



Team Administration

Ashley McFarland Hired as Regional Livestock Specialist

In April the team was fortunate to hire Ashley as our Regional Livestock specialist. She was active with 4-H and livestock in her youth, which drove her interest to pursue an Animal Science BT degree at SUNY Cobleskill and a BS at the Ohio State University. After graduation, she was a herd health manager for a beef operation and also as a dairy nutrition consultant. Ashley has spent a lot of time this quarter going to beef, sheep, swine and goat farms to meet livestock producers and responding to requests for information. Welcome Ashley!



Ashely McFarland

Daniele Ricci Serves as Summer Intern

The team has hired Daniele Ricci as a summer intern who is she helping with a number of our on-going projects. A long time 4-H member Daniele is now a senior at Cazenovia College working on a Bachelor of Professional Studies in Management with a specialization in Equine Business Management and a concentration in accounting.

Educational Activities

Conservation Tillage Inservice for SWCDs

Kevin has worked with Dale Gates, NRCS Resource Conservationist and Agronomist as a member of the Chesapeake Bay Conservation Tillage Expert Panel over the past 4 years. The panel has been charged with defining the conservation tillage best management practices for the Chesapeake Bay model so that producer use of those practices can be best reported and verified. Residue from previous crops weighs heavily on what tillage practice is recognized in field.



Dale Gates from NRCS reviews how to use the tillage practice decision



Kevin Ganoe shows how to use tapes to measure the amount of crops residue present.

Working with the Upper Susquehanna Coalition a hands on training session was for held for SWCD district employees who will be involved with the reporting process. The training included classroom session where they got to see a decision matrix to help identify the appropriate conservation tillage practice then headed to the field on a wet day to actually measure residue in a corn field. Thanks to Bob and John Hofmann of Cheshire Valley Farms for preparing the demonstration corn field with different tillage practices so that various levels of residue could be measured.

Current Projects and Grants:

Spring Forage Quality Monitoring

For the past 14 years the Central New York Dairy, Livestock 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. This prediction of when to cut is based on alfalfa height which works well to predict both alfalfa and grass quality. The 2017 haycrop was ahead of the 2016 first cutting. In 2016 on May 3 the alfalfa averaged 9 inches tall and 65 percent of the fields were 9 inches or less. For 2017, on May 2 alfalfa averaged 13 inches tall and 83 percent of the fields were 10 inches or more. Although we try to start monitoring early enough to anticipate harvest this year by May 2 some locations grasses were ready to be cut. (Balbian, Ganoë, Gibson, McFarland, Ricci and Schmidt).

New York Farm Viability Institute Income-Over Feed Cost Grant

A no cost extension is allowing Dave time to summarize results and to publish some of the successes. One success was working with a nutritionist who has two participating farms as clients. Dave and the nutritionist were able to convince farms to make changes that resulted in higher milk butter fat levels resulting in greater profitability. This will be the basis of the published story he is working on. (Balbian)



Dairy Feeder Schools

Feeder schools for dairy producers and employees will be held during the Fall 2017/Winter 2018 period. This is an effort coordinated by PRO-DAIRY to conduct two-day workshops across the state. The planning committee has already met twice with two workshops scheduled for our region. (Balbian)

Dairy Acceleration Program (DAP)

Applications continue to come in for this program. This quarter Dave met with 3 farms that applied for Business Planning and one of the farms also applied for Facility Planning. (Balbian)

Academy for Dairy Executives

The Academy for Dairy Executives program, targeted towards younger people taking over management roles on the dairy, returns again to the western part of our region. This 3-session program goes from noon to noon and includes an overnight. Sessions will be at The Colgate Inn in Hamilton on 12/12-13/17, The Hilton Garden Inn in Auburn on 1/23-24/18, and the Holiday Inn Southside in Oneonta on 2/20-21/18. The planning committee with CCE & PRO-DAIRY staff has met twice. The Herkimer CCE office is taking the lead in handling all of the registration and finances for this program. (Balbian)

Avipel study

Kevin is working with other CCE educators across the state to look at the effectiveness of the seed treatment Avipel, stop birds from eating corn seeds and improve plant populations. A dairy farm in Herkimer County with an on-going bird problem planted seed with and without Avipel so that we can measure differences in plant populations and yield. (Ganoe)

