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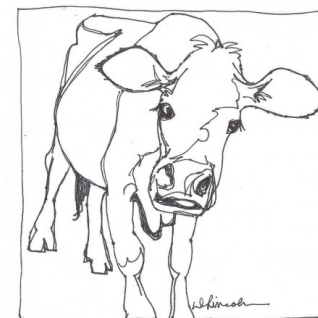
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Agriculture Newsletter

April 2014



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I saw a sign of Spring the other day! Actually, my husband was the first to spot it—two robins in a neighbor's tree. I know for you who are avian buffs, robins are not in reality a 'sign of Spring'; however, it at least gives me hope that we will eventually have a Spring in Wisconsin. A wise person told me a few years ago an old wives' tale about robins and Spring. They told me, 'Spring has not officially begun until snow falls on a robin's tail at least three times.' I usually do not believe these sayings, but I have 'scientifically' observed this saying to be true ever since I heard it. If you are looking for a sure sign of Spring, start looking for the Red-Winged Blackbird instead of the American Robin.

Just as we are transitioning into another season, I am also transitioning the programs offered by UW-Extension, but I need your help. As the Oconto County Agriculture Agent, it is my privilege to serve the Oconto and Marinette counties as an educational resource in the area of agriculture—specializing in dairy and livestock. More specifically, I am here to answer your questions, assist you in identifying educational resources, organizing and leading local and county-wide educational workshops, and serving as a liaison between the University of Wisconsin and Oconto and Marinette County communities.

If you are a dairy producer or employed in the agriculture industry in Oconto or Marinette county, you should have received a 'Needs Assessment' survey in the mail this past week. To serve Oconto and Marinette Counties—and you—effectively it is important for me to identify the informational needs within our agricultural community. I will encourage you to take the time—about 10-15 minutes—to complete the survey and return it to my office. The answers you provide in the completed surveys will allow me to learn what agricultural issues are important to you, and others like you, in Oconto and Marinette Counties. This will enable me to create educational, research, and community programs that are of interest and of value to our farm families, agribusinesses and the county, as a whole.

If you prefer, the same 'Needs Assessment' survey may be completed online by entering the survey link of: <http://goo.gl/jMbySR>. Your results are anonymous and your efforts are truly appreciated. If possible, please return your survey by **April 15, 2014**.

Thank you for your help, and if there is any way I can be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to your suggestions!

Sarah Mills-Lloyd

Agriculture Agent—Specializing in Dairy and Livestock
Oconto County UW-Extension

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If you will need any type of accommodation or assistance as you attend any UW-Extension sponsored event, please contact the host county or Scott at the Marinette County office at least two days prior to the event. All requests will be confidential.

Events, Deadlines and Notes

Meat Animal Quality Assurance Training

The MAQA process is designed for youth, and is mandatory for any youth that is planning on participating in the performance contests at the Marinette County Fair or the Sale of Champions at the Oconto County Fair. The curriculum rotates through a series of topics, making each annual program a new offering. This year's sessions are being held:

April 26 th	Washington Middle School, Oconto Falls	2:00-3:30 pm
May 6 th	Oconto County Courthouse, Oconto	7:30-9:00 pm
June 14 th	Gillett Public Library, Gillett	1:00-2:30 pm

In addition, the Pulaski FFA Chapter is hosting two MAQA trainings:

May 12 th	Pulaski High School Agriculture Room,	6:00-8:00 pm
June 23 rd	Pulaski High School Agriculture Room	6:00-8:30 pm

To get more information about these sessions, please contact Sarah at 920-834-6845.

Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop

UW-Extension of Marinette and Florence Counties are sponsoring a Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop. This hands-on workshop allows you to learn about and practice proper pruning and training techniques on your fruit trees.

Pruning of fruit trees is necessary if growers want their trees to have optimal health and high production capacity and now is the ideal time to be doing these yearly pruning activities. Proper pruning also helps increase fruit size and quality by assisting with your insect and disease management and by regulating fruit set. Optimal timing of pruning activities in a normal year is late February through early April, but can be earlier or later due to late winter temperature patterns.

The Aurora workshop—the second in the series—is being hosted by Larry & Sharon Chick, on East Fischer Lake Parkway—south of Cty Hwy N about two miles (watch for signs), starting at 10 am.

Participants will have the chance to learn the how and why of proper pruning and then apply those new skills with hands-on practice. The majority of the program will be conducted outside, so dress appropriately. Scott Reuss, UW-Extension Crops/Horticulture Agent, will be leading participants through the day's activities and will be demonstrating your tree training techniques, as well as how to 'fix' older trees that may need more assistance.

There is a \$5 registration fee for this workshop to cover the cost of publications which will be distributed as part of the opportunity and refreshments. Pre-registration is requested, but not mandatory, by contacting the Marinette County UW-Extension office, 715-732-7510 or by emailing to scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu. If you are unable to attend this workshop, but want to learn more about fruit tree care and management, call Scott Reuss at the Marinette County UW-Extension office or visit the UW-Extension web site at <http://marinette.uwex.edu> for more information.

Poultry Management Seminars

A pair of poultry management seminars is being offered at the Florence Natural Resources Center on Wednesday evenings April 2nd and April 16th starting at 6:30 pm. The focus on April 2nd will be egg production and on April 16th will switch to meat bird production.

