

2007 National Farm Management Conference

"Professionals Influencing Today's Agriculture"

It has been a busy June. The 2007 National Farm Management Conference in Rochester is over. As one of the co-planners, it was an incredibly busy time. As rewarding as the experience of being a co-planner has been, I am glad that next year's conference is in Fresno, California. The assistance I provide at that site will be much more limited. We take our turns helping out. This year it was my turn.

The Riverland Community College farm management instructors were the primary hosts for over 230 instructors, analysis specialists and extension educators from across the country. We had registrants from 30 states from Vermont to Alabama to Utah to Oregon.

So what, you may ask? We do it for you. Almost all of us were in Rochester to develop our skills in helping farm and ranch owners and managers reach their business and family goals. There were a few private consultants in the group, but the majority of us get paid by government agencies and therefore work for you. Our pay is the same whether we go to the effort of getting this advanced training or not. We had over 60 educational sessions (it was impossible to get to all of them) plus six tours plus the time we spent learning from each other. You might get the idea that we believe in continuing our education just like you do through your farm management program. Never stop learning.

To help make this type of conference possible, we go to some companies you may recognize for financial help to keep our costs down and provide the best programs available. Case IH and CNH Capital were big sponsors, providing \$6000 in cash plus two speakers. CHS, John Deere, Monsanto, AgStar, Farm Credit Services, Wells Fargo, Rabo AgriFinance, Land O'Lakes, The Center for Farm Financial Management, PCMars, and Red Wing Software were also among our sponsors.



Photo courtesy Laurie Morris, NFRBMEA Historian

They contributed to this educational effort because they realize that education is good for their customers and therefore good for their businesses. I'm sure you understand the link that they make between education and profit.

Respiration rate can indicate livestock heat stress

(from [Brownfield Ag Today](#))

Now's the time to be watching your livestock for heat stress. Something producers can check is the respiratory rate, to see if their animals are becoming overheated. University of Missouri associate animal science professor Don Spiers says producers can usually tell when their cattle are breathing too hard, but counting their breaths per minute can indicate their level of heat stress, "If 10% of the herd is around 70 to 120, it is highly recommended that they don't try moving that herd that day."



For You Excel Users Among Us

This link is for a “Corn Silage Pricer” spreadsheet designed by Iowa State to help determine a reasonable cost for corn silage sold either out of the field or out of storage. I have worked out a couple of scenarios using corn prices of \$2.10 per bushel as opposed to our current \$3.40 per bushel. It helps to back up to last year and use those costs and prices and then to do another spreadsheet with this year’s projected yields and prices. It looks like corn silage will be much more expensive.

Many people calculate the value of corn silage using the rule of thumb of 6 bushels of corn per ton of silage plus the fertilizer value of stalk removed. I thought that number might be outdated. I went back to our southeast Minnesota records and found that over the past ten years there has been an average of 7.481 bushels of corn per ton of corn silage. Over the past five years that number has been 7.68 bushels per ton of silage. The data from the last ten

years is fairly uniform with a range from 7.08 bushels per ton to 8.03 bushels per ton resulting in the 7.481 bushels per ton average.

The best corn to silage ratio occurred in 2005 with 8.03 bushels per ton. The poorest corn to silage ratio occurred in 1993 at 6.11 bushels per ton. 2005 was our best corn year ever. 1993 was the worst in modern memory and that was a wet year. Even the drought year of 1988 resulted in 7.53 bushels per ton of silage.

So, if you are buying or selling corn silage this fall, you may want to work on this spreadsheet a little. If you don’t have Excel or want to discuss it with me, I would be happy to work on it with you.

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/xls/a1-65cornsilagepricer.xls>

More Excel Work on Trucking Costs

Iowa State designed a spreadsheet to help you calculate the cost of owning your own truck or wagons to haul your crops. It is fairly self-explanatory.

Just a note: Our son, Bob, is a mechanic for Interstate Trucks in Albert Lea. He was recently in Chicago for training on the new International Truck engines. Bob told me that the 2007 model trucks were extremely low-emission diesel vehicles. However, that comes at a cost of

fuel mileage reduction of from roughly 8 miles per gallon down to around 4 to 5 miles per gallon. He reported that many truckers bought 2006 model trucks before they really needed them so that they could avoid buying the new trucks with poorer mileage. The engineers are going back to the drawing board on this one, but it may take until model year 2010 to get a more fuel-efficient system.

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/xls/a3-29graintransportation.xls>

How to Handle High Income Years

One of the sessions at our recent 2007 National Farm Management Conference in Rochester was a producer and professional panel that addressed what to do if you think you are coming into an unusually profitable year. Most people would think that this is not a real serious problem, however, unusually high income does bring with it a different set of problems. John Hobert, instructor at Cannon Falls, summarized the session as follows. Note: I have added a few short remarks.

