



Great Lakes Grazing Newsletter

Volume 11, Issue 5 October 2022

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Dear Great Lakes Grazier,

As I write this, just outside my office window it's cold, wet, and the skies are grey. However, there are plenty of great things to look forward to. The sun goes down a lot earlier and cuts the outside work time (at least in the daylight) way down, but we all can use this time to catch up with family, read a good book, or get caught up on paperwork.

My MSUE Colleagues and I just wrapped up the final event for the 2022 Beginner Grazing School. I always enjoy the time spent teaching and learning from those that attend. I look forward to gathering the surveys and finding out how we did and adjusting for next year. I also look forward to the pasture walks that will develop as a result of the connections built during events like this.

Pasture walk season is still going. It is probably going to be a chilly fall afternoon, but I hope that you can join us on the Alberda Farm in Zeeland, Michigan. Pete and his family have come up with some innovative ways to feed their sheep flock almost all year on pasture. If you have been wanting to incorporate cover crops in your grazing/crop farming system, this pasture walk will be one that you will want to attend.

It's a great time to get out and connect with old friends, meet new ones, learn something, and share some of your knowledge. Please see the flyers attached and do reach out to me if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Kable Thurlow

MSUE Beef and Grazing Educator

"What lies behind you and what lies in front of you, pales in comparison to what lies inside of you."

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

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New MSU Extension forage and livestock educator in the eastern Upper Peninsula



My name is Michelle Sweeten. I would like to introduce myself as the new **Michigan State University Extension** forage and live-stock educator in the eastern Upper Peninsula. I grew up on a hobby farm in northern Indiana, where I was active in 4-H and FFA. This led me to degrees in agricultural education from Purdue University. Upon graduation, my husband and I started our forage-based farm in Indiana.

While in Indiana, I spent several years working as an agronomist. My time was primarily spent scouting corn, soybeans, wheat and alfalfa as well as taking soil samples and the subsequent fertilizer recommendations. I also have experience teaching at several community colleges and public schools as well as conservation districts.

In 2015, we moved our farm to the eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The farm continues to be forage-based, focusing on grass-fed beef and timothy/legume hay. I enjoy my time rotating and checking our cattle. We have worked with MSU Extension in the past researching soil health and the effects of pasture renovation utilizing annual crops and bale grazing. It has been exciting to see our soil health improvement.

When I am not working, I enjoy exploring the outdoors with our four children and training our equine and border collies.

I am very excited to be the new **Michigan State University Extension** educator in the Upper Peninsula in this new position focus-ing on forages and livestock producers. I am looking forward to working with local producers and helping them find solutions for their individual operations. I will be servicing Luce, Mackinac, Chippewa and surrounding counties. Please **contact me** with questions.

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Cover Crop Grazing 2022



Online at 7 pm
Tues Nov 8th
Tues Nov 15th

Grazing Cover Crop Benefit\$:

The Real Story

Nov 8: Will MacArthur, Woodville, Ontario &
Dean Manning, Manning Family Farm, Falmouth, Nova Scotia

Nov 15: Lyndsey Smith/Chris Moore, Ottawa, &
Mark Brock, Shepherd Creek Farms, Hensall, Ontario

Register for free:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/cover-crop-grazing-2022-online-tickets-439672310717>



Nutrient Management Workshop

Who?

This program is open to all who would like to sharpen their skills of nutrient management facilitation. Space limited to 50.

What?

- Review of state law and GAAMPS concerning nutrient management and manure
- Working with NRCS. How to use the 590 worksheet.
- Nutrient Financials
- Nutrient Management Tool Box

When and Where?

November 10th, 2022

9:00am-3:00pm

Agro Liquid, 3055 M-21, St Johns, MI 48879

Speakers

Marilyn Thelen, Sarah Fronczak, Christina Curell, Jon LaPorte

Contact

Sarah Fronczak
froncza3@msu.edu

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The Alberda Family Farm



MSU Extension and The Alberda Family invite you to join us at a pasture walk at the Alberda Farm. Located at 542 84th Avenue, Zeeland, MI 49464, Thursday, October 27, 2022, from 3-5pm EST.

