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**Farm & Ranch  
Monthly Magazine**

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# **WREC Ribbon Cutting**

**See page 2**



# WREC Names New Facility For Neil Riveland



**The WREC honored Neil Riveland by naming their new facility after him. Riveland also had the honor of cutting the ribbon at the ribbon cutting ceremony to dedicate the new facility.**

**By Lois Kerr**

During this year's annual field day at the Williston Research Extension Center (WREC), held on Thursday, July 14, officials held a ribbon cutting ceremony to dedicate the new Neil Riveland seed processing and research laboratories building addition. North Dakota State University (NDSU) and the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education named the new facility in honor of agronomist Neil Riveland, who served the WREC for more than 42 years. Riveland retired in June of this year.

"He has made many contributions in research of crop varieties and herbicide evaluations in small grains and alternative crops along with no-till and minimum till cropping systems research. Riveland has been directly involved in farmer education and outreach in the entire MonDak region," stated the ceremony brochure.

During the dedication ceremony, Representative Bob Skarphol noted that the new facility would be an outstanding asset to the WREC, and that there was a big need for this facility. NDSU Extension Director and Dean of the College of Agriculture also remarked that the Neil Riveland fa-



**The new WREC facility, named for Neil Riveland, will be completed and ready for use in the near future.**

cility was an amazing addition because it would bring a lot of agricultural research to the region and was an investment in tomorrow.

Riveland also spoke at the dedication ceremony. He pointed out that the new facility has been on the books for 25 years. "This was something started a long time ago that has now become a reality," he noted. "With this facility the WREC can now process single seed samples as they are received, it has a horticulture lab, soils lab and irrigation lab, plus offices. This is exciting, and I am honored to have the facility named after me."

On behalf of the EARC/WREC Advisory Board, Leroy Panasuk presented Riveland with a plaque and thanked him for his many years of service to the MonDak region.

The addition will be completed and ready for use within the next few months.



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# Moisture, Warm Weather Give Beets A Boost

By Lois Kerr

Warm summer weather, coupled with plenty of moisture, has allowed beets to grow well this past month. Due to bad weather in early spring, however, Russ Fullmer, Sidney Sugars Incorporated agriculture manager, expects a light tonnage year even if the weather remains warm and sunny for the next few months.

"The beets are growing well with lots of water, and the heat is good," says Fullmer. "Beets love the mid 80 or lower temperatures; the 90° and higher temperatures shuts them down a bit during the day, but on the whole, beets are putting on tons with the sunshine and heat."

He continues, "The crop was planted late on the whole, as we had a lot of acres planted in late May. We also lost close to 4,000 acres because of flooding and the inability to plant wet fields. The first root samples indicate the lightest tonnage we've seen in five years, at 23.4 tons per acre, so we are below average, but we knew we would be."

Fullmer hopes that the warm weather continues

through August and that beets grow accordingly. "We hope to see a big growth spurt when we take our next root samples in a few weeks," he notes. "We still have two full months left for beets to grow and hopefully they put on a ton a week, which is normal for beets under good growing conditions."

Fullmer points out that on the bright side, the expected light tonnage will be counteracted by strong sugar prices, so growers may see good payments in the fall.

Cercospora has reared its ugly head this summer, so spray planes have been dusting affected areas to keep the disease in check. "Hot humid conditions have allowed the conditions that bring on Cercospora," Fullmer comments, "We have our weather monitor units, the Hoboes, out and the Cercospora ratings are high. Savage and north have seen the start of Cercospora so growers are trying to spray early and stay ahead of the disease. We know it is out there, so we need to keep watch and have timely sprayings. There aren't as many planes in the area so we need to get ahead and stay on top of it."

He adds, "We've also seen some Fusarium and some Rhizoctonia in certain fields."

The Savage area also received a few hail storms this season, with varying degrees of damage. "The storms weren't devastating but we saw anywhere from 30-70% defoliation," Fullmer says. "30% isn't too bad, but 70% is quite a bit. South of Savage also got some hail, with 30-40% defoliation."

Growers have scrupulously adhered to all the rules and regulations set out by government agencies for growing Roundup Ready beets. Inspectors have been out randomly checking fields and have found growers in compliance. "Inspectors are in their second tier of inspections," Fullmer remarks. "There is one inspection every month with inspectors conducting a random sampling. They are mainly looking for bolters, but growers have been out scouting fields to remove any bolters they find. We haven't heard of any problems with Roundup Ready beets."

Sidney Sugars crews are working at a few of the pile grounds to get them ready for harvest. "Our construction program is doing some landscaping and making a few changes at Culbertson to set things up more to our liking," Fullmer says. "We're also putting in a new long scale at Savage. Savage was the only station without the capability of handling semis, but with the installation of the scales, the Savage pile ground will have that capability for this year's harvest."

## North Dakota Ag Coalition Elects Officers

The North Dakota Ag Coalition has elected three officers to its executive board.

Jeff Enger, Marion, North Dakota Corn Growers Association, was elected as chairman, and Fred Helbling, Mandan, North Dakota Stockmen's Association, was elected as vice chairman. Both will serve two-year terms. Darrell Oswald, Wing, North Dakota Stockmen's Association, was elected to a three-year term as the livestock representative.

Also serving continuing three-year terms on the executive board are Bruce Freitag, Scranton, North Dakota Wheat Commission, who is the current small grains representative, and Paul Mathiason, Grand Forks, Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association, who is the current row crop representative.

The North Dakota Ag Coalition has been successful in providing a unified voice on behalf of North Dakota agricultural interests for more than 25 years. As a nonpartisan coalition, the organization represents more than 35 ag-related groups with the purpose of advocating for the growth and development of North Dakota's agricultural industry.

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2000 CIH SC 416 mower conditioner,  
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1999 CaseIH RS561 ..... \$12,500  
1995 CaseIH 8465 ..... \$8,995  
1995 New Holland 660 Round Baler, mesh wrap, bale connard,  
gathering wheels, good condition ..... \$8,900  
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AGRICULTURE



# EARC Holds Successful Field Day

By Lois Kerr

Each year, the Eastern Agricultural Research Center (EARC) holds a field day in July in order to provide information and updates on a variety of research projects. Many area producers attend this field day to learn about current research, and those who attended were not disappointed in their quest for additional information.

The tour began with a talk on durum wheat presented by EARC Agronomist Dr. Joyce Eckhoff, who discussed her research to produce quality durum varieties. "Durum is the number one favorite food in the world, more popular than meat, pizza, or rice," Eckhoff remarked during her talk. "There is a place for durum here."

Eckhoff has also developed solid stem lines that show great promise. "These lines have great quality, and we hope the Europeans will like them as well," she said.

Dr. Luther Talbot, MSU spring wheat breeder, discussed spring wheat varieties and development. "Wheat originally came from Europe in the late 1800s," he told the crowd. "It wasn't very good wheat and made very bad bread. A Canadian breeder discovered the variety that makes good bread, and breeders across the world made crosses with this variety so now good hard red spring wheat is grown worldwide."

Talbot also pointed out that the wheat stem sawfly, native to this region, adapted to wheat, so U.S. researchers got together, collected wheat varieties from around the world, and found an ancient variety from Portugal that had some resistance to sawfly. World breeders used this variety to produce resistant varieties, and now all sawfly resistant wheat carries this gene. He also pointed out that because of the development of new wheat varieties, coupled with improved farming practices, today's farmers see a 40% increase in yields from the yields their grandparents produced.

Russ Fullmer, Sidney Sugars agriculture manager, discussed the beet crop. Only three growers planted conventional beets this year; the remainder of growers have planted Roundup Ready beets. Sugar prices look promising which

may help offset the smaller crop. "World prices are sky-high," he remarked. "We expect the price will come down but we expect good payments but a smaller crop."

Dr. Charles Flynn discussed the fusarium trial currently in progress on one of his fields. "If you have fusarium, you need to look at this trial," he remarked. "Some varieties are completely gone, while others seem to be just fine. If you have a fusarium problem you need to take a look and see which varieties are working."

Flynn also discussed the new EARC/Extension facility. "We have two 12,000-square foot greenhouses, one for safflower and one for durum, and we have three labs with equipment that provide needed space," he remarked. "We will certainly need the space, as last year we analyzed 20,000 varieties of safflower and various grains, so we were busy through the winter."

Dr. Barry Jacobson, MSU-Bozeman Extension pathologist, discussed sugarbeet, safflower and small grain disease control. He talked about fungicides, new treatments, and the importance of timing in controlling diseases.

