



# U.P. Ag Connections Newsletter

June 2016

Agricultural News from MSU Extension and AgBioResearch

Volume 20 Issue 6

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## Engaging Young Farmers

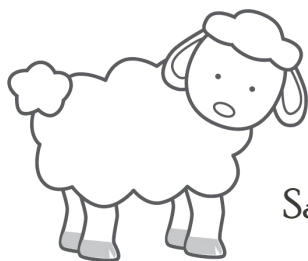
Challenges for each generation of farmers is an interesting mix of old and new. While the weather has been on the challenge list since the invention of farming things like futures markets, welfare standards and GMO labeling laws are challenges that have evolved over time and face today's producers. No matter the challenge though, farmers young and old, are not faced with simple, cut and dry challenges. It seems though that each new generation of farmers is faced with an increasing number of issues. Whether planning for the next generation or planning for the first generation in farming, organizations like MSU Extension and MI Farm Bureau are in unique positions to be catalysts for conquering challenges in farming. And that is why working together to create the Menominee County Young Farmers has been an important task.

Menominee County Young Farmers goal is to bring young farmers and agriculturists together in an atmosphere where they can network, build relationships, and share information to hopefully make farming a little less challenging. Through coordinated efforts of Michigan State University Extension and Menominee County Farm Bureau young farmers are gathering for activities that combine social and education to broaden horizons and open doors that may otherwise have been left closed.

Menominee County Young Farmers openly welcomes all experience levels of farmers and encourages the involvement of agricultural industry employees. Even if you are not actively farming but are involved in an agriculture related career your involvement is just as valuable and important. Menominee County Young Farmer activities are open to all across the Upper Peninsula however encourage young farmers and agriculturist to get involved with local groups or even start their own!

Upcoming events include a young farmer meet and greet, a recyclable boat race and a farm tour. These events are open to all who have an interest in farming! You can find out more information about the Menominee County Young Farmers by checking out the Facebook page @MenomineeCountyYoungFarmers or calling the Menominee County MSU Extension office at 906-753-2209. Article

*Katelyn Thompson*  
MSU Extension Farm Management Educator



You are invited to  
**Spring on the Farm**

Saturday, May 28 11 am—2 pm

Bartlett Sheep Farm  
N4632 ET Road,  
Traunik, Michigan

Entrance is free—bring your cameras and your questions, but please leave your pets at home.

The Bartlett Family will be hosting an open house to share the annual lambing experience with the public. There will be self-guided tour stops through the lambing barn and opportunities to take photos and hold lambs. Local spinners will demonstrate how wool is turned into yarn.

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## Dairy Calf Care School

by Frank Wardynski

Calf Care School is a one-day school jam-packed with useful information and training that can be implemented on any dairy farm. Participants will gain hands-on experience with calves and learn and/or review concepts and skills associated with profitable calf management from birth to the transition period. Topics will include: Newborn Calf Care, Colostrum Management, Using a Refractometer, Milk/Milk Replacer Feeding, Dry Feed & Water, Basic Calf Nutrition, Calf Housing, Dehorning, Vaccinations, Weaning, Monitoring Performance, Maintaining Records, Early Transition Period, and Bull Calf Care.

### Meeting dates and locations

June 21 Menominee MSUE Office, Stephenson 9:30-3:30 CDT

June 22 UPREC, Chatham 9:30-3:30 EDT

June 23 Pickford Twp Hall, Pickford 9:30-3:30 EDT

The cost of the program will be \$35, which includes lunch, notebook and instructional materials. Participants can register for the Pickford event at <http://events.anr.msu.edu/DairyCalfCarePickford/> UPREC event at <http://events.anr.msu.edu/DairyCalfCareChatham/> and for the Stephenson event at <http://events.anr.msu.edu/StephensonCalfCare/>.



Join Menominee County Young Farmers for a meet and greet at Belgiumtown Restaurant on June 7th at 7 pm for pizza and mingling!

For questions check out Menominee County Young Farmers on Facebook or contact Menominee County MSUE at (906) 753-2209.

*To stay in tuned with the latest in local food resources and events , check out The Plowshare, the formal newsletter for the U.P. Food Exchange*

<http://upfoodexchange.com/newsletter/>

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# TOGETHER AT THE FARM

## U.P. Local Food Conference

It is with great excitement that we continue to plan for Together at the Farm to be held July 30, 2016, at the Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center in Chatham, Michigan.

