



# U.P. Ag Connections Newsletter

July 2018

Agricultural News from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch

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Hello Upper Peninsula Farmers,

I would like to take this opportunity of having the front page to bring some awareness to a new programming initiative in Michigan that I believe will be a GREAT opportunity for U.P. farmers. Silvopasture is an advanced managed version of the age-old practice of grazing livestock in woodlot settings. Because of the great potential and interest in Michigan the MSU Extension team of Kable Thurlow, MSUE Beef Educator; Julie Crick, MSUE Natural Resource Educator; Jerry Lindquist, MSUE Grazing Educator and myself, Monica Jean, MSUE Field Crop Educator, with others, plan to bring more education on Silvopasture to landowners in Michigan.

Silvopasture is the combined production of trees, livestock and pasturage on the same land. Woodlands can be thinned and forages established on wooded land, or trees can be planted onto an open pasture area to achieve silvopasturing. Silvopasturing is not simply turning the cows into the woods and letting them lounge and graze where ever and whenever they want.

Silvopasturing produces two revenue streams: annual revenue from livestock and periodic revenue from trees. The landowner (farmers and woodland owners) must balance complementary and competing needs of three crops: animals, trees and forage. Though it may be surprising to livestock farmers, academic research shows that timber sales drives the financial returns from silvopasture: livestock sales generate annual cash flow while waiting for higher quality trees to mature.

Silvopasture is more management intensive than monoculture farming or timber production. Yet it can re-pay the additional effort and cost by expanding under-utilized areas of a farm or woodland and optimizing productivity and financial returns from land. Because of its cost, time and complexity a landowner is well-advised to start with a Silvopasture Management Plan as a framework within which to operate in the larger farm or woodland enterprise. To develop such a plan the landowner is advised to work with a team of forestry and livestock professionals that have training and experience in silvopasture management.

Our MSU Extension Team is working to provide more training and field events on silvopasturing in the up-coming years. If you feel you already have good examples of silvopasturing methods on your farm feel free to contact any of us as we will be needing good examples to showcase. If you have interest in serving as a cooperating farm to develop silvopasturing in the Upper Peninsula, please contact me!

Monica Jean, MSUE Field Crop Educator

(906) 786-3032 ext. 106—[atkinmon@msu.edu](mailto:atkinmon@msu.edu)

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## UPREC Beef Herd History

By Paul Naasz, UPREC Farm Manager

The beef cow herd at the Michigan State University Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center, UPREC, Chatham, MI was developed to conduct applied beef cattle research and provide opportunity for outreach education. In the last issue of the Ag Connections, we provided an update on the current status of the herd and its' future direction. In this issue, we will provide a history of previous beef activities at the Center.

The beef herd originated as a result of the formation of the Northern Beef Demonstration Center which was established on July 1, 1969 by a grant to Michigan State University from the Upper Great Lakes Regional Commission. The primary objective of the Center was to develop and demonstrate more profitable ways to organize and operate the beef cow-calf enterprise in the production of feeder cattle in the Upper Great Lakes Region. Due to financial constraints, the cow-calf herd was dispersed in 1981 and stocker cattle were purchased on an annual basis.

As a result of new faculty positions provided by the Animal Initiative, the center purchased fifty-one Angus and Angus-crossbred bred heifers in December of 1996 and an additional 25 heifers in November of 1997 from Heartland Cattle Co. for the genetic base of the herd. These heifers originated from 10 different ranches in MT, WY, ND, SD, NE, and KS. The heifers were developed by Heartland Cattle Co., McCook, NE. Development included culling for growth rate, reproductive soundness, and pelvic area. Prior to shipment to the U.P., all heifers were artificially inseminated and examined safe in calf to proven Angus sires to calve within a three-week period. Purchasing these heifers coincided with a state-wide project lead by MSU and Michigan Livestock Exchange to revitalize the beef industry. The project provided low-interest loans to Michigan producers to purchase similar heifers through Heartland Cattle Co.

During 1996 through 1998, the females at the center were bred to Angus sires with exceptional carcass traits, low birth weight, high growth, and moderate milk. In 1999, Simmental sires with similar traits, were introduced into the herd to improve hybrid vigor. At this same time, calving season was adjusted from winter to late spring to better align with U.P. feed resources.

The U.P. Beef Resource Herd was used in a number of applied research trials related to weaning strategies, estrus synchronization, animal identification, and health. The herd

expanded to approximately 150 cows, 40 developing heifers, and 5 herd sires and the offspring were fed on campus in an experimental model of local beef production.

In 2010-2011, a pilot project was launched that brought MSU born and raised cattle back to campus to be served through the residential dining service. In 2012, MSU Food Service (Residential Dining Services and the Spartan Hospitality Group [Kellogg Center and Catering]) purchased beef from cattle that were born, raised, and preconditioned at UPREC and the Beef Cow/Calf Teaching and Research Center on campus. These cattle were finished at the MSU Beef Cattle Teaching and Research Center, campus, and harvested at Ebels Meat Processing, Falmouth, MI, processed into boxed beef at Byron Center Meats, Byron Center, MI, and distributed to MSU Food Service by Sysco Grand Rapids. This project encompassed approximately 100,000 lb. of live cattle. Superimposed on this project was an experimental traceability system that utilized radio frequency identification and two dimensional barcoding as part of a Michigan Animal Agriculture Initiative and USDA-AMS grant.

