Cold Weather Calf Challenges – How are You Doing?

By: Jerry Bertoldo

Winter adds stress to those who have to don extra clothing and work in cold temperatures on the farm. We can go home, take a hot shower, get warmed up and enjoy a satisfying meal before we have at it again tomorrow. Our calves don’t have it quite so comfortable. Think about some of the environmental realities calves face.

• Just born calves have about 18 hours of stored energy for maintenance when the weather is calm and warm. Wet just-born calves in well below freezing conditions may run out of “gas” in a few hours.
• Calves less than 3 weeks of age need extra energy for keeping warm below 59°F
• Calves older than 3 weeks need extra energy for keeping warm below 42°F
• These threshold temperatures increase with wind and wet conditions
• Energy requirements increase with wind chill, evaporative cooling (wet legs and belly) and hair coat problems (mud, hair loss, matting/spiking from licking) potentially doubling in extreme conditions
• Smaller calves have greater surface to body mass ration and chill easier
• Air movement over a dry calf, less than 3 months old, at a temperature under 50°F in excess of 1 MPH is considered a draft.
• Straw insulates better than shavings
• Calves like to “nest”. Straw makes this easier, but needs to be at least 4-6 inches deep.

Calves do not like drafts, but need fresh air. Well bedded hutchies facing south do this rather well. Calf barns are generally built to naturally ventilate as well as they can in the summer. When calf barns are closed up in the winter the ammonia generated under the calves from manure and urine is a challenge to clear out. If you can smell it, it is too strong. These levels are irritating to the respiratory tract and can predispose the calf to lung infections.

By: Jerry Bertoldo

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Mission Statement

The NWNY Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops team will provide lifelong education to the people of the agricultural community to assist them in achieving their goals. Through education programs & opportunities, the NWNY Team seeks to build producers’ capacities to:

♦ Enhance the profitability of their business
♦ Practice environmental stewardship
♦ Enhance employee & family well-being in a safe work environment
♦ Provide safe, healthful agricultural products
♦ Provide leadership for enhancing relationships between agricultural sector, neighbors, & the general public.

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Every effort has been made to provide correct, complete and up-to-date pesticide recommendations. Changes occur constantly & human errors are still possible. These recommendations are not a substitute for pesticide labeling. Please read the label before applying pesticides.

By law and purpose, Cooperative Extension is dedicated to serving the people on a non-discriminatory basis.
• Barns with two rows of pens ventilate more evenly than four row types
• Wire paneled pens offer better air mixing than ones with solid sides. Pens with solid back panels can easily lead to poor air quality.
• Early pneumonia (first two weeks of age) may be due to malnutrition (poor immune development), inhalation of milk (sloppy tube feeding, excessively large nipple holes), inhalation of bedding dust or significant BRSV virus exposure from shedding adults in the calving pen.

Resistance to disease in the young calf in the winter is very much influenced by energy balance and protein availability, arguably as important as colostral immunity. Failing to address temperature drops, heat-depleting conditions and body size when feeding calves explains why more calves are lost in the cold weather than any other time of year.

• Calves nurse 20-25% of their body weight per day when left on the dam. 8-12% of BW in milk or milk replacer is what we commonly hand feed to dairy calves.
• Twice a day feeding makes high feeding rates difficult due to the inability of the gut to efficiently handle such volumes of liquid feed. Feeding on a 12 and 12 instead of a 14 and 10 hour interval basis helps to a degree. Going to 3X feeding is the better choice.
• Whole milk provides 25% more energy than most milk replacers on a volume basis.
• Calves do not digest starter as well in the first three weeks of life as they do after that. Forcing calves to eat starter early at the expense of milk/replacer intake not only slows growth potential, but is stressful to the calf and biologically counterproductive.

Calves are bovine infants. The characteristic early-to-their-feet toughness belies the susceptibility they have to stress, subpar nutrition and weather extremes.

Jerry Bertoldo is a veterinarian and dairy specialist with the North West New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team. Reach him at 585.343.3040, ext. 133 or 585.281.6816 cell. Email: grb23@cornell.edu
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Wyoming County has joined Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, and Yates Counties in the regional NWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team program. This expansion of the team’s territory became effective on January 1st.

For the last two years there had been collaborative efforts between Wyoming County CCE and the dairy programming of the team to replicate the herdsman training modules developed by the Wyoming County Dairy Institute. Both sides of the effort were aided by funds from the Center for Dairy Excellence. Combining the experience, resources and networking with agriservice of both entities proved quite rewarding. The use of the Polycom video conferencing system for classroom teaching enabled greater area coverage with less man hours and expense. We look forward to an expansion of this concept across the specialties offered by the team.

Joan Petzen is the agricultural program leader for Wyoming CCE. She will share her time between those duties and working within her specialty area of dairy farm business management with John Hanchar on the NWNY Team. She will introduce herself more fully in next month’s AgFocus.