This event is hosted by the U.P. food Exchange (UPFE), Michigan State University Extension, The Marquette Food Co-op, Western Upper Peninsula Health Department, and Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP).

We are honored to feature Eliot Coleman as our keynote speaker. Sponsorship and exhibitor information is now available on the UPFE website at [www.upfoodexchange.com](http://www.upfoodexchange.com).

Registration information will be available the first week of June.



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### Central Upper Peninsula farmers see advantage to sulfur fertilization on alfalfa

Tissue samples from side-by-side alfalfa fields suggest that sulfur addition is paying off

Jim Isleib, MSU Extension educator

Tissue samples for sulfur analysis from Upper Peninsula alfalfa fields were included in the 2015 Michigan Alfalfa Tissue Test Survey organized by Michigan State University Extension forage educator Phil Kaatz. A sample from the George Leckson farm in Garden, Michigan, Delta County was included in the survey. Leckson has been fertilizing some of his alfalfa fields with ammonium sulfate and seeing positive results compared to fields not receiving ammonium sulfate.

The results from Leckson's sample indicated 0.26% tissue sulfur, which barely makes it into the sufficient category. The adequate sulfur range for alfalfa tissue samples is 0.26 – 0.50%. Additional second cutting tissue samples were collected from adjacent alfalfa fields on the Leckson farm. One of these fields received 100 lbs of 21-0-0 in addition to normal topdress P and K fertilizer and the other did not. The samples were sent for analysis separately from the larger, state-wide project with the following results:

|                                   | Field 1 – 100 lbs 21-0-0/acre | Field 2 – no sulfur fertilizer |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| % sulfur in alfalfa tissue sample | 0.39                          | 0.24                           |
| Tissue sulfur status              | Sufficient                    | insufficient                   |

Two other samples Alger and Chippewa Counties were included in the state-wide survey. Neither of these additional fields had received sulfur fertilizer or manure. The tissue test results for sulfur indicated 0.19% and 0.17% respectively.

A Baraga county farmer related how a topdress application of potash topdress, including sulfur, has made a 'day and night' difference in alfalfa yield with the additional cost of sulfur fertilizer paying off nicely.

What does all this mean? The samples were not part of a research project and the information cannot be subjected to statistical analysis. Rather, they should be considered as a strong hint that farmers in the U.P. region growing alfalfa without sulfur fertilizer or manure should be aware of the potential need for additional sulfur on their crop. If you suspect a sulfur deficiency, a tissue analysis test is a great way to make sure on individual farms. For a full copy of the article highlighting the results and more detail on how to take an alfalfa tissue test, go to: Michigan alfalfa tissue test survey provides fertility snapshot at [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigan\\_alfalfa\\_tissue\\_test\\_survey\\_provides\\_fertility\\_snapshot](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigan_alfalfa_tissue_test_survey_provides_fertility_snapshot)

For more information, contact Jim Isleib at [isleibj@anr.msu.edu](mailto:isleibj@anr.msu.edu) or 906-387-2530

## **Beef Cattle Meeting—Deworming and Holistic Management**

Michigan State University Extension will be conducting a beef cattle meeting on July 27, 7-9:00 pm EDT at the Feedmill Café, 35009 Tapiola Rd in Tapiola. Jason Rowntree and Frank Wardynski will be present to discuss deworming beef cattle as well as many other management practices using a holistic management decision making process. Jason is in charge of the beef cattle at the U.P. Research and Extension Center in Chatham and leads the grass fed research at both research stations in Chatham and at Lake City. The Chatham research is part of a systems project that looks at the livestock/cropping systems interaction. Frank is leading a producer cooperator project on deworming cattle that utilizes fecal egg counts to determine need for treatment and identifies resistance issues. The agenda for this meeting is highly flexible. Jason and Frank would like to discuss any topics producers are willing to bring to the meeting regarding cattle production, grazing, forage production and soil health.

The MSU North Farm Apprentice Farmer Program participants are looking forward to the opening of the [Downtown Marquette Farmers & Artists Market](#) and [Munising Farmers' & Artisans' Market](#)! They caught a spot on TV-6 to talk about their farming experiences...did you catch it?

