

## 2025 Bovine Respiratory Disease Workshop – Madison County

Bovine Respiratory Diseases represent millions of dollars in losses due to mortality, morbidity, reduced performance, milk loss, and treatment costs across animals of all ages, from pre-weaned calves to adult dairy cows. This disease is complex due to the interaction between different pathogenic agents, such as viruses and bacteria, that can be primary infectors or primary and secondary infectors. It is essential to know what the different types of viruses are and the characteristics that can help us understand factors and how to prevent infection.

The CNYDLFC team organized a workshop for farmers to better understand the respiratory bovine disease complex, prevention and control as well as vaccination guidelines. This workshop was a collaboration between the CNYDLFC team, PRO-DAIRY, and Zoetis.



The event was attended by 10 people, farmers included, and the recording is available at:  
[https://vod.video.cornell.edu/media/BRD+Workshop\\_Madison+County\\_Apr+2025/1\\_vfbj43jy](https://vod.video.cornell.edu/media/BRD+Workshop_Madison+County_Apr+2025/1_vfbj43jy)

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# Corn Silage Dry Down Day - September 2025



Erik, Heer, and Raevyn participated in the regional Corn Silage Dry Down Day hosted by the CNYDLFC team. Producers brought corn samples from their fields, which were chopped and tested on-site for dry matter and starch content. Raevyn assisted with the testing process and farmer coordination, ensuring accurate results for each farm.

Educational materials were distributed explaining the importance of dry matter and starch in forage quality and the optimal percentages for harvest and storage. Producers learned how these measurements directly influence feed efficiency, silage fermentation, and herd performance, helping them make more informed harvest decisions.

*Erik & Heer collecting and processing silage samples during Corn Dry Down Day, September 2025.*

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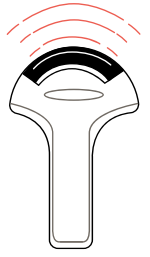
## New York State Fair in Syracuse

Each year Ashley has been asked to organize the State Livestock judging competition at the state fairgrounds along with the Swine Educational contest. Over the two programs there were almost 200 participants.

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



# Live Evaluation & Ultra Sounding for Carcass Data



Ashley has been participating in trainings to be able to be a certified ultrasound technician for carcass ultra sounding.

## What is Ultra Sounding?

Ultrasound for carcass evaluation in live animals, often called real-time ultrasound, is a non-invasive, safe technology used primarily in livestock (cattle, pigs, and sheep) to estimate internal body composition traits that predict the quality and yield of the final carcass.

### Traits Measured

Ultrasound provides valuable data that can be used to estimate retail yield and meat quality without having to slaughter the animal. Common traits measured in beef cattle, for example, include:

## How Do We Scan?

The process is essentially the same as medical or pregnancy ultrasound:

1. A technician applies a water-based gel to a specific, shorn area on the animal's hide (typically between the 12th and 13th ribs for cattle).
2. A transducer (probe) emits high-frequency sound waves (generally 2 to 10 MHz) into the animal's body.
3. The sound waves travel through the tissues and reflect back to the transducer when they encounter boundaries between tissues of different densities (like the interface between hide, fat, and muscle).
4. The ultrasound machine processes these reflections in real-time to create a cross-sectional image on a monitor, allowing the technician to visualize the internal structures.
5. Measurements are taken directly from this image using the machine's software.

### Backfat (BF) / Rib Fat (RF):

A measurement (in inches or millimeters) of the external fat thickness, which is a key factor in predicting the animal's yield grade (percent of closely trimmed retail cuts).

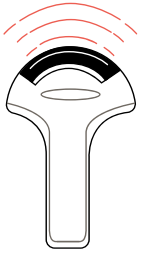
### Ribeye Area (REA) / Longissimus Muscle Area (LMA):

A measurement (usually in square inches or  $\text{cm}^2$ ) of the cross-section of the largest muscle in the back, giving an estimate of the animal's muscling or total lean product.

### Intramuscular Fat (IMF) / Percent Intramuscular Fat (PIMF):

An objective estimate of the marbling (fat within the muscle), which is the primary factor determining the final meat's quality grade (e.g., USDA Select, Choice, or Prime).

**Rump Fat (RF):** An additional fat measurement taken over the rump to estimate overall external body fat more accurately.



# Live Evaluation & Ultra Sounding Importance

The ability to accurately assess carcass traits in a live animal offers significant advantages for livestock producers and the industry.

## Educational Opportunity

It provides a hands-on method for youth and producers to visualize and understand the internal composition of live animals. Non-Invasive: Because technology is harmless to the animal and the operator, it allows valuable data collection without requiring the animal to be processed.

## Genetic Selection

It allows breeders to gather carcass data on young breeding stock (like bulls and heifers) before they are old enough to have progeny tested or are themselves harvested. This information is critical for calculating Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs) for carcass traits, which accelerates the rate of genetic improvement for meat quality and yield.

## Management Decisions

Producers can use the data to sort feedlot animals into groups based on estimated finish and project their optimal time for harvest, helping to meet target carcass specifications.



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# IPM Strategies to Protect Corn and Soybean Seed in NYS - Schoharie County



*Dr. Katja Poveda & Chloe Cho (Ph.D. Candidate) presenting their research at the SUNY Cobleskill plot.*

In coordination with Cornell IPM and researchers from the Department of Entomology, Erik hosted a field day at SUNY Cobleskill to highlight the statewide research being conducted on neonicotinoid seed treatments. Two of Erik and Heer's research plots are located at SUNY Cobleskill, who generously provided meeting space and wagon rides between plots for more than 50 attendees.

