

Cornell University Cooperative Extension Northern New York Regional Ag Team

CORNELL NNY REGIONAL AG PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS MAY-JULY 2016

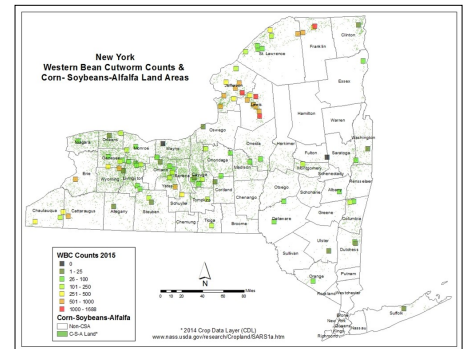
*Serving:
Jefferson, Lewis, Clinton,
Essex, St. Lawrence and
Franklin Counties.*

2016 “Excellence in IPM Award” includes NNYRAP Specialists and County Educators

The New York State Integrated Pest Management Program, headquartered in Geneva, awarded their 2016 “Excellence in IPM Award” to a large and diverse group of people, including several NNY specialists and educators. The 2016 Award was presented in January to participants and cooperators in the Pheromone Trap Network that alerts growers of field and sweet corn of a number of insect pests. Awardees involved with field crops were recognized at the 2016 Aurora Field Day, held on July 14, 2016 at the Musgrave Research Farm in Aurora, NY.



The main field crop pest monitored across NNY is Western Bean Cutworm, a growing concern for NYS field and sweet corn growers. Pheromone traps are installed and monitored in key locations across NNY from July to late August by Mike Hunter, Kitty O’Neil, Joe Lawrence, Amy Ivy, Pete Barney, Harry Fefee, Billy Bullock and others. Western Bean Cutworm trap counts are highest in NYS in Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, as indicated by the red and orange points on the map. Traps have again been installed over the past two weeks, to monitor the 2016 populations of Western Bean Cutworm.



Regional Programing provides Dairy Producers with Latest Data on Reproduction

Reproduction is a critical focus point for dairies as it can have direct and indirect impacts on production and profitability. Cornell professor Dr. Julio Giordano and PRO-DAIRY’s Dr. Rob Lynch were interested in sharing with NY dairy producers initial data from a large research project focusing on dairy reproduction. In June, the Northern NY Regional Ag Team organized two evening programs, one each in Jefferson and Clinton counties, to discuss research results and herd reproduction troubleshooting.

These sessions were offered free of charge and ran from 7-9pm in the evening to allow more producers and industry representatives to attend. Even with regular barn duties and the demands of field work, both sessions were very well attended by producers, as well as veterinarians, breeders, and students/interns. This lead to some great questions asked by the audience and some rich discussion. In Jefferson County, there were 26 attendees with the farms representing approximately 9,500 cows, and Clinton County had 25 attendees, representing approximately 6,000 cows.



Initial feedback after each program was very positive; attendees were intrigued by the initial findings presented and are keen to learn more once the study is completed. The research and data presented were very practical and applicable to both producers and the industry representatives present. One key positive of this meeting was having the producers hear directly from the researchers and getting the chance to ask questions and troubleshoot issues on their dairy.

It is important that the Northern NY Regional Ag Team provides producers in the North Country with the latest research and emerging ideas, and this was a great opportunity to do so. We will continue to utilize the strengths of the regional team and our relationships with researchers at Cornell and PRO-DAIRY to help educate producers, identify areas of improvement on farm, and increase their profitability.

Let's Improve Bunker Management

Bunk Density outreach has been ongoing in NYS since a NYFVI grant in 2006-07. During the last milk price downturn in 2009-10, and now in 2015-16, Cornell Cooperative Extension Educators in Jefferson and Lewis were looking for other management issues on dairy farms that were costing the farms money and profits. We decided on “Let's Improve Bunker Management-Short Course”. As we were doing bunk assessments we mused “wouldn't it be great to have a real time measurement of density to report to the farms if they need to improve packing while they are doing it versus several months later at feed out?” Thus the Safe, Real time method for estimating packing density in bunk silos was born with a grant from NYFVI.

The impact of the project has been valuable from a feed economic standpoint. The biggest industry change is dairy farmers now recognize that producing their own forages has a cost, as do purchased grain and supplements. Great silage makes profitability possible. Great silage does not happen with forages that are harvested at the wrong dry matter, were poorly packed or were not protected from air and water infiltration, however.

