



# U.P. Ag Connections Newsletter

October 2020

*Agricultural News from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch*

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## Dear Place-Based Educators, How Are You Adapting?

Have you taken a field trip with your students to a MSU farm or research station in the past? Do you engage in place-based education, a school garden, or incorporate agriculture, food and natural resources activities and content into your classes—in a “normal” year?

Join us for a community check-in that will hold space for K-14 place-based educators who want to share ideas about the potential for – and challenges to – experiential learning and outdoor education for students during the COVID-19 adapted school year as winter rolls around. This introductory session will be followed by additional conversations tailored to your interests.

This virtual conversation is hosted by your friends from Michigan State University facilities across the state: Kellogg Biological Station, Tollgate Farm and Education Center, and the Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center.

### Collaborative Teaching Support Network: Join the Conversation

As many of us face a cliff of Zoom fatigue and additional demands from school, work, and home, it’s worth asking: what will I gain from this experience? This session will allow you to:

- Try a grounding activity (that you can repeat with your students).
- Share ideas about how outdoor education and mindfulness can work together in multiple instructional delivery formats: in-person classroom, virtual, and at home.
- Connect with other educators in a non-work, non-meeting, non-official context – a community space held for you to talk with your peers.
- Choose the key topics and issues for future conversations.

### When is it?

Nov 9, 2020 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

### How do I sign up?

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://msu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0kd-qgrTopHNwPp2FAqv3Dm-SlBgF0UhgF>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Abbey - [palmerab@msu.edu](mailto:palmerab@msu.edu) (MSU Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center)

Ellen - [koehle43@msu.edu](mailto:koehle43@msu.edu) (Tollgate Farm and Education Center)

Kara and Misty - [k12partnership@kbs.msu.edu](mailto:k12partnership@kbs.msu.edu) (W.K. Kellogg Biological Station)

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## **Poor temperament adversely affects profit**

Glenn Selk, Oklahoma State University Emeritus Extension Animal Scientist

October is a traditional weaning and culling time for spring-calving herds. Weaning for value-added calf sales is already underway. This is a time when producers decide which cows no longer are helpful to the operation and which heifer calves will be kept for future replacements. Selecting against ill-tempered cattle has always made good sense. Wild cattle are hard on equipment, people, other cattle, and now we know that they are hard on the bottom line.

University of Florida animal scientists recorded disposition scores over two years on 160 Braford and 235 Brahman x British crossbred cows. They wanted to evaluate the effects of cow temperament and energy status on the probability to become pregnant during a 90-day natural breeding season. Cows were scored as 1= calm, no movement to 5= violent and continuous struggling while in the working chute. Also, a pen score assessment was assigned as 1= unalarmed and unexcited to 5 = very excited and aggressive toward technician. An exit velocity speed score was measured as the cows exited the working chute as 1= slowest and 5 = fastest. An overall temperament index score was calculated by averaging the chute score, pen score and exit velocity score. Blood samples were analyzed for cortisol concentrations. Cortisol is a hormone released when mammals are stressed or excited. Increased cow temperament score and elevated plasma cortisol concentrations both were associated with decreased probability of pregnancy. These results suggest that excitable temperament and the subsequent elevated cortisol concentrations are detrimental to reproductive function of cows. These authors concluded that management strategies that improve cow disposition, enhance their immune status, and maintain the cow herd at adequate levels of nutrition are required for optimal reproductive performance. Source: Cooke and co-workers. 2009 Florida Beef Research Report.

Mississippi State University researchers (Vann and co-workers. 2006. Southern Section of American Society of Animal Science) used a total of 210 feeder cattle consigned by 19 producers in a "Farm to Feedlot" program to evaluate the effect of temperament on performance, carcass characteristics, and net profit. Temperament was scored on a 1 to 5 scale (1=nonaggressive, docile; 5=very aggressive, excitable). The temperament scoring system was similar to that described in the Florida cow study. Exit velocity and pen scores were highly correlated. As pen scores increased, so did exit velocity. As pen score and exit velocity increased, health treatments costs and number of days treated increased, while average daily gain and final body weight decreased. This outcome makes perfect sense. Other studies have shown that excitable temperament can diminish immune responsiveness, with more temperamental calves having a reduced response to vaccination when compared with calm calves.

In the Mississippi study, as pen temperament score increased, net profit per head tended to decline. Pen temperament scores and net profits per head were as follows: 1=\$121.89; 2=\$100.98; 3=\$107.18; 4=\$83.75; 5=\$80.81. Although feed and cattle price relationships have changed since this data was collected, one would expect similar impacts from the temperaments of cattle under today's economic situation.

"Heritability" is the portion of the differences in a trait that can be attributed to genetics. The heritability of temperament in beef cattle has been estimated to range from 0.36 to 0.45. This moderate level of heritability indicates that real progress can be made by selecting against wild cattle. Whether we are marketing our calf crop at weaning or retaining ownership throughout the feedlot phase, wild, excitable cattle are expensive to own and raise.