SUNY Cobleskill's President Marion Terenzio and Provost Darcy Medica welcomed the attendees and shared some updates about the Institute for Rural Vitality before turning the event over to Erik and the researchers. In addition to learning more about the goals of the study, eligible attendees earned DEC pesticide applicator recertification credits and Certified Crop Advisor CEUs. The event was such a success, plans are in the works for a repeat field day in 2026.



*Dr. Alejandro Calixto (Director of Cornell Integrated Pest Management) Presenting on neonicotinoids at SUNY Cobleskill's Champlin Hall.*

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# Seed Corn Maggot Population Dynamics and Seed Treatment Efficacy

With the ban of neonicotinoid insecticide seed treatments set to take effect on corn, soy, and grain crops in 2029, Erik and Heer have been heavily involved in Cornell's efforts to assess the threat that various insect pests pose to our field crops, and to identify viable alternative pest management strategies. Seed treatment trials were conducted in 12 fields around our region this year, including a demonstration plot at SUNY Cobleskill, which will investigate and show how different cropping strategies affect seedcorn maggot pressure and damage. Yield data will be collected this fall, and results will be shared at this winter's CNY Corn and Soybean Day crop congress.

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## Farmer Engagement and Outreach

Throughout the quarter, Raevyn conducted one-on-one consultations with multiple producers across Central New York to support farm management decision-making. Discussions focused on identifying funding opportunities for farm expansion projects and capital improvements, as well as determining land rental rates for their region. Conversations around land rentals included reviewing when the land was last used for production, analyzing current property tax rates on a per-acre basis, and discussing recent appraisals to establish equitable values. Raevyn also guided producers through considerations such as insurance coverage and developing clear lease agreements that protect both landowners and tenants. These meetings helped producers make informed financial and legal decisions while strengthening their understanding of farmland valuation and long-term access strategies.

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## Farm Business Management Retreat – October 2025

Raevyn attended the Farm Business Management Retreat, where regional specialists, state faculty, and Extension educators collaborated on advancing business management programming and education across New York State. The retreat focused on producer education in cost control, benchmarking, and risk management. Raevyn participated in breakout sessions on financial planning tools and program evaluation, gaining insights that will enhance future programming for Central New York producers.

## Other Educational Activities: July - September 2025

- Individual assistance, questions and issues centered on dairy alternatives, livestock grazing opportunities, and overall, the livestock industry. Assisting with pork supply plans if/ when ASF (African swine fever) hits the US. (McFarland)
- Completed Agricultural Supervisory Leadership course. (Gonzalez)
- Provided training on milk quality and milking routines on different dairy farms. (Gonzalez)
- Recorded an episode of monthly podcast with regional Dairy Specialists statewide. (Gonzalez)
- Participated in recording a monthly podcast episode with regional Dairy Specialists from across New York State. (Gonzalez)
- Attended BRD Conference for the Northeastern Highlander Association. (Gonzalez)
- Assisted at the Birthing Center during the NY State Fair. (Gonzalez)
- Funding and Program Development: Worked to identify and pursue new funding opportunities to support regional programming and producer education. This included contributing to grant proposal development aimed at strengthening farm business management, workforce training, and risk management resources across the eight-county region. (Saunders)
- Producer Outreach: Continued one-on-one and on-farm outreach with farmers throughout Central New York to build relationships and better understand current financial and operational challenges. These conversations have helped identify common priorities such as farmland access, expansion funding, and long-term business planning needs. (Saunders)
- Regional Collaboration: Participated in ongoing discussions with CCE regional teams and county offices to align programming goals, share outreach strategies, and coordinate future events that integrate business management education into programming. (Saunders)
- Began weekly monitoring of corn pest pheromone traps throughout the region. (Patel)
- Collaborated with Crystal Stewart-Courtens to hold a Field Crop and Vegetable Farm Walk at a plain community farm in Fort Plain. (Smith)
- Worked with Colgate intern, Zach O'Donnell, to monitor more than 30 alfalfa fields around the region for potato leafhoppers, sharing economic threshold data with farmers as needed. (Patel)

## Future Grant and Project Activities:

- Ashley will be working with the Small Farms, Farm ops program on campus to develop fencing 101 material and swine material to share state -wide. We will be receiving grant funds for Ashley's time.
- Ashley will organize and carry out a Hands-on Integrated Parasite Management training for small ruminants.
- Ashley will organize and carry out a Hands-on training for beef cattle producers with a newly purchased injection simulator. The injection simulator was purchased by the NYS Beef Council to help demonstrate the proper techniques of giving injections. We are eager to be able to utilize this technology in our region.
- Ashley will host Swine 101 workshops across the region.
- Raevyn will continue producer outreach across the region to support farm business management needs, provide one-on-one technical assistance, and strengthen relationships with local producers.
- Raevyn will collaborate with CCE county offices to contribute to ongoing and upcoming programming, identifying opportunities to integrate business management topics into local educational efforts.
- Raevyn will work with the CNYDLFC regional team to assist in planning and delivery of winter programming and events.
- Raevyn will continue exploring and developing funding opportunities to support farm business management education and trainings throughout the region.
- Raevyn will participate in professional development and internal planning sessions to align farm business management initiatives with broader CCE regional goals.
- Erik and Heer will plan the 2026 CNY Corn and Soybean Day crop congress, to be held January 20 and 21 in Hamilton and Ballston Spa, respectively.
- With Maryellen Sheehan of CCE Madison Co, Erik will hold DEC Pesticide Applicator license exam trainings at CCE offices around the region in February 2026.

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