Dear Michigan Grazier,

The white season is here and with it comes the winter meeting season. This newsletter is loaded with meeting info that may be important to you.

The highlight of all of them in my mind is the MSU Grass-fed School coming the end of this month. After six years of research in Michigan the team of MSU Researchers and Extension Educators will offer all the insight into what they have discovered. From selecting the proper cattle, pasture forage and hay to managing them for better gain and economics, to getting them sold for a premium this two day school will cover it all. Grass-fed beef production is not for everyone, but for those who wish to venture into this market they had better do it well because the supply competition is growing. This school then becomes a must attend for those desiring to improve their grass feeding skills.

Plus there is a whole lot more in the way of meetings to attend that can help you improve your bottom line. I hope to see you out and about a few times this winter.

Here is to a safe and prosperous 2018!

Jerry Lindquist

MSU Grazing & Field Crop Educator
Michigan hay supplies tighten and prices increase

Hay stocks in Michigan are down 16.7 percent according to USDA Crop Reports and many Midwest states realized similar declines.

Hay supplies in Michigan have definitely decreased in the last six months. Going into the 2017 summer season, the growing first cutting hay crop looked good and the carry-over from a second mild winter on farms had many feeling they should have plenty of forage. Granted hundreds of semitrailer loads of hay left the state in March to aid the ranches in the Western Plains States that were devastated by wild fires, but that hay was a very small dent in Michigan’s supply. More donated hay left Michigan in July to support drought stricken ranches in the Dakotas leaving what appeared to be a still plentiful forage supply. But by mid-summer, weather patterns had divided the state of Michigan into two extremes with Central and Southern Michigan turning bone dry and the tip of the Northern Lower Peninsula and the Eastern Upper Peninsula being too wet. Both of these weather patterns made it difficult or nearly impossible to harvest dry hay. With most pastures in the south running out of forage in late summer, many pasturing livestock operations began feeding hay much earlier than planned. The eastern end of the Upper Peninsula had standing water in first cutting hay crops into mid-summer delaying harvest and in many cases causing mowed crops to rot in the field. Yields were 40 to 60 percent lower for the year in that Eastern Upper Peninsula region which is a significant hay producing region in Michigan. These weather events, compounded by the lower total hay acres in Michigan that had occurred over the last five years, have taken away the large hay surplus in rapid fashion.

According to USDA surveys of farms conducted on December 1, 2017, hay stocks in Michigan were down 16.7 percent from the previous year. Many Midwest States have experienced similar declines with Wisconsin being down 17.2 percent, Iowa down 14 percent, South Dakota down 10.8 percent and North Dakota down 28.7 percent. Across the United States, total hay stocks are 10 percent lower than 2016 and are almost as low as what they were in the drought year of 2012. The states to our south may have more hay available as Ohio hay stocks are up 18.7 percent and Indiana stocks are up 35.4 percent.

Hay can still be found in Michigan but it may not be as easy to locate, it may be a further distance to transport and it obviously will cost more than it did at last year’s prediction from MSU Extension forage experts. Also with the wet conditions in the Upper Peninsula, the quality of some hays will not be quite as good as those conditions led to over-mature, late harvested hay that may also be dusty and moldy.
Hay prices have been gradually moving higher as demand grows and knowledge of the short hay supply became known. The big movers were the low quality grass and legume mixed round baled hays that were selling for as low as $65 to $85 per ton in mid-summer. They now have moved up to $90 to $115 per ton. Most mid quality alfalfa and alfalfa/grass hays are selling for $120 to $150 per ton depending upon their quality and the type of bale package. The high quality alfalfa hays are selling for $150 to $200 per ton on average. These prices may move higher over the next few months depending upon the severity of the winter weather, since livestock in colder temperatures eat more hay, and upon how many farms are still in need of extra hay.

These prices may hold because the corn silage harvest was sufficient in most areas, grain prices are relatively low and can offset some of the hay in the ration and because livestock and dairy farm profits are low to non-existent and trimming the feed budget is a goal of many.

For those wishing to buy or sell hay the Michigan Hay Sellers List is available free of charge at [http://web2.canr.msu.edu/hay/](http://web2.canr.msu.edu/hay/). It is an internet listing of those with hay for sale in the state of Michigan.