Bill Iversen, USDA/ARS physical scientist, discussed the soil compaction experiment underway on EARC research land, and Dr. Bart Stevens, USDA/ARS agronomist, talked about the long term cropping system study, also underway on the EARC research land. Stevens has one year of research results to date, but expects to have answers to several questions as time passes.

The speaking tour wrapped up with Ben Larson, Safflower Technologies International agronomist, discussing a variety of alternate crops and their potential in the MonDak, and Dr. Jerry Bergman, EARC director, discussed his safflower research.

We sometimes take these annual tours for granted and feel we can learn nothing new from them. However, nothing is further from the truth. Those who attended this year's tour came away with a wealth of new information.



Dr. Barry Jacobson, MSU Bozeman pathologist, discussed diseases in sugarbeets and in small grains during the EARC Field Day.



The EARC had many speakers on hand during its field day to provide information to attendees. Above, Dr. Joyce Eckhoff talks about durum wheat varieties.



Russ Fullmer, Sidney Sugars agriculture manager, spoke at the EARC Field.

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Cub Cadet Tractor Ex3200 FWA & Loader (LM)  
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Cub Cadet RZT50 Zero Turn Mower (LM) \$2,999  
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(LM) ..... \$3,999  
Cub Cadet Z-Force S 54" Zero Turn (Ster Whl)  
(LM) ..... \$4,799  
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# 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Tractor Pull Scheduled For Aug. 27

By Lois Kerr

The Sidney Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture will once again offer its very popular tractor pull event, scheduled for Aug. 27 at the Richland County Fairgrounds. The event features a steak fondue dinner sponsored by the Education Foundation beginning at 4 p.m., followed by tractor and truck pulls and pedal pulling beginning at 6 p.m.

"We always look forward to this event," says Sidney Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Wade Van Every. "This is a fun event for families. Everyone loves to watch tractors roar down the track pulling the sled."

The Douglas, North Dakota Fire Department will supply the specialized sled designed specifically for pulling competitions. Built from antique parts by the fire chief, the fire company uses the sled as a means of raising money for the tiny fire department. The tractor or truck that pulls the most weight for its size wins the prize, not what piece of equipment pulls the sled the furthest. The fire department rents the sled out five or six times each summer, and they have been providing the sled for the Sidney event for sev-

eral years. "The Douglas Fire Department supplies the sled," Van Every comments. "They have been coming to Sidney with the sled for the past four years."

The event also will feature pedal pulling contests for the youngsters. Kids will have a variety of times and opportunities to enter pedal pulls.

The Chamber hosts this special event as a replacement for the Best of the West Beef Showcase. "We used to have a tractor pull the first night of the fair," Van Every comments. "However, when we quit doing the Best of the West Beef Showcase, we wanted an event to replace it, so we chose the tractor pull. The tractor pull has worked out well each year and is a popular event for families to come and have a good time."

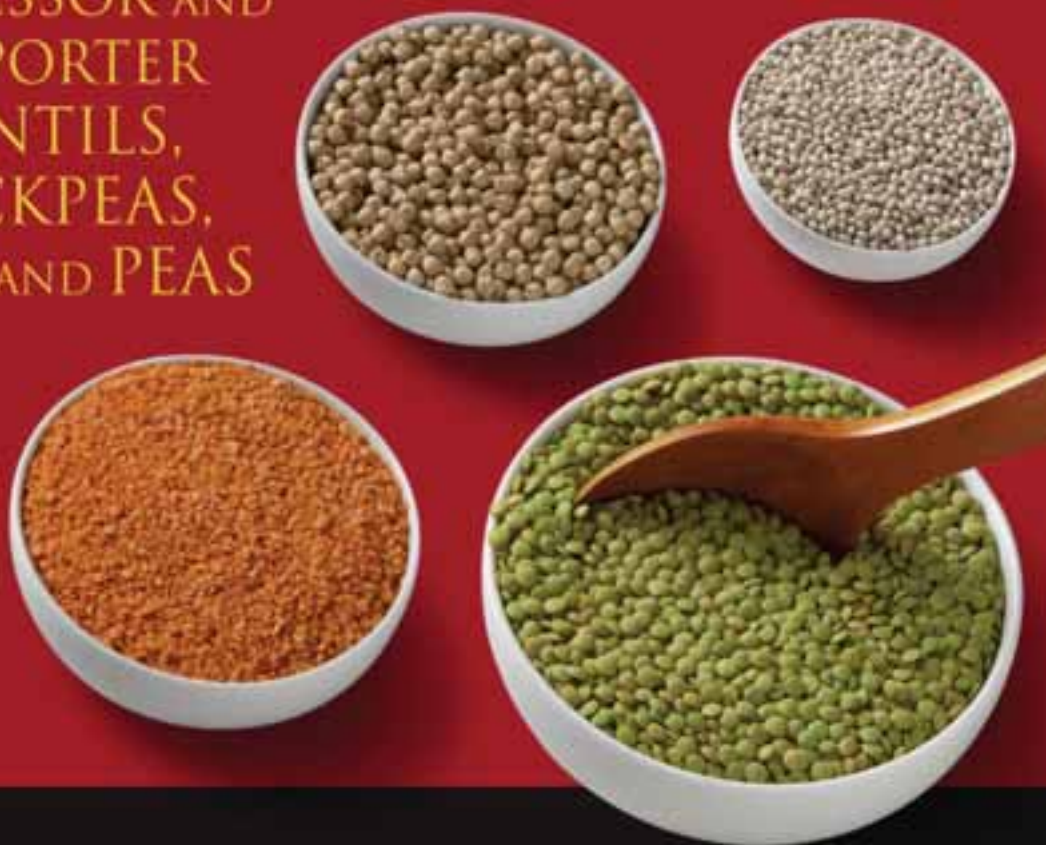
Van Every invites people to attend the event, enjoy a good steak fondue meal beginning at 4 p.m., then stay for the fun and excitement of the tractor pull. "Come out, eat a good supper, take in the pedal pulling, and stay for the tractor pull beginning at 6 p.m." he says.







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# Extension, EARC Under One Roof

By Lois Kerr

With the completion of the new facility north of town, the Richland County Extension office and the Eastern Agricultural Research Center (EARC) will soon share their new modern building. Staff at both the EARC and Extension invites the public to stop in and visit at any time during normal working hours. The Extension staff moved to the facility in early June and the EARC staff will complete their move in the near future, depending on when the furniture for the EARC personnel arrives.

Extension staff includes Tim Fine, Juli Snedigar, Judy Johnson and Patti Fjelstad. EARC staff includes Jerry Bergman, Joyce Eckhoff, Charles Flynn, Rene Sundheim, Cherie Gatzke, Becky Garza, Deb Kunda, Mary Schaff, Calla Kowatch, Lisa Curtis and Ron Brown. Both the Extension staff and the EARC staff looks forward to serving Richland County from the new facility.

Extension personnel are located in the west portion of the building. **Judy Johnson**, family and con-



Extension staff members Judy Johnson, Tim Fine and Juli Snedigar.  
Seated: Patti Fjelstad.

sumer science extension agent, has worked for Richland County residents for the past 26 years. She focuses on food and nutrition, family financing, human development and environmental health. One of her popular programs 'Strong Women Stay Young' teaches strength training for women. She also offers food safety education and financial education for youth. She provides research based information relating to life skills so people can make informed decisions.

**Tim Fine** has served Richland County for a little over a year as extension agent. His responsibilities include crop production, livestock production and horticulture. He provides information on gardening, landscaping, and ornamental plots as well as assisting farmers and ranchers with crop and livestock production questions and problems. He appreciates the new Research and Extension facility. "The meeting room is a big asset," he remarks. "I also like to have the ability to walk down the hall to visit with the research staff as we stay updated on research results, as part of Extension's mission is to disseminate research information."

**Juli Snedigar** serves as the 4-H and community development extension agent. Snedigar began her duties with the Richland County extension office in March



Research assistant Mary Schaff weighs seed.



of this year. She handles the 4-H program and has initiated a new component of Extension, that of community development. Snedigar brings four years of past extension experience with her to the Richland County office.

**Patti Fjelstad** works as the administrative assistant for the Richland County extension office. She began her duties in 2008 and meets and greets the public. She assists with the 4-H newsletter and fills in where needed to help ensure the office runs smoothly. "This is never boring," she says. "I enjoy working with the 4-H members and their families, and working with Tim, Judy and Juli is awesome. This is my niche as I enjoy the job, the agents and meeting the public. I think this new facility will be a good move for all of us."

