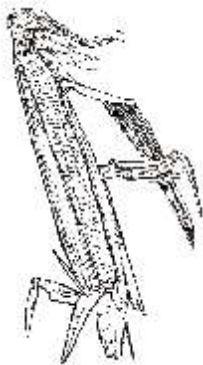




Marinette County

Courthouse  
1926 Hall Avenue  
Marinette, WI 54143  
Phone: 715-732-7510



If you will need any type of accommodation or assistance as you attend any UW-Extension sponsored event, please contact the host county or Scott at the Marinette County office at least two days prior to the event. All requests will be confidential.

Scott Reuss  
715-732-7510  
1-877-884-4408  
cell 715-923-0807  
[scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu)

Sarah Mills-Lloyd  
920-834-6845  
[sarah.mills-lloyd@co.oconto.wi.us](mailto:sarah.mills-lloyd@co.oconto.wi.us)

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## March, 2015 Newsletter

Contact us if you have any questions or concerns for which we can be of service. In particular, if you have questions about the Farm Bill Crops program decision making, contact me and I will help you analyze the different options.

Scott Reuss

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Page 2	Area Horticulture Programs
Page 3/4	Alfalfa Seeding Rate Determination
Pages 5 - 6	Cattle Well Being brochure
Page 7	Farm Bill & Youth Livestock opportunities
Page 8	Strengthening You and Your Farm Workshop Brochure

### Calendar of Events

Sat., March 21	10 a.m.	Fruit Tree Pruning @ Harmony Arboretum
Tues., March 24	10 a.m.	Farm Bill Decisions @ Oconto Courthouse
	7 p.m.	MAQA @ Pound Town Hall
Thurs., March 26	4 p.m.	Small Market Vegetable Production
	6:30 p.m.	Home Vegetable Production (Both at Forest Cty. Courthouse)
	9:30 a.m.	Strengthening You and Your Farm - Cecil
Thurs., April 30	9 a.m.	Cattle Well Being Conference - Kimberly

The **MSU Extension 2015 Beginning Farmer Webinar Series** is a series of 2-hour evening webinars covering a wide variety of farm-related topics is available, including: "Getting started with...."

- ...Marketing, March 18
- ...Small Fruit Production, March 23
- ...Beef Cow-Calf Production, March 25
- ...Direct Marketing, March 30
- ...Managing Soil, Irrigation and Fertilization Interactions, April 1
- ...Cover Crops in Field Crop Rotations, April 6
- ...Poultry Production, April 20
- ...Small Farm Equipment, April 27
- ...Beef Feedlot Management, April 29

A fee of \$10 per webinar is required. Webinar recordings will be provided to all registered participants. Participate from the comfort and convenience of your own home or office. Registration, a brochure containing details on each individual program, and on-line or mailed payment options can be found at

<http://events.anr.msu.edu/beginningfarmerwebinars/>.

Each program begins at 7pm eastern time and will last about 2 hours. A high-speed internet connection is required. You will receive webinar connection information after you register.

# Upcoming Horticulture Programs

## **Marinette County Library Series**

We are starting a series of programs held within the various branches of the Marinette County Consolidated Library System. There may be others that get scheduled, but the ones that are currently scheduled are:

- + Wed., March 25 4 p.m. Wausaukee Library  
Seed Starting - a hands on session for families.
- + Wed., April 15 1 p.m. Marinette Library  
Seed Starting & Selection
- + Wed., April 29 1 p.m. Crivitz Library  
Companion Planting in Vegetable Gardens
- + Thurs., May 7 6 p.m. Goodman Library  
Landscaping for Wildlife
- + Mon., May 11 1 p.m. Marinette Library  
Landscaping for Wildlife
- + Wed., June 17 1 p.m. Marinette Library  
Companion Planting in Vegetable Gardens

All of these sessions are free to attend. If you have any questions about them, contact either your branch librarian or by calling the Marinette County UW-Extension office at 715-732-7510 or e-mail [scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu)

The University of Wisconsin-Extension provides affirmative action and equal opportunity in education, programming and employment. If you need any accommodations to assist in your participation of this program, please contact Scott or Gina at 715-732-7510 at least 24 hours prior to the event. All requests will be kept confidential.

