



## Educational Activities

### Hoof Health & Lameness Program

This program is a combination webinar & hands on program. It began with two webinar sessions in March. It concluded with two additional webinar sessions in April along with a Saturday hands on session. This program was for hoof trimmers, dairy producers, and agribusiness personnel. Cooperating groups included SUNY Cobleskill, Pro-Dairy, The Wyoming County Dairy Institute, and our own Central NY Dairy & Field Crops Team.



*Participants watch a demonstration during the Hoof Health & Lameness Program*

### Soil Health and Residue Management

This meeting was the first of two meetings to be held in conjunction with CCE of Delaware County in the Susquehanna River Watershed focusing on soil health. Joleanna Holsteins (The Johnson Family) near Unadilla hosted a field day, that focused on cover crops and reduced tillage systems successfully used on that farm. Besides tillage equipment demos participants got to see soil quality demonstrations and test pits. (Ganoë)



*Larry Day, soil scientist for the Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District using a soil pit to demonstrate soil horizons and soil compaction.*

## Current Projects and Grants

### Dairy Acceleration Program

This effort is one of the outcomes of the Governor's Yogurt Summit. The program's goal is to grow NYS milk production. Coordinated by the Pro-Dairy program, it provides grant money for Business Planning, Facility Planning, and Environmental Planning. Dave is the facilitator for this program in our region and after applications are submitted conducts an in-depth interview. If the farm's application is approved he meets with them again along with a business planner, and sometimes an environmental planner to discuss and finalize what the expected outcomes are. This quarter Dave has had meetings with 3 accepted farms and their business planners. Work on their business plans is the next step in the process. (Balbian)

## NY Farm Viability Grant for Selecting Malting Barley Varieties

The spring malting barley plot was planted in April with seventeen varieties made available for evaluation. Spring was also time to evaluate the 22 winter malting barley varieties for winter survival. Although winter barley types typically yield 60% more than spring types winter barleys do not always survive the cold temperatures of upstate New York. This past winter was very cold and so the trials are supplying good information as to what varieties may survive the winter and those that won't.



*Winter injury of the winter malting barley variety trials demonstrates the difficulties growing this crop but also the differences in varieties.*



*Getting setup to harvest winter forage plots in May*

## Winter Forage Trials

Kevin worked with Dr. Quirine Ketterings of the Cornell Nutrient Management Spear Program on a statewide project aimed determining how much the nitrogen is needed for profitable forage yields of crops like rye and triticale in the spring. Nitrogen applications 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. Nitrogen rate trials were placed on three farms in the team region.

## Spring Forage Quality Monitoring

For the past 11 years the Central New York Dairy and Field Crops team has monitored the quality of first cutting hay crop in the field to give producers a better idea of when they should begin harvest. Producers are emailed the results within the day of measuring so they can make important management decisions. Each year we receive more requests to be emailed the results of this monitoring. This year we tracked 67 fields in the teams region and worked with Madison County CCE staff as well.



## Emerging Issues and Individual Assistance

Dave continues to work with dairy farms as they seek to update and modernize. Some examples are:

- A dairy producer who is bringing his son into the business looking for advice on how to add on to his freestall barn and how to change his feed storage from upright silos to bunker silos.
- A farm family that attended last season's Winter Dairy Management program interested in how to add a milking parlor to their existing facility, which is a freestall barn with milking currently being done in 6 tie-stalls in the old barn.
- Worked with a dairy farm family that is planning to install Robotic Milkers in a completely new complex as to where to locate this new complex
- Provided consultation along with help from the Pro-Dairy Ag Engineers to a well-managed dairy having serious respiratory problems in their group housed calf barn. Specific ventilation recommendations were provided. However, some basic management issues remain that I discussed with them.

Kevin continues to provide assistance to livestock and hay growers on how to improve old meadows and increase yields. Need to look at future programming for this group as demand for more information increases.

## Speaking Opportunities:

**Ag Awareness Day** – This was an event for grade school children to learn something about Agriculture. There was livestock there, including some dairy heifers. I had a display about the kinds of feeds dairy animals eat and spoke to them about the various feeds and where they come from. The event was organized by 4-H. (Balbian)

## Next Quarter and Future Activities

Continue with follow up activities for the Academy for Dairy Executives group that we had. (Balbian)

Continue soybean scouting program for 13 participating growers. (Ganoe)

Substantial effort and activities with the second round of funding for the Dairy Acceleration Program will be taking place in the near future. Final details will be officially announced as soon as all of the agreements are signed with Ag & Markets and NYSDEC. (Balbian)

Start Corn Stalk Nitrate Sampling in project corn fields. (Ganoe, Schmidt)

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

Begin working on the program for the 2015 Central New York Dairy Day program. Commitments from some speakers need to be secured nearly a year in advance. (Balbian)

Organize and conduct a drive yourself Tour/Open House of dairy farms that have transitioned from a tie-stall to a freestall/parlor system. (Balbian)

Educational activities will be planned and taking place next quarter about the Margin Protection Program (MPP). This is the big change in the new farm bill for dairy. It involves paying a premium to cover shortfalls from a low margin. The margin will be derived from a formula related to milk price, soybean meal price, corn grain price, and alfalfa hay price. (Balbian)