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April 2014 Edition



Where Does The Pallid Sturgeon Go?

See page 10

Montana Hail Board Raises Coverage and Premiums

Authorizes Department to Negotiate for Reinsurance

Submitted by Jayson O'Neill

On Monday, the Montana Hail Board voted to expand coverage, including a slight increase in premiums on hail insurance.

At producers' request and with the authority granted in House Bill 189, the board voted unanimously to increase per-acreage coverage on non-irrigated land from \$50 to \$75 and on irrigated land from \$76 to \$114 or a 50% increase in coverage.

"Producers were looking for increased coverage and

the legislature granted the board authority last session. The board was happy to provide the coverage and unanimously pass the motion," said Board Chair Gary Gollehon.

In addition, the board unanimously approved a five percent premium rate increase. For a producer with a 10% rate, their new rate would be 10.5%. The hail board covered 1,046 losses totaling more than \$14 million from 2013 hail events, a record for the programs' 98 year history.

"Last year was atypical, the hail program paid out 186% of premiums due to the extent of the damage. We look

at premiums and reserves every year to ensure that farmers have hail coverage. The five percent is as low as the board felt comfortable raising premiums while still maintaining some reserves and expanding coverage," said Ron de Yong, Director, Montana Department of Agriculture.

The board also authorized the department to negotiate for reinsurance to protect farmers if Montana has another extreme hail year.

The Montana state hail insurance program was created to provide basic hail insurance coverage on any crop grown in the state and is self-supporting. The five-member board consists of Commissioner of Insurance Monica Lindeen, Agriculture Department Director Ron de Yong, Chair Gary Gollehon, and producers Trudy Lass Skari and Jim Schillinger. A reserve fund is maintained to provide security for the programs financial responsibilities.

For more information about state hail insurance, contact the Montana Department of Agriculture's hail program at (406) 444-2402.

The Montana Department of Agriculture's mission is to protect producers and consumers, and to enhance and develop agriculture and allied industries. For more information on the Montana Department of Agriculture, visit www.agr.mt.gov.



FESTIVAL VENDORS NEEDED

Watford City, North Dakota Centennial Festival

Friday, June 27 & Saturday, June 28

Vendors - Kid Zone - Music - Beer Gardens

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or call Amanda Kieson at 701-842-1212
whippinstitch@yahoo.com

GET READY FOR SPRING PLANTING!

USED MFWD & 2WD TRACTORS

- 2007 JD 8430, Powershift, MFWD, 3pt hitch w/ quick hitch, 5 hyd's, PTO, 380/96R50 duals, front duals\$185,000
 2000 JD 5510 (75 PTO HP) sync shuttle tranny, MFWD, 3pt hitch, 18.4x30 singles.....\$21,500

LOADER TRACTORS

- 2012 JD 7130 (110 HP), 16 speed powerquad tranny, MFWD, 3pt hitch, 3 hyd's, dual PTO, 18.4x38 singles, factory warranty, low hours. NEW JD H360 loader, 8' bucket, grapple, mech joystick\$118,900
 2003 JD 7320 (105 PTO HP), 3pt hitch, 3 hyd's, dual PTO, 18.4 x 38 singles, 741 loader, 8' bucket, grapple and joystick.....\$69,500
 2008 JD 7330 (125 PTO HP) IVT tranny, MFWD, 3 pt hitch, 3 hydraulics, dual PTO, 18.4X38 singles, JD 741 SL loader, 8' bucket, grapple, joystick.....\$109,500

USED COMBINES

- 1) 2012 JD S660 combines, 520/85r38 duals, Contour master, low low hoursCALL
 2012 JD S660 combine, 520/85r38 duals, contour master, 630R platform pickup reelCALL
 2006 JD 9660 STS, 520/85r38 dualsCALL
 2000 JD 9750 STS, 30.5x32 duals, chopperCALL
 2002 JD 9650 STS, 800/65X32 Singles, Chopper, Grain Tank ExtCALL
 1990 JD 9600, 30.5x32 singles, chopper, chaff spreader...CALL
 1989 JD 9600 with chopper, 30.5x32 duals, 960 McDon draper headerCALL
 2013 JD 635FD, draper platform with HHS in rigidCALL
 2013 640 FD, draper platform, no HHS in rigid.....CALL
 2012 635 FD draper platform, no HHSCALL
 2010 JD 630R platform, pickup reel.....CALL
 (2) 2004 JD 635F Flex platform, 35'CALL
 1998 JD 930 platform with pickup reel.....CALL
 2009 Case IH 2010 Rigid Platform, Bat Reel, Less than 100 Hours.....\$20,000
 1997 Macdon 960D platformCALL

USED 4WD DRIVE TRACTORS

- 1995 JD 8970 (400 eng HP), powershift tranny, 4 hyd's, 520/ 85R42 duals.....\$69,500

SEEDING EQUIPMENT

- JD 610/787 air hoe drill, 40', 230 bu.....\$45,000
 2001 JD 1900/1820 air hoe drill, 53' and 270 bu.....\$62,500
 Flexicoil 5000/2320 Air Hoe Drill, 57', 7.2" Spacing (lot F625)\$42,500
 JD 787/730 Air Disk Drill, 36', 6" spacing, 170 bushel tank\$16,500
 (2) JD 9350 disk drills, 8' units, fertilizer, hitch\$4,750
 (3) JD 9350 disc drills, 10' units, 6" spacing, fertilizer, JD transport hitch\$11,500

USED MISCELLANEOUS

- JD480B forklift, gas, 28' mast, side shift, fresh overhaul\$8,950
 2012 JD XUV 825i gator, camo, only 54 miles\$16,000
 2009 Brandt 10x60 Swing away auger\$11,500
 Nile 3pt ditcher.....\$3,950
 Diamond 72" & 62" mowers.....\$2,500

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WSC 4th Annual Carcass Challenge is Underway

By Tie Shank

The Williston State College's 4th Annual Carcass Challenge is underway at the Hovde Feedlot near Arnegard, ND. The following livestock producers have donated calves to the program this year.

Aaron & Shelby Jacobson of Noonan, ND
Emmet & Hugh O'Neil of Columbus, ND
Bradley Rosenquist of Columbus, ND
Jonathan Enget of Stanley, ND
Helen Glasoe of Wildrose, ND
Mark & Shelley Ellis of Williston, ND
Curt & Nancy of Severson of Cartwright, ND
Brent Svangstu of Noonan, ND
Chuck Hanson of Noonan, ND
Gerald Rosenquist of Columbus, ND
Galen Rosenquist of McGregor, ND
Dennis Jacobson of Wildrose, ND
Dave & Kristi Clark of Froid, MT
Shane Clark of Froid, MT

"The Williston State College Agriculture Program and I are so appreciative of all the support from these producers and of the producers who have donated in previous years," stated Agriculture Program Coordinator Kim Murphy.

"Not only do these calves raise money for the Agriculture Ambassador program, but they also serve as a learning tool for the agriculture classes," commented Murphy. "The

students go out to the feedlot to learn about how they are processed, fed and handled. They feed them the same rations, weigh and process them monthly and then study the data to determine the average daily gain of each calf."

When the calves are ready to be processed, they are taken to Prairie Packing in Williston and sold as quarters, halves or wholes. Awards are then given out to the producers who donated the calf with the highest daily gain and the calf with the best carcass data (determined by which one would sell highest on the grid).

The Carcass Challenge was put in place to raise funds to start the Agriculture Ambassador Program at WSC. The Agriculture Ambassador Program is made up of students who have an interest in agriculture and are willing and able to advocate for agriculture as an industry. The students visit local classrooms and organizations and teach them the importance of agriculture. Agriculture Ambassadors are also available for recruiting opportunities.

Murphy states, "The Carcass Challenge has been a very successful program and has allowed the Agriculture Ambassadors an opportunity to get up and running!"

If you'd like more information on the Carcass Challenge, the Agriculture Ambassador Program or about making a donation to support the program, please contact Kim Murphy at (701)774-6226.

State, National Park Service to Develop New Bison Management Plan

**Submitted by Steve Merritt
Montana Department of Livestock**

The National Park Service (NPS) and the State of Montana (State) have agreed to prepare a joint Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to consider possible changes for managing wild Yellowstone bison and the non-native disease brucellosis.

The process will allow the NPS and the State to account for substantial new information and changed circumstances since the implementation of the Interagency Bison Management Plan (IBMP) began in 2001, and could result in the creation of a plan to replace the IBMP.

The NPS and the State will be working within the guidelines of both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) in preparing the EIS.

A notice will be published in the Federal Register later this year announcing the start of public scoping, which is an opportunity early in the planning and EIS process for the public, organizations, and other agencies to suggest issues and alternatives that should be considered by the NPS and the State.

The purpose of management is to conserve a viable wild population of Yellowstone bison while continuing to reduce the risk of brucellosis transmission to cattle, damage to property, and threats to human safety.

The NPS and the State will continue to implement the current IBMP with agreed upon adaptive management changes until new Federal and State Records of Decision are signed at the conclusion of this environmental planning and review process.

Spring Is Just Around The Corner!

Low Rate Financing Available On All New Case IH Equipment



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Buckets, Snow Blowers**



Farmall 110A w/loader



Steiger 550 Quad NEW



**Thunder Creek Fuel Trailer
750 Gal & 990 Gal**



Case IH WD1203 Windrower



Precision Spray 100 & 160



**CaseIH 8230
Combine**

USED TRACTORS

1979 JD 4840, 3 pt, PTO	\$22,500
2008 CaseIH 435 Steiger, 710 duals, full auto guidance, HID lights, luxury cab, 1987hrs.....	\$210,000
1982 JD 4440, 3pt, 3 remote, quad range, new paint, duals, 11631hrs.....	\$25,000
2005 CaseIH MX255, MFD, 3pt, 3638hrs, 480/80R42 Duals w/ CaseIH LX780 loader & grapple	\$108,000
Bobcat T190 track loader, cab, auxiliary hydraulics, 2002hrs ...	\$22,000
IH Hydro 70, gas engine, new tires, dual loader, grapple.....	\$10,000
2004 Case IH MX255, 4200 Hrs, 0 Hrs on new engine, 3pt. ...	\$110,000
2009 Case IH Maximum 110, loader, grapple, MFD.....	SOLD!

