**A247C001\_2306214K\_CANON.mp3**

[00:00:00] **Speaker 1** I actually started in Lafayette County.

[00:00:02] **Speaker 2** And only as of April 2022 have I worked within the four counties. Okay, So I am getting to know the other of the other counties. Yeah.

[00:00:10] **Speaker 3** You have a bigger area to cover. So is that a good feeling when you can provide information that ends up helping and 100%. Yeah.

[00:00:22] **Speaker 2** It's the best. Yeah, it's the best.

[00:00:24] **Speaker 1** And oftentimes during a conversation, um, the grower will often.

[00:00:30] **Speaker 2** Wheel off.

[00:00:30] **Speaker 1** And discover the answer together.

[00:00:32] **Speaker 3** Okay.

[00:00:33] **Speaker 1** It's kind of just that process of talking and understanding. But then there's there's opportunities.

[00:00:38] **Speaker 2** To talk about, I guess I'll say, like, like new technologies.

[00:00:42] **Speaker 1** Or different ways of trying.

[00:00:43] **Speaker 2** Things. Mm hmm. And that's really where I think ext.

[00:00:46] **Speaker 1** Resources can.

[00:00:46] **Speaker 2** Help. Yeah. Because we have science based information that has been demonstrated and has worked.

[00:00:53] **Speaker 1** Yeah. Um, so we're we're able.

[00:00:55] **Speaker 3** To offer that. Yeah. And you can maybe, like, demo something so that it's like, a little less scary. Like you can see the results.

[00:01:03] **Speaker 2** We can along with, along with then being able to do some on.

[00:01:07] **Speaker 1** Farm research.

[00:01:08] **Speaker 2** Mm hmm.

[00:01:09] **Speaker 1** Helping growers find answers, but then have.

[00:01:11] **Speaker 2** The statistical data next to it so that they can be comfortable that it's going to repeat itself.

[00:01:18] **Speaker 3** Sure. And that's a good reminder. Do you have a phone? Mean could you put it on airplane mode just just while we're talking? Yeah. Sometimes there's a weird little like parameter. Okay. Okay. And are we ready? We are ready.

[00:01:39] **Speaker 2** And. Quick question. My good with hands.

[00:01:41] **Speaker 1** Crossed right here or.

[00:01:43] **Speaker 2** Just perfect. This I think this will keep me from being fidgety, so.

[00:01:47] **Speaker 3** Okay. Um, well, power through this August, I think. Okay, So just to start, you know, this past May was the fourth driest on record for Wisconsin, and now we're more than halfway through June. And by and large, it looks pretty hot, pretty dry. So how are crops faring?

[00:02:10] **Speaker 2** Yeah, good crops.

[00:02:11] **Speaker 1** Are faring.

[00:02:12] **Speaker 2** Well.

[00:02:13] **Speaker 1** Generally.

[00:02:14] **Speaker 2** And we've had some, uh.

[00:02:16] **Speaker 1** Some area rains that have come through and kind of helped in small areas. We're probably starting to see a little bit of difference in some of our soils and the way that the crops perform on those soils.

[00:02:27] **Speaker 2** So we have.

[00:02:28] **Speaker 1** A little bit more sandy.

[00:02:29] **Speaker 2** Type top soils.

[00:02:30] **Speaker 1** Those crops might be drying up a little bit faster compared to our. A lot more silt.

[00:02:36] **Speaker 2** And clay based soils that are maybe holding the.

[00:02:38] **Speaker 1** Moisture just a little bit better.

[00:02:41] **Speaker 2** Before me though, we had really good soil moisture. We had we had actually caught up last fall and we had decent.

[00:02:48] **Speaker 1** Winter moisture in our systems. We're in really.

[00:02:51] **Speaker 2** Good shape.

[00:02:51] **Speaker 1** This spring. So the crops are.

[00:02:53] **Speaker 2** Still taking advantage of some of that, uh.

[00:02:55] **Speaker 1** Good early spring moisture.

[00:02:57] **Speaker 2** But we just haven't had.

[00:02:59] **Speaker 1** Um, the moisture.