The EARC staff will have offices just down the hall on the east side of the new facility.

**Jerry Bergman**, EARC director, has served the area since 1974 when he arrived in Sidney as an agronomist and safflower breeder. Bergman has been director of the EARC since 1979. He continues to work on the development of new and improved safflower varieties and to date has released 14 varieties of safflower.

**Joyce Eckhoff**, agronomist, has worked at the EARC for 25 years. Her work focuses on durum breeding and research and on the development of low cadmium durum lines for the European market. She also works to develop high quality solid stemmed durum with resistance to sawfly. She has worked cooperatively for the past six years with Barilla, a pasta manufacturing plant headquartered in Parma, Italy.

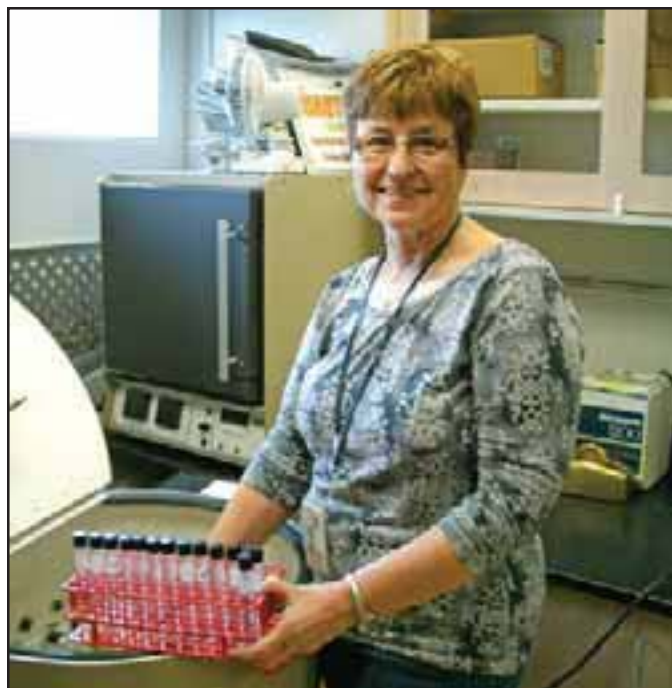
**Charles Flynn**, crop quality laboratory supervisor and chemist joined the EARC staff in 1976 to provide chemical analyses and laboratory research. The oil quality and lab research has resulted in the development of safflower varieties that produce the highest quality healthy oil, superior to olive oil and canola oil.

**Rene Sundheim**, research lab technician, tests crop quality in the lab, and is known as the 'gal Friday' in the lab.

**Becky Garza**, research assistant and supervisor of the summer crew, and **Deb Kunda**, **Lisa Curtis**, **Mary Schaff**, **Calla Kowatch** and **Ron Brown**, research assistants, perform a variety of necessary tasks throughout the year at the research facility. They plant, weed, water, hoe, take notes, weigh and measure seeds, grind seed, and test grain for oil and protein content. They also make plant pollination crosses and maintain the greenhouses.

**Cherie Gatzke**, administrative assistant, joined the EARC staff in May of this year. She meets and greets the public and does all the necessary administrative work to keep the research facility functioning smoothly.

Stop by and visit with the Extension staff and with the research staff. They look forward to serving the public from the new facility.



**Research lab technician Rene Sundheim.**



**Research assistants Lisa Curtis, Deb Kunda, Becky Garza and Calla Kowatch.**



**Charles Flynn at work in the lab.**





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# Italian Pasta Company Rep Attends EARC Field Day

By Lois Kerr

Maroun Atallah, Group Science technology and Quality Grains and Food Plant researcher from Barilla attended the Eastern Agricultural Research Center's field day last week. Atallah, who traveled from the Barilla plant in Parma, Italy, came to the field day to inspect the quality of durum wheat grown in the area. "Quality durum wheat is important for our supply chain," Atallah remarked. "This is an important area for durum wheat in America and we wanted to see the quality of the durum grown here."

The Barilla plant in Parma, the largest pasta plant in the world, has 11 lines for producing regular pasta with different cuts, 6 lines for producing egg noodles, and 1 line for producing tortellini. The company makes 64 different cuts of pasta, because Italians believe that every sauce requires a different cut of pasta. The Chinese may have invented pasta, but the Italians have turned it into an art form.

Barilla, the third largest producer of baked goods, also manufactures a wide variety of cookies, pastries and cakes, made from spring wheat.

A family-owned company, Barilla first opened its doors for business in 1877 as a bakery that also sold homemade pasta. Since that time it has grown to become the largest



**Dr. Joyce Eckhoff, EARC agronomist, is shown with Maroun Atallah, Barilla pasta plant representative, Parma, Italy**

pasta plant in the world.

Barilla came to America 12 years ago and built a plant and a mill in Ames, IA. The company built a second U.S. plant in New York state in 2008. Barilla has rapidly increased its market share, including sales in the U.S., since going international. Barilla pasta products are available locally.

## Bozeman-Area Restaurants To Feature Unique Beef Dishes During 5th Annual Montana Cattle Crawl

Weebee's, Gallatin Gateway Inn, and the Mint Bar and Café will dish up their own unique takes on beef during the 5th Annual Montana Cattle Crawl, slated for Sunday, Aug. 21 in Bozeman.

The Cattle Crawl, held prior years in Billings, is a project of the Young Stockgrowers committee of the Montana Stockgrowers Association (MSGA) to acquaint urban beef consumers with local ranchers and to encourage food service establishments to feature beef in a creative way. It is funded by Montana beef producers and checkoff dollars.

The Montana Cattle Crawl will begin at 4 p.m. at Weebee's with beef appetizers. Crawlers will then hitch a ride on the stage to the historic Gallatin Gateway Inn for the second beef course. The third stop will be the Mint Bar and Café, Belgrade, for a delicious beef entrée. Finally, the bus will travel back to Weebee's for dessert.

Tickets are \$75 per person or \$140 per couple. Price includes food, wine, commemorative wine glass, and travel. For more information or to sign up, please contact Rose Malisani at MSGA at 406-442-3420 by Aug. 15. Seating is limited.

# Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Held For New Extension/EARC Facility

By Lois Kerr

At the close of the Eastern Agricultural Research Center's (EARC) field day, held on Tuesday, July 26, officials held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new \$1.6 million EARC and Richland County Extension facility, located on the EARC grounds on the east side of Hwy. 200 just north of Sidney.

The facility has a 150-seat meeting room and conference center, research laboratories, two greenhouses, and offices for both research and extension staff.

"The capital campaign project raised \$753,000 from area individuals and businesses," said Dr. Jerry Bergman, EARC director, during the ceremony. "This is a great facility that will serve Sidney and area for a long time. It is a great building for the current staff and it will help recruit new staff in the future."

Dave Kasten, former Montana legislator who played a huge role in securing this facility for the region, remarked, "It is good for us legislators to see the support this facility received. It is a good facility; it was a struggle to get it but we did get the funding."

Montana Legislators Walt McNutt and Don Steinbeisser

involved themselves with this project years ago and they were also a tremendous help in securing funding that made this facility a reality. They recognized that our number one industry in Montana—agriculture—requires intensive research in order to assist growers to harvest quality crops, so they set out to ensure that the staff had an adequate facility in which to conduct experiments that benefit agriculture. "We need to fund research adequately, as this is the lifeblood of agriculture," McNutt commented during the ceremony.

Former Richland County Commissioner Mark Rehbein spoke up in favor for the facility and he pushed for the inclusion of Richland County Extension at the facility. Rehbein praised the efforts of Bergman in obtaining this new building. "This facility would not exist without the tenacious support of Jerry Bergman," Rehbein noted. "We ran into one roadblock after another, but with the help of local legislators and Jerry Bergman, we made it work."

Montana State University's Dean of Agriculture, Jeff Jacobsen, was unable to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony, but he sent a letter which praised the efforts of many people who worked to turn a vision into reality. "People have worked

hard over the years to get this," the letter stated. "Don Steinbeisser and Walt McNutt were vigorous advocates, and I also want to acknowledge the efforts of Dave Kasten. We want to celebrate a new beginning at the EARC."

The letter continued, "This is a one-of-a-kind facility with ag research and extension connected. This investment in agriculture will yield big returns."