USED MISCELLANEOUS

2009 Rem 3700 Grain Vac, good condition, 120 hrs.	\$23,000
Farmhand 25' mulcher	\$11,500
(2) John Deere 2700 disc grippers, 7 shank.....	\$22,000 each

USED SEEDING & SPRAYING

Concord 4710 Drill, 3000 tow behind cart, hydraulic drive....	\$30,000
2005 Brandt 2SB4000, suspended boom, 90', 1500 gal. tank	\$25,000
2005 CaseIH SPX 4410 self propelled sprayer, 1200 gal., 90' booms, Raven Auto Trac, 5700 Hrs, consigned	\$95,000
Summers 2pt sprayer, 88' booms, 500 gal tank, Dickey John monitor	\$6,500
Monosem 6 row, 24" planter.....	CALL

USED HARVEST EQUIPMENT

2005 CaseIH 2388, 1267R/1506E hrs., chopper, yield & moisture monitor, very good cond.	CALL
w/ 2005 2042 35' draper head	CALL

USED HAYING EQUIPMENT

JD 4895 Windrower, 1641 Hrs, 18' dual knife loader ...	Just Traded
2007 Case IH WDX 1203 Windrower w/18' header, 600hrs...	Just Traded
2008 CaseIH RB564 round baler, 8700 bales, mesh wrap, wide pickup, endless belts, hydraulic pickup lift, central lube	\$29,900
2006 RBX563 Round Baler, wide pickup, mesh wrap, endless belts, 8,000 bales, good cond.	\$26,000
CIH RBX 563 baler, mesh, wide pickup.....	\$25,000
1990 Hesston 560 Round Baler.....	\$5,500
2011 Haybuster 2650, hydraulic chute lift, big tires, very good condition.....	\$16,000
2008 Vermeer Processor, BP8000	\$10,500
2003 CaseIH RBX562, MeshWrap, Like New	\$24,500
1999 CaseIH RS561	\$12,500
1995 CaseIH 8465	\$8,995
1994 CaseIH 8480 Softcore	\$6,995

USED MOWERS

Artsway Belly Mower, 6', mounts for a Farmall C	Consigned
Grasshopper 618, 52" Deck, Bagger	\$4,500
Dixie Chopper LT 2500, 50" Deck	\$5,500

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Specialty Crop Funding Available, MT Dept. of Ag is Accepting Grant Applications

Submitted by Jayson O'Neill

The Montana Department of Agriculture announced that funding is available and applications will be accepted to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. After receiving funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the state will disburse \$305,000 to successful applicants through a competitive grant process.

Specialty crops are fruits and vegetables, culinary and medicinal herbs, dried fruits, horticultural, and nursery crops, including floriculture. Eligible plants must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes and/or aesthetic gratification. A list of specialty crops is available, along with a companion list of ineligible commodities, on the USDA website.

Proposed projects must enhance the competitiveness of U.S. grown specialty crops in either domestic or foreign markets. Projects must benefit more than one commercial product, organization, or individual. Examples include research, promotion, marketing, nutrition, trade enhancement, food safety, plant health, education, "buy local" programs, conservation, or product development.

Other areas of particular interest to the department include nutritional improvements, especially for children, improving efficiency and reducing costs of distribution

systems, development of good agricultural practices, pest and disease control, and development of organic and sustainable production practices. See a complete description of eligible and previously-funded projects at agr.mt.gov/agr/Producer/GrantsLoans/SCBG/Eligibility.html.

Funding is available to interested state and/or local organizations, academia, producer associations, community based organizations, specialty crop stakeholders, and local, state, and federal government entities.

Grant proposals are due to the Montana Department of Agriculture by close of business on May 21, 2014. For more information, eligibility guidelines, and resources, visit agr.mt.gov/agr/Producer/GrantsLoans/SCBG or contact Angelyn DeYoung, Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Manager, at (406) 444-2402.

Projects will be evaluated by the department and a technical review committee. Approved proposals will be forwarded to the USDA. Successful applicants will be notified in October 2014.

The Montana Department of Agriculture's mission is to protect producers and consumers, and to enhance and develop agriculture and allied industries. For more information on the Montana Department of Agriculture, visit www.agr.mt.gov.

State's First Rabies Case Serves As Good Vaccination Reminder

Submitted by Steve Merritt

The state's first rabies quarantine of 2014, issued last week for Big Horn County, should serve as a good reminder for pet owners to review vaccination records for their dogs, cats and ferrets.

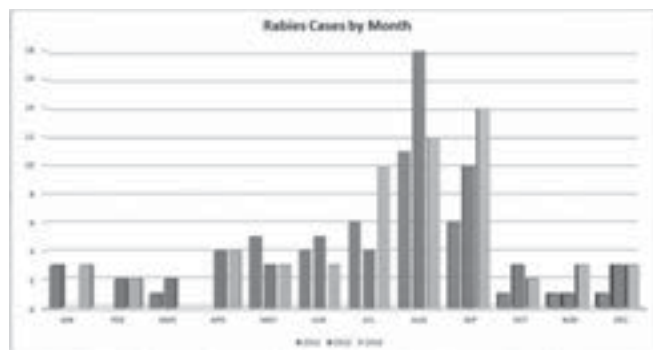
"It's that time of year," said assistant state veterinarian Dr. Tahnee Szymanski. "If your pet hasn't been vaccinated recently, or if you aren't sure, contact your veterinarian and get it taken care of now."

Based on statistics from the past three years, rabies generally makes an appearance in early spring, then the number of reported cases increases until a peak in late summer.

"We see rabies year-round, but it's much more common in the summer when the potential for pet/wildlife interactions is highest," Szymanski said. "The number of reported cases peaks in July, August and September, when we have four to five times as many cases as we do at any other time of year (see attached chart of rabies cases by month)."

If you're going to be outside enjoying the great Montana

outdoors with your pets, or if your pets spend any time outdoors – even in a fenced yard – it's prudent to vaccinate. Vaccination is inexpensive and effective, and could save you from having to make tough decisions regarding your pet, as non-vaccinated animals or those past due for vaccination must either be euthanized or placed under a strict six-month quarantine if exposed to a known or suspected rabid animal.



FARM AUCTION

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2014 • 10:00 A.M.



LOCATION: From Sidney, MT - Take Highway 16 S toward Glendive for 23 miles, turn left on Road 340 for 1.5 miles. From Glendive, MT - Take Highway 16 N toward Sidney for 25 miles, turn right on Road 340 for 1.5 miles. **OWNERS:** Marlow and Carolyn Iversen 406-776-2286. Lunch will be available.



FARM MACHINERY

- JD 8100 MFWD Tractor, power shift, 3 pt, PTO
- JD 4555 MFWD Tractor, power shift, 3 pt, PTO
- JD 4450 MFWD Tractor, power shift, 3 pt, PTO
- JD 4450 2-wheel drive Tractor, power shift, 3 pt, PTO
- JD 4230 2-wheel drive Tractor, quad range, power shift, 3 pt, PTO
- 2006 McCormick TXT200 MFWD Tractor, 3 pt, PTO, 442 hours & Buhler 2895 Front-end Loader w/bucket & grapple (consigned 406-772-5547)
- 2007 JD CT332 diesel Skid Steer, tracks, air, heat, quick tach, bucket & forks, 2,100 hours (consigned 406-853-2667)
- JD model 740 Front-end Loader (fits on JD 4450)
- IHC 400 gas Tractor
- Degelman 12' Dozer
- 3 pt 6-way Back Blade
- JD 3 pt Maximerge 12-row Planter (unit has been gone through)
- IHC 3 pt Cyclo 6-row 30" Planter
- Heath 3 pt 8-row Planter (for parts)
- Case IH 3 pt 5-bottom Spinner Plow, model 145
- Case IH 3 pt 4-bottom Spinner Plow, model 145
- Farmhand 21' Roller Harrow (ultra mulcher)
- Triple K 3 pt 22' Field Cultivator
- Triple K 3 pt 15' Field Cultivator
- JD 3 pt 25' S Tine Field Cultivator
- (2) S&H 3 pt 12-row Cultivators
- Wick 3 pt 8-row Field Cultivator, model 2600
- JD 3 pt 16' Toolbar, model 1600
- NH 14' heavy duty Tandem Disk
- JD 3 pt Ditch Closer
- Meyer 3 pt Ditch Closer
- (2) 6-row 3 pt Ditchers
- 12-row 3 pt Double Bar Ditcher
- (2) Eversman 3 pt Ditchers
- Artsway, model 690 Beet Digger
- Artsway 6-row Beet Digger (for parts)
- Wick 6-row Defoliator
- (2) Intl 10' double disk Drills, 7" spacing w/transport, model 620
- JD 3 pt 20' Tine Harrow
- Eversman 3 pt 20' Land Plane, model 2000
- 3 pt 12-row Ridger
- Howard 3 pt 7-shank Ripper
- 3 pt 12-row Crustbuster
- Farmhand 400 Manure Spreader
- Wilmar 500 Tandem Axle Fertilizer Spreader
- Schwartz Feeder/Mixer Wagon, model 750



BACKHOE, HAYING EQUIP. & SPRAYERS

- Long 3 pt Backhoe
- JD 2320 gas Swather w/21' Draper Head
- NH 1475 Swing Tongue w/conditioner
- JD 567 Big Round Baler, megawide w/net wrap
- NH 855 Big Round Baler (idler sprocket is broke)
- NH 3 pt Windrow Turner
- Farmhand 6-wheel Rake
- JD Hay Chopper & Richardson Dump Wagon
- UFT 3 pt 12' Flail Mower
- Frontier RC2084 Mower w/quick tach
- JD 3 pt 8-row Band Sprayer
- 3 pt 16-row Bank Sprayer
- Summers 3 pt 60' Sprayer
- Kuker 3 pt 40' Sprayer
- Spray Coupe Tri-cycle Sprayer, model 116-78
- Spray Coupe 4-wheel Sprayer w/electric lift Booms

