



# U.P. Ag Connections Newsletter

July 2021

Agricultural News from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch

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## News and Views

By Frank Wardynski

I am going to write some feature articles over the next few months directed towards agriculture education. This month I am starting with an internship with Michigan State University. Ashlee Fleming is an Animal Science Major at MSU. Ashlee is from Grand Ledge. She did not grow up on a farm but did grow up exhibiting cattle and goats at the county fair of the local 4-H club. The livestock were housed at a friend's farm. She worked on a horse ranch each of the last two years and gained limited yet valuable experience operating equipment like a skid steer.

Jon Haindl has been seeking an intern from MSU to help on the farm through the summer while offering them an opportunity to gain experience in most all aspects of the farming operation. Many of you know Jon. He operates a beef cattle farm in Cooks. Jon has been trying to get an intern for the last three years. He was unsuccessful the first year in finding an applicant. Those that had some level of experience wanted more management opportunities and the others had virtually no experience. One applicant's only equipment experience was on a golf cart. The concern of turning interns loose with farm equipment valued well over \$100,000 is warranted. Last year Covid was the greatest obstacle.

Jon and Ashlee spoke over the phone several times. Jon again was concerned about her lack of equipment experience. However, (and this is part of my observation) Ashlee must be an outgoing person with a sense of confidence despite her lack of experience. Jon told me she has "spunk", which he told me the definition of spunk in the dictionary is "courage."

Ashlee moved to the UP May 19, to start her internship. Since starting, some of the tasks she has been working on include holding newborn calves for processing, catching newborn calves with four-wheeler cage, fencing, raking and tedding hay. After talking with them both, they are both very happy with the way things are working out. Ashlee talks about Jon and his teaching style. He not only explains the how but also the why. I have talked with Jon enough on long car trips to have an appreciation for what Ashlee is saying. Jon's skills as a vocational ag teacher make him an excellent mentor for an internship program. I can understand Jon's reservation of hiring interns with limited experience, but I also know he has an ability to break things down to the simplest form and building from there.

Ashlee has graduated from task to task through the summer. By the end of calving season, Jon was holding the calves while Ashlee did the processing procedures.

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## Alfalfa Weevils hit hard in UP

By Jim Isleib, MSUE

For the first time in my 30+ years as a UP extension agent, I have seen bad damage to alfalfa from alfalfa weevil. The problem was brought to my attention from farms in Delta and Alger counties in mid-June. Alfalfa weevils are not typically a serious pest in the UP, although they are an annual problem in more southern parts of Michigan. Many farmers were not familiar with this unusual local issue. Generally, timely, or even early cutting is the most appropriate action to deal with alfalfa weevil. The damage builds and peaks near the time when alfalfa is approaching first cut stage. Insecticide to control weevil larvae is sometimes required before first cut to reduce losses.

According to MSU field crops entomologist, Dr. Chris Difonzo, *'the easiest scouting method uses tip injury. Survey across the field and not just on one side or on an edge. Check tips of 100 stems for feeding. Treat if 40 percent of stems show damage and the field won't be cut for at least seven days...If a field is over threshold, cutting is the preferred control method because it preserves natural enemies and pollinators, and saves the cost of application. Also, most insecticides cannot be used within seven to 21 days of cutting, depending on the product.'*



Alfalfa weevil larva  
Photo: Bruce MacKellar, MSU Extension



Alfalfa weevil damage, 6/16/21, Chatham, MI  
Photo: Jim Isleib, MSU Extension

If alfalfa weevil has impacted your alfalfa this year, keep an eye on the regrowth for small, green larvae eating foliage. It is unlikely that a second generation will give us much trouble, but with the unusual weather this year, you never know.

A pest we are more familiar with, potato leafhopper, has also been problematic in some fields. Upper Peninsula alfalfa growers are generally familiar with this pest, which sucks juice from alfalfa leaves and injects a toxic saliva into the plant.



Potato leafhopper damage in a new alfalfa seeding. Photo: Phil Kaatz, MSU Extension.

