



U.P. Ag Connections

725 Greenland Road, Ontonagon, MI 49953

Vol. 16 Issue 7

MSU Extension

July 2011

Published Irregularly

NEWS & VIEWS

By Frank Wardynski, MSU Extension Educator

This summer in the Upper Peninsula, the bugs haven't been too terribly bad compared to many other years. Those people that dislike the scorching heat have been mostly comfortable during this spring and early summer. Nobody seems to be complaining about drought weather conditions either. The hay and pasture yields appear to be good to excellent with small grains also looking good.

I've been trying to think of the "good" in our weather this year. With the exception of farmers that rely mostly on pasture and producing moderate to average quality hay, I think this year's planting and growing season has been one of the biggest challenges we have seen in recent history. The planting of almost any crop this spring has been a challenge particularly for those of us trying to plant as early as we would like to. Almost everyone has been impacted by the weather some certainly more than others.

One of the most difficult aspects of growing a variety of vegetable and fruit produce in the Upper Peninsula is the climate. Last year was a uniquely warm summer which was mostly advantageous for produce farmers but this year I have heard of numerous problems from them including some frost damage in mid-June.

One area I am particularly concerned about is the corn and alfalfa crops for dairy farmers. Corn yields are always the best when it is planted early and warm temperatures prevail throughout the growing season. Last year was an excellent one for growing corn in the U.P. but this year could be a devastating one particularly as prices range from \$7-8 per bushel. When harvesting corn this fall, I foresee the potential for several

problems ranging from immature low test weights to frost damaged and wet corn silage. With that in mind, I have scheduled four meetings (see page 6) in early August to discuss the current situation and to address the potential management problems we could have with the feed crops this fall. I don't have an agenda set for these meetings; we'll need to evaluate these situations as they arise. If any of you have suggestions for potential resources for the meetings such as nutritionists, commodity brokers, etc., I'm all ears.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Dr. Gail Hoholik for being nominated for the Birth of a Purebred Award. Dr. Hoholik was nominated by the Michigan Veterinary Medical Association. Dr. Hoholik owns Thompson Veterinary clinic in Manistique, MI and her professional interests include animal chiropractic, acupuncture, soft tissue surgery, equine dentistry and equine lameness. Congratulations and good luck!

~Frank

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MARKET REPORT (06/23/11)

By Frank Wardynski, MSU Extension Educator

Market Ready Prices

Choice Steers	\$98-\$112	per 100 lbs.
Holstein Steers	\$95-\$105	per 100 lbs.
Hogs	\$65-\$80	per 100 lbs.
Lambs	\$200-\$210	per 100 lbs.
Cull cows	\$65-\$86	per 100 lbs.

Breeding and Feeder Animals

Grade Holstein cows	\$1250 - 1600	per head
Grade Holstein bred heifers	\$1000 - 1500	per head
Deacon calves (MI. Market)	\$100-175	per 100 #

"Farm Account"

Feed Prices across the UP (6/20/2011)

	Avg. \$/cwt	Avg. \$/ton	Price Range
Corn	\$16.35	\$327.00	\$280-398
Soymeal	\$24.21	\$484.25	\$420-638
Oats	\$15.50	\$260.00	\$220-300
Barley	\$10.50	\$209.00	\$198-220
Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots			

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Wanted & For Sale Listings

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Mark Nachtman 446-3553



For Sale: John Deere Combine 3300, gas engine, very good condition, \$3,000. Melvin Johnson, Crystal Falls 875-3466

For Sale: Yearling Polled Hereford bulls. Delivery available. Klink Farms 906-644-7140

Late Summer Alfalfa Seeding

By: Dr. Doo-Hong Min, MSU Extension Forage Specialist, U.P. Research Center

Due to wet soil conditions this spring, some farmers might have lost time to plant alfalfa. However, there is an alternative by planting alfalfa in late summer (not in the fall) in the U.P. region. Advantages of late summer seeding alfalfa are: less competition with weeds, less disease pressure, full production potential in the following year, and no companion crop needed.

