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Details: Informational Hearing (March 22, 2007)

(FORM UPDATED: 07/12/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2007-08

(session year)

Assembly

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Agriculture (AC-Ag)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
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INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt**
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- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions
 - (**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
 - (**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

TO: Members of Assembly Agriculture Committee

FROM: Jeff Lyon, Director, Governmental Relations

RE: Support for University of Wisconsin Discovery Farms Programs

DATE: March 21, 2007

On behalf of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, I want to express our support for the University of Wisconsin Discovery Farms Program. WFBF has had long-standing policy supporting the Discovery Farms Program, which collects data from actual farms to address various environmental issues. This information allows farmers, state agencies, federal agencies, the education community and the environmental community to have a factual debate about the practicality and the necessity of various environmental regulations.

The information collected on Discovery Farms has been instrumental in modifying proposed state regulations. For example, there has been a concerted effort to require riparian buffers along all rivers and streams. Data collected through the Discovery Farms Program showed that this would not necessarily improve water quality. But rather the data showed that not only the riparian area, but the adjoining upland, needed to be looked at to determine what Best Management Practices would best address nonpoint run-off. DNR is in the process of utilizing this information to develop proposed modifications to NR 151, their administrative rule implementing the State's nonpoint program.

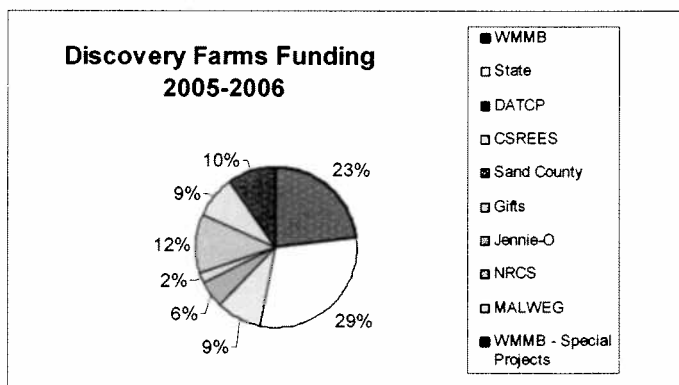
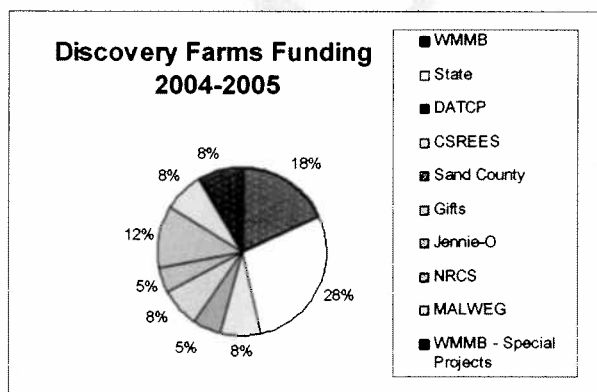
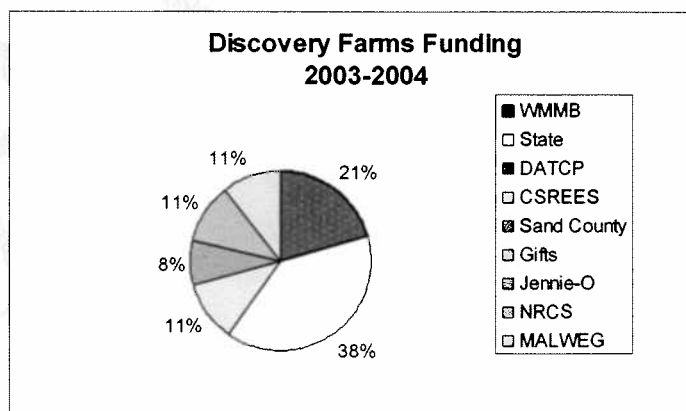
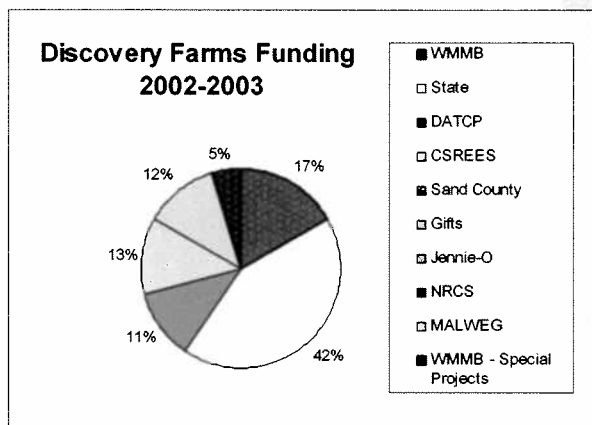
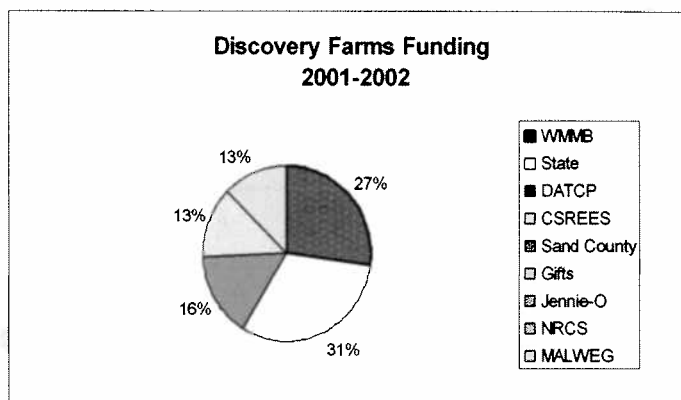
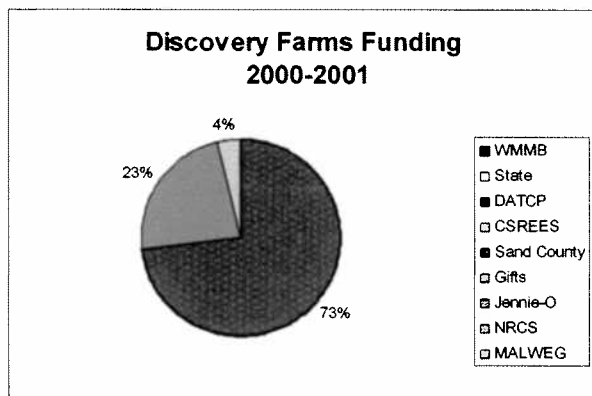
Last year there were differences between DNR and DATCP rules addressing nutrient management standards. Discovery Farms' information was presented to the Assembly and Senate Agricultural Committees pointing out the environmental and economical impacts of the two proposals. From this information, DNR and DATCP came to an agreement and NR 243, DNR's CAFO regulation, and ATCP 50, DATCP's portion of the nonpoint program, were modified to be consistent with one another.

Data currently being collected on Discovery Farms will be important in developing nutrient application criteria with regard to determining when manure should be applied based upon the moisture content of the soil or to land drained by subsurface tiles.

Discovery Farms research has benefited production agriculture and the environment by trying to ensure that regulations are practical and really work. Attached is a summary of the funding Discovery Farms has received from its conception. As you can see, there have been several entities that have financially supported the work of the Discovery Farm program.

However, with the elimination of most of the federal earmarks this fiscal year. The near term and long term outlook of Discovery Farms are in doubt. WFBF requests your support in securing adequate funding in the upcoming state budget to ensure that the Discovery Farms program can continue.

SOURCES OF DISCOVERY FARMS FUNDING





3/22 - Agr Committee Informational Hearings
Bruce Jones + Bob Crepp
2007 Status of WI Agriculture
Report

Net income fell sharply:

- low milk prices
- high fuel prices

Crop producers did better than livestock producers

On aggregate, the WI ag balance sheet is very strong.