Joan’s office will remain in Warsaw. She can be reached at 585-786-2251 or via e-mail at jsp10@cornell.edu.

Best Management Workshop

**February 24, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.**
Gas & Steam Engine Grounds Clubhouse
104000 Gillate Rd., Alexander

**March 23, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**
Elba Fire Recreation Hall
7143 Oak Orchard Rd., Elba

- Pest Management, Fungicide Uses, & Seed Selection, to improve profitability & reduce environmental concerns.
- Bunk Management to improve feed quality, reduce spoilage, and bunk leaching.
- Pesticide Safety Kit.
- Rotational Grazing and Pasture Management
- Manure Management to capitalize nutrients while reducing nutrient runoff and leaching

1 DEC Pesticide Credit is available

Registration:
Contact: Elizabeth
Genesee Co. SWCD at 585.343.2362

Step It Up 2011
Anastassia Events
6440 Pike Street
Portageville, 14536

**February 22 from 10 am to 3 pm**
Registration begins at 9:30

- Weed Management in Pastures - Dave Roberts, NRCS Grasslands Specialist
- Managing Those Pesky Flies – Nancy Glazier
- Managed Grazing - Featured Speaker, Joe Tomandl, Chelsa, WI dairy grazier
- Concurrent Sessions for Dairy and Beef
- Dairy Grazing Economics and Decision Making Panel Discussion
- Wisconsin’s Dairy Grazier Apprenticeship Program - Joe Tomandl
- Improving Rates of Gain and Profits in Beef Enterprises with Rotational Grazing

Registration fee of $25 per person ($35 for non-enrollees) will include coffee, donuts, and a hot lunch.

To register, please call Cathy at 585.343.3040 x138, email cfw6@cornell.edu. Credit card registration at www.nwnyteam.org.
Is Your Farm Ready For an Emergency?

By Nancy Glazier

The NWNY region is arguably the breadbasket of New York, and locally raised products are critical to the food supply of the state. Catastrophic events, such as natural or man-made disasters, could potentially be devastating for both the region and the state. The best approach is preparedness, not procrastination! Fortunately, winter is a great time of the year to work on these planning projects. Some of the counties in our region have county-wide action plans; you should have one for your operation regardless of whether your home county has one.

A group of emergency planners, extension and university folks from Penn State, Cornell, Rutgers, Oklahoma State, and University of Vermont, has put together a workbook to assist farms with developing an emergency action plan. The tool was developed to assist all types of farms with catastrophic events, both natural and man-made. The planning is basically the same. Included is assistance with planning for all aspects of agriculture, so if your operation is diversified, all aspects can be included. Some of the material may seem simple, but it is all needed to develop the plan. Here’s an overview.

General. This section is for the farm name, (911) address, home and cell phone numbers of owners and managers.

Checklists are provided for each section below: done/not done; low/high priority.

Facilities and Materials. This section looks for some basic information, such as structures, animal areas, as well as feed and raw materials, fertilizers and seed. It includes everything required to run the day to day operation. It also includes access roads, water supply, and vehicles.

People. In the course of a day, there may or may not be visitors (invited or uninvited) on the farm. Whether they are family, friends, sales people or the milk hauler, you want to keep them safe. Is there a visitor’s policy? This section includes the checklist to make sure emergency numbers and contacts are compiled. Also, is there a hiring policy written?

Planning and Practices. This section identifies the need for planning – on the farm and community level. How do you handle a manure, fertilizer or pesticide spill? How are employee or important records disposed of? Are computer files backed up?

Review and Update. After the plan is developed, it should be updated annually. It should also review it with employees and family members.

It may take some time to develop the plan for your operation. What’s important is starting. Some items may be easier to complete in nicer weather and the checklists help set your priorities.

The goal is to have the workbook online to automatically generate your action plan after your input. The proposed launch date was January 1, so hopefully by the time you read this, it will be available. The workbook and online system can be found at: http://readyag.psu.edu/. If you would like a paper copy and/or assistance developing your plan, let me know.
Tile, Tile, Tile

By: James Kingston

With the shortage of land and the rising cost of an acre of ground farmers are tiling more acres to increase production. In my previous employment at Soil & Water there were number of farmers that had the same story. These growers pretty much gave up tiling about the time the Soil Conservation Service stopped providing cost share, but now they plan on installing a certain amount of tile every year into the future. At a cost of approximately $.70 to $.90 a foot for installation some of these same growers have looked into and purchased equipment to install tile on their own.

