



October

NEWSLETTER

Driftless Ag Update

Ag news for La Crosse, Vernon, and Crawford Counties from UW-Madison Extension



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Educator Updates	02
Wet Corn Tool	03
Upcoming Events	04
Lambing and Kidding Basis	05
Deworming Management	08
Spring Potash Panic	10



Here's your October Driftless Ag Update!

Hello and congratulations on receiving our October Driftless Ag Update! This newsletter is co-written by your local UW-Madison Extension Ag Educators, Beth McIlquham (livestock) and Sam Bibby (crops).

Please contact your local extension office for the print version of any article included in this newsletter.

Notes from your Regional Crops Educator- Sam Bibby

-Johnson Grass is an increasing weed issue in Western WI. Considered one of the worst weeds around the world it is something to be on the lookout for. Johnson grass is a perennial warm season grass and has developed resistance to multiple herbicide modes of action in different areas around the US. I have found several populations of Johnson grass in Vernon and La Crosse counties. I am in the process of digging roots and collecting seeds. It is our current hypothesis that it is not able to overwinter here and is only causing problems as an annual weed. If you know of a population, please contact me so we can look for root structures indicating a perennial plant and collect seed for a herbicide resistance screening.

-Consider being a National Weather Service Citizen Scientist! The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow (CoCoRaHS) network is looking for additional sites for rain gauges and weather observations. There is a special promotion for \$8 off a rain gauge through Sep 10 (WISCOCO8). They specifically need additional sites in Juneau County!

-Selling or Buying High Moisture Corn? This tool developed by UW-Madison Extension Educator Kevin Jarek is a calculator developed to help find a fair price for high moisture corn. It takes into account the current price of LP, electricity and the standard shrink factor.

Notes from your Regional Livestock Educator- Beth McIlquham

-Beef Quality Assurance (BQA): There will be a few in-person BQA trainings in southwest Wisconsin's this fall. There will be more information to come in the next newsletter. If you need certification before then, please check out the online version found on the Beef Quality Assurance website.

-In Case of Foreign Animal Disease: What happens if your farm becomes infected with a foreign animal disease?

-Disease Digest: The UW-Madison Extension Livestock team has created a webpage that houses resources and information on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. In September, HPAI was identified in Jefferson County in a commercial poultry flock. There have been no cases of New World Screwworm in the U.S. in livestock, An unvaccinated horse tested positive for West Nile Disease in Grant County. For animal owners of all kinds, please evaluate your biosecurity protocols, including pest management.

Ver 1.9 - 11/20/09 Equivalent Price Per Ton of High Moisture Shell Corn

- 1 Enter base moisture content for dry corn
(suggested range 14 to 15.5%)
- 2 Enter starting corn price for table
- 3** Water shrink factor (automatically calculated from base moisture)
Constant Shrink Factor. Sum of water shrink plus handling loss (per point)
(typically between the water shrink factor in 3a and 1.5)
- 4 Enter LP gas price (\$/gal)
- 5 Enter electricity price (\$/KWH)
- 6 Enter shelling costs (\$/cwt)
- 1a. Enter relative TDN adjustment factor based on test weight
(see Table C)
- 3a.
- 3b.
- 4a. Enter estimated L.P. gallons to remove 1 point moisture
(range 0.0165 - 0.0210) see Table A or Table B
- 5a. Enter estimated KWH needed to remove 1 point moisture
(range 0.0106 - 0.2910) see Table A or Table B

Equivalent Price/Ton* of: High Moisture Shelled Corn
Jeff Key, Winnebago County Agricultural/Farm Management Agent (Retired) and Gary Frank, Center for Dairy Profitability (Retired)
2009 Revision by: Nick Schneider, Winnebago County Agriculture Agent