- Primarily due to farm real estate values:
 - land prices growing rapidly
 - '96 - '06 = 180%

80,000 farms = \$51.6 Bill. net worth.

The correction seen in the 80's not anticipated to re occur despite high land values.

People are finding ways to generate sufficient income to stay on the farm + in farming.

On 2007 -

Milk prices will rebound

Meat Output ↑ Prices ↑

Strong Corn Prices

Soy = OK

Fuel prices high but not too volatile

Much better than 2006

Prospects are good for a good earnings
year in WI

Dairy:

The Southwest drives our milk
prices

WI dairy farmers get paid some of the best
prices in the country.

- Which makes it difficult for our
cheese plants to compete.

We have plenty of heifers to maintain
+ grow our dairy industry
herds -

Dry whey is adding \$1.50/lb to
milk price right now



3/22 - Ag committee Informational Hearing

UW Discovery Farms:

Robin Shepard + Dennis Frame

Shepard - UWDF is a fellowship for University outreach.

Program is farmer driven.

Frame - Unless we engage the producer community & make them an active part of the solution, we will not be successful.

The program is designed to evaluate the impact of farming systems on air, water & soil.

Understand farming systems & assess their environmental impacts
Work w/ farms to identify ways to modify their systems.

8 farms currently in the program.

Farmers want to understand the impacts of their farms on the environment
& to educate other farmers

DF does not recommend BMPs unless they detect a problem.

They spend 2 years getting to know each of these farms.

They are able to collect high quality data.

** Need legislation to allow Discoverer Farms to do testing on pathogens. **

Developed risk assessments during periods of potential run-off.

• Determine alternative mgmt practices.

Critical Time Periods for run-off risks

- Snowmelt, rain on frozen ground
- Saturated soils → rain on frozen ground

Challenge is how to educate producers & the public re. high risk periods.

Goal is to develop risk mgmt assessment tool.

40-75% run off occurs on frozen ground.

90% of losses will occur by June 15

Why not ban winter spreading?

- It's more important to identify a work around critical times for run off (rather than dates on a calendar...)
- There are years when crops can be planted in March.
- There are years when manure can be applied all winter.

Why Spread in Winter?

- Minimize compaction
- No other field activity
- No damage to crops
- Storage Issues
- Animal health issues
- More efficient use of nutrients

Manure storage must be managed to ensure that storage is available during high risk periods.

Still need to do work on solid manure mgmt.

Educate producers to manage manure in a way that reduces losses in the winter period.

Developing a system to use soil moisture + weather forecasts to determine the likelihood of run-off.

Spreading Index

Till lines are a big issue in the eastern '13 of the state.

- Significant need for till studies

- Need to understand till before we regulate it.

Funding -

Will lose federal earmarks for 2007 (October)

Exploring options to maintain the current level of funding, but the prospects are not very good right now.

May need to reduce the # of Discovery Farms

It's dangerous to build a program like this on "soft money"

To revamp WASH would cost \$2.6M

Dennis currently spends 40-50% of his time raising \$



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715-983-2138 (fax)

Issues Examined by UW – Discovery Farms and the WI Farm Community

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Dennis Frame

Co – Director U.W. – Discovery Farms

- **Farmers want to understand the impacts of their farming systems on the environment,**
- **Every one of our cooperators believes that their farming system is not having a negative affect -- it's the other farmers,**
- **Our work has identified critical time periods when the risk of runoff is very high:**
 - **Snowmelt, rain on snow/frozen ground**
 - **Non-frozen soils that are close to saturation**
- **We need to work with farmers to find acceptable solutions to land spreading during high risk periods (key days/weeks in February – March).**
 - **A total ban on spreading during this 60 day period is not necessary, nor is it financially feasible**
 - **Identify critical sites where manure can be applied or stored during this high risk period**
- **The non – frozen period:**
 - **The goal is to develop a critical condition index that helps identify acceptable spreading conditions,**
- **There is a tremendous need to continue tile monitoring studies,**
- **Need to understand how management influences losses through tile:**
 - **Moisture content of manure**
 - **Incorporation/tillage**
 - **Timing**
- **Farmers are the solution to environmental challenges. How do we engage the farm community (producers, agri-business, and agency personnel) in a positive program that results in the implementation of practices that protect the environment?**
- **Farmers have provided the greatest share of funding and support for the UW – Discovery Farms Program. If the program is to continue and expand its educational mission, significant investments need to come from the state and**





