

**Timothy J. Jergenson**  
**Department of Agriculture/Agri-Business**  
**Tenured Faculty Review**  
**June 8, 2011**

**Position:** Barron County UW-Extension Agricultural/Natural  
Resources/Horticultural Agent 2002 – Present

**Rank:** Associate Professor – Granted July 1996

**Program Responsibilities:** 80% Agriculture  
20% Administrative

## Program Development/Implementation and Teaching Impacts

### Farm Financial Management

#### Management Assessment Center

**Situation:** The UW-Extension Farm and Risk Management (FARM) team has developed and offered Management Assessment Centers (MAC) for Dairy Farmers since 2004. Through impact and publicity the MAC for Dairy Farmers has received interest from new audiences and agricultural organizations to develop and hold a MAC specifically for them. This past year (2010) the team worked with the Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (PDPW) to provide a MAC for 12 of their members to attend. Using the framework from the MAC for Dairy Farmers, the working group described scenarios and curriculum and made logistical/financial modifications to fit the needs of PDPW and create a final MAC program for PDPW. Tim Jergenson has been an active member of the Management Assessment Centers since 2005 and served as an assessor during the Management Assessment Center for PDPW.

**Results:** Twelve dairy farm managers, recruited by PDPW attended a Management Assessment Center (PDPW MAC) in Arkdale, WI, November 2010. The program developed by UWEX provided managerial assessment in nine attribute areas including; communications, planning and organizing, leadership, decision making, managing resources, empathy, teamwork initiative, and creativity. These attributes were assessed by observing participants in activities which include; group discussions (assigned and non-assigned roles), performance interview, in-basket, case study, and job interview. Feedback, in the form of an individual customized report, was completed and delivered to participants as soon as possible following the actual Management Assessment Center workshop. Suggestions were discussed individually with participants for self-improvement in order to increase their effectiveness in any of the (nine) attributes. Through this program PDPW participants learned about their personal management skills and how they could start improving their management skills. Evaluation: All twelve participants found the PDPW useful and very beneficial to them personally and to their farm business. Edits to the program will be made according to feedback from the program participants. Feedback from participants was very positive, with participants thinking the scenarios designed in the curriculum were realistic and practical. During a feedback session, one producer commented that he “couldn’t understand why every farmer in the state wouldn’t want to experience the Center.” Shelly Mayer was very positive and commented what a “fun and rewarding experience for PDPW...The team provided an intellectual “challenge” to their members.” **(Exhibit 1)**

#### Dairy Decisions Workshop

**Situation:** Dairy producers experienced extreme market volatility in 2008. Between June 2008 and January 2009 dairy producers experienced a decline in milk prices of over \$9 per hundredweight, from \$21 to \$11.50. Even through the summer of '08 when prices were uncharacteristically above \$20, dairy producers felt the pinch of record high input prices. Diesel fuel hit a new record high while corn and soybean prices more than doubled. Potash, an important fertilizer for hay production, went from around

\$200/ton in 2007 to over \$900/ton. During this time of volatility Tim Jergenson and other agribusiness professionals observed producers paralyzed by indecision and quick to make knee-jerk reactions.

**Response:** Polk County Agriculture Agent, Ryan Sterry and Tim Jergenson organized a workshop to give dairy producers a framework from which to make decisions to manage feed costs, and in the case of home grown feeds how to manage fertilizer costs. These Agents wanted to give producers information and tools to plan ahead. The workshop consisted of a morning session covering the best use of expensive fertilizer (Dr. Carrie Laboski), how to determine land rental rates (Tim Jergenson), and a roundtable discussion with local agronomists. The afternoon session looked at available decision making tools (Ryan Sterry), ration tips to cope with high feed costs (Dr. Randy Shaver), and a roundtable featuring local dairy nutritionists.

**Results:** Twenty four people attended the program, including several agronomists and dairy nutritionists. Evaluation results indicate that participants in the “Dairy Decisions Workshop” found the topics offered during the program were useful and attendees increased their knowledge in key areas of farm financial management. Tim Jergenson taught a portion of this workshop entitled “What Can I Pay for Land Rent.” Specific comments on how producers intended to use the information from the workshop included: “Will look at lowering ration P and starch in lactating diets,” “Soil sampling more often,” “Pay more attention to fertilizer and nutrient management,” “Evaluate land rent price,” and “Great decision tools if guys take advantage.” Three producers requested copies of the decision making tools on CD after the workshop. **(Exhibit 2)**

### **Farm Financial Recordkeeping**

**Situation:** There are more than 1300 farms (Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics, 2010) in Barron County. Many of these farms either have not moved to a computerized accounting system. This group of producers typically understands the need to accurately evaluate the financial strength of their operation but need to have the financial records that provide a more accurate picture to enhance the longer-term profitability of their business and help them make better production and risk management decisions. During 2007 Tim Jergenson received several inquiries from Barron County producers requesting training on using the QuickBooks financial accounting software program. These producers indicated that their tax preparers recommended they begin using QuickBooks in place of their current hand record systems or computerized accounting software. These farmers wanted QuickBooks training customized for farmers and they indicated that they were not able to attend the semester long QuickBooks classes offered at the local Technical College.