Moisture % Wet	Lbs Wet Kernels	% Shrink	Dry Bushels	\$3.40	\$3.50	\$3.60	\$3.70	Price per Dry Bushel \$3.80	\$3.90	\$4.00	\$4.10	\$4.20	\$4.30
15.0	2000	0.00	35.71	\$121.43	\$125.00	\$128.57	\$132.14	\$135.71	\$139.29	\$142.86	\$146.43	\$150.00	\$153.57
16.0	2000	1.18	35.29	\$118.99	\$122.52	\$126.05	\$129.58	\$133.10	\$136.63	\$140.16	\$143.69	\$147.22	\$150.75
17.0	2000	2.35	34.87	\$116.57	\$120.06	\$123.54	\$127.03	\$130.52	\$134.01	\$137.49	\$140.98	\$144.47	\$147.96
18.0	2000	3.53	34.45	\$114.18	\$117.62	\$121.07	\$124.51	\$127.96	\$131.40	\$134.85	\$138.29	\$141.74	\$145.18
19.0	2000	4.71	34.03	\$111.81	\$115.21	\$118.61	\$122.02	\$125.42	\$128.82	\$132.23	\$135.63	\$139.03	\$142.44
20.0	2000	5.88	33.61	\$109.46	\$112.82	\$116.18	\$119.55	\$122.91	\$126.27	\$129.63	\$132.99	\$136.35	\$139.71
21.0	2000	7.06	33.19	\$107.14	\$110.46	\$113.78	\$117.10	\$120.42	\$123.74	\$127.06	\$130.38	\$133.70	\$137.02
22.0	2000	8.24	32.77	\$104.84	\$108.12	\$111.40	\$114.68	\$117.95	\$121.23	\$124.51	\$127.79	\$131.06	\$134.34
23.0	2000	9.41	32.35	\$102.57	\$105.81	\$109.04	\$112.28	\$115.51	\$118.75	\$121.98	\$125.22	\$128.45	\$131.69
24.0	2000	10.59	31.93	\$100.32	\$103.52	\$106.71	\$109.90	\$113.10	\$116.29	\$119.48	\$122.68	\$125.87	\$129.06
25.0	2000	11.76	31.51	\$98.10	\$101.25	\$104.40	\$107.55	\$110.70	\$113.86	\$117.01	\$120.16	\$123.31	\$126.46
26.0	2000	12.94	31.09	\$95.90	\$99.01	\$102.12	\$105.23	\$108.34	\$111.44	\$114.55	\$117.66	\$120.77	\$123.88
27.0	2000	14.12	30.67	\$93.72	\$96.79	\$99.86	\$102.92	\$105.99	\$109.06	\$112.13	\$115.19	\$118.26	\$121.33
28.0	2000	15.29	30.25	\$91.57	\$94.60	\$97.62	\$100.65	\$103.67	\$106.70	\$109.72	\$112.75	\$115.77	\$118.80
29.0	2000	16.47	29.83	\$89.44	\$92.43	\$95.41	\$98.39	\$101.37	\$104.36	\$107.34	\$110.32	\$113.31	\$116.29
30.0	2000	17.65	29.41	\$87.34	\$90.28	\$93.22	\$96.16	\$99.10	\$102.04	\$104.99	\$107.93	\$110.87	\$113.81
31.0	2000	18.82	28.99	\$85.26	\$88.16	\$91.06	\$93.96	\$96.86	\$99.75	\$102.65	\$105.55	\$108.45	\$111.35
32.0	2000	20.00	28.57	\$83.20	\$86.06	\$88.92	\$91.77	\$94.63	\$97.49	\$100.35	\$103.20	\$106.06	\$108.92
33.0	2000	21.18	28.15	\$81.17	\$83.99	\$86.80	\$89.62	\$92.43	\$95.25	\$98.06	\$100.88	\$103.69	\$106.51
34.0	2000	22.35	27.73	\$79.16	\$81.94	\$84.71	\$87.48	\$90.26	\$93.03	\$95.80	\$98.58	\$101.35	\$104.12
35.0	2000	23.53	27.31	\$77.18	\$79.91	\$82.64	\$85.37	\$88.11	\$90.84	\$93.57	\$96.30	\$99.03	\$101.76
36.0	2000	24.71	26.89	\$75.22	\$77.91	\$80.60	\$83.29	\$85.98	\$88.67	\$91.36	\$94.05	\$96.73	\$99.42
37.0	2000	25.88	26.47	\$73.29	\$75.93	\$78.58	\$81.23	\$83.87	\$86.52	\$89.17	\$91.82	\$94.46	\$97.11
38.0	2000	27.06	26.05	\$71.38	\$73.98	\$76.59	\$79.19	\$81.80	\$84.40	\$87.01	\$89.61	\$92.22	\$94.82
39.0	2000	28.24	25.63	\$69.49	\$72.05	\$74.61	\$77.18	\$79.74	\$82.30	\$84.87	\$87.43	\$89.99	\$92.56
40.0	2000	29.41	25.21	\$67.63	\$70.15	\$72.67	\$75.19	\$77.71	\$80.23	\$82.75	\$85.27	\$87.79	\$90.32
41.0	2000	30.59	24.79	\$65.79	\$68.27	\$70.75	\$73.22	\$75.70	\$78.18	\$80.66	\$83.14	\$85.62	\$88.10