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Mission Statement

Vision Statement

UW-Discovery Farms Briefing Paper

Concept of Discovery Farms

Role of the Local Advisory Committee

Participation Expectation Statement

Introduction to the program (ppt)

How has the Wisconsin Dairy Industry Benefited from Discovery Farms?

UW-Discovery Farms Briefing Paper

January 5, 2004

Dennis R. Frame

Co - Director

UW-Discovery Farms Program

What is a Discovery Farm?

A Discovery Farm is an operating, commercial Wisconsin farm cooperating in on-farm systems evaluation and demonstration projects. The network works with a systems farm at UW-Platteville and researchers at UW-Madison to evaluate nutrient management strategies and practices aimed at reducing nonpoint source pollution while protecting farm profitability. A primary objective is to establish baseline data that can be used to determine environmental impacts of various farm management practices.



We hope to establish 20 to 30 Discovery Farms that span the state's diverse soil types, physical and water characteristics, and livestock and cropping systems. As of today we have established one farm with two monitoring sites, two farms with three sites, and another farm with a upstream / downstream study design. In addition, we are working with four other operations on studies ranging from whole farm mass balance, the Wisconsin Buffer Initiative, and the fate of nitrogen losses on grazing systems.

Who proposed the Discovery Farms idea?

Faculty members in the UW-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and UW-Extension Cooperative Extension proposed the concept after exploring farm-based, systems research efforts in the Netherlands. Since the proposal, we've received additional input from Wisconsin dairy and livestock farmers; farm organizations (including Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Farm Bureau and Wisconsin Pork Producers Association); faculty from UW-Platteville, -River Falls and -Stevens Point; and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

What are the goals of the Discovery Farms program?



- Promote the economic viability of Wisconsin's agriculture across the state's diverse livestock and cropping systems.

- Increase understanding of agricultural impacts on soil, water and air quality and work toward reducing adverse impacts.
- Provide research-based information on agricultural production and natural resource management to public policymakers.
- Integrate outreach and research programs with environmental management and regulatory efforts.

How do Discovery Farms fit into the Wisconsin Agricultural Stewardship Initiative?

In Spring 2000, Governor Tommy Thompson announced the Wisconsin Agricultural Stewardship Initiative (WASI) – an effort to help Wisconsin farmers meet environmental and economic challenges confronting them. WASI consists of three related programmatic efforts: a) the Discovery Farms network; b) a systems farm, which will conduct nonpoint pollution systems research and evaluate practices or technologies that may be too financially risky to undertake on Discovery Farms; and c) component research conducted primarily at UW-Madison and its Agricultural Research Stations across the state, and also at agricultural and natural resources consortium colleges at UW-Platteville, -River Falls, and -Stevens Point. Component research consists of carefully controlled and replicated research projects that will lead to strategies and practices that can be tested on-farm at a Discovery Farm or the Platteville systems farm.

How is oversight of the Discovery Farms program organized?

WASI emphasizes farmer input and direction. The **Wisconsin Agricultural Stewardship Initiative Coordinating Council** is made up of farmers, environmentalists, and other citizens. These voting members direct and coordinate the Platteville systems farm and Discovery Farms, and advise on component research needs. Council members work with agency and university personnel, and the council coordinates fund-raising efforts.

The **Discovery Farms Steering Committee** solicits input on nonpoint pollution information needs, identifies evaluation/demonstration project possibilities, select projects for funding, and solicits Discovery Farms cooperators. It will also coordinate the gathering and reporting of data and information generated. The committee, chaired by a farmer, includes representatives from Wisconsin farm, agribusiness and environmental organizations.