However, there are also risks of late summer seeding, which include poor germination and seedling establishment due to moisture stress, some herbicide carryover potential, and the threat of an early killing frost. Therefore, timely seeding based on current soil moisture conditions and short-term weather forecasts is very critical to minimize these risks. The following steps will increase the chances for successful alfalfa establishment during late summer:

Check your soil pH: Test your soil using proper soil sampling probe and find out the soil pH. If soil pH is lower than 6.5, it would be better off postponing planting alfalfa until next year since it takes 6-12 months to see the liming effect. Instead, you're better off to lime the site where alfalfa is being planted this fall since alfalfa requires minimum soil pH of 6.5 to have optimum nitrogen fixation. Corrective P and K fertilizers can be incorporated during alfalfa seedbed preparation.

Planting date and rate: This is late summer seeding, not fall seeding. Due to a shorter growing season in the U.P. region compared to the rest of the regions in Michigan, a proper seeding date is very critical for a successful late summer seeding. Alfalfa needs to have enough time to store the food reserves in the roots to overwinter and regrow next spring. To make that happen, alfalfa seeds should be in the ground by the first to second week of August in the U.P. If soil conditions are extremely hot and dry, and no rain is in the short to mid-term forecast, it is better to abandon the plans for summer seeding. To increase the summer seeding success rate, it is recommended to increase the seeding rate by 10 - 20% over spring seeding rates.

Prepare a firm seedbed relatively weed free: In summer, whenever you work on the soil, the soil moisture level will be reduced. Therefore, consider minimum tillage or no-till to conserve more soil moisture if there is an option. However, weed control should be done by spraying before no-till planting alfalfa. It's important to have a firm seedbed to have good seed-soil contact for conventional tillage and cultipacking before and after seeding. Avoid harvesting in the fall: Since late summer seeding doesn't have a full growing season, the alfalfa plant may not reach full size before entering winter. Therefore, it's important not to harvest the alfalfa plants in the fall and let them have enough time to store reserves in the roots.

Late-Planted Corn

Considerations For Harvest

By: Jim Isleib – MSU Extension, U.P. Crop Production Educator

A lot of corn across the U.P. and throughout Michigan was planted late due to wet and cold soil conditions. Most U.P. corn will be ensiled this fall and it may not reach physiological maturity before freezing. There are several considerations regarding harvest of immature corn for silage. Instead of 'reinventing the wheel', here is an article written by MSU Animal Science professor Mike Allen in the late 1990's:

Harvesting Immature Corn for Silage

By: Mike Allen, Animal Science, Michigan State University
(Reprinted from the 1996 Harvest Alert #12)

Much of the corn harvested for silage in Michigan this year may be immature at harvest because of delayed planting and a cooler growing season. Although silage from immature corn can be an excellent forage, certain factors related to harvesting and feeding should be considered.

When to harvest

Immature corn is considerably wetter than normal and seepage from the silo will be extensive if harvested too wet. In addition, very wet corn silage may reduce dry matter intake if it is included in the diet at high levels. Moisture content should be less than 72% when stored in bunker silos and less than 65% when stored in upright silos. This is likely to require harvesting after a frost, particularly for corn planted in late June or early July.

The best way to determine when to harvest is to harvest a representative sample of each field (not border rows) and determine the moisture content using a microwave or forced air drier. Do not decide when to harvest by just looking at the corn; leaves dry quickly and turn brown following a frost and the corn appears to be drier than it really is. Leaves are a small fraction (<15 %) of the entire plant and the plant may still be too wet when the leaves are brown and dry.

Length of cut

Chopping coarsely will increase the effectiveness of fiber at stimulating chewing and salivary buffer flow into the rumen. Immature corn forage can be chopped more coarsely than mature corn for silage because the ears are much less developed and kernels, if present, are soft and do not need to be ruptured during harvest to be digested. Cob disks will also be less of a problem with immature ears.