### **Coronavirus Food Assistance Program-2**

Frank Wardynski, MSUE

Get signed up for CFAP-2. USDA Farm Service Agency started accepting applications for a second round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program on September 21 and will conclude December 11, 2020. Details for applications can be found at [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap) or contact your regional FSA office. CFAP-2 payments will be made for three categories of commodities: price trigger commodities, flat-rate crops, and sales commodities.

## Grazing Virtual Field Day

**October 14, 2020 11:30AM - 1:30PM**

Contact: Kable Thurlow

[Michigan State University \(MSU\) Extension](#) and [AgBioResearch](#) are partnering with the [Washtenaw County Conservation District](#) and [Baseline Farm](#) in Dexter, Mich. for a virtual field day on grazing on Wednesday, October 14 from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. The online webinar will focus on grazing management, soil health and environmental issues.

Beef producers in Michigan are encouraged to attend this online event to learn more about the ins and outs of practicing a grazing rotation.

“The goal of the event is to educate producers interested in transitioning to a grazing system and to further the knowledge of those already implementing a grazing system,” said [Nick Machinski](#), [Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program \(MAEAP\)](#) technician for the [Washtenaw County Conservation District](#).

Topics and presenters include:

- Overview of the Washtenaw County Conservation District and MAEAP program:
- Presenter: Nick Machinski, [Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program \(MAEAP\)](#) technician
  
- Introduction to Baseline Farm
- Presenter: John Cox, Owner of Baseline Farms
  
- Grazing management, watering and fencing
- Presenter: [Kable Thurlow](#), Beef and Grazing Educator, MSU Extension
  
- Soil Health
- Presenter: [Paul Gross](#), Field Crops Educator, MSU Extension
  
- Regenerative Agriculture and Carbon Sequestration
- Presenter: [Jason Rowntree](#), Associate Professor, [MSU Department of Animal Science](#)
  
- Equipment and other financial assistance opportunities
- Presenter: Boyd Byelich, District Conservationist, [S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)
  
- Creating and implementing a grazing management plan
- Presenter: Adam Shedd, NRCS District Conservationist

“This event will cover a wide range of topics related to grazing management,” said Machinski. “It will also provide opportunities and resources that will help assist those interested in transitioning to a grazing system or for those who want to fine tune their current grazing system.”

Thurlow is eager to partner with Baseline Farm to share this valuable information with Michigan’s beef producers. “This three-way partnership will allow us to reach more people that want to deepen their knowledge of grazing practices. The topics that each of us are covering will be valuable to the novice and advanced graziers.”

For technical questions contact Meghan Honke Seidel at [honkemeg@msu.edu](mailto:honkemeg@msu.edu) or 517-884-7089.

## USDA releases 2020 farmland cash rent values

Jonathan LaPorte, Michigan State University Extension

The "[USDA Farmland Cash Rent](#)" report is a listing of the county rental rates dating from 2009 to the 2020 year. The information was obtained from the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and is based on their survey results from producers.

It is important to remember that land rent prices vary tremendously from county to county. In Michigan, higher productivity soils tend to command a higher price. This includes tile-drained areas where specialty crops are grown, such as sugar beets and vegetables.

Other factors can impact the price that farmers are willing and able to pay for land rent. Some of these include field size, access, soil type, soil fertility, previous cropping history, and proximity to their farm operation.

Here are some U.P. highlights from the report. Only a few counties were included due to low survey response:

County	Non-irrigated cropland, cash rent per acre 2020	Pasture rent per acre 2020
Chippewa	\$19.50	\$8.90 (2019)
Delta	\$22.50	\$20.00 (2018)
Menominee	\$26.00	\$20.00 (2017)

Looking at this report will give you a place to start, but may not reflect the actual value of farmland in your area. To assist in determining what a reasonable rate is for your production area, please see the MSU Extension factsheet "[Farmland Rent Considerations](#)."

### DATE & TIME:

7 - 8:30 p.m.

Each Tuesday and Thursday  
in October

### ONLINE

### COST:

\$10 per session

\$65 for all sessions

### HOW TO REGISTER:

[https://events.anr.msu.edu/  
grazing2020/](https://events.anr.msu.edu/grazing2020/)

### CONTACT:

Kable Thurlow  
MSUE Beef & Grazing  
Educator  
989-426-7741  
[thurlowk@msu.edu](mailto:thurlowk@msu.edu)

## BEGINNING GRAZING SCHOOL

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

Farmers and landowners who graze dairy, livestock and small ruminant animals, and want the latest animal and forage research on grazing management.

