

wisconsin grass-fed beef cooperative

WISCONSIN
MEADOWS™

100% Grass-fed Beef

Meadow View

Volume 10, Issue 4 • October 2019

Autumn Edition!

If you are getting this in the mail but **DO HAVE** an e-mail address, please let us know. We'll save on printing costs, and you will get better and more frequent communications from WGBC.

We welcome your feedback or questions, as well as contributions of articles, recipes or photos, upcoming grazing events or news from your part of the state. Send to: more.info@wisconsgrassfed.coop or to our mailing address: P.O. Box 269, Viroqua, WI 54665 Phone: 1-800-745-9093 (Rod Ofte) www.wisconsingrassfed.coop www.wisconsinmeadows.com



Bittersweet photo by Jon Lee of Coon Valley

**WGBC Annual Meeting – save the date:
Feb. 8, 2020 at Wintergreen Resort in the Dells**

Watch for more info next issue!

Lorentz Meats processing day is now on Monday Morning

Please note: Effective the week of October 7 – Lorentz Meats is now processing our animals on Mondays.

As many of you know, 90% of our member's beef processing takes place at Lorentz's Cannon Falls, MN location. WGBC's share of all animals processed there per week is less than 10% – we are 1 of 7 primary customers for their commercial operations. Occasionally, they need to make adjustments due to other customer's volume and daily capacity. The change in schedule had been considered for weeks and they advised us late September our "processing time slot" was being moved to late Monday mornings.

What does this mean for WGBC members? Most cattle shipments in past years have been instructed to deliver late Monday afternoon or evening. This made the most sense especially when hauling distances are longer. *Now, effective immediately, it is suggested animals be delivered late Sunday afternoons.* There will be a pen assigned for our animals. A contact for a Lorentz employee will be provided when necessary as questions or concerns require assistance.

For those farms closer to Cannon Falls, MN – there is the possibility of delivering animals Monday mornings when unloaded before 10 am. If there are any questions or concerns about our arrangements and plans with Lorentz Meats – please contact me. Thank you.

Pete Prochnow

Are you glued to social media or have a kid who is? See page 4...

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Planning for the Future of Our Brand and Our Cooperative

In 2018 Wisconsin Meadows celebrated its 10th anniversary. For the first 4 years, no one was certain we were going to succeed as a co-op. Just because we've survived and started delivering a profit is not a guarantee of future success for the next 10 years.

While we have had growth in supply and demand, as we have become more successful as a co-op, we also attract more attention from competitors for cattle and for markets.

The Wisconsin Grass-fed Beef Cooperative Board of Directors held our annual face-to-face strategy meeting in September. This day-long meeting looks at where we are compared to where we thought we would be in planning ahead last year, and looks forward to where we think we'd like to be and what to focus attention on heading into our 12th year. How aggressive should we be and how much risk do different options entail? Examples of this are trialing our new pasture pork program for a year and delving into online retail ordering. Does this deliver value for our members and help grow marketing opportunities for the co-op?

Interest from consumers and chefs in pasture produced meats is expanding for beef, swine, lamb, goats and poultry. I recently attended the Carolina Meat Conference, where 400 enthusiastic producers, processors and chefs networked and learned about producing and marketing pasture-based meats to meet growing consumer demand.



Carolina Meat Conference in Charlotte: 400 producers, chefs, processors focused on pastured meat – beef, pork, lamb, goat, and poultry.

JBS, the largest beef packer in the world has a grass-fed line of product, Tyson Foods conducted a grass finishing trial under center pivot irrigation. How does the co-op create a defensibly unique marketing position that continues to pay producers a minimum of a 20% premium that larger competitors cannot compete in?

An agenda item for our monthly conference calls this summer has focused upon strategic planning. If we don't have a destination in mind, any path will get us there. Strategic planning is forward-looking more than a year into the future, more of a five and ten year planning horizon and is looking at what a business is good at, not so good at, what opportunities are there ahead that the business might want to consider, and what are the threats to the business.