We will be joined live by Ron Kean—UW-Extension Poultry Specialist each evening regarding best management practices. We will also discuss legalities of selling poultry and/or eggs and have an in-depth Q & A session with local producer panel. Contact either Scott at 715-732-7510 or Kathy at 715-528-4480 for more information.

Apple University

'Apple University' will be hosted by Marinette and Oconto County UW-Extension—a three session workshop—will be offered Wednesday evenings from 6-8:30 pm starting April 9th at the Marinette County Courthouse—Jury Assembly Room. On April 9th, Scott Reuss will be discussing pruning, planting and general management of apple trees. Tony Dembski from Maple Valley Orchards will be hosting the grafting session on April 16th. At the April 23rd (final) session, Scott Reuss will be discussing insect and disease management.

Pre-registration is requested. Please call Marinette County UW-Extension at 715-732-7510 or e-mail scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu. The cost of the workshop is \$5 per family for the entire series plus \$8 per grafted tree.

Mark Your Calendar- Oconto County Breakfast on the Farm Scheduled for June 8, 2014

The Oconto County Breakfast on the Farm Committee invites you to celebrate June Dairy Month by attending Breakfast on the Farm! The 2014 Oconto County Breakfast on the Farm will be held Sunday, June 8, at Triple C Dairy Farm owned by Lee Roy and Diane Kruse the near Oconto Falls. A polka mass will be held at 7 a.m. and breakfast will be served from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. Entertainment will be available for all ages, including live

music, a petting zoo, children's games and activities, and much more. Watch the newspaper for details about ticket prices, the breakfast menu, and more specific entertainment details in the near future.

The farm is located at 8716 CCC Road, Oconto Falls. The Kruse's purchased their 120 acre farm with 24 cow stall barn in 1985 from a retiring couple. Thirty years later, along with raising 3 children, Kevin, Katrina, & Kayley, Lee Roy & Diane have grown their farm business to crop 1300 acres, and are milking 635 cows. The Kruse's raise all their replacements themselves, and do most of their own field work. The dairy herd is milked in a 30 cow Boumatic rotary parlor. Milk is shipped through the Dairy

Farmers of America Cooperative. The Kruse's employ 11 full-time and 3 part-time employees. Tours of the farm will be available.

The Oconto County Breakfast on the Farm is coordinated by the Oconto County Breakfast on the Farm Committee and made possible with generous financial support provided by local businesses. For more information, please contact Jordan Rank, Committee Chairman, at (920) 598-0945.

Oconto County Swine Exhibitors: The decision has been made to have a terminal show for the 2014 swine project at the Oconto County Fair. This means there will be no breeding classes shown. The Fair Board will be arranging for all market hogs to be sent to either Maplewood Meats or Gillett Meats on the Monday (August 18th) following the Oconto County Fair by the Fair Board.

RFID tags will be mailed to you from the Oconto County UW-Extension office. Please call the office at (920) 834-6845 to report how many pigs (per exhibitor) you plan to identify and we will mail the tag(s) to you. Directions for the proper placement of the ear tag will be included in a letter with the tags.

Because the Wisconsin state veterinarian banned swine weigh-ins, the swine will be identified via digital photos with 'readable' corresponding ear tag and exhibitor. Photos will need to be taken. Please check our website <http://oconto.uwex.edu/agriculture/youth-agriculture-programs/> for instructions.

The deadline for the photo submission is Monday, April 28, 2014 to staciepienta@gmail.com. For further information, check the Youth Agriculture webpage at <http://oconto.uwex.edu/agriculture/youth-agriculture-programs/>, or contact Sarah Mills-Lloyd at 920-834-6845 or by email sarah.millsloyd@ces.uwex.edu

*****Wanted—Dairy Farms to Participate in Research Project*****

A research project is being conducted by Sarah Mills-Lloyd, DVM for dairy operations of various sizes that have persisting neonatal calf diarrhea problems for longer than a month in duration. Twelve farms will be selected to participate in this study—free of charge. If you currently have neonatal calf diarrhea issues on your farm, please contact Sarah at the Oconto County UW-Extension to see if you qualify for this program which will offer free laboratory diagnostic evaluations. She can be reached at 920-834-6845 or by email sarah.millsloyd@ces.uwex.edu.

Calendar of Events

Remember you can find all this information and more detailed information on our websites—<http://marinette.uwex.edu> or <http://oconto.uwex.edu>.

April 2/16	Florence	Poultry Management Workshops
April 5	Aurora	Fruit Tree Pruning
April 9, 16, 23	Marinette	Apple University
April 14	Oconto Falls Library	Growing the Less Common Vegetables
April 15	Florence	Gardening 101 - Woody Landscape Plants
April 21	Coleman Library	Tree/Shrub Selections & Planting
April 22	Florence	Gardening 101 - Vegetable Production at Home
April 26	Oconto Falls	MAQA Session at Washington Middle School
April 26	Florence High School	North Stars Garden Conference
April 29	Oconto Falls Library	Vine Crops in the Home Vegetable Garden
May 2	Kimberly	Farm Management Update for Agriculture Professionals
May 6	Oconto	MAQA Session at Oconto County Courthouse