If not, go to:

<https://youtu.be/HzYF1bK5AmA>



## **Retired Extension specialist honored at Block & Bridle Club**

By Jeff Dwyer, MSU Extension Director

Dr. Ben Bartlett was honored at the Michigan State University Block and Bridle Club Annual Recognition Banquet on Saturday, April 9. For over 30 years, Ben has helped better the lives of Michigan and U.S. livestock producers through his forward thinking, outstanding teaching abilities, and practical and usable newsletters, articles and bulletins.

In 1977, Ben, his wife, Denise, and three children moved to the Upper Peninsula (U.P.) when he took the position of manager at the Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center. In 1983, he became the dairy and livestock Extension specialist for the U. P. He focused on helping producers improve their production and profitability. He provided Extension programs centering on pre-sale vaccination, synchronized breeding research and low stress cattle handling. He also served by helping to coordinate the Michigan and multi-state grazing conferences over 10 years. He was also involved in the Bovine Virus Diarrhea (BVD) eradication trial, part of a three-year study to rid the U.P. of the disease. Ben was known for providing the information that farmers needed, when they needed it, in a way that they could connect to. He also sent a monthly newsletter to over 1,000 people for 13 years.

Ben was active outside of MSU Extension, serving as chair of the North Central Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Committee and the nonprofit Holistic Management International. His other international work included organizing

producer education tours to Scotland, Argentina, New Zealand and Australia. He also co-authored "Water Systems for Grazing" that sold over 10,000 copies, as well as a chapter for a Natural Resource, Agriculture and Engineering Service grazing workbook.

Ben has received many awards for his outstanding lifetime of service including the MSU Distinguished Academic Staff award, the American Sheep Industry Flock Guardian, Outstanding Extension Educator, the Epsilon Sigma Phi Visionary Leadership award, the Eisenhower Agriculture Fellowship and the Growing UP Distinguished Service to Agriculture awards.

In 2011, Ben retired from MSU, but he and Denise work full time on their sheep, cattle and grass operation. They provide grazing and soil health trials with a SARE Farmer and Rancher grant and have shared their findings at meetings in Michigan, Wisconsin, South Africa, Kenya and Kyrgyzstan.

Congratulations, Ben, on your recognition and for the effect you've had on our organization, our state, our country and our world.

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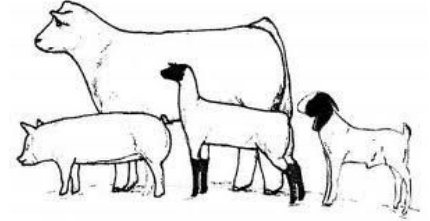
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## Livestock Producer Input Needed for Multi-Species Processing Feasibility Study

The Upper Peninsula Multi-species Processing Feasibility Study Project is a cooperative venture between several stakeholders including Marquette County, MSU Extension, Upper Peninsula Food Exchange, Farm Bureau, and regional planning organizations, and has hired Karen Karp & Partners along with John-Mark Hack of Marksbury Farm and BJH Advisors to conduct a feasibility study. The study is designed to understand the needs of livestock producers relating to harvest and processing and what additional resources are needed to support livestock producers in the U.P..

Livestock producers are critically important to the study. The project team needs to understand the number and type of animals in the region that could be harvested and processed in the UP, the areas in the UP that are underserved, and the specific types of services that are needed.



The survey for livestock producers in the UP can be completed online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/UPMeatProcessing> or may be completed over the telephone by contacting Jan at the Chippewa county MSU Extension office at 906-635-6368. The survey will be open from May 1 through May 31, 2016. For additional information about the project contact Michelle Walk at [walkmich@msu.edu](mailto:walkmich@msu.edu) or 906-635-6368 or Thyra Karlstrom at [tkarlstrom@mqtco.org](mailto:tkarlstrom@mqtco.org) or 906-225-8192. For questions about the survey please contact Ben Kerrick at Karen Karp & Partners at [ben@kkandp.com](mailto:ben@kkandp.com) or 212-260-1070.