Your board of directors voted unanimously to pursue a strategic planning process for our co-op. The board will be working with the **Food Finance Institute at UW-Madison**, and with its' director Tera Johnson. The Food Finance Institute helps food-based business get started or grow. After successfully launching Tera's Whey, the first organic whey product in the country, Tera and the Food Finance Institute have helped launch and expand food-based business into local, regional and national brands across Wisconsin and Midwest.

Your board is being proactive and intentional in considering how to continue to grow the co-op and its' value for our members. The future is whatever we make it. The future, however, hinges on members participating in the co-op through selling of cattle, hosting pasture walks or assisting with marketing demos and events and serving on the board of directors.

As this strategic planning process moves forward we will keep our membership informed about creating a vision for the future.

Gene Schriefer,
WGBC Board Member



Three board members to be elected at the annual meeting in February

We aim to have a diverse mix of producers both young and “experienced” from around the state. Everyone brings a unique perspective and set of skills, and your knowledge from business, education, government, and good ’ole farming is all welcome as well as your passion for sustainable farming and a self-governing cooperative. With member participation a cooperative can remain a strong and successful business.

The main duties of the board members are:

- chiefly, to read materials in advance and attend via conference call, our monthly meetings and vote on our pay price or any other matters necessary that month. Calls are generally held on the third Monday evenings from about 7 to 9 pm. This could be open for discussion depending on the needs of the next group of board members
- attend two in-person meetings, a day-long September strategic meeting as well as our February annual meeting. (board members usually receive a gas card to help defray travel expenses.)

- become familiar with our *goals and strategic plan* as well as our bylaws and articles of incorporation.
- support and be an advocate for our co-op.
- volunteer for committee assignments, occasionally represent WGBC at events such as store demos, Grassworks, Burgers and Brew, etc.

To learn more about the duties of a board member or put your name on the ballot, feel free to contact our secretary and past-president Greg Nowicki at 715-257-7146 or e-mail: eatgrasfed@gmail.com



Blue Cheese Bacon Burger

recipe by Jon Lee

This recipe incorporates both our beef and pork.

- 1 lb. Wisconsin Meadows Grass-fed Beef
- 2 T of fine chopped shallots
- 3 strips of Wisconsin Meadows Pastured Pork Bacon (fry crisp and crunchy)
- 1 minced garlic clove or fine chopped
- ¼ teaspoon of fresh ground black pepper
- Sprinkles of salt while you are grilling

Mix well the beef, bacon, garlic, shallots and pepper in a bowl. Let this mix sit at room temperature for an hour. Shape into 4 patties. Grease your grill with olive oil too ensure that the burgers don’t stick to the grill. When you are at temperature usually 450-500 degrees, place burgers on the grill. Your grill will determine how long you will cook these, but you are looking for medium rare temperature. A pink middle is desired. My grill usually takes 5–7 minutes per side. Watch your grill and time the cooking. Add the blue cheese to the top of the burger for the last 2 minutes so that it melts on the burger. Top with grilled onion, tomato and spinach. Enjoy with a cold beer!

WGBC Pricing Effective October 1, 2019

(all per pound, carcass weight)

BEEF

Carcass Grade	Marbling Score (points)	Tier Number	Price / Lb. (hanging wt.)
Choice	0 – 90	T 1	\$2.30
Select	50 – 90	T 2	\$2.20
Select	30 – 40	T 3	\$2.10
Select	0 – 20	T 4	\$2.00
Select	0 pts/Standard	T 5	\$1.70
Cull*			\$1.20

*Call if you have cull cows to send, we will advise if/when needed.

The following beef producer incentives remain in effect for 2019:

- Transport cost assistance stays @ \$0 for first 50 miles and \$10 every 50 miles after – per head.
- Patron Bonus – after individual member farms ship 16 head, subsequent (starting with #17) animals shipped receive an additional \$0.10 / lb – all price tiers – for the remainder of the same calendar year.

PORK

Hot Carcass Weight	Tier	Price / Lb.
210 – 250	T 1	\$1.70
	T 2	\$1.60

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Upcoming Events *(blue text indicates events the co-op is sponsoring or attending)*

Tues. Oct 22, 2019, 10:30am – 12:30pm
Kickapoo Grazing: Vance & Olaf Haugen
12620 Deer Rd, Canton, MN 55922

Discussion on evaluation of grazing and pastures for fall & planning for spring. Considerations for Karst geology/water quality in the Driftless Region. Co-sponsored by Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship (DGA) with Bonnie Haugen.