* If you must harvest this corn, subtract the harvesting costs; and if you can only use dry corn, subtract drying costs. Of course the price you pay will be determined by supply and demand conditions in your area and negotiations between you and the seller, but unless there are special circumstances it should not be above the prices shown here.

** National Corn Handbook NCH 61 "Calculating Grain Weight Shrinkage in Corn Due to Mechanical Drying" demonstrates two methods for calculating total shrink. The value found in 3c is the constant shrink factor. Typical constant shrink factors range from 1.163 to 1.5% per point. You may allow the constant shrink factor to auto-calculate or directly enter the constant shrink factor used at a local elevator. The constant shrink factor found in 3b can not be less than the water shrink factor in 3a. 3b is used to calculate the % shrink.

Badger Crop Connect

Badger Crop Connect 2025

Badger Crop Connect is back for 2025. Every 2nd and 4th Thursday from 12:30 to 1:30 via Zoom UW faculty and other topic experts will provide timely recommendations, share research findings and provide program updates.

https://cropsandsoils.extension.wisc.edu/programs/badger-crop-connect/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=wcm_march_ii



Virtual Farm Succession Workshop Series- Sign Up Now

Navigate complex farm succession conversations with confidence!

The "Cultivating Your Farm's Future" workshop series covers essential topics like communication preferences, common tensions around farm succession, inheritance distributions (Is "equal" fair?), financials for farm succession, estate planning (probate, estate tax), wills, trusts, and business entities. Even if you've attended other classes, this program focuses on helping you get a START on YOUR succession plan.

The program fee is \$150/per farm, allowing multiple family members to attend. Act quickly! The registration deadline for the fall series is October 24, 2025. 

Sign up now: go.wisc.edu/cyff



Save a Calf, Save a Cow Workshop

This workshop is for beef, dairy, and their workers. This workshop provides information and techniques to boost your confidence in preparing the cow for calving, obstetric techniques and newborn calf care. Cost is \$20. Find more information and registration by clicking on the picture above or the button below. With any other questions, please contact Beth McIlquham (contact information listed at the bottom of the newsletter).

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfAcIuOmVLn2uy5j5995WNgt9Iund5XzBi-YqO-6N8qvZfoEA/viewform>



Register for WWASH- Dec 16-17

Join us at the 2025 WWASH Conference to explore the intersection of on-farm research, soil health, and water quality. Engage with other farmers, dynamic keynote speakers, participate in interactive breakout sessions, and contribute to thought-provoking roundtable discussions, all designed to deepen your expertise and provide actionable insights for your farm or the producers you support.

<https://cropsandsoils.extension.wisc.edu/wwash/>

Lambing and Kidding Basics

One of the most exciting times for sheep and goat producers is the arrival of baby lambs and goats. Adequate nutrition and proper preparation can ensure the health and safety of dams and their offspring.

