

AGNOTES

Ag Waste Open House Slotted For Aug. 4

On Wednesday, Aug. 4, starting at 1 p.m. anyone interested in learning more about Ag Waste Feedlot systems is invited to attend an open house at the newly constructed facility on the Gary and Leonard Dvoracek property located south of the corner of 417th Ave and Hwy 52.

Clean water is something we all need and therefore it is important to protect and improve water quality. Ag Waste Feedlot systems are designed to keep manure and other contaminants out of clean water supplies. These systems catch all manure and water run-off from the feedlot area; they also allow proper utilization of manure as fertilizer, increase cattle gains, and promote a drier feedlot system. For example: four inches of mud can decrease feed efficiency by 14 percent.

There are cost-share programs available for eliminating an existing feedlot system (that is contributing waste into a water body) and then moving to a new site and constructing a new full containment feedlot system. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) when coupled with local watershed programs can cost-share at least 75 percent of the costs to install an agricultural waste system.

Sponsors of this event are the Bon Homme Conservation District, Bon Homme County Extension Service, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Randall Resource Conservation and Development Association, the SD Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the SD Association of Conservation Districts.

Snacks and drinks will be provided.

If you have any questions please call (605) 589-3232 extension #3.

Reminder: Oral Farm Leases Auto-Renew

Oral farm leases will renew automatically for the next growing season on Sept. 1, 2010, unless written notice of intent to terminate or modify the existing lease is given before Sept. 1. Any lease that renews automatically will carry the same terms and conditions as the existing lease.

When and if written notice is given, the existing lease still remains in effect until March 1, 2011, at which time the new contract becomes effective. These rules apply to both the tenant and the landowner. The only exception is when one party fails to live up to the terms of the original agreement.

The bottom line: Any landlord or tenant who wants to terminate or modify an existing oral contract must notify the other party before September 1, 2010. It should also be noted that any lease agreement for more than one year must be in writing to be valid.

GMO

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alfalfa they land on when they need a snack. Studies have shown honey bees will travel far distances and know no boundaries so cross-pollination between organic alfalfa and RRA is typically very easy.

For organic farmers, this can be a potentially very scary situation. The organic market has found its niche in the agriculture sector and is continually making progress through certification of additional acres and also with the growing sales of organic food products. The introduction of a GE crop of this nature could destroy years of hard work and investments required to obtain organic certification.

When an organic dairy farmer in Vermont buys a semi-load of organic alfalfa from his favorite certified organic hay dealer, he has no way of knowing the crop has been tainted until his milk is tested. Leahy believes organic and conventional agriculture can co-exist but special care needs to be taken when introducing new seed varieties which may

Weed Control Finds Success With Bugs

BY EMILY NOHR
emily.nohr@yankton.net

In its third year of use in Yankton County, biological control remains a viable and popular way of controlling weeds in roadway ditches, pastures and wetlands, said Yankton County weed supervisor Tom Schramm.

Currently, the county has 8-10 different species of bugs working to reduce weeds. Biological control, by definition, is using an insect that eats one specific type of weed, and does not eat anything else. Some weeds are reduced by one bug, while others are reduced by a combination of bugs.

Each bug works differently, too. Some, like the flea beetle on leafy spurge, eat away on the plant itself. When the beetle eggs hatch, they work on the roots. Other bugs may just feed on the leaves and stem of weeds.

Schramm said that the eastern half of the county has more problems with leafy spurge this

summer, while the southwestern part of the county has an influx of spotted mapweed.

The county, along with the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and other organizations, have released bugs all summer to combat the influx of certain weeds. Most recently, the county has gotten bugs to decrease the occurrence of the weed, mullein.

The wet summer, however, has made weed control a bigger challenge than ever.

"This year, we're getting a lot more thistles showing up than normal," Schramm said. "... I think a lot of it is just because of the extra moisture we've got. Everything seems to be the rise this year."

The county continues to control purple loosestrife, spotted knapweed and leafy spurge in the region, too.

"We've been working with the leafy spurge for about 10-15 years up around the Niobrara area," Schramm said. "It took until about three years ago and then they really started cleaning

house there."

But biological control does not completely eliminate weeds. That's why Schramm uses pesticides to control weeds in conjunction with bugs.

"It's pretty much at the mercy of Mother Nature whether the bugs will live or not," Schramm said. "In a lot of cases, they won't kill the weeds. They'll bring them down to a feasible population. If they kill all the weeds, they don't have anything to eat."

Another disadvantage of biological control is that it can take three to five years for bugs to be established in one spot, said Brenda Seivers, a South Dakota Department of Agriculture weed management technician.

"A lot of people lose patience waiting for the bugs to work. Sometimes infestation gets larger, and that's why we encourage people use pesticides, too," she said.