PUMP, PIPE, TANKS & MISC

- 10" PTO Irrigation Pump
- (55) 10" & 12" Aluminum Gated Pipe
- (40) 10" & 12" Plastic Gated Pipe
- Approx. (1500) Aluminum Siphon Tubes
- Bobcat Miller AC/DC Portable Welder w/Onan motor
- Outback Unit
- (10) Motorola 2-way Radios
- 1500 gallon Poly Water Tank & Water Pump
- (2) 1000 gallon Fuel Tanks w/pumps
- (2) 500 gallon Fuel Tanks w/pumps
- (2) Single Car Garage Doors w/hardware

AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: Marlow and Carolyn have decided to retire from farming and will offer their full line of equipment at auction. Most of the equipment is field ready. Their tractors are in great shape. There will not be many small items, so don't be late. Hope to see you on April 12th! Rick



TRUCKS & TRAILERS

- 1976 Intl Pay Star 5000 Twin Screw Tandem Truck, 335 Cummins, 10-speed w/deep under, 20' box & hoist
- 1979 GMC Brigadier 8500 Twin Screw Tandem Truck, Allison automatic, 16' box & hoist
- 1978 GMC Brigadier Twin Screw Tandem Truck, 13-speed, 20' box & hoist
- 1991 Freightliner Semi Tractor w/400 Big Cummins, 13-speed
- 1990 Kenworth Semi Tractor w/3406 CAT, 13-speed
- (2) 29' End Dump 5th wheel Trailers (1-w/roll tarp)
- 45' Low Boy 5th wheel Trailer w/ramps
- Titan 30' 5th wheel Tandem dually Flatbed
- Guthrie 48' Hopper Bottom Grain Trailer, air operated, roll tarp
- 16' Bottom Dump 5th wheel Gravel Trailer
- Sooner 16' Bumper-pull Stock Trailer
- Homemade 20' Tandem Dually 5th wheel Trailer
- Pickup Box Trailer

COMBINES, AUGERS & PICKUPS

- JD 6620 Combine w/224 Head
- (2) JD 6620 Combine w/222 Head
- JD 6601 pull-type Combine (for parts)
- Walinga Grain Vac
- Westfield 8'x60' PTO Auger
- Dacon 6'x43' Auger w/gas motor
- 1990 Chevy Cheyenne 3500 dually Pickup, 4x4, regular cab
- 1990 Chevy Extended Cab 2500 Pickup, automatic, 4x4
- 1987 Dodge D50 Pickup

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R-K Statewide Auction Service and its auctioneers are acting solely as auctioneers for the Sellers.

Wheat Stem Sawfly Devastations Lead To Another International Conference at MSU

Submitted by MSU News Service

Wheat stem sawflies heavily damage more wheat than any other insect in Montana, and now Colorado and Nebraska are experiencing unprecedented outbreaks, says Montana State University entomologist David Weaver.

Continuing to search for solutions, experts from three countries and four states will share their findings at the Sixth International Wheat Stem Sawfly Conference to be held April 3 and 4 at the Procrastinator Theatre in MSU's Strand Union building. The conference is free and open to the public, but seating is limited so people who want to attend are asked to notify the organizers at wheatstem-sawfly@gmail.com

"We all recognize that problems associated with wheat stem sawfly are dynamic and evolving," Weaver said. "It is a devastating pest with features in its life cycle that make it very difficult to manage. This results in an ability to cause very large economic losses at the level of individual growers through to the large-scale regional impacts in much of the northern and central parts of the wheat belt."

MSU economist Anton Bekkerman, who will give two presentations at the conference, conducted the first formal economic study on the impacts of wheat stem sawfly in Montana. During his talk from 10 to 10:30 a.m. April 3, he will give a 15-year perspective on the damage it caused.

"The high wheat prices observed in 2012 resulted in estimated direct damages of approximately \$80.1 million to Montana farmers," Bekkerman said. "What is perhaps equally as important is that these damages implied that nearly 9.7 million bushels of Montana wheat did not reach consumers. This has important indirect economic implications all along the wheat marketing chain."

The estimated expected losses to individual farmers with 2,000-acre operations were between \$15,000 and \$20,000 for spring wheat producers and \$25,000 and \$47,000 for winter wheat producers in 2012, Bekkerman said. Winter wheat producers in high impact areas were expected to lose \$110,000 and \$120,000 per farm.

"In evaluating two widely used management strategies – solid stemmed varieties and swathing – the results indicate that highest long-run economic returns are likely when using a slightly less yielding solid stem variety that minimizes the chances of the sawfly population growing rather than planting higher yielding varieties and swathing, which can increase long-run sawfly populations and exacerbate damage," Bekkerman added.

Other conference speakers will give updates on the southward expansion of wheat stem sawflies and share their findings about biological control, integrated pest management, host plant resistance, the genetics of both wheat stem sawfly and wheat, population monitoring, and chemical ecology.

A keynote speaker will be Marie-Claude Bon from the

European Biological Control Laboratory in France. She will speak from 1:30 to 2 p.m. April 3 on genetic variation among wheat stem sawfly populations.

Genetic variation is probably one reason that wheat stem sawflies are so persistent and intractable in Montana, Weaver said. Compared to other areas of the northern Great Plains, the genetic diversity of wheat stem sawflies in Montana is much greater. Bon will discuss this variation and its implications.

Another reason that wheat stem sawflies are a problem is because they have not yet been managed using any known insecticides, Weaver said. As a result, researchers are continually testing new insecticides and investigating other options, including the exploration of newly discovered genetic traits in existing wheat germ plasm that provide additional resistance.

The Wheat Stem Sawfly Conference is held every two years, with the 2012 conference also held at MSU. Since beginning in 2003, the conference has been held in Bozeman three times and has been part of past Pacific Branch-Entomological Society of America and Entomological Society of Canada meetings. The conferences draw scientists, members of the agribusiness community, agricultural leaders and wheat growers.

"Agricultural research has had these wonderful and highly supportive relationships with wheat growers in the state," Weaver said. "They are very interested in attending these presentations to find out more about the wheat stem sawfly research that is being conducted."

For a complete schedule of the conference and more details, go to <http://www.entomology.montana.edu/sawfly/iwsscprogram2014.pdf> and scroll down.





ANNUAL BULL SALE

BAR JV ANGUS

APRIL 9, 2014

1:00 PM • GDAR SALE BARN • SIDNEY, MT

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Other Sires:

- ★ WMR Timeless 458
- ★ RA Identity Z79
- ★ Sitz JLS Upward 631X
- ★ RA Lead On W5
- ★ Sitz Upward 307R
- ★ DFA Hero 6017
- ★ Sitz Game Day 334Y
- ★ Pine Creek Ideal 1133
- ★ GDAR CJD Alliance 0712

For More Information, Contact:

BAR JV ANGUS

14043 County Rd. 340 • Fairview, MT 59221

Jim Vitt 406-798-3653

Dale Vitt 406-798-3398 406-480-5676 C

djvitt@midrivers.com



DFA HERO 6017

Lower Yellowstone Diversion Dam Fish Passage

The Lower Yellowstone Diversion Dam raises the water level to allow water to flow into the irrigation system.

Inset: The pallid sturgeon.



By Tie Shank

What do you get when you combine 225 miles of laterals, 118 miles of drains, the Lower Yellowstone Diversion Dam, Thomas Point Pumping Plant and the main canal? The answer is, The Lower Yellowstone Project. Approximately one-third of the project lands are in western North Dakota and the remaining two-thirds are located in east-central Montana.

According to a recent article written by Gerald 'Jerry' Benock, of the Montana Area Office (MTAO) of the Bureau of Reclamation, "This project is authorized as a single-purpose project to furnish a dependable supply of irrigation water for 53,000 acres of fertile land along the west bank of the Yellowstone River." It delivers water diverted from the river to irrigate roughly 400 farms in North Dakota and Montana.

The Lower Yellowstone Diversion Dam is located approximately 16 miles downstream of Glendive, MT. The original intake diversion project (completed in 1909) remains in place and requires rock to be added regularly to maintain the water level required to divert irrigation water from the river.

Benock's article goes on to say, "Intake Diversion Dam has impeded movements of pallid sturgeon upstream since its construction."

Pallid Sturgeon with its unique dinosaur-like appearance was listed as Endangered under the Endangered Species Act in 1990. The Pallid Sturgeon Recovery Plan was published and put in to action in 1993 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This endangered species was historically present in the Yellowstone River upstream to at least the confluence with the Tongue River (Brown 1971). However, since 1991 only two adults have been recorded following the historic river flows of 2011. This restriction to upstream migration has created the urgency to provide a safe passage of the Pallid Sturgeon to a spawning habitat located 165 miles upstream on the Yellowstone River.

Additional data has revealed that on average 500,000 fish of 36 species could be entrained annually in the irrigation canal system. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is a joint lead agency assisting Reclamation in the design and construction of the Lower Yellowstone Project for the purposes of ecosystem restoration.

The new system must prevent fish loss and entrainment while providing the irrigation water supply to the Lower Yellowstone irrigators. Numerous studies have been conducted and design alternatives looked at for fish passage and entrainment control. In 2009 a design was chosen as the preferred way to achieve both entrainment control and fish passage. The design was completed and operated successfully in 2012.

However, a fish passage was to be provided by expanding the height and length of the rock ramp across the river. The cost of this far exceeded the original gathered information and due to this along with “construction challenges and the lack of confidence in the ability of the system to achieve and maintain long term fish passage without substantial operation and maintenance resources,” states Benock, “it was determined that the USACE and Reclamation needed to reconsider previously dropped alternatives for fish passage.”

In 2013 the planning study effort began again. The following objectives and Criteria were established:

Objectives

- Endangered Species Act (ESA) obligations at Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project for providing passage of juvenile and adult Pallid Sturgeon.
- Maintain long-term viability of the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project.