## **Master Gardener Volunteer Training**

The Master Gardener Volunteer training is being offered in Florence this year, with a cost of \$95 per individual or \$155 per couple. The training is a 14 week series, taking place on Tuesday evenings from March 17 to June 16 and held mostly at the Natural Resources Center. Contact Scott for more information, or Kathy Bednarski in the Florence office at 715-528-4480.

## **Spring Garden Conferences**

The annual Northern Lights Master Gardener Volunteers' Spring Garden Conference will be held on Saturday, March 28 at UW-Marquette. The brochure is available at <http://marinette.uwex.edu> or at many local libraries and both UWEX offices.

The annual North Stars Garden Conference will be held in Florence on Saturday, May 2. Contact Kathy in the Florence County UWEX office, 715-528-4480 to get a copy of the brochure.

## **Home and Market Growers' Vegetable Production Workshops**

### **Crandon, Thurs., March 26**

There is a pair of workshops being sponsored by UW-Extension of Marinette and Forest Counties on Thursday, March 26 in the Forest County County Board Room regarding vegetable production. The afternoon session starts at 4 p.m. and will focus on growing vegetables for sale at farmer's markets or off the farm. We will analyze cost of production and pricing basics, and logistics and legalities that you need to consider.

The evening session starts at 6:30 and will concentrate on home garden vegetable production, from start to finish. Anyone is welcome to attend either, or both, sessions, whether they plan on growing for themselves or others. Both are free to attend. If you have any questions, contact either Steve Nelson in the Forest Cty. Office at 715-478-7797 or Scott Reuss in the Marinette office at 715-732-7510.

## **Fruit Tree Pruning Workshops**

### **Harmony Arboretum - Sat., March 21 @ 10 am**

Pruning of fruit trees is necessary to maintain tree health and high production capacity. Proper pruning also helps increase fruit size and quality by assisting with pest management and regulating fruit set. Optimal timing of pruning activities in a normal year is late February through early April, but can be earlier or later due to late winter temperature patterns.

Participants will have the chance to learn the how and why of proper pruning and then apply those new skills with hands-on practice. The majority of the program will be conducted outside, so dress appropriately. Scott Reuss, UW-Extension Crops/Horticulture Agent, will be leading participants through the day's activities and will be demonstrating young tree training techniques, as well as how to 'fix' older trees that may need more assistance.

There is a \$5 registration fee for this workshop to cover the cost of the publications which will be distributed as part of the opportunity, and refreshments. Pre-registration is requested by contacting the Marinette County UW-Extension office, 715-732-7510 or by e-mailing to [sreuss@marinettecounty.com](mailto:sreuss@marinettecounty.com).

### **Iron River, MI - Friday, April 10**

Basically all the same concepts as above, except that the registration fee is different, and registration and site information are being handled by Roger Jaworski in the Iron Conservation District. Call him at (906) 875-3765 for details and to RSVP.

## Determining the Optimum Alfalfa Seeding Rate

by Mike Rankin

### Introduction

Virtually everyone who has applied their trade as an alfalfa researcher has done a seeding rate study at some point in their career. The scientific literature is full of such studies and most come to the same conclusion: very little of what we dump in the drill ends up as a productive alfalfa plant that lives to see the next presidential election. It's not anyone's fault, but rather that inefficiency is a part of the deal. However, there should be some consideration given to cutting losses simply because input costs, including seed, are not getting any cheaper.

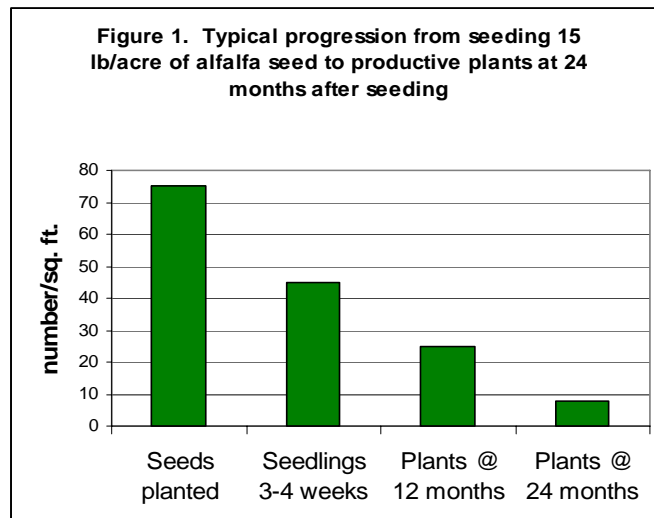
To take a closer look at the issue of alfalfa seeding rates, let's start at the beginning with the seed itself. There are about 199,000 alfalfa seeds per pound. If that one pound was evenly spread over one acre (43,560 ft.<sup>2</sup>), there would be in the neighborhood of five seeds per square foot. So pick your seeding rate, multiply by five, and that's how many seeds per square foot are sitting a fraction of an inch below the soil surface waiting to become productive plants when you pull out of the field with your seeder or drill.



