

University of Minnesota Extension, Stearns County News
October 14, 2020

NEWS RELEASES

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FOR RELEASE: October 19, 2020

[Now is the Time to Control Buckthorn](#)
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[5 Tips to Increase Milk Fat Production](#)

CALENDAR

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| October 26 | 4-H Federation Meeting RESCHEDULED DATE
7:30 p.m. via virtual online |
| November 10 | 4-H Livestock Project Committee Meeting
7:00 p.m. via virtual online |
| November 19 | Land Rent Meetings

9:30am at the Little Falls Chamber of Commerce
200 1st St NW, Little Falls, MN 56345

1:30pm at the Holdingford City Hall
420 Main St, Holdingford, MN 56340 |



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EXTENSION

STEARNS COUNTY

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Source: Katie Drewitz, Extension Educator –
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University of Minnesota Extension
Stearns, Benton & Morrison Counties

Release Date: October 19, 2020

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NOTE TO EDITOR: Please credit author in published articles. Thank you.

Now is the Time to Control Buckthorn

By Katie Drewitz, University of Minnesota Extension

ST. CLOUD, Minn. (10/14/2020) — October is a great time of year to spot and manage the buckthorn on your property. Buckthorn is a tall shrub or small tree that can reach 25 feet tall. It is commonly found in the understory of woodlands, fence lines, and forest edges. Buckthorn is easy to identify at this point in the season because its leaves maintain a dark green color after most trees and shrubs have changed color or the leaves have fallen off.

There are two species of buckthorn that are invasive species here in Minnesota, the common (*Rhamnus cathartica*) and the glossy (*Fragula alnus*). Both species are not native to Minnesota and were introduced in the early 1800's from Europe as a plant used for hedges. Landowners are encouraged to make efforts to control it on their property as it is on the [Minnesota Restricted Noxious Weed List](#). It is illegal to sell, transport without a permit, or intentionally plant in Minnesota. In addition, the common and glossy buckthorns are an over-wintering host site for soybean aphids and should be removed in fence lines and woodlands near soybean fields to reduce aphid populations.

Other key identifying features are the common buckthorn have egg-shaped leaves with a pointed tip and stout thorns on its branches while the glossy buckthorn has oval shaped leaves that are glossy and lacks thorns on its branches. Female plants produce berries that are dark purple to black and are in clusters with one-quarter inch berries. The berries are not edible to humans, but birds readily consume them and spread the seeds which contributes to their invasive nature.

Management includes hand-pulling seedlings or small trees. A tool called a weed wrench can also assist with removing plants up to 2 ½-inches in diameter. Some local Soil and Water Conservation Districts or other offices may them for check-out or rent. For larger trees with 2-inch or larger diameter trunk the plant should be cut down to the ground and the stump should be treated with chemical herbicide to prevent re-sprouting. Herbicides that can be used include brush or tree killing products containing triclopyr, glyphosate, or 2-4D. Always follow label instructions for herbicides. In some circumstances grazing by goats is also a viable control option.

For more information about buckthorn identification or control visit the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota DNR or the University of Minnesota Extension websites. You can also contact your local Extension Educator. Residents in Stearns, Benton and Morrison Counties can call 320-255-6169 ext. 1 or email wins0115@umn.edu.

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Source: Nathan Drewitz, Extension Educator-Crops
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NOTE TO EDITOR: Please credit author in published articles. Thank you.

Land Rent Meetings in Central Minnesota November 19th

By Nathan Drewitz University of Minnesota Extension

FOLEY, Minn. (10/14/2020) — Landlords, Farmers, and Agri-Business Professionals should make plans to attend one of the informative land rent meetings being held across Central Minnesota. These free meetings are offered by University of Minnesota Extension. Farmland rental rates are the largest input cost and a fair farm rent agreement is a challenge in today's economy with current corn and soybeans prices in 2020.

Negotiating a fair rental agreement that satisfies the landowner and the farmer is a challenge. Nathan Hulinsky, Extension Educator in Ag Business Management, will provide several ways; by examples, factsheets and worksheets to determine a fair farmland rental rate for both parties.

Topics covered at the meetings will include local historic and projected farmland rental rate trends, current farmland values and sales, a worksheet that will help determine a fair rental agreement. Input costs for 2020 will be presented along with current 2020 corn and soybean prices. Worksheets will examine 2021 costs and what is affordable rent that a farmer will be able to pay in 2021, the rate of return to the landlord at current market values, and flexible rental agreements.