Please note that there will be several stops that we will travel to. Graziers looking to learn more about grazing season extension and using cover crops for grazing will want to attend. This pasture walk has 100 ewes and their lambs and 12 beef brood cows.

Topics covered will include:

- Beef finishing on pasture and grain
- Fencing and watering systems for grazing sheep on remote crop lands
- Corral for handling sheep and cattle
- Rotational grazing and perennial pastures
- Cover crops for winter grazing

**For Questions, contact the
Gladwin MSU Extension
Office @ 989-426-7741**

Registration:

**There is no cost to attend,
however, pre-registration is
appreciated and can be
done by visiting:**

<https://events.anr.msu.edu/Alberdafamilypasturewalk>

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PFAS Survey

Below is a link to a survey to assess attitudes and perceptions concerning risks to drinking water in Michigan, with a focus on PFAS. This survey was developed by a research team at Michigan State University (MSU) and funded through the US Geological Survey's Water Resources Research Program. It is being distributed widely to residents throughout Michigan.

If you would like to take part in the survey, you can access it at:

https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cG9dCnHTIaUwWmW. It has been reviewed and has been approved for distribution by the MSU Institutional Review Board Office in the Office of Research Regulatory Support. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. As an incentive to participate, every 10th email submitted at the end of the survey (up to 550 emails) will receive a \$25 Amazon gift card. This information will not be connected with survey responses in any way.

If you would like more information, feel free to contact one of the investigators on the project: Dr. Mark Axelrod (axelrod3@msu.edu); Dr. Lois Wolfson (wolfson1@msu.edu); Ms. Ruth Kline-Robach (kliner@msu.edu) or Dr. Stephen Gasteyer (gasteyer@msu.edu).

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Feed and forage outlook

Feed and forage outlook to be discussed in the upcoming Hoard's Dairyman webinar

FORT ATKINSON, Wis. — Our next webinar will take place on Monday, November 14 at noon (Central time). *Hay & Forage Grower's* Mike Rankin and University of Illinois' Mike Hutjens will present, "**A feed and forage outlook for the year ahead.**"

This year brought drought, delayed planting, water restrictions, and/or excess moisture during the growing season, all of which influence forage quality and quantity. This webinar will discuss feed quality lab results, ration costs, and by-product options.

To register for the 2022 webinars, visit www.hoards.com/webinars.

Hoard's Dairyman launched its free webinar series 11 years ago. These educational sessions are held the second Monday of each month and are broadcast live from noon until 1 p.m. (Central time). Attendees are encouraged to submit questions before, during, and after the webinar. They will be answered at the conclusion of the presentation.

Each hour-long webinar includes nationally known and carefully selected presenters who discuss the most timely and relevant challenges faced by today's dairy producers. Past topics include finance, nutrition, milk quality, herd care, milk marketing, and dairy policy.

There is no cost to register or to view the webinars. To sign up, go to our [registration page](#) and complete the brief questionnaire on your role in the industry. Once registered, an email reminder is sent with future webinar dates and times, and there is no need to register again. If you are unable to attend a live webinar, they are recorded and can be accessed later on the *Hoard's Dairyman* website under the [webcasts' link](#). All of the previous webinars have been archived and have been seen by over 364,000 viewers. To learn more about the webinars, visit www.hoards.com/webinars.

In addition, the webinar series is approved for continuing education units (CEU) by the American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists. Each hour-long webinar earns one CEU.

Hoard's Dairyman invites you to join us on the second Monday of each month – for just one hour. And you don't even have to leave the comfort of your home or office.