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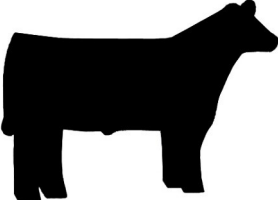
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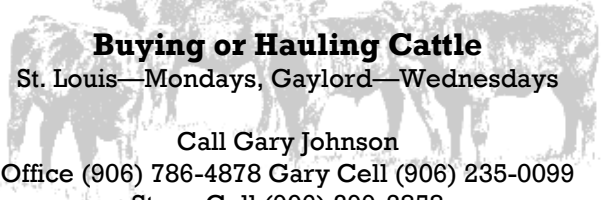
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# EDUCATION ON THE FARM



## ***Education on the Farm Set for June 11th, 2016!***

May brought beautiful weather this year allowing local agricultural fields to dry out, newborn lambs can be seen playing in green pastures, and fields/gardens are beginning to be tilled and planted with hopes of a bountiful 2016 harvest. In addition to the spring hustle and bustle by farmers and gardeners, planning for the 2016 Education on the Farm is well underway with the 3rd annual event set for June 11th, 2016 from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm at the Bay Mills Community College's Waishkey Bay Farm in Brimley.

This year, Education on the Farm will be hosted by the Waishkey Bay Farm, located at 10135 W. Mills Road in Brimley just off M-221 between M-28 and Brimley. Waishkey Bay Farm is owned and operated by Bay Mills Community College (BMCC). The college plans to incorporate an agricultural program into the curriculum at BMCC using the Waishkey Bay Farm. This year's Education on the Farm is planned through a partnership between the Chippewa County Farm Bureau, Mac Luce Schoolcraft Farm Bureau, Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District, Waishkey Bay Farm, and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). NRCS has partnered with the Michigan Farm Bureau for several years to provide grant funding for the event and generous local sponsors help offset the cost. This year's sponsors including, Cloverland Electric, Gaylor Trucking, Central Savings Bank, Pickford Feed Service, Greenstone Farm Credit, U.P. Tire, Maples Saw Mill, Islands Charters, and Soo Co-op Credit Union.

The 2016 event will feature both large farm and small farm topics focused on educating farmers and farming enthusiasts about innovative and proactive conservation programs that help protect natural resources. Topics at the event will include Bee Keeping, Manure Management, Pasture Poultry, Beef Cattle Management, Seasonal Extension Skill Building, and a Rotational Grazing/Fencing Demonstration. New this year, attendees will have the option to take their lunch on a walk through the woods with the Conservation District Forester. Also this year, a tour of the Waishkey Bay Farm will be offered at the end of the day for those interested in learning about farm's current operations and future plans for the farm.

Lunch is provided at no cost to all in attendance and will be catered by U.P. in Smoke Barbecue featuring their famous pulled pork sandwiches! RSVP is requested by June 3rd for a lunch count, but is not required to attend the event. To RSVP please call Mike McCarthy at 906-632-9611 ext. 101 or email [mike.mccarthy@macd.org](mailto:mike.mccarthy@macd.org). For more information about Education on the Farm please visit our website at [www.clmcd.org/eof.asp](http://www.clmcd.org/eof.asp).

Mike McCarthy  
Chippewa/Luce/Mackinac Conservation District  
MAEAP Technician



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### Market Report

|                 |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Choice Steers   | \$110—\$130 per 100 lbs. |
| Holstein Steers | \$95—\$124 per 100 lbs.  |
| Hogs            | \$69—\$76 per 100 lbs.   |
| Lambs           | \$170—\$190 per 100 lbs. |
| Cull cows       | \$65—\$75 per 100 lbs.   |
| Calves          | \$180—\$260 per 100 lbs. |
| Goats           | \$250—\$250 per 100 lbs. |

#### Breeding and Feeder Animals

|                             |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Grade Holstein cows         | \$1700—\$2400/head |
| Grade Holstein bred heifers | \$1700—\$2400/head |

#### Feed Prices across the U.P.

|         | Avg. \$/cwt | Avg. \$/ton | Price Range |
|---------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Corn    | \$9.96      | \$199.25    | \$160-270   |
| Soymeal | \$23.49     | \$469.75    | \$433-556   |
| Oats    | \$9.51      | \$190.25    | \$160-236   |
| Barley  | \$9.84      | \$196.75    | \$160-242   |

