



## Resources Available for Challenged Livestock Feed Supplies

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MADISON-A combination of excessive rains, thawing and refreezing this past winter plus last month's heavy rains and floods have made livestock feed and forage locally unavailable in some parts of the state. What can be harvested is often of poor nutritional quality. That's why the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) urges farmers in areas hit by winterkill and the flooding in June to take advantage of the various services offered.

"Just as we did last summer during the drought, state agencies are working together to assist farmers in dealing with their feed and forage challenges brought on by this year's weather conditions," said DATCP Secretary Ben Brancel. "The DNR is opening selected state-owned lands for haying and grazing and we encourage individual farmers who may have more feed and forage than they might need to offer it to others on the UW Extension's Farmer-to-Farmer website."

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff has identified nearly 5,300 acres of hay that could be made available but only in counties where Governor Scott Walker declared a state of emergency as a result of flooding in June and the counties where USDA has declared a natural disaster as a result of winterkill. Individual farmers will be limited to 20 acres on a first come-first serve basis.

The harvest window on these selected state-owned lands is August 10 for prairie grasses and August 30 for cool season grasses. You can get details on how to sign up for this harvest by calling the DNR at 1-888-936-7463, seven days a week from 7 a.m.-10 p.m. or searching the DNR web site <http://dnr.wi.gov> for key words "hay harvest".

The Farmer-to-Farmer network exchange for feed and forage can be found at this address: <http://farmertofarmer.uwex.edu/>. The idea is to put Wisconsin farmers in touch with one another for the purpose of buying and/or selling hay and other forage crops. It costs nothing to list what feed you may have available.

"This service of the UW-Extension was a helpful tool during last summer's drought and can be useful again now in helping affected farmers meet their weather related feed challenges," added Brancel.

As always, DATCP's Wisconsin Farm Center is available to answer questions and connect farmers with available resources. Farm Center staff can assist with financial planning, help mediate with creditors and provide referrals to counseling services. The Farm Center services are free and available weekdays from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 1-800-942-2474 or [farmcenter@wisconsin.gov](mailto:farmcenter@wisconsin.gov).

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