At this year’s Corn Congress I gave a presentation on different brands of grade control systems and tile plows that are pulled by a tractor. As today’s farmers own larger tractors and GPS RTK controls, do-it-yourself tile installation is certainly an option. The GPS RTK systems can not only steer the tractor, but with the proper software they can survey the land. For an area that needs tile, the grade control system will survey the elevation with sub inch accuracy and automatically calculate the slope and depth of tile within parameters that you set (ideal depth, minimum slope, etc.). It will do this by simply driving across the field. Next, place the plow into your outlet and drive back over the tracks you had just driven. The grade control system will automatically control the grade and depth while installing the tile. If the line will not fit within your predetermined parameters an error message will tell you this line will not work. These grade control system work well but proper set up is crucial! If you purchase one of these systems make sure that the supplier will assist you in set-up and be there to help you get started on your first and second tile job. In one situation, the grade control system worked well the first time out with the service provider on site. The tractor was unhooked from the tile plow for a few weeks, when the system was hooked back up nothing worked. Until you get use to going through all the steps you are going to want someone with experience to assist you. Tile plows will also work off of laser grade controls if you do not want or plan on having a GPS system.

Growers around the area that have used these plows are all pleased with plow performance. A grower in Monroe County that has had a tile plow for several years insists this was one of the best investments he had ever made. Tile plows can be directly mounted, hooked to the 3 point hitch, or trailer type plows. Each type of plow has pros and cons, but, for the most part they all work well. Tractors need to be a minimum of 250 -300 Hp but, the bigger the tractor the better. Installing when the ground is firm and dry is ideal; under wet soil conditions the tractor will have a hard time pulling the unit with proper grade. Installing just after the crop is planted or after wheat is harvested would be best. Unlike many of the videos you will see on the internet, our soils in WNY tend to be tighter and in most cases require the farmer to pre-rip the ground first before installing the tile to ensure satisfactory grade.

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Economically is it worth the investment? (Figuring you already own a backhoe, a 300Hp tractor & have GPS RTK). The NWNY Team member John Hanchar used 2 different financial analyses to determine what a farm would need to install around 16,000 ft a year for a 5 year period to be at the breakeven point as compared to hiring a contractor at $.70 a foot to install. These analyses assume a standard that 3 people will be needed when installing tile at a rate of 800 ft/hour. For example, farm profitability would be increased around $7,000 a year if 30,000 ft a year were installed as compared to hiring a contractor at a rate of $.70 a foot. At that rate, a farmer must determine if that $7,000 is worth the hasses of installing the tile yourself. It is a lot easier to hire a contractor that deals with all of the issues that may happen during installation (breakdown, deep cuts, minimal slopes, rocks and colossal boulders.) while you focus your energy on other projects that may need attention on the farm. Of course, the higher the number of feet you plan on installing in a year the greater the return is. The NWNY Team’s website features a calculator developed by John Hanchar that you can use to determine the number of feet you would like to install and the pay back you should expect.

These tile plows are a great option for the right farm and there are a growing number of farmers using these systems in WNY with success. Although these units look and sound enticing, I do want to stress sometimes things don’t go smoothly and it can be extremely frustrating. Some farms don’t like tile plows and believe in using only trenchers. Both systems have pros and cons and a trencher has advantages depending upon soil types and if there is pre-existing tile. The bottom line is installing tile is one of the best investment you will ever make no matter if you install it yourself or hire someone else to.


### Tile Plow Cost Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tile Plow</td>
<td>$16,000 - $20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stringer Cart</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPS grade or Laser controls</td>
<td>$8,000 - 12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$33,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Getting Good Herd Reproduction**

Wednesday, February 16
Yates County Office Bldg., Auditorium
417 Liberty Street, Penn Yan
10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Videoconference version connecting sites across the state. Phil Hurst, dairyman from Seneca Falls, will be there as one of two farms to tell their reproduction success story. Other valuable information from a variety of speakers.

$5.00 for handouts
$10.00 includes registration & lunch

**RSVP by:** February 11

Doreen Koch, 315.536.5123 or Email: dek26@cornell.edu

*Out of respect for Mr. Hurst and other plain folks attending there will be no cameras used.*
Western NY had two producers place nationally in the corn yield contest sponsored by the National Corn Growers Association. Congratulations to Jason Swede of Gary Swede Farms Inc. in Pavilion. His corn yield entry of 293.6559 bushels per acre earned him 1st place in the class A no-till/strip-till category. Henry Everman’s entry of 279.0926 earned him 3rd place in the class A Non-Irrigated division. Winners will be presented awards at the 2011 Commodity Classic in Tampa, FL (March 3-5). You can find all the National and New York winners on the National Corn Growers webpage @ www.ncga.com.

