



## Educational Activities

### Soil Health Field Day

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 Schoharie. The featured speaker was NRCS National Soil Health Expert Ray Archuleta who brings his special enthusiastic brand of hands-on teaching of soil health concepts to growers. 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 tours were guided by Cornell and industry experts who could explain the advantages of using the various crops. Over 170 people attended this event which focused on how cover crop can aid in improving soil health. (Ganoe)



*NRCS National Soil Health Expert Ray Archuleta demonstrates the effect of roots can have on soil structure*



*Scott Ryan explains proper setup of his no-till drill to attendees of the no-till drill demonstration at Honorone Farm in Montgomery County*

### No-Till Drill Demonstration

The no-till seeding of crops can lead to reduced soil erosion and labor and fuel costs. Up until recently few drills have been available. A no-till drill demonstration held in mid-July was a joint collaboration between the Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation 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. (Ganoe)

## Speaking Opportunities:

Around 75 people attended a Self-Propelled Chopper Clinic held by a John Deere dealer for their customers and prospective customers of self-propelled choppers. Dave was asked to speak about harvest strategies to maximize quality. This included proper moisture content at harvest, adequate kernel processing, proper particle size, and storage strategies. This included demonstrations of determining dry matters with a Koster tester, process scoring with a 32 oz. cup, and particle size analysis with the Penn State Particle Separator. Assistance with this clinic was provided by the South Central New York Team, as the clinic was held in their region. (Balbian)



*Regional dairy specialist Dave Balbian demonstrates the use of the Penn State Particle Separator to determine if corn silage is chopped to the proper length.*

Dave was asked to speak about how milk is priced, milk price volatility, and the economics of dairy production at a Boot Camp for New Soil & Water District Employees across New York State held at SUNY Cobleskill. (Balbian)



*Regional Field Crop specialist explains grass growth at a pasture walk held by the Chenango County Soil and Water Conservation District.*

The Chenango County Soil and Water Conservation District held a Pasture Walk on plant competition and sustenance on two farms in Chenango County. The purpose of this pasture walk was to show the importance of soil fertility and weed control toward improving pasture productivity. Soil tests were available for the pastures on the two farms so attendees could see the effect higher soil fertility had on pasture growth. (Ganoë)

## Current Projects and Grants

### Malting Barley Sampling Project

The NYFVI malting barley variety trial has been completed with 22 winter malting barley varieties evaluated issues for malting barley quality in during the 2015 growing season. (Ganoë)

## **NYFVI Precision Feeding Management Grant**

Our grant application regarding precision feeding management and discussion groups NYFVI grant that we were awarded to improve economics of feeding dairy cattle continues was modified and approved to meet the requirements of the amount we were awarded. (Balbian)

## **Emerging Issues and Individual Assistance**

Kevin is a member of the Conservation Tillage (Phase 6) Expert Panel for the Chesapeake Bay. Conservation tillage is a best management practice included in the Chesapeake Bay Program's Watershed Model and for Phase 6 of the model the panel is considering further expanding levels of conservation tillage by the amount of surface residue and soil disturbance.

The NY State Brewers Association Farm Brewing Committee meets regularly to discuss issues related to farm breweries and the expanded use of NY grown ingredients like barley and hops. Kevin provides malting barley expertise to this committee

Right now the second round of funding for the Dairy Acceleration Program is being utilized. Four new farms in our region approved for DAP funding this quarter. Dave is the point person in our region for helping farms put together proposals for this funding.

The Academy for Dairy Executives program is coming again this time to the eastern part to our region. Dave is working with the team in eastern New York and Pro Dairy Staff to organize and promote this year's program, secure sponsorships from agribusinesses and to recruit attendees. The dates are Dec. 1-2, Jan. 19-20, and March 1-2.

There is continued interest in improving dairy facilities and Dave is working with a new Pro Dairy person who has specialty in designing ventilation systems on individual farms for group housed calf facilities. Dave also met with a group of Amish farmers who have moved into our area to provide input on low cost milking parlor options.

Stray Voltage can be an issue on dairy farms today. Dave worked with an electrical energy consultant who is on a national electrical codes committee that publishes national electrical code standards. He wants to get a 4 wire system (mentioned in the current standard) expounded upon in detail in the code book as a proven method to eliminate stray voltage. A 3 wire system is commonly used today. Organized and met with a group of electrical experts at Cornell to discuss this concept in detail.

## **Public Relations**

Each year the team puts up displays at various events and interacts with attendees. We put up an exhibit at the Empire Farm Days in the CCE building. The Empire Farm Days is the summer state wide

agricultural exhibition for producers held each year near Seneca Falls. Farm Progress Show is the exhibition for local agricultural producers held in Mohawk every year. This year the team set up an exhibit on dairy farms transitioning from a tie stall to a freestall with low cost pit parlor for these events and visited with clientele.

The team participates every year in events for the general public to learn about agriculture. This year Sundae-on-the-Farm was in Montgomery County was held at Karen's Produce near Amsterdam while a similar event, A-Day-on-the Farm was held at Rogers Family Orchard in Fulton County. The team set up an exhibit about local crops and feedstuffs and talked to participants.

### **Next Quarter and Future Activities**

Begin the NYFVI project that we were awarded funding for on Economics and Dairy Nutrition. (Balbian)

Attend the 2015 Agriculture and Food Systems In-service. (Balbian and Ganoë)

Attend the 2015 Northeast Region Certified Crop Advisor Training. (Ganoë)

Continue work with the Academy for Dairy Executives group. (Balbian)

Continue work as a facilitator on the Dairy Acceleration Program across our region. (Balbian)

Continue with individual assistance on facilities & dairy nutrition (Balbian)

Continue working on planning the program for the 2016 Central New York Dairy Day program. The team advisory committee decided on Cow Comfort as the topic for this year's program.

Commitments from some speakers for the March 2016 program are confirmed at this time. (Balbian)

Work with CCE Oneida County to hold a tile school in December near Sangerfield. (Ganoë)

Plan winter meetings such as Corn Day, Field Crop Pest Management meeting, and Hay Schools. (Ganoë)