The facility will ensure the continuance of ag research and technology transfer by providing laboratory and greenhouse research, integration of the research staff and the Extension staff, a fiber optic link to the MSU main station in Bozeman, the demonstrations and transfer of research-based information to area producers, on-site learning opportunities, and a regional center where area farmers, agribusinesses and other agricultural interests can meet to discuss topics of concern.



The new EARC facility will provide modern laboratory space for research staff.



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# “Take A Break”

By Lois Kerr

### LOOP-A-WORD Gardening

The following words are found within the diagram. Words read forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally.

H	H	B	B	D	I	R	T	H	I	L	O	C	C	O	R	B
S	C	O	E	E	C	E	L	E	R	Y	K	A	L	E	E	A
I	A	A	A	E	K	O	H	L	R	A	B	I	V	R	B	P
D	N	G	N	S	T	C	V	O	B	B	D	I	R	B	M	P
A	I	N	S	I	N	S	N	E	A	P	H	I	D	I	U	L
R	B	I	K	E	P	E	E	G	R	C	E	N	S	T	C	E
E	S	R	R	P	D	S	E	D	B	S	Y	I	C	H	U	P
S	Q	T	A	R	K	O	C	H	A	R	D	K	L	T	C	R
R	U	S	A	B	U	T	T	E	R	P	H	P	O	W	T	E
O	A	G	T	W	U	O	W	E	E	D	S	M	O	M	O	W
H	S	K	A	U	R	H	B	O	K	R	A	U	E	U	X	O
O	H	T	K	R	O	W	R	N	R	T	O	P	S	L	C	L
U	E	E	A	E	A	R	T	R	O	W	E	L	O	C	O	F
R	H	C	A	R	E	P	P	E	P	I	N	I	I	H	R	N
E	C	U	T	T	E	L	S	S	S	T	N	A	L	P	N	U
L	I	S	A	B	P	O	T	A	T	O	G	O	U	R	D	S

apple	chard	kohlrabi	rhubarb	trowel
aphid	chive	leek	seed	water
asparagus	corn	lettuce	soil	weed
basil	cover	melon	spade	work
beans	cucumber	mulch	spinach	
beets	dirt	okra	sprouts	
berries	garden	onion	squash	
broccoli	gourds	pepper	strawberry	
butter (beans)	heat	plants	string	
cabbage	hoe	potat	sunflower	
carrot	horseradish	pumpkin	tomatoes	
celery	kale	radish	trench	

**KEYWORD:** To find the keyword, fill in the blanks 1 to 10 with the correct missing letter. Transfer these letters to the correspondingly numbered squares in the diagram. Be careful. More than one letter will complete each word.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

1. \_\_ATCH
2. CAME\_\_
3. DO\_\_ES
4. THE\_\_E
5. BRIN\_\_
6. PRI\_\_E
7. SPIN\_\_
8. TRE\_\_D
9. BAR\_\_S

### CRYPTO-LIST

Crypto list is a list of related words in code. The same code is used throughout. When you have identified a word, use the known letters to decode the other words in the list.

Rest Time

Ex: day off

G I D J I N

G S Y Y Q Q T A Q I H

A Q P N C D Q

B I G I D C S J

P C Q P D I

A Q G Q P P

P I T T I D C G I O

C J D Q A K C P P C S J

T A Q I D V Q A

See answers on page 24.

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# Effort Required To Win Grand Championship



**Nancy Van Hook, representing Exploration Drilling Inc., Sidney, purchased Brennan Gorder's Grand Champion steer at the 2010 Richland County Fair.**

**By Lois Kerr**

It takes a lot of effort and a tremendous amount of commitment to do the work required in order to prepare an animal for show at the fair. To win the Grand Championship validates the time required and makes the whole process incredibly sweet. After spending months preparing his animal for the fair, last year Brennan Gorder won the Grand Championship with his steer, an achievement he will never forget.

"I've been in 4-H for eleven years, and I entered a steer every year," he comments. "Last year was the first time I ever won Grand Champion. I knew I had a good steer, but I didn't know how it would compare to the other entrants."

Each year for the past 11 years, Gorder has begun his quest to win the Grand Championship when he selects his steer in the fall. He spends the winter fattening the animal properly to get it into good shape, but the real work begins each summer when he initiates the necessary work with the animal to bring out its full potential. "I always pick my steer in November," Gorder comments. "I feed it grain and hay all winter to fatten it up."

He continues, "In the summer I start working with it, tying it up, washing, grooming and trimming it, and leading it around to get it used to me and to being handled. The showmanship is important as it shows how you and your steer interact. You have to make sure it is set at all times, and you don't want an aggressive steer."

Gorder spends two to three hours daily all summer long to prepare his animal for the fair. He looks forward to the activity and excitement that go hand-in-hand with fair each August, but he also feels a sense of relief when the fair ends. "It is a lot of work to prepare an animal for showing," Gorder remarks. "I anticipate the fair and I look forward to it, but I'm also happy to see it end."

He adds, "I love showing and I like the money I make from the steer."

Gorder will show his last steer as a 4-H member at this year's fair. He plans to attend Concordia College, Moorhead, MN, this fall, so Fair 2011 will end his 4-H involvement. "I really liked 4-H," he concludes. "4-H has really taught me a lot and I don't regret the eleven years I've spent with the organization."



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# Badlands Steel



**Ryan Luebke gets ready to shape a piece of steel at Badlands Steel in Williston. Inset is an example of their work.**

Badlands Steel, Williston, serves area farmers and ranchers as well as the oil field, working with new steel which they bend, shear and fabricate. The three owners Stewart Vachal (general manager), Rory Anderson and Dean Klein are all longtime Williston residents who joined together in April 2007 to open Badlands Steel. Manager Dennis Stevens has lots of experience having worked with steel for 15 years.

The company has a plasma cutter which can do specialized industrial applications. The cutter will cut through 2" thick material allowing them to build such things as specialty tools and pipe stands. The cutter takes away a lot of the labor for welders and other fabricators. They bring in the specifications, have the pieces cut, and the welders can finish the jobs. According to Vachal, one of their workers

was intrigued with the machine. The owners "let him run with it" and creating decorative plasma cutouts has become a "nice little sideline". A huge variety of cutouts are on display in the office, with the "Gone fishing" one particularly appropriate for Father's Day.

Badlands Steel has other specialty equipment, such as the "piranha" which allows them to producerecision holes of varying sizes, or their band saw which cuts strip after strip of identical steel. "We do the prep work. They (welders and others) do the rest," Vachal comments. He says the hardest part of the business is the fluctuating price of steel, which is based on global markets.

Badlands Steel invites you to stop by for all your steel needs, and to check out the plasma cutouts for yourself or as a gift. The business is located at 4324 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. W., Williston. The phone number is 701-774-2231.





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# Higher Energy Prices Hitting Farmers' Bottom Line

Although Montana farmers and ranchers are benefiting from good commodity prices, rising costs of fuel and fertilizer remain a concern, according to the Montana Farm Bureau Federation. The state's largest agricultural organization says although hay is plentiful and crops are growing well the costs associated with fertilizing, harvesting and irrigating are hitting the farmers' bottom line.

"Many Montana farmers and ranchers are haying right

now, and whether they're swathing, baling or bringing in bales from the field, they're using fuel. Higher-priced fuel is definitely detrimental to a farmer's profit margin," notes Montana Farm Bureau Vice President Bruce Wright.

The Gallatin Valley farmer says the cost of fertilizer is up this year. "When we put our wheat crop in, we run our starter fertilizer through an air seeder, then top dress it with more fertilizer, so the increase in the cost of fertilizer really adds up," Wright says. "Although diesel prices might be down slightly from earlier this summer, they're still hovering around \$3.80. We use a lot of diesel haying. Farmers who use diesel pumps for irrigating are definitely going to see a large increase in expenses."

AFBF Economist Matt Erickson has outlined the impact of high energy prices on farmers in a new white paper "Cost-of-Production Report: the Rising Costs of Inputs." High oil prices will drive up the cost of production of corn, soybeans, wheat, rice and cotton in 2011, according to Erickson. Higher fertilizer prices are also impacting net farm income. USDA is forecasting 2011 total operating costs to climb 18% for corn, 18% for wheat and 15% for rice compared to last year. Erickson says a major factor causing these higher production costs are higher energy prices and higher fertilizer prices.