The last six weeks of gestation are crucial for monitoring body condition scores (BCS) and providing adequate nutrition and vaccinations. Pregnant ewes and does should have a BCS of 3 to 3.5 on the 5-point BCS scale. This ensures females have enough energy reserves for late pregnancy and lactation. As the fetus(es) grow, they inhabit a larger space in the abdominal cavity, leaving less space for rumen capacity, thus decreasing the amount of nutrition she can acquire from forages. Supplementing the female with grain concentrates can increase nutrition during the last weeks of gestation. Slowly transition to feeding grain to prevent acidosis and the over proliferation of *Clostridium perfringens* bacteria, which can lead to enterotoxemia, AKA overeating disease. To increase the dam's immunity and provide antibodies to young against *Clostridium perfringens* type C & D, vaccinate the gestating female three to four weeks before the lambing/kidding event will also coincide with colostrum development. Consult your veterinarian and develop a vaccination protocol to best fit the needs of your operation.

Parturition, or the process of giving birth, occurs in three phases.

- Phase One is the preparation or pre-labor phase when the cervix dilates and the onset of uterine contractions begins. Phase One can last between 12 to 24 hours. The ewe or doe may isolate herself from the flock or herd, become restless, frequently lay down and get up, urinate or defecate often, paw at the ground, build a nest, have a warm udder, and a mucus discharge from the vulva.
- Phase Two is the delivery phase, or active labor, with strong, forceful uterine contractions. The water bag (amniotic sac) appears first, followed by the lamb or kid. The typical presentation is two feet with the head resting on the front legs, like a diver. Dystocia and abnormal fetal presentation will make delivery difficult. Monitor females to ensure they are making progress. Assistance may be necessary if no progress is made after 30 minutes of strenuous pushing. To assist, restrain the ewe or doe with a halter, wash the vulva with a warm soap solution, put on an OB sleeve, and generously lubricate the OB sleeve. Insert the hand into the vulva to determine the position of the fetus, adjust the presentation, and gently pull the lamb or kid. Only pull if you are pulling two front legs with a head or two back legs of the same lamb or kid. Call your veterinarian for assistance if you are uncomfortable assisting or have tried to pull the lamb or kid for 30 minutes.
- Phase Three, post-labor, is the final phase, during which the fetal membranes and placenta are delivered, typically a few hours after the lamb or kid is born.

After the lamb or kid is born, the dam will clean the offspring, encourage them to stand, and nurse colostrum. Colostrum is the nutrient and immunoglobulin-rich first meal of the newborn lamb or kid; it also contains fats, proteins, lactose, and vitamins. The quality of colostrum synthesized is determined by the dam's overall health and nutritional status during gestation.

Therefore, the dam must have the nutrition to meet her dietary needs and vaccinations to boost her immune system. Lambs and kids must receive colostrum within the first two to six hours of life. The earlier, the better in cold weather. Young should receive 10% of their body weight in colostrum in the first 24 hours. 50% of the total amount to be received should be received within the first couple of hours of life, and 50% in two-to-three-ounce increments every three to four hours.

If the dam is not producing colostrum or does not have the volume to provide all offspring with the amount needed, colostrum from another female on the same farm or a powdered colostrum replacer should be used. Due to biosecurity risks, off-farm colostrum must be pasteurized before use. Remember, the preference is "dam is best," followed by a herdmate or a powdered colostrum replacer.



Once the female has given birth, the navel should be treated with 7% iodine, and the family unit can be moved into a smaller 5' x 5' pen called a "jug." The jug allows for the bonding of the young to the dam and vice versa. While in the jug, the producer can monitor the dam's health, feed intake, and udder health to determine if she can raise her young, especially if she has multiple young. Over the next few days, the producer can also monitor the health of the young to ensure they are nursing and receiving adequate nutrition. They can also apply identification tags, castrate, and remove tails if needed.

The season of lambing or kidding will determine the type of facilities needed. Shelters should be dry and well-ventilated during cold or wet seasons to prevent respiratory issues, infections, and hypothermia.

