## Other Educational Activities January-March 2019

The Labor Roadshow II was held in Saratoga on January 29th. Participants heard valuable information from professionals in Ag workforce management and attorneys working with human resource laws.

Determining Land Rental Rates workshop was held again in March covering Otsego and Madison counties. The Country Folks newspaper published an article on the meeting which generated more interest in land rentals.

Nicole had the pleasure of speaking with a group of ladies for the Annie's project grant project hosted by Sarah Ficken Ag Educator in Madison County. She spoke of the importance of financial soundness and the steps to create financial statements to determine the health of the farm business.

Nicole created a fact sheet for Madison Counties Marketing Mini Grant series. This factsheet focused on determining whether or not a farm business was ready to increase production and the appropriate actions to determine the economic feasibility of increasing sales volumes.

Kevin conducted eight Field Crop Pest Management Meetings throughout the eight counties that covered topics such as identifying and controlling herbicide resistant weeds new to the region such as marestail and waterhemp and utilizing weather data from the Climate Smart Farming and NEWA programs at Cornell.

Kevin conducted the 2019 Corn Day at the Otesaga Resort in Cooperstown featuring presentations from speakers on using corn yield data to make nitrogen management decisions and herbicide programs for reduced tillage

Ashley conducted a meeting on Johne's disease, a contagious usually fatal infection of the small intestine of ruminants. Dr. Scrafford, DVM NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, explained why he believes this is going to hit our beef herds harder than it hit our dairy herds 10 years ago and what producers can do to minimize their risk.

Ashley conducted a FAMACHA Training Workshop which helps sheep and goats producers understand how to control internal parasites. Dr. Tatiana L. Stanton, Cornell Sheep & Goat Extension Specialist and Janice Liotta, Cornell Vet School Parasitology Lab manager taught this course on one of the largest health issues that affect sheep and goats in this country.

Ashley has continued working with the NY Beef producers group to help educate in the local classrooms across the region on beef cattle production. This opportunity has opened doors into many different enterprises within the beef industry.

David and Kevin conducted two Forage Quality Seminars with internationally known silage specialist Dr. Limin Kung from the University of Delaware as the keynote speaker. He was joined by Dr. Jerry H. Cherney, Professor –Soil & Crop Sciences at Cornell University and Joe Lawrence, Dairy Forage Systems Specialist, Pro Dairy.

## Grant and project activities January-March 2019

Dave is working on a Topic Specific Team grant from the New York Farm Viability Institute with 12 dairies on a precision feeding project in Madison County.


**Cornell Cooperative Extension** | Central New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops

***Serving Chenango, Fulton, Herkimer, Madison, Montgomery, Otsego, Saratoga and Schoharie Counties***

### Team Members

**Kevin H. Ganoe, MS, CCA**
*Area Field Crop Specialist*
*Team Leader*
Phone: 315-866-7920 Ext 230
Cell: 315-219-7786
E-mail: khg2@cornell.edu

**David R. Balbian, MS, PAS**
*Area Dairy Specialist*
Cell: 518-312-3592
E-mail: drb23@cornell.edu

**Ashley McFarland, PAS**
*Area Livestock Specialist*
Phone: 315-866-7920 Ext. 228
Cell: 315-604-2156
E-mail: am2876@cornell.edu

**Nicole L. Tommell, M.Ag.Ed**
*Area Farm Business Management Specialist*
Cell: 315-867-6001
E-mail: nt375@cornell.edu





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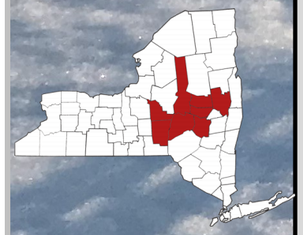
# 2019 First Quarter



The **Central New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Program**

is a Cornell Cooperative Extension partnership between Cornell University and the CCE Associations in 8 counties

## Dairy Day emphasizes reproductive efficiency for profit

During an afternoon breakout session Robert Lynch, DVM, Pro-Dairy, Dairy Herd Health & Management Specialist addresses how dairy managers can adopt a synchronization program that will work best for them

The birth of a calf is necessary to initiate milk production. The first three months of milk production after calving is the highest daily production period. As time passes, daily milk output declines until the cow enters her dry period. It is economically imperative that dairy producers get cows and heifers pregnant in a timely manner to maintain a higher daily milk output per cow.

A dairy industry guideline is to have cows calve on a 12 to 13 month schedule and to have heifers calve for the first time around 22 to 24 month of age. Delayed pregnancy that causes deviations from this norm generally results in higher feed costs with less milk revenue. **Using typical milk production levels and milk priced at $16/cwt. if a producer can reduce the average days in milk by 20 days, milk income will increase by around $25,000 per 100 cows per year.**

This year's Dairy Day program held at the Otesaga Resort in Cooperstown featured three dairy reproduction experts as speakers. The morning program addressed economics and using beef bulls to breed low merit cows. The afternoon sessions run concurrently allowed people to attend the topic of interest to them. Session A covered various estrus synchronization programs that can work. Session B covered natural heat detection along with the use of artificial insemination. Session C covered natural service, the use of bulls, and all the safety precautions needed when working around bulls.