–Hoard's Dairyman

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Start Planning Your Nutrient Needs Now

By Sarah Fronczak and Jonathan LaPorte, Michigan State University Extension

As fall season approaches, producers across all farms are beginning to look at 2023's profit potential. One key ingredient to a profitable year is how much your farm's nutrient management needs will cost. While fertilizer supplies are expected to be better next season, prices are not expected to fall dramatically. Local availability may also remain a concern as retailers continue working through supply chain disruptions. Despite these types of uncertainties, farms can position themselves to minimize fertilizer costs and retain farm profits.

Know Expected Prices of Key Input Purchases

Remember an important trend about prices. When commodity market prices are trending upwards, input prices tend to follow quickly. A higher demand for a product often brings with it an equally higher demand for inputs needed to produce it. However, when commodity prices decline, input prices are not as quick to follow. The lag time of fertilizer prices to follow markets impacts all farms, regardless of whether you raise field crops, forages, fruits, or vegetables.

Minimizing costs starts with understanding expected prices. A conversation with local retailers about current prices is needed before you can identify options to minimize costs. Once identified, you need to analyze which options are best for your farm.

Analyze Best Options for Your Farm

Knowing what options are available is one part of minimizing costs. The key is deciding which options will work best for your farm's current situation.

- To find which options are best for your farm, start with your soil. Soil sampling is critically important to reducing fertilizer costs. You need to know what you've got to work with before considering any other decisions.
- As you think about yield goals, consider how reasonable those goals are to meet. Are they based on historical trends? Unfounded wishes? It is always best to focus on a goal that is within your farm's potential. Remember, you are basing your cost planning on what yield you want to achieve.
- Pricing strategies may favor purchasing only a portion of your nutrient needs this fall. With a portion bought, you've secured access to some nutrients and a starting point to gauge future price changes.
- Consider manure or compost as a possible nutrient source. These sources can provide nutrients in this crop year as well as years to come. In addition to nutrients, they can also provide organic matter that creates healthier soil.
- Compare fertilizer prices to all other input needs and account for all options to reduce cost of production. Those options can include changes in planting intentions, renting out less productive acres, or adopting new practices to reduce fuel or chemical usage.

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Consider Nutrient Retention and Harvesting

Cover crops can be an effective way of preventing nutrient loss through erosion. When nutrients are applied to the soil surface, whether as manure or granular, nutrients can be lost during rainstorms, snow melt, and winter winds. Actively growing roots hold soil in place, while above ground plant growth shields soil from movement caused by wind and water.

Cover crops can contribute nitrogen to cash crops by converting atmospheric nitrogen to soil nitrogen and by scavenging and mining soil nutrients. Crops grown in fields after legumes can take up at least 30 to 60 percent of the N that the legume produced. You can learn more about cover crops in [Managing Cover Crops Profitably](#) published by SARE.

Cover crops can tighten nutrient cycling in your field by taking up nutrients that might otherwise leach out of the field. Non-legume cover crops are the best at nitrate conservation due to deep roots that form quickly after planted. For much of Michigan cereal rye is the best choice for capturing nutrients after a summer crop. Research has shown that rye planted in the fall by October 1st can take up more than 70lbs of nitrogen per acre. Nitrogen in rye can be returned to your next crop when rye is terminated in spring.

Finally, Cover crops can contribute to phosphorus availability through housing beneficial mycorrhizae that are efficient at absorbing phosphorus from the soil and passing it on to their plant host. Keeping phosphorus in an organic form is the best way to maintain availability for your crop.

Use Available Tools to Aid Decision-Making

Last but not least, weigh through options using available decision tools from MSU Extension. The series of **Fertilizer Cost Comparison Decision Tools** are specifically designed to help you review nutrient management plans and their costs. These tools do not replace soil testing or soil-based recommendations. Instead, they offer an opportunity to consider how to meet nutrient needs at the lowest possible cost.

