Pricing Corn Silage

By: John Hanchar

Thanks to Christian Yunker, CY Farms, LLC/Batavia Turf, for providing valuable comments on this work.

Summary

- Price analysis suggests that the price of corn silage depends on corn silage quantities, the price of alfalfa hay, the price received by farmers for milk, and the price of corn grain.

- Estimated corn silage price is sensitive to alfalfa hay price and corn grain price.

- Price estimates combined with understanding of relevant supply and demand factors from an individual farm business owner’s perspective can aid decision making regarding corn silage price. Given current (May, June 2012) alfalfa hay and corn grain prices, price analysis suggests an estimated corn silage price of about $41 per ton.

Determining Corn Silage Price

A farm business owner can examine how much he/she would be willing to supply to a market at a given price. Cost of production analysis combined with consideration of other factors helps to define the supply relationship. As Christian Yunker, CY Farms, notes, other factors include: opportunity costs associated with the ability to grow as varied crops as is possible in many western NY areas; market volatility and uncertainty; and the effects of long term relationships between sellers and buyers of corn silage. A seller can develop a target based upon the above, but actual market conditions provide no guarantee that a buyer will purchase quantities desired at a price that achieves the producer’s cost target.

Continued on page 3
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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By law and purpose, Cooperative Extension is dedicated to serving the people on a non-discriminatory basis.
Some farm business owners might approach the problem of determining corn silage price from a value in production, or input demand perspective. The amounts of corn grain and corn stover in a ton of corn silage, relevant prices, and corn silage’s place in the milk production process are key variables. A buyer can develop a price target based upon the above, but actual market conditions provide no guarantee that a producer will sell the quantity desired at a price that matches the buyer’s willingness to pay.

Although factors in price determination, the two approaches described above, by themselves, in isolation don’t completely determine market price and quantity. Supply and demand relationships work simultaneously in markets to determine price and quantity. Empirical price analysis brings supply and demand relationships together to determine price.

**Corn Silage Price Analysis**

Empirical price analysis suggests that corn silage price is a function of corn silage quantities, alfalfa hay price, the price received by farmers for milk sold, and corn grain price. Ordinary least squares regression provided an estimate of corn silage price as a linear function of the above variables. The current analysis is somewhat rough, elementary, but the analysis may be helpful to farm business owners looking to price corn silage.


### Corn Silage Price Estimates

*Table 1. Estimated Corn Silage Price ($/ton) by Alfalfa Hay Price ($/ton) by Corn Price ($/bushel), NY.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corn Price ($/bushel)</th>
<th>Alfalfa Hay Price ($/ton)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--- $/ton ---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ordinary least squares regression results, where estimated corn silage price is a function of alfalfa hay price and corn price, other factors (corn silage quantity and milk price) fixed at average levels for the period 1991 through 2010 -- estimated corn silage price ($/ton) = 10.621 + (0.079 x price of alfalfa hay ($/ton)) + (2.448 x price of corn ($/bushel)).

Suppose
- the price of corn is $6.18 per bushel (Western NY Energy. “Corn Bids.” June 12, 2012.).

Rounding the prices up to the nearest table values, $180 per ton, and $6.50 per bushel, respectively, and using the results from Table 1, yields an estimated corn silage price of $41 per ton given mid June 2012 market conditions. Corn silage price estimates combined with understanding of relevant supply and demand factors from the individual farm business owner’s perspective can aid decision making regarding corn silage price.

For more information please contact John Hanchar.
It’s time to start thinking about Cover Crops! We have seen the best time to establish many of our cover crop species are the first 2 weeks in August. Some farms even like to go in late July and have had good success. This is also the optimal time for our new late summer/fall alfalfa seedings. If it is dry, plant it anyway, the rain will come and the seeds will germinate. The last couple of seasons, cover crops have received a lot of interest especially with tillage radish following winter wheat.

Cover Crop Trials in 2011
Last year the team worked with three cooperators across the region to plant different cover crops alone and in combinations (see following table). All of these were following small grains and planting methods varied (broadcast, airflowed, and drilled). All plots emerged fine but planting date varied throughout the month of August. Ideally, what we learned was that plots planted on the 8 and 9 of August looked the best and reached their full potential. The plot planted on August 24 did not get the size needed to get completely established and achieve full coverage.