Silage additives

Immature corn should ensile well if harvested at the appropriate moisture content. There will be a more than adequate supply of sugars for the microbes to ferment because less sugar has been trans-located to the ear and converted to starch. Avoid treating corn forage that is greater than 70% moisture with anhydrous ammonia as it might encourage growth of undesirable organisms resulting in a poor fermentation. Inoculants shouldn't be necessary if the corn is harvested during warm weather but should be considered for corn forage harvested during cool weather late in the season. If the daily high temperature is less than 55° to 60° F for several days prior to harvest, inoculants should be considered because the naturally occurring microbes which are desirable may be low in number.

Feeding value

The feeding value of silage from immature corn depends partly on the degree of maturity at harvest. In general it will have higher fiber, slightly higher protein, and slightly lower energy content than normal corn silage. The fiber content may exceed 55% NDF for very immature corn silage or for wet corn silage that has had extensive seepage. Digestibility might be 10 to 15% lower for very immature corn silage because of the higher fiber content and diets based on these forages must be adjusted with higher concentrate levels. Silage from corn that is only slightly immature may have fiber levels that are close to normal even though the grain content may be considerably lower. This is because grain filling occurs by translocating sugars from the stover and the total sugar plus starch content of the plant may change little during grain filling. Slightly immature corn silage has similar or even higher digestibility than mature corn silage. This is because digestibility of starch and fiber decreases as the corn plant matures. Although the grain content increases, the grain becomes harder and more kernels pass through the cow undigested. The non-structural carbohydrates of immature corn are highly digestible sugars and starch. The digestibility of fiber decreases as the corn plant matures giving an advantage to immature silage. Although silage from immature corn may require more grain in the diet than normal, if it is harvested at the appropriate moisture content, it might improve milk production because of higher starch and fiber digestibility.

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Deer Exclusion Fencing on Michigan

Farms

Protecting high-value crops from deer depredation is tricky (and expensive) business.

By: Jim Isleib, MSU Extension U.P. Crop Production Educator

Accurately assessing crop loss to whitetail deer feeding is a challenging task. In legume and grass forage crops, deer damage is not always obvious and losses to deer feeding may be attributed to other causes. Deer feeding in corn, beans and other row crops is easier to identify and quantify, but just as difficult to manage.

In the late 1980's, a series of trials was conducted by extension staff in Presque Isle county, Michigan to assess yield loss in alfalfa and dry beans due to deer feeding. In dry beans, 130 deer exclusion 'cages' with dimensions of 3' wide X 5' long X 2' high were placed on 4 sites. For each harvest sample collected from under a cage, two samples were collected from sites not protected from deer. Data indicated that yield losses attributable to deer feeding ranged from 24% to 43%. Several factors that contributed to the problem were: 1) the presence of large amounts of wooded cover during the entire year; 2) a series of favorable winters which resulted in a large overwintering deer population; and 3) availability of and accessibility to agricultural crops as a feed alternative. A similar study on alfalfa in a high deer population situation at Hawks, MI suggested that 18.7% of the potential alfalfa yield in the field studied was removed by deer feeding at a critical growth stage in the annual plant cycle (when the plants were drawing heavily on root reserves to begin growth).

Farmer concerns about crop losses to deer feeding remain high in many areas in Michigan. Long-standing tensions exist, with innumerable variations, between agricultural and deer-hunting interest groups. State wildlife management professionals attempt to find a reasonable balance between the conflicting demands of farmers and deer hunters. Crop damage permits and block permits are tools that have been used to reduce deer feeding pressure on some farms. For information on block permits and crop damage permits in Michigan, visit the MDNR website at <http://deer.fw.msu.edu/management/crop.php/>.

Of course, neither farmers nor deer hunters are fully satisfied with the results very often. A study comparing attitudes of farmers versus deer hunters with regard to controlling crop damage can be viewed by visiting <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=ewdcc7&sei-redir=1>.

Where crop value justifies the expense, deer exclusion fencing is worth consideration. Many technical resources from the public and private sectors are available that describe the construction and effectiveness of deer fencing, including "Deer" from Ingham County MSU Extension at <http://www.ingham.org/ce/hort/animal%20pest%20problems/deer.pdf>, and a chapter on deer control in the "Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management" at http://icwdm.org/handbook/mammals/mam_d25.pdf.