"A lot of people are really skeptical of bringing a bug in. Maybe in the past it did the wrong thing or got out of con-

trol," Schramm added.

The process of getting biological control in the needed areas can be a hassle, too. Before biological control can even be brought to South Dakota, it must be approved through a federal agency.

"If (the bugs) take a bite out of anything native here, it cannot be brought in," Seivers said. Still, Yankton County horticulture extension officer Cynthia Bergman said that biological control does a lot of good for weed control and the environment.

"The classic benefit is that once you release the living organism, you only have to release it once and it will continue to control those weeds generation after generation, year after year," Bergman said.

"Where they have worked, they've worked wonderfully," Seivers added.

While Schramm has been implementing bugs primarily in rural areas, Bergman said that she has seen extensive use of fungi used to control weeds in

home gardens.

"We're getting a lot more people asking about it and getting to be aware of it," Schramm said.

The county gets the bugs used for biological control from several locations, including a source east of Volin. Bugs are raised by inmates at the Human Services Center in Yankton and at the Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield, too. While the county also continues to partner with Union and Clay counties and counties in Nebraska, they get some of their biological control bugs from as far away as Oregon and Montana, Schramm said.

While it is too late to implement biological control this year, Seivers said that the South Dakota Department of Agriculture plans to host free bug collections again next year. For more information about biological control, call the South Dakota Department of Agriculture in Pierre at (605) 773-3796.

'Paleo Diet' Encourages Prehistoric Eating

BY ANNA TONG
McClatchy Newspapers

Our Stone Age ancestors lived in an uncomfortable world, spending their 30-year life spans hunting and gathering without air conditioning or heat.

But some say the cave men ate better than we do.

That's the premise behind the Paleo diet, a health and weight-loss trend that encourages people to eat modern-day versions of Paleolithic food.

Several weeks ago, one group of health-conscious Californians took on the Paleo diet and planned to spend nine weeks eating like cave men. That means consuming only animals, vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds and mushrooms, said Rick Larson, co-owner of CrossFit West Sacramento, the gym running the challenge.

"A lot of people at our gym were getting good workout results, but I knew they weren't supporting it with their diets," Larson said. Because other gyms in the CrossFit family have had success with the Paleo diet, Larson decided to test it at his gym. Fifteen people took the bait.

Out is anything that humans began eating after the agriculture and animal husbandry revolutions, meaning no dairy, beans, grains or starches and absolutely nothing processed.

"If you can't eat it raw, then you shouldn't consume it," Larson said. (Although, since our Paleolithic ancestors did have fire, cooking food is permissible.)

The idea of the Paleo diet has been around since the 1980s, but it was popularized in the 2002 book "The Paleo Diet: Lose Weight and Get Healthy by Eating the Food You Were Designed to

Eat" by Loren Cordain, a professor at Colorado State University. Twenty years ago, Cordain read about the diet in a scientific journal and decided to try it.

"For the first time in my life, I started to feel quite healthy. I didn't get any respiratory problems, my arthritis problems went away, and I felt like I gained more muscle mass," he said.

He's been eating like a Neanderthal ever since. "We are genetically made up with a Stone Age disposition, but we are living in a world of Space Agers," Cordain said.

The Paleo diet even clears up acne, he said.

Following the diet is tough: Larson holds weekly social support sessions with participants. On a recent Tuesday, Larson told the group they are allowed to have two vices: tea and coffee.

"But not sweetened, and with no dairy," he said. He points to himself. He's been doing the Paleo/Zone diet for 11 weeks, and his body fat percentage is 2.7, he said.

"Come on! That's how much fat is in my finger," said Santina Pasquini, 33. Pasquini said she has tried everything from Weight Watchers to diet pills, and in the week she's been doing the Paleo/Zone diet, she has lost 8 pounds.

It's not even as hard as she thought.

"I thought I was never going to be able to give up Diet Pepsi, but surprisingly, the cravings aren't there," she said.

Out is anything that humans began eating after the agriculture and animal husbandry revolutions, meaning no dairy, beans, grains or starches and absolutely nothing processed.

STATE FORESTER:

Hackberry Trees On The Decline

Many Hackberry trees in the area are on the decline. According to John Ball, SDSU Extension Forester, a number of counties have reported similar symptoms. The trees have produced only tufts of foliage and many trees have completely died back.

The cause of the decline is unknown. Dr. Ball indicated

that the southern plains experienced a similar problem about 5 years ago. It turned out to be an insect similar to a psyllid that caused the trees to either produce only tufts of foliage or die back entirely.

Dr. Ball indicated that he has not seen this insect on the northern plains and the far-

thest north on record is Kansas. But this insect is a possibility. Dr. Ball hopes to come down this way to further examine some of the trees early next month.