### PROGRAM AGENDA:

- October 6: Introduction to school and overview of grazing terms
- October 8: Graziers are Grass Farmers!
- October 13: Soil Health and Fertility
- October 15: Nutrition, Health and Welfare of Grazing Animals
- October 20: Pasture Establishment and Renovations,
- October 22: Fencing & Water
- October 27: Pasture Allocation, Stock Density, Costs
- October 29: Designing a Grazing Plan

### EXPERTS:

- Kim Cassida, Forage Specialist
- Richard Erhardt, Small Ruminant Specialist
- Kevin Gould, Beef and Grazing Educator
- Jim Isleib, Field Crops Educator
- Phil Kaatz, Field Crops Educator
- Kable Thurlow, Beef and Grazing Educator
- Frank Wardynski, Ruminant Educator

## FDA Proposal: New Food Traceability Rule

Landen Tetil, Marquette Co. Conservation District

Most farmers are by now familiar with FSMA – the Food Safety Modernization Act – the federal legislation that oversees the safety of our food supply through seven rules. Of the seven rules, the one I am employed to educate on is the Produce Safety Rule, the rule that focuses on preventing foodborne illnesses on fresh fruit and vegetable farms. This new proposed FSMA rule, Food Traceability, would add more traceability recordkeeping requirements to existing FSMA rules. Here are the basics you need to know.

The Food Traceability Rule would require businesses to establish and maintain records on what the FDA is calling “Critical Tracking Events”, including growing, receiving, transforming, creating, and shipping. At a minimum, a traceability lot code would be needed to connect the food to the key data elements associated with the Critical Tracking Events. Records of traceability would need to be kept as either original paper records, electronic records, or true copies, and be available within 24 hours of a FDA request.

The rule would affect anyone who manufactures, processes, packs, or holds food designated in the “Food Traceability List.” This list was determined by FDA in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control through a risk-ranking model for food tracing, in which food items were given a score based on the following criteria: frequency of outbreaks, severity of illnesses, likelihood of contamination, potential for pathogen growth, manufacturing process contamination probability, consumption rate, and cost of illness.

Some of the food in the proposed Food Traceability List includes soft and semi-soft cheeses, shell eggs, nut butter, finfish, crustaceans, mollusks, fresh-cut fruit and vegetables, and deli salads. The produce included on the list, that also fall under the Produce Safety Rule, include cucumbers, fresh herbs, leafy greens, melons, peppers, sprouts, tomatoes, and tropical tree fruits.

This proposed Traceability Rule is not yet enacted into law. It is available for public comment through the Federal Register until January 21, 2021. To view the proposed rule or submit a comment, visit this webpage: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/09/23/2020-20100/requirements-for-additional-traceability-records-for-certain-foods>

*To learn more about assessing produce safety risks on your farm or to earn a produce safety certificate from the state of Michigan, contact your local Produce Safety Technician at [Landen.mqtcondist@gmail.com](mailto:Landen.mqtcondist@gmail.com) or (906) 251-3061*

## *Classifieds*

**FOR SALE: Mixed hay**, large round bales, 800#, \$20/bale. Call Al (906)647-6697.

**FOR SALE: Koyker 565 Loader** with 7 ft bucket. Also has skid steer adapter. Fits JD 3000-5000 series tractors. \$2500; **Oliver 13 ft disk** with 18 inch scalloped blades, \$1095. Call Tolfree Farms (908) 884-2351 or email [countryj@jamadots.com](mailto:countryj@jamadots.com).

**FOR SALE: Hay**, large square bales 3x3x7.75 Timothy grass, 4,000 to sell. Former dairy farm doing all big square bales hay. Call Dave Bell in the EUP 906-440-6455 or email [Bellsdairy@yahoo.com](mailto:Bellsdairy@yahoo.com). Also a realtor in the UP so contact me for real estate here. [Dave@smith-company.com](mailto:Dave@smith-company.com)

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[hjdegroot@alphacomm.net](mailto:hjdegroot@alphacomm.net)

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### **CLARE COUNTY LIVESTOCK AUCTION**

#### **2020 Fall Feeder Cattle Auctions:**

Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup>  
Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>

\*\*\* All Feeder Auctions Begin at 1:00p.m. \*\*\*

#### **Location:**

Clare County Livestock Auction, LLC  
11228 S. Grant Ave.  
Clare, MI 48617  
(989) 386-9256

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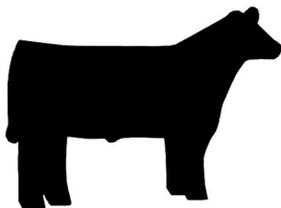
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### **Market Report**

Choice Steers	\$90-\$100 per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$80-\$89 per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$60-\$66 per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$130-\$170 per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$50-\$60 per 100 lbs.
Calves	\$60-\$110 per 100 lbs.
Goats	\$200-\$250 per 100 lbs.

#### Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows	\$1200-\$1500/head
Grade Holstein bred heifers	\$1000-\$1250/head

#### Feed Prices across the U.P.

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$11.28	\$225.50	\$160-342
Soymeal	\$20.19	\$403.75	\$372-450
Oats	\$13.38	\$267.50	\$230-340
Barley	\$11.93	\$238.50	\$200-310
Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots			