Winter Dairy Management Schools

This year Winter Dairy Management programs held in Cooperstown, Fonda and Schuylerville focused on the profitability of increasing butterfat and milk protein output. David Balbian and Dr. Tom Overton teamed up to put together presentations on how nutrition affects milk protein and butterfat. Dairy producers were invited to make presentations on how their farms improved and maintained high component levels.

“The presenters taught me in detail the relationship between component prices and profitability. Very nice!”
- Winter Dairy Management Schools Attendee

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

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Dairy Acceleration Program (DAP)
The Dairy Acceleration Program or DAP provides New York state funding to dairy farms for business planning and plans to protect the environment. Regional Dairy Specialist David Balbian is the facilitator in the process, helping the producer, the business planner, and environmental planner to all be on the same page and to complete their tasks in a timely fashion. Most all of these farms are looking to increase milk output by expanding cow numbers and/or increasing milk per cow. For farms with an adequate land base to produce enough feed and the milking center capacity to milk more cows this can be a viable business strategy to be more economically competitive, even during this period of lower milk prices. In the team region seven farms applied and were approved for DAP funding in 2015.

Focus on producing a healthy, profitable cow
For dairy farms to be profitable in the future they will need to have great cows that were raised using best management practices and that have the genetic potential to be very productive and healthy. Central New York Dairy and Field Crops Team educational programs focused on bringing next generation of cow to the farm.

2015 Dairy Day, titled “Breeding, Raising, and Managing Your Future Herd of Super Cows” looked at evaluating genetic potential through the use of genomics, new strategies to improve conception through artificial insemination and new research looking at how dairy animals are raised and how well they grow early on in life can influence how productive they will be once they enter the milking herd.

A series of Calf Management Training webinars aimed at those responsible for raising calves were held four evenings during October and November of 2014 at the CCE offices in Herkimer and Ballston Spa. These webinars, viewed across the state on the same evenings, covered topics like providing healthy environment for growth, calf nutrition and what data to collect to assess animal performance. An on-farm session was held after the webinars at a dairy located in Fultonville.
Improve soil health…
improve productivity and
profitability!

Soils that are compacted with little poor space, low organic matter
and little biological activity provide a difficult place for crops to
grow. Reducing tillage and increasing the use of cover crops im-
proves soil tilth and protects soils from compaction and erosion.

No-till Drill Demonstration

A no-till drill demonstration held in mid-July was a joint collaboration between the Montgomery County Soil and Water Con-
servation District and the CNYDFC team. Three different no-till drills available in the area, Haybuster, John Deere and Great
Plains, were on hand so that attendees could experience of how to properly setup and operate each model.

Soil Health Field Day: Building Better Soils with Cover Crops

Kevin worked with CCE staff from Delaware County, the Eastern NY Horticulture Program and the Capital Area Agriculture &
Horticulture Program to conduct a cover crop field day September 3 at the Carrot Barn in Schohane. The featured speaker
was NRCS National Soil Health Expert Ray Archuleta who brings his special enthusiast-
ic brand of hands-on teaching of soil health
concepts to growers. Over 170 people at-
tended this event which focused on how
cover crop can aid in improving soil health.

Participants were able to have a guided
tour of a demonstration of over 35 cover
crop or crop mixtures that were planted in
early June and in early August. These plot
bours were guided by Cornell and industry
experts who could explain the advantages
of using the various crops.

“The enthusiasm is
infectious.
Man am I excited!…”

- Soil Health Field Day Attendee

Small grains provide winter cover,
spring forage and ingredients for beer

Small grains, such as wheat, oats, barley and rye have made a resurgence in the past few years as farms look to diversify
crops in the rotation to not only improve soil health and reduce erosion but also gain a quality forage or grain.

Malting Barley Variety Trials

Farm brewery legislation requires the use of NY state ingredients to maintain a farm brewery license so malting barley use will
only increase. The results from the two year study have shown that varieties are available to provide the quality desired.

Winter Forage Nitrogen Trials

Again this year Kevin worked with Dr. Quirine Ketter-
ings of the Cornell Nutrient Management Spear Pro-
gram on a statewide project aimed at determining how
much nitrogen is needed for profitable forage yields of
crops like rye and triticale in the spring. Nitrogen ap-
plications in the spring may result in more yield and
determining when the nitrogen is needed and how
much is needed is the focus of this research. In 2015
trials were placed on a farm in Montgomery County
and demonstrated a need for 30-60 more pounds of
nitrogen.