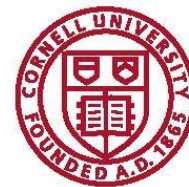


# Cornell Cooperative Extension

## Northwest NY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program



*Serving:  
Genesee, Livingston, Monroe,  
Niagara, Ontario, Orleans,  
Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming,  
& Yates Counties*

### CORNELL NWNYP PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

#### JANUARY – MARCH 2018

##### **Empowering the Next Generation for a Successful Transition**

Succession is a key issue for many farms across the Northwest New York Region. It is no secret, according to USDA Census of Agriculture statistics; the average age of the primary operator on farms across our region is somewhere well north of 50 and gets a little older with each census.

Succession is a two-pronged issue for the farm community. Farms, being land based, are capital-intensive businesses. Historically ownership of farming assets rests with the operator of the business. The cash flow generated from farming operations is often insufficient to allow one generation to “buy out” the next and afford the tax payment required by a sale. Agriculture is changing and businesses are becoming more complex. Therefore, grooming of successors for management is critical to the ongoing success of farms as new managers take the reins.

Legal and tax tools exist to address issues of income and inheritance taxes and the cost of elder care. Implementation of these tools requires careful, customized planning for each farm and family situation. To address these issues, the Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team of Cornell Cooperative Extension and Cornell University’s Pro-DAIRY Program collaborated to offer a one-day seminar in Batavia and series of discussion focused workshops in three locations across the region. Empowering farm managers to initiate the process of developing a transition plan to engage a new generation in management and ownership was the focus of these activities.

Forty-seven people from thirty farm businesses across the region attended the one-day seminar. Twenty-eight people from thirteen farms attended the discussion series. Collaborators will conduct an evaluation in the coming months to assess the steps taken by participants to initiate a succession plan for their businesses. Anecdotal evidence suggest many farms have already take steps to engage with professionals to assist them planning.



##### **Positive Reviews for our 2018 Forage Congress**



In response to producer requests and feedback from our first Forage Congress in 2017, the NWNYP Team was proud to host our second Forage Congress in Livingston County on February 28, 2018. The conference brought together the topics of dynamic harvest schedule, farm forage requirements, and critical management zones for yield stability, nutrient conservation, best crop selection and economics in a one day venue. The agenda was developed with input from the NWNYP Team’s dairy and field crops advisory committees and 2017 presenters. Approximately 73 participants and 20 exhibitors attended the day-long event; both felt the topics were relevant and timely. Planning for year three is underway.

## New Tool for Battling Herbicide Resistant Weeds

Up until three years ago we did not have any glyphosate resistant weeds in New York. Now we have two of them, marehail and tall waterhemp. It started as a problem mainly in soybean fields because of the reliance on glyphosate resistant soybean varieties but it has now become an issue in corn and even our small grains.

The resistance to glyphosate has now forced growers to look at different methods of weed control utilizing alternate herbicide chemistries, tillage and the use of fall cover crops. One of the newest alternatives is the use of dicamba tolerant soybeans. These soybeans are resistant to dicamba herbicide which is only effective on broadleaf plants not grasses. It is a newer formulation of dicamba that has a much less volatility. This does not mean it can't drift if not used properly and therefore there are lots of restrictions on the label for proper application.

One requirement to use this technology is that growers are required to go through a dicamba certification educational program. At this year's Soybean and Small Grains Congresses, the team worked with BASF to get participants the required training to secure their certificates to use the new dicamba products (Engenia, XtendiMax, and FeXapan) on dicamba tolerant soybeans.

Over 400 growers and agriculture industry representative attended the two meetings in Batavia and Waterloo. This represents the majority of the 350 thousand acres of soybeans planted in NY. It is estimated that at least 50% of the soybeans planted this year will be dicamba tolerant varieties.



## Dairy Skills Training - Herd Managers Program

In recent years, a statewide working group of regional dairy specialists has collaborated to select training topics, develop the curriculum, and provide presentation materials. Pro-Dairy has facilitated the meetings that guide the process. Each region determines the classroom and on-farm sites for programs and provides local promotion and registration. One of the topics selected for 2018 was a class for herd managers; the individuals charged with cow care, especially around the time of calving.

The period preceding calving through the first few weeks of lactation is critical to the health, production, and value of a dairy cow. As many factors can affect these outcomes, providing employees with basic training on the "how's" and "why's" of best management practices is crucial. Employees are much more likely to follow through with standard operating procedures when they understand their importance. Spanish-speaking employees can be at a greater disadvantage due to the language barrier.

The Herd Managers Training engaged 25 farm personnel, including eight Hispanics. These individuals represented some 17,000 lactating cows on their home farms with a range in size from 130 to 2,000. Farms in Wayne and Genesee Counties hosted the two-day program, and a manager at each farm explained their management practices. The sessions included real-time translation of the talks and on-farm demonstrations.

Through interactive presentations, attendees participated in discussions about stress, record keeping, data use, health management, anatomy, physical examination, ideal environmental conditions, antibiotic stewardship, monitoring cow performance and culling practices. Questions and discussions were lively. Survey results from 21 individuals indicated that 85% of the topic areas were rated well at 4 or 5 on a 1 to 5 scale. Participants found value in the course because it provided them with new, detailed information on practical topics.

