

AG FOCUS

JUNE IS
DAIRY MONTH



Connecting Dairy Farmers and Consumers with Value-Added Ventures

Margaret Quaassdorff

June Dairy Month holds a special place in the hearts of dairy farmers and enthusiasts as it serves as a reminder of the vital role they play in nourishing communities. It is a time to celebrate the high-quality dairy products that grace our tables, from wholesome milk and yogurt to creamy butter, artisanal cheeses, and delectable ice creams. The month-long celebration encourages consumers to appreciate the dedication, expertise, and hard work that go into producing these delicious dairy delights. Have you ever thought of producing your own value-added products?

Expanding a dairy business to include value-added products presents numerous opportunities for dairy farmers, and their family members who may be strong in professions outside of agriculture. By adding value to their fluid milk or milk products, farmers can potentially increase profitability, diversify revenue streams, and establish stronger connections with consumers. Here are some opportunities that dairy farmers can explore when venturing into value-added products:

1. Cheese and Dairy Product Production: One of the most common value-added products in the dairy industry is cheese. Farmers can consider establishing an on-site cheese production facility or partnering with local cheesemakers. Producing artisanal cheeses allows farmers to utilize their milk and develop unique, high-quality products that cater to specific consumer preferences. Additionally, farmers can explore producing other dairy products such as yogurt, butter, ice cream, or flavored milk to further diversify their product line.

2. Direct-to-Consumer Sales: Value-added products offer an excellent opportunity for farmers to engage in direct-to-consumer sales. By establishing farm stores,

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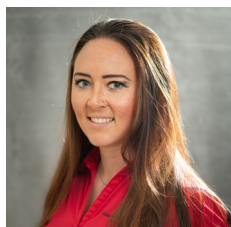
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Connecting Dairy Farmers and Consumers with Value-Added Ventures Cont.

participating in farmers' markets, or implementing online sales platforms, farmers can directly market and sell their value-added products to consumers. This allows for increased profit margins, the ability to share their farm story and production methods, and build long-term relationships with customers in Western New York and beyond who appreciate local and artisanal products.

3. Agritourism and Farm Experiences: Expanding into value-added products can create opportunities for agritourism and farm experiences. Farmers can offer educational tours, workshops, or hands-on experiences that showcase the production process of their value-added products, how the milk is harvested, and how the cows are cared for. This can include cheese-making demonstrations, tasting events, or farm-to-table experiences that provide a deeper understanding of dairy farming and its associated products. Agritourism not only generates additional revenue but also helps farmers connect with consumers on a personal level. See our monthly Agritourism webinars, including that on June 20th, "Agritourism Pricing: How to Figure Out What Your Customers Will Bear. For more information about this business opportunity: <https://nwny-team.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=2126>

4. Specialty and Niche Markets: Value-added products can open doors to specialty and niche markets. Farmers can diversify and cater to specific consumers by developing organic, grass-fed, or artisanal product lines. They can target consumers interested in A2A2 milk, offer low-or lactose-free milk products, or explore international markets that demand unique dairy products. By identifying and tapping into these niche markets, farmers can differentiate themselves and capture a dedicated consumer base willing to pay a premium for their specialized products.

5. Cooperative Ventures and Collaborations: Collaborating with other dairy farmers, producers, or local businesses can create new opportunities for value-added products. Farmers can join or form cooperatives to pool resources, share production facilities, and collectively market their products. Collaboration

with local chefs, restaurants, or food businesses can lead to partnerships that incorporate value-added dairy products into their menus or retail offerings, further expanding the reach and visibility of the farmers' products.

When venturing into value-added products, it's crucial for dairy farmers to conduct thorough market research, assess production capabilities, and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements. Developing a solid business plan (including how many more people will be hired, and who will be responsible for which parts of the business), considering product differentiation, and maintaining product quality are essential factors for success. The CCE NWNy and SWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Teams have secured a grant to assist dairy farmers with this process. [Join our email list](#) for the latest updates and register for the upcoming [webinar Intro to Value-Added Processing for Dairy Farmers](#).



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Reducing Misplaced Sucking Behavior in Calves

Kaitlyn Lutz

As we move towards more pair and group-housed calves in the dairy industry, we hear a lot of concern from producers regarding cross-sucking. Although not supported by the literature, cross-sucking is often blamed as the culprit for blind quarters, heifer mastitis and navel issues. A recent study out of University of California, Davis, was published in the March 2023 issue of the Journal of Dairy Science (JDS) looking at different methods of feeding hay to calves and its effect on abnormal oral behaviors.

Many producers have seen improvements in cross-sucking behavior after increasing the quantity of milk fed, and this is supported by research. However, sucking is only partially motivated by hunger but is also motivated by the calf's natural behavioral needs. Natural behavior of dairy calves with dams on pasture-based systems show that calves generally nurse between 4-10 times per day for about 7-10 minutes at a time. Calves also learn to eat forage at a young age under natural conditions- when I worked in New Zealand, I was surprised to see dairy calves out on pasture starting to graze at 2-weeks old. Although providing calves with pasture or hay is not a common practice in the US, it is more common in other countries and mandated in some European countries.

From 2016-2018 I lived with my husband on his 800-head dairy in New Zealand. All calves were group housed in straw-bedded pens of about 15 head and fed twice daily whole milk from mob-feeders. They were having cross-sucking issues and my brother-in-law, a creative elementary school teacher who grew up on a dairy, decided to hang hay nets in each pen. The problem immediately stopped, and the calves were obsessed with the "enrichment toy". Although this is one anecdote, I did have a few clients try this over the years with similar success. There was also a recent study published out of the UK comparing calves provided with enrichment (brushes, plastic chain, rubber teats and haynets filled with scented hay) vs. no enrichment. The calves provided enrichment, regardless of individual vs. group housing, tended to have higher average

daily gains and less cross-sucking (Zhang 2021).