**Response:** Jergenson consulted with staff from the Center for Dairy Profitability at the University of Wisconsin – Madison about the possibility of offering training for farmers in Barron County wishing to learn how to use QuickBooks. At about the same time staff from the Center for Dairy Profitability (CDP) had developed a teaching program for the QuickBooks (QB) software. With financial support from the Risk Management Agency and CDP, nine workshops were held across Wisconsin on Farm Financial recordkeeping (2-intermediate level). Registrations for these hands-on, computer lab sited workshops

were at capacity and evaluations excellent. These workshops focused on basic accounting skills via the processing and reporting of cash records. Using specific farm financial record-keeping and analysis software programs (AAIMS, QuickBooks, AgFA) producers learned not only the importance and the contents of a balance sheet, income statement and cash flow but how these all tell the story of their farm business. These workshops were designed to mentor and educate producers about the vast financial decisions for the farm business and emphasized the teaching of accrual accounting skills using QuickBooks and AAIMS as the learning platform.

**Results:** Roughly 190 producers attended nine QuickBooks workshops across the state (Barron, Fond du Lac, Sauk, Eau Claire, Pierce, Taylor, and Dunn Counties). Evaluations stated that after attending the workshops they would improve the accounting and record-keeping expertise of farm businesses in order to complete more of the accounting tasks, produce more accurate financial records and work more effectively with their hired accountant. These workshops empowered producers to manage their financial information used in the critical decision making processes of their farm businesses. Furthermore, instructors from the Wisconsin Indian Head Technical College requested that Tim Jergenson and Jenny Vanderlin (CDP) assist them in offering QuickBooks training for farmers in four locations across Barron, Polk and Rusk Counties in 2009.

## **Bio-Energy**

**Situation:** Northwestern Wisconsin is home to innovative businesses and communities struggling to overcome energy and land-use related challenges. Farmers, manufacturers, and other energy entrepreneurs have invested time and money into growing renewable energy businesses while creating jobs and contributing to a cleaner environment. Likewise, local governments are tackling higher energy costs by developing pro-active energy plans to become more fiscally and environmentally responsible.

**Response:** To meet the needs identified by regional community members, UW-Cooperative Extension, Eau Claire Continuing Education, UW-Barron, and UW-River Falls developed a program to identify and address bio-energy related issues. They used a \$15,000 dollar UW-Extension/UW-Colleges Program Innovation grant to leverage an additional \$50,000 dollars in federal and private sector support for the project. The project began by convening regional renewable energy roundtables in Spooner, Eau Claire, Baldwin, and River Falls. Economic developers, conservationists, local government staff, utilities, farmers, loggers, and other businesses sat down to discuss past development experiences and reflected on those experiences to describe the opportunities and barriers facing bio-energy development in the region. Following the roundtable sessions, the project partners designed and organized forums, tours, conferences, and strategic planning sessions that reached over 600 individuals, businesses, and community leaders in Northwest Wisconsin.

Tim Jergenson and Andrew Dane, Community Resource Development Agent from the Barron County UW-Extension Office, along with other Extension educators from Polk, St. Croix, Ashland, Bayfield, and Chippewa County UW-Extension, Eau Claire Continuing Education, and faculty from UW-Barron and UW-

River Falls partnered to deliver a series of educational programs. Over 300 participants attended at least one educational activity that included bio-energy forums in Rice Lake, Ashland, Chippewa Falls, and New Richmond. Participants indicated they increased their awareness and knowledge of renewable energy options, renewable energy feasibility analysis and financing, and community energy planning. Ninety people joined one of two tours of bio-energy projects in their own backyards. Renewable energy field tours featured visiting solar, wind, district heating/cooling, geothermal, hydropower projects in Polk, Barron, and Pierce Counties.