[00:03:00] **Speaker 2** Replenished in the soil just just yet this.

[00:03:03] **Speaker 1** Year.

[00:03:03] **Speaker 3** And one climatologist calls this weather whiplash where we saw lots of precipitation in the early months of this year. And then now we have this kind of dry spell. So as these early months helped crops, are they able to sustain a longer dry spell?

[00:03:24] **Speaker 2** So we think about like being.

[00:03:27] **Speaker 1** Weather resilient and agriculture. Um. For the good years, 2020.

[00:03:32] **Speaker 2** And 2021 were really.

[00:03:34] **Speaker 1** Really good years. We had frequent rainfall and really good crops. Years prior to that, we.

[00:03:40] **Speaker 2** Had maybe excess moisture actually, and that can have its own issues associated.

[00:03:45] **Speaker 1** With the cropping.

[00:03:47] **Speaker 2** Think about being weather resilient. And oftentimes that means having a.

[00:03:51] **Speaker 1** Diverse crop.

[00:03:52] **Speaker 2** Rotation. It means doing like minimum tillage and having some.

[00:03:57] **Speaker 1** Cover cover crops.

[00:03:58] **Speaker 2** Actually mixed in. So I'm still, uh, I'm still.

[00:04:03] **Speaker 1** Um, positive on cover cover crop cropping.

[00:04:05] **Speaker 2** Even though.

[00:04:06] **Speaker 1** Some growers have.

[00:04:07] **Speaker 2** Seen this.

[00:04:08] **Speaker 1** Spring.

[00:04:08] **Speaker 2** Especially.

[00:04:09] **Speaker 1** Some of the cover crops.

[00:04:10] **Speaker 2** Have used a little bit of too much of that valuable topsoil.

[00:04:15] **Speaker 3** And can you describe what's happening specifically here in South central Wisconsin?

[00:04:20] **Speaker 2** Yeah, So we got our crops planted on time.

[00:04:23] **Speaker 1** Uh, very, very.

[00:04:25] **Speaker 2** Good planting conditions. Once once we got through, like the first half of April, we were able to get off the fields and we and soils were in really good shape. They were moist, but they had dried out enough that there was not a lot of compaction. So we got the crop planted. Well.

[00:04:42] **Speaker 1** And like you shared from the start.

[00:04:44] **Speaker 2** We just have not received the moisture that we need to kind of keep.

[00:04:48] **Speaker 1** The crop growing at.

[00:04:49] **Speaker 2** The pace that we that we want.

[00:04:51] **Speaker 1** So we're sitting here, uh, we're standing.

[00:04:54] **Speaker 2** Uh, June, June 20/20, and we.

[00:04:58] **Speaker 1** Um, we have a lot of our crop.

[00:05:00] **Speaker 2** Protection out.

[00:05:01] **Speaker 1** As far as.

[00:05:02] **Speaker 2** Our herbicides.

[00:05:03] **Speaker 1** And we have pretty good weed control in general. We really haven't.

[00:05:07] **Speaker 2** Seen huge issues with diseases or insects just yet. Um, we have had.

[00:05:13] **Speaker 1** Some true armyworm actually that.

[00:05:15] **Speaker 2** Has come into.

[00:05:15] **Speaker 1** Some of our pastures and maybe some of our greener grass.

[00:05:19] **Speaker 2** Type fields and done some damage.

[00:05:22] **Speaker 1** But we really are just.

[00:05:23] **Speaker 2** Needing to be.

[00:05:24] **Speaker 1** Patient for some more rainfall to help our crops take the next step.

[00:05:28] **Speaker 3** How much longer can they hold out?

[00:05:29] **Speaker 2** Yeah, that's that's a really good question. Uh, I'm going to be optimistic until we celebrate the 4th of July. At that point, I think we're hitting kind of a real milestone with the fact that these crops surprised me to be able to reverse course. I know we're visiting here about alfalfa on this particular farm, and alfalfa.

[00:05:52] **Speaker 1** Is an interesting crop in.

[00:05:53] **Speaker 2** That it can actually go dormant and it could maintain its its life. And then you can actually come back out of dormancy then and produce.