Criteria

1. Likelihood of ESA Success
2. Water Delivery Reliability
3. Engineering Design/Constructability
4. Acceptability

After many meetings, discussions and careful review of each alternative, the planning team identified the alternative best suited to meet the above objectives and criteria. Reclamation and USACE are currently working on National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents along with design work for the alternative.

The total federal cost contributed by USACE to assist Reclamation with this effort is approximately \$90 million.

Benock states, “The challenge is to provide a fish passage system that meets design criteria developed by a team of fish and hydraulic specialist that will ensure the best opportunity to achieve passage for pallid sturgeon and other fish species and to continue providing irrigation water to the LYIP.”

Next week the Reclamation will be posting a link on their website to a ‘draft supplement’ to the currently posted Final Environmental Assessment. Public meetings will be held in Glendive, MT and in Sidney MT to get feedback on this comprehensive document. Dates of the meetings will also be posted next week on-line at <http://www.usbr.gov/gp/mtao/loweryellowstone/>



The head gate upstream from the diversion dam at Intake.



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Federal Certificate Now Required to Apply Restricted Use Pesticides on Tribal Land

By MSU News Services

A federal certificate is now required for Montanans to spray restricted use pesticides on tribal land, says Montana State University Extension Pesticide Education Specialist Cecil Tharp.

Restricted use pesticide dealers within tribal boundaries must register their businesses by April 7, Tharp said. In addition, private, commercial and government applicators applying restricted use pesticides within tribal boundaries must apply for the federal permit immediately.

Tharp said Montana applicators who already have a state pesticide license don't have to have the federal certification card in their possession prior to spraying, but they must be able to prove that they applied for the federal permit. Applicators not currently holding a restricted use pesticide license can't apply restricted use pesticides until they have a state pesticide license, as well as a federal pesticide license in their possession. All restricted use applicators must have the federal certification in their possession by Aug. 6.

The federal certificate is free. It is good for five years for private applicators and one year for commercial/government applicators.

"Simply make a copy of your state pesticide license and send it to EPA region 8 with the federal certification application," Tharp said.

This application is available at <http://www2.epa.gov/pesticide-applicator-certification-indian-country/indian-country-applicator-certification-form>.

Tharp predicts that hundreds of Montanans will apply for the federal certificate and said he expects the rule to affect many applicators within every tribe in Montana.

"This is a pretty big deal," Tharp said. "This is something we have been waiting

for a long time."

Federal certification has long been required, but it wasn't available, Tharp said. Since certificates are now available, compliance will be enforced. Home owners or individuals who apply general-use, over-the-counter products on land they own, rent or lease are exempt, however.

For more information, go to <http://www.pesticides.montana.edu/News/Miscellaneous/agalertTRIBALCERTIFICATION.pdf> or <http://www2.epa.gov/pesticide-applicator-certification-indian-country>

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ND PAS State President Gives Thanks to Williston State College's Ag Instructor Kim Murphy

By Tie Shank

Kayla Crooker, ND PAS State President and former WSC student, looks back on her education decisions and gives thanks to WSC Ag Department and her mentor, Kim Murphy.

"When I enrolled at Williston State College, I was not sure what I wanted to do with my life. I knew I wanted to stay involved in Agriculture, but the industry has so many opportunities I couldn't choose which one I wanted to pursue. I enrolled as a double major in Farm & Ranch Management and Ag Sales. I was so nervous for my first day of class, I almost didn't go. My feelings changed immensely when I walked into Kim Murphy's class. From that moment on, I knew I found a great place to start. Her warm smile and at ease demeanor created a superb learning environment for myself and the rest of her students to absorb her wealth of knowledge."

The Agriculture Ambassador Program gave Crooker the opportunity to network with many influential people in the community and from around the state. She was given the chance to do television interviews, radio segments, write articles for newspapers and advocate for agriculture, all while exposing her career goals, promoting herself as an agriculturalist and building her resume.

Crooker was also very involved in another chapter at WSC advised by Kim Murphy: the Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization (PAS). The PAS motto is "Uniting Education and Industry in Agriculture." It offers students numerous opportunities to network with industry leaders which could potentially help them when looking for employment later. "PAS also allows students to improve their skills in leadership and professional development through career program contests varying from employment interview to livestock production," states Crooker. "Being active in Ag Ambassadors and WSC Ag Club (PAS) allowed me to build on my resume and improve my leadership capabilities which led to running for state and national office. I am currently serving my second term as ND State PAS



Kim Murphy

President, and was recently elected National PAS Vice President last week at our national conference. I currently attend NDSU majoring in Agricultural Education minoring in Animal Science."

PAS is a small but very influential organization of over 150 members with chapters in five different colleges.

Crooker was adamant in saying that Murphy's "relentless support and dedication" shaped her college career. Being from an agricultural background, Murphy understood the commitments that accompany the farm & ranch life.

In closing, Crooker's final statement was, "As ND PAS State President, it is my duty to promote PAS in all facets of agriculture and to educate the general public about agricultural practices. I recruit new members and communicate with sponsors. I address the ND State FFA Convention and plan/preside over the ND PAS State Conference. Again, I cannot stress enough how important Kim Murphy is to the agriculture community and how she inspired me to pursue my dreams of agricultural education."



Kayla Crooker

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Dr. Hans Schneider Researches Sugar Beets at EARC

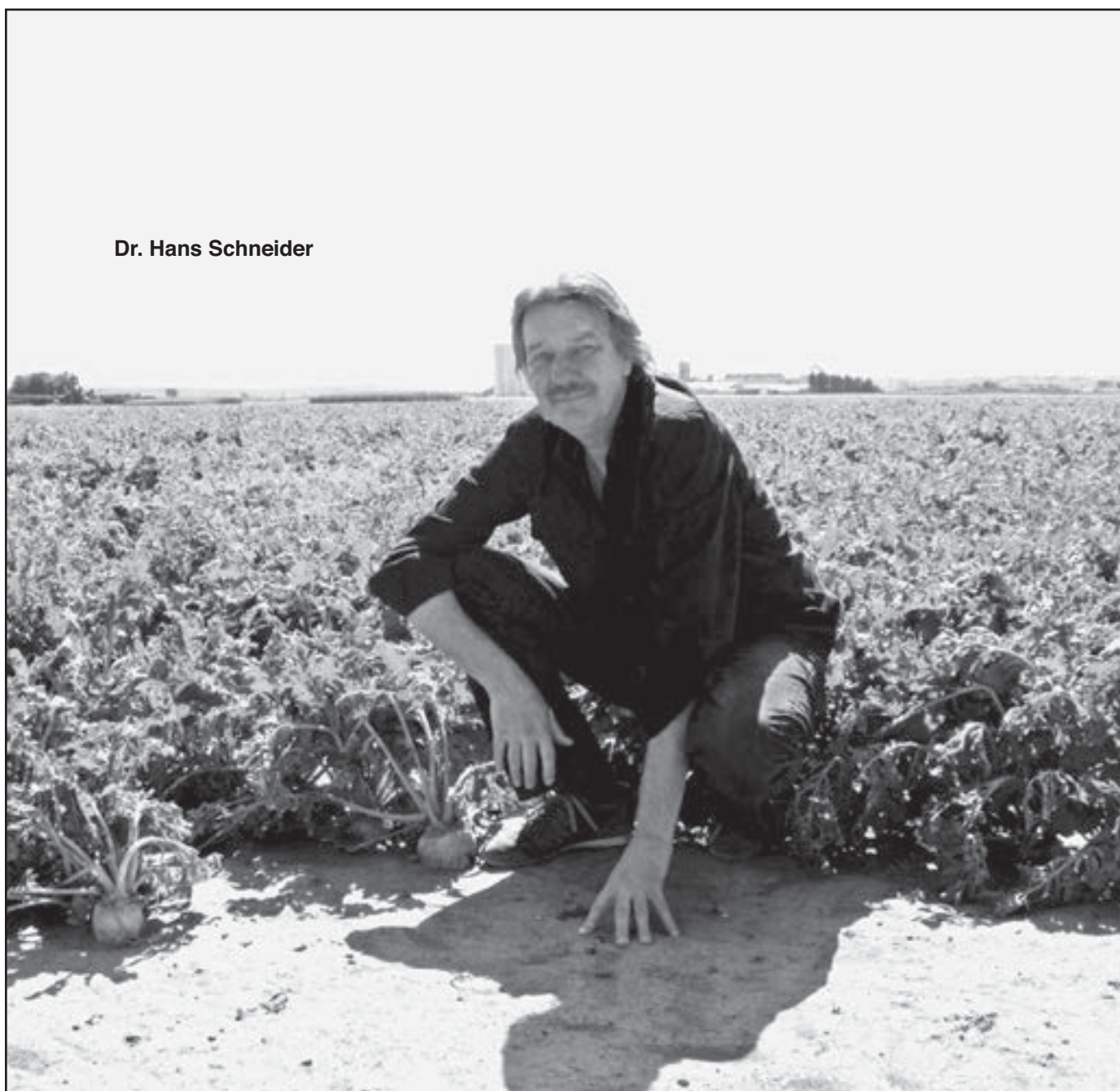
By Tie Shank

Dr. Hans Schneider received his doctorate degree in plant pathology from Wageningen Agricultural University

in the Netherlands, which is known world-wide for its agricultural educational and research programs.

After several years of working in multiple areas of

Dr. Hans Schneider



plant diseases and protection research, Dr. Schneider was offered a position at the Institute of Sugar Beet Research (IRS) in the Netherlands to develop an integrated control strategy to combat *Rhizoctonia solani*. During his thirteen years at IRS, Schneider set up plant disease diagnostics and a molecular laboratory for identification of plant pathogens. He also worked on all diseases and pests of sugar beets grown in the Netherlands and as a field inspector for Monsanto Vegetable Seeds. After doing so, Schneider decided to return (in part) to where his expertise lies: diseases and pests of sugar beets.

In July of 2013, Dr. Schneider accepted the position of both Associate Professor of Plant Pathology and Superintendent of EARC, in Sidney, Montana.