Fifty people participated in a workshop at the Spooner Agricultural Research Station where utility personnel, farmers, conservationists, and economic developers learned about and discussed the opportunities for utilizing Switch Grass, Miscanthus, and Hybrid Poplars for bio-energy production. Tim Jergenson introduced Miscanthus to the workshop participants. Jergenson has been growing Miscanthus in plots at the Spooner Agricultural Research Station and at a demonstration site outside the city of Barron. Miscanthus is a long-lived perennial grass grown on farms in Northern Europe as a fuel source for on-farm heating needs and has potential as feedstock for cellulosic ethanol production.

### **Sunflower Variety Trials**

**Situation:** A Barron County company began construction of a 3 million gallon capacity bio diesel manufacturing facility during 2007. The first step in this process involves growing an oil seed crop and pressing it to extract the oil. This oil is then further processed to make a bio diesel fuel that can be burned directly in a diesel engine. Two potential oil seed crops that can be grown in Wisconsin for bio diesel production are sunflower and canola. As a result of this interest in bio diesel over 500 acres of sunflowers were planted in NW Wisconsin in 2008. Sunflowers had not been grown to any great extent in the area since 1980. As a result there was very little cropping recommendations and experience with growing sunflowers. The most current research on sunflower production is from North Dakota and Minnesota.

**Response:** To address the need for non-biased information on sunflower production, UW-Extension Agriculture Development Agent Kevin Schoessow, Spooner Ag Research Station assistant superintendent Phil Holman, Tim Jergenson and Rusk County Ag Agent, Aliesha Crowe teamed up to conduct sunflower variety trails. Three on-farm sites and two sites at the Spooner Ag Station were planted to sunflowers to demonstrate varieties, weed control, planting techniques and planting dates. Field days were held at all four locations to allow interested farmers to see firsthand the sunflower plots and ask questions about cultural practices. Yield data was collected at three of the sites and used to make comparisons between varieties. It is estimated that over 100 farmers, agribusiness professionals and other interested parties attended the four field days. At these events, UW-Extension staff raised additional awareness about the challenges and potential opportunities of growing sunflowers in NW Wisconsin.

**Results:** As a result of efforts by Jergenson, Schoessow, Crowe and other UW-Extension and UW-Madison staff there was an increased understanding of sunflower production practices. Weed control options were probably the most noted learner result, along with the effects of planting date on plant

height and harvest moisture. The bio-diesel production company used the results of the sunflower variety trials and their own experience from growing canola to help them decide that canola was a better oilseed option for their processing facility. Farmers in Barron, Burnett, Polk, Rusk, and Washburn counties learned the economics of raising sunflowers in comparison to raising corn or soybeans in current market conditions. These factors combined to lead the bio-diesel production company and area farmers to stop growing sunflowers. **(Exhibit 3)**

## **Horticulture**

**Situation:** Gardening is the favorite hobby for many Americans. The average Wisconsin resident invests approximately \$650 per year on flowers, trees and shrubs, hired services, equipment and miscellaneous landscape products (Wisconsin Green Industry Survey, 2002). There is a strong demand for reliable horticulture information and this has resulted in a consistent increase in demand for education and information on home horticulture over the years at the Barron County UW-Extension Office.

At the time of hire, Tim Jergenson was instructed that home horticultural education would be an important part of the position and the position title was changed from Agriculture Agent to Agricultural/Natural Resources/Horticultural Agent. The Barron County Agricultural/Natural Resources/Horticultural Agent position description indicates that one area of focus will be “Home horticulture, encompassing vegetables, ornamental, landscape, and turf; subject matter to include soil and fertility, pest identification and control, disease identification, variety selection, and landscape design.”

**Response:** In response to need for horticultural education, Tim Jergenson organized and helped to teach Master Gardener Volunteer training programs in 2006, 2008 and in 2010. During this period, interest in the Master Gardener program has grown as awareness of the program expanded. Class attendance has been from 16 to 25 in each of the three years it was offered. In addition, existing Master Gardener Volunteers (MGV’s) are allowed to attend the general training sessions. Beginning in 2010, certified Master Gardener Volunteers were encouraged to attend the “Responding to Horticultural Inquiries” workshop as offered by UW-Extension horticultural specialists. MGV’s were also encouraged to enroll in the “Plant Health Advisor” online training program developed by Barbara Larsen, Kenosha County Horticultural Educator. MGV’s who completed one or the other of these trainings scheduled time to answer home horticultural calls in the Barron County UW-Extension Office.

**Results:** Tim Jergenson answers 200 – 250 horticultural calls each year. Most of these requests for information are received during the growing season, May through September, but horticultural inquiries begin in March and continue until early November each year. Some of the consumer gardening questions are repetitive in nature and it became apparent that properly training Master Gardener Volunteers could answer many of these questions. During June and July, 2010 five MGV’s with advanced training answered 36 home horticultural calls.