"One reason fertilizer prices have increased is demand for fertilizer given the current tight supply for grain commodities, primarily corn," Erickson explains. "In the current situation of tight supplies for grain, fertilizer is a necessity as acreage production in the U.S. is at a max. Similarly, high grain prices increase the demand for fertilizer in international markets."

"With diesel a byproduct of crude oil, farm diesel prices are expected to continue to increase with projections of increased crude oil prices from the Energy Information Administration," Erickson says.

"Keep in mind that farming is a very capital intensive business, and high input costs affect the bottom line, even in the good years," concludes Wright.

AFBF's new white paper on the cost of agricultural production can be found at: <http://bit.ly/pNlp7R>.

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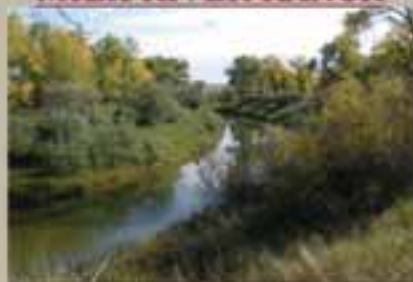
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**PARCEL 2:** 197.8 +/- Acres

Improvements, Wildlife & Recreation: 130 +/- acres (was irrigated under pivot), 37.8 +/- Acres of Flood Irrigation & Irrigation Rights w/ water supplied by the Malta Irrigation District. There are Whitetail Deer & Pheasants.



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## BEAVER CREEK RANCH



### Property Location

16 miles E of Malta  
495 +/- Total Acres, to be sold in One Parcel



Improvements, Wildlife & Recreation:  
3 1/4 miles of Beaver Creek running through this property, 30x5-4 Metal Quonset Building w/concrete floor, Septic Well & Generator, Oxbow Pond w/island, (Great for Waterfowl) Whitetail, Mule Deer, Pheasant & Upland Game Birds and Food Plots



## RIVER BEND RANCH



### Property Location

Approximately 12 miles W of Dodson  
1388 +/- Total Acres, to be sold in Three Parcels & an Entirety



**PARCEL 1:** 722 +/- Acres  
Improvements, Wildlife & Recreation: 3/4 mile of Milk River Frontage, watered by Eureka & Unnamed Creeks with Oxbow Pond, 26x40

Shop, 40x105 Open Face Pole Barn, Well and Stock Tanks scattered throughout the property. Whitetail, Mule Deer, Ducks, Geese, Pheasants & Upland Game Birds

**PARCEL 2:** 346 +/- Acres

Improvements, Wildlife & Recreation: 2 1/4 miles of the Milk River Frontage w/ Water Rights and a Pump Contract for 280 +/- acre feet out of the Milk River. Abundance of Wildlife



**PARCEL 3:** 320 +/- Acres of grass and irrigated land w/ water rights out of Savoy Creek.

A title commitment has been ordered and will be available, at their request, to prospective buyers for inspection prior to sale day. The above may or may not be the proper legal description; it was partially taken from the Phillip and Blaine County Tax records, but the full legal description is too long to print. The above does describe the property to be sold.

**Notarize Words:** Prospective buyers are encouraged to inspect the property to their satisfaction prior to the auction.

**Mineral Rights:** Any mineral rights owned by the seller on these properties will transfer to the buyer.

**Water Rights:** All water rights held will transfer.

**Taxes:** Taxes will be pro-rated from the day of closing.

**Title Insurance:** Standard owner's title insurance will be provided by the seller through Phillip County Title Company, 53 South 2nd Street E, Malta, MT 59538 406-654-1413

**Terms:** Cash. 20% down sale day, the balance due at closing the week of October 14, 2011 at Phillip County Title Company, 53 South 2nd Street E, Malta, MT 59538 406-654-1413

**Buyers Premium:** A 2% Buyers Premium will be added to the winning bid price to arrive at the total contract price paid by the purchaser.

Your bid is considered acceptance of the terms of this auction. If you, the Buyer fail to close, the down payment is non-refundable. If the Seller fails to close, 100% of the down payment will be returned. At this time there is no known reason that the Seller would not be able to close. All funds are held in the escrow account of Phillip County Title Company, 53 South 2nd Street E, Malta, MT 59538 406-654-1413



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# Selecting Proper Garden Varieties Key To Success

By Lois Kerr

Gardeners face endless choices when seed catalogues arrive each winter. After wading through all the hype describing different varieties, people still face the choice of trying to determine what varieties will work best under northern conditions, which varieties will pay for themselves in yield and which ones will leave us disappointed at harvest time.

Tom Kalb, NDSU horticulture educator, tries to answer these questions for gardeners by conducting garden trials that demonstrate what varieties of trees, fruits, and vegetables work well in the MonDak region. He points out that correct variety selection makes or breaks a garden.

"Selection of the proper variety is the first step to success," he notes. "The right variety will control disease and can double a yield, so begin with a good variety."

Kalb recommends choosing seeds from a reputable seed company, as these companies offer quality seed. Several of these companies offer more than just a catalogue selling seed.

"Johnny's Selected Seeds, available through [www.johnnyseeds.com](http://www.johnnyseeds.com), offers varieties developed for the north," Kalb comments. "They have treated organic seed and provide great customer service. The catalogue also has information on the number of seeds a gardener needs and how to thin young plants. This is a great resource guide for northern gardeners."

Kalb also recommends Park, Gurney and Burpee, among other reputable seed companies. For those who enjoy growing heirloom varieties, he suggests Seed Savers Exchange, [www.seedsavers.org](http://www.seedsavers.org). "We've moved past heirloom varieties and have progressed to better seed, but some people like these heirloom varieties," he remarks. "Seed Savers Exchange is a good heirloom source with quality seed."

Whatever seed company a gardener chooses, Kalb advises people to read the catalogues carefully and to check with the local research center when possible to help in the selection process. "Everything is great according to the seed catalogues," he comments, "so check with the research centers that grow these crops as they can tell you what variety is a good one."

He continues, "I have test gardeners across the state that test seed in their home gardens for me. There are 500 families in North Dakota that test varieties for research centers. They compare how well varieties perform in their home gardens and they make recommendations based on their results."

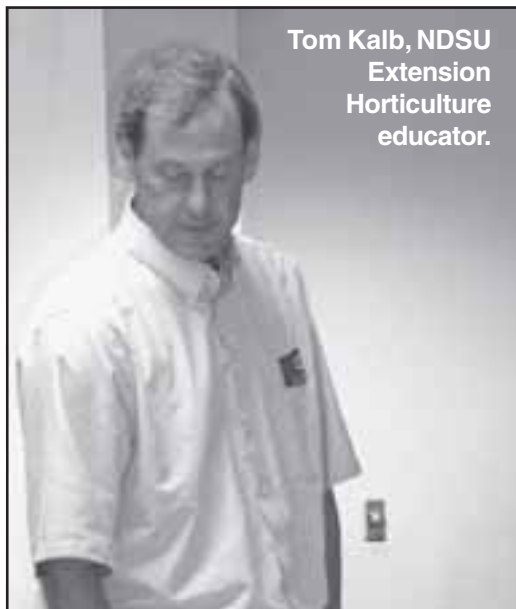
Kalb also advises people to select varieties based on several key characteristics if they want a high yielding garden. "Purchase early maturing varieties of 100 days or less," he advises. "Select varieties that promise high yields, resist diseases, are tolerant to heat and drought, and have outstanding flavor."

Kalb has found a few varieties that he recommends for area gardeners to consider for next year's gardening experience. "Espada beans are popular, but Provider is the most reliable," he says. "Sweet Sue corn is great off the stalk but it loses its sugar quickly. Sugar enhanced varieties, especially Trinity, keep their sweetness longer. Diva cucumber is the highest quality cucumber you can grow in North Dakota. Eureka is the best all-purpose type."

Melons, difficult to grow in our region, require some thought. "Honeydews are a disaster here and don't work," Kalb comments. "However, Asian melons will work. They are the easiest to grow and the fastest to ripen. They are white inside. For those who want to try growing watermelons, the Yellow Doll variety ripens two weeks earlier than any other variety."

Kalb also says Roma tomatoes are the easiest to grow, and the Patio variety makes the best container tomato.

Enjoy seed catalogues when they arrive, browse through the offerings, and keep Kalb's suggestions in mind when shopping for next year's garden seeds.



Tom Kalb, NDSU  
Extension  
Horticulture  
educator.