For more information, you may contact Jerry Lindquist, MSU Extension Grazing and Field Crop Educator at lindquis@msu.edu, or 231-832-6139, or Phil Kaatz, MSU Extension Forage Educator at 810-667-0341 or at kaatz@msu.edu.

This article was published by Michigan State University Extension. For more information, visit [http://www.msue.msu.edu](http://www.msue.msu.edu). To have a digest of information delivered straight to your email inbox, visit [http://www.msue.msu.edu/newsletters](http://www.msue.msu.edu/newsletters). To contact an expert in your area, visit [http://expert.msue.msu.edu](http://expert.msue.msu.edu), or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464).
Growers, consultants and agribusiness professionals are invited to participate in a series of six online programs addressing field crop production and pest management in 2018. Participants will learn how to enhance their corn, soybean, small grain and forage production systems in the coming season, and have an opportunity to ask questions of MSU agriculture experts. These live webinar programs can be viewed independently online. Registration is $20.00 for the full series of six webinars or $5.00 per individual webinar session. One MDARD Pesticide Recertification Credit will be available through each event for application to one of the following categories: Private Core, Commercial Core, or Field Crops.

All programs will be held Monday evenings 7pm-8pm ET

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<td>Interseeding Alfalfa Into Silage Corn</td>
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Visit [events.anr.msu.edu/FieldCropsWebinarSeries2018](http://events.anr.msu.edu/FieldCropsWebinarSeries2018) to register and access connection information.

Contact James DeDecker at (989) 734-2168 or dedecke5@msu.edu for more information, or by February 5th, 2018 to request accommodations for persons with disabilities.
Grass Fed Beef School

To Register by February 23, 2018 visit https://events.anr.msu.edu/MSUGrassFedBeefSchool/

DATE & TIME:
Feb. 26-27, 2018
Day 1: Registration 8:30-9:00
   School 9:00 - 5:30
   Day 2: 8:30-4:00

LOCATION:
Kettunen Center
14907 4H Drive
Tustin, MI 49688

SPEAKERS:
Dr. Allen Williams
   (via Zoom)
 President of LMC, founder of Grass Fed Beef, LLC.
 Dr. Kim Cassida
    Forage Specialist
 Dr. Jason Rowntree
    MSU Beef Specialist
 Doug Carmichael
    MSU LC Manager
 Blaine Hitzfield
   (via Zoom)
 Seven Sons, Marketing & Distribution
 MSU Educators
 Jeannine Schweihofe
 Meat Quality Educator
 Jerry Lindquist
 Grazing Educator
 Kable Thurlow
 Beef Educator
 Frank Wardynski
 Beef Educator
 Kevin Gould
 Beef Educator
 Paul Gross
 Field Crops Educator

Highlighted Topics:
What is Grass Finishing and Grass-Finished Beef & How is it different.
The Grassfed Beef Industry in 2018 and Beyond.
Benefits of Grassfed Beef
MSU Research Results on Grassfed Beef
Lesson Learned on Grassfed Beef
Proper Soil Fertility and How to get it.
Grazing Methods.
Forages and Feeding Strategies.
Carcass Merit & Meat Quality
Experiences in Marketing Grassfed Beef
Producer Panel Discussion on Marketing Grassfed Beef in Michigan

You can see and download the whole agenda when you click on the link to register. Please note that the registration deadline is February 23, 2018.

Overnight lodging is available at
Kettunen Center. 231-829-3421 or www.kettunencenter.org or The Cadillac area www.cadillacmichigan.com

If you have questions about the School or need special accommodations, please call Kable or Jenny at 989-426-7741

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Persons with disabilities have the right to request and receive reasonable accommodations.
RESTRICTED USE PESTICIDE REVIEW AND EXAM

WHEN: Wednesday, February 28, 2018

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Pesticide Update & Exam Review offered by MSU Extension worth 3 pesticide re-certification credits

1:00 p.m. - Restricted Use Pesticide Exam offered by Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

WHERE: Wexford County MSU Extension, 401 N. Lake St., Cadillac, MI. 49601

The review is for those wishing to receive final training before the exam or for those wishing to receive pesticide re-certification credits. The review is worth 3 credits. You do not have to attend the review to take the exam. The exam is for those wishing to become certified to purchase restricted use pesticides or who need to re-certify.

