

SOUTH CENTRAL NY DAIRY & FIELD CROPS PROGRAM

3rd Quarter Report

July-September 2016

STAIEP & DAP Working in SYNCHRONY

Governor Cuomo announced the Southern Tier Ag Industry Enhancement Program (STAIEP) on January 19, 2016. The program allocated \$25 million to 11 Southern Tier Counties including Broome, Chemung, Tioga and Tompkins that our team serves.

The intent of the support directly targeted to ag producers was to increase agricultural production on farms and improve profitability, as well as support farmers in better managing and enhancing environmental resources. Farmers could receive up to \$100,000 at a 75% cost share to help with construction, renovation, irrigation, drainage, environmental enhancements, fencing, trellis systems and greenhouses. The project was to be administered by the Department of Agriculture and Markets in coordination with the County Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Applicants had to meet a set of 5 criteria to be eligible to apply. Applications had to include 4 elements: 1) Projects must be critical to increasing production, enhancing profitability and or increasing environmental compatibility of the farm operation; 2) Projects must implement a farm business or environmental plan or components of a plan; 3) The applicable section (s) of the farm business or environmental plan should be prepared by a third party and submitted with the application for funding; and 4) The project must be located on land owned and operated by an Eligible Farm Operation. Projects located on rented land are not eligible.

“New York’s agriculture industry is an economic engine in upstate communities – driving growth and expanding opportunity,” Governor Cuomo

Marrying DAP to STAIEP

This program was a once in a life time opportunity for farmers in these counties. The farms that had been through the Dairy Acceleration Program (DAP*) program had a leg up. Participating DAP farms had already thought through their long term goals and had an up-to-date business plan in hand that would meet criteria required by STAIEP. Others who were new DAP applicants could apply for a mini-project and receive up to \$1000 to have a consultant prepare farm financial records and benchmark farm

financial status. This report would also meet the requirement of farm financials prepared by an independent third party.

There was a very short turn around time between the announcement of the STAIEP funding and the due date of March 7 for first round of applications.

Team members worked with dairies that had their DAP developed business plan and encouraged those that didn’t to use DAP to pay for the professionals to prepare the required financial overview. In August the farms selected for funding from the first round were announced. All of the farms that had completed the DAP business plan received awards. Other farmers taking advantage of DAP have also applied for the 2nd round of funding.



New calf facility as planned through DAP process

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.

Organic Dairy & Crop Producer's Discussion Group Meetings



Ed and Eileen Scheffler welcomed area farmers to their farm to share their crop production practices, farm diversification and their use of a small

scale oil press for biodiesel production. The purpose of the discussion group is to support community building which encourages shared learning as a group. This discussion group explores aspects of production practices and technical knowledge of crop production and herdsmanhip.

Ed and Eileen began the discussion with "the born in a log cabin" story which is to say a brief history of the farm since its inception with this generation, challenges addressed and changes made during the 30+ years they have farmed. One of the more recent changes was the additional enterprise of the farm store for farm raised milk, meat, eggs and excess garden produce.

The farm is grain independent supplying its needs with triticale, corn and soybean. Sunflowers are grown as oil feed stock and the sunflower meal byproduct from oil production is fed to the cows. Ed discussed his interests and changing practices to address soil fertility as well as crop rotation, crop choice, weed control. Visitors watched the oil press in operation. The farm store provides an opportunity to connect customers to local agriculture and the people who grow their food. *



Pasture Walk at PASTURELAND Organic Dairy

Pete Mapstone and his son Jeremy led a group of 50 dairy producers on a tour of their farmstead and long term

pastures. Pete explained that he began the transition to organic in 2005, and began shipping organic milk in May of 2007.

They currently milk 300, grown internally from 60 head in 1987. We toured the new calf barn which was built after discovering that group housed calves were compromising udder health and causing infections of mastitis when the heifers joined the milking string.

With the help of Dairy One testing and records, the farm maintains a low somatic cell count and has received the Silver Cow Award for keeping SCC under 150,000 for a year.

Pete was an early adopter of solar panels to supply the farm and home's electrical needs. The low maintenance panels run along a barn roof.

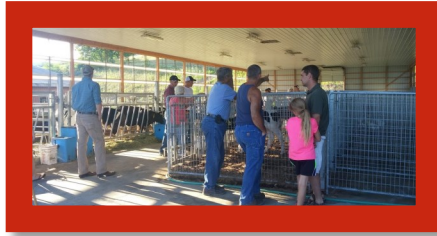
Having practiced intensive grazing since 1987, they incorporated a new practice of topdressing pastures and hayfields with gypsum and chicken manure. They saw a big impact on yield and recovery after harvest especially with the very dry conditions this summer. The farm is nearly grain self-sufficient. A visit to the flat barn parlor showed how they accomplish a throughput of 100 cows/hr.*



Summer Dairy Events

Stronghaven Twilight Meeting Touring the Calf Barn

Stronghaven Farms, LLC opened the doors to their new calf facility on July 19th to a tour of the facilities. After touring several



different calf barns last winter while participating in the Broome-Tioga-Chemung Discussion Group, the farm decided upon a design composed of several aspects they saw from other facilities. The barn houses calves individually while on milk, and then in groups after weaning at 7 weeks old. Positive pressure ventilation, automatic curtains controlled by a weather station, heated alleys, sloped floors and spacious room for the calves are just a few of the details that were shown and discussed. The farm's veterinarian, Dr. Ben Laudermilch, followed up the tour with his talk on key items when raising calves. He also focused on products that he sees as beneficial and important things to track while raising calves. The Strong family graciously offered use of their pavilion for the discussion and a meal during the beautiful summer evening meeting.

