



CORNELL NWNYS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS JULY – SEPTEMBER 2013

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Malting Barley Production Grows in NWNYS

The NWNYS Dairy, Livestock, & Field Crops team has taken the lead in the state-wide Extension effort to help farmers grow malting barley. The team developed the first Extension bulletin for best management practices, hosted two variety locations, conducted a twilight tour, and assisted farmers in NWNYS growing malting barley on over 400 acres this past year. In 2013, about 800 acres of malting barley were grown state-wide and the acreage has increased to between 2,000-3,000 acres for the 2014 growing season. Long-term there will likely be between 15,000 and 20,000 acres grown in NY. The demand for malting barley is coming from malt houses, distillers, and local breweries as a result of the Farm Brewery Act. These varieties of barley command a premium price compared to feed barley or winter wheat. Farmers are currently selling malting barley at \$10-12 per bushel. Long-term winter barley yields are 80 bushels per acre and spring barley yields are 40 bushels per acre. About 75% of the malting barley acres being grown are winter barley varieties. Long-term this growing market will likely have a value exceeding \$16 million to New York farmers.



Bilingual Job Training Improves Milkers' Knowledge and Production

What does the inside of an udder look like? How do cows produce milk? What effect does compliance with milking procedure have on the udder? These are questions that many employees milking cows today can't answer, despite the fact that the slightest deviation from milking protocol can have negative effects on milk quality, udder health, and ultimately, farm profit. The NWNYS Team, in collaboration with Vi-Cor's Milk to the Max Program, organized a workshop to help producers educate their milking staff on udder health, udder physiology and mastitis.



A classroom session answered many questions about mastitis and what milkers can do to prevent it, while the udder dissection lab session allowed participants a hands-on approach to learning about udder physiology. The workshop was presented on two dairy farms and attracted a total of 44 participants, 25 of which were Spanish-speaking. Employees can now put the knowledge gained through this course to work to improve udder health and decrease cases of mastitis. A conservative improvement in milk production of 0.5 pounds per cow per day with improved milk quality would yield \$3 million in additional revenue annually from those 9,000 cows.

NWNYS Team Website Makeover

Our website has had a makeover! The site has been redesigned and content has been updated. The web address remains the same. Stop in and take a look – www.nwnyteam.org



On-Farm Soybean IPM Educational Programs Exceed Expectations

With a record high 320,000 acres of soybean planted in NY this spring, continued education to maximize production is desired. A Soybean Tactical Ag (TAg) Team covering over 1200 acres of soybeans was established in Niagara County. The ten participants completed ten hours of in-field and classroom training covering IPM practices and crop production opportunities with a focus on weed, disease, and insect pest sampling and management. Participants increased their pre- to post-test soybean knowledge scores by an average of 22% at the end of the program. Many comments on the evaluation suggest this type of farmer-to-farmer program that is hands-on in the field provides the best learning environment. Many expressed their overall better understanding of soybeans (plant populations, pest management, and fertility) will make them a better manager and make their operation more profitable. All TAg participants highly agreed this class helped them understand the importance of pest and crop management and would highly recommend the class to other farmers.



Price Analysis for Corn Silage – A Valuable Tool for Determining Price

In response to the program's Field Crops Advisory Committee's desire for work on pricing forages, the team worked with a Genesee County producer to develop an empirical price analysis for corn silage. This type of analysis considers the simultaneous relationship between supply and demand factors in determining price. After reporting the initial work in the August 2012 issue of Ag Focus, the team has updated the estimates using current market information several times, most recently in September 2013. New estimates are posted to the team's website (www.nwnyteam.org) and reported in Ag Focus.



The team continues to receive favorable responses to the work. Regarding the original work, one producer commented, "I think that your work on this will be helpful for many folks." Regarding the periodic updates, producers have commented the work has been a valuable addition to the tool set for determining corn silage price.

Small Scale Anaerobic Digester Workshop, a Renewable Energy Possibility

Leading from discussion at a recent agriculture advisory committee meeting, a small scale digester workshop was planned and held. The goal was to provide an option to reduce on-farm energy costs and improve profitability. A committee member's brother attended and recounted the process of installing a digester on a farm in Pennsylvania. Hearing first-hand is a way for other farmers to become knowledgeable on the topic and discover whether it is a viable undertaking for their farms. Additional topics included digester safety, the principles of the digestion process, and small scale challenges and opportunities. A Cornell University visiting scholar from Brazil was also available to share his experiences and answer questions regarding retrofitting an existing on-farm structure. The target audience was dairy producers, and drew 67 participants from extension, universities, and agencies as well.