1. Maintain a level attitude regarding higher income. You stuck out the bad years and kept your head, now make sure you do so in the good times.
2. Plan capital purchases and justify them.
3. Develop or update business plans and stick to the plan.
4. Debt reduction should not be the only objective.

5. Use deferred payments to stabilize your income from year to year. Maintain a constant level of income.
 6. Successful operations don’t necessarily drive new pickups or machinery.
 7. Don’t be entirely tax plan driven. Don’t be afraid to pay some taxes.
 8. Control your family living spending.
 9. Maintain or build capital margins in a high income year.
 10. Consider retirement plans other than real estate.
 11. Continue to control expenses.
 12. Control your emotions due to higher income levels. Think things through before making decisions.
 13. Maintain adequate storage to meet marketing needs. Think of your neighbors. Not everybody is profiting equally in this “boom”. Exceptionally good times and exceptionally bad times can both be hard on a community.
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BREEDING
&
COW COMFORT

TOUR OBJECTIVES:

1. What is being done to improve breeding and pregnancy rates in high producing dairy herds?
2. Does Cow Comfort (Sand & Sand lanes) affect breeding programs?
3. Does new Technology with Activity Monitoring provide tools to improve breeding and herd health?
4. What is this Auto Calf feeding all about?

TOUR SCHEDULE:

9:00 — Load Bus (First National Bank in Plainview)

9:30 — Quarry Hill Dairy

10:45 - 1:15 — Shadycrest Holsteins
Lunch at Shadycrest

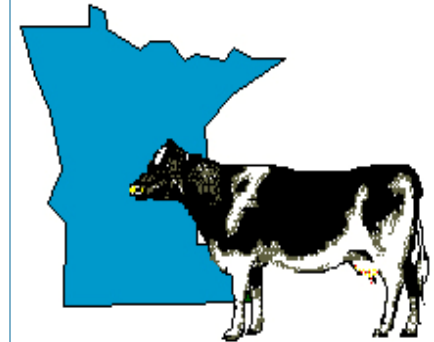
1:45— 3:00 — McNallan Farms

3:30 — Return to Plainview



SE MINNESOTA
DAIRY TOUR

**Breeding &
Cow Comfort**



July 26, 2007

9:00 AM–3:00 PM

Cost for Tour:
\$10 per person (includes lunch)

Sponsored by
Minnesota Dairy Initiatives- SE Region
&
Riverland
Community & Technical College

SE MINNESOTA DAIRY TOUR

SHADYCREST HOLSTEINS

Scott & Michelle Herber



Shadycrest is dairy of 620 cows owned by Scott and Michelle Herber. In September 2006, they installed the DeLaval All Pro system with Activity Monitoring (with milk metering) and began to focus on reproduction. The pregnancy rates have increased from 14% to nearly 20%.

In addition, they are currently installing an Automated Calf Feeding System in an effort to better track and improve calf performance. Shadycrest is raising all their youngstock.

QUARRY HILL DAIRY

John & Connie Meyer



Quarry Hill Dairy is owned by John and Connie Meyer. This 550-cow dairy has been a family farm for many years. Three years ago, they converted the mattresses/lime bedding to sand

bedding and installed a sand settling lane. Herd health, breeding and turnover rates have improved significantly. Currently, they are reclaiming and reusing the sand. This 28,000 pound herd has averages of 150,000 SCC, 20% pregnancy rate, and 185 days in milk. Youngstock are partially custom raised.

McNALLAN FARMS, LLC

Steve, Paul, Matt & Scott McNallan



McNallan Farms, LLC is owned by Steve, Paul, Matt and Scott McNallan. This 700-cow herd had pregnancy rates as low as 13% in 2006, but now are averaging 19-20%. They implemented an intensified breeding program with Genex/RPM and the Pfizer 100 Day Contract— Dairy Wellness Plan Manager. **Compliance** is the priority for the day on the McNallan farm. This sand-bedded, 28,000 - pound herd is using their own sand found on their farm and averages around 200,000 SCC.

bedding and installed a sand settling lane. Herd health, breeding and turnover rates have improved significantly. Currently, they are reclaiming and reusing the sand. This 28,000 pound herd has averages of 150,000 SCC, 20% pregnancy rate, and 185 days in milk. Youngstock are partially custom raised.