Timely Culling to Increase Profitability Getting more Profit out of your Cull Cows



Empire Livestock in Dryden hosted our meeting on July 14th, where Dr. Art Sherman, NYS Ag & Markets and Dr. Laura Rath-Brown,

MidState Veterinary Services, discussed their perspectives on cull cows. The meeting had excellent discussion around body condition score at culling versus cents per pound received for that cow, the optimum situations for culling, and what each farm present used as criteria for when to cull. Ms. Danielle Cornelius, Empire Livestock, gave her perspective as well and fielded quite a few questions from down cows and humane treatment of cows, to bob calves and the right timing of sending them to market, to what buyers are looking for in cull cows, bob calves and anything in between. If you are interested, the team is willing to plan another workshop.

Summer Repro Update

Walnut Ridge Dairy hosted our Summer Repro Update, in coordination with Pro-Dairy, on June 28th. Speakers included Cornell University



Assistant Professor Juio Giordano, PhD student Matias Stangaferro, and Pro-Dairy's Rob Lynch. This workshop served as a way for new research surrounding reproduction to be highlighted to farms that are looking to optimize their herd reproductive efficiency. Dr. Giordano covered his research trial looking at short voluntary waiting periods versus long, of which Walnut Ridge was a trial farm. The data showed interesting differences in milk yield when comparing first lactation cows to mature cows. Dr. Lynch discussed factors to look at when trying to determine the best strategy for picking the correct wait period. Great discussion came from the farms, breeders and veterinarians during the meeting. Thanks to all who came and endured the humidity!!

Glezen Farms Twilight Meeting Cow Comfort and Touring Freestall Facility

Glezen Farms, LLC took participants on a full tour of their facilities on August 2nd, aiming to highlight the efforts made in the past ten years to make cows more comfortable.



Scott Glezen, owner, and Brad Blaisure, herd manager, went over the changes that the farm has been through, from walking cows from the new freestall down to the parlor, to putting in a new parlor and keeping cows in the entire new facility. Chelsea Hoover, nutritionist with Shur-Gain, went over details from the three NOVUS C.O.W.S. assessments the farm has been through and how the farm used those results to positively affect the herd. In particular, Scott talked about using his profit team to help make decisions during good times and bad. The tour included the new dry cow and fresh cow facility, in process of being built, the bedded pack hospital barn, and the current barn dry cows are housed in, as well as calf facilities. Thank you to Glezens for opening their business up for so many questions!

Connecting Production Practices to Building Soil Health

Cover Crop and No-Till Practices Support Soil



Demonstrations and field visits explored rooting conditions, compaction, micro and macro soil biology, crop growth and development. Demonstrations using the Soil Health Trailer tools included: aggregate stability, soil microbial activity and the protective role of crop trash and cover. Management recommendations for improving less than optimal conditions as identified by the Cornell Soil Health Test were discussed by Aaron Ristow, CU Soil Health Lab Director. ✦

Aiming to conserve his soil, Jamie Baker explained how he has been adding *cover crops* and *no-till* into his cropping system over the last 3 years. With the drought this year it has been nerve wracking. Getting the right equipment properly adjusted has been an important step to his success.



Aggregate Stability-the base of soil conservation

On the Road with the Soil Health Trailer

Dates	Event	Location
May 4	Madison Grazing	Canastota
May 27	Oneida Grazers	Durhamville
July 8	Tioga County Fair	Owego
July 15	Maple Hill Creamery	Sharon Springs
July 26	Northern NY Event	Boonville
July 26	Northern NY Event	Lowville
July 27	Northern NY Event	Hammond
August 5	Grasstravaganza	SUNY Alfred
August 9	Empire Farm Days	Seneca Falls
August 10	Empire Farm Days	Seneca Falls
August 11	Empire Farm Days	Seneca Falls
August 17	Organic Vegetable Research	CU Veg Research Farm, Freeville
August 20	Vegetable Cover Crops	Hurley
Aug 23	Glynwood Soil Health	New Paltz
Aug 31	Kings Agri-Seed Meeting	Romulus
Sept 1	Organic Valley Grass Fed	Nichols
Sept 17	Cobleskill Soil Health	SUNY Cobleskill
Sept 20	4-H Envirothon	Acra
Sept 21	Grazing Soil Health	Hoosic Falls
Sept 26	Cover Crops	Mt. Morris