



U.P. Ag Connections Newsletter

November 2023

Agricultural News from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch

Volume 27 Issue 11

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by Frank Wardynski, MSUE

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- Farm Financial Management for Beginners

This farm economy has been crazy this past year. Beef prices have soared to record levels. Milk prices have dropped about 30% in the last 18 months. Drought hit locations in the western UP and south central UP. Consequently, hay prices have been mixed. Grain and meal prices have dropped significantly. It has been a while since grain prices have dropped to the point that producers are looking at using corn as energy to feed beef cows and limit feed hay.

Purchasing inputs eased just a bit this year with lower fertilizer and fuel prices until inflation reversed its downward trend to pick up again in August, September and October. Of course, interest rates are probably the most impactful expense increase. One method of minimizing tax liabilities has been to make capital purchases. Current interest rates are going to challenge that strategy. Higher interest rates is going to limit the purchases farmers can pay for capital. It is also going to challenge budgets as operating loans are going to cost more.

The Federal Reserve has been steadily raising interest rates to combat inflation. Inflation was coming down and then started to increase as summer was ending and autumn beginning. The Fed is trying to decide if they should continue to continue the rate climb. Just recently the US Treasury Department put out 10- and 30-year bonds at lower prices, which translates into higher bond yields, those higher yields are likely to increase interest rates of our loans from lending institutions.

I give some of that background to simply state that this year's finances may be very different than you have seen in quite some time.

Some recommendations:

1. Get your accounting up to date as soon as possible.
2. Start tax planning now. Are you in a position that you may want to make purchases on next year's inputs before the first of the year? Or push some back into next year?
3. Look for help if needed.

I work with many farmers with no cost involved. I can make a farm visit or meet via Zoom on the computer to go over some farm financial analysis and management. I have recommendations of really good accounting systems both paper form and on computer. And those systems are reasonably priced.

I am going to be conducting a class on Farm Financial Management for Beginners in Escanaba on November 30. We are going to cover accounting, financial statements, taxes, and financial analysis. And I promise, there is no need to be scared of any of that. I am going to work through all that to make it understandable and usable.

I make all my initial visits direct at farm finance literacy free of charge. Then I ask if you are interested in joining TelFarm. TelFarm is MSU's farm financial accounting and analysis services.

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AgBioResearch

USDA releases farmland cash rental values for Michigan counties

Jonathan LaPorte, Michigan State University Extension

Rental rates in the MSU report are not intended as a price floor for rent negotiation, but rather a good place to start.

USDA Farm Land Cash Rental Information 2023-2012

https://www.canr.msu.edu/farm_management/

The following information has been compiled from the USDA-NASS Quickstats web page. Since these values are based on survey results, they are not intended to serve as a price floor for rent negotiation. Your field's individual factors and county location may mean USDA's average is not a perfect fit for your farmland, but it can be a good place to start. It can also be helpful to see the rental rates in neighboring counties and consider differences in agriculture being produced in those locations.

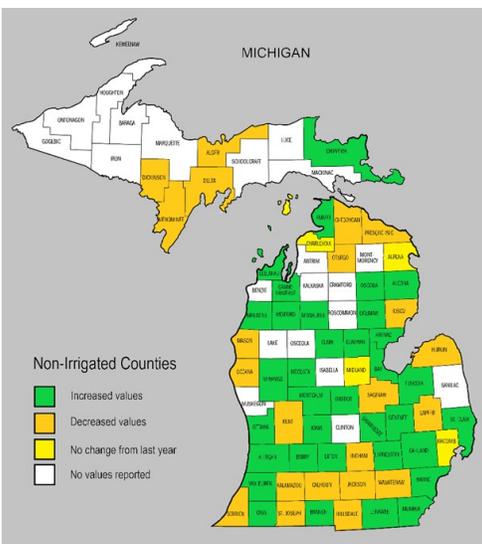
County	2023 \$/Acre	2022 \$/Acre	2021 \$/Acre	2020 \$/Acre	2019 \$/Acre	2017 \$/Acre	2016 \$/Acre	2014 \$/Acre	2013 \$/Acre	2012 \$/Acre
<i>RENT, CASH, CROPLAND, NON-IRRIGATED</i>										
ALGER	\$16.00	\$20.00	\$16.00	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
CHIPPEWA	\$26.50	\$15.00	\$20.50	\$19.50	\$15.00	\$17.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$24.00	\$14.00
DELTA	\$12.00	\$20.00	\$23.50	\$22.50	\$21.50	\$26.50	\$26.00	\$28.00	\$24.00	\$24.00
DICKINSON	\$29.00	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
MACKINAC	\$30.00	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
MENOMINEE	\$22.00	\$32.00	\$33.00	\$26.00	\$26.00	\$27.50	\$22.00	\$24.00	\$24.50	\$17.50
ONTONAGON	---	---	\$17.00	---	---	---	---	\$29.00	---	---

