

SOUTH CENTRAL NY DAIRY & FIELD CROPS PROGRAM

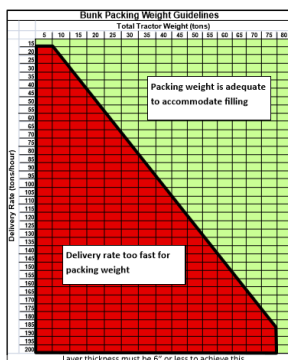
3rd Quarter Report

July-Sept. 2015

Corn Silage Harvest Workshops

Corn silage is an important forage in dairy cow diets. It typically makes up 50-75% of a dairy cow's diet. Sugar, starch and digested plant fiber provide the bulk of energy in her diet. The investment to plant an acre of corn ranges from \$350-\$450/ac. The quality captured and preserved at harvest sets the base for feeding through the next year.

Our meetings, delivered on host farms, featured live labs at the bunk to demonstrate staging corn for timing the start of harvest, effectiveness of corn processors, and packing density based on tractor weights and fill rates. These factors help to reduce losses silage fermentation and storage.



Easy-to-read flashcard that matches silage delivery rates with the weight of the packing tractor

“Bunk silos and drive over piles are an economical way to store forage. When managed properly, this storage option can result in high quality feed and a competitive advantage for area farmers. Key to management success is achieving 15 lbs dry matter per square foot. Higher

densities generally reduce annual storage cost/ton by increasing the amount of forage entering the silo and reducing crop losses during storage.” -R. Kuck

Making Great Corn Silage!



Controlling the Front End of Silage Fermentation

- Chop to release moisture and sugars
- Pack quickly
- Pack tightly to removed air from the forage mass
- Seal quickly
- Use an inoculant

Source: Limin Kung Jr., University of Delaware.
“Managing Your Inoculants for Silage”



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Farms following the guidelines are reducing silage losses by 10% or more!

“On our host farms alone, which harvest 1000 tons collectively, reducing losses by 10% would result in \$50,000 dollars of feed SAVED when silage is valued at \$50/ton”



Farm Safety and OSHA Workshop – August 26th

Together with Jim Carrabba of NYCAMH and Karl Czymbek of Pro-Dairy, Betsy held a Farm Safety and OSHA Workshop at McMahon's EZ Acres in Homer. Over 30 participants representing 10 farms and over 8500 cows attended the workshop, some from as far as 3 hours away. In attendance as well were employees from Soil & Water, ag service professionals, and a farm worker advocacy group. The morning session included an update on the surprise inspections by OSHA as well as a plethora of information on OSHA standards. The discussion was very informal, and the group had many questions on safety issues and the finer details of OSHA requirements. Danielle Volles of Volles Farms and Mike McMahon of EZ Acres also spoke to the group on how they keep safety records and train their employees on safety. Danielle also spoke at length on her ongoing contact with OSHA, as her dairy had undergone an unplanned inspection after an employee fatality. Lunch was provided by Cazenovia Equipment Company. The afternoon session included a walk through of the EZ

Acres' facilities, including the bunks, manure system, parlor and utility room. Best management practices were shared amongst participants, as well as record keeping sheets

and monthly service checklists. Participants stated that the event was well worth the time spent, and they appreciated the producer perspective from Danielle. Many of the producers responded that they felt better equipped to know where to find information on OSHA standards and felt more comfortable contacting NYCAMH to get information.



Danielle Volles shares her experience with OSHA inspections

Tour Helps Producers Prepare for OSHA Visits

HELEN MARGARET GRIFFITHS
New York Correspondent

HOMER, N.Y. — Danielle Volles of Volles Dairy Farm in Marietta, N.Y., knows what it's like to go through an Occupational Safety and Health Administration safety audit.

What's her advice to producers? Be honest.

She was one of several people who spoke on farm safety at a recent OSHA regulations workshop at McMahon's EZ Acres dairy farm

in Homer. Cornell's South Central New York Dairy and Field Crops Team sponsored the workshop.