Monitor insect pests with pheromone traps

Kevin and other CCE educators across the state have put out traps to monitor for insect pests such as black cutworm, armyworm and western bean cutworm. The traps contain a pheromone that attracts insects to a trap to be counted. Found significant numbers of numbers of black cutworm and armyworm at one site but nearby fields did not show any damage. Need to put out traps another year to understand relationship between trapping moths and having larvae causing injury. (Ganoe)

FINPACK for livestock Producers

Dr. Michael Baker received a grant for New York State Livestock Producers to record their financial records in a program and Ashley will be working with interested producers. (McFarland)

Emerging Issues and Individual Assistance



Wet weather is having a major effect on the 2017 cropping season. Answered many questions related to late planting, alternate crops to plant and weed control. Wrote letter supporting those farms who were claiming prevent planting to crop insurance adjusters. (Ganoe)

Met once this quarter with one dairy farm profit team. (Balbian)

Individual consultations on dairy farm:

- One farm will move dry cows into a heifer barn & fill the main barn with more milking cows.
- Another farm that was trying to buy the currently rented farm will move back to his parent's home farm to improve cash flow.

- Housing for calves was another issue on one farm. After debating several options they came around to my (most cost effective for them) solution by purchasing some used calf hutches.
- Another large dairy needed advice on ventilating a large dry cow barn. The barn design made the solution challenging, but we did come up with a solution.

Finding markets for livestock continues to be an issue in our region. People are looking to become livestock producers but do have the background to understand finding markets and producing a quality of animal to meet market demand. (McFarland)

Getting around to farms make me aware that animal handling is an issue for many farms. A lot of farmers and their employees don't know the proper way to handle animals and hopefully this can be addressed with upcoming programs. (McFarland)

In-Service and Professional Development:

Attended the Herd Health & Nutrition Conference held in Liverpool for veterinarians and agribusiness personnel. Emphasis this year was on feeding for higher components and understanding management of low lignin alfalfa. (Balbian and Ganoë)

Veterinarian Feed Directive update held at the CCE Office building in Ballston Spa. There is still some frustration and confusion over stricter rules that require prescriptions or Veterinarian Feed Directive for antibiotics to be used in feed or drinking water. This update provided some clarity on this important subject. (Balbian)

Attended the small grains field day at the Aurora Musgrave research farm. Spent the next day with Claus Nyman, US representative for KWS (German seed company), visiting farms that might have interest in hybrid rye. Has possibilities as a new crop in our area. (Ganoë)

Next Quarter and Future Activities

- Continue work on the Dairy Acceleration Program. I am acting as a facilitator for this program across our region. (Balbian)
- Continue work on the NYFVI IOFC Grant project. (Balbian)
- Attend the Ag Specialist Retreat organized by Extension Administration. (Balbian, Ganoë, McFarland)
- Continue to work on a committee to develop the Winter Dairy Management program this year. (Balbian)
- Moderate the Are You a Member of the 7 Pound Club? Program at Empire Farm Days on August 10th. (Balbian)

- Plan & carry out an on-farm meeting on new research on heifer repro & managing milk fever with PRO-DAIRY. Scheduled for August 23rd. (Balbian)
- Continue work on a committee to develop the Academy for Dairy Executives Program (Balbian)
- Conduct on farm pre harvest Corn Silage meetings. (Balbian, Ganoë)
- Participate in the CNY Farm Progress Show. (Balbian, Ganoë, McFarland)
- Start planning Dairy Day for 2018. (Balbian)
- Continue work on the Dairy Acceleration Program as Dave is the facilitator for this program across our region. (Balbian)
- Continue work of the NYFVI IOFC Grant. (Balbian)
- Start new Topic Specific Team on selecting corn silage hybrids with the NYFVI. (Balbian, Ganoë)
- Continue soybean scouting program for soybean producers and with summer intern. (Ganoë)
- Harvest silage in bird repellent corn seed study. (Ganoë)
- Participate in state wide western bean cutworm trapping program. (Ganoë)
- Conduct AI Clinic with Ivor Jones- Select Sires (McFarland)
- Conduct BGA Training (McFarland)
- Hold Beef Producer Meetings In July (McFarland)
- Plan larger Beef and Sheep Producer Meeting (McFarland)
- Help with Feeder Calf Pool (McFarland)