Data for other MI counties available at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/usda-farmland-cash-rental-rates>

The "USDA Farmland Cash Rental Rates" document is a listing of cash rental rates by county dating from 2012 to the 2023 year. The information was obtained from the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and is based on their county-level survey results.

Results contain a mixture of annual and long-term lease agreements. Long-term lease agreements normally have fixed cash rental rates. Therefore, changes in year-to-year cash rental rates depend largely on how many new leases are included in the data. Another factor is response consistency and if all the same farms that participated last year took part in this year's survey. The impact of these factors is essentially unknown when looking at the cash rental rates. As a result, rental rate values in this report are not intended to serve as a price floor for rent negotiation. But rather a good place to start.

It is also important to remember that land rent prices vary tremendously from county to county. In Michigan, the higher productivity soils tend to command a higher price. This includes tile drained or irrigated 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 factors can include field size, access, soil type, soil fertility, previous cropping history, and proximity to their farm operation.



Your field's individual factors and county location may mean USDA's average is not a perfect fit for your farmland. But it may be helpful to see rental rates for neighboring counties and consider differences in agriculture being produced in those locations.

The 2023 data indicates a mixture of changes across Michigan counties.

For non-irrigated counties (see Figure 1):

- 36 counties saw rental rate averages increase.
- 22 counties saw rental rate averages decrease.
- 4 counties saw no change in their average rental rate.

Pasture acres were absent in the 2022 report due to a lack of survey responses. In 2023, only three counties were listed. Two of the three counties reported increases in cash rental rates. The third county technically reported an increase, but the next comparable year is 2017.

The data for this report can be accessed on the [USDA NASS website](https://www.nass.usda.gov/).

Figure 1. Non-irrigated average cash rental rate changes by county, based on 2023 USDA Quickstats survey data.



U.P. Pesticide Applicator Training & Exams

MSU Extension will offer two different Pesticide Applicator Training and Exam opportunities in the Upper Peninsula on December 18, 2023 and April 12, 2024. Each program is unique, so please review the options carefully! Dec. 18 offers your choice of core manual review (RUP credits) and/or MDARD exams at Bay Testing Services, but no lunch. April 12 offers a core manual review (NO RUP credits), lunch and MDARD exams (Core exams only, no commercial categories; Full training & exam participation required).

December 18th, 2023 – Bay College in Escanaba, MI

Who: Certified pesticide applicators seeking RUP credits, MDARD exam prep and/or administration

What: A four-hour core manual review, followed by MDARD exams at Bay College Testing Services

When: December 18th, 2023

Core manual review 8am-12pm

MDARD Exams scheduled independently with Metro Institute at Bay College Testing Services

Where: Core manual review at Bay College, Besse Health & Tech Center – Lecture Hall Rm 421

Why: RUP credits, MDARD exam prep and/or exam administration

Registration: Call MSU-UPREC at (906) 439-5114 to register for the FREE core manual review.