Due to the increase in number of fatalities on dairy farms, OSHA in New York has implemented a Local Emphasis Program aimed at reversing this trend. The LEP has identified the top 12 dairy farm hazards: manure storage facilities, dairy bull/cow behavior, electrical systems, skid steer operations, tractor operations, guarding of PTOs, guarding of other equipment, hazards when

servicing and maintaining equipment, hazardous chemical communications, confined spaces, horizontal bunker silos and noise.

When an OSHA farm inspection occurs, any of these hazards can be on an inspector's agenda. Volles described some of her experiences from recent OSHA visits. She is in charge of OSHA regulations and safety at Volles Dairy Farm and showed attendees a large well-la-



Photo by Helen Margaret Griffiths

The manure pit at McMahon's EZ Acres dairy has good fencing, locked gates, a life ring and good signage. These are important features to secure one of the most dangerous areas on a dairy farm.

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Hay Making Workshop – August 20th at CNY Farm Supply

Together with Heather Birdsall of the SCNY Ag Team, Janice and Betsy put on a Hay Making Workshop to educate producers relatively new to the hay making process. Dave Law and his crew at CNY Farm Supply in Cortland hosted the event. Dave went over the common pieces of equipment used in making both small square and large round bales, and how older models compare to newer models. There was a lot of discussion around the pros and cons, as well as cost involved, in using different equipment. Bucky VanPelt of VanPelt Farms in Dryden was also available to answer questions, as he has decades of years of experience in making hay with a myriad

of equipment. After the walkthrough of equipment, Janice spoke to the group about caring for your hay stand. This included proper liming, fertilizing, cut height as well as species selection. Questions from the group lasted past our cut-off time and fostered great discussion.



Dave Law, Explains hay equipment



Dairy Profit Seminars: Quality Milk Roundtable

Supermilk 25 Year Winners Roundtable at Empire Farm Days



The Empire State Milk Quality Council (ESMQC) has been recognizing the top farms in the area of milk quality for 25 years with the Super Milk award. Twenty seven farms across NY have done just this, and three of these farms were highlighted at Empire Farm Days this year. Betsy holds office as treasurer for the ESMQC, and acted as moderator for the *25 Year Supermilk Winner Roundtable*, held at the Dairy Profit Seminar Center at Empire Farm Days on August 11, 2015. One of the farms highlighted, Millbrook Farms, comes from Tompkins County. Partners Ron Space and Jeremy Brown both sat on the panel and offered their experiences and insights on producing and maintaining quality milk.

Soil Health Trailer for Education & Demonstration Across NY



Fay Benson was awarded a National Grazinglands Coalition Grant funded by the NRCS. Which funds and equips a teaching trailer for SOIL HEALTH. This trailer is part of a 5 state Conservation Innovation Grant funded by the NRCS. It brings the first soil health trailer to the Northeast. The trailer is equipped to measure and demonstrate vital physical, chemical and biological components of soil health.

Equipment includes a rainfall simulator, tools to perform active carbon tests, a measure of biological activity, aggregate stability tests, and penetrometers. for demonstration and loan.

Benson said the purpose of the soil health trailer is to engage the public and demonstrate the importance of

soil health.

Standard laboratory tests provide producers with information on soil chemistry, he said, but the



“Soil Health has been identified as the limiting factor to productivity on many farms nationwide. Seed companies and agronomists have done an excellent job of improving seed selection and fertility of soils but now realize they also need to focus on the physical structure and biological life in the soil to make the most of seeds and nutrients.” -

—A. Fay Benson, Extension Educator

biological and physical aspects of soil are often missed.

“Compaction is a huge component of soil health, and in pastures this is often ignored,” Benson explained. adding that compaction can be reduced by growing brassicas and Italian ryegrass, which he said has an even better root system than the daikon radish.

Public Outreach Events:

- Farm/City Day
- Empire Farm Days
- Sundaes on the farm
- Cheese-making Class



Cornell Cooperative Extension links the research and extension efforts at Cornell University, the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station and the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, providing the knowledge to maximize New York State's agricultural and natural resources.

SCNY Dairy & Field Crops Extension Program