For the exam: You must bring a photo ID (driver’s license).

Bring a #2 pencil and an ink pen.

Bring your registration paperwork received in the mail from Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) if renewing.

Make check/money orders payable to “State of Michigan”. Cash or credit/debit cards are not accepted.

If retaking an exam that you failed you must bring receipt of payment from the previous exam session.

Calculators if needed will be available from the exam proctor. Personal calculators or cell phone calculators are not allowed.

Cost: For the Exam -$50 for private applicators (farmers); $75 for commercial applicators (cash is not accepted).

There is no charge to attend the review. A pizza luncheon will be provided at the end of the review.

Registration: Please register for these two events by either:

1.) contacting Jerry Lindquist 231-832-6139 or at lindquis@anr.msu.edu or Jill O’Donnell 231-779-9480 or at odonne10@anr.msu.edu

   or

2.) registering on-line for the exam only at www.michigan.gov/pestexam

Exams are also offered at various times and locations around the State. For the complete list of exams go to www.michigan.gov/pestexam.

Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting Jill O’Donnell at 231-779-9480 by Feb 23, 2018 to make arrangements. Requests received after this date will be fulfilled when possible.

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Session Locations

March 5
Bay College Heirman Center
Danforth Rd
Escanaba, MI 49829

March 6
Gaylord University Center
80 Livingston Blvd
Gaylord, MI 49735

March 12
Ionia MSU Extension
50 E. Sprague Rd
Ionia, MI 48846

March 13
Mid Michigan Community College
Michigan Room
1375 S. Clara Ave
Harrison, MI 48625
Registration
6:30-7:00 p.m.

Ebove Tb, Current Efforts and Vision for the Future
7:00-7:15 p.m.
George Quackenbush,
Executive Vice President, Michigan Cattlemen’s Association
Kevin Gould / Phil Durst
MSU Extension Beef Educators

The session will provide an update of the current status of Tb in Michigan and current movements at the state level.

Selection Madness: Let's Take a Time-out and Set Up a Play
7:15-8:05 p.m.
Daniel Buehler, Ph.D., P.A.S.
MSU Assoc. Professor/Beef Extension Specialist

Like a pendulum, beef cattle selection has seen big swings from one extreme to another. Current buzz is that cows are too big and small cows should be the rage. Commercial producers often seem overwhelmed by the sea of EPDs, yet repeatedly maintain laser focus on selecting for lighter and lighter birth weights. This presentation will discuss selection strategies that focus on “optimal” and avoiding the temptation of chasing extremes.

Cow-Calf Health Risk Assessment
8:10-9:00 p.m.
Frank Wandynski,
MSU Extension Beef Educator
Phil Durst
MSU Dairy and Beef Extension Educator

Beef cow-calf herd health is usually easy and straightforward. Pay special attention at calving and weaning, then after that the health of animals on the farm is generally good. At least until problems occur. Then producers are looking backwards at what they should have done. This presentation will cover strategies to develop a herd health management calendar: by utilizing own farm risk assessment, implementing management practices to ensure good health while minimizing production cost, and by using judicious use of antibiotics and chemical products to minimize organism resistance.

Register online at
https://events.anr.msu.edu/2018CowCalfGmgmt/

Name

Address

City    State    Zip

Phone

Email:

Registration Fee: $10
Please make checks payable to Michigan State University

Number of attendees: __________

I (we) will attend:

☐ Escanaba  ☐ Harrison  ☐ Ionia
☐ Gaylord

☐ Check Number Enclosed: __________

Total registration fee: __________

Mail to:
Michigan State University Extension
50 E. Sprague Rd
Ionia, MI 48846
Attn: Janice Ransom
Shining a Light on Agricultural Solar Energy Development

Programs sponsored by:

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension

LOCATIONS & DATES:
Powers, MI – March 7
Traverse City – March 8
Big Rapids – March 13
Frankenmuth – March 14
Tecumseh – March 15
(10:30am-3:00pm)
Ionia – March 21
Three Rivers – March 22

TIME:
10:00am - 2:30pm
(**Tecumseh: 10:30am-3:00pm**)?

