IN THE SPRING, WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN MANY EVENTS TO SHOWCASE AGRICULTURE & DAIRY FARMING

OUTREACH TO:

Community Leaders, Teachers, Students, Families, Senior Citizens

Events:

- Agstravaganza– The Shops at Ithaca
- Cornell Veterinary Student Club
- Agstravaganza for Cortland County 4th Graders
- McMahon's Farm Visit (Homer)
- Jerry Dell School Visit (Dryden)
- Cheese Demo at Marathon Senior Center
- EZ Acres Farm Visit & Tour for Lead Cortland (Adult Economic/Community Leadership Group)
- Cortland Dairy Parade Logistics
- Dryden Dairy Day—Display on Manure Management
- 4-H Club Presentation on Dairy Management
- Radio Show on "Best Management Practices on Farms & Comparing of Small vs Large Farms" @ WXHC
- Fair Displays / Farm City Day

Agstravaganza

The Shops at Ithaca

Cheese Demo

Farm City Day

Tioga County Fair

Planting Seeds for Public Awareness of Agriculture

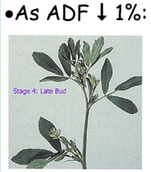
FORAGE QUALITY EXPRESSED AS DOLLAR$

As Standing Hay:

Alfalfa Leaving the Bud Stage & Grass Leaving the Boot Stage:

For Every Day Harvest is Delayed, NDF and ADF ↑ by 1%

- As NDF ↓ 1%: DMI ↑ .5 Lbs. And Milk ↑ 1 Lb.
- As ADF ↓ 1%: Milk ↑ .6Lbs.



100 Cow Herd:

All Hay Diet on Forage Side of Ration
This Cutting (1st) is 1/2 of Total Yield.

Daily Milk Loss:
1.6 Lbs./Cow/Day x 100 Cows = 160 Lbs.

1.6 Cwt X $15.00 =
$24.00/Day for every Day Delayed Harvest

One Half of Hay Tonnage to be Fed:
183 Days of Feeding x $24.00 Loss/Day
=**$4392 Loss per Day of Delayed Harvest**
Apply Percent Adjustments as Needed!

Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
South Central New York Dairy & Field Crops Team

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities
Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal

South Central New York — Tompkins, Cortland, Chemung, Tioga — Area Dairy & Field Crops Team

SOUTH CENTRAL NY DAIRY & FIELD CROPS PROGRAM

2ND QUARTER REPORT, APRIL– JUNE 2015

ALFALFA HEIGHTS USED TO TARGET 1ST CUTTING DATES

This spring, Betsy and Janice provided reports to local producers on haycrop progress toward maturity by taking height measurements weekly throughout the 4 counties.

> "Thanks for putting this together. My customers have been finding it VERY helpful. Appreciate your efforts!"
> -local agriservice

This spring fields were slow to green; snow persisted in drifts late into April and in shaded spots until early May. Each year weather and soil conditions dictate how fast alfalfa and grass hay fields will grow. First cutting can fall anytime from early to mid May and alfalfa in late May to early June. Forage quality is one of the cornerstones of dairy profitability. The higher the forage quality the lower the amounts of grain that are needed to balance a ration.

Alfalfa heights have been proven to be a reliable method for predicting maturity and fiber levels for both alfalfa and grass stands as well as mixed stands.

The team identified 20 fields to measure weekly until first cutting. Results were compiled and distributed weekly via email and text messages to producers and agriservice personnel.

Harvest Guidelines : (Continued on back page)

Stand Composition	Recommended Height for Harvest	Target NDF (%)
100% grass	14"	50
50:50 grass:alfalfa	22"	44
100% alfalfa	28"	40

Subject: Alfalfa Heights Update Week of May 18, 2015

First Cutting Updates–Alfalfa Heights as a Predictor for Quality

The cooler weather the past few days has given everyone a little bit of reprieve. BUT, it is GO TIME for mixed grass and alfalfa stands if you haven't started already! In lower elevation fields, some pure alfalfa stands should be getting knocked down as well! Janice and Betsy saw several fields with alfalfa buds, and orchard grass is heading out in almost every stand we saw this week. Several farms in Chemung County were mowing alfalfa/orchard fields on Tuesday and other farms throughout Tioga, Cortland and Tompkins on Wednesday. It's time to park the corn planter and get first cutting harvested – at this point in the year, the increase in NDF in your hay crop far outweighs the advantage in having corn seed in the ground! It goes without being said, but the better quality hay crop you put in now affects your production and feed bill YEAR ROUND. If you would like to share your 2015 hay crop samples' NDF and protein back to Janice and Betsy, please feel free to email them to us or give us a call!

Predicted days to cut are based on daily NDF increases for grasses of 1.0% point, 50/50 mixed alfalfa/grass stands of 0.8% points, and alfalfa of 0.5% points. Predictions are adjusted for the coming week's weather.

Typically NDF increases about 0.8 to 1.2 per day for grasses, with cooler weather being the lower end of the range and warmer weather being the higher end.

For alfalfa, NDF increases about 0.4 to 0.7 per day, also dependent upon warm/cool weather.

For questions, you can reach Janice at 753.5215 or jgd3@cornell.edu or Betsy at 753.5213 or bjh246@cornell.edu.

