



Educational Activities

2014 Dairy Day

The 2014 version of this meeting emphasized how profitable dairy farms make money and the economics and farm experiences of robotic milkers. Featured speaker was Dr. David Kammel from the University of Wisconsin who discussed options for low cost milking parlors and how to economically budget the transitions from tie stall to free stall with a low cost parlor. This annual event attracted nearly 120 people and included a small trade show.



Jason Karszes from the Cornell ProDairy Program shows trends in milk price and costs of production over the last 19 years



Kathy Barrett, Senior Extension Associate, Dairy Management, ProDairy, Cornell University talks about feeding strategies when using robotic milkers

Winter Dairy Management Schools

These schools are spread throughout the state to share resources. This year the agenda for the schools was very similar to our 2014 Dairy Day including having Dr. David Kammel from the University of Wisconsin on the program at a number of locations. The February event in Ballston Spa attracted nearly 40 people. Dave Balbian covered the low cost pit milking parlors topic at Morrisville and Middletown. (Balbian)



Mike Hunter the CCE Field Crops Educator, from Jefferson County discusses matching fertilizer materials to needs for growing corn

2014 Corn Day

Corn continues to be one of the most important field crops in our area and the corn meeting is designed to address issues affecting production of that crop so that growers can produce it more profitably and in an environmentally sound manner. The 103 people attending heard talks on understanding fertilizer materials for growing corn, weed control updates, controlling corn leaf blights and reducing the chances for corn rootworms to gain resistance to corn rootworm resistant corn. (Ganoë)

Field Crop Pest Management Meetings

Held each winter at the six extension office in the region these meetings emphasize field crop pest issues from the previous growing season and provide insights on how to handle these pests in the future. The 2014 meetings focused on corn pests and the effects excess water on corn growth and development. Of the 136 people attending (Ganoe)

OSHA Preparation Meetings

Conducted the last of several meetings to prepare dairy producers for upcoming OSHA inspections, the last one at the Norwich CCE office. Late 2013 sessions included two meeting room sessions and two on farm mock inspections. We directed affected farms in southern Chenango & Otsego counties to an on farm mock inspection in southeast Oneida County. (Balbian)

Calf Health & Nutrition Conference

Bringing that next generation of animals into the herd healthy and profitably is always important to the future of a dairy farm. This February event was organized and held cooperatively with CCE of Delaware County. The nearly 60 people who attended learned about the latest research in calf health and nutrition. (Balbian)

Cornell Dairy Executives Program

Two of the three sessions completed this three session program that focused on business and financial management. This program was conducted cooperatively with Cornell's Pro-Dairy program. This program is held in a different part of the state every year, and for the first time ever they had to turn some people away because the program became overbooked. This program was/is designed for younger people moving into management level positions on the farm. We had great representation, with about 25% of the attendees coming from our counties. (Balbian)

Hay, Baleage, & Forage Quality School

The schools were a joint venture between the CCE Capital Area Agriculture and Horticulture Program and the Central NY Dairy and Field Crops Team held at three locations: Mt. Upton, Hudson and Ballston Spa. The first day of the two day schools provided in-depth training on the agronomics of producing forage. The second session focused on the details of the machinery used in making dry hay and baleage, the forage needs of livestock, and how to analyze your hay making to see if it is a profitable enterprise. A mix veteran and new farmers alike participated with 163 people attending. (Ganoe)



Regional Field Crop Specialist Kevin Ganoe discusses evaluating hay stands at the Hay, Baleage, & Forage Quality School in Mt Upton.

Current Projects and Grants

NY Farm Viability Grant for Selecting Malting Barley Varieties.

We were able to start sharing the 2013 data available from the malting barley variety trials at a meeting attended by thirty people. The meeting was a great mix of growers, maltsters and brewers in a roundtable format discussing the potential and problems related to growing malting barley. (Ganoe)



Dr. Gary Bergstrom, back left corner of the room, discusses small grain disease issues during the malting barley roundtable.

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. (Balbian)

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Precision Feed Management and Corn Nitrogen Management Grants

The first of two three year grants with NFWF come to a close at the end of January 2014. A summary meeting was held for participants to review the lessons learned from the project. Dave and Robin Jerauld presented data looking at factors correlating feeding practices to profitability to the precision feed management participants. Increasing net milk income minus purchased feed cost, the money that is left over after paying the feed bill is most highly correlated with increased profitability.

Kevin and Mark Schmidt discussed yield trial information with the corn nitrogen management participants. Two of the participants had applied multiple rates of N to fields and had measured yields using truck scales that were purchased as part of the grant. The yield results showed that the current Cornell guidelines continue to be the best guide for applying nitrogen to corn (Jerauld, Balbian, Schmidt, Ganoe)

Emerging Issues and Individual Assistance

Dave continues to assist dairy farms considering modernizing or building new facilities by taking them to farms that have already upgraded their facilities. This year's Winter Dairy Management Program and Dairy Day have resulted in several on-farm appointments to assess herd expansions and low cost milking parlor installations. (Balbian)

An issue that seems to cycle over time is one of people moving into the area to purchase farms or people living in the area having or acquiring land that are not sure what to do with. At the current time we are in one of the up cycles with many requests for information from individuals that are unsure what to do with their land and resources. Kevin worked with other CCE educators and two SUNY Cobleskill faculty members to put on the program “So You Bought the Farm” to 45 participants in Richfield Springs. The goal of this program is to introduce various agricultural enterprises to participants that have little or no experience in agriculture. Besides typical agricultural enterprises for the area the meeting also focused on basic land management and business skills. (Ganoë)

Dave meets with several dairy groups over the year. A Mohawk Valley group met twice this quarter, once touring a local farm that built a new group housed calf facility with a computerized feeding system. The second meeting invited in a representative from NOVUS to discuss the COWS system they have employed on one of the group’s farms. A low cost milking parlor discussion group toured a new Schoharie County 200 cow drive-thru freestall barn and low cost milking parlor that was constructed entirely in 2013. This farm participated in some team low cost parlor meetings and also toured several low cost milking parlors with Dave in the past. (Balbian)

Newsletters and Media

WBNG Ch. 12 Binghamton covered our Central New York Dairy Day program. They interviewed two speakers and two producers. On their local evening news the story got two full minutes of air time.

Country Folks – Great coverage of our winter programs in their weekly publication, such as the OSHA meetings, the Calf Health & Nutrition Conference, Dairy Day, Corn Day, Field Crop Pest Management Meetings and Small Grains Meeting.

Next Quarter and Future Activities

Begin 1st Cutting Forage Quality Project in May (Balbian, Ganoë, Jerauld and Schmidt)

Continue Checking the Back Forty newsletter (Ganoë)

Continue with individual assistance on facilities & nutrition (Balbian)

Continue NFWF Precision Feed Management and Corn Nitrogen Management Grants (Balbian, Ganoë, Jerauld and Schmidt)

Conduct soybean scouting program for soybean producers. (Ganoë)

Work with Quirine Ketterings on N rates for Winter Forage research. (Ganoë)

Continue activities with the Dairy Acceleration Program. (Balbian)