MSU Extension educator Phil Kaatz published this 2016 article on potato leafhoppers in alfalfa during another dry year:

*Potato leafhoppers annually arrive in Michigan with storms originating from the Gulf Coast states. In alfalfa, the hot, dry weather often leads to increased populations of potato leafhoppers. Growers may not always notice the increased populations until damage has already occurred.*

*Adult potato leafhoppers are a small (0.125 inch long) green to greenish-yellow, wedge-shaped insect. These insects are able to reproduce at very rapid rates and can overwhelm a field. Potato leafhoppers feeds on the plants and the insect's toxins (digestive enzymes) are injected into the plant during feeding, causing a condition known as hopper burn (see photo). Growers mistakenly assume these symptoms are caused either by a nutrient deficiency or by the lack of rainfall. The effects of potato leafhoppers are a reduction of yield, forage quality, plant vigor and winter hardiness. In other words, nothing good for an alfalfa stand.*

*Many companies offer new alfalfa varieties with leafhopper resistance. However, the need to scout fields is still a necessity. Stands that are not cut every 30 days, such as a new seeding that needs additional time to be established, are at a high risk of damage. Potato leafhopper-resistant varieties will have glandular hairs that exude droplets of a sticky compound. The resistance may fail to hold back the insects in years where the population is very high and it may still be necessary to control the pests with an insecticide.*

*For potato leafhopper control, producers have several options:*

- *Cultural control: Cutting alfalfa will kill the adults and nymphs in the forage, leading to a disruption in the potato leafhopper lifecycle.*
- *Genetic resistance: Use new potato leafhopper-resistant varieties that have up to 85 percent resistance genetically bred into the alfalfa.*
- *Chemical control: Once the alfalfa is over threshold, this is the most viable method of control if the field is not scheduled to be cut in the next seven days. Many options are available.*

## **Growing UP Agricultural Association, Service to Ag Recipient**

*By Ben Bartlett*

The Growing UP Agricultural Association, GUPAA (the group of UP farmers and extension people who represent UP agriculture to MSU and other State organizations), honors someone at its annual meeting with the Service to Agriculture award. Larry "Ike" McTiver was chosen this year for his innovation and support of the beef cattle industry. Ike passed away last winter, but his work with MSU in a timed breeding experiment 40 years ago, his pasture renovation trials and his legacy of gentle cattle handling before it was popular will live on. The award was presented to Sandy and Scott, spouse and son, at Ike's Celebration of Life gathering in June.

Our annual meeting was held virtually due to Covid for the second year but just as your farming chores stayed the same, GUPAA has continued to speak for the research and extension needs of UP agriculture. If you have an ag issue or know someone who has been in special service to UP agriculture, give me, Ben Bartlett, [bartle18@msu.edu](mailto:bartle18@msu.edu) or Paul Naasz, [naasz@msu.edu](mailto:naasz@msu.edu) a call. (Watch for the 2020 recipient in the August issue).



## **Agricultural Crop Trials and Demonstrations in the U.P. this summer**

*By Jim Isleib and James DeDecker*

Several MSU and MSU Extension research trials and demonstrations are in place across the Upper Peninsula and at the MSU Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center in Chatham:

Dark Red Kidney Bean seeding rate comparison (70,000 vs 60,000 seeds per acre) – Fayette. Funded by state-wide MDARD grant

Soybean fungicide demonstration (with and without Miravis Neo at R3 stage) – Cooks. Funded by Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee

Low cost, high tech volumetric soil water monitoring demonstration (solar charged units placed on 4 cooperating farms in Dafter, Rudyard, Pelkie and Baraga). Funded by Project GREEN

CBD Hemp TRIM variety trial & weed management study—UPREC, BMCC Waishkey Bay Farm, Ziibimijwang Farm, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, Forestry Innovation Center. Funded by NIFA Tribal grant

Seed to Kitchen vegetable variety trials—UPREC. Funded by Project GREEN

Mechanical Weed Management in Organic Carrots—UPREC. Funded by NIFA OREI

Northern Flint Corn Revitalization project—UPREC. Funded by the College of the Menominee Nation

Farm Business Incubator Program—UPREC.