Schneider has recently set up a plant pathology laboratory and an integrated disease management program for diseases and pests in sugar beets, pulse crops, wheat and other crops important to the region. He has a particular interest in disease suppressive soils. His assignment is to develop integrated control strategies for pests and diseases important in N.E. Montana with a special emphasis on sugar beets.

Schneider states, "At the moment we are re-modeling lab space to create a plant pathology laboratory. Lab equipment has been ordered and we expect to hire a research associate to work in the lab soon. We can study

plant pathogens important in sugar beet cultivation in the lab and the greenhouse. The lab is also meant to support the sugar industry and sugar beet farmers for disease diagnostics. EARC will start up a survey with the AG staff to the occurrence of sugar beet diseases and pests occurring in Sidney Sugars' growing area. Diseases and pests are known to occur, but their abundance, severity and impact on sugar beet production is not well known. Problems which need to be addressed are soil born fungi such as *Rhizoctonia* root and crown rot, *Aphanomyces* and *Fusarium* yellows. Data from the Red River Valley and Europe show that the foliar fungus *Cercopora* develops quick resistance to fungicides. The occurrence of fungicide resistance *Cercospora* isolates is unknown for the area. A schedule of alternating fungicides might have to be developed. Beet cyst nematodes are known to occur in the region, but their abundance and impact on sugar beet production is unclear. Another problem may be *Rhizomania* (AKA crazy root or root madness); a virus transmitted by a soil-born fungus. All sugar beet varieties grown in the area are resistant to the virus, but resistance breaking isolates have been reported from the RRV and the EU. Again, the situation is unclear for the region and needs to be addressed."

Junior Ag Loan Program Assistance Available for Farm and Ranch Youth Accepting Applications for New Projects

Submitted by Walt Anseth

More than 50 Montana farm and ranch youth now participate in the Montana Department of Agriculture's Junior Agriculture Loan Program. Young people active in rural youth organizations like 4-H or FFA may be eligible for loans up to \$8,500. The program has provided over 1,300 loans to young farmers and ranchers since its inception.

The program is designed to help rural youth develop or expand livestock or agri-business projects like custom farming, marketing, and processing. The Department of Agriculture may finance up to 90 percent of a project, at a low five-percent interest rate.

"At times it can be difficult for young farmers and ranchers to get the financing they need to develop a project. The Junior Agriculture Loan Program can help get a project get off the ground and give young producers valuable business experience," said Walt Anseth, Agriculture Finance Officer with the Montana Department of Agriculture.

The experience and educational benefits from the program often far exceed the actual loan for active participants. Many young men and women unable to secure conventional finance due to age, inadequate collateral or credit history, have used the program to establish financing experience and to advance their project's monetary value.

Youth applicants age 9 to 11 are eligible for up to a \$3,500 loan, while 12 to 21 year olds are eligible for up to an \$8,500 loan. For more information and application materials, contact Walt Anseth, Agriculture Finance Officer at the Montana Department of Agriculture at (406) 444-2402 or by email at agr@mt.gov.

The Montana Department of Agriculture's mission is to protect producers and consumers, and to enhance and develop agriculture and allied industries. For more information on the Montana Department of Agriculture, visit www.agr.mt.gov.

MONTANA FSA: Foreign Persons Must Report U.S. Agricultural Land Holdings

Submitted by Jennifer Cole

March 24- USDA Montana Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Director Bruce Nelson reminds foreign persons with an interest in agricultural lands in the United States that they are required to report their holdings and any transactions to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

"Any foreign person who acquires, transfers or holds any interest, other than a security interest, including leaseholds of 10 years or more, in agricultural land in the United States is required by law to report the transaction no later than 90 calendar days after the date of the transaction," Nelson said.

Foreign investors must file FSA-153 "Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act Report" (AFIDA) reports with the FSA county office that maintains reports for the county where the land is located. The FSA-153 Form is available at a FSA county office or can be downloaded online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFile-Services/eForms/FSA153.PDF>.

"Failure to file a report, filing a late report or filing an inaccurate report can result in a penalty with fines up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land," Nelson said.

For AFIDA purposes, agricultural land is defined as any land used for farming, ranching, orchards, vineyards, or timber production, if the tracts total 10 acres or more.

Disclosure reports are also required when there are changes in land use. For example, reports are required when land use changes from nonagricultural to agricultural or from agricultural to nonagricultural. Foreign investors must also file a report when there is a change in the status of ownership such as the owner changes from foreign to non-foreign, from non-foreign to foreign or from foreign to foreign.

Data gained from these disclosures is used to prepare an annual report to the President and Congress concerning the effect of such holdings upon family farms and rural communities in the United States. For more information regarding AFIDA and FSA programs, contact your local FSA office at or visit the USDA Web site at <http://www.usda.gov>.

USDA Encourages Early Registration for FSA Programs

Submitted by Isabel Benemelis

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia today recommended that farmers and ranchers who plan to participate in FSA programs register in advance. Producers are encouraged to report farm records and business structure changes to a local FSA Service Center before April 15, 2014.

Enrollment for the disaster programs authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, including the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) will begin by April 15, 2014.

"We expect significant interest in these programs," said Garcia. "Early registration should help improve the sign-up process and allow us to expedite implementation of the programs. I strongly encourage producers to complete their paperwork ahead of time."

Examples of updates or changes to report include:

New producers or producers who have not reported farm records to FSA.

Producers who have recently bought, sold or rented land. Those producers need to ensure that changes have been reported and properly recorded by local FSA county office personnel. Reports of purchased or sold property should include a copy of the land deed, and if land has been leased, then documentation should be provided that indicates the producer had/has control of the acreage.

Producers that have changed business structures (e.g. formed a partnership or LLC) need to ensure that these relationships and shares are properly recorded with FSA. Even family farms that have records on file may want to ensure that this is recorded accurately as it may impact payment limits.

Farm records can be updated during business hours at FSA Service Centers that administer the county where the farm or ranch is located. Producers can contact their local FSA Service Center in advance to find out what paperwork they may need. In addition, bank account information should be supplied or updated if necessary to ensure that producers receive payments as quickly as possible through direct deposit.

While any producer may report farm records and business structure changes, it is especially important for producers who suffered livestock, livestock grazing, honeybee, farm-raised fish, or tree/vine losses for 2011, 2012, 2013 or 2014, and may be eligible for assistance through one of the four disaster programs.

For further information about our disaster programs and USDA's Farm Bill implementation plan, visit FSA's 2014 Farm Bill Web page. FSA Service Center locations can be found on the FSA website.



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Each year Sidney Sugars contracts sugarbeet acres with area growers. Not only does this allow producers to grow a high value crop but it also provides employment at the factory and at the six beet receiving stations located from Powder River to Culbertson. The company generally employs approximately 60 seasonal workers for the beet receiving stations

during harvest each year and hires approximately 120 seasonal employees to work at the factory during the winter months where they produce white sugar for sale around the country. Winter campaigns generally last about four months.

Sidney Sugars has 90 year round employees and has 120 sugarbeet growers.

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BEEF, Cattle and the Larsons – ‘It’s a lifestyle and a way of life’



The Larson family.

By Tie Shank

Tim and Kristin Larson of Sidney, MT pride themselves on promoting the Beef and cattle industry. Both raised on cattle ranches in Montana, Tim in Forsyth and Kristin in Big Timber, the BEEF and cattle industry is their way of life. They currently reside on a small ranch just outside of Sidney, MT with their 4 children: Grady (10), Garrett (8), Landry (5) and Leddy (3) who love the cattle industry (and their horses) just as much as mom & dad.

Growing up, Tim was very active in 4-H and Rodeo

and Kristin in 4-H and FFA. These organizations are what sparked their interest in the cattle industry. Both Tim and Kristin knew from a very young age they wanted to work in the cattle industry and they never wavered from it. Kristin attended Montana State University and graduated with a degree in Ag Business and a minor in Economics and went to work for Hawkeye West in Billings doing their marketing and advertising. Tim started off in Dillon, MT with a rodeo scholarship and finished at Western Iowa Tech. He then

Continued on next page.

Continued on from previous page.

went to work for Rod Prewitt and worked in the feedlot. Tim began buying cattle right away and he's been at Prewitt & Company ever since. Tim handles most of the buying and selling of the cattle for the company while Kristin works in the office and videos cattle to put on the Superior Video sales.

Tim and Kristin met in Miles City, MT. Tim was there buying cattle and Kristin was there on the Montana Angus Tour. Kristin moved to Sidney in June of 2001 and the couple was married that December.

Advocating for BEEF and cattle is not only an important part of the Larsons lifestyle, but it is their way of life. Tim is a director for the Montana Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame, the Mondak Area Stockgrowers Association and the Montana Youth Rodeo Association. He is also Vice President of the Richland County Rodeo Club. Kristin is past president of the Mondak Area Stockgrowers and director for the Montana Stockgrowers, currently Vice President of the Montana Beef Council and a Federation Director for the National Beef Check Off, President of the Sidney FFA Alumni and Director on the Eagle Foundation Board. The Larsons are also members of the NCBA, North Dakota Stockmen's Association, Montana Stockgrowers Association, Pella Lutheran Church and Farm Bureau.

In August 2012 Prewitt & Company LLC purchased Yellowstone Livestock and Tim Larson became the manager. Their goal and tagline has become "Working hard to build a competitive marketplace for your livestock." They work

very hard every day to do this and feel strongly the sale barn is an important part of the vitality of the community. They are trying to provide a service for the cattle producers in the area. There are lots of premier cattle in this area and both Tim and Kristin feel fortunate to work with an amazing group of producers on a daily basis.

