



U.P. Ag Connections Newsletter

December 2023

Agricultural News from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch

Volume 27 Issue 12

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News and Views

Price Risk Management Opportunities in the Beef Cattle Business

By Frank Wardynski, MSUE

Beef Cattle prices can be severely impacted by events occurring in one day or over time. In 2019, a fire at a large packing plant severely reduced harvest capabilities in this country and drove prices of feeder cattle and market ready cattle down over the next several months. In 2020, many packing plants were shut down over various periods of time due to many workers contracting Coronavirus and drove cattle prices lower. In both years, cattle producers sold both feeder cattle and market cattle at prices lower than expected.

Cattle prices through 2023 have been at record level highs. Most of the reasons behind these prices are due to low supply and stable demand. The US cattle population appears to be stable with no indication of an increase in numbers through next year. Consequently, prices should be high again next year unless something happens on the demand side.

Cattle producers that take the opportunity to obtain market price protection will frequently realize more income than producers that do not during times of falling cattle prices. The USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) has implemented a market price insurance program since 2004. The Livestock Risk Protection program (LRP) allows producers to purchase market price protection insurance against falling markets. Farm business management educators and specialists at [Michigan State University Extension](https://www.maes.msu.edu/) recommend developing marketing plans and developing market risk strategies.

Through LRP, producers can purchase market protection from insurance agents in a similar manner to buying crop insurance. Agents selling crop insurance frequently sell LRP policies. The LRP works similarly to purchasing put options setting a floor on the market price; however, LRP like crop insurance is government subsidized. LRP insurance fits with various size operations as producers can get protection on as few as one head.

It is critically important to point out that LRP policies offer market price protection and have no influence on the price producers receive for their cattle. Cattle are sold and marketed by producers in the method of their choosing. Consequently, producers are still encouraged to market cattle for cash sale to the best of their ability. The actual policy is insurance against cattle market prices going lower.

In most years it can be difficult to get really good prices locked in on the fall feeder calf index. This year appears to be unique and that prices for the feeder calf index can be logged in at prices of \$2.50 - \$2.65 per pound for five weight calves and \$2.35 - \$2.40 per pound for 750 weight calves. Right now, you can buy those policies for about \$70 - \$100 per head. That may seem expensive, but it is the price to lock in near record prices.

I have lots of experience using LRP's and if you're interested, I'd love you to call and we can talk about the details. I'm planning on using this as one of the topics during the winter beef meetings coming in January or February.

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MI Great Beer State Conference & Trade Show

Registration is now open for Michigan's Great Beer State Conference & Trade Show taking place January 10-12, 2024 at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Kalamazoo, MI. This year's conference will feature tracks with presentations focused on technical brewing, brewing business, hops and barley/malt. Our keynote speaker will be the "Pope of Foam", Charlie Bamforth from Sierra Nevada Brewing. While much of our barley and malt content will be brewer facing, barley growers and maltsters should also find great value in our malt sensory training on Wednesday, as well as our barley presentations and panel offered Thursday and Friday. Details and registration are available at the link below. Barley growers and maltsters can take advantage of the MBG member registration rate of \$345.

<https://www.mibeer.com/Events/2024-michigans-great-beer-state-conference-trade-show>

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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 –
2001 N Lincoln Rd; Escanaba, MI 49829

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>

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/>

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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 jdedecker@msu.edu. Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.



"Downtown Marquette" by Tony Webster is licensed under the CC BY 2.0 DEED license

Michigan State University Extension Public Listening Session — Marquette

Whether it's supporting the dedicated professionals who drive the state's agriculture economy, helping children develop leadership skills, teaching individuals how to better manage a chronic illness, or empowering entrepreneurs to realize their dreams, MSU Extension has been a force for good in the state of Michigan for over 100 years.

As part of an ongoing strategic direction process, MSU Extension is holding a series of listening sessions across the state. The purpose of these sessions are to listen to a wide variety of audiences from the communities we serve. We hope to gather feedback to determine where the organization is, what we do well, and where there are opportunities for improvement.

Everyone is welcome. Whether you are a past Extension program participant, partner organization, or just a curious community member, we want to hear from you!

When:

Monday, December 11, 2023
from 4:00 to 6:30 p.m.

Where:

NMU Northern Center
1401 Presque Isle Ave.
Marquette, MI 49855

Register:

<https://events.anr.msu.edu/listeningseries>

Contact:

Kathy Walicki
walicki@msu.edu or 231-873-2129
Marie Garcia
garci434@msu.edu or 517-353-9464

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Farms Branching Out:

Expanding opportunities for agroforestry markets, connections, and conservation

We are a team from Michigan State University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Ohio State University, Central State University (Ohio), and the USDA Forest Service who were recently funded to survey and interview farmers and natural resource professionals to better understand and accelerate agroforestry practice uptake and to develop a research protocol for agroforestry demonstration farms that will also host long-term research.

What are Agroforestry practices?

Agroforestry Practices	Examples
Alley Cropping: The planting of rows of trees and/or shrubs to create alleys within which agricultural or horticultural crops are produced.	
Forest Farming: The cultivation of high-value crops under the protection of a managed tree canopy.	
Riparian Forest Buffers: An area adjacent to a stream, lake, or wetland that contains a combination of trees, shrubs, and/or other perennial plants and is managed differently from the surrounding landscape, primarily to provide conservation benefits.	
Silvopasture: The deliberate integration of trees and grazing livestock operations on the same land.	
Windbreaks: Linear plantings of trees and shrubs designed to provide economic, environmental and community benefits.	