Some Words of Caution
There were many things we learned (the hard way) from our cover crop experimentation last year. Remember, all of our trials followed winter wheat.

◊ Volunteer wheat can compete with the desired cover crop. With the dry weather last year, the volunteer wheat did not emerge before the field was sprayed. It all came up with the cover crop species. It can be a big advantage if it emerges and is sprayed before planting.

◊ Decide if you want a cover crop that winterkills or overwinters. No-tillers want a crop to winter-kill such as forage oats or tillage radish. Many people think forage turnips and annual rye grass winterkill. They do not! However, last winter was so mild even oats overwintered and had to be sprayed.

◊ Forage radishes need some N applied at planting (30-50 lbs.) or they will stunt, yellow and not cover well. Volunteer wheat will also steal N! A history of manure application will help. Clover and peas planted in the same plot will provide some N to the radish.

◊ Some covers will not establish well in wetter ground. In this situation, stick to the shallow rooted grasses and small grains. The brassicas and legumes will not do well.

◊ Peas need to be planted early and with a drill. They did not establish when broadcast and lightly disked.

◊ We planted forage/tillage radishes offered by three different companies (side-by-side). All established well and we could not see any differences in root or top growth.
**New Research**

Two of our cooperators planted radishes in 30” rows at 2.5 lbs. of radish per acre. They used cucumber plates in the planter and they looked great! They also experimented with broadcasting clover prior to planting the radishes and drilling peas between the 30” radish rows. This year both farms planted corn right into the slot formed by the radishes and also just off to one side. I’ll let you know how the corn turns out.

We are in our second year of field research with Dr. Quirine Ketterings looking at the Carbon:Nitrogen ratios for all of the cover crop species. We are also looking at the amount of nitrogen being released into the soil from these cover crops to get a better idea of nitrogen credits going into corn. Our results should be out this fall.

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**Drilled** | **Broadcast** | **Price/lb.** | **Winterkill?**
--- | --- | --- | ---
*Annual Rye Grass* | 10-20 lbs. | 20-30 lbs. | $.94/lb. | N
*Sorghum-Sudangrass* | 30-40 lbs. | 30-40 lbs. | $.98/lb. | Y
*Crimson Clover* | 12 lbs. | 20 lbs. | $1.48/lb. | N
*White Clover* | 5-9 lbs. | 7-12 lbs. | $3.40/lb. | N
*Red Clover* | 7 lbs. | 10 lbs. | $2.46/lb. | N
*Field Peas/Austrian Winter Peas* | 120/50 lbs. | 140/60 lbs. | $.60 / $.80/lb. | Y/N
*Hairy Vetch* | 15-20 lbs. | 25-30 lbs. | $2.78/lb. | N
*Forage Radishes* | 8-10 lbs. | 12 lbs. | $3.30/lb. | Y
*Forage Turnips* | 4-7 lbs. | 10-12 lbs. | $4.60/lb. | N
*Oats (Spring or Forage)* | 80-110 lbs. | 110-140 lbs. | $.40/lb. | Y
*Triticale* | 80 lbs. | 110 lbs. | $.44/lb. | N
*Wheat* | 70 lbs. | 100 lbs. | N
*Winter Cereal Rye* | 60 lbs. | 85 lbs. | N

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Have You Heard?

The NWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team is now on Facebook!

Like our page to get up-to-date information on NWNY Team programming and events, as well as links to interesting articles.

www.facebook.com/NWNYTeam
Hay Storage Considerations, Don’t Waste it!

By: Nancy Glazier

Now may be a good time to think about hay storage. With lost hay this season from armyworms and dry conditions, and high purchased feed prices, more of the bale will need to be utilized. Large bales are a convenient form of hay for one-person operations. These bales can be moved, stored and fed relatively easily with the right equipment. Hay loss can occur when baling, moving and feeding and some is unavoidable. The biggest loss – both dry matter and digestibility – occurs with outdoor storage. Dry matter loss can reach 50% depending on the beginning quality, storage conditions and length of storage. It is not always realistic or practical to build a barn to store hay. Here are some tips to minimize waste from outdoor storage.