Fillmore County: from Decorah IA, take Hwy 52N about 17 miles to the intersection of Hwys 44 & 52, through intersection onto Dove Rd. then .5 mile to right on Deer Rd. Go 1.5 miles to farm on east side of road.

For more information, please contact:
Cynthia Olmstead, KGI Project Director
info@kickapoo grazinginitiative.com / 608-606-6022

Sat. Nov. 9, 2019, 8:30am – 3:30pm
NW WI Graziers Network Fall Grazing Conference
Shell Lake Community Center, 200 West Lake Drive
Shell Lake, WI (next to US Hwy 63, in Washburn Co.)

Advance registration forms for the Conference are due by Tuesday, November 5. The registration fee \$20 (\$30 late reg.) and includes lunch, snacks and materials.

This conference will continue our strong tradition of an informative and friendly networking environment to learn about grazing, cattle genetics and soil health. Conference should be of interest to new farmers, part-time or full-time operators, low-income startups, graziers or non-graziers.

The specific topics include:

Extending the grazing season with Cover Crops - Logan Dwyer, Beef and Crop Producer, Chetek

Soil Health thru grazing livestock - Tim Miland, Soil Scientist, NRCS

Soil Microbiome: Streaming YouTube Video - Dr. Christine Jones, Soil Ecologist, Australia,

Soil Microbiology Farm Survey -

Dr. Teal Potter, UW-Madison, Dept. of Plant Pathology, CALS

Beef Industry Updates – Moderated by Kevin Schoessow, UW Ext.

Direct Marketing using the Internet -

Mary Graise, North Star Bison, Rice Lake

Cost of Production in Beef operations - Becky Schey, UW-Extension,

Beef Marketing Outlook, 2020 and Beyond -

Dr. Brenda Boetel, UW-River Falls

Genetic Improvement Programs used by Grass-fed Beef Producers - Producer Panel, Moderator: Lynn Johnson

Contact Lorraine Toman at 715-635-3735 to register or for more info, contact UW-Extension Ag Agent, Kevin Schoessow, at Spooner 715-635-3506

Tues. Nov. 19 – Wed. Nov. 20, 2019
Green Lands Blue Waters Conference –
615 Washington Ave SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414

Farming now faces new norms with chaotic weather, economic uncertainty, social divisions, and increasing pressure to deliver both quality products and environmental benefits. Collaborative solutions are more important than ever, and the benefits of continuous living cover farming go way beyond the farm gate.

At this year's conference, learn how grounded champions, who have worked for decades to change agricultural paradigms, are collaborating with the next generation of agricultural leaders and new allies in creative partnerships to break (or not break) new ground, keeping our soil and our communities rooted as we endeavor to create a resilient agriculture. Plan to come away lifted by the voices of many determined allies moving this important work forward, together. Registration at:
<https://greenlandsbluewater.org/resources/conferences/>

Fri Dec 6 – Sat Dec 7, 2019
Perennial Farm Gathering – Savanna Institute
Sinsinawa Mound Center, Z, 585 Sinsinawa Rd,
Sinsinawa, WI 53824

Panels and workshops with Midwest agroforestry experts, perennial food and beverage tastings, and the ever-popular 5-minute Nutshell Show & Tell talks, open to all attendees. Session topics will include chestnut, hazelnut, and elderberry production, silvopasture, financing perennial agriculture, land access and land tenure agreements, online marketing, beneficial insects, and more!

More information at: www.savannainstitute.org

Jan. 23-25, 2020 GrassWorks Grazing Conference

Feb. 8, 2020 – WGBC Annual Meeting
Save the date and come to the Dells to network with other members, hear about our successes and challenges, and elect your 2020 board members.

WGBC is thinking about hiring a social media guru, it would be great to use one of our members (or farm kids) who know grazing as well as Twitter and Instagram! If interested, or you know someone to recommend, please contact Rod or Mandy.