Tim Jergenson facilitated and provided some of the training of the MGV's and serves as the advisor to Barron County Master Gardener Association. Beginning in 2006, the general training for MGV's moved from a video/satellite system to a classroom instructor format. County agricultural and horticultural agents from counties in northwestern Wisconsin, state horticultural specialists and MGV's with advanced training serve as in-classroom instructors for the general training for beginning MGV's training. According to participants, having in-classroom instructors has greatly enhanced the quality of the MGV training program. The number of certified MGV's in Barron County has increased from 41 in 2004 volunteering 1975 hours per year to 55 in 2010 volunteering 2240 hours of community service and horticultural education.

### **Administrative**

**Situation:** During 2006 the Barron County UW Extension staff faced several difficult challenges that required a large amount of time and leadership from the Department Head. The unsatisfactory performance of some staff members, a County-based program prioritization study that negatively impacted the Extension Office and the relocation of the Department to a different building all occurred during that year. In 2009, the department was again challenged by a unique set of circumstances. The retirement of two long time staff members, from positions which were ranked at the bottom county's program prioritization system created a challenge when the time came to fill vacant positions. County budget reductions from 2010 to 2011 required the elimination of two positions in the Barron County UW-Extension Office. One position eliminated was a para-professional position and the other was a clerical position.

**Response:** After several months of disruptions in program delivery during 2006, and with the intervention from the District Director, a member of the Barron County UW extension staff was placed on a professional development program. This process required hours of coaching and consultation by Tim Jergenson, the Department Head and the District Director. After months of hard work by all parties involved, the staff member on the professional development program decided to pursue employment outside UW-Extension. The District Director and UW Extension state staff members worked closely with the Department Head through the process and provided a great deal of time and support in the effort to satisfactorily resolve this situation.

After months of budget negotiations and an extended position justification process lead by Tim Jergenson, the Barron County UW-Extension Office was able to fill three vacant educator positions in the Department in early 2010. Two of these educator positions remain ranked at the bottom of the Barron County program prioritization plan. Much work remains to re-build the educational programs in these areas. **(Exhibit 4)**

### **Applied Research and/or Publications**

"Monitor Stored Grain for Hot Spots and Mold," Wisconsin Crop Manager, Vol. 14, No. 1, January 18, 2007

“The Attributes of successful Dairy Owners and Manager: #4 – Communication,” Midwest Dairy Business, p. 34, October 2006 (**Exhibit 5**)

### **Continued Professional Development**

NACAA Professional Improvement Conference, Cincinnati Ohio -July 2006

Public Issues Leadership Development Conference - Washington DC, April 2007

Alternative Energy for Communities and Agriculture, Rice Lake, Wisconsin-September 2007

Role of Methane Digesters on Small and Medium Sized Livestock Farms, Stevens Point, WI – January 2008

ACEEE 2nd Forum on Energy Efficiency in Agriculture, Des Moines, Iowa – February 2008

UW Extension State Department Conferences, 2008, 2009, and 2010

UW-Extension Western District Technology Training, Rice Lake, WI -November 2009

Crucial Conversations Training Course, Rice Lake Wisconsin-February 2009

Western District Sustainable Energy Workshop, Fall Creek Wisconsin-December 2009

UW Extension State Department Conferences, 2008, 2009, and 2010

Using Technology to Enhance Educational Programs, Eau Claire- February 2010

CDP/FARM Team Boot Camp, Wisconsin Dells, WI – August 2010

Midwest Manure Summit, Green Bay, WI – February 2011

### **Contributions to the Profession and/or University**

Wisconsin Association of County Agricultural Agents member 1990-present

Wisconsin Association of County Agricultural Agents President-elect, 2005-2006; President, 2006-2007; Past President, 2007-2008

National Association of County Agricultural Agents member 1990-present

Epsilon Sigma Phi National Extension Fraternity member 1998-present

Department of Ag/Agribusiness member 1990-present

Department of Ag/Agribusiness, Standards Rank and Tenure Committee 2008-2009

Department of Ag/Agribusiness Tenured Faculty Review Committee 2010-2011

### **Administration of Educational and/or Research Programs**

Department Head – Barron County UW-Extension – 2004 – present

Assistant Project Manager – Risk Management Agency - Bio-Energy grant 2007-2008

### **Awards**

JCEP-Wisconsin Administrative Leadership Recognition Award - 2010

WEECDA Outstanding Team Award -2010

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Extension Agent Partner in Agriculture Award - 2007