Tightly wrapped bales tend to shed water better. The outer layer forms a thatch to reduce water infiltration. What helps with shedding precipitation is placing the bales lined up tightly together end to end. Pick a site that has good ventilation, away from hedgerows and wooded areas. This gives bales a better chance to dry out from air movement. And think about row spacing of at least 3 feet for good air flow and sunlight penetration. It’s also a good idea to keep vegetation mowed between rows.

Ideally, bales should be stored off the ground. Hay stored directly on the ground may lose up to 12 inches on the bottom of the bales due to wicking action. Find some waste material such as old fence posts, pallets or tires and place the bales on top. Gravel or stone may work too. Research was conducted by University of Tennessee animal scientists comparing different methods of storing large round bales of grass hay. The hay was cut and baled in June in Tennessee. The bales were weighed at the time of harvest and storage. Then they were weighed again the following January at the time of winter feeding. The following table lists the type of storage and the resulting percentage hay loss.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Storage</th>
<th>Percentage (%) Hay Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On ground, no cover</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On tires, no cover</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On ground, covered</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On tires, covered</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net wrap on ground</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In barn</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Losses of Hay Stored using Six Methods of Storage

Note the difference between storage in the barn and on tires and covered. Some small changes can make a big difference! Plastic tarps can be relatively inexpensive when the saving from reducing loss is calculated.

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Now recruiting for December 2012. Detailed program information can be accessed at www.ansci.cornell.edu/prodairy/dairyexec.
Tile Drainage Field Day
August 10, 2012
9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
Lilyea Farms
1320 Pre-Emption Road, Penn Yan

- The Soil Health Benefits of Tile Drainage
- The How-To’s of Tile Drainage
- The Economics; Cost per acre, Backhoe vs. Tile Plow
- Drain Tiles in Vineyards & Row Crops
- Equipment Demonstration, both Traditional and Tile Plow

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We all know that feeding calves adequate amounts of high quality colostrum, and feeding it fast, is an essential part of getting them off to a good start. But do your employees understand just how critical this is? Share this refresher course on colostrum management with your Spanish-speaking employees, and brush up on your own Spanish so that you can get the message across.

Colostrum is the milk produced by cows prior to calving. It contains key nutrients to promote healthy growth, such as protein, vitamins, minerals and energy, as well as antibodies (or immunoglobulins, IgGs) to prevent disease. Since the calf’s ability to absorb IgGs decreases quickly after birth, it is important to feed colostrum as soon as possible. Standard recommendations are to feed 4 quarts of colostrum within the first few hours after birth. You should strive to feed at least 50% of calves within the first hour after birth, which is the time in which they can most efficiently absorb IgGs.

While quantity and timing of colostrum feeding are important, quality should certainly not be forgotten. If possible, IgG levels should be measured using a Colostrometer to ensure that the antibody concentration is sufficient. Since colostrum provides a great medium for bacteria growth, utmost care should be taken to sanitize all containers (buckets, bottles, nipples, tubes, etc.) between uses and to cool colostrum quickly after milking if it will not be fed immediately.

Below you will find a few easy phrases to help you communicate the importance of high quality colostrum for healthy calves.

**Calostro: Cantidad, Calidad y Puntualidad**

El calostro es la leche producida por la vaca inmediatamente antes del parto. Contiene nutrientes claves como proteína, vitaminas, minerales y energía para promover un crecimiento sano, además anticuerpos (también conocidas como immunoglobulinas o IgGs) para prevenir las enfermedades. Como la capacidad de la becerra de absorber las IgGs disminuye rápidamente después del nacimiento, es importante darla calostro lo más pronto como sea posible. La recomendación estándar es dar un galón de calostro dentro de las primeras horas después del nacimiento. Debe esforzarse dar de comer a por lo menos 50% de las becerros dentro de una hora después del nacimiento, como eso es el tiempo en que pueden absorber las IgGs con más eficiencia.

Mientras la cantidad y la puntualidad de la alimentación de calostro son importantes, no hay que olvidar la calidad. Si es posible, midan el nivel de IgGs con un Calostrometer para asegurar que el nivel de anticuerpos es suficiente. Como el calostro es un buen caldo para el cultivo de bacterias, hay que siempre desinfectar todos los envases (cubetas, botellas, biberones, tubos, etc.) después de cada uso y enfriar el calostro rápidamente después del ordeño si no lo van a usar inmediatamente.

