



U.P. Ag Connections Newsletter

September 2016

Agricultural News from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch

Volume 20 Issue 9

In this issue:

- Page 2
Pastured Livestock Tour
- Page 3
U.P. Field Days
- Page 4
Grazing School
Farm to School Workshop
- Page 5
Getting Ready for Market, Part 2
- Page 6
Parasitic Noxious Weeds
- Page 7
Market Report
- Page 8
Calendar of events
North Farm Short Course—Seed Saving

Welcome, Monica Jean, our new Field Crop Extension Educator!



Monica grew up on her family’s small farm helping raise an assortment of animals including horses, Hereford cattle and poultry. She attended Beal City High School and participated in 4-H, FFA and several other extracurricular activities. She received a Bachelor in Science at Central Michigan University, majoring in Biology in 2014. Monica was employed through college at a local veterinary practice working with small and large animals. She was also a 4-H leader in Isabella County while attending CMU.

Monica completed her Master in Science at Michigan State University in Animal Science. Her thesis was a part of the Extension’s Michigan Corn Stover Project working with Dr. Kurt Thelen, Dr. Steven Rust and Dennis Pennington. She concentrated on feeding corn stover to cattle in a confined feedlot, intercropping cereal cover crops into corn and storage of corn stover bales. She also participated in several other research products including cattle comfort in confined feedlot and bioenergy production.

Monica will be stationed in Delta county acting as the Field Crops Extension Educator for the area. Monica is thankful for this opportunity and is excited to be joining such a wonderful team!

Monica Jean’s contact information:
atkinmon@msu.edu
 (906) 786-3032

Follow the farm on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/MSU.UPREC/

Thank you to everyone that attended Together at the Farm and to the gracious sponsors that made the event possible!

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U.P. Local Food Conference

Michigan State University
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Pastured Livestock Tour

Saturday, September 10 · 1 – 6 pm

Begin tour at the Michigan State University
Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center
E3774 University Drive, Chatham

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MSU Extension offers five field days across the central and western U.P. in September

Five field days are planned at different locations for farmers and others interested in soil productivity, improved crop production, pasture management and additional topics including robotic milkers and fall calving for the beef herd. Light refreshments will be provided. Please contact the Alger County MSU Extension office (906-387-2530 or isleibj@anr.msu.edu) or the Ontonagon County MSU Extension office (906-884-4386 or wardynsk@anr.msu.edu) if you plan to come to any of these free events.

Tuesday, September 13, 2016 at 4:00 pm eastern time, Bahrman Potato Farm, E1780 State Highway 94, Rumely, MI, 49826

This field day will focus on soil productivity including fertility, compaction, and new soil testing options. MSU Extension field crop educator and soil health team member Paul Gross will be leading discussion. A soil trench will be prepared to demonstrate soil compaction issues and their impact on plant growth.

Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at 1:00 pm central time (2:00 pm eastern), Melodydell Dairy (Ken, Ed and Carl McBroom), N470 Thaler Dr, Vulcan, MI 49892. Directions: Turn south off of US 2 on Waucedah Rd and continue straight on Thaler Drive.

This field day will focus on soil compaction and other soil health and fertility issues including new soil testing options. A soil compaction trench will be prepared to demonstrate the impact of compaction. MSU Extension educator Paul Gross will lead discussion on soil productivity issues. A tour of the McBroom's robotic milking system is included for interested people.

Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at 6:30 pm eastern time, MSU Forest Biomass Innovation Center, 6005 J Road, Escanaba, MI 49829 (on agricultural land rented by Lippens Potato Farm). Directions: From the traffic light in Escanaba where M35 departs to the south from US 2 & 41, travel 5.9 miles west on US 2 & 41 to Hyde. OR from the flashing light in Bark River, travel 5.3 miles east on US 2 & 41 to the same point. At Hyde, turn north on Co. 521, which becomes Co. 533. Travel 2.5 miles north to 16.25 Road (C-21) which is the first hard surface road to the right. Turn east onto C-21 and follow it for 1.5 miles around 3 sharp turns to the main Center's driveway. Look for signs.

