

Educational Activities

Dairy Feeder Schools

Although proper dairy nutrition is an important part of profitability on dairy farms an equally important part is actually delivering the feed to the cows the diet the nutritionist put together. The dairy feeder schools are for those who are feeding dairy cows and want to learn more about the how and why of what they're doing. Topics include proper bunk silo and feed bunk management, adjusting for dry matter concentration and feeder safety. The twenty eight participants



Ron Kuck, Dairy & Livestock Educator, CCE Jefferson County describes how to properly packed bunk silos at the Dairy Feeder School near Nelliston.

of these 2-day schools held in the Canajoharie and Sherburne areas received a combination of classroom and hands on experiences at a farm. (Balbian)

Annual Feed Dealers Meeting

This is an annual program for Cornell faculty to provide research updates to the local feed industry. Attended feed industry people, local veterinarians, and a few of producers this year's agenda focused on dealing with forage quality challenges, strategies to manage hypocalcemia, results from selective dry cow therapy trial and a VFD, Veterinary Feed Directive Regulation update. (Balbian)



Equine Forage Quality Meeting

Much of the hay made and sold in in the team area goes to feed horses. Hay growers and horse owners are not always clear what forage quality is needed for horse performance and health. Carol Buckhout, Assistant Professor, Equine Business Management, Cazenovia College led a discussion of hay assumptions and myths and outlined the forage requirements for horses. An emphasis was placed on horses with special needs such as EMS, PSSM, PPID and hay nutrient content related to fiber and sugars. Held in Ballston Spa, Kevin Ganoe led a hands-on hay evaluation where the twenty six participants matched forage analysis to hay samples of various quality. (Ganoe)

Why Should You Vaccinate Cattle?

Vaccinating livestock reduces the chances of animals getting diseases allowing for better average daily gains and reduced mortality. Some diseases that livestock contract even have the potential to clean out an entire flock or herd. Ashley McFarland conducted a beef vaccination meeting where Dr. Scrafford, a NYS Veterinarian discussed why producers should vaccinate their cattle. The thirty producers attending should understand how to work with their local veterinarian to come up with a vaccination protocol that fits their specific operations. (McFarland)

Academy for Dairy Executives

The first session was held at the Colgate Inn in Hamilton on December 12 & 13 focusing helping attendees with making management decisions on the farm. Dave continues to work with PRO-Dairy staff and other Ag Educators in Central New York. Follow up sessions are scheduled in Auburn on January 23-24 and in Oneonta on February 20-21. (Balbian)

Current Projects and Grants

Central New York Feeder Calf Sale

Central NY Beef producers have come together with Cornell Cooperative Extension to put a feeder calf sale on in the spring and fall of each year. The tele-auction has been growing and improving for the past three years. This fall there were a record number of animals entered into this sale.

In the sale, 62 steers averaged \$1.35/lbs.; with the light-weight steer groups bringing \$1.50/lbs. and \$1.60/lbs. The 47 heifers averaged \$1.13 per pound. The following week at local sale barns steers average \$1.02/lbs. and heifers averaged \$0.68/lbs.

Producers are required to following certain protocols follow in order for cattle to stay healthier through the transition process from producer to buyer. Animals are graded by a USDA certified grader and those not fit into the standard grade will not be allowed to be in the sale. Animals in this sale are selling for a premium price due to following the specific protocols that have been set. The sellers are guaranteeing that there will be no issues with the animals that they purchased. Another goal of the group's is to build a quality relationship with each buyer so they continue to come back and be constant buyers.



Pictured Left to Right: Ron Maidens, Tim Ross, Livestock Specialist Ashley McFarland, Fred Ross, Bill Gibson.