[00:06:01] **Speaker 1** Later in the.

[00:06:02] **Speaker 2** Season. More of our traditional annual.

[00:06:04] **Speaker 1** Crops.

[00:06:05] **Speaker 2** Will not do that.

[00:06:06] **Speaker 1** Um, corn, soybean, for instance, once they've kind of reached that permanent wilting point.

[00:06:12] **Speaker 2** They really they really won't be able to rebound the same or similar.

[00:06:15] **Speaker 1** Perennial forage as well.

[00:06:17] **Speaker 3** Um, and so what are you most concerned about at this point?

[00:06:22] **Speaker 2** I'm most.

[00:06:22] **Speaker 1** Concerned.

[00:06:23] **Speaker 2** About being able to have.

[00:06:26] **Speaker 1** Some answers when growers call.

[00:06:28] **Speaker 2** On being able to help them stay positive, help them think about, you know, what are the what are the needs that they have immediately. So if it's a livestock.

[00:06:40] **Speaker 1** Or dairy based farm, really encourage growers to.

[00:06:43] **Speaker 2** Take a good.

[00:06:44] **Speaker 1** Forage inventory.

[00:06:45] **Speaker 2** Now we have had.

[00:06:47] **Speaker 1** Good years recently, so perhaps there's a little bit of forage that's.

[00:06:51] **Speaker 2** Built up on the farms. If that's the case, let's try to inventory that and get a good idea. You know, we have X amount of tons of corn silage available and to be able to kind of know how far can we go with.

[00:07:02] **Speaker 1** The current forage.

[00:07:03] **Speaker 2** And then at that point just keep monitoring of the crop. There may be a chance that we can plant.

[00:07:09] **Speaker 1** A second crop.

[00:07:10] **Speaker 2** If we do get some late season rain. So maybe middle of July to the beginning of August. I want to work with.

[00:07:17] **Speaker 1** Our crop insurance.

[00:07:18] **Speaker 2** Agent.

[00:07:18] **Speaker 1** To make sure that we don't.

[00:07:20] **Speaker 2** Affect the.

[00:07:21] **Speaker 1** Crop insurance coverage on our first crop.

[00:07:23] **Speaker 2** But there may be a chance.

[00:07:24] **Speaker 1** To grow a second crop at that.

[00:07:26] **Speaker 2** Point. Maybe sorghum Sudan grass, maybe fall oats just to meet those livestock needs.

[00:07:33] **Speaker 1** For our for our farms that have dairy and livestock.

[00:07:36] **Speaker 3** How much do you expect tools like crop insurance to really be in use this season?

[00:07:41] **Speaker 2** Yeah.

[00:07:41] **Speaker 1** So on average, across the.

[00:07:45] **Speaker 2** State of Wisconsin, roughly.

[00:07:47] **Speaker 1** 80% of the acres are covered in revenue based crop insurance.

[00:07:52] **Speaker 2** So what that means is.

[00:07:55] **Speaker 1** There's actually a revenue.

[00:07:56] **Speaker 2** Component based off of.

[00:07:58] **Speaker 1** Your historic yields on your farm. So if your farm has a yield history of 150.

[00:08:02] **Speaker 2** Bushels.

[00:08:03] **Speaker 1** Per acre, and the price that.

[00:08:05] **Speaker 2** We end up using will be the.

[00:08:06] **Speaker 1** Higher of the spring or fall price.

[00:08:08] **Speaker 2** So we'll take that.

[00:08:09] **Speaker 1** Times the price.

[00:08:10] **Speaker 2** So we'll take that 150 times $36.

[00:08:14] **Speaker 1** That revenue would be your guarantee.

[00:08:17] **Speaker 2** There's a couple of reducers that come in for that because we don't have one.

[00:08:22] **Speaker 1** 100% insurance coverage.

[00:08:24] **Speaker 2** But it will definitely.

[00:08:25] **Speaker 1** Help cover the.

[00:08:26] **Speaker 2** Input side.

[00:08:27] **Speaker 1** Of those farms.