Each Discovery Farms project is crafted by a **Project Design Team** made up of agricultural producers, state and federal agency representatives, and UW researchers. The team will evaluate project proposals for relevance and feasibility.

An On-Farm Project Team supports each producer who conducts a Discovery Farm project. Chaired by the farm cooperator, the team helps implement the project, monitor progress, collect and analyze data, and share results. The team includes neighboring farmers; fertilizer, feed and financial consultants; county and other local extension personnel; local representatives of NRCS and Land Conservation Departments; local Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) instructors; and others. Project teams receive support and advice from university and agency specialists.

Who decides the Discovery Farms evaluation and demonstration project agenda?

Farmer input and direction at all levels of the WASI ensure that its programs address problems most relevant to producers. Discovery

Farms projects also respond to needs of state and federal agencies such as DNR, DATCP, and NRCS. Scientists evaluate opportunities created by new findings and determine scientific feasibility of various study approaches. Paramount in the process, however, is the needs of farmers themselves.

Who selects and designs Discovery Farm projects?

Following input from farmers and others, the Discovery Farms Steering Committee selects the most important and relevant projects. Then a Project Design Team develops details for each project, including required characteristics of participating farms, variable measurements, measurement protocols, data handling and analysis, and study length. The design team determines the compensation paid to the Discovery Farm cooperator and overall project budget needs.

How are Discovery Farms projects conducted?

Discovery Farms evaluates and demonstrates best management practices and determines their effectiveness on working Wisconsin farms. Although cooperating farmers are compensated for the substantial effort and additional costs the project may require, every cooperator must agree to do what is necessary to successfully complete the project. The cooperating farmer is key to project success, but he/she does not stand-alone. An On-Farm Project Team helps set up the experiments, devise measurement strategies, and gather necessary data. Help is also available from the project's statewide research support team.

How are project findings shared with Wisconsin farmers and others?

Results from various demonstration farm projects is combined and interpreted to produce the best recommendations possible. The results are communicated in a timely fashion to interested parties. Much of the information moves to farmers, consultants and other agribusinesses through Cooperative Extension efforts and the county educational network. Findings are distributed through Extension publications, mass media, and other routes that reach farmers and agribusinesses. Field days at Discovery Farms, the Platteville systems farm, and other UW System campuses and research stations will also disseminate results. Special efforts are made to communicate findings at annual meetings and other gatherings of participating organizations. Web-based computer technologies can create searchable databases, chat rooms and e-mail lists for exchanging ideas and sharing information. Distance education facilities of UW Extension in Madison and new outreach facilities at UW-Platteville and -River Falls will further facilitate timely information dissemination. Project progress and results are also reported at an annual conference of all participating and supporting organizations.

For More Information:

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Committee on Agriculture

Updated 10-24-08

Bills

- 2/22/2007** **Assembly Bill 114**
relating to: changing the requirements under which a landowner may withdraw property from a drainage district.
- By Representatives Albers, Molepske, Townsend, A. Ott, Mursau and Hahn; cosponsored by Senators S. Fitzgerald, Lassa, Olsen and Schultz.
- 2/22/2007** **Assembly Bill 115**
relating to: requiring a seller of real property located in a drainage district to disclose the location of the property within a drainage district.
- By Representatives Albers, Molepske, Townsend, A. Ott, Mursau and Hahn; cosponsored by Senators S. Fitzgerald, Lassa, Olsen and Schultz.
- 2/22/2007** **Assembly Bill 117**
relating to: requiring certain approvals for the construction, enlargement, or modification of a dam that affects the water level of a drain.
- By Representatives Albers, Molepske, Townsend, A. Ott, Mursau and Hahn; cosponsored by Senators S. Fitzgerald, Lassa and Olsen.
- 2/22/2007** **Assembly Bill 119**
relating to: authorizing a drainage district to impose setback distances or no-build zones related to drain maintenance.
- By Representatives Albers, Molepske, Townsend, A. Ott, Mursau and Hahn; cosponsored by Senators S. Fitzgerald, Lassa, Olsen and Schultz.
- 2/22/2007** **Assembly Bill 120**
relating to: requiring local governmental units to consider relationships with a drainage district in the preparation of comprehensive plans and requiring sellers of real property to disclose proximity of property to military bases and location within drainage districts.
- By Representatives Molepske, Albers, Townsend, A. Ott, Mursau and Hahn; cosponsored by Senators Lassa, S. Fitzgerald, Olsen and Schultz.
- 2/22/2007** **Assembly Bill 116**
relating to: increasing the public contract minimum bid requirements for drainage districts.
- By Representatives Molepske, Albers, Townsend, A. Ott, Mursau and Hahn; cosponsored by Senators Lassa, S. Fitzgerald, Olsen and Schultz.
- 2/22/2007** **Assembly Bill 118**
relating to: requiring local governmental units to consider relationships with drainage districts in the preparation of comprehensive plans, requiring local governments to provide notice to drainage districts regarding proposals that affect drainage districts, and requiring sellers of real property to disclose the location of property within drainage districts.