Schedule and pay for MDARD exams separately online at <http://michigan.metrosignup.com>
<http://michigan.metrosignup.com>

April 12th, 2024 – NMU Northern Center in Marquette, MI

Who: Certified pesticide applicators seeking MDARD exam prep and administration

What: A four-hour core manual review (NO RUP credits), followed by lunch and MDARD exams (Core exams only, no commercial categories)

When: April 12th, 2024

Core manual review 8:30am-12:30pm, Lunch included 12:30pm-1pm

MDARD Exams beginning at 1pm onsite

Where: NMU Northern Center Peninsula 2 Room - 1401 Presque Isle Ave.; Marquette, MI 4985

Why: MDARD exam prep and administration (must participate in both, no RUP credits available)

Registration: Registration and payment details online at <https://events.anr.msu.edu/2024RUPInPersonTesting/>
<https://events.anr.msu.edu/2024RUPInPersonTesting/>

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Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting the event contact James DeDecker two weeks before the start of the event at dedecker5@msu.edu. Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

Forensic Forest Hike at Rock River Kilns

by Alex Kolton, Alger Conservation District

Alger County boasts an array of natural landscapes renowned for their pristine beauty and ecological significance. One of the most striking examples of this natural splendor is the Rock River Kilns, a series of limestone kilns that played a pivotal role in the production of charcoal for the region's mining industries during the 19th century. Presently, the Rock River Kilns is a favored destination for hiking enthusiasts, history aficionados, and nature enthusiasts alike who seek to explore the region's rich heritage and breathtaking scenery. Anna Ellis, from MSU Extension, partnered with, Sara Kelso, Alger Conservation's District forester to host a fun, educational, and relaxed-paced hike through the Hiawatha National Forest to learn some of the history behind the Rock River Kilns.

We began the hike with a short walk to an open field where some of the first French and Swedish migrants came to store their harvested hardwood used in the kilns to make incredible amounts of charcoal from 1879 to 1896 before the resources in the area were depleted. This wide-open field was once stacked sky-high with freshly harvested raw hardwood that awaited its turn in the kilns. Due to the use of this field and the high piles of wood, the field's soil remains extremely compacted to this day which is why it remains wide open and bare of trees. Opportunistic spotted knapweed and a lush grove of blackberry patches now line the field and provide locals, native wildlife, and pollinators food sources and refuge.

As we continued our hike around the corner, Anna and Sara pointed out some other tell-tale signs of the forest's history. One of the noticeable signs of the previous harvest was how the trees were growing at the base. As I mentioned, the main thought as to why the kilns were abandoned was the working crew depleted the available hardwood resources in the area. Due to this resource-heavy practice, much of the forested area was cut clear leaving room for saplings to grow once operations ended. Because the area was cut clear, many of the now older birch, maple, and broad root trees sprawled and had vast wild trunk structures due to the excessive leftover space.

Once at the kilns, our hosts spoke on the day of operations required to make charcoal in 1879. This job was not only resource-intensive but also dangerous. Most migrants who worked at the Rock River Kilns lived on-site just across the tracks, now a snowmobile and ATV trail. If the dangers of logging in 1879 didn't take its toll, chances are an array of microscopic enemies would barrage your health. Before we headed over to the lake, we made a pit stop by the headstones which attest to three individuals who succumbed to these harsh conditions. Three headstones mark the final resting area of three small children, all under ten years old, which diphtheria claimed within the year 1885. Recently restored, these historical headstones are a reminder of how we once lived.



Our final stop on the forensic hike was the lake, which is fed by a cold spring and was the workers main water source of the operation. Remnants of stone wall run along the lake and down to the kiln site, this is believed to have been a reservoir for the workers supplying the teams to live and work for nearly two decades of production at Rock River Kilns.

Our group had an excellent time, and much feedback was provided by a handful of seasoned locals who participated and taught us more about the local forest, the kilns, and its rich history.

Find more Hikes and Events Near You

A big "thank you" to Anna and Sara for a fantastic forensic hike at Rock River Kilns!

Learn more about Rock River Kilns, or other areas of interest by visiting the Alger County Historical Society.

Participants of the Crop and Pest Management Update Meetings will hear MSU Extension specialists present the latest recommendations for managing weeds, diseases, insects, and nematodes and receive a copy of Extension bulletin E-434 “Weed Control Guide for Field Crops.” The topics covered at the programs will be determined by the local host and will vary from site to site. Detailed agendas for all programs are available below or by calling the host MSU Extension office. Each meeting will take place 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., with registration starting at 8:30 a.m. **Cost:** \$40.00 per session.