COST:
$20 / person, includes lunch and handouts

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:
Agribusiness owners, interested citizens, public officials, renewable energy representatives, etc.

DESCRIPTION:
In Michigan, solar energy developers are actively contacting farm owners in an effort to secure land for solar energy projects. The driving force behind this flurry of activity is the 7 cent per kilowatt/hour increase in the avoidance cost recently approved by the Michigan Public Service Commission. This recent development, along with declining costs of solar panels and other equipment over a period of years, has improved the balance sheet for new solar energy projects in Michigan.

In an effort to help farmers understand the renewable energy landscape, nuances of solar leases, zoning considerations, and accompanying tax implications, MSU Extension and Michigan Farm Bureau are holding programs for farmers at various locations statewide. MSU Extension staff with lease agreement, tax, and zoning expertise will provide the educational content. Farmers who participate in the programs will leave with valuable, practical knowledge they can use to determine if a solar lease agreement is a sound decision for themselves and their community. The program will cover:

- The Context for Solar Energy Development on Michigan Farmland
- A Community Vision for Solar Energy Systems
- Zoning Approaches for Solar Energy
- Siting Considerations for Utility-Scale Solar
- Integrating Solar with Existing Ag Systems
- Understanding Solar Energy Lease Agreements
- Taxation Guidance including Impact on PA 116

HOW TO REGISTER: Registration is required by March 4, 2018 at https://events.anr.msu.edu/shine

CONTACT: Charles Gould at 616-994-4547 or gouldm@msu.edu

Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting the event contact two weeks prior to the start of the event. Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

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Join forage producers, graziers, custom forage harvesters, agribusinesses, MSU Extension Specialists and Educators for this annual conference and trade show.

All women & men veterans are welcome & encouraged to attend this event.

Sponsored by the Michigan Forage Council, NC SARE and Michigan State University Extension.

To register go online to:
MSU Events Management
https://events.anr.msu.edu/2018GLFGC/
Pre-registration deadline is Friday, March 2, 2018
All late registrations can register at the door.

If you do not have internet call:
Lapeer MSU Extension
1800 Imlay City Rd.
Lapeer, MI 48446
Phone: 810-667-0341
Fax: 810-667-0355
Attention: Tina House
Email: houset@anr.msu.edu

Growing High Quality Forages

Great Lakes Forage & Grazing Conference

March 7, 2018
Wednesday
AgroLiquid
3055 W. M-21
St. Johns, MI 48879
(1.5 miles W. of Old 127)
9:00 A.M.  4:00 P.M.

Michigan Forage Council
Keynote Speaker: Gary Zimmer Midwestern BioAg

Gary Zimmer is the founder and Chief Visionary Officer of Midwestern BioAg, headquartered in Madison, WI. Known as the “father” of biological agriculture, Zimmer is an internationally known author, speaker, and consultant. He owns Otter Creek Organic Farm, a family-operated, award-winning 1,000-acre farm near Lone Rock, WI, and has been on the board of Taliesin Preservation Inc. since 2011.

Zimmer is the author of three books, The Biological Farmer (Second Edition), The Biological Farmer and Advancing Biological Farming, and numerous articles on soils and livestock nutrition. Zimmer holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a master’s degree in Dairy Nutrition from the University of Hawaii.

