



# Extension Connection

Monthly Highlights – September 2012

*UW-Extension entomologist, Eileen Cullen, discusses spider mite management with several area crop producers.*

- [WNEP Partnerships](#)
- [Science and Energy Conservation Strategies](#)
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## **Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program Partnerships**

WNEP (Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program) begins its new fiscal year starting October 1<sup>st</sup>. During the 2011-2012 program year, WNEP reached an estimated 5,564 participants. With long lasting partners, such as ADVOCAP, the Salvation Army and the Boys & Girls Club, and new partners, the 2012-2013 program year promises to be even more successful. New partners include: Chegwin Elementary, Community Thrift Store & Food Pantry (Ripon), Lutheran Social Services, the Sharing Table (Ripon) and UMOS (Green Lake County).

The 2012-2013 school year has begun and WNEP (the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program) is once again partnering with Fond du Lac area schools to provide nutrition education to elementary students. A long lasting partnership continues to grow with Riverside Elementary. WNEP presented information to parents and children during the school's "Back to School" open house in August. Parents were given the opportunity to provide feedback on past WNEP programming. Many parents expressed their satisfaction with WNEP, including "Your program is the reason that my child likes to eat fruits and vegetables." In addition to in-class nutrition education, WNEP will also present nutrition education to parents this year. In addition to Riverside Elementary, WNEP will partner with Parkside and Chegwin Elementary schools.

## **Science and Energy Conservation Strategies**

In June, Diana Hammer Tscheschlok attended an in-service with UW-Extension colleagues to learn the latest climate science and energy conservation strategies. As a result of this workshop, she is infusing more climate science into her work with the Fond du Lac County Energy Team. While climate change is a global phenomenon, there are many impactful ways to respond locally. Here are the most important points about climate science from the training:

- WI gets 80% of our fuel (fossil) from outside the state which takes \$13 billion per year (\$2800 per person) out of our local economy.
- Scientists agree that burning fossil fuels and land clearing (trees into crops) creates carbon emissions which raise the temperature of the earth.
- The US military is a leader in climate change research and adaptation. "[It] is a threat multiplier. Climate instability will lead to instability in geopolitics and impact American military operations around the world." *Army Chief of Staff & General Tony Zinni, Quadrennial Review (2010).*
- Actual emissions on earth have been matching the worst case scenario prediction for the past 20 years, and the amount of fossil fuel we burn continues to increase.

- Many scientists believe our best chance of minimizing the negative impacts of global warming (rising sea levels, etc.) is to slow warming to only 2 degrees warmer by 2100. To do this, the total amount of carbon emissions needs to peak in 2017 or sooner.
- On a graph, the shape of emissions dropping looks like a wedge. Each wedge is worth 25 Gigatons of carbon over 50 years or 2500 Gigawatts of electricity. To have a 50% chance of limiting temperature increases to 2 degrees, we need to have 14 wedges in place.
- The U.S. could achieve 110 wedges if all available options were used (reducing miles traveled by car, increasing fuel efficiency of cars, lower use of electricity from fossil fuels, solar arrays, off-shore wind, etc.) .
- “Delaying action is a false economy: for every \$1 of investment in cleaner technology that is avoided in the power sector before 2020, an additional \$4.30 would need to be spent after 2020 to compensate for the increased emissions.” *International Energy Agency 2011 Energy Outlook*

This in-service was hosted by the State Energy Extension Partnership, an effort funded by a US Department of Energy grant to WI. Another meeting for local government officials and others interested in renewable energy is scheduled for October 5 in Stevens Point. Contact Diana for more details. To view a short video on climate change impacts in WI, visit the [WI Initiative on Climate Change](#).

### **Drought-related Concerns Dominated the Growing Season and Extension Programming**

In one of the driest growing seasons in many years, crop concerns were many and varied during the past several months. Extension programs and farm calls were driven by these concerns. Lack of moisture and stressed crops, especially in the southern one-third of the county prompted questions of harvesting corn before pollination and cutting alfalfa that was flowering but had only 8 inches of growth. Many of these issues we had faced in previous drought years and those experiences proved beneficial in 2012. Insect pest outbreaks were the worst in recent memory: alfalfa weevil, black cut worms, variegated cut worms, potato leafhoppers, and spider mites all caused significant economic losses beyond those caused simply by lack of moisture.

In late July, a twilight meeting was held at the Ed Montsma farm and Lamartine town hall to discuss many of the drought-related issues. UW Extension crop specialists were on hand to discuss management strategies with growers and agribusiness personnel. Growers’ questions centered on how to evaluate corn for successful pollination and how to control spider mites in soybean fields. About 65 people attended the event.

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