Look for our email weekly for the newest updates! Betsy

Wonder How the Dairy Acceleration Program Works? Here's How …

By Betsy Hicks, Extension Area Dairy Specialist

The Dairy Acceleration Program (DAP), an initiative of Governor Cuomo in partnership with the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, administered by Cornell's Pro Dairy program offers an opportunity for producers to "enhance profitability of New York dairy farms while maintaining a commitment to environmentally responsible dairy farming". From the DAP webpage at http://prodairy.cals.cornell.edu/dairy-acceleration, the funds may be used for the creation of strategic business plans focused on increasing the viability of the dairy, design of new or remodeled facilities, development or update of Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP) and the design of eligible best management practices (BMPs) identified in the farm CNMP. Farms must have lactating dairy cattle and be shipping milk. After helping on a couple DAP applications, I'd like to offer some insights on the process from a facilitator's point of view.

When a farm first decides to apply for the program, the application is reviewed and sent to an extension associate to then meet with the producer and complete a baseline interview. This interview is only a page long and has some more detailed questions about how the funds would be used and what practices the producer uses on the farm. At this point, the producer can also choose who they would like to facilitate the DAP program (usually an extension educator), as well as a business planner, facility planner and CAFO planner (depending on what parts of the program the producer is applying for). Upon completion of the baseline interview, a committee scores the application to determine if any funding can be awarded. Preference is generally given to herds under 300 cows, but farms above that are welcome to apply.

> The power of having all the planners in one room at the same time is very exciting and productive. The vision the farmers have for their operation really comes to life and different facets that they may not have thought of are all worked out through the questions that the people at the table ask.

Dairy Acceleration Program funding covers 80% of a project's cost. The farm is responsible for 20% of the project cost, including any dollar value in excess of established limits of what is awarded. If the application is awarded funds, the producer and the facilitator that the producer has chosen are then notified by Caroline Potter at Pro-Dairy. At this point, the facilitator meets with the producer to formalize a plan of when to meet with the planners and what they would like to accomplish. In the meetings a lot of brainstorming happens. Often with expansion, facility planners will have maps of the farmstead printed out and the thought process for expanding operations really starts to form a clear vision for how the expansion will happen – sometimes through several phases. The business planner helps with how these phases can occur in terms of cash flow and exactly what number of cows the farm should settle on. Even if there is no expansion planned, just additional facilities or improvements, the business planner can calculate how the investment will pay itself back.

On one particular farm that I helped facilitate the DAP meetings, the producer was starting an expansion that would double their cow numbers. Bringing together the facility planner and business planner as well as outside resources from Pro-Dairy and elsewhere really helped form a clear plan for this producer to expand profitably. Changes planned during these meeting involve several phases, including an addition on existing facilities for lactating cows, moving the silage bunks to a new site to allow for additional lactating facilities, a new parlor when cow numbers require it, as well as heifer facilities, dry cow pens and freshening pens. Everything from water lines to manure pipes and storage to electric supply was talked about and planned. At some meetings, all DAP people were present; other times, just a few were there. We spent a lot of time pouring over birds-eye view maps of the farm as well as walking around the farmstead to visualize where things might make sense. On this farm, the producer also utilized DAP funds to update his CNMP and has further applied for more DAP funds to assist in designing the best management practices for his new bunk silo system.

One thing is clear from facilitating with DAP, too many questions can never be asked. For example: even though I didn't necessarily understand how a manure pipe, for instance, might have to flow to the pit, I still wondered how it might impact the height of the addition they were talking about. That question brought up about four more that needed to be addressed before that part could go any farther. The farm had his site contractor available at the meetings and we were able to all bring the things we knew together to save time in planning and ensure it was correct the first time around.

The value in applying for DAP funds is more than just the dollar value associated with what you apply for; the synergy of bringing together people that have expertise in a certain role to work towards a common goal for your farmstead is beyond measurement.

DAIRY ACCELERATION PROGRAM PAYS DIVIDENDS TO LOCAL DAIRIES & LOCAL ECONOMY

Modest grants to dairy farmers provided by the Dairy Acceleration Program and facilitated by local extension educators spur significant investments in **on-farm infrastructure generating substantial local economic activity.**

The Dairy Acceleration Program

➢The program is designed to enhance profitability of New York dairy farms while maintaining a commitment to environmentally responsible growth. The program provides funding for development of business plans and comprehensive nutrient management plans.

➢Extension educators promote the program, encourage prospective applicants and play a key role as program facilitators. Educators oversee the process from the initial intake survey through delivery of project reports. The program supports thoughtful planning for growth by providing crucial financial information for sound business decisions. The comprehensive nutrient management plans ensure that growth will be accompanied by best management practices for farm waste products.

➢**Outcomes/Impacts:** Three local farms recently completed their business plans and have begun implementation. One farm will be building a new barn for housing calves and then adding a barn to grow the dairy herd by 100 cows. As the project progresses new bunker silos and a manure storage will be built. Estimated investment in the growth of this dairy is estimated at $750,000. Another farm is building new free-stall housing (>$500,000), a milking center (>$500,000) and manure storage ($205,000). A third farm invested $300,000 in facilities and $15,000 in environmental improvements.

Transition Heifer Barn-Group Pens & Freestalls
Built for animals 8 weeks to 12 Months

That's an investment of over $2.3 million to local contractors & businesses from 3 dairies that participated in DAP