Aquí se puede encontrar unas frases fáciles para ayudarle a comunicar sobre la importancia de calostro de alta calidad para be

**Reference:**

Genesee County Fair Grounds in Batavia, New York, will be the tour start and workshop location for the Western New York Compost Facility Tour and Compost Workshop. Hosted by Cooperative Extension; Cornell Waste Management Institute; Environmental Finance Center-Syracuse University; NWNY Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops; and Cornell ILR.

**The Tour on August 2nd will visit sites including:**
- Backyard Compost Education & Demonstration Site;
- Dairy digesting food waste along with manure to produce methane, electricity and manure solids;
- Vermicomposting operation using forced aerated static piles to pre-compost manure before it is fed to red w wigglers that produce a highly valued compost product;
- Earth Bin composting of leaves, grass, brush and branches, food waste, paper products and pulp;
- Municipal yard waste compost site employing piled windrows

**August 3rd’s workshop topics:**
  Jean Bonhotal, Cornell Waste Management Institute
- Composting with Ash Wood Chips – Do’s/don’ts
  Jared Spokowski, NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets
- Health and Safety Issues for the Compost Worker,
  Nellie Brown, Cornell Industrial and Labor Relations
- Troubleshooting Common Compost Problems
  Jean Bonhotal, Cornell Waste Management Institute

See the brochure for details and registration information http://cwmi.css.cornell.edu/WesternNYCompostTour.pdf
Purpose: To develop young bulls on an all-forage diet and collect data on performance useful for producers interested in breeding bulls to be used in environments typical of New York.

What is the New York All Forage Fed Bull Test? Following an adjustment period, weaned bull calves will be fed an all-forage diet (baleage and/or dry hay) for a 120 day test period.

When will the test be conducted?
1. Bulls are to be delivered to the Cornell Teaching and Research Unit in Dryden NY, December 1, 2012.
2. The official 120 day test will begin December 13, 2012 and conclude April 12, 2013.
3. Following the test bulls can be taken back to the farm of origin or possibly consigned to a sale for bulls that successfully complete the test.

Where? Cornell University Beef Teaching and Research Unit, Dryden, NY

What are there requirements for the test?
1. Maximum of 4 bulls per farm. Only bulls born between January 1, 2012 and June 15, 2012 will be accepted.
2. De-horning is to be completed, healed and dry prior to December 1.
3. Cattle are to be weaned no later than October 17, 2012. Initial vaccination is to be completed at least 21 days prior to weaning. Vaccines requiring boosters must be completed by November 10.
4. Vaccinations are to include BRSV, IBR, PI-3, BVD, 7-way Clostridial, Haemophilus somnus, and Mannheimia haemolytica (formerly Pasteurella haemolytica) and Pasteurella multocida (leucotoxin). Booster is to be given according to label.
5. Calves are to receive a selenium injection, be dewormed, treated for grubs, and free of ringworm and warts.
6. Beef Quality Assurance guidelines of neck only and when possible subcutaneous injections are to be followed. Beef Quality Assurance certification strongly recommended.

What information will be collected during the test?
1. At a minimum, consignors will receive:
2. Performance—total gain, average daily gain, model predicted dry matter intake and feed efficiency, temperament, and structural soundness and undergo a breeding soundness exam.
3. Carcass ultrasound measurements: ribeye area, back fat, and intramuscular fat.

What’s the cost for the test?
Cost for consigning a bull to the test will be $425. Application and non-refundable deposit of $50 is due October 1, 2012. Balance is due December 1, 2012 upon delivery to the test station.

To consign bulls or for more information:

Cornell Cooperative Extension, Nancy Glazier: 585.315.7746
Cornell University, Mike Baker: 607.255.5923
Hoof Health and Lameness Module for Fall 2012

The NWNY Team & the Wyoming County Dairy Institute have added a new dairy skills training module for the fall of 2012, entitled “Hoof Health and Lameness”. It will focus on lameness detection, locomotion scoring, causes and cures of dairy cattle hoof conditions impacted by metabolic problems, trauma, stress and infectious diseases.