This group has been successful over the years with support from Dr. Mike baker, beef specialist at Cornell University, and Bill Gibson who has helped run this event for the past few years. Ashley McFarland has worked with the participating producers to start weighing cattle prior to the delivery date and emphasize proper handling techniques to use when sorting cattle. This has helped the sale with the workload at the delivery location. (McFarland)

NYFVI Grant:

Using forage quality testing to improve the corn silage hybrid selection process on dairy farms

Nineteen participants collected eighty fresh corn silage samples during harvest in September and October. Each sample represented a particular hybrid used on that farm. Dave and Kevin submitted the samples for forage analysis and the summarized the results for participants. Meetings were held in December so that participants could see how their corn hybrids performed for forage quality and then also look at how hybrids performed on other farms. This will be done again in the fall of 2018. During the winter of 2017-18 fermented samples will be taken to assess forage quality and management practices at harvest and in storage used to demonstrate how they affect milk production potential. (Balbian and Ganoe)

FINPACK

Over the past year, Dr. Michael Baker received a grant for NYS livestock producers to record their financial records in the FINPACK financial program to look at whole farm profitability. Currently Ashley, has completed 6 FINPACK's with local farmers. Anyone that is interested may feel free to contact Ashley McFarland and she can give you all the details on this program. She hopes to get more farms involved in the near future. (McFarland)

Portable Beef Handling System

Ashley McFarland is working on writing a grant to have a handling system that is portable for beef farmers to use. This system would allow our smaller beef producers to be safe while handling their animals. This piece of equipment would be owned by Cornell Cooperative Extension and would be insured by Cornell University. (McFarland)

Empire State Barley and Malt Summit

Kevin assisted Cheryl Thayer, Harvest NY and Dr. Gary Bergstrom, Cornell University along with other CCE educators, Cornell faculty and partners to plan and conduct the Empire State Barley and Malt Summit. Kevin moderated the pre-conference panel with panel members explaining their "Ingredients for Success". (Ganoe)

Speaking Opportunities:

Dave presented results of the NYFVI grant Using Precision Feed Management to Improve Profitability on Dairy Farms to dairy educators at Cornell's Annual November In-service. (Balbian)

Dave spoke at Dairy Feeder Schools in Chazy and Morrisville as part of the statewide effort. (Balbian)

Emerging Issues and Individual Assistance

Ashley has been working with livestock producers on record keeping, need for vaccinations and castration tools and procedures. She is continuing to emphasize to producers looking for markets the need to produce a consistent product for their customers. (Balbian)

Dave has had individual consultations dealing with dairy nutrition, feed costs, productivity, facility design, and purchasing replacements. (Balbian)

Ashley is putting together two regional meetings on animal marketing to bring producers together and see what they are currently doing, and assist them in becoming more successful with their end products. Producing a consistent product is the goal producers should have when becoming involved in the livestock industry and will be emphasized at these meetings. (McFarland)

Dave met once this quarter with two different dairy farm profit teams. (Balbian)

Continue to work with farms on the Dairy Acceleration Program. Applications continue to come in for this program. This quarter Dave met with 1 farm that applied for Business Planning. (Balbian)

In-service & Professional Development:

Dave attended the annual Cornell Nutrition Conference in Syracuse. (Balbian)

Dave, Kevin and Ashley attended the annual ag and food systems in-service at Cornell. (Balbian, Ganoë and McFarland)

Kevin attended the Certified Crop Advisor training held in Syracuse. (Ganoë)

Next Quarter and Future Activities

Continue work on the Dairy Acceleration Program as a facilitator for this program across team region. (Balbian)

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

Conduct 2018 Central New York Dairy Day and Corn Day programs. (Balbian and Ganoë)

Conduct 6 Field Crop Pest Management meetings across the team region. (Ganoë)

Organize BQA (Beef Quality Assurance) Meeting for Spring 2018 (McFarland)

Producing a Consistent Product – SUNY Morrisville College & SUNY Cobleskill College (McFarland)

Help organize and conduct the Spring Feeder Calf Sale (McFarland)

Organize a livestock committee meeting by bringing in a few producers from each county to discuss challenges they see (McFarland)

Meet with 2 Dairy Profit Teams (Balbian)

Continue work on the NYFVI corn silage hybrid project. (Ganoe, Balbian)

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

Continue work on the Academy for Dairy Executives Program. (Balbian)

Continue planning Dairy Day for 2018. (Balbian)

Attend the every other year NEDPA meeting (Balbian)

Speak at the Chenango County Ag. Center Open House (Balbian)

Speak at the Madison County Dairy meeting 3/27/18 (Balbian)