"Our main goal is to promote BEEF and the cattle industry in a positive way in our community and wherever we're at, 100% of the time. With only 2% of the total population involved in agriculture it is becoming increasingly important for all of us to tell our story and promote our lifestyle in a positive way. If we don't someone else WILL tell our story and it may not be our story at all but how they envision and what they read about it. Information is so readily available on the internet and social media but a lot of it isn't correct and thus our consumers are misinformed. We have to get to them first and give them some insight into our world. We have a story to tell and it's a great story and we raise a superior product. It is becoming ever important for this world to eat protein and more of the world population is demanding it so we have to work to promote BEEF and keep it on everyone's tables. We are lucky because BEEF is a nutritional powerhouse and, with 29 lean cuts, can and should be a part of everyone's diet," states Kristin Larson. "Our passion is the cattle industry; we promote it and live it every day. Our ultimate goal is to leave a legacy for our children, to leave our land in better shape than we received it. It's about hard work, ethics and integrity and understanding the value of it all."

Livestock Producers Affected by Severe Weather Urged to Keep Good Records

Submitted by Kent Politsch

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia, today repeated his appeal to livestock producers affected by natural disasters such as the drought in the West and the unexpected winter storm in the upper Midwest to keep thorough records. This includes livestock and feed losses, and any additional expenses that are a result of losses to purchased forage or feed stuff.

"The 2014 Farm Bill provides a strong farm safety net to help ranchers during these difficult times," said Garcia. "We'll provide producers with information on new program requirements, updates and signups as the information becomes available. In the meantime, I urge producers to keep thorough records. We know these disasters have caused serious economic hardships for our livestock producers. We'll do all we can to assist in their recovery."

In addition to western drought and the early-winter snowstorms, there are a variety of disasters from floods to storms to unexpected freezes. Each event causes economic consequences for farmers and ranchers throughout

the United States. FSA recommends that owners and producers record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences, including:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses;

- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;

- Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures;

- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed;

- Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records;

- Pictures of on-farm storage facilities that were destroyed by wind or flood waters; and

- Evidence of damaged farm land.

Visit www.fsa.usda.gov or an FSA county office to learn more about FSA programs and loans. For information about USDA's Farm Bill implementation plan, visit www.usda.gov/farmbill.



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USDA Enhances Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

Submitted by Isabel Benemelis

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the expansion of the Farm Storage and Facility Loan program, which provides low-interest financing to producers. The enhanced program includes 22 new categories of eligible equipment for fruit and vegetable producers, and makes it easier for farmers and ranchers around the country to finance the equipment they need to grow and expand.

This is part of a broader effort to help small and mid-sized farmers and ranchers, as announced today by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

Producers with small and mid-sized operations, and specialty crop fruit and vegetable growers, now have access to needed capital for a variety of supplies including sorting bins, wash stations and other food safety-related equipment. A new more flexible alternative is also provided for determining storage needs for fruit and vegetable producers, and waivers are available on a case-by-case basis for disaster assistance or insurance coverage if available products are not relevant or feasible for a particular producer.

Additionally, Farm Storage and Facility Loans security requirements have been eased for loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Previously, all loans in excess of \$50,000 required a promissory note and additional security, such as a lien on real estate. Now loans up to \$100,000 can be secured by only a promissory note.

"The Farm Storage and Facility Loan program has helped American farmers and ranchers to finance on-farm storage for almost 13 years," said Farm Service Agency Administrator (FSA), Juan M. Garcia. "We anticipate these changes will increase the number of individuals who qualify for these loans and help them access new market opportunities."

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include grains, oilseeds, peanuts, pulse crops, hay, honey, renewable biomass commodities, fruits and vegetables. Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for fruits and vegetables.

Other new changes to the Farm Storage and Facility Loan program will allow FSA State Committees to subordinate Commodity Credit Corporation's lien position.

These changes to the program were issued via an official notice to state and county Farm Service Agency offices and are effective immediately.

More than 33,000 loans have been issued for on-farm storage, increasing grain storage capacity by 900 million bushels since May 2000.

More information about tools and resources available to small and mid-sized farmers will be rolled out in the coming months, including information about access to capital, risk management, food safety, and locating market opportunities on USDA's Small and Mid-Sized Farmer Resources webpage.

Visit www.fsa.usda.gov or an FSA county office to learn more about FSA programs and loans, including the Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

\$1,000 Educational Heritage Scholarship Offered by Montana Stockgrowers Foundation

Submitted by Ryan J. Goodman

The Montana Stockgrowers Association's Research & Education Endowment Foundation (REEF) is offering an Educational Heritage Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000. This annual scholarship is awarded to a MSGA student member.

"The Foundation's continued support of college students is imperative for young ranchers like me to further our education goals. The scholarship I received has allowed me to feel financially secure in my junior year of college at Montana State University," said Kelsey Haughian, 2013 award recipient from Miles City, MT.

To be eligible, students must be currently enrolled in college and have completed at least one semester in college, be a member of Montana Stockgrowers Association, or have at least one parent who is a member, and demonstrate a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

Applicants must complete the application form, include a copy of their current transcript, write a 500-word essay discussing their educational pursuits and what they hope to do with their education, and include two letters of recommendation.

Applications are due April 15, 2014. Students can apply online at bit.ly/REEF2014EHS.

For more information on these scholarships and to apply online, visit the MSGA website at www.mtbeef.org/reef. For questions, please email Lauren Chase at Lauren@mtbeef.org. If you are interested in these scholarships but are not currently a member of MSGA, join today. Student memberships start at just \$20.

The Research and Education Endowment Foundation (REEF) of the Montana Stockgrowers Association (MSGA) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization established to ensure the future of Montana's cattle industry through producer and public education, and promotion of MSGA programs.

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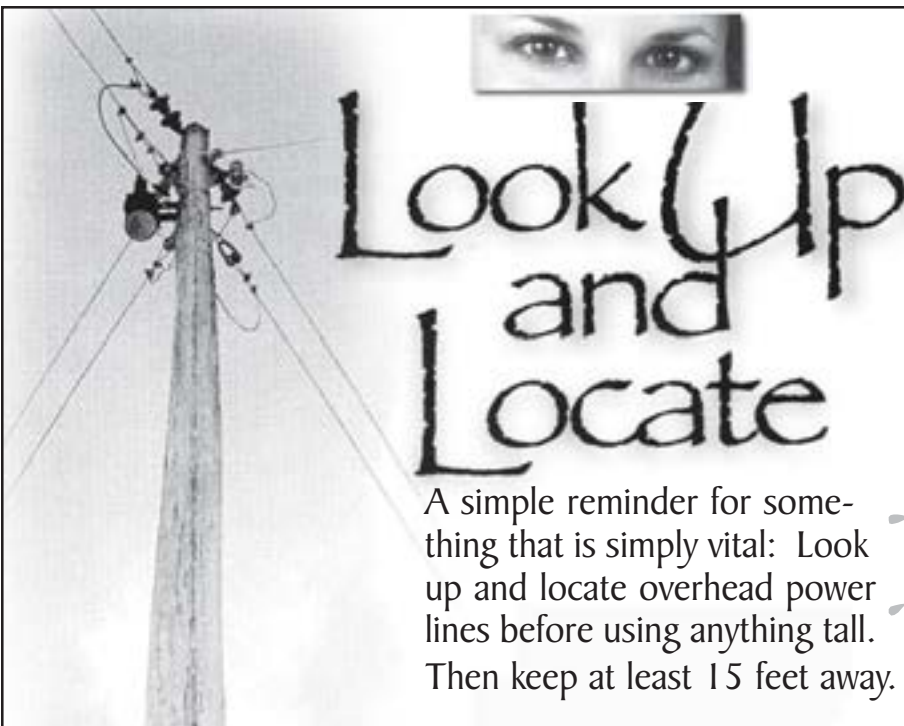
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Dairy Focus: Spring Thaw Can Contribute to Feed Waste

Spoilage will increase as temperatures rise.

By J.W. Schroeder, Dairy Specialist
NDSU Extension Service

Spring is approaching, and now is a good time to assess forage inventories and finalize plans for 2014 production. However, in addition to planning for growing-season forages, springtime thawing often contributes to additional waste in the feed yard.

Much has been printed about using good management practices during the feeding process to help minimize waste, including spoilage when wet forages are exposed to air. Forages such as corn silage are an important ingredient for lactating dairy cows.

Silages this time of the year have fermented for at least six months, contributing to the best feed value of the season. The longer fermentation window means more available starch, which can translate into some of the best milk yields with last year's crop. So wasting this valuable feed can be a significant loss in the form of spoiled feed and having to purchase additional feed to replace it.

As temperatures rise, so does the opportunity for wet feeds to spoil. In the case of corn silage, in the presence of oxygen, yeast metabolizes lactic acid, causing silage pH (acidity) to increase. When the pH increases, undesirable fungi and bacteria are able to grow and further spoil the silage.

This spoilage translates into dry-matter losses that can be as high as 10 percent in poorly managed silages, as well as reduction in forage quality and palatability. And

while nature's freezer (our cold weather) has served to reduce spoilage of wet byproducts, as the temperatures rise, so will spoilage.

As for ensiled and fermented feeds such as haylage and corn silage, the silage's quality is set. Good feeding management practices can't improve silage quality, but they can help reduce further feed deterioration. Here are some reminders:

Remove enough forage from the face of the silage mass. Livestock feed experts recommend removing forage to a depth of 12 inches in the cooler months and 18 inches in warmer months.

Remove the forage carefully so the face is smooth and the surface exposed to oxygen is minimized.

Pull the plastic cover on the silage mass back two to three times per week. Check the integrity of the plastic cover throughout the year and patch any holes or tears so air cannot infiltrate the silage mass.

Remove silage as needed throughout the day so it is incorporated into the ration shortly after removal.

Push feed up frequently, especially during the warm months, to avoid heating of the total mixed ration in the feed bunk and to stimulate appetite.

Waste reduction has real value. It comes in many forms, visible and invisible. Periodically reviewing feed-handling protocols with your employees and adjusting inventories to meet changes in feed availability for the coming year will help keep your dairy profitable.

MT Revenue Dept. Encourages Owners of Property Damaged or Destroyed by Flooding to Apply for Tax Relief

Submitted by Mary Ann Dunwell

The Montana Department of Revenue encourages Montana property owners whose homes are damaged or destroyed by flooding to apply for natural disaster property tax relief.