### What happens next?

So let's begin with a 15 pound per acre seeding rate (Figure 1). That equates to 75 seeds per square foot. Research suggests that only about 50 to 70 percent of

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those seeds will be accounted for as seedlings after emergence is complete in three to four weeks. Using a 60 percent average, that leaves us with 45 seedlings per square foot. At this point, it's a survival of the fittest game. As plants become bigger and compete for available resources, another 40 to 50 percent will be gone by the next spring. This leaves us with about 25 plants per square foot as our stand heads into the first production year. During the next 12 months, expect another 30 to 40 percent loss of plants, leaving us with 8 or 9 productive plants per square foot, a batting average of .120 from our original 75 seeds.

As depressing as all of this may sound (after all, we paid for 75 seeds per square foot), our example stand counts for the spring following seeding and a year later are on the high end of what research suggests are fully productive stands. Generally speaking, we like to see 15 to 25 plants per square foot at the beginning of the first production year and at least 3 healthy plants per square foot in older stands. As stands age, evaluation based solely on plant counts becomes problematic because variables such as stem number, stem size, plant health, weed encroachment, and crop rotation restrictions must be considered (Reference UW-Extension publication "[Alfalfa Stand Assessment: Is this stand good enough to keep?](#)")

### What impact does seeding rate have on final stands?

It seems intuitive that more seeds dropped per square foot should result in more seedlings and plants per

square foot. Seeding studies show that higher seeding rates do result in more seedlings through the end of the seeding year. Further, very low seeding rates (below 8 pounds per acre) often have fewer seedlings and lower total-season yields in the seeding year. However, as seeding rates increase, the percentage of plants that die during the first year also increases. Research from Missouri and Pennsylvania recently showed a 45 percent first-year plant mortality for a 10 pound per acre seeding rate and a 60 to 70 percent mortality for seeding rates over 20 pounds per acre. It's been an almost universal research finding throughout the Midwest and Eastern U.S. that plant densities and yield are nearly equal for seeding rates of 10 pounds per acre or more in the year following seeding.

How can doubling the seeding rate, say from 10 to 20 pounds per acre, possibly result in the same forage yield and near the same plant density in the years after seeding? It's all explained by the alfalfa plant's ability to compensate based on neighboring plant competition. Forage yield is not just a function of the number of plants per unit area, but also the number of stems per plant and weight per stem. As stands thin, plants initiate more stems and in some cases larger stems as a response to less plant to plant competition.

### So what's the optimum alfalfa seeding rate?

Recommended seeding rates vary with region and can be obtained at your local extension office. Research strongly suggests that there is little benefit to seeding over 10 pounds of pure live seed per acre in the Midwest and Eastern U.S. regions. In Wisconsin, 12 pounds of pure live seed per acre is recommended in most situations. This equates to dropping 60 seeds per square foot. As alfalfa seed becomes more expensive and transgenic traits come with a technology fee, reducing seeding rates to the agronomic and economic optimum is more easily justified. Further, it's always better to invest in good alfalfa genetics and seed at an optimum rate than to buy the cheap stuff and seed at a higher rate.

### How is the desired seeding rate obtained?

Obtaining the desired seeding rate starts with seeder calibration. Factors such as seed size, seed coating, and the percentage of pure live seed (indicated on seed tag) will impact how the seeding implement needs to be set for the desired result. Further, there may be times where it makes good sense to increase seeding rates. These include situations where the seedbed is less than optimum and where the desired seeding depth is difficult to obtain (either too deep or too shallow).