By Representatives Molepske, Albers, Townsend, A. Ott, Mursau and Hahn; cosponsored by Senators Lassa, S. Fitzgerald, Olsen and Schultz.

4/10/2007

Assembly Bill 234

relating to: the use of pesticides by veterinarians and veterinary technicians.

By Representatives Hines, A. Ott, Ballweg, Bies, Davis, Gronemus, Gunderson, Hahn, Jorgensen, Molepske, Mursau, Musser, Nerison, Owens, Petrowski, Tauchen, Townsend, Vruwink, M. Williams and Wood; cosponsored by Senators Lassa, Vinehout, Ellis, Grothman, Harsdorf, Kapanke, Kedzie, A. Lasee, Olsen, Plale, Risser and Schultz.

5/7/2007

Assembly Bill 306

relating to: an assessment on growers that sell corn.

By Representatives A. Ott, Jorgensen, Hahn, Davis, Hilgenberg, Ballweg, Sheridan, Murtha, Owens, Albers, Vruwink, Strachota, Tauchen, Molepske, Seidel, Hixson, Nelson and Smith; cosponsored by Senators Kreitlow, Kapanke, Hansen, Cowles, A. Lasee, Olsen, Schultz and Harsdorf.

5/31/2007

Assembly Bill 381

relating to: an income and franchise tax credit for sales and use taxes paid on the purchase of electricity used in agricultural biotechnology.

By Representatives Wieckert, Hahn, Gronemus, Musser, Mursau, Mason, Tauchen, A. Ott, Hines, Bies, Albers, Townsend, Gunderson and Murtha; cosponsored by Senators Leibham and Roessler.

7/3/2007

Assembly Bill 446

relating to: reimbursement for damages caused by dogs and the use of funds derived from the licensing of dogs.

By Representatives Hines, A. Ott, Albers, Townsend, Musser and Petrowski; cosponsored by Senator Olsen.

10/30/2007

Assembly Bill 554

relating to: nursery dealers, nursery growers, Christmas tree growers, and granting rule-making authority.

By Representatives A. Ott, Musser, Gunderson, Hahn, Gronemus and Zepnick; cosponsored by Senators Vinehout, Olsen, Schultz and Lassa.

1/3/2008

Assembly Bill 657

relating to: eliminating the World Dairy Center Authority.

By Representatives A. Ott, Gronemus, Albers and Mursau; cosponsored by Senators Grothman, Roessler and Olsen.

1/17/2008

Assembly Bill 701

relating to: a report on food safety programs.

By Representatives A. Ott, Gronemus, Nerison, Vruwink, M. Williams, Molepske, Mursau, Garthwaite, Murtha, Jorgensen, Tauchen, Musser, Davis, Townsend, Hahn and Petrowski; cosponsored by Senators Vinehout, Kapanke, A. Lasee, Roessler, Schultz and Cowles.

1/25/2008

Assembly Bill 732

relating to: a meat processing facility investment income and franchise tax credit, granting rule-making authority, and making an appropriation.