Forest Service USDA - <https://www.fs.usda.gov/nac/practices/index.shtml#~:text=The%20five%20practices%20are%20windbreaks,cropping%2C%20silvopasture%20and%20forest%20farming.>



What else is included?

- *Maple syrup production*
- *Christmas trees*
- *Fruit and Nut Bearing Trees*
- *General tree and woodland management*

How can I participate?

- **Peer-to-Peer Agroforestry Exchanges**

*Are you interested in sharing information with like-minded individuals? We are seeking farmers who would **host** an Agroforestry Exchange at their farm (or a series of meetings). We will provide refreshments and recommend some professionals who can come speak and kick off your meeting. We can work with you to brainstorm topics, format, and logistics. We are also seeking farmers who are interested in **attending** a nearby exchange - we can connect you to hosts!*

- **Cost-share for Management Plans (that include Agroforestry)**

Are you interested in developing a management plan for your property? We are looking for farmers open to having a management plan written for the trees and woods on your farm. We will connect you to a forester who can write a plan for you, and may be able to cost-share some or all of the plan expenses.

- **Video production, Interviews, and Case Studies**

Are you interested in participating in a video that displays your practices? Or are you willing to have a researcher come and interview you on your farm? We are recruiting interested farmers who have already initiated an agroforestry practice, are thinking about initiating a practice in the next 1-2 years (so we can follow your process of installing this practice), or are not yet sure if agroforestry is a good fit for their land. Case study materials (videos, photos, written material) would be shared on the National Agroforestry Center website, the project website, and with other groups who serve farmers. Interviews will inform research to better understand the decision-making process for agroforestry practices.

- **Demonstration sites for field days**

Are you interested in your property becoming an educational site? We are seeking farmers with current agroforestry practices to host other farmers for field days and demonstrations. We will support you with refreshments, guest speakers, and assist with logistics.

If you are interested in one or more of these opportunities, please contact Project Manager, Amanda Curton curtonam@msu.edu.

SAVE THE DATE:

In person:

Hybrid IPM Meeting—January 4, 2024, locations: Rogers City, Brimley, Chatham, Stephenson

Dairy Meeting –January 10, 2024, Stephenson

Pasture Walk—January 18, 2024, 11am-2pm, Harrisville, MI

Ag for Tomorrow Conference—February 20, 2024, Bay College, Escanaba

Great Lakes Forage & Grazing Conference—March 7, 2024, St. Johns, MI

Pasture Walk—March 21, 2024, 11am-2pm, Flint, MI

Online:

Hay Production 101—Mid February

MI Ag Ideas to Grow With—February 27-March 10



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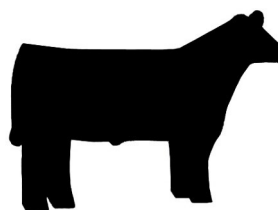
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Sale Date December 16, 2023

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Robert Filhart, Owner (989)330-6005

Haley Filhart, Owner (989)430-2055

Classifieds

Straw for Sale: Small squares or 4x5 Large round bales.
906-439-5114 Ext. 2

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-\$169 per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$115-\$155 per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$38-\$47 per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$160-\$225 per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$75-\$95 per 100 lbs.
Calves	\$150-\$310 per 100 lbs.
Goats	\$200-\$375 per 100 lbs.

Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows top \$1850/head

Grade Holstein bred heifers top \$2400/head

Feed Prices across the U.P.

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$16.60	\$331.90	\$240-543
Soymeal	\$29.73	\$594.50	\$500-655
Oats	\$18.45	\$369.00	\$320-416
Barley	\$13.81	\$276.25	\$200-386
Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots			

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Pasture Walks are a great way to spend an evening

Kable Thurlow, Michigan State University Extension

What's a pasture walk? It's an event, hosted at a farm that is pasturing some type of livestock. In the case of the pasture walks that I have worked with, we have been on sheep, beef and dairy farms.

Discussion topics are chosen through a series of conversations with the coordinator and the host farm, typically showcasing one or more innovative or game-changing ideas that farmers have developed. For example, some focus on watering systems and others on fencing. Other topics include bale grazing, strategies for handling the spring flush, supplements, pest control, soil health, shade, sacrifice lots, plus, marketing and sales.

In a typical grazing season, [Michigan State University Extension](#) educators, along with partner agencies like [Michigan Natural Resources Conservation Service](#) (NRCS), [Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program](#) (MAEAP), and [local Conservation Districts](#) host two to four pasture walks. In 2022, there was an increase to seven.

In terms of excitement about pasture walks, the 2023 pasture walk season proved to be even better, with a total of 11 being conducted in Michigan. Thanks to the support of the [Michigan Forage Council](#), we were able to offer food and drinks at almost every one of these events. Average attendance at each of these events was around 30, allowing for great discussion, learning and network building. Geographically, the 2023 pasture walks were conducted across the state from southern Michigan to the western Upper Peninsula, and many places in between.

There is excitement brewing about trying one or two winter pasture walks. MSU Extension uses the Great Lakes Grazing [Newsletter](#) to inform people about our pasture related events. Stay informed of these events, by signing up to receive this newsletter.

[Signup Form \(constantcontactpages.com\)](https://constantcontactpages.com)