- Ventilation moves air and removes moisture, ammonia, carbon dioxide, and heat. The air exchange rate should be four air changes an hour, one every 15 minutes. Young goats and lambs are susceptible to cold drafts, an air velocity higher than 60 feet per minute (Kammel).
- Bedding should always be kept dry and clean to prevent illness and infections.
- Jugs should be cleaned and disinfected between family units.
- Supplemental heat, such as radiant heat lamps, may be needed, but it should only be used where the ewe or doe cannot access. Radiant heat can also be used in creep areas.
- Family units can be removed from jugs and placed in pens with other family units of similar size and age. Careful monitoring will ensure that dams and offspring find each other and that the young are adequately fed. Try this tip to check if the dam is claiming the young, and if they are receiving adequate nutrition: when young are resting, enter the pen and have the lambs or kids get up; lambs and kids should rise, stretch, and seek the dam to nurse. If young fail to seek the mother, rise and are lethargic, and/or gant, they may not be receiving adequate nutrition. Also, young that are malnourished will try to "rob" a meal from another female. This can lead to injured teats and mastitis. The lamb or kid that is "hungry" should be supplemented or removed from the group and raised on the bottle.

Proper preparation and careful monitoring can help producers provide adequate care and assistance for dams and young during the lambing/kidding season. Getting off to a good start with less labor stress and adequate colostrum intake goes a long way to a healthy future for both dam and offspring.

Thanks for Your Deworming Management

On behalf of intestinal helminth parasites everywhere, I would like to thank dairy and beef producers for hosting us in their cattle and on their pastures this summer. Despite your management efforts, we reproduced inside your cattle.

As a parasite, we relied on our host animal. We had no reason to kill them. Most producers didn't notice the production we took from their animals. However, our slow but steady march to dewormer resistance continued without pause.

The popular pour-on macrocyclic lactone treatment many producers applied before grass turnout didn't eliminate us. Parasitologists report that the current efficacy of macrocyclic lactone pour-on products is 70% or less, which means producers likely left 30% of us to keep reproducing. Even though producers switched brand names when applying pour-on treatments to cattle during the summer, we resisted that class of dewormer. Repeated treatment with the same deworming class killed a few of our sensitive members but left the resistant ones to survive and reproduce. They passed on their resistant genes, producing offspring that will overwinter on pasture to infect new animal's next spring.

Previously treated survivors resist all the products included in the same deworming class used on them. There are three classes of dewormers. Macrocyclic lactones include brands like Ivomec®, Dectomax® and LongRange®. The benzimidazole class of anthelmintics includes Safeguard® and Valbazen®. The imidazothiazole class includes Prohibit® and Levasol®. I only mention these brand names for clarity. Switching brands within the class didn't change the mode of action; but we appreciated the flavor change to our diet.

You could have seen how badly your deworming strategy failed if you had run fecal egg count reduction (FECR) tests. You could have reduced our numbers more effectively by switching to a different deworming class or using a combination of treatments by following the dosing instructions for each product. Advice from your veterinarian, nutritionist or Extension educator could have helped with your treatment strategies.

Typically, 3% of our eggs survive to adulthood. We compensate by producing lots of eggs. To give you an idea of our reproductive capacity, dewormer-resistant adult worms mate and shed dewormer-resistant eggs in manure. Fecal egg counting (FEC) results provide an estimate of the number of eggs per gram (EPG) of manure. Every 1 EPG can result in 15,000 eggs shed by one animal per day onto the pasture.

Most producers don't follow Ray Kaplan, DVM, PhD, whose research focuses on measuring, understanding, and solving the problem of drug resistance in helminths. If they had, they might have heard him explain that if just one in one million worms are resistant, the resistance rate rises to one in 125 after 13 treatments using the same dewormer class. Treatment failure becomes complete just six treatments later, when the resistant worms make up half the population.

Dr. Kaplan advised small ruminant producers not to rotate between dewormer classes because doing so accelerates dewormer failure. Instead, he says to identify which dewormer worked on the farm using FECR tests and to stay with it until the FECR showed the kill rate was no longer acceptable. He also recommended using combination treatments – correctly dosing one product from two different classes on the same day.