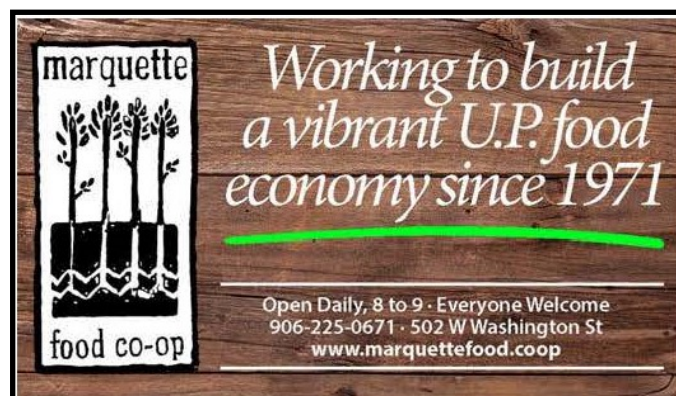
This field day will also focus on soil productivity including fertility, compaction, and new soil testing options. MSU Extension field crop educator and soil health team member Paul Gross will be leading discussion. A soil trench will be prepared to demonstrate soil compaction issues and their impact on plant growth.

Tuesday, September 27, 2016 at 6:00 pm eastern time, Ken and Lael Janson Farm, 27081 County Line Rd, Pelkie, MI.

Directions: North on Pelkie Rd from M-38, west on Papin Rd and meet on the corner on County Line Rd and Papin Rd
We'll observe active compost piles and compare fields with and without compost applied. We'll also see the demonstration of a soil aerator and view fields in a side by side comparison that were aerated earlier this spring vs those with no aeration.

Wednesday, September 28, 2016 at 6:00 pm eastern time, Dykstra Beef Farm, 13670 Hwy M-38, Ontonagon, MI.

Manager Duane Kolpack will discuss and show corn planted to be used as late season grazing to extend the grazing season and may also be harvested as corn silage. Also the fall calving herd will be nearby for discussion of fall calving advantages and disadvantages.



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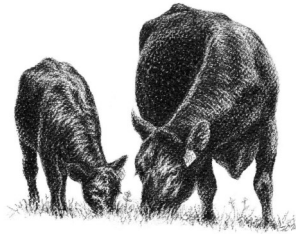
President: Stanley Johns

Secretary: Shannon McHugh-Sanders

MSU Grazing School Coming in September

MSU's popular Grazing School will be offered at three locations across Michigan in September.

Michigan State University Extension will again offer its very popular Grazing School for livestock, small ruminant and dairy producers at three locations simultaneously across Michigan on September 22 & 23, 2016.



The two-day school will be offered at the MSU Kellogg Biological Station's W.K. Kellogg Farm near Hickory Corners, the MSU Ag BioResearch Center near Lake City, and at the Bay Mills Community College Waishkey Bay Farm near Brimley, MI. The school is offered to help all farmers improve their grazing management knowledge and skill set. Major topics will include:

- Introduction to managed intensive grazing
- Pasture management and decision making
- Livestock nutrition and requirements on pasture
- Forage yield determination and pasture allocation
- Pasture plant species for Michigan
- Pasture soil fertility and management
- Grazing systems, layout and design
- Water systems and requirements
- Building and using fence for grazing
- Pasture establishment and improvement

Please register at <http://events.anr.msu.edu/grazingschool16/>. For further information contact Frank Wardynski, MSU Extension Beef and Dairy Educator and the Bay Mills Host at 906-281-0918. MSU Extension programs are open to all people. Accommodation requests for people with disabilities should be communicated to the site host a minimum of seven days before the event. *Submitted by Jerry Lindquist, MSU Extension Grazing Educator, lindquis@msu.edu; 231-832-6139*

Farm to School: Cafeteria, Classroom, Community

September 22, 2016—6:30-8:30 pm
MSU Extension Office, Stephenson



There will be a brief presentation on the different components of farm to school (farm to cafeteria, school gardens, classroom activities and on-farm education programs) and different models for implementation. This will be followed by a discussion to answer questions. Who should attend? Teachers interested in engaging students in the classroom or in the garden, food service staff, parents, community members interested in supporting farm to school activities, and farmers interested in sourcing product to the school or hosting educational activities on their farm. There is no cost to attend this workshop, but we ask that you RSVP at the following link so we have an accurate count for materials. We look forward to your participation!

<http://events.anr.msu.edu/MenomineeF2S/>

Scholarships

offered for grazing school students!