Register: <https://events.anr.msu.edu/2024Cropandpestmanagement/>

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Virtual and Northern 2024 Crop and Pest Update

Agenda

Join MSU Extension Educators Jenna Falor and Monica Jean as they host a virtual crop and pest update! These presentations will be tailored to Northern MI management. This virtual meeting will also have 4 proctored sites across Northern Michigan so you can attend online or in-person.

- Dr. Marisol Quintanilla- Nematode management
- Dr. Kim Cassida -Managing Forages
- Dr. Manni Singh-Agronomic practices for Improved Profits
- Michelle Sweeten -Center for Regenerative Agriculture Update
- Dr. James DeDecker- Crop Variety Performance

Info

Date: Thursday, January 4, 2024

Time: 9:00am - 3:00pm, Registration at 8:30

Locations:

1. Virtual via Zoom,
2. Waishkey Bay Farm – Brimley, Host: Michelle Sweeten
3. UPREC – Chatham, Host: Dr. James DeDecker
4. MSU Extension Office – Stephenson
5. Presque Isle County Building – Rogers City, Host: Adam Kovisto

Registration

Cost: \$40: all registered participants will receive weed guides, in-person attendees will receive lunch

Pre-registration open until December 28th.

<https://events.anr.msu.edu/2024Cropandpestmanagement/>

Isabella County
Extension Office:
989-317-4079

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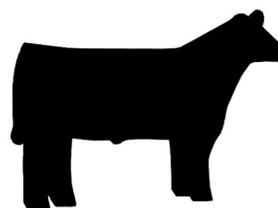
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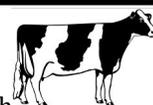
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Haley Filhart, Owner (989)430-2055

Classifieds

FOR SALE: Inline Bale Wrapper, 2015 Anderson NWX-660. Honda gas engine, self propelled, remote control. Stored inside last 2 years. \$24,000. Also, 1000 gallon **pull behind Sprayer** with 60 ft boom. \$1,000. Both in Hancock. Call Nate (906)370-1876.

FOR SALE: Hay, mixed round bales, 700# stored inside. Also small square bales of straw. Call Jim Myers (906)399-1649 or (906) 466-2672.

FOR SALE: small square bales of straw and small squares of first crop hay. Call Marenger's Farm (906)384-6587.

FOR SALE: Mixed Hay round bales, 700#, \$20. Call Alan or Karen Raynard @ (906) 647-6697, Pickford.

Market Report

Choice Steers	\$150-\$185 per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$115-\$168 per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$45-\$53 per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$140-\$220 per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$75-\$100 per 100 lbs.
Calves	\$150-\$300 per 100 lbs.
Goats	\$250-\$350 per 100 lbs.

Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows top	\$1550/head
Grade Holstein bred heifers top	\$2000/head

Feed Prices across the U.P.

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$17.05	\$340.90	\$265-543
Soymeal	\$28.55	\$571.00	\$500-650
Oats	\$17.70	\$354.00	\$320-416
Barley	\$13.83	\$276.25	\$200-386
Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots			

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Farm Financial Management for Beginners

Frank Wardynski, MSU Extension Educator, will be conducting a Farm Financial Management educational meeting for beginners held on Thursday, November 30, 2023 at Bay College in Escanaba, MI at 7:00 pm in the Heirman Center, Room 911.

Farm financial management does not need to be as complicated and scary as too many farmers think. This session is designed to help farmers, both beginning and experienced, capture their financial information into a useful form and to utilize MSU Extension Educators to annual year-end income statements.

I struggled with the title of this program. You do not need to be a beginning farmer to attend this session. This session is designed to help improve farmers' understanding of the farm finances regardless of how many years you have been farming. I thought about calling it, "Taking the Fear out of Farm Finance."

If you plan to attend, please call the Ontonagon MSU Extension office at 906-884-4386. I am always worried nobody will show up for this type of program. If I get just one phone call, I will be there, but will cancel the class if nobody calls.