Finally, because seeding equipment and planting conditions vary significantly, it might be well worth your time to track plant densities on your own farm. Count plants per square foot about a month after seeding, then in the fall of the seeding year, and again the next spring. At this point, we like to see about 15 - 25 plants per square foot to achieve maximum yields. Don't worry if your numbers are a bit lower, plants will likely compensate with more stems per plant and excellent yields are still attainable.

Seed costs, spread over the life of a stand, currently comprise a small percentage of the total alfalfa production investment. Still, it's generally hard to justify over-seeding alfalfa.



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*Please note that the advent of coated seed makes determination of Pure Live Seed Lbs. Per acre even more important. UWEX is going to survey new seeding fields across WI for a full year to quantify seeding rate and established plants per sq. ft. Let me know if you want me to survey any of your fields. 715-732-7510 or e-mail to [sreuss@marinettecounty.com](mailto:sreuss@marinettecounty.com)*

*Call me when you are going to plant.*



# Wisconsin Dairy and Beef Well-Being Conference

April 30, 2015

**UW**  
**Extension**

University of Wisconsin-Extension



<http://fyi.uwex.edu/animalhusbandryconference/>

## Liberty Hall

800 Eisenhower Dr, Kimberly, WI 54136

### Agenda

9:00 AM	Registration			
9:30 AM	<i>We're Only as Good as Our Customers Think We Are</i> Bruce Feinberg, McDonald's Global Health and Welfare Officer			
10:20 AM	<i>Proper Animal Care is Not Just Good for Cattle, It's Good for All of Us</i> Dr. Dee Griffin, Feedlot Production Management Veterinarian and Professor, University of Nebraska			
11:20 AM	<i>The Value of a Cull Cow-The Packer Perspective</i> Dr. Lily Edwards-Callaway, Animal Welfare Programs, JBS			
12:10 PM	LUNCH			
1:00 PM	Breakout Sessions			
	<table><tr><td>Dr. Amy Stanton Dairy Cattle Well Being Specialist UW-Madison/UW-Extension <i>Topic: Dairy Calf Care and Management</i></td><td>Dr. Kurt Vogel Assistant Professor UW-River Falls <i>Topic: Humane Euthanasia</i></td><td>Dr. Jan Shearer Professor Iowa State University Veterinary School <i>Topic: Lameness in Cow/Calf and Feedyard Cattle</i></td></tr></table>	Dr. Amy Stanton Dairy Cattle Well Being Specialist UW-Madison/UW-Extension <i>Topic: Dairy Calf Care and Management</i>	Dr. Kurt Vogel Assistant Professor UW-River Falls <i>Topic: Humane Euthanasia</i>	Dr. Jan Shearer Professor Iowa State University Veterinary School <i>Topic: Lameness in Cow/Calf and Feedyard Cattle</i>
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2:00 PM	<i>Biological Systems Overload—Looking at Optimal Production, Not Maximum Production</i> Dr. Temple Grandin, Professor, Colorado State University			

### Registration Form

Wisconsin Dairy and Beef Well-Being Conference

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ # Attending \_\_\_\_\_

#### Veterinarian/Veterinary Technician/Humane Officer Registration:

Early Bird (Prior to April 16th): \$75

After April 16th: \$85

5.4 Continuing Education Units offered for this conference

This course runs in partnership with the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine (UW-SVM). The UW-SVM is an accredited continuing veterinary medical education provider; however, participants should be aware that some boards have limitations on the number of hours accepted in certain categories and/or restrictions on certain methods of delivery.



#### General Registration:

Early Bird (Prior to April 16th): \$45

After April 16th: \$55

CEU Credits available for:

4 Hours for American Registry for Professional Animal Scientists (ARPAS)

1 Beef/Dairy Beef Quality Assurance

**Registration Deadline: April 23, 2015**

**Make check payable to: UW-Extension**

**Mail to: Outagamie County UW-Extension**

**3365 W. Brewster Street**

**Appleton WI 54914**

# Featured Speakers



Temple Grandin

**Dr. Temple Grandin**—Temple Grandin has done extensive work on the design of handling facilities. Half the cattle in the U.S. and Canada are handled in equipment she has designed for meat plants. Other professional activities include developing animal welfare guidelines for the meat industry and consulting with McDonalds, Wendy's International, Burger King, and other companies on animal welfare.