## August Puzzle Answers

Keyword: Possessed

Crypto-list: catnap, coffee break, respite, vacation, siesta, recess, sabbatical, intermission, breather



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# A Little Bit Country

## Updated Canola Production

By Warren Froelich

**NDSU Extension Service, Williams County**

Producers, agricultural consultants and others interested in agriculture can use a new updated canola production (spiral bound) pocket field guide to obtain the latest information about canola production. The previous field guide was published in 2005 and was in need of major updates, especially on the canola diseases of blackleg and sclerotinia, canola insects, weed management and desiccation at harvest, and other management issues.

NDSU State Extension staff and other canola specialists wrote the revised and reviewed guide.

The field guide also has a photo section at the back of the publication with pictures of weeds, insects, and diseases.

The publication is a comprehensive guide for those considering or growing canola. Some of the topics discussed include canola varieties; growth stages; field selection; planting dates; soil fertility requirements; weed, insect, and disease management and control;

frost tolerance and damage; swathing and harvest management; resource contacts and publications; and useful websites.

North Dakota growers can order a free copy of the pocket guide from the Northern Canola Growers Association by phone at 897-585-1671 or email [info@northerncanola.com](mailto:info@northerncanola.com).

Our office also has a limited number of copies which can be distributed upon request. A web version of the guide can be found at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/plantsci/crops/a1280.pdf](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/plantsci/crops/a1280.pdf).

### Scout for Pea Aphids

Pea aphids are fairly abundant this year as are other species of aphids, so pea fields should be scouted during flowering. They are small, about 1/8+ inch long and pale green. Pea aphid feeding during the flowering and early pod stage can result in lower yields due to less seed formation and smaller seed size. Protein content and other quality issues do not appear to be affected.

Scouting for aphids in pea is conducted using either a sweep net or examining the number of aphids per plant tip when 50-75% of the peas are flowering. Take ten 180° sweeps using a 15-inch sweep net or check at least five 8-inch plant tips from four different locations in the field. Population estimates should be calculated by averaging counts taken from four separate areas of the field.

Economic thresholds may vary depending on the value of the crops and cost of control, as well as variation in potential seed weight caused by variation in precipitation and heat stress. The economic threshold in peas is 2-3 aphids per 8-inch plant tips, or 9-12 aphids per sweep (or 90-120 aphids per 10 sweeps,) at flowering. If the economic threshold is exceeded, a single application of insecticide when 50% of plants have produced some young pods will protect the crop against yield loss and be cost-effective. Varieties of peas may also vary in their tolerance to feeding by pea aphids, thus economic injury levels may differ between varieties. However, research has shown that insecticides applied when pods first form protect pea yield better than earlier or later applications. Control at the early pod stage provides protection through the pod formation and elongation stages, which are very sensitive to aphid damage.

A listing of insecticides registered for pea aphid control in field peas is available from the ND Field Crop Insect Management Guide 2011, E-1143, NDSU Extension Service at: <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/plantsci/pests/e1143w1.htm>.










## McKenzie Co. Junior Rodeo Champions

Junior All-Around Champion Mason Bice, Killdeer, and Senior All-Around Kristy Langseth, Minot, display their All Around Trophy Spurs, sponsored by Reservation Telephone Co-op. The rodeo was held July 16 in conjunction with the McKenzie County Fair.



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# Richland County Accepting ECP Applications For Flood Damage Until Aug. 18

Richland County has been approved to implement the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) due to floods. Producers need to file an ECP application with the FSA before starting work on land damaged by flood water. Emergency Conservation Program is a cost share program which assists producers with damage caused by excessive rain and the floods that have occurred. Signup for the program ends Aug. 18, 2011.

A producer qualifying for ECP assistance may receive cost-share levels not to exceed 75% of the eligible cost of restoration measures. The Richland County Committee has been approved for the following conservation practices to correct damage due to the flood:

EC1 – Removing Debris from Farmland: Practice is used for removing debris from farmland. A typical example of this is taking debris off cropland and fences.

EC2 – Grading, Shaping, Releveling, or Similar Measures: Practice is used for grading, shaping, and leveling land that has been damaged by the flood and is returned to agriculture use. Example – Land has erosion caused by flood and leveling of the land is needed to restore it.

EC3 – Restoring Permanent Fences: Practice corrects

damage to fences caused by the flood. Example – Fences in water gaps which have been washed out due to the high water. Cost-share is calculated up to 75% of the actual cost, after they are adjusted based on the age of the fence.

Age of fence:	Allowable actual cost factor
0-5 years old	100% of computed cost-share
6-10 years old	75% of computer cost-share
11-30 years old	60% of computed cost-share
Over 30 years old	0% of computed cost-share

EC4 – Restoring Conservation Structures and Other Installations: Practice restores conservation structures and installation damaged by the flood. Example – Restoration of dams, ponds that have been destroyed by the flood.

Eligibility for cost share assistance is based on a minimum of \$1,000 of eligible damage. All requests for cost share are subject to the availability of funds. Producers are encouraged to provide the FSA office with the following data at the time of application: Location of the damage and extent of the damage, such as length of fence, time needed to remove debris, damage to land or conservation structures with estimates of cost to repair. Please call the office at 406-433-2103 to schedule an appointment so we can prepare some of the application data prior to the appointment.

# North Dakota FSA Provides Assistance For Recent High Temperature Livestock Losses

Livestock producers who incur eligible livestock death losses due to the recent extreme heat and other adverse weather events may be eligible for the USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Livestock Indemnity Program.

"Producers who suffered eligible livestock losses due to adverse weather will be required to provide documentation of the livestock lost and documentation of losses due to normal mortality for the calendar year," said Aaron Krauter, state executive director. "FSA staff can provide producers with a list of acceptable loss documentation that includes proof of death, producer records and verifiable inventory documentation."

For livestock losses that occur in calendar year 2011, producers will have until the earlier of 30 days after the livestock loss is apparent or no later than Oct. 31, 2011 to file a notice of loss with FSA. In addition, producers have until Jan. 30, 2012, to apply for payment.

Adequate documentation must prove the death of eligible livestock occurred as a direct result of an eligible adverse weather event in the calendar year for which benefits are being requested. If adequate verifiable proof of death records documentation is not available, a livestock producer may provide reliable records, along with verifiable beginning and ending inventory, as proof of death.

Certifications of livestock deaths by third parties, who are not affiliated with the farming operation, may be accepted only if verifiable proof of death records or reliable proof of death records is not available. Verifiable beginning and ending inventory records are also required with such third party certifications.

LIP indemnity payments will be based on 75% of the fair market value of the livestock as determined by FSA.

Producers need to contact their local FSA county offices to sign up for LIP. Producers can also learn more about LIP by visiting [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).



# MonDak Harvest Fest

## Tractor & Truck Pull

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# LYIP Deals With Unusual Situations

By Lois Kerr

Thanks to historic high water levels on both the Yellowstone and the Missouri rivers this spring, the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project (LYIP) faced unusual problems this season. Crews not only dealt with collapsed banks and washouts, but they also had to take steps to prevent the flooding of 1500 acres that lie below the river bank in

areas of the irrigation district, so many low-lying fields did flood along both rivers. "This opportunity did not exist along other areas along the Yellowstone," Nypen comments.

The flooding south of Savage completely washed away a lateral, so LYIP will look for alternate ways to irrigate that portion of land. "We had a 1,000 feet of Lateral HH1 that dropped into the river," Nypen remarks. "The river consumed it, so we will set up an emergency pump station to provide water to the lateral that was severed. The river movement is so dynamic that another permanent service route must be constructed. A pipeline route from another direction is a likely solution."

Richard and Terry Cayko at the northern edge of LYIP experienced the worst of the flooding. "The Caykos lost a lot of their sugarbeet land to flooding," Nypen says. "They were the worst hit in the entire Project, and suffered extensive damage."

Even though the water situation along the length of LYIP is slowly returning to normal, water levels remain high on both the Missouri and the Yellowstone. "Normally by the third week of July the Yellowstone runs at 16,000 cubic feet per second," Nypen notes. "On July 21 it was still running at 45,000 cubic feet per second, nearly three times normal."

He concludes, "We expect the Yellowstone to start collapsing by August, but the Missouri will stay high because the Army Corps of Engineers will continue to draw down the excessive flood pool behind Fort Peck dam. They are extracting 40,000 cubic feet of water per second and report that releases will be reduced to 30,000 by Aug. 1; here again about three times the normal flow."