Area meetings will be held at the following locations:

Little Falls at 9:30am at the Little Falls Chamber of Commerce; 200 1st St NW, Little Falls, MN 56345

Holdingsford at 1:30pm at the Holdingsford City Hall; 420 Main St, Holdingsford, MN 56340

Make plans to attend one of these meetings now. Please also remember that due to COVID 19 masks are mandatory and everyone will be required to maintain at least 6 feet of distance. Families or groups that come together will be allowed to sit together. Please be respectful of those around you to help prevent the spread of COVID 19 and keep in-person programming available to everyone.

Preregistration is required to attend. You can preregister by going to z.umn.edu/CMNLandRent or by calling/emailing Nathan Drewitz at (608) 515-4414 or ndrewitz@umn.edu to secure your seat. To receive future events, educational programming, and agronomic updates by email, signup at z.umn.edu/tricountysignup. In addition, if you would like to provide input for future local extension programming in Stearns, Benton, and Morrison counties please fill out the survey at z.umn.edu/tricountycrops.

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Source: Stacey Caughey, Interim Extension Educator-Agriculture
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Release Date: October 19, 2020

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NOTE TO EDITOR: Please credit author in published articles. Thank you.

5 Tips to Increase Milk Fat Production

By Stacey Caughey University of Minnesota Extension

ST. CLOUD, Minn. (10/14/20) — Adding value to your milk check is all about balancing between your overall milk production and components. In some situations, increasing the amount of milk fat can boost your bottom line. Whether your herd is struggling with milk fat depression or you are looking to capture additional value from milk, follow these five tips on how you can possibly increase milk fat in dairy cows.

1. Forage Quality

You want to emphasize the importance of harvesting and preserving high-quality forages. Make sure forages are harvested on time and at the correct moisture. You want to protect all those hard efforts with proper packing and storage practices. Try and use two layers of plastic and add an inoculant. The goal is to make sure the ensiled forages ferment properly and are free of molds and yeast.

If forages are of poor quality or not stored properly, not much can be done to cost-effectively minimize the negative impacts. Mold will negatively impact rumen fermentation and if you must deal with moldy forages, it will be a challenge to maximize rumen performance and enhance milk fat production.

2. Mixing and Delivering Properly

Over or under mixing dairy feed rations can alter what the cow eats and how the ration ferments in the rumen. Both can cause issues with rumen pH and cow health, leading to reduced component production. You will want to check to make sure your herd's total mixed ration (TMR) is mixed properly at every feeding to help support milk fat production.

Perform regular maintenance checks on kicker plates, knives, and weigh bars to confirm they are in proper working order. Proper feed delivery and availability also impacts milk fat levels.

Regularly push up feed to help reduce slug feeding in dairy cows. Slug feeding can alter rumen pH, leading to subclinical rumen acidosis.

3. Evaluate fiber and forage digestibility

Nearly half of milk fat precursors are made of short chain fatty acids produced during rumen fermentation of dietary fiber. High forage quality with digestible fiber helps increase milk fat yield. Another tool is the management of neutral detergent fiber digestibility (NDFD) to make certain its at the optimal level to support milk fat production.

Evaluation of particle length can be done both on a subjective, daily basis by monitoring feed bunks, as well as in a more objective manure by using the Penn State Shaker Box. Typically, you should see 7% in the top sieve for lactating diets. Cud chewing can also be a good indicator of optimal fiber and forage digestibility levels. Half or more of the cows at rest in a pen should be chewing their cud at any given time.

4. Starch and Fat Levels

Awareness of starch digestion rates in the rumen is critical when pursuing higher milk fat production. Different ingredients have faster rumen fermentation times than others, affecting rumen dynamics. Monitor the pounds and percentages of starch fed in a TMR. The type and quality of dietary fat are also important to support optimal levels of milk fat production, especially for promoting sustained lactation without depleting body reserves. A common dietary fat level is 5%. Higher levels can be successfully fed, depending on the other dietary nutrient levels that can impact milk fat yield.

5. Balance for Methionine and Lysine

Amino acids are an important tool to help maximize milk and component production. The right balance of amino acids can help support greater milk component yields and avoid milk fat depression.

However, balancing rations for amino acids without confirming that the other pieces of the nutrition puzzle mentioned above are in order will likely not result in the return on investment.

You want to make sure the rations include the highest quality forages possible. Then determine the rations are consistently delivered to cows are formulated. Once these factors are in place, then balance the ration for amino acids.

Please contact Stacey Caughey, Interim Extension Educator for Stearns, Benton and Morrison counties with any questions at 218-330-5737 or butle269@umn.edu



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