

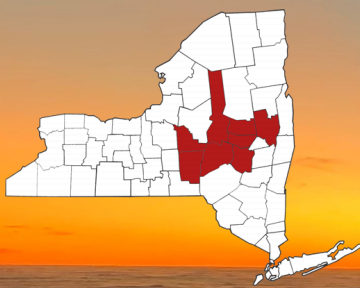
Cornell Cooperative Extension

Central New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops

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

Dairy Day Helps Producers Increase their Milk Price and Milk Income

2020 1st
Quarter
Report



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



Photo: Dave Balbian introduces Dr. Tom Overton, chair of Cornell's Animal Science Department, who spoke about butterfat and what producers could do to influence its content in milk.

Dairy Day in Cooperstown this year concentrated on the things producers could do to increase their own milk price. Market conditions drive milk prices for the most part, but dairy producers can often receive a premium for having high quality milk, typically is paid as a per hundredweight bonus added to their price. Somatic cell count is one of the measurements quality premiums are based on. Low levels of somatic cells indicate low levels of mastitis in the herd.

The actual price per hundred that dairy producers receive is based on the price per pound of butterfat and the price per pound of milk protein. The economics of milk production tells us that the most significant correlation with profitability is the quantity of combined production of components (butterfat & milk protein) in pounds per cow per day, with higher levels of components produced having a greater likelihood of being profitable. It's really a combination of high levels of milk production combined with high butterfat and milk protein percent that is the key here.

Using 100 milking cows producing 25,000 pounds of milk/year as a baseline, a \$.15/cwt. quality premium would be worth \$3,750/year. Improving milk protein from 2.85% to 3.2% and increasing butterfat from 3.5% to 4.1% (using the most current milk prices) would result in more income by \$56,250/year! This comes out to roughly \$2 per cwt.

Dr. Rick Watters of Cornell's Quality Milk Production Services (QMPS) presented information about pathogen based mastitis treatments, selective dry cow therapy, and milking time audits. Dr. Tom Overton, chair of Cornell's Animal Science Department discussed butterfat, what producers could do to improve butterfat percent and what the common causes of butterfat depression were. Our final speaker, Dr. Chuck Schwab, Emeritus Professor from the University of New Hampshire, traveled from Wisconsin to be with us. He presented information about balancing dairy rations for Amino Acids and the impact that can have on Milk Protein percent, milk production volume, and overall health and immunity.

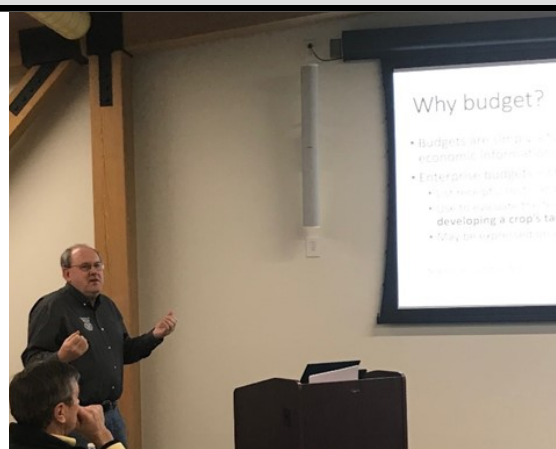
Mitigating Financial Risk at the Farm Gate

Mitigating financial risk at the farm level is often a topic of discussion but tends to be an area that some farm businesses lack experience. In February and March of 2020, Kevin Ganoe and Nicole Tommell, Area team specialists, worked together to deliver a program partially funded by a grant procured through the USDA Crop Insurance Program to provide education at the farm level.

Although this 2 part series focused on the crop side of the farm business, the basic principles demonstrated in the program are useful in different segments at the farm level.

Over the 2-session workshop, folks discussed the importance of creating partial budgets to determine their cost of production at the crop level. Understanding their initial investments in relation to acreage yield, producers then could develop plans to capture opportunities by using the Futures Markets as a price discovery tool.

Utilizing the budgeting tools supplied at the first meeting a Montgomery County participant went home and prepared a budget for the spring 2020 crop season. At the second session he was able to explain how he used the tools to calculate the farm's costs of production for corn and determine a break even yield. On his farm that led to discussion of looking at the yield potential of fields and whether or not those fields can grow corn profitably.



Field Crop Specialist Kevin Ganoe discusses why budgeting is an important part of risk management.

Corn Day Emphasizes Soil Health and What Grows in Soil



Dave Magos of Morning Star Farms answers questions from the audience about his no-till practices

Crop growers seek to use practices on their farms that would improve soil health, like no-till and cover crops, but especially on dairy farms it is hard to see how to implement those practices.

The 2020 Corn Day held at the Otesaga Resort, Cooperstown in February with Dave Magos of Morning Star Farms the featured speaker to address these soil health issues. Dave described to the ninety eight in attendance how he has been able to have 850 cows, 2,600 crop acres and still be 100% no-till. Cover crops, manure handling and soil compaction were just some of the challenges Dave addressed in his talk and question and answer session.