A 1994 study of farmer's deer exclusion efforts in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and northern Lower Peninsula and northeast Wisconsin revealed the following:

- ◇ High tensile electric was the most commonly used type of deer exclusion fence with 6 foot height striking a good balance between effectiveness, cost and ease of installation.
- ◇ 8 foot woven wire was perceived as most effective by fence users. However, the high cost of installation limited its widespread use.
- ◇ Other types of fence with inconsistent or low ratings by users were high-tensile non-electric and one-wire or two-wire temporary electric fencing.
- ◇ All non-fencing control alternatives were perceived as relatively ineffective based on farmer perception, with the exception of state-issued block and crop damage permits, and regular hunting.

For more information on the deer exclusion fencing study, contact Jim Isleib, MSU Extension Crop Production Educator at 906-387-2530 or isleibj@anr.msu.edu.

Field Day

"Focus on Efficiency"

Forage, Dairy and Beef

Michigan State University

MSU Upper Peninsula Research Center

Chatham, MI

Saturday, July 23, 2011

10:15 – 3:30 EDT

For more information contact Paul Naasz or
Michelle Coleman at 906-439-5114 x 2



4-H Ice Cream Fundraiser
at the Field Day

Farm Service Agency News

SURE Program Sign Up Deadline is July 29, 2011

As a critical element of the FSA farm safety net, the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) provides financial assistance to producers who suffer qualifying losses due to natural disaster. Signup for the SURE Program for 2009 crop losses began January 29, 2011 and continues through July 29, 2011. To qualify for SURE requires that producers implement risk management measures by enrolling in either crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) for all crops. SURE evaluates qualifying losses based on total farm revenue, not individual crop losses. Producers considered Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher may be eligible for SURE without a plan of insurance or NAP coverage.

Late Filed DCP/ACRE Contracts

If you've missed the deadline to enroll your farms in Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) or Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE) it's not too late. Contact your local FSA office by August 1, 2011. Additional fees may apply.

Acreage Reporting

Remember, to maintain program eligibility you must file an accurate crop and acreage report.

Filing an accurate acreage report at your local FSA office can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage is acreage that was timely planted with the intent to harvest, but because of disaster related conditions, the crop failed before it would be brought to harvest. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date. Annual acreage reports are required for most Farm Service Agency programs.

The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline is June 30, 2011 for fall seeded small-grain crops and July 15, 2010 for all other crops and cropland uses.

Prevented Planting

The prevented planting reporting deadline had been extended for 2011. Affected producers must file a notice of loss (CCC-576) for prevented planting in the FSA office by July 15, 2011. Remember, prevented planting is the inability to plant the intended crop acreage with proper equipment by the final planting date for the crop type because of a natural disaster. If you plant an alternative crop on those acres, those acres are not considered prevented planting.

For example, if you intended to plant oats, but subsequently planted corn on the acres, FSA does not consider those acres as prevented planting. If you were unable to plant all the acres you intended action is necessary. You may want to report those acres as prevented planted when you file your acreage report. If you have crop insurance, talk to your agent immediately to find out if prevented planted acres are covered

under your policy and if restrictions apply. For more specific information on Prevented Planting, contact your local FSA Office.

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)

Low cost financing for storage facilities is available for qualifying producers to build or remodel farm storage facilities for a variety of commodities, including wheat, soybeans, corn, hay, renewable biomass, and cold storage for fruits and vegetables. The low interest rate changes monthly and is based on the rate of interest charged on Treasury Securities of comparable term. Loan terms of 7, 10, and 12 years are available for the purchase and installation of new, eligible storage facilities or permanently affixed drying and handling equipment or for new components used to remodel existing facilities. Eligible facilities include conventional type bins or cribs, new or remanufactured oxygen-limiting upright and bunker silos, new permanently affixed structures suitable for storing hay and renewable biomass, and new cold storage facilities suitable for storing the fruits and vegetable produced by the borrower. Loan limits are up to \$500,000. Loan terms: \$100,000 or less – 7 years; \$100,000.01 - \$250,000 – 7 or 10 years; \$250,000.01 - \$500,000 – 7, 10, or 12 years. Sign-up is continuous, as long as CCC funds are available.