Winter Barley Cold Hardiness study — UPREC, Kellogg Biological Station, BMCC Waishkey Bay Farm, Empire, Stockbridge. Funded by Michigan Craft Beverage Council

Oat and Malting Barley variety trials — UPREC, Kellogg Biological Station, Mason. Funded by MI Crop Improvement Association

Alfalfa low-lignin and Forage Grass variety trials—UPREC, MSU campus. Funded by Dr. Kim Cassida

Potato variety trial, white mold fungicide and Crane repellent studies—Verbrigghe Farm, Rock; Dale Johnson Farm, Sagola. Funded by MI Potato Commission Industry

Soybean variety trial and Fungicide trial—Forestry Innovation Center; Dave Robere, Cooks. Funded by MI Soybean Promotion Committee

Soil Health Management Systems study—Havelka Farm, Wallace; Sweetens, Dafter. Funded by NRCS CIG

Cool Season Forage Grass Maturity Rating study—UPREC, MSU campus. Funded by Project GREEN

Cereal Rye for Distilling variety trial—UPREC, Kellogg Biological Station. Funded by MI Craft Beverage Council

## **Reminder: ‘What’s U.P. @ UPREC?’ You Tube channel has lots of info on current work at MSU’s Chatham farm**

*By Jim Isleib, MSU Extension UP Crop Production Educator*

Since the pandemic hit, curtailing normal MSU Extension work, and just about everything else, I have been producing short, informative videos about everyday research and farming activities at the MSU Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center in Chatham, including nearly all the staff there, and a few others. Currently, there are 48 episodes posted on-line. Topics include operations involving the grass-finished beef herd, crop research projects, organic vegetables and season-extension work at the North Farm, general farm operations like hay-making, grazing, fences and watering systems, the farm shop, the weather station, and much more. Even a couple on pruning apple trees. These videos were viewed (at least in part) over 2,000 times in May. I’m not sure if I’m reaching my intended audience, the U.P. farming community, or mostly general public. But I’m happy to know that people are interested in the doings at UPREC.

Check out the videos on-line at [Jim Isleib - YouTube](#). If you don’t receive the electronic newsletter, you can get there on your computer internet by googling “You Tube”, then type “Whats UP at UPREC” into the search box.

## Classifieds

**FOR SALE: Simmental Bulls**, mature and young, registered and non-registered. Call Duane Kolpack (906) 362-6862.

**FOR SALE: 2nd and 3rd crop alfalfa**, small square bales. Marenger Potato Farm, Flat Rock. (906) 384-6587.

**FOR SALE: Alfalfa Balage**, 2nd and 3rd crop alfalfa. \$60/bale. (906) 630-4945.

**FOR SALE: Registered Dexter cattle**, all ages and models. Call Tolfree Farms (906) 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)

**Beautiful property** in the Upper Michigan, 130 acres In Perkins for sale or pasture for rent for livestock for the 2021 season. Beautiful river running through it. Great for hunting, building or developing, or simple grazing livestock. Land is divided into 9 paddocks with high tensile electric fence and 5 stock watering ponds. Call (906) 359-4825.

**FARM FOR SALE: Upper Peninsula Farm** with over 1,100 acres, water access, maple syrup production, and much more!  
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Henry DeGroot (906) 238-4251  
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**FOR SALE: John Deere B.** Clean, less than 50 hrs on rebuild.  
**Allis-Chalmers C.** New paint, runs good. **Hay Hauler.** Hauls up to 10—4x6 round bales, use spear on back, don't have to unhook. Call Terry (906)644-2777.

**FOR SALE: Reh-Morr Farm, Eben Jct. MI, N5057 Benson Rd. Rock River Twp. Alger Co.**

Acreage includes field, maple forest, loamy, sand soil, high ground, conifer wind breaks. Zoned agriculture. Blackberries, raspberries, cherry trees (sour), asparagus, rhubarb, currants. High tunnel hoop houses. 3-30 X 72, 1-20 X 27 Barn with lean-to. 30 X 55 Sauna-outdoor, wood heat. Garage new-30 X 40 2 story, lower level 2 car garage, large workshop, upper level partially finished and storage. House 3 BR, 1 Bath, 2000 sq. ft., wood heat, electric baseboard, small walk-out basement. Well water. On Gravel Road. Owned since 1989. Pesticides not used.