Dr. Grandin has also won prestigious industry awards including the Richard L. Knowlton Award from Meat Marketing and Technology Magazine and the Industry Advancement Award from the American Meat Institute and the Beef Top 40 industry leaders and the Lifetime Achievement Award from The National Cattlemen's Beef Association. Her work has also been recognized by humane groups and she received several awards. HBO has recently premiered a movie about Temple's early life and career with the livestock industry. The movie received seven Emmy awards, a Golden Globe, and a Peabody Award. In 2011, Temple was inducted into the Cowgirl Hall of Fame.



Jan Shearer

**Dr. Jan Shearer**—Jan Shearer is currently Professor and Extension Veterinarian at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. His areas of interest and expertise include bovine lameness, animal welfare and euthanasia of cattle. He is Chair of the Food Animal Working Group of the American Veterinary Medical Association's Panel on Euthanasia and a member of the AVMA's Panel on Humane Slaughter. He has been honored by The Ohio State University's College of Veterinary Medicine with the Distinguished Alumnus Award, by the American Association of Bovine Practitioners with the Alpha Award of Excellence and by the AVMA in 2011 as recipient of the AVMA Animal Welfare Award.



Dee Griffin

**Dr. Dee Griffin**—Most of Dee Griffin's career has been spent full time in the cattle industry. He was the staff veterinarian for Hitch Enterprises, a family owned operation that had 1200 cows, as many as 20,000 stockers, over 250,000 feeder cattle and two packing plants. He has worked with the BQA program since its inception when Hitch became the first USDA Verified Control Production beef operation. Today he is a Professor at the University of Nebraska in the Veterinary and Biomedical Science Department. He teaches at the Great Plains Veterinary Educational Center located on the grounds of the US-Meat Animal Research Center and is working with numerous beef herds and feedlots across Nebraska especially in the area of developing biosecurity and pre-harvest HACCP production practices. The FDA selected him to serve on their Veterinary Medical Advisory and Minor Species Drug Use Committees.

*For more information on the conference and to see complete biographies on all the speakers, please visit:*

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/animalhusbandryconference/>



Lily Edwards-Callaway



Bruce Feinberg



Kurt Vogel



Amy Stanton

## **This program brought to you by:**



UW-Extension Dairy Team

UW-Extension Livestock Team

**Monetary and In-Kind Sponsorship provided by:**



**WISCONSIN MILK MARKETING BOARD**  
WISCONSIN DAIRY PRODUCERS



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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the UW-Extension Office at 920-832-5119 and ask for Jean.

Requests for reasonable accommodations for disabilities or limitations should be made prior to the date of the program or activity for which it is needed. Please do so as early as possible prior to the program or activity so that proper arrangements can be made. Requests are kept confidential.

# Agriculture Programs

## **Final Chance to Examine the Farm Bill Crop Land Program Choices**

The sheer magnitude of the new Farm Bill's crops related program decision making dictates that I write one last time about these processes and offer one last workshop to go in depth about them. The final workshop on these topics will be held in room 1003 of the Oconto County Courthouse on Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, from 10 a.m. to Noon. After that, you can head across the street to the FSA office, but you may want to make an appointment to do that!

First bit of news is that the Farm Service Agency extended the deadline for the first two steps that can happen from February 27 to March 31. All landowners have the opportunity (usually done in conjunction with the producer of record if the land is rented) to change the allocation of their farm's base program acres into the commodity crops that were actually planted in the years 2009 through 2012. They also have the chance to update any commodity crop's yield to 90% of that crop's average yield for the years 2008 through 2012.

It is important to know that these processes are not mandatory, but it is a rare opportunity. The 2014 Farm Bill offered this opportunity for the first time since 2002. Updated base acres and base yields may not mean much, but it can improve a particular farm's ability to participate within future farm bill programs, as well. Thus, it is definitely recommended that any farm which has not analyzed these processes take the time to do so, and then make the decision as to which route is best for them.

The other step that needs to be done by March 31 is for the producer of record to sign up each FSA Farm # and crop combination into either the PLC = Price Loss Coverage program, or the ARC = Agriculture Risk Coverage program. UW-Extension recommends that corn and soybean base acres in Oconto, Marinette, and Shawano Counties be signed up into the ARC-County program, and winter wheat acres be signed up into the PLC program, based on analysis of likely program payments through the 2018 cropping year. For Oats & Barley, ARC-County or PLC probably does not make much dollars per acre difference.