Change in Farming Operation

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate.

Retirement Announcement:

On July 29th, I will be retiring from the Farm Service Agency and would like to take this opportunity to say goodbye to all of my friends in the Delta/Schoolcraft/Alger/Marquette and (Chippewa/Luce/Mackinac) areas. Time flew by so fast (almost 28 years). You all took good care of me when I was getting my feet wet back in the "old" days and I will be forever grateful. I have enjoyed working with each and every one of you.

My husband is retired and the next phase of our lives will be camping, 4 wheeling and trail riding with our grandchildren and enjoying every minute of the adventures that await us.

Your friend, Donna Silta

There will be a retirement reception for Donna Silta on Friday, July 22, 2011 from 12-4 pm at the Gladstone Service Center, 2003 Minneapolis Ave., Gladstone, MI 49837. Questions please contact Rita 906-428-3361 ext 100 or rita.mills@mi.usda.gov.

Planting Brown Midrib Sorghum Sudangrass to Replace Corn Silage

By Frank Wardynski, MSU Extension Educator

Due to weather conditions this spring, corn planting was delayed. As a result, some dairy farmers have harvested their first cutting of alfalfa before all acres intended for corn were even planted. Due to the continuing wet conditions and the inability to plant these acres, an alternative crop may be considered to replace corn silage.

Brown midrib sorghum sudangrass is a high yielding forage with highly digestible fiber. If planted in June, two cuttings can be obtained and can yield near that of corn on a dry matter basis. It can be planted as late as July 15 for one cutting. Soil temperature is critical for germination and needs to be at least 60 degrees Fahrenheit with 65 degrees preferable. Warm soil temperatures typically are not a problem but this year it has been particularly cool. If harvested at 36-48 inches tall, the energy content is similar to corn silage and crude protein concentration ranges from 15-20%.

As is the case with all sorghum species crops, prussic acid poisoning can be a problem. Prussic acid is found in its highest concentrations in the leaves and new shoots making grazing cattle most susceptible to it. Frost and severe drought frequently increase prussic acid content and therefore it should not be grazed under these conditions. Prussic acid poisoning usually is not a problem in stored feeds with concentrations of prussic acid decreasing during the sun curing and fermentation process. Brown midrib sorghum sudangrass can be stored as chopped silage, round bale silage and sun cured hay.

Another potential problem can occur during the wilting process. Sorghum sudangrass can hold water after cutting and may not dry to an acceptable moisture level for fermentation. While this crop can dry rapidly under ideal drying conditions, the large mass of forage can inhibit drying, especially if the crop is allowed to grow to heights above 48 inches. In addition to drying problems, if the crop is allowed to grow beyond the recommended height, forage quality rapidly decreases. To aid drying time, crimp the stems and lie in a full swath but avoid over drying. Conversely, if drying conditions are ideal this crop can dry too rapidly creating fermentation problems associated with dry silage. Brown midrib sorghum sudangrass should be chopped between ¾-1 inch for bunker silos and slightly longer for upright silos and baggers to ensure effective fiber.

The final deciding factor of whether to plant an alternative forage crop or not may be the yield and progress of other crops. Some dairy farmers have

indicated their first cutting of alfalfa was of high quality and yields were good. Conversely corn will be close as to whether or not it will ripen and produce harvestable grain in the remaining growing season. If the corn crop doesn't ripen or is damaged by early fall frost, much of it may be chopped for silage. Making the decision of whether to plant an alternative forage crop versus corn may be determined based on the speculation of traditional forage supply.

Feed Resources and Pricing Meetings

By Frank Wardynski, MSU Extension Educator

This year's weather has presented many challenges of both planting and harvesting feed crops for livestock producers. Cool wet weather could offer huge challenges throughout the year regarding how we harvest and feed livestock this year. A series of roundtable discussion meetings have been set at various locations across the Upper Peninsula to discuss the challenges and future management plans. The schedule for these meetings is on the calendar on the back page of this newsletter.