Contact: Dan or Mary (906) 439-5558 evenings  
[dbrabine@yahoo.com](mailto:dbrabine@yahoo.com)

## Classifieds, cont.

**FOR SALE: International 5000**, Self-propelled 14 foot windrower cab-hydro-diesel, has detachable hay conditioner. Stored inside, field ready. \$5000 (906) 988-2397.

**FOR SALE:**

52'elevator Kewanen PTO drag line

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Gehl Round Baler 4x4

3 pt wheel rake 16' wide

3 hay wagons with racks

All used last year

(906) 988-2397

**FOR SALE: Simm Angus Bulls**-Genomic Tested, Balanced EPD's, Great Disposition, born Fall of 2020. (906)281-0808 or (815)614-0163.



Michigan State University Extension

**Master Gardener Program Online via zoom**

**Thursdays, 5:30—9:30 p.m. EST - (4:30-8:30 p.m. CST)**

**August 19 through November 18**

*Become a Master Gardener Volunteer!*

Join other gardeners via an online format for this 14 week volunteer training program. Horticultural topics include: best practices for growing flowers, vegetables and fruit; caring for lawns and woody ornamentals; house plant care; diagnosing plant diseases; pest identification and control, and much more.

Complete the classroom requirement, then volunteer for 40 hours in the community in order to become a certified Master Gardener.

\*Participants are expected to regularly attend the classes; occasional makeup can be scheduled for extenuating circumstances. No class on Nov. 25; Dec. 2 will be make-up date if needed.

After initial program completion, to continue as a certified Extension Master Gardener you must complete 10 education hours and 20 volunteer hours annually.

**Cost is \$325. Partial scholarships are available and must be applied for at the time of registration. Registration deadline is August 12, 2021**

**Steps to register:**

1. You will require a high speed internet connection; a computer/device with camera & microphone.
2. After you complete the class application, registration, and pay, you will need to complete the Volunteer Selection Process (VSP). To complete these steps, go to: <https://events.anr.msu.edu/uppermqvofall2021/>
3. If paying by check, it must be postmarked by July 29; all other payments due August 12.

For additional questions, please contact Rebecca Krans, [kransr@msu.edu](mailto:kransr@msu.edu)

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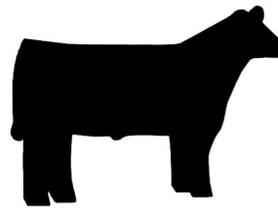
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## Market Report

Choice Steers	\$100-\$117 per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$95-\$110 per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$75-\$81 per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$250-\$310 per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$60-\$74 per 100 lbs.
Calves	\$80-\$140 per 100 lbs.
Goats	\$250-\$400 per 100 lbs.

### Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows	\$1000-\$1525/head
Grade Holstein bred heifers	\$1200-\$1500/head

### Feed Prices across the U.P.

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$15.64	\$312.75	\$240-426
Soymeal	\$26.08	\$521.50	\$440-624
Oats	\$13.49	\$269.75	\$239-340
Barley	\$12.55	\$251.00	\$200-314
Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots			

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# Enviro-weather

formerly Michigan Automated Weather Network (MAWN)

The **Michigan Automated Weather Network**, or MAWN, was one of the original partners that combined to form [Enviro-weather](#), MSU's weather-based decision-making resource for pest, production and resource managers. MAWN stations are now known as Enviro-weather stations. The pages linked at this site provide comprehensive, detailed data and other information from each weather station in the network.

The Enviro-weather Project is supported by [Project GREEN](#), an initiative of Michigan's plant-based commodities and businesses, the [Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station \(MAES\)](#), [MSU Extension \(MSUE\)](#), and by user donations. A major emphasis of Enviro-weather is to improve the efficiency and productivity of agriculture through expanding use of Integrated Crop Management (ICM) strategies, many of which require highly detailed weather data and information. Our objectives are to provide quality data, information, and proven methodologies for expanded use of ICM and other weather-dependent management strategies in Michigan; to facilitate new research using meteorological data for agricultural management; and to overall reduce weather-dependent risk in agricultural systems for growers and for the industry.

