



## CORNELL NWNYS PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2017

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Genesee, Livingston, Monroe,  
Niagara, Ontario, Orleans,  
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& Yates Counties*

### Heifer Facility Tour Shares Ideas and Answers

Dairy producers continue the quest for better calf comfort and healthy environments for young calves. Technology has brought us automatic feeding systems with impressive data collecting abilities. Improved comfort features and socially friendly group penning of baby calves have been great steps forward. Challenges remain, however. Keeping the pathogen load in check and ensuring fresh air without drafts continues to be an elusive goal on many farms. Respiratory health primarily problems attributed to insufficient ventilation is of particular concern even in newer facilities.



In conjunction with the PRO-DAIRY program, the NWNYS Team organized, developed and presented a Pre-Empire Farm Days “Heifer Housing and Feeding Systems Tour” of two progressive dairies. Each exemplified different successful methods of maintaining young calves in large structures. The 90 plus participants were able to compare barn design and function as well as liquid feed delivery systems between the two farms.

Novel ventilation designs, comprehensive biosecurity and simple, thorough sanitizing of feeding items were the top discussion themes. Facility managers responded with in depth answers to attendees’ questions. Industry sponsors detailed the technologies being utilized. A keynote speaker gave an overview of the modern concepts of calf rearing being featured throughout the tour during lunch under the tent.

A few dairy producers considering new calf facilities commented on the value of being able to not only see these structures, but hear from the individuals who either design or work in them every day at one time. All of the day’s activities were made possible by sponsors’ financial support.

### Economics of Growing Malting Barley in New York State

Changes in supply and demand conditions for malting barley include the effects of policies designed to boost economic activity attributed to the production, marketing, and consumption of malting barley and its products. These changes underlie farmer interest in the economic potential associated with growing malting barley. Using cost of production, and enterprise budgeting concepts, team members estimated costs of production, and returns given expected prices, yields etc. for the 2017 crop. Team members reported results



- at Cornell University’s 2017 Small Grains Management Field Day
- in two [AgFocus](#) articles
- and on the team’s website; the Cornell University’s [fieldcrops.org](#) website; and others

Approximately 85 attendees at the Small Grains Field Day, readers of the [AgFocus](#) articles, and website visitors learned the following.

- Profit estimates vary -- negative to positive -- depending upon yield and price received by the farmer for barley
- Producers can apply estimates to make decisions regarding malting barley production’s place in their cropping systems; understanding variability plays an important role
- Understanding yield, quality, price, costs, profit interactions associated with suggested changes in production practices are key moving forward

Producers looking to evaluate malting barley’s possible fit in cropping systems achieve better results from their decision making efforts when they apply a better understanding of expected economic effects and variability in outcomes.

## Industrial Hemp: New Alternative Crops for New York Producers

Does industrial hemp have the potential to enhance the economic viability of NY farm businesses? Research and extension efforts are underway to provide local research to ensure optimal crop productivity and quality for NY grown industrial hemp.

Growers in the NWNY region frequently express interest in alternative, new crops that may have the potential to increase their bottom line. Due to legislation at the state level and funding decisions by New York State's executive branch, the state's agricultural sector can add industrial hemp to the list. For more background information on legislative and funding considerations, see the Cornell University, Harvest NY report "[Industrial Hemp: from Seed to Market](https://sips.cals.cornell.edu/extension-outreach/industrial-hemp)" at <https://sips.cals.cornell.edu/extension-outreach/industrial-hemp>.



As with any new crop, local research and extension work is necessary and currently being conducted by Cornell faculty and the NWNY Team. These include:

- Understanding best management practices for industrial hemp in NY
- Identifying best varieties for NY environmental conditions
- Identifying barriers to production
- Producing fact sheets, grower manuals and internet resources
- Analyzing and providing information on economics, markets and end product value
- Identifying existing and potential hemp processors

This year, 28 producers planted 1,750 acres of industrial hemp in NY. Of those acres, 1,100 of them were planted right here in WNY. NWNY Team members are working closely with producers, Cornell research and extension staff and industry to prepare for more hemp acres in 2018.

## Webinars in Spanish Reach New Demographic

The Dairy Management Webinars in Spanish series is a new collaboration between Cornell's PRO-DAIRY Program and the NWNY Team. While PRO-DAIRY already offered a Dairy Update webinar series in English, there was nothing of the kind available in Spanish. Rather than run the same webinars in English, the team reached out to Spanish-speaking professors, graduate students and staff at Cornell to develop a webinar series attuned to the needs of Hispanic dairy workers. More and more Hispanic employees are being promoted to positions of higher responsibility, but often lack the scientific background to understand the *why* behind specific tasks. Between November and April of 2017, the Spanish Dairy Management Webinar series offered five webinars on topics including milking and udder physiology, calving assistance, and reproductive health of dairy cattle. Providing the opportunity for these employees to advance their knowledge and understanding of advanced topics in dairy management will make them better able to contribute to the success of the dairy farm, while at the same time making themselves more valuable employees.



Each webinar was recorded and is now available via the Cornell PRO-DAIRY YouTube channel at <https://prodairy.cals.cornell.edu/webinars/spanish-webinars>. While there were between 10 and 15 attendees at each of the live webinars, the recordings have been viewed 1,089 times. Informal conversations with dairy managers have been overwhelmingly positive, citing the need for advanced dairy training opportunities for Spanish-speaking staff. Due to the success of this program, plans are already in the works for the next season of the Spanish Dairy Management Webinar series.