Conference Agenda:

9:00 - 9:30 Registration
10:00 Keynote Speaker: Gary Zimmer
   “Soil Fertility & Nutrients for Top Quality Forages”
11:00 Forage Spokesperson Contest
   A showcase of Michigan forage producers vying for the opportunity to represent Michigan at the 2019 AFGC Conference.
Noon - Lunch
12:30 Michigan Forage Council Annual Meeting
1:00 Keynote Speaker: Gary Zimmer
   “Producing & Feeding Top Quality Forages”
1:45 - 2:30 Tradeshow Break
Afternoon Concurrent Sessions:
Forage Production Sessions:
   ♦ 2:30 Forage Research Update
       Dr. Kim Cassida, MSU
   ♦ 3:15 Alfalfa Irrigation Management
       Gary Carmichael, “The Hay Guy”
Grazing Management Sessions:
   ♦ 2:30 MSU Lake City Grazing Update
       Dr. Jason Rowntree
   ♦ 3:15 Woodland Grazing—It Really Can Work
       - MSU Extension & Cornell University
   ♦ 4:00 Adjourn

Registration:

Registration Information:
Michigan Forage Council members: $45.00
Non-members: $55.00
Students: $20.00

At the door registration  ADD $10.00.
(Lunch not guaranteed)

Pre-registration deadline March 2, 2018
(covers all sessions, lunch, and breaks)

To register go to:
MSU ANR Events Management
https://events.anr.msu.edu/2018GLFGC/

Early registration deadline:
Friday, March 2, 2018
(Those without Internet call Lapeer MSU Extension)
After March 2 all registrations will be at the door.

Accommodations for persons with disabilities or special diet restrictions may be requested by contacting the event contact two weeks prior to the start of the event. Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

For questions about registration call:
Lapeer County MSU Extension
Attention: Tina House
Phone: 810-667-0341
2018 Michigan Bull Breeding Soundness Exam Clinics

The MSU Beef Extension Team will once again be organizing regional Bull Breeding Soundness Exam Clinics. Last year, the program tested over 300 bulls for 110 different operations. By identifying these potential male fertility problems, producers were able to reduce the risk of a less than optimum breeding season. The MSUE Beef Team encourages you to have BSE conducted on your breeding bulls every year. Contact your veterinarian or take advantage of the following Breeding Soundness Exam Clinics organized by MSUE. Cost is $60 per bull when done at one of the MSUE clinics. To schedule an appointment at one of these BSE clinics, please call the appropriate contact person as soon as possible. All Clinics start at 9:00 AM. In addition, the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine regularly schedules in house appointments for BSE’s. To schedule an appointment contact the MSU CVM Large Animal Clinic at 517-353-9710.

Location: Gary Voogt Farm, 2831 Hayes St, Marne MI
Date: Friday, March 9th, 2018
Contact: Kevin Gould @ 616-527-5357 or Gary Voogt @ 616-677-3680

Location: Matt Miller Farm, 2685 E. Bellevue Rd, Charlotte MI
Date: Friday, March 23rd, 2018
Contact: Beadle Lake Veterinary Clinic @ 269-441-9233

Location: MSU Beef Expo, MSU Pavilion, East Lansing MI
Date: Thursday April 5th, 2018 from 1-4 PM
Contact: Dan Grooms or Jen Roberts @ 517-355-9593

Location: MSU Lake City Experiment Station, 5401 W. Jennings Road, Lake City MI
Date: Friday, April 13th, 2018
Contact: Kablo Thurlow @ 989-426-7741 or Doug Carmichael @ 231-839-4608

Location: Breault Beef Farm, 868 Hoffman Road, Gladwin MI
Date: Friday, April 20th, 2018
Contact: Kablo Thurlow @ 989-426-7741

Location: Kevin Wernnette Farm, 9144 50TH AVE, Remus MI
Date: Saturday, April 21st, 2018
Contact: Kevin Gould @ 616-527-5357 or Dr. Kevin Todd 231-832-3680

Location: Chuck Preston Farm, 4780 County Line Road, Prescott MI
Date: Saturday, April 28th, 2018
Contact: Phil Durst @ 989-387-5346 or Chuck Preston @ 989-873-4164
Beef Bull Buying Season is Here

“The cheapest bull to buy is the most expensive one to own” a wise old county agent’s advice from years ago that still holds true today.

Great Lakes Beef Connection Bull Sale, March 10, Noon, Clare, MI.
http://jcsimmentals.com/

MCA/MSU Bull Evaluation Sale, March 17, Crystal, MI,
http://www.mibulls.com/

Michigan Beef Expo, April 6 – 8, East Lansing, MI.,
https://www.micattlemen.org/michiganbeefexpo.aspx