A property owner whose home or outbuildings are partially or totally destroyed by natural disaster, rendering the property unsuitable for its previous use, may be eligible for property tax relief. Businesses who lose their equipment to flooding or other natural disaster may also qualify.

The tax relief is prorated based on the number of days in the tax year that the property is unusable. The relief is available for the current tax year. The department asks property owners to complete Form AB-25 to apply for the property tax relief. They'll need to complete the application by December 31, 2014. The form is available online at www.revenue.mt.gov or at all Revenue Department local offices.

"Flooding can be devastating and we are sorry for

Montanans whose homes are damaged or destroyed by natural disaster and who suffer because of it," said Revenue Director Mike Kadas. "This tax relief can be significant and help provide some relief as property owners recover from this season's snow melt and dangerous flooding."

The state's natural disaster property tax relief also covers properties damaged by avalanche, wind or other natural event.

Montana property owners who experience a natural disaster-related loss of a dwelling also may be eligible for a federal income tax deduction. In addition, the department can issue replacement copies of property records, past-year tax returns or other revenue-related information that is lost in a flood or other natural disaster.

For more information, contact your local Revenue Department office. You can also visit the department's website at www.revenue.mt.gov and click on the natural disaster relief link.

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(Sitz Uncommon x RA Traveler R135)

CED	BW	WW	YW	M	Marb	REA	Fat
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**Lot 27 - RA Z79 Identity C118**

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MFU Members Return from National Farmers Union Convention

Submitted by **Sandy Courtage**
Communications Director

Montana Farmers Union (MFU) President Alan Merrill and 14 MFU members traveled to the National Farmers Union convention in Santa Fe, NM, which was held March 8-11, 2014.

In addition to Merrill, the group included six delegates who helped shape the direction of the organization's national public policy. Delegates included Brett Dailey, Jordan, MFU board representative; Calvin Lane, Molt, MFU board representative; Jay Buckley, Great Falls; Jacob Cowgill, Power; Kristie Rutledge, Big Sandy; and Maggie Shane, Great Falls, youth delegate. William Downs, Molt, served as Montana's representative on the NFU Policy Committee.

Other MFU members joining President Merrill at the convention include: Donna Dailey, Jordan; Katie and Jeff Bangs, Inverness, FUE Young Couple representatives; and Paul Kanning, Flaxville, NFU Beginning Farmer Institute participant. Attending from the MFU state office were Delisa Clampitt, MFU Education Director; and Chris Christiaens, MFU Legislative and Special Projects. Violet Green, Carter, also attended as a member of the National Youth Advisory Council.

"Every year we look forward to helping shape the policy discussion at the national organizational level," said Merrill. "There were great presentations and workshops, including U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, who talked about the important aspects of the Farm Bill that are yet to be implemented."

Special Orders of Business adopted at the convention included policy statements on the International Year of Family Farming, Implementation of the 2014 Farm Bill, Immigration Reform, Trade Policy, Animal Disease Protection and Research, Renewable Fuel Standard, Reform of the Beef Checkoff, and Sequestration. More detail on the Special Orders is available at <http://www.nfu.org/policy-nfu/special-orders-of-business>.

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Montana Nutrition Conference, Livestock Forum set for April 22, 23 at Bozeman

MSU News Service

Submitted by Rachel Endecott

The future of ranching will be the focus of this year's Montana Nutrition Conference and Livestock Forum in Bozeman.

The conference will begin the afternoon of Tuesday, April 22, and run through the morning of Wednesday, April 23, at the GranTree Inn, 1325 N. 7th Avenue.

Speakers will cover a wide variety of topics, including water quality and mineral supplementation, the importance of mycotoxins in Montana, treating low quality forages to improve feeding quality, applying genomic selection, estate planning, the October 2013 blizzard in South Dakota, and the future of feed-grade antibiotics in livestock.

The Tuesday evening program will feature Carrie Mess, a Wisconsin dairy farmer and blogger, and Ryan Goodman, manager of communications at the Montana Stockgrowers Association, speaking on "Social Media: Understanding the Power of Reaching Our Customers." Two scholarships sponsored by the Montana Feed Association will also be awarded.

The conference is organized by Montana State University Extension Beef Cattle Specialist Rachel Endecott in conjunction with the Montana Feed Association.

Cost to attend both days of the conference is \$115. Attendees can register online with a credit card at <https://www.montana.edu/nutrition>. A conference brochure is available at <http://animalrange.montana.edu/conferences.htm>

The schedule and speakers are:

Tuesday, April 22

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. -- Registration

12:30 p.m. -- Welcome

1 to 2 p.m. -- Water Quality and Mineral Supplementation. Mark Petersen, USDA-ARS Fort Keogh

2 to 3 p.m. -- Mycotoxins: Importance in Montana – Barry Jacobsen, MSU

3 p.m. -- Break

3:15 to 4:15 p.m. – Treating Low Quality Forages to Improve Feeding Quality. Tim Bodine, Performix Nutrition

4:15 to 5:15 p.m. -- Application of Genomic Selection: New Frontiers in Animal Breeding. Jennifer Thomson, MSU

5:30 p.m. -- Social

6:30 p.m. -- Dinner and program

Scholarship presentations

Evening speakers: Social Media – Understanding the power of reaching our customers. Carrie Mess, Wisconsin

dairy farmer, and Ryan Goodman, manager of communications, Montana Stockgrowers Association

Wednesday, April 23

7 to 8 a.m. -- Breakfast, grad student poster judging

8 to 9:30 a.m. -- Think You Know Who Gets Your Property When You Die? Think Again...Even If You Have a Will! Marsha Goetting, MSU

9:30 a.m. -- Break

9:45 to 10:45 a.m. -- October 2013 Blizzard in South Dakota: What Are the Ramifications? Ken Olson, South Dakota State University

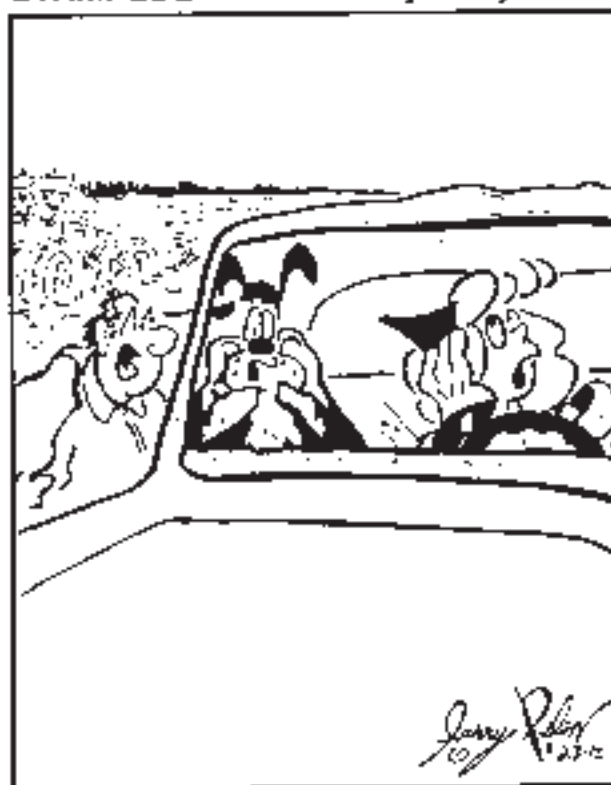
10:45 to 11:45 a.m. -- Using Feed-Grade Antibiotics in Livestock: What Changes Should We Prepare For? Russ Daly, SDSU

11:45 a.m. to noon – Presentation of graduate student poster awards. Pat Hatfield, MSU

Noon -- Conference wrap-up

STAMPEDE

By Jerry Palen



"Oh knock it off you two! I've said
"let's quit early" lots of times!"

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack Announces Increased Opportunity for Producers as part of New Farm Bill

Farm Loan Program Modifications Create Flexibility for New and Existing Farmers and Ranchers Alike

Submitted by Dan Janes

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced increased opportunity for producers as a result of the 2014 Farm Bill. A fact sheet outlining modifications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs is available [here](#).

"Our nation's farmers and ranchers are the engine of the rural economy. These improvements to our Farm Loan Programs will help a new generation begin farming and grow existing farm operations," said Secretary Vilsack. "Today's announcement represents just one part of a series of investments the new Farm Bill makes in the next generation of agriculture, which is critical to economic growth in communities across the country."

The Farm Bill expands lending opportunities for thousands of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

Changes that will take effect immediately include:

- Elimination of loan term limits for guaranteed operating loans.

- Modification of the definition of beginning farmer, using the average farm size for the county as a qualifier instead of the median farm size.

- Modification of the Joint Financing Direct Farm Ownership Interest Rate to 2 percent less than regular Direct Farm Ownership rate, with a floor of 2.5 percent. Previously, the rate was established at 5 percent.

- Increase of the maximum loan amount for Direct Farm Ownership down payments from \$225,000 to \$300,000.

- Elimination of rural residency requirement for Youth Loans, allowing urban youth to benefit.

- Debt forgiveness on Youth Loans, which will not prevent borrowers from obtaining additional loans from the federal government.

- Increase of the guarantee amount on Conservation Loans from 75 to 80 percent and 90 percent for socially disadvantaged borrowers and beginning farmers.

- Microloans will not count toward loan term limits for veterans and beginning farmers.

Additional modifications must be implemented through the rulemaking processes. Visit the FSA Farm Bill website for detailed information and updates to farm loan programs.

MSU Extension Posts Video On Mixed Cover Crops

Submitted by Sepp Jannotta

Agriculture experts with Montana State University have released a short video about mixed species cover crops potentially replacing summer fallow, presenting MSU's ongoing research.

Producers are increasingly planting cover crops to improve soil quality, help manage weeds or pests and provide livestock forage. Replacing summer fallow with a cover crop can decrease saline seeps, nitrate leaching and erosion, while increasing soil organic matter and microbial activity.

"Until recently, the focus of cover crop research has been on single species legume cover crops as a soil building tool," said Perry Miller, professor in the Department of Land Resources and Environmental Sciences.

By seeding annual legumes, such as pea or lentil early in the spring and terminating them around first bloom, Miller said wheat yield and protein the following year can be comparable to following summer fallow.