By Representatives A. Ott, Steinbrink, Petrowski, Ballweg, Hubler, Mursau, Hahn, Jorgensen, Kerkman, Musser, Albers, Gunderson, Townsend, Gronemus, M. Williams, Nerison and Molepske; cosponsored by Senators Vinehout, Kapanke, Schultz, Harsdorf, Lehman, Olsen and Roessler.

2/4/2008 **Assembly Bill 763**
relating to: allowing dairy cooperatives to claim the dairy manufacturing facility investment credit and making an appropriation.

By Representatives Davis, Steinbrink, A. Ott, Albers, Ballweg, Garthwaite, Gronemus, Hahn, Jorgensen, Mursau, Musser, Nass, Nerison, Petrowski, Suder, Tauchen, Vruwink, M. Williams and Molepske; cosponsored by Senators Vinehout, Kapanke, Harsdorf and Olsen.

3/11/2008 **Assembly Bill 950**
relating to: the property tax assessment of land subject to a stream bank protection easement.

By Representative Davis; cosponsored by Senator Schultz.

Clearinghouse Rules

1/18/2007 **Clearinghouse Rule 06-085**
relating to seed potato certification and grading.

1/18/2007 **Clearinghouse Rule 05-075**
relating to animal feeding operations.

2/12/2007 **Clearinghouse Rule 05-013**
relating to nutrient management on farms and affecting small businesses.

4/23/2007 **Clearinghouse Rule 06-136**
relating to soil fumigant pesticides containing chloropicrin or metam sodium.

10/1/2007 **Clearinghouse Rule 07-006**
relating to safe production, processing, distribution, and sale of milk and dairy products.

1/2/2008 **Clearinghouse Rule 07-037**
relating to food and dairy license and reinspection fees.

4/3/2008 **Clearinghouse Rule 07-061**
relating to animal health fees.

4/17/2008 **Clearinghouse Rule 07-067**
relating to agricultural marketing orders and marketing boards.

7/14/2008 **Clearinghouse Rule 08-038**
relating to the "buy local" grant program created under s. 93.48, Stats.

7/29/2008 **Clearinghouse Rule 08-031**
relating to certifying applicants and allocating dairy manufacturing facility investment tax credits, and affecting small businesses.

7/29/2008 **Clearinghouse Rule 07-116**
relating to meat and inedible animal by-products.

- 8/6/2008** **Clearinghouse Rule 07-051**
relating to continuing education, informed consent and recordkeeping.
- 8/26/2008** **Clearinghouse Rule 07-073**
relating to the agricultural producer security program.
- 8/26/2008** **Clearinghouse Rule 07-107**
relating to animal diseases and movement; animal markets, dealers and truckers; and livestock premises registration.
- 8/26/2008** **Clearinghouse Rule 07-093**
relating to local agents that license and inspect retail food establishments for the department.

Informational Presentations

- 3/9/2007** **Overview of the University of Wisconsin Discovery Farms Program**
- 3/9/2007** **Informational Briefing on the 2007 Status of Wisconsin Agriculture Report**
- 3/15/2007** **Agency Budget Briefing - Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection**
(DATCP)
Secretary Rod Nilsestuen
- 4/20/2007** **Update on Wisconsin's Premises Registration System & Pseudorabies Control Efforts**
Invited Speakers Only

Dr. Robert Ehlenfeldt - State Veterinarian
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
- 5/7/2007** **Informational Hearing on Anaerobic Digesters - Turning Animal Waste into Power**
Steve Dvorak - President, GHD, Inc., Chilton, WI
- 8/27/2007** **Informational Hearing on Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) in Wisconsin**
Invited Speakers Only

Dr. Robert Ehlenfeldt - State Veterinarian
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection

Dr. Myron Kibus - State Fish Health Veterinarian
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
- 11/20/2007** **National Farm Medicine Center: Overview & Implications for Wisconsin**
Barbara C. Lee, RN, PhD - Director of the National Farm Medicine Center