Average price/100 wt. for 1 ton lots

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## Recycled Boat Race

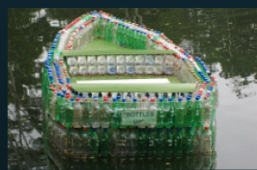
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Menominee County Young Farmers

Saturday July 23, 2016

Menominee County Fair - Shaky Lakes Campground

[facebook.com/menomineecountyyoungfarmers](http://facebook.com/menomineecountyyoungfarmers)



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## ***North Farm Short Course focusing on Small Farm Systems***

These short courses are an in-depth exploration of farming fundamentals and best practices for diversified vegetable growers. Each five-hour learning session has an emphasis on hands-on activities so participants can practice what they learn, and includes the cost of materials for a project.

All workshops will be held on-site starting at 1 pm EST and will include a combination of experiential and classroom-based learning. Short courses qualify for education hours through the [MSU Extension Master Gardener program](#).

Registration is required for these events and can be accessed at [www.msunorthfarm.org](http://www.msunorthfarm.org). Questions? Contact Abbey Palmer at palmerab@msu.edu or 906-439-5114.

**Small Farm Systems – Sunday, June 26**

**Whole Farm Health – Sunday, August 28**

**Seed Saving – Sunday, October 9**

***Thank you to everyone that sold  
items at the recent consignment  
auction and to all of you that  
came out and supported the sale!***

## ***Munising School Hoophouse is Growing Good Food***

by Abbey Palmer, North Farm Education Coordinator

Students in Munising have been harvesting greens like spinach, lettuce, and arugula since early March in the school's hoophouse. Hoophouses are plastic-covered greenhouses that utilize passive solar energy—just the sun's warmth, without supplemental heat—to extend the growing season, making fresh produce available for ten months of the year even in the U.P.'s harsh climate. Ted Williams' environmental science students are tending to this year-round garden to learn about where food comes from and how it is produced. All winter, they have been maintaining plants in the hoophouse and harvesting to contribute to the cafeteria's salad bar. In the summer, tomatoes, cucumbers, kale, and lettuce will be available at the Munising Farmers Market.

The hoophouse has been a part of the Munising community since 2009, funded in part by a grant through the MSU Project GREEN program. The 48' hoop structure was moved to the grounds of Munising Middle/High School by staff from the Michigan State University U.P. Research and Extension Center's North Farm in 2014. Food safety training for the students, a remote weather station to monitor temperature differences inside and outside the structure, and a refrigerator to store freshly-harvested produce until it is ready to be used are among the improvements. Vicki Ballas, SNAP-ED Program Associate with MSU Extension, has been involved with the project since its beginning and says that the structure's new location has fostered high-quality student involvement. "Many hands make light work – the students did snow removal, weeded, and are transplanting starts for the

spring. This is a hands-on education for these students who are learning skills they can use their whole lives." Whether it's actually growing food or the academic subjects that pertain to food – like soil science, plant biology, or nutrition – students are engaged with the hoop house. And for some, the hoop house is important to their future career goals. Senior Tanner Schmidtman says that he enjoys the time in the garden for this reason: "I'll use these concepts because I'm planning to go into the natural resources field."

With this project, Munising joins other schools in the UP and nationwide to promote healthy with a focus on fresh, local produce. According to the CDC, in Michigan 37.6% of students in grades 9-12 consumed vegetables less than one time daily (Michigan State Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Profile). When students are out working in the hoop house to grow the vegetables they see later in the cafeteria, they're more likely to try them because of the ownership they feel over the process of getting the food from the ground to the plate. Students are inspired by their experiences in the hoop house and want to have gardens of their own, like senior Darby Coyne: "It gives you a sense of accomplishment when you can see the plants progress every week."





