

July/Aug. 2017 Pasture Walks

Southwest Wisconsin Grazing Network

Contact Information:

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July 19 10:00 a.m.

Lancaster Ag Research Station, 7396 Wisconsin 35 & 81, Lancaster, WI 53813

Kernza, Cover Crops and Conservation Field Day Research updates on two projects that enhance soil health and farm profits. Kernza is a variety of intermediate wheat grass that has gone through 6 generations of breeding and selection for seed size by The Land Institute. Wheatgrass develops a massive root system. The goal is to develop a perennial grain that does not need to be planted annually that can have a dual role as a resilient livestock forage that produces when other cool season forages shut down from moisture stress. Field scale plots have been established at Lancaster and multiple local farms in SW Wisconsin. Lancaster ARS is one of the grazing sites. We'll observe plots and see what yield and quality data can tell us of its' potential for grazing and grain.

Wisconsin producers are quickly adopting cover crops as a strategy to conserve soil, capture nutrients and build soil health. Cover Crops after wheat or corn silage are simple. Our short growing season can make cover crops a challenge after corn and soybeans. The second update will be reviewing success with interseeding cover crops into V5 corn so a growing plant is already establish by crop harvest and is able to grow through fall. We'll be looking at shade tolerance and timing for successful establishment.

Rainfall simulation, Sauk County LCD. "If we can't see it, it must not exist". What we do on our land . . . matters. No one thinks they have soil erosion, yet the evidence is clear after each passing storm, soil moves. The rainfall simulator is an engaging demonstration on the impact of different cropping and tillage systems on water infiltration rates and runoff. "It's not how much rain you get, it's how much you keep" Kit Pharo

July 21 9:00- 2:30

Bickford Organics and Meadowlark Organics, 6346 Reed Rd., Ridgeway, WI

Diverse Organic Rotations – See separate brochure

August 1 1-3:00 p.m.

Eric and Kiley Cates, 6101 County Z , Spring Green, WI

Eric and Kiley relocated back to Spring Green and the Cates Family Farm in 2016. Eric is custom grazing dairy heifer calves on a contract basis for a local farm and purchasing steers for grass finishing in the family direct marketing business. He has been engaged in fencing building, learning grazing management, and how to introduce young dairy calves to pasture, and training them to moving through the paddock system. With a year under his belt, this beginning farmer is willing to learn and ask questions.

August 2 6:30 p.m.

Iowa County Extension Office, 303 W. Chapel Street, Dodgeville, WI

Dinner Program. While Wisconsin is known as “America’s Dairyland”, interest in raising beef cattle is on the rise. A recent USDA census showed that a majority of cow/calf operations have less than 50 head of cattle, but raise nearly one third of the US calf crop annually. With a plentiful supply of out-of-use dairy farm operations and pasture land available, many who work off the farm or have retired from dairying, find raising beef cattle a natural fit for their available facilities. Lyssa Seefeldt, UW-Extension -Marquette County. Facing the Finances: Managing in Tough Times & Gene Schriefer, UW-Extension – Iowa County, More Pounds per Cow - Calving with Nature and Retaining Calves. **RSVP – July 27 \$15.00/person make checks payable to UWEX**

August 12 10:00 a.m.

Nicholas Bryant, 5179 State Road 39, Mineral Point , WI

An Air Force vet, Nico has been developing Guinea Fowl as a pastured poultry enterprise for several years. In 2017, he was selected for a SARE farmer rancher grant to examine various housing, feeding and grazing rotation practices for raising Guinea fowl on pasture. While Guinea Fowl grow slowly, inputs are very low, market demand and price are encouraging Nico to expand this portion of his diverse poultry farm. Discussion topics -Market potential of guinea fowl, Mobile production methods, Diets and ration selection, Breeding and genetics, Challenges of species compared with chickens, Poultry processing barriers. \$5 fee farm breakfast - **RSVP by August 5th at 608-732-1202**

August 15 1:00 p.m.

Jamie & Deanne Holmstrum, N9276 Hay Hollow Rd., Blanchardville, WI

Sorghum- Sudan Grass is a warm season annual that requires 30% less moisture than corn and produces quality forage in the hottest months of the year. This will be Jamie and Deanne 3rd season growing this crop on their organic dairy. So far it has grown well on their shallow, drought prone soils and provided surplus forages when their cools season paddocks take longer to recover, as well as providing high energy stored feed for winter. Jamie is also considering improving his watering system for his dairy cows and is looking for ideas on getting water closer to where cattle are grazing to improve forage utilization & management, and manure distribution.