Roger Barrick, Douglas County Agronomy Educator, also has noticed the decline of the hackberry trees in the area.

Know Your Labels: Consumer's Guide To Sorting Through Product Claims

BY KATE BEEM
McClatchy Newspapers

With the Gulf of Mexico oil spill heavy on minds everywhere these days, taking care of the environment seems even more important.

It's all a matter of choice, from deciding whether to throw away or recycle that cardboard cereal box to what ends up in your grocery cart.

And in the cleaning aisle at the local market, plenty of products sport envirolabels touting their safety to the environment and those living in it. Judging from the number of logos with the word "green" in them, it's pretty easy to buy products that not only leave your home clean and shiny but that also help Mother Nature.

Or is it? Merely slapping an eye-catching green logo on a product does not ensure its environmental worthiness, experts say. That's true in part because there are few labeling requirements for manufacturers of cleaning products. So anyone can call a product "green" without having to prove it, says Dee Ferguson, owner of A Green Way Home Cleaning in Kansas City.

"You have to be very, very careful" not to fall prey to the sales gimmick, says Ferguson, who uses only non-toxic cleaning products that list 100 percent of ingredients on the label.

And unlike organic food claims, which can be certified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, claims of environmental safety aren't regulated yet,

says Urvashi Rangan, director of technical policy for Consumers Union, which publishes Consumer Reports and several offshoot publications.

"Just because it says 'pure,' what does 'pure' mean?" Rangan says. That's not to say all green labels are meaningless. Many do tell consumers that the product does what it purports to do — keep harmful toxins out of homes and the environment. It's just a matter of knowing who's making the claim.

Generally, the most reliable green label claims are certified by third-party groups with no vested interest in the product's success, Rangan says. Third parties could be trade groups that hired another independent agency to test a product or a fully independent group whose goal is making the environment cleaner.

When products receive certification from these groups, they earn the right to sport special logos, providing consumers some level of assurance that what they're selling does what they say it does, Rangan says.

GreenerChoices.org, a website published by Consumers Union, evaluates green labels based on whether the labels are meaningful and verifiable; consistent from product to product; and the certifier is forthright about its motives.

Meanwhile, consumer groups continue pushing manufacturers and the government to require full disclosure of ingredients, and some manufacturers are moving that way, either listing ingredients on their labels or online, she says.

MARKET INSIDER

Trading Advice From The Tomb

BY BRIAN HOOPS
Yankton

One of the most reliable, but underutilized seasonal indicators is commonly referred to as "The Voice from the Tomb."

Despite it's catchy name, this seasonal indicator has been nothing short of amazing during the last ten years or more that I have been aware of it.

First, let's determine what a seasonal indicator is — a seasonal indicator occurs at consistent times of the year and results in similar price activity during those times. For example, the price of lean hogs, will normally rally into the spring and early summer timeframe as demand improves and supplies tighten. Grains have similar price patterns, normally; grain prices trend lower into harvest as the anticipation of large inventories hitting the cash market will soften prices.

In the wheat market, my favorite seasonal indicator is called "The Voice from the Tomb."



Brian Hoops

It is referred to as "the tomb" because of the story behind it. The short version of the story is as follows:

Years ago, there was an extremely wealthy wheat speculator. After his wife died, he raised his three children by himself and dedicated his life to them.

However, his children were lazy and they thought they would inherit all the money. He believed his children were wasteful and grew to believe they took him for granted. When he died, he left nothing to the children; all his money went to charity. All he left them in his will were dates of when to buy and when to sell wheat. He further explained in his will that if the children would only follow the six sell signals, they would have the fortune they always thought they were going to have.

The six signals occur throughout the year and follow a strong seasonal pattern for wheat. In the last year, the signals generated by the "Voice" have been highly reliable for the wheat market, as five of the last six signals have proven to be profitable, a 83 percent winning percentage. It needs to be stressed that no trading system or seasonal study is 100 percent accurate and this seasonal pattern is not guaranteed to make you profitable. You still have to find your own entry and exit points and always use sound money management decisions; this pattern should be used as a guide for trading.

Very few people know the story about "The Voice from the Tomb" and its relationship to seasonal trading for wheat.

- Here are the key dates for wheat:
- Jan. 10 — Sell March wheat
 - Feb. 22 — Buy May wheat
 - May 10 — Sell July wheat
 - July 1 — Buy September wheat
 - Sept. 10 — Sell December wheat
 - Nov. 28 — Buy March wheat

Even fewer people know there are also key seasonal dates for trading corn and I have them listed below as well as placed them on the chart.

- Here are the key dates for corn:
- March 1 — Buy May corn
 - May 10 — Sell July corn
 - June 25 — Buy September corn
 - Aug. 10 — Sell December corn

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