Legume cover crops are known to provide nitrogen. Adding fibrous-rooted species such as oat to the plant mix may increase soil organic matter at a greater rate. Tap-rooted species such as turnip and safflower are being included to see if they can help reduce compaction, while brassicas such as canola and radish provide ground cover to reduce weed establishment and evaporation.

"We hope to find out if there are cover crops that perform certain functions better than others," said Clain Jones, Extension soil fertility specialist at MSU.

"A cover crop mix might also stimulate soil biological

activity more than a single species crop, though we're not far enough into the project to know this," said Susan Tallman, a graduate student and researcher on this project.

This study, funded by USDA Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, is focused on growers in the golden triangle as an area with high potential for use of cover crops to reduce fallow. Growers have expressed interest in using cover crops to increase soil organic matter to improve water holding capacity, nutrient availability and other potential benefits.

"A goal of this study is to find out what works, and does not work well for our production systems and whether mixed crop cover crops add any benefits beyond those provided by legume monocultures," said Jones.

A potential disadvantage of cover crops is that in the short term they may use precious stored soil water, possibly limiting the following crop's yield. They also take time from a producer's already busy spring season. However, in the long run they will likely be beneficial to the soil and ultimately the farmer's net returns, Jones said.

If you are interested in using cover crops, contact Jones, your local Extension agent, or your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office. The NRCS can provide producers with a list of cover crops that will grow in a given region, as well as information on where to find seed.

The 7-minute video is posted on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/JWMT-uXyWZM>. More information on cover crops and this study is posted on Jones' web site at <http://landresources.montana.edu/soilfertility/> under "cover crops."



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Market Advisor:

N.D. Bucks U.S. Trend of Declining Beef Cows

**By Tim Petry, Livestock Marketing Economist
NDSU Extension Service**

North Dakota beef cow numbers increased for the second straight year, but U.S. numbers continued an eight-year decline.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released the much-anticipated "Cattle" report on Jan. 31. The report documented numbers for all classes of cattle on U.S. farms and ranches as of Jan. 1. It was anxiously awaited because the July 2013 "Cattle" report was not issued by NASS due to budget reductions. The good news is that NASS has indicated it will reinstate the July 2014 "Cattle" report.

The report confirmed what many in the beef industry expected: another decline in the U.S. cattle herd. The inventory of all cattle and calves was 87.7 million head, down 1.8 percent from one year ago and the smallest total U.S. cattle herd since 1951. However, it should be noted that beef production totaled 25.7 billion pounds in 2013, compared with just 8.6 billion in 1951. The nearly 26 billion pounds in 2013 is just less than the record 27 billion pounds produced in 2002, so the beef industry produces much more beef with the same number of cattle that existed in the 1950s.

The makeup of the U.S. cow herd is much different today than it was 1951. In 1951, there were 18.5 million beef cows and 23.6 million milk cows for a total of just more than 42 million cows. In 2014, there are more than 29 million beef cows and 9.2 million milk cows for a total 38.25 million head. The dairy industry also has gotten much more efficient. In 1951, milk production was 115 billion pounds of milk produced, compared with 201 billion pounds in 2013.

The U.S. beef cow herd declined to 255,000 head on Jan. 1, 2014, which is just 0.9 percent below the previous year. Contrast that to the 3 percent decline reported on Jan. 1, 2013, and a more than 2 percent decline in 2012, when a severe drought in the southern Plains expanded into much of the U.S. cattle-producing area.

Beef cow slaughter declined significantly in the last half of 2013 because drought conditions in many areas improved and feed costs moderated, so herd rebuilding, or restocking may be a better word, began in areas where grazing conditions allowed for it.

While U.S. beef cow numbers declined, beef cows in North Dakota increased to 943,000, which is up by 21,000 head as of Jan. 1, 2014. This was the second year of increasing beef cow numbers in the state. Beef cow numbers went up 60,000 head as of Jan. 1, 2013, compared with the previous year. U.S. beef cow numbers fell 862,000 during

that same time because of the severe drought conditions in the southern Plains. The 943,000 head in North Dakota in 2014 is the highest since 2005, when there were 947,000 beef cows.

Also interesting is that, on Jan. 1, 2013, beef cow numbers in all of North Dakota's neighboring states also increased. However, by 2014, all neighboring states lost beef cows, so North Dakota's increase also bucked a regional trend.

North Dakota ranked ninth in U.S. beef cow numbers as of Jan. 1, 2014. This is up from 13th place in 2010.

In the top 10 beef cow states, cow numbers increased in four states and declined in six states. The largest decrease in cow numbers occurred in Texas, which is the top beef cow state, because it suffered several years of drought. Texas lost 105,000 beef cows. That, coupled with losses of 550,000 and 460,000 cows in the previous two years, means that beef cow numbers in Texas fell by more than 1 million head. Beef cow numbers went from 5.03 million in 2011 down to 3.91 million in 2014. No. 4 Nebraska lost 8,000 cows, fifth-place South Dakota (impacted by a severe October blizzard) declined by 53,000 head, No. 6 Montana lost 30,000 cows, eighth-place Kentucky lost 16,000, and No. 10 Iowa declined by 40,000 head.

The largest increase in beef cows occurred in seventh-place Kansas, with an additional 86,000 head. Increases also were recorded in No. 2 Missouri with 63,000 head, third-place Oklahoma at 51,000, and No. 9 North Dakota with 21,000 head.

The number of heifers kept for U.S. beef cow replacement, at just under 5.5 million head, was up 90,200 head or 1.7 percent. This was the third straight year of increasing beef cow replacements and the highest number since 2009.

The 2013 U.S. calf crop was estimated at 33.9 million head, which is down 1 percent from 2012. The smaller calf crop, along with increased heifer retention and fewer feeder cattle imports, resulted in a 2.7 percent decrease in feeder cattle outside of feedlots on Jan. 1.

Lower inventories are supporting record high cattle prices that may encourage herd rebuilding. However, Mother Nature is in charge of the moisture conditions necessary for that to happen. It is very dry in much of the southwestern part of the U.S. California is experiencing a record-breaking drought despite recent rainfall.

Much of the rest of the cattle-producing regions, including the southwestern part of North Dakota, is less than a year removed from drought conditions, so ample spring and summer rainfall will be necessary for the U.S. beef herd to increase by January 2015.

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**Re-Inventing
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BeefTalk: Do the Cows Fit the Operation?

Are the dedicated resources and activities that are present within the cattle operation optimal in regard to the economic efficiency of the operation?

**By Kris Ringwall, Beef Specialist
NDSU Extension Service**

Generally, facts do not change and the application of facts to life determines success. In other words, life is more than luck.

One needs to plan, implement, evaluate and replan to stay in touch. That was the essence of the integrated resource management program that was very successful with the help of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and the cooperative efforts of the land-grant universities across the U.S.

The program focused on beef financial and production data collection and evaluation followed by appropriate managerial adjustments. Integrated resource management (IRM) is "dedicated to improving the economic efficiency of cattle operations through effective resource management" as noted on the cover of the IRM pocket reference that was published in 2001 and sponsored by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

As with many programs, the covers change but the core concepts do not, thus the facts. The IRM pocket reference was a good source of information for the beef producer. Because breeding time is just around the corner, the manual has several good points regarding rebreeding cows.

Cow condition is the primary indicator of the success of the upcoming breeding season. As a rule of thumb, after paging through the IRM pocket reference, successfully breeding a set of cows that have a condition score of 3 or lower is not going to happen. Condition score 3 or lower cows are cows that have little to no fat cover, with prominent backbone, hips and ribs evident and, in the extreme case, are emaciated.

These cows are not candidates for rebreeding and, if prominent within a herd, there needs to be a serious discussion with those who can offer some help. Poor nutrition and subsequent health issues would more than likely be the foundation of the problem and immediate action must be taken to correct the problems.

However, those herds are not the point of this discussion. Because body condition changes gradually from extremely thin to fat as the cows add condition, the cows will advance from those borderline condition score 4 cows to a condition score of 5 or 6. Moderately conditioned cows (condition score 5 or 6) do not have obviously visible ribs, the backbone and hips are smoother and there is no obvious visual evidence of individual bones.

These cows appear physically fit, move well and are

alert and content. These are cows that should be present in cow herds across cattle country and reflect the ability of cattle producers to match cow type to the production environment.

There is not one cow type to fit all environments. The evaluation of body condition and the analysis of the cost of feed to maintain the desired body condition are critical IRM points. The first point, which is having the cows in body condition scores of 5 or 6, will assure good pregnancy rates. The IRM pocket reference indicates that pregnancy rates for body condition score 5 cows should be around 86 percent and 93 percent for body condition score 6 cows.

Are producers meeting that criteria? If one visits the benchmarks for those North Dakota Beef Cattle Improvement Association beef producers involved in the North Dakota State University Extension Service's CHAPS program, the current benchmark is 93.6 percent.

The implication would be that the average cow within those herds would have a body condition score of 6. The validation of the first point is positive and indicative of good management. Also, keep in mind that cows do not need to be fleshy, condition score 7 or greater cows to rebreed. In fact, there would not be a positive return on the feed bill if the cows are overfed.

Just like in any life form, obesity carries additional health risks and should be avoided. That does bring a good point and leads a producer to the question and the focus of the IRM program as stated earlier, which says "dedicated to improving the economic efficiency of cattle operations through effective resource management."

Are the dedicated resources and activities that are present within the cattle operation optimal in regard to the economic efficiency of the operation? That question still remains for many beef operations because additional managerial resources dedicated to proper data collection and followed by the correct financial and economic analysis of the operation are needed.

Do the cows fit the operation? Pregnancy evaluations will answer the production question. At 93 percent pregnancy rates, the answer is yes. Anything less than 85 percent should raise an eyebrow.

However, the economic question often remains open. May you find all your ear tags.

For more information, contact Ringwall at 1041 State Ave., Dickinson, ND 58601, or go to <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/news/columns/beeftalk/>.

About The Ag Roundup



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