There are four versions of the decision tool available:

- [Field Crops](#) – Nutrient planning for corn, soybeans, and wheat growers
- [Forages](#) – Nutrient planning for alfalfa, grass, and alfalfa/grass mix growers
- [Fruit](#) – Nutrient planning for fruit growers
- [Vegetables](#) – Nutrient planning for vegetable growers

The [Fertilizer Cost Comparison Decision Tools](#) can be accessed through the MSU Extension's [Farm Management](#) website on the [Decision Tools subpage](#). For more information or feedback on future improvements to these decision tools, please contact Jon LaPorte at laportej@msu.edu.

For more information on nutrient management and its costs, review [MSU Bulletin E-3412: Introduction to Fertilizer Planning](#). If you would like to learn more about the reason behind nutrient management planning you can take MSU Extension's online course, [Nutrient Smart+](#).

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Three constitutional amendments on the ballot for Michigan voters this November

When Michigan voters head to the polls, whether on election day or at their dining room table (for those who vote absentee) there will be a lot on the ballot. In addition to selecting the state's next Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, and [other elected officials](#), they'll be asked to vote on three ballot questions, each proposing to amend the state constitution.

[Proposal 22-1](#), sent to the ballot by a 2/3 majority vote in the state legislature, would change (but not eliminate) term limits in Michigan, and require the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, and state legislators to file annual financial disclosure reports.

[Proposal 22-2](#), on the ballot through a signature gathering petition, would add several voting rights to the Michigan constitution.

[Proposal 22-3](#), on the ballot through a signature gathering petition, would establish a new right to reproductive freedom for all matters related to pregnancy, including access to abortion prior to fetal viability.

Michigan State University Extension has also prepared summaries of each ballot proposal. These written summaries provide comparisons to current Michigan law, similar laws in other states, and possible impacts of the three proposals. Readers can access those summaries at the links below:

- [Proposal 22-1: Financial Disclosure Reports & Legislative Term Limits](#)
- [Proposal 22-2: Promote the Vote 2022](#)
- [Proposal 22-3: Reproductive Freedom for All](#)

All information here can be found on the MSU website: canr.msu.edu and search for Michigan ballot proposal summaries.

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Michigan pesticide applicator review sessions, recertifications credits, and testing options for Fall 2022 and Winter 2023

By Jeremy Jubenville, Michigan State University Extension

In Michigan, autumn is a time when the commercial agricultural community starts to think about pesticide applicator certifications. For some, it may be because the new production season is approaching and they would like to make sure everything is in place before it begins. For others, however, it's because applicator certification credentials expire on December 31 every third year.

In service to Michigan agriculture, Michigan State University Extension has developed this short FAQ to help restricted use pesticide (RUP) applicators find the testing and recertification options that work best for them.

****Important note to those who are recertifying:** be sure to have your applicator license number handy when you are attending an education session or taking the exam.

What testing options are available?

There are three testing options available:

1. Paper-based in-person exams (with [core review sessions](#)) are available through MSU Extension.
2. [Computer-based in-person exams](#) are available through the Metro Institute
3. Computer-based remotely-proctored exams are available through the [Metro Institute](#)

Where can we purchase updated training manuals?

Private Core, Commercial Core, and Category manuals can be purchased online at the [National Pesticide Safety Education Center \(NPSEC\) website](#). Manuals can also be purchased at your [county Extension office](#), although availability may be limited in some areas. Calling ahead is recommended.

What are Core Review Sessions?

These are 4-hour sessions that cover every chapter of the National Pesticide Applicator Certification Core Manual. Review sessions take place in the morning and are followed by the MDARD Private Core, Fumigation Standard, Aerial Standard, and Commercial Core applicator exams in the afternoon. Many applicators have found this program to be convenient and helpful.

Note: No Commercial Category exams will be offered at these sessions.

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Where and when are core review & testing sessions available?

There are currently 25 sessions scheduled throughout the state between October 2022 and June 2023. It is important to note that participants must attend the core review if they plan to take the test in-person.

A complete list of available sessions, along with registration and additional information, can be found at the [MDARD In-Person Core Testing and Core Review web page](#).