Breeding & Cow Comfort

July 26, 2007
9:00 AM–3:00 PM

Tour Registration Form

Cost: \$10 per person (includes lunch)
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO MDI

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

_____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____
Number Attending Total Cost

(Detach Here)

MAIL THIS FORM TO:

Plainview Farm Business Management
Tom Anderson, Instructor
P. O. Box 423
Plainview, MN 55964

OR PHONE OR EMAIL:

Phone: (507) 534-1214
Tom's Cell: (507) 259-6269
Fax: (507) 534-3013
E-mail: tom.plainviewfbm@earthlink.net

Deadline for Registration:
Friday, July 20

University of Minnesota Southern Research and Outreach Center at Waseca
and
University of Minnesota Extension

CROP MANAGEMENT TOUR

UNIVERSITY CENTER ROCHESTER ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

TUESDAY, JULY 10, 2007

REGISTRATION: 9:00 am

PROGRAM: 9:30 am– 12 Noon

➤ **Introduction and IPM Issues**

Fritz Breitenbach – UM SE IPM Specialist and Lisa Behnken – UM Regional Extension Educator
2007 SE Region Ag Interns – Kelly Behnken, Britta Boyum, Kristal Brogan, Tony Gehling, Bryan Sewell,
Katherine Sheehan, Krista Sheehan, and Matt White

➤ **Atrazine BMP's: Understanding the Issues**

Ron Struss – MN Dept. of Agriculture
Fritz Breitenbach – UM SE IPM Specialist
Lisa Behnken – UM Regional Extension Educator

Are there replacements? Discussion and tour of trials with and without atrazine.

➤ **Weed Resistance Management in Minnesota**

Jeff Gunsolus – UM Extension Weed Scientist

How close are those resistant weeds? What should we be doing now?

➤ **Corn, Soybean, and Oat Herbicide Trials**

Jeff Gunsolus – UM Extension Weed Scientist
Fritz Breitenbach – UM SE IPM Specialist
Lisa Behnken, Krishona Martinson, and Dave Nicolai – UM Regional Extension Educators
Tony Gehling – UM SE Region Ag Intern

Discussion and tour of new products, package mixes, and programs to manage weeds. Products include:
Breakfree®, Halex GT®, Impact®, Laudis®, Prefix®, Resolve®, Sonic®, Status®, SureStart®, and Liberty® soybeans.

➤ **Production Practices – View & Discussion**

Ryan Miller – UM Regional Extension Educator and John Lamb – UM Soil Scientist

- ◆ Soybean Cyst Nematode Management
- ◆ Soybean Population and Seed Treatments
- ◆ “Sulzin Nitroman” – Who? What? Why? Fertilizer Update

Farmers continually seek to achieve higher yields. However, one must balance inputs and risks with economic returns in this equation. Visitors will have the opportunity to see field trials on soybean seeding rates (50-150K) and new technologies for weed control in corn and soybeans. Weed species evaluated include woolly cupgrass, giant foxtail, common lambsquarters, giant ragweed, common waterhemp and velvetleaf. Several new products will be discussed.

**Field trials are signed and visitors are welcome to view trials not discussed during the tour.
Visitors are also invited to return and view trials on a later day to monitor changes.**

Southern Research and Outreach Center
University of Minnesota
35838 120th Street
Waseca, MN 56093

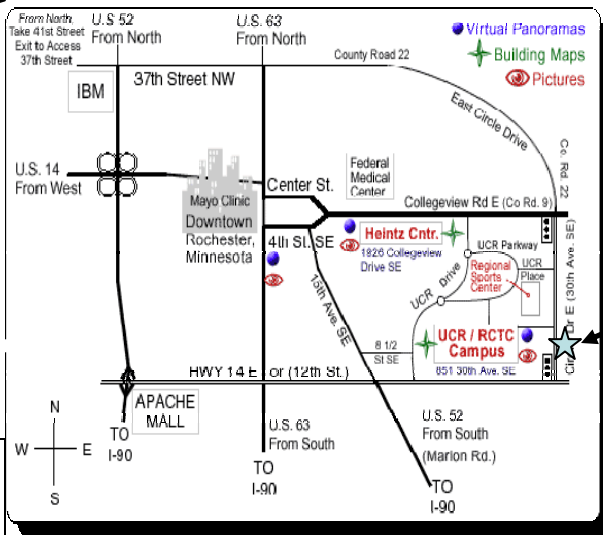
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Permit No. 33



**Cancelled if
Inclement
Weather**

**University of Minnesota Southern Research and Outreach Center at Waseca
and
University of Minnesota Extension**

CROP MANAGEMENT TOUR



**PLOT
LOCATION**

**ROCHESTER
Tuesday, July 10, 2007**

**Registration
9:00 am**

**Program
9:30 am – 12 noon**

Directions: Plots are located directly east of University Center Rochester, at intersection of Hwy. 14 and Co. Rd. 22 (E. Circle Drive).



FARM MANAGEMENT EDUCATION
Wayne C. Pike, Instructor
6540 65th Street NE
Rochester, MN 55906-1911

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



VISIT US ON THE WEB! www.riverland.edu/mgt/wpike/index.htm