



A partnership between Cornell University and CCE Associations in these nine counties: Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne and Wyoming.

QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS

January - March 2022

Crop Congresses Address Eminent Farming Challenges in 2022

We were really hoping to be back in-person in 2022. Unfortunately, for a second year, the congresses all had to go virtual. The Corn Congress (Jan. 5, 6) and Soybean & Small Grains Congress (Feb. 9, 10) were held from 10:00AM to noon each day. All the programs were run through a Zoom webinar and each registrant got their own link to join the meeting. Those that needed DEC pesticide certification credits were able to click on a link in the chat box and enter their information before and after the meeting to receive their credits each day. Questions for the speakers were typed into the Q&A box and covered after each presentation.

This year will be a challenging year for corn, soybean and wheat producers with supply chain issues, pesticide shortages, high fertilizer costs, potential insecticide seed treatment ban and a new corn disease in WNY. This year's programs looked at addressing these issues and providing potential management options for growers to continue to succeed. We had specialists on these topics from Purdue, University of Illinois, and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture along with Cornell faculty and regional CCE specialists.

Overall, we were very pleased with how smoothly our congresses ran and the amount of participation and industry support exceeded our expectations. Almost 550 participants attended the four webinar sessions with 40 different industry sponsorships. Participants learned valuable information on how to "get the best bang for their nitrogen buck", "utilize other herbicides during glyphosate shortages", "alternative seed treatment options" and "identify and manage tar spot, a new corn disease in NY". We received many positive comments from attendees. Many continued to lament that they really miss the interaction with other farmers, visiting the exhibitor booths and seeing old friends. We are all suffering from virtual fatigue. Everyone is crossing their fingers that we will be back in-person in 2023.



Screenshot from 2022 Corn Congress on January 5, 2022.

Bird Flu Found in NWNY Poultry Flocks

On February 19, 2022, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in a backyard poultry flock in Suffolk County, NY. At the request of the CCE Disaster All-hazards Response Team, the NWNY and SWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Teams collaborated with statewide education and outreach efforts. Additional confirmed cases were detected in Dutchess, Ulster, Fulton, and right here in Monroe and Orleans Counties. These cases are attributed to spring migratory wild birds.

HPAI is a reportable disease, which means if domestic birds of any species or flock type (commercial or backyard) are found dead or with symptoms, it needs to be reported to NY Ag & Markets or APHIS. Proper and timely reporting helps the U.S. maintain international trade status.

Livestock educators were notified and prepared for sick bird calls in their counties, first in impacted counties then statewide. Press releases were written and shared statewide. A webinar was hosted with one of NY Ag & Markets veterinarians targeted at backyard flock owners with 546 registrants. Over 150 questions were submitted through a survey with individual follow-up afterward. Nearly 100% of participants found the webinar helpful with understanding HPAI.

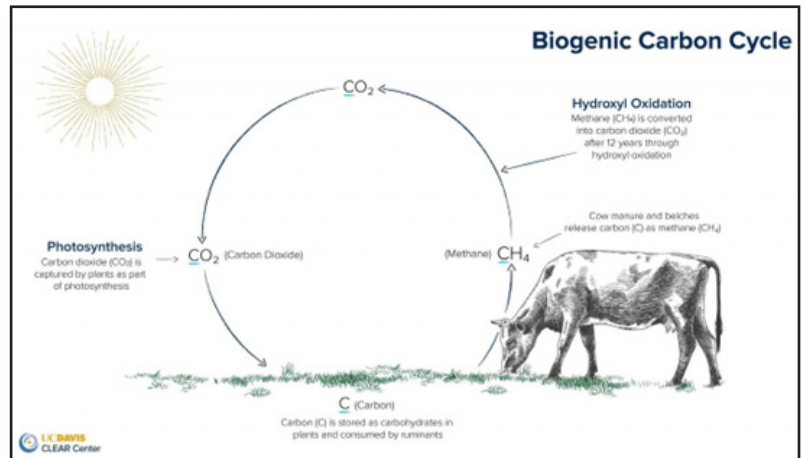
Current wild bird migration and infection risk is not over. Once warm and sunny weather arrives, the virus will be eliminated from the environment. The fall will bring new risks with migration as the wild birds head south. This will put our poultry flocks at risk again. There are roughly 6 million commercial birds in Western New York and numerous very small commercial flocks.



Net Zero for New York Dairy Virtual Conference

Net Zero is a trending topic in the dairy industry. In February 2022, a total of 720 regional, national and global attendees gathered for a two-day virtual conference where leading dairy industry experts shed light on what “getting to net zero” means for New York dairy producers. The idea for this conference, which was held in cooperation with PRO-DAIRY, came from the NWNYS Dairy Advisory Committee, where it was identified as an important subject for dairy producers in our region to know more about. The conference was geared towards NY dairy producers who were interested in learning more about dairy farming and its relationship to greenhouse gases, and those who wanted to learn about current and future farm practices and technology that could be used to measure and reduce greenhouse gases on their own operations. The first day of the conference gave a broad overview of the concept of Net Zero, and there was discussion around the U.S. Dairy Net Zero Initiative, as well as consumer trends and industry sustainability.

Dr. Frank Mitloehner of the CLEAR Center at UC Davis also gave a popular presentation on the topic of understanding of farmers’ key role in reducing climate warming and the pathway to climate neutrality. The second day focused on Cornell speakers and local resources currently available to NY dairy producers regarding practices for managing methane, innovative crop strategies for reducing or sequestering greenhouse gases, and nutritional and genetic strategies for reducing greenhouse gases. Cornell University’s Dr. Overton made a clear point that though some nutritional strategies to reduce methane are available and being researched, anything that improves milk per cow, reduces the number of cows needed, or enhances feed efficiency will cut down on the environmental impact. A panel of dairy producers and industry experts also shared the sustainable practices and strategies being implemented currently on NY farms. Attendees reported having gained a greater understanding of the facts surrounding dairy cattle and greenhouse gases. Resources for NY dairy producers as well as speaker presentations are available online for viewing: <https://cornell.box.com/v/NetZeroNYDairy>.



The biogenic carbon cycle. UC Davis CLEAR Center

Northwest NY Region Dairy Farm Business Summary (DFBS) Cooperators, a Significant Source of Economic Activity in 2021

Through the first quarter of 2022, applying financial management skills, owners of 31 dairy farm businesses from the region cooperated with regional specialists, PRO-DAIRY staff, and agribusiness consultants to complete DFBS’s for 2021. Cooperators learned about the strengths and weaknesses of their businesses using

- their farm’s summary and analysis results
- DFBS data for the Northwest NY region as a whole, and
- DFBS data for a group of most profitable businesses by size using the two page Comparison Report

Research studies conclude that producers using DFBS with analysis achieve greater levels of profit compared to producers that do not.

Greater profitability contributes to enhanced economic viability, increasing the likelihood that businesses have the capacity to invest in replacement and, or expansion assets, and maintain and, or increase employment levels. Estimates using DFBS results suggest that the 31 cooperating businesses from the region invested a total of about \$11.2 million in land, buildings and improvements in 2021, and a total of \$13.3 million in machinery and equipment. Estimates suggest that the 31 farms employed a total of about 610 worker equivalents, excluding operators, where an equivalent represents 230 hours worked per month for 12 months. The farms generated a total of about \$233 million in farm receipts from milk, cattle, crops and other revenue producing sources.