Are there other online review options available through MSU Extension?

Yes!

- A 4-hour video was created for private applicators to review the core manual before taking the exam. This video is freely available and can be watched at any time: [Pesticide Review for Private Applicators](#)
- For those that do better in a structured learning environment, MSU Extension offers a more formal [Pesticide Applicator Training Course](#). Those that complete the course will receive 12 education credits that can be applied to their private or commercial core license.

What is the Metro Institute?

A private company that has been authorized by MDARD to administer pesticide applicator certification tests. You can access their site through this link: [Metro Institute – Michigan Testing Site](#).

Where can I go to take an in-person computer-based test?

The Metro Institute has [21 locations throughout Michigan](#) (including the upper peninsula).

How does the computer-based remotely-proctored exam work?

This exam is designed to be taken from your home or office. It requires applicants to have:

- reliable internet service
- a moveable camera
- a microphone

MDARD recommends logging into the system and accessing the exam at least 30 minutes before the scheduled start time. [Click here to view a training video](#) that walks you through the exam process.

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How do I sign up for a computer-based exam?

Registration for a computer-based exam with the Metro Institute is [available on their website](#).

How much do these options cost?

MDARD certification fee schedule:

- Private applicator fee is \$50
- Commercial applicator fee is \$75

Testing costs:

- MSU Extension paper-based in-person exam & core review session: \$25
- Metro Institute computer-based in-person exam: \$55
- Metro Institute remote-proctored exam: \$65

Note that the testing costs are in addition to the certification fees. MDARD emphasizes that the certification process is not complete until applicators have submitted a [completed license application](#) and the application fee.

All of this information and more can be found at the [MDARD Pesticide Applicator Certification](#) webpage.

Does MSU Extension have any scheduled programs that offer pesticide education credits before the end of the year?

The 2022 [Michigan Greenhouse Growers Expo](#) and [Great Lakes Expo](#) are being held December 6-8 at Devos Place in Grand Rapids, MI. Attendees will have the opportunity to earn pesticide credits at selected education sessions.

[The IPM Academy](#) is a self-paced online course that uses a combination of videos, resources, and interactive content. Those who complete the course can request 6 RUP credits.

Are there any other opportunities to earn education credits?

All seminars that offer RUP credits are listed on the [MDARD Pesticide Applicator Renewal Seminar Meeting Dates and Locations](#) webpage.

- Select the month and click “Find Training” to view the list of in-person and online options, along with a contact phone number.
- Note: there is another link on that page to view a list of ONLY online seminars, many of which can be accessed at any time in a self-paced manner.

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Get Ready for the Elimination of Over-the-Counter Microbial Drugs

By Frank Wardynski and Phil Durst, Michigan State University Extension

Livestock producers will not be able to purchase antibiotics without a prescription after June of 2023. They will need a Veterinarian Client Patient Relationship to get a prescription.

“Hey Dad, will you stop at the farm supply store and pick up a bottle of penicillin and some oxytet. – please?”

While that may be something you have said and continue to say, the window of opportunity for doing so will soon be closing as a result of a USDA directive.

The United States Department of Agriculture Center for Veterinarian Medicine (CVM) has issued Guidance for Industry (GFI) #263. In June of 2023, livestock producers will no longer be able to purchase “medically important” antimicrobials over the counter. Medically important antimicrobials are ones that are used in human medicine as well as veterinary medicine. Penicillin and oxytetracycline are medically important antimicrobials that are commonly purchased over the counter at local farm stores or on-line from veterinarian supply stores without needing a prescription from a veterinarian. GFI #263 is the latest of several guidances issued to reduce the risk of antimicrobial resistance and applies to all animals, whether farm animals or companion animals.