[00:08:28] **Speaker 2** And then give them that chance to be able to participate again next year.

[00:08:32] **Speaker 3** So you are a bit concerned, but you sound like you're remaining optimistic when you are out communicating with farmers.

[00:08:40] **Speaker 2** That's what I'm trying to project.

[00:08:43] **Speaker 1** Yes.

[00:08:44] **Speaker 3** And so as we see working. It's like this weather, whiplash, you know, extreme flash floods, um, potentially these flash droughts, as this climatologist calls them. Um, our crops in general prepared, our farmers prepared to handle this kind of back and forth lot of extremes.

[00:09:06] **Speaker 1** Yeah, that's a really good question.

[00:09:08] **Speaker 2** Uh, I think we have the tools and the expertise available. I think we will need to probably take a look at some of our decision making and maybe some of our techniques. Um, but as long.

[00:09:20] **Speaker 1** As our crop insurance programs remain strong.

[00:09:23] **Speaker 2** That's going to allow people the chance to take that risk. Take that risk.

[00:09:27] **Speaker 1** Um, if there are changes there, it might.

[00:09:29] **Speaker 2** Adjust things somewhat. But there's reasons to take a look at, like we mentioned from the start, that.

[00:09:34] **Speaker 1** Diversified cropping.

[00:09:36] **Speaker 2** Rotation to be able to.

[00:09:38] **Speaker 1** Have crops that mature at different times during the year.

[00:09:41] **Speaker 2** Um, oftentimes some.

[00:09:43] **Speaker 1** Of our small grain crops of our are wheat or R.I..

[00:09:46] **Speaker 2** That we actually plant in the fall. We could be harvesting those here in the next 3 to 4 weeks. Then they they may do just fine based off of the early season moisture that we had.

[00:09:57] **Speaker 1** So there's some there's some.

[00:09:59] **Speaker 2** Reasons to take to take a look at.

[00:10:02] **Speaker 1** Bringing a little bit more diversity.

[00:10:04] **Speaker 2** To to some.

[00:10:05] **Speaker 1** Of our farms.

[00:10:06] **Speaker 2** I think the one piece that we don't know what's going to play out is.

[00:10:09] **Speaker 1** How are some of the weather changes that we may be are experiencing?

[00:10:13] **Speaker 2** How will they impact some of the diseases and insects and and weeds that we currently have? Is it going to allow a weed that, um, maybe doesn't have the growing season.

[00:10:24] **Speaker 1** Currently.

[00:10:25] **Speaker 2** To come into our fields and kind of be.

[00:10:27] **Speaker 1** A problem for us?

[00:10:30] **Speaker 3** Are there things that you think possibly the state legislature or Congress could do to help farmers? I mean, it's difficult to be a farmer in this day and age already. These kinds of unpredictable things make it that much harder. Are there things that our legislative leaders can do?

[00:10:49] **Speaker 2** That's a tough question for.

[00:10:50] **Speaker 1** Me to answer. I think with my role within extensions.

[00:10:54] **Speaker 2** Probably best answered by maybe a.

[00:10:56] **Speaker 1** Farm, a farm group. Um.

[00:10:58] **Speaker 2** What I might be able to give you just a little bit of an answer. I think anything we can do to.

[00:11:05] **Speaker 1** Further the ability for more farmers to enter.

[00:11:10] **Speaker 2** I think will be positive. Um, again, I think with the.

[00:11:14] **Speaker 1** Diversity of the crops that we've.

[00:11:16] **Speaker 2** Produced, I think will be positive.

[00:11:18] **Speaker 1** And a lot of it starts with how we manage our soil.

[00:11:21] **Speaker 2** So if we can take a look at, you know, what is the impact of doing tillage ahead of ahead of planting.

[00:11:28] **Speaker 1** Our crops.

[00:11:28] **Speaker 2** Oftentimes we use tillage for a lot of different methods on a lot of different goals. But, uh, you.

[00:11:35] **Speaker 1** Know, when we're in more of a weather risk.