Attendees at the Brimley Grazing School September 22-23 may qualify \$50 scholarship. The first 6 registrants will be refunded \$50 of the Grazing School cost after attending. Register now to take advantage of this opportunity!



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Getting Ready for Market – Part 2

By Michelle Walk, Community Food Systems Educator, MSU Extension

This is the time of year many of the outdoor markets are seeing the widest variety of items available. According to the [Michigan Farmers Market Association](#) (MIFMA), the number of farmers markets in Michigan has increased from around 90 in 2001 to over 300 today, so you don't have to go far to find a market. Farmers markets have been a great way for small farms to find an outlet to sell their produce or for backyard gardeners to sell extra items or test the waters for increasing what they grow.

Each market has their own policies, requirements and application process to be able to sell at their market so be sure to check with the market manager before just showing up to sell. Just because in many cases it is easy to sell at a farmers market doesn't mean you shouldn't put some effort into your booth and display. Connecting with your customers is a great way to build a loyal customer base. Here are some tips to make your booth stand out:

Have signage with your farm name that is up high enough to be visible to customers. Whether this is a chalkboard or whiteboard on an easel next to your table or a vinyl printed banner that you hang from your pop up tent. Many smaller markets do not have assigned spaces so your booth may be in a different location each week. Having a sign with your farm name will help people find you. If you have a logo, be consistent in using it in other ways such as on labels and business cards so people become familiar with it.

Think about your display. Put a tablecloth or some other washable covering over your table(s). Think about using a variety of containers for displaying what you are selling and creating visual appeal, just make sure they are of a material that is safe for food contact. Consider having a photo of your farm as part of your signage or display

Ensure prices are clearly marked. There are many creative ways to do this. Use clothespins to clip prices to display containers. Use a chalk board or white board to list what is available that day and the respective prices. Use miniature chalkboards or whiteboards to set in front of individual items. Create your own reusable signs by laminating note cards and then using white board markers.

Find other ways to connect with your customers outside of the market. This could include maintaining an email list or Facebook page to let customers know what you will have available each week. Providing recipes or information on how to prepare and store specific items. [Michigan State University Extension's Michigan Fresh](#) website is a great resource for this information with downloadable fact sheets.

Selling at a farmers market is a great way to connect directly with consumers. One of the great things about the local farmers market is the trust people develop by knowing the people who grow their food. Are you doing everything you can to make sure you are connecting with your customers?

For more information you can contact the Michigan State University Extension [Community Food Systems Work Group](#).

Additional articles in this series:

[Getting Ready for Market – Part 1](#)

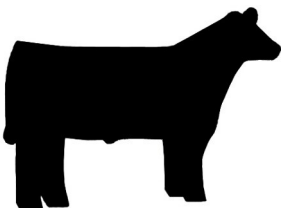
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Parasitic weeds are rare, but not unknown in Michigan

By Jim Isleib, Michigan State University Extension Educator
Thankfully, parasitic weeds like dodder and yellow rattle don't often become a problem, but proper ID is important if and when they do.

Occasionally, an unusual weed will emerge on a farm or farming neighborhood. Sometimes these unfamiliar weeds have been around in low populations for many years and never attracted much notice. Advantageous conditions caused by weather, cropping or grazing practices, or other factors in a given year, or series of years, can result in an 'explosion' in population for a weed.



An apparent new weed infestation on hay ground on a small Marquette county farm resulted in a recent call to Michigan State University Extension field crop educator Jim Isleib. On the resulting farm visit, the weed in questions was identified as Western Salsify (*Tragopogon dubius* Scop), a common biennial or short-lived perennial. There was no need to notify the state department of agriculture or send out notice to the local farming community. It was simply a common weed that had taken hold and multiplied in a low fertility mixed hay field where competition from desirable species was weak.

Sometimes, however, the strange weed reported is a real oddity, including parasitic oddity. Dodder was reported in residential flowerbeds in Munising a few years ago. This parasitic plant, genus *Cuscuta*, is a true parasite, obtaining all carbohydrates, nutrients and water from its host plant.



Dodder seeds germinate and grow a slender shoot that must find and attach itself to a host plant within a few days or die. It develops structures called haustoria that penetrate host plant shoots and allow dodder to extract water and nutrients. As it grows, dodder weakens its host and increases susceptibility to disease and insect attack. Grasses and other monocot plants are not susceptible to dodder. However, it can become a [weed problem](#) in several agricultural crops (e.g. alfalfa, clover, soybean, etc.) and has been observed on Michigan farms. Management of dodder is not well understood. Physically removing plants before seed set can reduce populations.