In March of 2013, the Angus/Simmental crossbred herd was dispersed and replaced with the current Red Angus herd to begin more in-depth investigation of pasture-based production systems. We invite you to stop in anytime to see the cattle and find out how things are progressing.

**One of the original beef cows from Heartland Cattle Co., pictured here as a 16-yr-old [7-22-11]**



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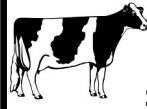
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## Market Report

Choice Steers	\$100—\$112 per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$75—\$97 per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$72—\$80 per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$160—\$175 per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$45—\$65 per 100 lbs.
Calves	\$50—\$115 per 100 lbs.
Goats	\$200—\$270 per 100 lbs.

### Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows \$1250—\$1850/head  
 Grade Holstein bred heifers \$1000—\$1400/head

### Feed Prices across the U.P.

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$8.88	\$177.50	\$160-195
Soymeal	\$21.24	\$424.75	\$372-450
Oats	\$12.00	\$240.00	\$200-300
Barley	\$9.65	\$193.00	\$160-240
Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots			



The Brock Family will be the host farmer for the Breakfast on the farm event June 30<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 1pm. A hearty farm breakfast is \$7 for adults and \$5 for children 12 and under.

This Menominee County Farm Bureau event for families to taste not only a good breakfast but to see what a regular farm life is all about.

This is a family event with something for everybody.

Saturday

June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018

—  
Pancakes

Sausage

Scrambled eggs

—  
Adults \$7

Kids (12 and under) \$5

—  
9am- 1pm

Brock Farms  
W5186 Co. Rd. 360

Daggett, MI 49821

### Beef Meeting with Packer for Grass Finished Beef

By Frank Wardynski

Michigan State University Extension is hosting a meeting with guest speaker Charles Bradbury. Charles is the head of the Grassfed Beef Division of JBS packing. Charles is from Huntsville, TX. The meeting will discuss JBS purchasing of grassfed beef and their marketing price grid. The meeting will be conducted at the UP Research and Extension Center in Chatham on July 17 at 7:00pm EDT. Frank Wardynski is hosting the meeting. There is no charge for the meeting, however producers should call to RSVP at 906-884-4386. **Because Charles is coming in from Texas, an RSVP will allow the extension staff to contact participants if the meeting needs to be delayed or cancelled.**

## When should I harvest my small grain forage?

*Decide what balance you need between yield and quality, then watch those peas-and-oats (or other small grain forages) closely to harvest them at the desired growth stage.*

Jim Isleib, Extension Educator

Michigan farmers plant small grain forages in two basic systems...1) as a nurse crop for a perennial hay crop such as alfalfa or 2) as a stand-alone annual forage crop. Harvest decisions depend largely on the system used. If the small grain forage is a 'nurse crop', then the effects of the harvest decision are based on what is best for the perennial hay crop underneath. Leaving the nurse crop in place too long can create serious competition for the developing perennial hay crop. Many farmers choose to remove the nurse crop as soon as the threat of erosion is past, with little regard for small grain forage yield. The development of glyphosate-resistant alfalfa varieties makes this approach much more feasible. Others wait to remove the nurse crop until the small grain reaches early boot stage. This approach provides reasonable forage yield and quality, and removes the crop in time to allow the perennial hay a good start before it becomes dormant. Finally, some will wait until soft, or even hard dough stage to maximize yield of small grain forage. In this case, there is a stronger possibility that establishment of the perennial hay crop can be negatively affected.

When small grains are planted for forage without a hay seeding, the decision is simpler. Former Michigan State University Extension forage specialist Dr. Doo-Hong Min had the following observations: *"In general, there are three stages of maturity for small grains – boot, milk, and dough. The boot stage is the time when the head is enclosed by the sheath of the uppermost leaf. The milk stage is when the grain head releases a white liquid substance when opened. The dough stage is when the grain head begins to turn to a doughy consistency. As the plant matures from the boot stage to the dough stage, forage quality decreases while yield increases. If the goal is to harvest high quality feed, then small grains for forage should be harvested in the flag leaf to boot stage. In contrast, if high yields are the goal, then harvest should occur in the late dough stage. If a compromise is desired, small grains should be harvested in the early dough stage. If small grain harvest is delayed past the late dough stage, then the forage may be too dry to ensile. Since small grains can progress from boot to dough stage in a relatively short period of time, they must be watched closely to harvest at your target time."*

University of Wisconsin Extension's [Pea and Small Grain Mixtures](#) includes the following information from a 1980's 3-year trial in Arlington, WI on oat/pea and barley/pea forage planted as alfalfa nurse crop:

Forage type	Cut date	Yield (lb/acre)	Crude Protein	NDF	Alfalfa yield during establishment year	Total 1 <sup>st</sup> year forage yield
Oats alone	June 12	3201	13.5	52.9	1915	5135
Oat/pea	June 12	3441	17.6	46.3	1770	5191
Barley alone	June 8	3318	13.6	58.1	1779	5097
Barley/pea	June 8	3469	16.4	58.1	1577	5029

The bottom line with small grain forage crops is to know what you need in terms of yield, quality, and impact on your new perennial hay crop....and watch close!

