A partnership between Cornell University and the Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations of Chenango, Fulton, Herkimer, Madison, Montgomery, Otsego, Saratoga and Schoharie Counties.

2023 Annual Report  
October 2022 - September 2023

**QUICK STATS**

- **2500+** Direct Producer Contact (phone/text/on farm) on topics related to Farm Business Management, Field Crops, Dairy Management, and Livestock Production.
- **830+** Event and program direct participants who’ve attended one of our many online and in person events.
- **219+** Newsletters, Mass Email and Facebook posts providing timely information to a large audience.

**Dairy Management**

David Balbian

Dairy Day was rescheduled due to a blizzard that impacted New York on the original scheduled date in March. The new date was April 11 and a record number attended, nearly 150 people. This year’s program was different from most. Instead of information about new research, two local dairies that are achieving herd averages over 30,000 lbs. of milk on 2X milking presented information on how they managed their herds. The program was titled Putting All the Pieces Together! Nicole Tommell opened the program by providing information about economics and high production titled "Profitability~Productivity~ Data: The Other PPD.". In addition to the on-farm teams, their herd nutritionists and veterinarians also provided insights into how they work with these herds to achieve this high level of productivity.

Alongside Statewide Dairy Specialists and Pro-Dairy the CNYDLFC team organized and carried out a calving & dystocia workshop for both English and Spanish speaking participants using a “model cow & calf” to depict various difficult birth situations and how to manage them. During this time, participants had the opportunity to practice various situations under the guidance of Dr. Rob Lynch, DVM. Both English and Spanish speakers gained knowledge through class/lecture and hands on learning depending on their specific needs!

The Statewide Dairy Specialists and Pro-Dairy organized and carried out 7 short webinars over the lunch hour for dairy producers, employees and advisors. Topics were Reproduction, Calves, Remodel or Build New, Drones for Feed Inventory, Looking Ahead, Milking and Integrated Barn Climate Systems. Dave spearheaded and hosted the last event.

Congratulations on your retirement, Dave!
Ashley, Erik and I wish you much happiness!

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities.
Field Crops and Forage
Erik Smith

Erik is leading a statewide group of CCE educators and specialists in another year of sampling soybean fields for this damaging pest. 15 fields were sampled across our region and up to 75 fields will be sampled across NY in our effort to monitor the spread of SCN and alert soybean growers to populations in their fields. Monitoring population levels is essential to cost-effective management, as SCN can cause up to 30% soybean yield loss with no above-ground symptoms, but low levels can be managed with resistant soybean varieties and crop rotation as opposed to more costly measures such as seed treatments.

Alfalfa is a major part of a dairy cow’s diet on most farms, and potato leafhopper is the most damaging pest of alfalfa crops each year. With funding from the Chobani Community Impact Fund, Erik worked with Emily Anderson of CCE Chenango County to put sweepnets in the hands of local FFA members. The goal of this project was to expand our potato leafhopper monitoring efforts and provide timely PLH population data and management recommendations with farmers, and teach our future farmers about Integrated Pest Management and how we use science to protect our crops and make informed crop management strategies. The team monitored 21 fields in 5 counties for 12 weeks from June through August.

Livestock Management
Ashley McFarland

Ashley McFarland and David Balbian organized an artificial insemination course for cattle at Insight Dairy, LLC, in Little Falls, NY. The course, led by John Jacobs from Select Sires, featured a classroom session covering the intricacies of reproduction. Additionally, there was a full day of hands-on training with live cattle, aiming to equip the 14 attending producers from across the state with the skills to perform artificial insemination on their own animals and understand the key steps for success.

In April, a Beef Quality Assurance training took place at the Montgomery Soil and Water office, drawing 15 attendees, including dairy farmers and small-scale beef producers. The training, spanning 2-4 hours, involved both a classroom session and a chute-side training. Post the classroom component, the group visited Bo Eck farm in Amsterdam, NY, which had recently acquired a corral and chute system for cattle restraint. Despite rainy conditions, the participants assisted the farmer in understanding the system’s mechanics. The event concluded successfully, providing valuable insights on proper injection site techniques.

The FAMACHA training, designed for sheep and goat producers, helps identify the need for deworming in individual animals. Over the past 50 years, mass deworming practices have led to drug resistance. The FAMACHA method allows targeted treatment, reducing overall resistance. A workshop at the CCE Schoharie office in September, with 26 participants, addressed parasite management led by Rachel Moody from the CAAHP team and Ashley McFarland, regional livestock specialist for CNYDLFC.
A small group took part in the 4 week course designed to teach new and beginning farmers the basics of QuickBooks Desktop. During the course, the following topics were discussed: Chart of Accounts, Invoicing, Recording Expenses, Reconciling Accounts, Pulling Basic Reports, and Managing Vendors and Customers. This was a hands-on workshop where CNYDLFC provided pre-loaded laptops for folks participants to learn and ask questions in real time. This material is based upon work supported by USDA/NIFA under Award Number 2021-0027-34693.

Mental Health First Aid was a focus for 2023. Over the course of the year, a total of 3 programs were taught in our region. During the 8 hour program, students learn the signs and symptoms of mental health and how to approach and assist a person experiencing a mental health challenge. The program taught over 70 people from our region which included first responders, industry professionals and producers.

Over the course of the summer, CNYDLFC in conjunction with researchers from Cornell PRO-DAIRY, Illinois-based manure management technology company Newtrient, and Norwegian tech startup N2 Applied studied a novel manure treatment technology that aimed to increase the crop-available nitrogen content of dairy manure while removing greenhouse gasses. A trial of the technology is taking place at a farm in the region. The CNYDLFC team members helped to collect data three times per week and monitor the system through the trial phase.

The team conducted weekly first cutting alfalfa monitoring this spring on 50 fields across our region providing producers with detailed optimal harvest dates for lactating cow forage quality. Producers and Agribusiness Professionals look for this information each spring as harvesting first cut hay crop on time is critical for dairy producers. Late harvested hay crop results in lower milk production and higher grain supplementation costs. Hay crops were ready for harvest earlier than ever seen since beginning this effort many years ago.

The NYFVI project faced delays due to the state budget, affecting funding and the project start date. Despite this, initial data and forage analyses have been collected. A summer meeting at the Cooperstown CCE office addressed project goals, explained forage analysis interpretation, and reviewed preliminary data. The focus was on assessing how varying forage quality impacts growth rates and cost per pound of gain.
Connect with our Team!
Cornell Cooperative Extension’s Central New York Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program provides free workshops, trainings, individual consultations, email and mailed newsletters, and research-based resources and information.

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Central New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team serving Chenango, Fulton, Herkimer, Madison, Montgomery, Otsego, Saratoga and Schoharie Counties