I will be at each meeting location with various MSU Extension and U.P. Research Center personnel. If producers have requests for individuals outside of MSU staff to be at these meetings, please let me know and I'll see what I can do. Call me at the Ontonagon County MSU Extension office at 906-884-4386 or email wardynsk@anr.msu.edu.

BVD Testing Update

By Frank Wardynski, MSU Extension Educator

Producers who need to test animals for BVD will now submit their samples themselves directly to:
Michigan State University Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health
4125 Beaumont Road
Lansing, MI 48910-8104
Phone: (517) 353-1683

Information required to submit samples can be found on-line at <http://www.animalhealth.msu.edu/> then clicking on "Available Tests," typing "BVD" into the name/code search box and clicking on "Search." Then click on Bovine Viral Diarrhea PCR - Ear. This screen has all the information required to properly collect and submit the samples. Producers will then need to click on "Submittal Forms," click on "General Submissions," and print the form to fill out and submit with the samples along with a check for \$3.25 per animal. Producers with questions can call the Diagnostic Center directly at (517) 353-1683 or Frank Wardynski at (906) 884-4386.

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Meetings & Events Calendar

July

- July 8-9 Michigan Cattlemen’s Summer Round Up, Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort, Mt. Pleasant. For a registration form & hotel information, contact the MI Cattlemen’s Association office at (517) 347-8117 or www.micattlemen.org
- July 15-17 Menominee County Fair, N8390 County Park Rd, Shakey Lakes Park, Stephenson, MI 49887 Fair office 753-2209 E-Mail: msue.menominee@county.msu.edu
- July 23 Field Day, MSU U.P. Research Center, Chatham, MI, 10:15-3:30 EDT Phone 906-439-5114 x 2
- July 30-31 Ontonagon County Fair, Adventure Mountain, Greenland, MI 49929 Phone: 906.883.3162

August

- Aug. 4 Feed Resources & Pricing Meeting, Kinross Township Hall, Kincheloe, 11 am-2 pm EDT
- Aug. 5-8 Alger County Fair, Fair Street, Rock River Township Fairgrounds, Chatham, MI 49816 Phone: 906.439.5114 Fair office E-Mail: naasz@msu.edu
- Aug. 8 Feed Resources & Pricing Meeting, Feed Mill Café, Tapiola 11 am-2 pm EDT
- Aug. 9 Feed Resources & Pricing Meeting, MSU U.P. Research Center, Chatham, 11 am-2 pm EDT
- Aug. 10 Feed Resources & Pricing Meeting, The Sidetrack Restaurant & Bar, Powers, 12-3 pm CDT
- Aug. 11-14 Gogebic County Fair, 648 W Cloverland Dr, Ironwood, MI 49938 Phone: 906.663.4045 E-Mail: romoszt@msu.edu Web Site: www.gogebiccountyfair.com
- Aug. 11-14 Marquette County Fair, 715 CR 553, Marquette, MI 49855 Phone: 906.249.4111 E-Mail: mmolash@tds.net Web Site: www.marquettecountyfair.org
- Aug. 15-21 Upper Peninsula State Fair, 230 Ludington St, Escanaba, MI 49829 Phone: 906.786.4011 Web Site: www.upstatefair.org
- Aug. 17- 21 Iron County Fair, 720 W Franklin St, Iron River, MI 49935 Phone: 906.265.3857
- Aug. 24- 28 Luce W. Mackinac Co. Fair, 11555 North Co. Rd 399, 3 miles East of Newberry off M-28, Newberry, MI. 49868 Phone: 906.293.8955 Web Site: www.lucewestmackfair.com
- Aug. 25-28 Houghton County Fair, 1500 Birch St, Hancock, MI 49930 Phone: 906.482.6200 Fair office 906.523.6182 Web Site: www.houghtoncountyfair.com
- Aug. 28-Sep. 5 Chippewa County Fair, M-80 Hwy, Kinross, MI 49752 Phone: 906.647.2413 906.495.5778 - Fair Office Web Site: www.chippewafair.com

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Published monthly by
Ontonagon County
MSU Extension
725 Greenland Road
Ontonagon, MI 49953