**LYIP had to pump water draining from fields behind one of the intentionally plugged drains so it could then return to the river.**

the Nohly area. LYIP closed off three open drains in that area this spring to prevent water from flooding farmland.

"We've never had this situation before," says Jerry Nypen, LYIP manager. "1500 acres in the Nohly area lie below the historically high river levels that prevailed for the last 40 years. There are three open drains in this area; two drain to the Yellowstone and one drains to the Missouri. All three drains were plugged to keep river water from inundating that 1500 acres."

He adds, "This is a unique situation in river bottom lands where the river banks are higher than the adjacent land."

Water continued to drain off the farmland but could not return to the river due to the blocked drain. LYIP crews set up pump sites at the plugged off portion of each drain to pump water across the plugged spots so it could drain back to the river. "Irrigated land in this area drains by gravity through the intentionally plugged drains, so it became necessary to pump the water back to the river," says Nypen.

LYIP did not have this option in other



**Rod Stephens opens one of the drains intentionally plugged by LYIP to prevent flooding of 1500 acres near Nohly.**

# About The Ag Roundup



The Ag Roundup is a monthly Farm & Ranch Magazine. It is delivered to over 10,000 farm & ranch families in Western North Dakota and Eastern Montana. The advertising and news deadline for the September 2011 issue is August 30. Subscription Rate: \$15 per year.

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## STAMPEDE

By Jerry Palen



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# Make Sure Structural Materials Dry Before Rebuilding

After a flood, the normal response is to clean up and rebuild as soon as possible.

"However, rebuilding too quickly after a flood can cause continuing problems, such as mold growth, which is a health hazard, and deterioration of wood and wall coverings," warns Ken Hellevang, North Dakota State University Extension Service agricultural engineer and flooding expert.

Hellevang says one important thing for people to remember is that cleanup, including removing all porous materials (such as carpet, drywall and ceiling tile), cleaning all nonporous materials (such as metal and glass) and thoroughly cleaning and drying the structure, should be done soon. However, they need to delay rebuilding until wood has dried to 15 percent moisture content or less.

Wood submerged in water will absorb a large amount of water, so drying may take weeks. Ventilating the structure with outdoor air and using fans to circulate air across surfaces reduces the drying time.

A common problem with rebuilding too quickly is mold will grow in closed wall cavities, such as on the back of drywall (Sheetrock). Air moves from wall cavities, basements and crawl spaces into the living space, so mold in these spaces is a health hazard.

Mold can trigger allergic reactions, asthma episodes and other respiratory problems. People have reported suffering an increase in respiratory problems several months after floodwaters subsided.

Building materials may be wet even though they appear dry on the surface, so checking the moisture content by using a moisture meter before rebuilding is important, Hellevang says.

Reducing the moisture content in wood to 15 percent or less will minimize the potential for mold growth. While wood may not decay until exceeding a moisture content of about 20%, mold growth likely will occur in wall cavities at moisture levels below decay-causing levels.

Most county NDSU Extension Service offices have moisture meters that people can borrow to determine if they adequately dried the parts of their homes and other buildings that flooded before they start rebuilding. Typically, the counties charge a \$100 deposit, which they refund when the meter is returned.

Meters calibrated for measuring wood moisture content also can provide a relative moisture measurement of other materials such as drywall. However, the meters only measure moisture content; they do not determine if mold is present.

Meters are not available to detect mold growth. Testing for mold requires a trained professional to collect samples with special equipment and a technician with training in mold identification evaluating the samples. This testing is very expensive.

Test kits purchased from local stores or off the Internet do not provide accurate information, according to Hellevang, so he generally does not recommend homeowners test for mold.

"If mold is visible or you detect a musty smell, remove the moldy material using accepted procedures such as described in NDSU publication 'Remove Mold for a Healthy Home,'" he advises. "Focus on removing wet materials and drying the structure."

Moisture will continue coming through concrete in the basement until the soil around the basement is dry, so homeowners may have to wait months before the basement will be dry enough to rebuild.

Hellevang recommends checking for moisture coming through concrete walls and the floor by taping a 3x3-foot plastic sheet to the floor or walls and watching for moisture accumulating behind the plastic or the concrete to darken in a few days.

The NDSU Extension Service's flood website, <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/flood>, provides information on flood recovery, including videos on restoring flooded buildings and fact sheets on topics such as cleaning flooded or water-damaged homes and drying out before rebuilding.

## Montana PRCA Rodeo Circuit Unofficial 2011 Standings

The Montana PRCA Rodeo Circuit has released the unofficial 2011 standings as of July 19.

Local riders included are:

Troy Vaira, Richey, 6<sup>th</sup> in Bareback Riding  
Beau Franzen, Sidney, 9<sup>th</sup> in Steer Wrestling  
J.C. Crowley, Poplar, 9<sup>th</sup> in Tie-Down  
Rayna Rice, Sidney, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Barrel Racing



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# Group Grateful For House Introduction Of Livestock Marketing Fairness Act Which Promises To Put End To Serious, Anticompetitive Buying Practice

R-CALF USA praises Representative Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) and Representative Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio) for their sponsorship and co-sponsorship, respectively, of H.R. 2631: the bipartisan Livestock Marketing Fairness Act (Act) introduced in Congress. The Act, among other things, would prohibit meat packers from removing live cattle from the competitive market place without first negotiating a firm base price for the cattle—a practice increasingly used by meat packers to gain an anticompetitive advantage over cattle farmers and ranchers through what are called un-priced formula contracts.

According to R-CALF USA, meat packers tie-up large numbers of cattle in the market place with un-priced formula contracts that cause a severe reduction in the volume of cattle that comprise the negotiated market or cash market, which is the price-discovery market for the entire cattle industry.

“The primary benefit to cattle farmers and ranchers who enter these contracts is that they can avoid the meat pack-

ers’ practice of restricting timely access to the market when their cattle are ready for slaughter, which is becoming a huge problem in the industry now that only four meat packers control the slaughter of more than 80% of the nation’s slaughter-ready cattle,” said R-CALF USA CEO Bill Bullard.

“Because only a handful of meat packers act as gate keepers to the entire cattle market, they can—and do—coerce cattle farmers and ranchers to enter these contracts in return for timely market access, even though cattle farmers and ranchers know the aggregate effect of their un-priced formula contracts is to lower the price of cattle for everyone,” he added.

Bullard said these un-priced formula contracts benefit meat packers by allowing them to have large numbers of cattle committed to them without ever having to negotiate a price. As a result, he said, “these formula contracts function like direct packer ownership of cattle— meat packers control the cattle while they are being fed but with an additional advantage—they don’t have to pay for the cattle until after they are slaughtered.

“These un-priced formula contracts have thinned our cash market to the point where it is incapable of true price discovery, they have severely reduced price transparency in the market place, and they give the meat packers leverage to manipulate the price-discovery market— an outcome that occurs when meat packers call-in their formula contracts in order to avoid negotiating or bidding in the cash market.”

R-CALF USA has sought a prohibition against un-priced formula contracts for over a decade and claims such contracts have enabled meat packers to prosper by unfairly capturing a significant percentage of the competitive value of cattle sold by U.S. farmers and ranchers. “Using USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) data, we developed a chart with trend lines that show since 1980, the spread between what meat packers receive for beef and beef byproducts and the value of what U.S. farmers and ranchers receive for their cattle has increased about 60%,” Bullard said.

Bullard added, “It should surprise no one that over half a million U.S. cattle farmers and ranchers have exited the cattle industry since 1980 while meat packers were engaged in such anticompetitive buying practices as exemplified by un-priced formula contracts that enable meat packers to both prosper and keep up with inflation on the backs of hard working U.S. farmers and ranchers.

“We are grateful that Congresswomen Lummis and Kaptur have introduced the Livestock Marketing Fairness Act in recognition of the serious harm these anticompetitive, un-priced formula contracts are exacting on U.S. cattle farmers and ranchers,” he concluded.

## NILE Taking Applications For Merit Heifer Program

The Northern International Livestock Exposition (NILE) is once again taking applications for participants in the 2011 NILE Merit Heifer Program. The Merit Heifer program is a “live animal” scholarship that strives to help youth get a start in the beef cattle business by awarding heifer calves to participants chosen based on merit, future goals and ability to care for the animal. Any youth ages 13-17, who is a 4-H or FFA member may apply. During the program duration, participants are responsible for raising the heifer, arranging for her to be bred, completing the record keeping procedure and bringing the animal back one year later as a bred replacement heifer for exhibit at the NILE Stock Show.