An NRCS analysis of Morning Star Farms showed a net increase of \$62 per acre from decreases in labor, fuel, machinery and nitrogen costs:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ny/soils/health/?cid=nrcseprd1298872>

Other speakers continued the emphasis on soil health and what grows in the soil. Dr. Carmen Greenwood, Associate Professor at SUNY Cobleskill showed how good soil how practices allow some organisms to thrive in the soil while other organisms are more of an indicator of poor soil health practices. Entomologist Dr. Elson Shields, Cornell University, talked about how a project that uses nematodes found in the soil to control corn rootworm and other insect pests and how producers could utilize this technology.

Meat Marketing Workshop

Marketing is the most common question asked when starting up a livestock operation. Often producers are left



Matthew LeRoux discusses profitable meat marketing with producers in Morrisville.

sending their animals to an auction barn and getting a lower than desired price for their hard work. Cornell's former marketing specialist, Matthew LeRoux came to Morrisville CCE office in March to teach producer's how to value their products and how to utilize a free online meat marketing tool.

The meat marketing tool, Meat Suite has been very successful recently for many small producers. This website was designed to help customers find high quality locally sourced meat. This particular site includes quite a lot of farms from across the state. Each farm is able to set their own prices and tell their story: <https://www.meatsuite.com>

If you or your farm are interested in learning more about this program or other meat marketing opportunities please feel free to contact Ashley for more information.

Team Programming and the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak

To support efforts to minimize the spread of COVID-19 the Central NY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team stopped conducting any meetings or in person assistance on March 13, 2020. All meetings have been cancelled until further notice as we look to we may move them to other formats such as online for the foreseeable future.

We encourage everyone to continue to reach out to us by cell phone, email, and text as we will gladly respond. We will also continue to contact you by those same methods as we put out newsletters or share other pertinent pieces of information.

For up to date team information go to: <https://cnydfc.cce.cornell.edu>

The Central New York Dairy and Field Crops Team is available to assist you as always, just for the near future not in the in-person way we have in the past. We will continue to monitor the situation and keep in touch.

COVID-19 response:

Need information? View the following Cornell CALS and CCE Resource Pages Updated Regularly:

General Questions & Links: <https://eden.cce.cornell.edu>

Food Production, Processing & Safety Questions: <https://instituteoffoodsafety.cornell.edu/coronavirus-covid-19>

Employment & Agricultural Workforce Questions: <http://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu>

Cornell Small Farms Resiliency Resources: <https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/resources/farm-resilience>

Financial & Mental Health Resources for Farmers: <https://www.nyfarmnet.org>

Cornell Farmworker Program: www.farmworkers.cornell.edu and www.trabajadores.cornell.edu (en espanol)

Other Educational Activities: January – March 2020

Kevin conducted six Field Crop Pest Management Meetings through out the region in January. The ninety six participants learned about spotted lantern fly, growing degree days and insect pests and herbicide resistance and management.

Nicole visited farms throughout the region to collect data for the NYS Dairy Farm Business Summary.

Nicole accompanied an organic dairy in our area to a Dairy Discussion Group in Dryden, NY. This group meets twice per year to discuss various topics pertaining to their farm businesses.

Kevin and Dave conducted an educational program on organic crop production and dairy nutrition on request from a local organic dairy handler.

A QuickBooks for farmers presented by SCORE was held in Madison County in February. This offering was attended by a variety of producers from different agricultural businesses.

Ashley held a Sheep & Goat Nutrition Clinic for thirty one producers in Cooperstown with Dr. Tatiana Stanton, Extension Associate, Cornell University Small Ruminant Specialist, explaining how to properly balance diets for small ruminants.

Kevin conducted four Dairy Forage Options for Marginally Drained Soils with Joe Lawrence from the PRO-Dairy program at Cornell and Amy Langner from NRCS. These directed discussions helped the forty seven in attendance explore various options for forage crops on their farms.

Nicole and Dave have continued to conduct baseline interviews for the Dairy Advancement Program (DAP). A number of producers throughout the region have qualified for the Dairy Advancement Programs recordkeeping funds. Nicole has been assisting producers by setting up new electronic recordkeeping and providing online and on farm support.

Nicole visited with a local agricultural education class to speak about her job and the support she gives to producers through the area and the types of programs that the CNYDFLC offers.

Grant and Project Activities: January – March 2020

Dave continues to meet with a NYFVI sponsored Precision Feeding Topic Specific Team in Madison County. One of the participating farms sold out and two of the participating farms (a father and son) merged into one operation, leaving a total of 10 farms involved.

Nicole completed the balance of the USDA Risk Management grant with the delivery of a 2 part series of Risk Management Workshops in Otsego County. Kevin Ganoe, Area Field Crop Specialist was a guest speaker delivering content of partial budgets at the farm level.

Nicole submitted a grant proposal for \$10,000 to purchase laptops/ software and supplemental salary to develop a more involved QuickBooks course to deliver to all parts of the CNY region.

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