

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

# **QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS**

# July - September 2023

### Price Analysis for Corn Silage – Fall 2023

Several years ago, in response to the program's Field Crops Advisory Committee's desire for work on pricing forages, the team developed an empirical price analysis model for corn silage. The team updates the work annually. The fall 2023 estimate reflects an update to the data set, and other changes to the statistical model to best capture changes in supply and demand relationships. The team reports estimates developed using the model in <u>Ag Focus</u>, and posts estimates to the team's website <www.nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu>.

Readers of <u>Ag Focus</u>, and website visitors learned that given most recently available data, price analysis for NY suggests an estimated corn silage price of about \$63 per ton. Farm business owners apply corn silage price estimates combined with understanding of relevant supply and demand factors from the individual farm business owner's perspective, including local conditions, to achieve better results from their decision making efforts where price information is required.

Regarding the original work, one producer commented, "I think that your work on this will be helpful for many folks." Regarding the updates, producers comment that the work continues to provide information that benefits decision making regarding corn silage price.

#### Investing in the Minds of Future Leaders

On July 20th-21st, Cornell's Agricultural Workforce Development team led their first Spanish-language, in-person workshop entitled "Transición a Supervisor", meaning Transition to Supervisor in English. Eighteen Spanish-speaking leaders in the agricultural industry, nine from within the NWNY region, representing dairy, apple, vineyards and even a SUNY college educator came to learn about how to take the step from high-performing employee to supervisor. This event was located at the CCE Ontario County office and included four bilingual instructors: Libby Eiholzer (Cargill), Kaitlyn Lutz (CCE NWNY Team), Santiago Ledwith (Action Dairy and Talentum4) and María

"Bess" Lewis (Cornell Ag Workforce Development).

Ag Workforce Development has been providing Agricultural Supervisory Leadership (ASL) courses in English since 2021, with over 105 participants thus far. The team began adapting the six courses that currently make up the English ASL certificate program into Spanish last December. This in-person event allowed the team to pilot the adaptation and format of the course with the Spanish-speaking audience prior to rolling out the online curriculum, which opens October 2023.

During the two-day workshop, participants learned communication and conflict resolution skills, multicultural team management and how to manage supervisory challenges through a series of didactic as well as hands-on group activities. One participant's takeaway from the workshop was that "it is important to be a positive person so that your team can be motivated. This will help me apply it to my team in the workplace." Another participant planned "to work on communication between the supervisor and the owner and we need to give all the tools necessary to achieve good results of quality."

ASL courses in Spanish are filling a much-needed gap in leadership skills in the agricultural industry. Over 50% of the NY agricultural workforce speaks Spanish as their first language and most report having no exposure to leadership education, taking on supervisory roles as a matter of tenure. We look forward to elevating the leadership skills within the NY agricultural industry through the continued success of this program. To learn more, visit the ASL website in Spanish.



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## Seneca Regional Dry-Down Day Doubles Down on Harvest Accuracy

For any farmer who grows corn silage to feed cows, planning for and timing harvest appropriately is critical to producing a quality product. Whole-plant dry matter is the best indicator of when harvest should begin. With the droughty weather and variable rainfall in the region during the Spring and Summer of 2023, it was especially important for farmers to have a harvest plan. 2023 Corn Silage Regional Dry-Down Day, hosted by the dairy and forage specialists on the NWNY Team in collaboration with CCE Seneca County, brought the Dairy One forage lab and their near-infrared (NIR) reader to Keystone Mills in Romulus, NY to aid farmers in determining accurate corn silage harvest timing.

More than doubling the participants in the previous year, over 30 farmers from Seneca, Wayne and Allegany counties brought or sent in bundles of corn stalks cut from each field they anticipated harvesting for corn silage. Each of these bundles were put through a wood-chipper, and then tested for dry matter or moisture levels. With Dairy One's NIR reader, over 75 samples were scanned at the mill, and information about the overall corn maturity and starch levels in the ear were analyzed. Farmers were then given their values for each field sample, as well as estimated harvest date ranges, and information on best management practices for the 2023 corn silage harvest. This program reached and benefited many farmers including those in the plain community and those with smaller dairies who may not have access to regular monitoring of moisture levels of their corn crops.



Tim Lewis and others from Dairy One use Near Infra-red technology to determine dry matter and starch content of corn silage samples at the 2023 Corn Silage Seneca Regional Dry-Down Day.



Forage Specialists, Mike Stanyard and Jodi Letham chop corn samples through a woodchipper to prepare them for dry matter analysis.

### Managing Glyphosate Resistant Waterhemp in Soybeans

Glyphosate resistant weeds such as common waterhemp continue to cause weed management issues for soybean and corn producers. Waterhemp populations now have been identified in all nine counties in NWNY and in 16 counties across NY. To make matters worse this weed has also been found to have resistance to three other herbicide modes of action through previous testing in NY. It is very challenging to put together an herbicide program to control these weeds and prevent economic yield losses.

Cornell University recently hired a new weed scientist, Vipan Kumar. Dr Kumar has done extensive research on waterhemp and other pigweed species at Kansas State where it has been a problem for many years. We were able to collaborate with a grower in Seneca County that has an ongoing waterhemp problem and heavy seed bank and set up a waterhemp test plot. We tested 20 different herbicide programs in soybean. The replicated blocks were broken down into application timings of pre-emerge only (1 pass), pre-emerge plus early post-emerge (2 passes) and early post plus late post-emerge (2 passes).

A field day was held on August 4 with a walking tour of the treatments to demonstrate which spray programs and timings were the most effective in managing waterhemp. Twenty-five growers, consultants, industry reps and soil and water employees joined us for the tour. This walking tour was a very effective method of showcasing the value of 2-pass programs and why growers should utilize them to achieve season long control when applied at the right timing. This demonstration plot provided invaluable hands-on training for selecting effective herbicide programs on their soybean acres as this weed gains ground annually.



Dr. Kumar walking the audience through the herbicide treatments.