### Top New York State Winners

#### Class A Non-Irrigated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Bu/acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Henry Everman</td>
<td>Dansville</td>
<td>DEKALB 61-69</td>
<td>279.0926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kludt Brothers Inc.</td>
<td>Kendall</td>
<td>DEKALB 52-43</td>
<td>275.5501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. H.D. Everman</td>
<td>Dansville</td>
<td>DEKALB 61-69</td>
<td>274.3297</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Class A No Till/StripTill Non-Irrigated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Bu/acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Jason Swede</td>
<td>Pavilion</td>
<td>DEKALB 63-42</td>
<td>293.6559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gary Swede Farms</td>
<td>Pavilion</td>
<td>DEKALB 61-69</td>
<td>274.1871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Gary Swede</td>
<td>Pavilion</td>
<td>DEKALB 52-43</td>
<td>251.6528</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Class A Ridge Till

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Bu/acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vaill Acres</td>
<td>Poplar Ridge</td>
<td>DEKALB 52-59</td>
<td>251.3602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Anthony Della Rocco</td>
<td>Melrose</td>
<td>Pioneer PO125HR</td>
<td>232.9294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Kludt Brothers Inc.</td>
<td>Kendall</td>
<td>DEKALB 46-60</td>
<td>231.7326</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This year’s highest non-irrigated corn yield of 306.49 bushels came from Sam Santini of Stewartsville, NJ. The highest irrigated class yield of 368.44 came from David Hula of Charles City, VA.

### 2010 New York Corn Growers Association Yield Contest Winners

If you don’t want to enter into the National contest, why not enter the contest sponsored by the New York Corn & Soybean Grower Association. There were 50 yield entries submitted this year. The winners of each region were recognized at this year’s NY Corn & Soybean Expo in Syracuse on January 26th.

Here were the top 10 yield entries for 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Bu/acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Matt Kludt</td>
<td>Orleans County</td>
<td>DeKalb 52-43</td>
<td>275.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Eric Lyon</td>
<td>Wayne County</td>
<td>Pioneer 35F44</td>
<td>258.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Norm Vaill</td>
<td>Cayuga County</td>
<td>DeKalb 52-59</td>
<td>258.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Bret Myer</td>
<td>Livingston County</td>
<td>DeKalb 46-61</td>
<td>244.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Don Humphreys</td>
<td>Oneida County</td>
<td>Pioneer PO125HR</td>
<td>242.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Ron Gruschow</td>
<td>Livingston County</td>
<td>Pioneer 35F44</td>
<td>239.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Karl Eisenhut</td>
<td>Oneida County</td>
<td>Pioneer 35F38</td>
<td>238.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Randy Brouillet</td>
<td>Oneida County</td>
<td>Pioneer 35F40</td>
<td>237.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Charles Campbell</td>
<td>Tioga County</td>
<td>DeKalb 53-41</td>
<td>237.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Jim Lewis</td>
<td>Oneida County</td>
<td>Pioneer 37Y12</td>
<td>237.16</td>
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</table>
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<td><strong>February 2011</strong></td>
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</table>
Questions?? Contact: Jerry Bertoldo: 585.281.6816 |
| 8 | Basic Farm Financial Management Workshop, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m., CCE-Orleans County & CCE-Wyoming County, Questions?? Contact: John Hanchar: 585.658.3250 x112 or jjh6@cornell.edu |
| 9 | WNY Soybean/Small Grains Congress, Clarion Hotel (formerly Holiday Inn), 8250 Park Road, Batavia |
| 10 | Finger Lakes Soybean/Small Grains Congress, Holiday Inn, 2468 NYS Route 414, Waterloo  
Basic Farm Financial Management Workshop, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m., CCE-Orleans County & CCE-Wyoming County, Questions?? Contact: John Hanchar: 585.658.3250 x112 or jjh6@cornell.edu |
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| 22 | Step It Up 2011Grazing Conference, location TBD, Questions?? Contact: Debra Welch: 585.786.2251 |
| 24 | Best Management Practices Workshop, Gas & Steam Engine Grounds Clubhouse, 104000 Gillate Rd., Alexander, Contact: Genesee Co. SWCD @ 585.343.2362 |

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<th>March 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Herd Health &amp; Nutrition Conference, Holiday Inn, 441 Electronics Parkway, Liverpool (Syracuse), Registration Contact: Heather Howland, 607.255.4478 or <a href="mailto:dmconf@cornell.edu">dmconf@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Winning the Game, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., CCE-Genesee Co., 420 E. Main Street, Batavia, Registration Contact: Cathy Wallace, 585.343.3040 x138 or <a href="mailto:cfw6@cornell.edu">cfw6@cornell.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Winning the Game, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Jordan Hall, 630 North St., Geneva, Registration Contact: Cathy Wallace, 585.343.3040 x138 or <a href="mailto:cfw6@cornell.edu">cfw6@cornell.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Managing the Margins, 10:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m., CCE-Genesee Co., 420 East Main Street, Batavia, Registration Contact: Cathy Wallace, 585.343.3040 x138, Questions?? Contact: John Hanchar: 585.658.3250 x112 or <a href="mailto:jjh6@cornell.edu">jjh6@cornell.edu</a></td>
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