If a producer does not make an election decision by the deadline of March 31, all their base acres of record will be automatically elected into the PLC program. However, there is a very significant penalty for missing the deadline. All potential program payments for the 2014 program year will be relinquished. This is significant because current projections are that the 2014 payments will likely be the largest of all five years of

these programs, especially in Oconto & Marinette Counties.

All of these steps need to be done through the local Farm Service Agency office (Oconto office for Marinette & Oconto County farms, Shawano for Shawano County, Green Bay for Brown County, etc...) Producers or landowners are welcome to contact Scott Reuss in the Marinette County UW-Extension office at 715-732-7510 or e-mail to [scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:scott.reuss@ces.uwex.edu) if they have any questions or concerns about these programs and the decision making process.

## **Meat Animal Quality Assurance**

Tuesday, March 24, 7 p.m. start, Pound Town Hall on the east edge of Coleman on Mar. Cty. Hwy. B. Register prior to the event by contacting Sarah at 920-834-6845. This is the necessary training for any youth wanting to participate at the youth animal auctions in Marinette or Oconto County Fairs.

## **Other Youth Livestock Opportunities**

The UW-Madison Saddle & Sirloin Club announces the annual Saddle and Sirloin **Club Swine Project Awards**. Up to five awards of \$100 each will be awarded to first or second year swine project members. To be eligible, an applicant must be a first or second year swine project member, 9-18 years old, and a Wisconsin resident. The completed application is due postmarked on or before Friday, April 17, 2015. Applications must be submitted by mail; no applications submitted via email will be accepted.

The award may be used for any expenses related to the recipient's swine project including the cost of pigs, feed, supplies, equipment, and facility maintenance. The award application can be found online at <http://uwsaddlesirloin.com/> under the Award Applications Tab. For additional information, contact Saddle & Sirloin Swine Project Award Chair James Downey at (917) 923-6620 or [picot@wisc.edu](mailto:picot@wisc.edu).

The Wisconsin Ayrshire Breeders Association (WABA) are now accepting applications for its Shayr-A-Heifer Program. The Shayr-A-Heifer Program is designed to give young people the opportunity to work with a registered Ayrshire heifer as a project animal. Qualified applicants will be required to enter into a contract with WABA over ownership and expectations of each party for care of animal. More details of the program can be found in the enclosed attachment or by calling Shayr-A-Heifer Chairmen Craig Keller (608-437-5156). Application deadline is April 8, 2015.

**UW-Extension and the Rural Health Initiative  
Farm Family Health & Business Management Conference**

# ***Strengthening You and Your Farm***

March 26, 2015

The Main Event  
(206 Lemke Street, Cecil)

9:30 am 2:30 pm  
(Registration begins at 9:00 am)

\$15 per person  
(includes lunch)

**Topics and Speakers:**

<i>Strengthening your Employees' Status -</i> <b>How Changes in Immigration Laws Could Impact Dairies</b>	Luca Fagundes Attorney Fagundes Law
<i>Strengthening Your Mind -</i> <b>The Importance of Brain Fitness as We Age</b>	Nancy Schultz Family Living Agent Shawano County UW-Extension
<i>Strengthening your Public Image -</i> <b>Telling our Story on Social Media - The Local Experience</b>	Panel Discussion
<b>The Rural Health Initiative for Farm Families</b>	Rhonda Strebel Executive Director Rural Health Initiative
<i>Strengthening your Finances -</i> <b>Creating a Retirement Paycheck with Wise Investments</b>	Jon Aumann Financial Advisor Edward Jones
<i>Strengthening Your Bones -</i> <b>Improving Mobility and Strength - the Strong Bones Program</b>	Kara Skarlupka Strong Bones Instructor
<i>Strengthening Farm Risk Management -</i> <b>Farm Liability Insurance - Changes in Manure Classification</b>	Bill Kriese District Manager Rural Insurance



Pre-registration is required by March 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Shawano County UW-Extension  
(715) 526-6136



**FREE HEALTH SCREENINGS** by the Rural Health Initiative for  
Marathon, Outagamie, Shawano, and Waupaca Farm Families

Walk-in, no registration for health screening needed – 8:00 am to 9:30 am