The cost of growing, harvesting, storing and feeding high quality forages has a real effect on the balance sheet. With quality standards in mind, the Bunk Management Short Course provided immediate feedback to the bunk-filling crew. While taking measurements, we were able to interact with the crew, helping them understand the importance of bunk density and filling practices. Using bunk management flashcards (available from your local extension office), developed by Cornell Cooperative Extension educators of Jefferson and Lewis Counties, bunk-filling personnel can make immediate adjustments, when necessary.

With an understanding of their impact on farm success, bunk-filling crews also better understand their responsibilities as good farm employees. Better packing procedures lead to more forage volume per cubic foot of bunk, less shrink from poor fermentation, less waste from moldy silage, more silage inventory to sell, less acres for needed for corn silage, more acres available for high moisture or dry shell corn, and work with local Soil & Water Conservation Districts to design bunk pads, etc.



Some producers, seeing benefits from increased packing density, have upgraded bunk cover from traditional 6-mil black/white plastic covers to new oxygen limiting barrier films.

The guiding principle of these short courses is to give dairy farms and their consultants a safe and real time method for estimating and achieving high packing density in bunk silos—to ensure proper fermentation and preservation of feed quality while also reducing shrink and waste. Farms receiving real time information on their feed storage practices can easily reduce shrink from ~25% to ~15% . This adds value to both perennial

forages (haylage) and corn silage that could approach \$147 million annually for New York State dairy farms.

We sense we have accomplished much and await the opportunity to work with more farms and consultants.

Meat and Dairy Processing & Marketing

May 25, 2016 marked the first meat cutting seminar of the collaboration between Harvest New York and SUNY Cobleskill. 15 producers from 7 counties around New York State met at the SUNY campus in Cobleskill, NY for a day-long Beef Cutting Seminar. Participants had the opportunity to learn meat marketing techniques from Harvest NY's own MacKenzie Waro. Carol Gillis, Executive Director of the New York Beef Council, led a discussion on the New York Beef industry and the importance of each beef producer to the checkoff program and the beef industry. SUNY Cobleskill's Meat Lab Manager, Betsy Jensen, led the class through cuts of beef and the importance of safe meat handling. A meat pricing lecture was led by Matt LaRoux, marketing specialist with CCE Tomkins County. The seminar concluded with Michael Lapi, a visiting instructor at SUNY Cobleskill, and his hands-on meat cutting demonstration.



On August 24, a similar pork cutting seminar will take place at SUNY Cobleskill. Participants will learn marketing techniques for the meat as well as the cuts of pork. The afternoon will include a guided lesson on cutting a whole hog carcass. A poultry cutting seminar is planned for October 11, 2016, again at SUNY Cobleskill's faculty. For questions, or to register, please contact MacKenzie Waro at mlw55@cornell.edu.

Focusing on the workforce in Northern New York is a priority for the food manufacturing industry. The North Country has a relatively young workforce in Food and Beverage manufacturing compared to the rest of New York State. This is an advantage to the North Country, if these employees are properly trained, enhancing younger employee retention and creating a more stable workforce.

Also in August 2016, we have planned the first of 3 on-site trainings on Basic Dairy Science and Sanitation for at least 20 Kraft employees in Lowville, NY. Many plants have a hard time sparing upwards of 10 employees for a 1-2 day training course. For this reason, we will be working on developing a program that will be held on-site in Northern New York and open to the surrounding plants. This way, it is more cost effective for everyone, plants can send a comfortable amount of employees, and it is close to their own operations.



With the support of Senator Ritchie and Assemblyman Magee, Dairy Day was held in Albany in June. Harvest New York and Dairy Foods Extension demonstrated the process of making cheese curd and handed out chocolate milk and our own Big Red Cheddar. This event was open to the community, and was a great time to showcase the importance of our programs that benefit the great dairy industry in New York State.

Our Mission

"The Northern New York Regional Ag Team aims to improve the productivity and viability of agricultural industries, people and communities in Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton and Essex Counties by promoting productive, safe, economically and environmentally sustainable management practices and by providing assistance to industry, government, and other agencies in evaluating the impact of public policies affecting the industry."

Contact us directly through our website: <http://nnyrap.cce.cornell.edu/>

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities. NYS College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, NYS College of Human Ecology, and NYS College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, Cooperative Extension associates, county governing bodies, and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.