[00:11:38] **Speaker 2** Situation, what does that do to our chance of having a problem? So I think we're starting to learn all that, trying to figure out how those all fit together. I know there's climate smart type work being done at USDA, so hopefully that has in mind, you know, the.

[00:11:53] **Speaker 1** Goals of farmers for their.

[00:11:55] **Speaker 2** Land management to um, because ultimately that that really is where we're going to have the biggest results is what our private landowners, you know, have the power to make the decisions.

[00:12:06] **Speaker 1** That are best for them.

[00:12:08] **Speaker 3** Anything else you want to add?

[00:12:10] **Speaker 2** I think I want I want we want to talk a little bit about the alfalfa, if we could, and maybe we'll.

[00:12:17] **Speaker 1** Visit a little bit more about that later. Um, so our perennial forages.

[00:12:21] **Speaker 2** Uh, just have, have a little bit of patience with them if I think we try to think about.

[00:12:26] **Speaker 1** If there's enough out there to harvest currently.

[00:12:28] **Speaker 2** We can go.

[00:12:29] **Speaker 1** Ahead and harvest.

[00:12:30] **Speaker 2** Those. Uh, we want to keep the cutting high, maybe a little bit higher. Um, but if, if the crop is just stop, stop growing, it's probably best for us just.

[00:12:38] **Speaker 1** A week to harvest until it starts again.

[00:12:41] **Speaker 2** We visit a.

[00:12:42] **Speaker 1** Little of our crop insurance as being a really important tool for growers.

[00:12:46] **Speaker 2** Um, I think it's important that the general public understands. Um, we have.

[00:12:50] **Speaker 1** Very.

[00:12:50] **Speaker 2** Often an eight or.

[00:12:51] **Speaker 1** $900 an acre invested in getting our crops planted.

[00:12:56] **Speaker 2** And that's and that's not without other costs that are added to that as well. So having some tools in place that can help, uh, you know.

[00:13:04] **Speaker 1** Uh, fork farmers recoup some of those costs are really important to keeping them uh.

[00:13:10] **Speaker 2** Uh, ready to come back next, next year, but also grow crop.

[00:13:14] **Speaker 3** So it's 8 to $900 invested plus costs on top of that. And so crop insurance doesn't necessarily recoup all of that. So it's not a tool that farmers look forward to using.

[00:13:27] **Speaker 2** No, I. I think we need to.

[00:13:29] **Speaker 1** Consider it insurance.

[00:13:31] **Speaker 2** Like. Like any of us would buy insurance. It's just it's.

[00:13:35] **Speaker 1** Insurance specifically for.

[00:13:37] **Speaker 2** That return on.

[00:13:39] **Speaker 1** That acre of crops.

[00:13:41] **Speaker 3** Is there anything else that you think like a general audience who aren't expert farmers? Should kind of know about the situation we're in right now.

[00:13:50] **Speaker 2** Yeah, Uh, I think, uh, pulling in and saying hi.

[00:13:55] **Speaker 1** Maybe see your neighbors, ask them how they're doing.

[00:13:58] **Speaker 2** This can really cause havoc on.

[00:14:00] **Speaker 1** The psyche of our farmers.

[00:14:02] **Speaker 2** We can. We all. We have all these things bouncing around in our heads. We have experienced in the past of.

[00:14:08] **Speaker 1** Other droughts or other times.

[00:14:10] **Speaker 2** That.

[00:14:10] **Speaker 1** Have been really stressful on our farm and on our.

[00:14:12] **Speaker 2** Family. So I think it would go a long ways if you could stop in and say hi, see what, see what's going on. They might very well have some answers for some of the questions that you have as well. Maybe you have a question about a plant.

[00:14:25] **Speaker 1** In your yard or a question about a tree. Oftentimes, farmers are very in touch with.

[00:14:29] **Speaker 2** With all things.

[00:14:30] **Speaker 1** Uh, crops and soils.

[00:14:32] **Speaker 3** All right. Thank you very much.

[00:14:34] **Speaker 2** Thank you.

[00:14:35] **Speaker 3** Um, and so now we'll turn to Stan.

[00:14:39] **Speaker 2** Before we do that. There.