Kevin Ziemba of STgenetics discusses the advantages of breeding low producing dairy cows to a beef breed

Attendees at the Livestock Technique workshops learned how to properly give livestock injections by injecting oranges with dye.

## Proper livestock techniques can lead to higher prices

Ashley McFarland, Regional Livestock Specialist did a series of workshops pertaining to techniques in the livestock industry. These three meetings were held at the following Cornell Cooperative Extension offices– Herkimer, Madison, and Chenango. At these meetings we had approximately 30 people in attendance. The focus was on proper management practices, such as castration, ear notching, ear tagging, administration of injections, and implanting techniques, along with the proper handling of animals.

**Producers can avoid price discounts from feedlots and meat packers by castrating bull calves at an early age.**

**For example: Bull $0.50/lbs @ 1300lbs= $650 VS. Steer $1.06/lbs @ 1300lbs =$1,378. Difference of $728 per head.**

By performing a workshop that was hands on, without the use of live animals we were able to practice many different types of scenarios. We were able to demonstrate why and how a scenario would have effected the animal if done that way verses the proper way. It was a fun learning experience for all in attendance. There was a great turnout for this series and Ashley plans to do another series this fall on this same topic in the other counties in the region.

## Succession Planning Workshop series helps bring next generation to the farm

Winter brought the Succession Planning Workshop series to Madison County. This three part series was designed to delve deeper in the beginning phases of farm transfer to the next generation. During the lunch time meetings, farm families learned about effective communication, estate planning, tax and business structure considerations, and developing a vision for the farm future.

The beginning piece on farm communication , presented by Erica Leubner MSW from NY FarmNet, set the tone for the series. Interacting and working together to build better dialogue and mutual respect was the foundation for the remainder of the meetings. Anna Richards, PRO-Dairy's Dairy Farm Business Specialist discussed tactics in preserving the integrity of the farm business while working among family in the transition state. Anna's discussion was insightful and poignant for the generational farm working toward the delicate balance of wealth management. The final segment married the other two workshops together to get folks thinking about the future vision of the farm. Each segment was very informative and at the end, families had a deeper understanding of themselves and each other in order to move forward in the farm transition process.



## Helping farms consider alternatives to milking cows

Dairy Specialist Dave Balbian outlines what dairy farmers need to consider for developing a profitable dairy replacement enterprise.

As dairy farmers continue to sell off their dairy herds, they are looking for alternatives to stay in farming. Many of them would like to keep working with animals on their farm so Livestock Specialist Ashley McFarland, Dairy Specialist Dave Balbian and Farm Business Management Specialist Nicole Tommell spoke about beef and dairy heifers as possible alternatives. The meetings were held in two central locations, Morrisville and Fonda, within the region and were well attended by many current and past dairy farmers as well as a few producers who were interested in starting to raise beef cattle.

What most dairy producers do not realize is the amount of change that may need to take place to their facilities to accommodate beef cattle such as removing stalls, filling in gutters, adding headlocks or additional fencing. It is necessary to add handling equipment like chutes to protect owner and animals. Cash flow changes will take getting used to as income will be more seasonal.

Dairy heifer raising can stand the best chance for success if growers enter into a contract situation with a dairy farm that values getting their own genetics in return and will pay a premium for this service.

According to the 2017 US ag census data, over fifty seven thousand acres of corn are planted for silage in the eight counties serviced by the team.

## Using forage quality testing to improve the corn silage hybrid selection process on dairy farms

Dairy farms can have a tough time selecting corn hybrids based on quality because there is not a single value of performance that is used consistently across all seed companies.

Dairy Specialist Dave Balbian and Field Crop Specialist Kevin Ganoe have just completed a two year project with the NYFVI on using green forage samples collected at harvest to assess hybrid performance. The protocols used matched those for Corn Silage Hybrid Evaluation Program at Cornell. A measure of undigestibity, uNDF 240, of the corn silage is used to compare the performance of the hybrids. The lower this value the greater expected feed intake and milk production.

**Lowering corn silage uNDF 240 one percentage point has the potential to increase milk production 7 pounds of milk per cow per day. For 100 cows that is an increase of $34,160 per year.**

The 21 project farms were able to test their own corn silage to look for differences in performance and compare that data to other participating farms and the Corn Silage Hybrid Evaluation tests for the year. Brown mid rib hybrids proved to consistently to have the lowest uNDF 240 so some growers looked to utilize them more even though silage yield is lower. Growers will need to continue to use the yearly Corn Silage Hybrid Evaluation Program data as corn silage hybrid quality does not always appear to be consistent from location to location or year to year.