## Forage sorghum and sudangrass variety trial

By Christian Kapp, UPREC Crop Research Assistant

In 2014 and 2015, a forage sorghum and sudangrass trial was conducted at the Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center (UPREC). The purpose of the trial was to evaluate certain varieties of forage sorghum and sudangrass with respect to yield and overall agronomic performance. Plot design was a randomized complete block with four replications. Plot size was 5 ft wide by 15 ft long. Alleys were trimmed out before harvest to eliminate edge effect. The trials were planted with a Carter Nursery seeder at 6 inch row spacing. At harvest, the center of the plot was cut with a Carter flail mower and the forage was collected for dry matter yield. Five forage sorghum varieties were planted in 2014. Six forage sorghum varieties were planted in 2015, along with two sudangrass varieties. Varieties and yield results are reported in table 1. Weather patterns were highly variable between 2014 and 2015. Total growing degree days (GDD, base level 50) between July 1 and September 30 of 2014 were 1134, whereas during 2015 in the same time period total GDD were 1410. Forage sorghum and sudangrass are warm season crops, and temperatures play a large impact upon growth and development. Interpretation of data should be made with caution, due to only two years of data.

### Plot information

Soil type: Well drained Eben Very Cobbly Sandy Loam

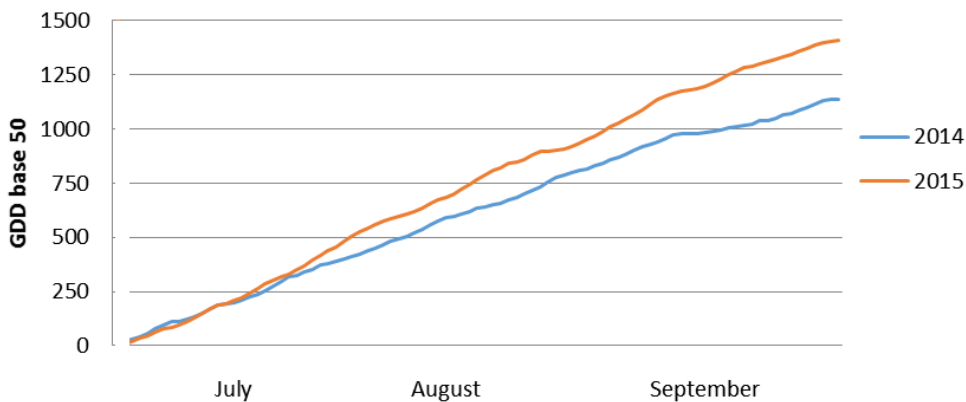
Fertility: 75 lbs/ac of actual N (46-0-0)

Planting dates: 6-30-14, 7-10-15

Harvest Dates: 9-17-14, 9-24-15



**Growing degree days (July 1 through September 30) compared between 2014 and 2015**



**Table 1. Dry matter yield (DM tons/acre) of forage sorghum and sudangrass varieties**

| Variety   | Species        | 2014      |            | 2015      |            |
|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
|           |                | DM ton/ac | LSD @ 0.05 | DM ton/ac | LSD @ 0.05 |
| AF 7101   | Forage sorghum | 1.44      | AB         | 1.78      | B          |
| AF 7102   | Forage sorghum | 1.35      | AB         | 1.89      | B          |
| AF 7201   | Forage sorghum | 1.33      | AB         | 1.73      | B          |
| AF 7301   | Forage sorghum | 1.20      | B          | 1.69      | B          |
| AF 7401   | Forage sorghum | 1.49      | A          | 1.63      | B          |
| BMR Sudex | Forage sorghum | n/a       | n/a        | 1.90      | B          |
| EG6666    | Sudangrass     | n/a       | n/a        | 1.62      | B          |
| Piper     | Sudangrass     | n/a       | n/a        | 2.31      | A          |
|           | CV (%)         | 12.0      |            | 11.6      |            |

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### **Serving the Upper Peninsula Agricultural Industry**

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#### **Calendar of Events**

- May 28 Spring on the Farm, Log Cabin Livestock, Bartlett Sheep Farm N632 ET Rd., Traunik (11 am—2 pm)
- June 21 Dairy Calf Care School, Menominee MSUE Office, Stephenson (9:30-3:30 CDT)
- June 22 Dairy Calf Care School, UPREC, Chatham (9:30-3:30 EDT)
- June 23 Dairy Calf Care School, Pickford Twp Hall, Pickford (9:30-3:30 EDT)
- June 26 Small Farm Systems Short Course, The North Farm @ UPREC (1-6 pm)
- July 30 Together at the Farm: U.P. Local Food Conference, Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center
- August 28 Whole Farm Health Short Course, The North Farm @ UPREC (1-6 pm)
- October 9 Seed Saving, Short Course, The North Farm @ UPREC (1-6 pm)