GFI #209, *The Judicious Use of Medically Important Antimicrobial Drugs in Food-Producing Animals* was the first guidance issued by the CVM in a plan to combat microbial resistance to antibiotics deemed medically important. GFI #209 was published in April 2012 and started the plan to:

1. Limit medically important antimicrobial drug use for the treatment of food-producing animals needed for animal health.
2. Use of these drugs will include veterinary oversight or consultation. GFI #209 was directed towards eliminating the use of antibiotics to improve animal performance by increasing growth or improving feed efficiency. It also is an important first step indicating that all antibiotic drugs would be administered by veterinary prescription or directive.

GFI #213 was published in 2013 and was fully implemented January 1, 2017. This guidance introduced the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD) which indicates that antimicrobials administered via the feed and water would be under the guidance of a veterinarian and could only be used for medical purposes. This guidance eliminated the use of antibiotics to promote weight gain and improve feed efficiency. Antibiotics can only be used to treat animals for health purposes.

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Like the requirement for cattle producers to have a valid Veterinary-Client-Patient-Relationship (VCPR) to get a VFD from a veterinarian, this new directive also requires a VCPR to get a prescription for drugs that you currently pick up at the farm supply or order online.

A VCPR is a formal agreement between the veterinarian and a cattle producer (client) and meets the following requirements.

1. A veterinarian has assumed the responsibility for making medical judgments regarding the health of (an) animal(s) and the need for medical treatment;
2. Client (the owner of the animal or animals or other caretaker) has agreed to follow the instructions of the veterinarian;
3. There is sufficient knowledge of the animal(s) by the veterinarian to initiate at least a general or preliminary diagnosis of the medical condition of the animal(s); and
4. The practicing veterinarian is readily available for follow-up in case of adverse reactions or failure of the regimen of therapy;
5. Such a relationship can exist only when the veterinarian has recently seen and is personally acquainted with the keeping and care of the animal(s) by virtue of examination of the animal(s), and/or by appropriate and timely visits to the premises where the animal(s) are kept.

Back in 2017 as the VFD rules were being implemented, many livestock producers did not have a VCPR in place, and consequently, were not able to get a VFD. As producers began calling local veterinarians to establish VCPRs, they quickly found it difficult to find vet services to accommodate all the requests. The situation with veterinarians serving food animal producers has not improved and is especially limiting in some rural areas. That won't be an excuse.

Livestock producers should seek veterinarian services as soon as possible to develop a VCPR. There are many livestock producers that use antibiotics at a minimal level. Beef cow-calf producers particularly have seldom needed to use antibiotics in their feed or water. They likely have only used penicillin or oxytetracycline products to treat the occasional sick animal for foot rot, pink eye, or respiratory problems at weaning. It is important to not only seek to develop a VCPR relationship, but to be willing to consider various ways to achieve this, which may include a remote relationship that depends on communicating with pictures by phone.

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Focus on the health of your animals.

While every cattle producer should have a VCPR so that antimicrobials will be an available tool, every cattle producer needs to work on better prevention of cattle health problems. Work to understand the conditions and factors that enable disease to take hold. Remember to ask “why?” (i.e., why did this animal get sick and not his herd mates?) until you arrive at actions you can take to reduce the risk of animals getting sick. Ask what you can do to reduce stress on your animals; ask how you can reduce pathogen load and transmission; ask how you can increase the immune response of your animals? Prevention is the most important thing you can do for the health of your animals. Antimicrobials are a fallback when prevention has failed.

Some livestock producers, both large and small have complained about the inconvenience of getting prescriptions for antimicrobials. Producers are asked to understand that microbial drug resistance is real and a critically important challenge facing the medical community. Antibiotic use in the livestock industry may have contributed to microbial resistance problems. Much of the blame of microbial resistance, whether justly or unjustly, has been placed on the livestock industry. Producers accepting these challenges and inconveniences to abide by the rules set forward should help both from an image standpoint and in the fight to minimize microbial antibiotic resistance.

“So Dad, would you call the vet about that calf and see if she will prescribe something? Then we need to get to work on preventing the next calf from getting sick.”

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