Bill Pelton, Merit Heifer chairman, says, “This program would not be possible without the generous support of our donor ranchers and we are very grateful to them.” This year, the NILE will select 25 recipients and match them up with donors from across the region. In addition to application from eligible recipients, the NILE is also taking applications from ranches wishing to participate through the donation of a heifer calf.

All application must be postmarked by Sept. 15, 2011. For more information and applications regarding the Merit Heifer Program, please go to: [www.meritheifer.com](http://www.meritheifer.com) or call the NILE office at 406-256-2495.



# Meadow Muffins . . . One Seed Short

*By Ken Overcast*

If you've got cattle.... they're gonna get out. You can count on it. That's a law that must be written down someplace. A friend of mine shared a little tale with me the other day that needs repeatin'. He made me promise not to reveal his true identity, and after you hear the story, I think you'll be able to see why.

The Donaldson family ran Black Angus cattle, and like most ranchers, were pretty proud of their herd. They had a good bunch of cows, but back in those days black cattle weren't as big as they are now, and a big heifer at calvin' time would weigh about 800 pounds or so. That seemed to work out just fine... as long as you were a little selective about the bulls you used on them.

Right after breakfast one morning ol' Dad sent Tom and Jack out to check the heifers. It was the middle of June sometime, and breeding season was in full swing. When the two boys got to the pasture, they found an unwanted visitor ... again. They'd had trouble with one of the neighbor's bulls and had chased him home several times, but the darn thing was back in again.

He was a big raw boned Charolais that weighed way over a ton, and probably had a birth weight of a hundred and twenty five pounds or so. To have him in with their heifers was just an accident waiting to happen. They'd never be able to have those calves.

The fence jumpin' bull belonged to the Bakers. They were pretty big operators that had a whole township of land in one chunk right over the fence and were always pretty quick to tell everyone just how much land they had and how successful they were. For them, a bull in with the neighbor's wasn't even an inconvenience. They had lots of bulls.

Ol' Man Donaldson had called and told them about the problem they'd had with the unwelcome visitor on several occasions, but the Bakers apparently had more pressing matters to attend to, and as a result the bull was back, and wouldn't stay out.

The young cowboys tied into the job at hand, but didn't have much luck. The boys were good hands and were pretty well mounted, but Mr. Bull was not very cooperative. He was enjoying the feminine companionship of a couple of the black beauties in his com-

pany, and had no intentions of going anywhere.

A ton of bull on the fight is nothin' to sneeze at. The bull won, and the boys went back home to break the bad news to Dad. The ol' man was furious. One thing the boys had learned through the years was to just stay quiet when Dad was on the prod. They didn't say a word, but just did as they were told and didn't ask any questions. Pa Donaldson jerked the cinch up on his big sorrel geldin' and had his rope down before they even got to the field.

The ol' man snagged the brute with his very first loop, but the bull had barely gotten the slack out of the rope when he wheeled around and came right back towards the horse. He had that sorrel gelding in his sights and murder on his mind. Dad managed to spur ahead enough that the bull missed him, but just barely.

You have to get this picture in your mind. There's a ton of mad Charolais bull headed south at 30 MPH with a rope around his neck, and ten feet of slack later, there's an irate cowboy dallied up on a 1200 pound horse headed west with that rope under his tail. Had the two not been connected, this story wouldn't be near this interesting.

What a wreck. Dad lived through it, but he was quite a while getting back to his feet and he didn't walk quite as straight when he finally wiped himself up off the ground. If it was actually possible, his mood had deteriorated even further.

The boys just THOUGHT he was on the prod before. He really had blood in his eye now. Getting back on his horse was quite a struggle, but soon they were headed back home for the pickup and more rope, with the boys just stayin' quiet and doing as they were told.

That old pickup was just hitting the high spots on the narrow prairie trail as Dad headed back out to the heifer field with the boys loping along behind. He ran the pickup tire up on the rope that was still around the bull's neck, and hollered at Jack to tie the knot end around the trailer hitch on the back.

"Now, heel that #\$\$%\$@," Dad yelled at Tom. A ton of bellerin' white bull was circling the pickup with Ol' man Donaldson tearin' an acre of prairie up with the

**Continued on next page.**

# Meadow Muffins...

Continued from page 37.

pickup in four wheel drive.

Tom threw a loop on the rear end, and they soon had him stretched out. The boys were still in the dark as to how all of this was going to get the bull back in his own pasture, but it wasn't long until they got the drift of the old man's plan.

As Dad stepped out of the pickup with his pocket-knife in his hand, it was the first time they'd seen him smile all morning. It was the kind of grin that graces a

tomcat's face just before he eats a big field mouse.

"Now, let the %#\$@ up," were the instructions as the old man slipped his pocket knife back in his jeans. "Don't think he'll feel much like botherin' any heifers for a day or two."

The elder Mr. Donaldson had only done half a job of making a steer out of that bull, and although the boys feared it might kill him ... it didn't. Dad was right though; he sure didn't bother the heifers for a few days. A short time later they got him worked over into a field

of cows where he wouldn't (or couldn't) do any serious damage.

Another strained phone call to the Bakers resulted in the permission to haul the bull to the sale barn on the next trip to town. The boys mixed him in with a few dry cows and Ol' Whitey got a one-way ticket to the city.

The big successful land baron, Mr. Baker, was in the audience at the sale barn when his bull went through, and announced very loudly and proudly to the audience that this was a registered Charolais bull, and if anyone wanted him for breeding purposes that he would gladly pay for a fertility test. That's exactly what happened, and the fertility exam was ordered.

The Vet was grinnin' like a skunk eatin' onions as he gave Mr. Baker the news of why Whitey had flunked his test. Baker sent a glare at Jack and Tom that would burn the paint off the wall. Of course they didn't know anything about it.

Whitey was resold for hamburger. He'd just jumped his last fence, and for some strange reason the boys didn't have any further problems with white bulls bein' in with their heifers.

Keep Smilin'....and don't forget to check yer cinch.

Ken Overcast is a recording cowboy singer that ranches on Lodge Creek in North Central Montana where he raises and dispenses

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# Factors To Consider For Cover Crops On Prevented Planted Acres

Millions of acres in North Dakota could not be planted this year because of wet conditions. This has many producers considering cover crops on prevented planted acres.

North Dakota State University Extension Service agents and specialists have these recommendations for producers:

- \* Some crops have rotation restrictions for insurability primarily due to disease issues. Don't plant a cover crop, either alone or as a part of a cocktail mix, this summer that will preclude you from insuring your intended crop in 2012. A cover crop is considered the same as a crop planted for harvest as it pertains to rotation restrictions.

Producers should contact their county Extension Service agent or Farm Service Agency (FSA) office for cover crop recommendations.

- \* Don't wait too long to plant a cover crop. Most crops should be planted no later than Aug. 5-10 to provide adequate time for the crop to develop to protect the soil.

- \* Winter wheat for harvest in 2012 is a good choice for planting on prevented planted acres. However, delay the winter wheat planting until the optimum planting window, which is early to mid-September, and be sure the fields are free of grassy weeds for two weeks prior to planting. Winter wheat might be considered on fields with previous years of prevented planting because winter wheat may reduce the risk of having another year of prevented planting if next spring is again wet.

- \* Know the source of the cover crop seed and adhere to plant variety protection (PVP) laws. Generally, it is a violation of the PVP agreement to plant the saved seeds of any crops with proprietary traits, even if it is just going to be a cover crop. For example, bin-run Roundup Ready seed of any crop cannot be planted as a cover crop.

- \* Haying or grazing of a cover crop is permitted after Nov. 1. Haying or grazing earlier than that date will result in loss of 65% of the prevented planted payment and the crop will become part of the actual production history (APH). This means the 2011 yield will be

60% of the producer's APH. The combination of these factors is a large economic disincentive to early haying or grazing.

- \* Keep in contact with your insurance agent. Let the agent know what your plans are for a cover crop on prevented planted acres and get assurances from the company that your insurance indemnity won't be compromised by what you intend to plant and how you plan to use it. It also is recommended that producers check with the FSA to make sure cover crop plans comply with their policy on use of prevented planting acres. For example, FSA regulations only recognize corn as a cover crop if solid seeded.

- \* Keep written records of all correspondence with your insurance agent. It also can be beneficial to take photos of the cover crops as documentation because some fields will be checked for compliance with FSA cover crop rules.



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