Fortunately for us, cattle producers didn't seem to understand the refugia concept that small ruminant producers are embracing. To be fair, it was easier for us to cause visible symptoms in sheep and goats. Faced with unthrifty and dead animals and growing dewormer resistance, small ruminant producers more quickly adopted selective treatment and used diagnostics to assess parasite levels in their herds.

In case you haven't heard the term, refugia means deliberately not treating some animals, so their helminths continue producing dewormer-sensitive offspring. The basic rules of genetics apply; when one resistant worm mates with one sensitive worm, about 50% of their offspring are dewormer-sensitive.



Reduce the risk of cattle eating parasite larvae by keeping grass taller than four inches, especially in the fall when dew is present. (Photo: Sandy Stuttgart, DVM, Livestock Educator, UW-Madison Division of Extension Taylor County)

Your pasture management may have reduced the number of larvae your cattle consumed, but the only way to know is to run FECs this fall. You can deworm to try to knock us back before you host us overwinter. You will know your treatment's effectiveness if you run FECR tests after a late fall combination treatment.

We hope producers will take too long to deworm us this fall. They often forget how we enter a resting state called hypobiosis inside animals during winter. It doesn't make sense for us to use energy reproducing when our eggs can't survive freezing. Many dewormers don't affect us in this state. It's better to treat us before we go dormant or wait until spring, when we become active again as temperatures rise.

I probably shouldn't remind you, but if you wanted to build a better deworming strategy, visit <https://livestock.extension.wisc.edu>.

Evolution favored us. We look forward to your hospitality next summer.

Signed, your herd's helminths

Spring Potash Panic: Much Ado About One Bushel?

Recently, questions have been raised about potential yield reductions in soybeans due to chloride (Cl⁻) toxicity associated with spring applications of muriate of potash (MOP). While ongoing research at the University of Minnesota is examining the correlation between potassium (K) application timing and Cl⁻ toxicity, this latest research does not indicate significant reductions in yield that would warrant altering existing application timing recommendations here in Wisconsin.

Minnesota's research found that spring applications of more than 100 pounds of K₂O per acre resulted in an average yield reduction of 1 bushel per acre across all sites, compared to fall applications of the same rate (Kaiser, 2024). To put this rate into context of UW's fertilizer guidelines found in A2809, a rate of 100 lb/ac of K₂O would be recommended for a 70 bu/ac yield goal when soil tests fall within the optimum range. If concerned about this minor effect, farmers can simply shift potash applications to the fall. Alternatively, if interested in applying sulfur, switching to potassium sulfate (0-0-50-18) is another viable option. Another strategy would be to "double up" MOP application ahead of corn in order to fertilize both the corn and soybean crops in rotation. No negative effects on corn yield were observed from spring potash applications in Minnesota (Kaiser, 2024).

Other research in Minnesota showed more extreme yield reduction of 2 to 15 bushels per acre only when MOP application rates exceeded 800 pounds per acre (applying 480 lb/ac of K₂O) (Kaiser, 2023). These findings clearly demonstrate that yield drags due to excessive Cl⁻ can occur. However, for most farmers who maintain soil test levels in the optimum range, rates of MOP should never be that high. These results may call into question the idea of rapidly increasing soil test K when levels are in the very low or low categories. Even then, A2809's recommendations only go as high as 185 lb/ac of K₂O for a 100 bu/ac yield goal when soils test in the very low category. Additionally, the bigger effects of high MOP rates may be seen on soils in western Minnesota and North Dakota due to limited rainfall keeping Cl⁻ concentrations relatively high in the root zone. With this in mind, the current potassium application guidelines should not be a cause for concern in Wisconsin.

Regarding K application timing and rates in Wisconsin, ongoing research at UW-Madison aims to better understand in-season K management. The goal of this Wisconsin Soybean Marketing Board funded work is to help growers address yield-limiting K deficiencies in their soybean crop through updating K fertilizer recommendations, developing a dynamic critical K concentration curve for leaf and petiole sufficiency to improve tissue test accuracy, and evaluating the ability to correct K deficiencies in-season with applications of foliar and granular K fertilizer. With this work currently underway, we look forward to sharing our preliminary findings in the coming year.



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