**September 18, 20, 25, 27 & 28, 2012**

CCE-offices in Warsaw or Canandaigua plus a local dairy farm

$75.00/person

Please pre-register by calling: 585-786-2251

The class will be taught by local professional trimmer Chip Hendrickson, Jeff Wheeler of ZINPRO, Dr. Melanie Hemenway of the New York Cattle Health Assurance Program, Dr. Rodrigo Bicalho, Asst. Prof. in the Ambulatory Clinic at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, and NWNY Team members Dr. Jerry Bertoldo, Libby Gaige, and Jackson Wright. Libby will offer on-farm presentations on Friday September 28th, for Hispanic workers on lameness detection and locomotion scoring in Spanish.

In addition to the 10 hours of science based lectures, the registrants will have an opportunity to trim cadaver hooves, apply hoof blocks, and observe professional trimmers treating a variety of lameness problems on a local herd.

**2012 Northeast Buckwheat Field Day**

August 22, 2012

1:00 p.m.—3:30 p.m.

Oeschner Farm

1045 Trumbull’s Corners Rd., Newfield
(farm is just west of downtown off Route 13, south of Ithaca)

- How do you get the most value out of buckwheat in your rotation?
- Double cropping buckwheat when small-grain harvest comes early.
- Harvest equipment for swathing will be on display.
- The farmer-to-farmer exchange of knowledge on production issues is always popular.

There is no charge for attending, and pre-registration is not required. For more information call: 315.787.2218 or visit: hort.cornell.edu/bjorkman/lab/buck/fieldday12.php

**Planning for Emergencies On-Farm Workshops**

Conducted in English and Spanish

Presented by Mary Jo Dudley of the Cornell Farmworker Program

- Discussions and role playing exercises about how to respond to emergencies such as a car accident, farm accident or an immigration detention.
- Spanish language skits that provide information about ways to respond if detained by a law enforcement official.
- Assistance for parents who wish to assign guardianship for their children.
- Overview of the purpose and process for assigning power of attorney.

A number of workshops are being planned throughout Western NY over the next few months. If you or your Spanish-speaking employees are interested in attending a workshop or you would like more information, please contact Libby Gaige at 607-793-4847 or geg24@cornell.edu.
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**August, 2012**

7-9  Empire Farm Days, Rodman Lott & Son Farms, 2973 Route 414, Seneca Falls  
10  Tile Drainage Field Day, 9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m., Lilyea Farms, 1320 Pre-Emption Rd., Penn Yan  
11-18  Wyoming County Fair, N. Division Street, Pike, Contact: 585.493.5626  
13-18  Wayne County Fair, 250 W. Jackson Street, Palmyra, Contact: 315.597.5372  
14  NY Corn & Soybean Growers Summer Tour, 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m., DuMond Farms, 5083 White Road, Union Springs, NY, for more information: www.nycornsoy.org or juliacrobbins@gmail.com  
23  Fresh Market Potato Varieties, and Insect & Disease Management Meeting, 5:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m., Williams Farm, Marion, Pre-register for dinner: Carol MacNeil: 585.313.8796 or crm6@cornell.edu. DEC/CCA credits if you attend the ENTIRE meeting. Free for current CVP enrollees; $10.00 for non-enrollees.  
25  Yates Farm Safety Day, Benton Fire Hall, Contact: Henry Martin, 315.536.4736

**September, 2012**

18  Dairy Skills Training: Hoof Health & Lameness, For more information contact: 585.786.2251, (see page 14)

**October, 2012**

3-7  Cornell University & New York Beef Producer’s Associate 2012 “Buckeye” Beef Tour, Contact: Mike Baker 607.255.5923 or mjb28@cornell.edu

**MORE DAIRY SKILLS TRAININGS**

Fall, Winter & Spring Programs—2012-13

*The Use and Evaluation of DHIA Records*: November 6, 8, 13 & 15  
*Commercial Driver’s License Training (CDL)*: October 24 & 25 (Producers and their employees only)  
*QuickBooks for Dairies*: January 7—11, 2013  
*Calf Management*: February 5, 7, 12, 14 & 16, 2013  
*Nutrient Management*: March 5, 7, 12, 14 & 16, 2013

For more information or to register for these courses please contact Wyoming Co. Dairy Institute: 585.786.2251 or visit WyomingCountyDairyInstitute.com

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