## The North Farm Skill-Seeker Workshop Series

The Michigan State University North Farm will be offering its annual Skill Seeker Workshop series for the 2018 season. These workshops, focused on topics relevant to small-scale farmers, homesteaders and home gardeners, will provide participants the opportunity to learn from university staff, local professionals and seasoned farmers. All courses meet at the North Farm located at N5431 Rock River Rd.

[Registration is strongly encouraged](#) Please call Abbey at (906)439-5058 or register online at [www.msunorthfarm.org](http://www.msunorthfarm.org).

### Plasticulture: Season Extension 201 · July 15 · 1-5 p.m.

See season extension using hoopouses, greenhouses, plastic mulch and weed control tarps with Collin Thompson, MSU North Farm.

### Flower Production · August 19 · 1-5 p.m.

Learn about variety selection, production management, bouquet arrangement and marketing with Shailah Bunce, Rock River Farm and Jeff Heidtman, Color Blind Gardens.

### Forest Resource Management · September 30 · 1-5 p.m.

Find out about forest resource management, developing a forest management plan and identifying the value of what may lie just outside your back door with Dan and Mary Rabine, Reh-Morr Farm, Holly Moss, MAEAP, and Matt Watkeys, District Forester.



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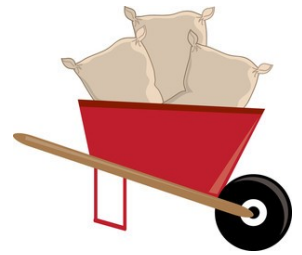
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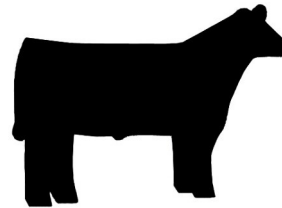
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## Classifieds

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**REGISTERED BLACK ANGUS BULL.** 2 year old. Very gentle. Been to the UP State Fair. (906)644-2107

**FARM FOR SALE by owner.** 278A / 200 tillable, 160A adjacent to farm buildings, some woods for harvest/hunting. Includes 96' barn, 6 buildings, 2 wells. All structures have metal roofing. \$382,000. [Visit FB Link](#) - Brimley Sales for pics/details. Contact Melvin Schwiderson @ (906) 248-6633 or [northwind906@icloud.com](mailto:northwind906@icloud.com)

**SHEEP HERD DISPERSAL SALE** Call or text (906) 280-3269 or call (906) 238-4468; 28 Suffolk/Polypae ewes; 8 young stock lambs; 2, 4-year old Suffolk rams.

**GREENLAND RANCHETTE FOR SALE**, secluded home with great view, pole barn, corral, bunkhouse, well fenced, pond, creek, deer, bear, goose, & bird hunting, major snowmobile trail access, all season highway. Adjoining 100-acre pasture with creek, pond, & gravel pit available. [clarencwilbur@gmail.com](mailto:clarencwilbur@gmail.com), 616 443 6066

**JD 16' flex head** (model #216), \$1,900 OBO. **Beautiful property** in the Upper Michigan, 130 acres for sale or pasture for rent for livestock for the 2018 season. Beautiful river running through it. Great for hunting, building or developing, or simple grazing livestock. Land is divided into 9 paddocks with high tensile electric fence and 5 stock watering ponds. **Herd dispersal** 11 black Angus bred cows, 5-8 years old, 1100 lbs., start calving April 15th. Rock, MI (906) 359-4825.

## BREEDING SOUNDNESS EXAMS BEING OFFERED AT UP STATE FAIR

Dr. Renee Coyer will be available to perform breeding soundness exams on bulls, bucks, and rams during this year's Upper Peninsula State Fair. Cost for testing will be \$62/animal.

Reserve your slot by calling Thompson Veterinary Clinic at (906) 341-2813.

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### ***Calendar of Events***

#### **Field Crop Field Days**

Corn Field Day—August 28th—Meintz Dairy Farm, Stephenson

Potato Field Day—August 29th—Roger VanDamme's, Cornell

Soybean Field day—September 4th—Forest Biomass Information Center, Escanaba

#### **North Farm Workshops**

Plasticulture: Season Extension 201 · July 15 · 1-5 p.m.

Flower Production · August 19 · 1-5 p.m.

Forest Resource Management · September 30 · 1-5 p.m.

**Beef Meeting with Packer for Grass Finished Beef** - July 17—7:00 p.m. UPREC in Chatham

***Remember to connect to virtual learning breakfasts every Thursday 6:30—7 am!***

[http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new\\_msu\\_extension\\_field\\_crops\\_virtual\\_breakfast\\_meetings\\_start\\_april\\_26](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/new_msu_extension_field_crops_virtual_breakfast_meetings_start_april_26)

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