Glyphosate has shown limited control of dodder on glyphosate-tolerant crops such as sugarbeet. Other herbicide sites of action may be useful, depending on the host crop. Always remember to consult the label

More recently, an unusual hemi-parasitic weed called [yellow rattle](#) (*Rhinanthus crista-galli* L.) was identified in a low-management hay field in Schoolcraft County, MI.



Hemi-parasitic plants can photosynthesize to some degree, but depend on hosts for nutrients and water. This annual weed is fairly well known in some parts of the US, including New Hampshire and [Vermont](#). The Upper Peninsula farmer, a new owner of the property, doesn't know how the weed got established on his small farm. Yellow rattle attaches to the root system of host plants and unlike dodder, prefers grasses (though it has a large host range). It has reached the point in some areas where grass forage plants are nearly gone. Management options are mostly cultural, including early hay cutting to prevent yellow rattle seed production, increasing the non-vulnerable legume component of the hay or pasture, and cleaning hay-mowing equipment used in an infested field before moving to a new field.

If you notice an unusual or strange weed infestation in a crop production field, feel free to contact your local Michigan State University Extension field or vegetable crop educator for assistance.

**Bay de Noc Beef Producers
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Saturday, September 17 at 1:00 p.m.
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Market Report

Choice Steers	\$105—\$115 per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$90—\$112 per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$55—\$64 per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$150—\$170 per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$65—\$75 per 100 lbs.
Calves	\$125—\$160 per 100 lbs.
Goats	\$225—\$300 per 100 lbs.

Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows	\$1500—\$2000/head
Grade Holstein bred heifers	\$1600—\$2000/head

Feed Prices across the U.P. - 5/16

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$9.84	\$196.75	\$158-270
Soymeal	\$22.83	\$456.50	\$405-552
Oats	\$8.74	\$174.75	\$146-198
Barley	\$9.46	\$189.25	\$140-232
Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots			

To stay in tuned with the latest in local food resources and events, check out *The Plowshare*, the formal newsletter for the U.P. Food Exchange
<http://upfoodexchange.com/newsletter/>

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If you do not wish to receive this publication, please contact Michelle at colema98@msu.edu or (906) 439-5114

Calendar of Events

- August 28 Whole Farm Health Short Course, The North Farm @ UPREC (1-6 pm)
- September 10 MAEAP Pastured Livestock Tour @ UPREC (1-6 pm)
- September 13 Soil Quality Field Day, Alger County @ Bahrman Potato Farm, Rumely (4 pm)
- September 14 Soil Quality Field Day @ Melodydell Dairy, Vulcan (1 pm CST)
- September 14 Soil Quality Field Day @ MSU Forest Biomass Innovation Center—rented land by Lippens Potato Farm (6:30 pm EST)
- September 17 Bay de Noc Beef Producers Fall Classic Cattle Sale @UP State Fairgrounds (1:00 pm)
- September 22 Farm to School Workshop @ MSU Extension Office, Stephenson (6:30-8:30 pm)
- Sept. 22-23 MSU Grazing School, Bay Mills Community College Waishkey Bay Farm, Brimley, MI
- September 27 Soil Quality Field Day @ Ken and Lael Janson Farm, Pelkie (6:00 pm EST)
- September 28 Soil Quality Field Day @ Dykstra Beef Farm, Ontonagon (6:00 pm EST)
- October 9 Seed Saving, Short Course, The North Farm @ UPREC (1-6 pm)

North Farm Short Course focusing on Seed Saving

These short courses are an in-depth exploration of farming fundamentals and best practices for diversified vegetable growers. Each five-hour learning session has an emphasis on hands-on activities so participants can practice what they learn, and includes the cost of materials for a project.

All workshops will be held on-site starting at 1 pm EST and will include a combination of experiential and classroom-based learning. Short courses qualify for education hours through the [MSU Extension Master Gardener program](#).

Registration is required for these events and can be accessed at www.msunorthfarm.org. Questions? Contact Abbey Palmer at palmerab@msu.edu or 906-439-5058.

Seed Saving – Sunday, October 9