Returning to the March 2023 JDS study, they looked at the effect of long hay provided in two different feeding systems on abnormal oral behavior in pre-weaned dairy calves. There were 27 Holstein calves enrolled, all individually housed in hutches close enough to touch one another. The calves were either fed long hay (~ 7 in.) either in a bucket, in a unique PVC pipe feeder, or not given access to hay. All calves were given free choice water and starter grain and fed a 26/15 Crude Protein/Fat milk replacer at an increasing rate from 4 quarts to 6 quarts daily. Keep in mind the milk was limit fed compared to today's standards. At 50d, when weaning began, all hay was removed, and all three groups received TMR in buckets.

The results showed:

- 1) *Feed intakes:* grain and water intakes increased more over time in both hay-fed groups than in the control group.
- 2) *Average Daily Gains:* both hay-fed groups had an average of 0.22 lb/day higher average daily gain than the control group during the pre-weaning period.
- 3) *Oral behaviors:* both hay-fed groups had more time observed ruminating compared to control group calves and less nonnutritive oral manipulations, such as chewing on objects in the pen, panting, ruminating, tongue rolling, and tongue flicking.



Figure 1. Calf feeding from a PVC pipe feeder filled with chopped mountain-grass hay. From "Providing long hay in a novel pipe feeder or a bucket reduces abnormal oral behaviors in milk-fed dairy calves", by B.C. Downey and C.B. Tucker, 2023, Journal of Dairy Science, 106:1968–1985. 2023 by Elsevier.

Other methods that have been studied and shown to decrease non-nutritive oral manipulation (such as cross-sucking) include teat feeding vs. bucket feeding or tube feeding and the use of slow-flow teats to increase sucking time, even when the feed rate is the same across experimental groups. More recent study methods include placing dummy teats in pens or grain bottles to deliver starter grain through a specialized nipple to give calves another outlet to suck post-feeding. This behavior is actually physiologically important to calves as sucking post-feeding promotes digestion through the release of specific hormones. To read more about cross-sucking behavior and methods to address it, check out this excellent article by UW Madison Extension: [Feeding practices and reducing cross sucking.](#)

I hope this gives you a little "food for thought" as you assess your current calf rearing program and look at future plans.

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Cash Rent Expense For Farm Land – Survey Data Are Available From USDA/QuickStats!

John Hanchar

Summary

- Cash rent expenses per acre vary considerably by county in the NWNy Region depending upon productivity, intended use and other supply and demand factors.
- Results from the most recent survey efforts by the United States Department of Agriculture/ National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA/ NASS) are available online via the service’s QuickStats application.
- Survey results suggest that for 2022, cash rent-expense for non-irrigated cropland by NWNy Region county varied from 58 to 128 dollars per acre.

USDA Survey Results Available for 2022 and Earlier Years

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) staff receive calls from individuals asking “What is the going cash rent for farm land in my area?” Callers seek information to make production and land use decisions. Many in the CCE system have ideas based upon word of mouth and perhaps some limited data for the local area that they serve.

Prior to 2008, the lack of a consistent data set characterized the situation. The availability of data by county changed when USDA/NASS responded to customer requests and new requirements of the 2008 Farm Bill. Today, results from initial 2008 survey efforts by the USDA/ NASS through the most recent efforts for 2022 are available online. Not surprisingly, cash rent expenses for farm land vary (Table 1). Variability in productivity, intended use and other local, national, and global supply and demand factors yield a wide range of cash rent values.

The averages reported in Table 1 were obtained by going to

quickstats.nass.usda.gov

and using the query menu on the page to make the following selections

Program: Survey
Sector: Economics
Group: Expenses
Commodity: Rent
Data Item: Rent, Cash, Cropland Non-Irrigated...

The pull down menus within the “Select Location” and “Year” sections allow for the selection of desired locations and years, respectively.

Table 1. Cash Rent Expense for Non-Irrigated Cropland by NWNy Region County by Year, Dollars per Acre.

	Average Cash Rent Expense, Non Irrigated Cropland		
County	(Dollars Per Acre)		
	2020	2021	2022
Genesee	81	84	
Livingston	99	96	128
Monroe	66	62	73
Niagara	54	58	58
Ontario	73	69	92
Orleans	100	84	
Seneca	66	70	74
Wayne	66	70	68
Wyoming	111	124	115

1) Source: USDA/NASS. <quickstats.nass.usda.gov>, accessed 2023-05-10; 2) Query results rounded to the nearest whole dollar. 3) Values not reported for Genesee and Orleans Counties for 2022.

Comments

Please note that the values reported in Table 1 are averages. Individual observations likely vary over a wide range of values. Averages for a very limited number of counties are also available for pasture land. For the period 2020 through 2022, Livingston County reported cash rent expense for pasture-land of 74 and 31 dollars per acre for 2022 and 2020, respectively, while Wyoming County reported a value of 51 dollars per acre in 2021. Based upon prices paid indices, estimates of expected cash rents paid for 2023 can be calculated assuming that 2023 prices will be about 3 percent higher compared to 2022 values.

For valuable resources on renting farm real estate, visit our website at <<https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu>>. Click on the “BUSINESS” tab, and enter “renting farm real estate” in the search bar. Also, the Ag Lease 101 website at <https://aglease101.org/> is a valuable resource.

Questions, comments, suggestions? contact John Hanchar.

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(2) 2013 PETERBILT PB330 CLEAN ROLLBACK TRUCK w/14' Kargo King Bed; Tarp; Allison Auto.; 25,993# GVW; 7,998# F/A; 17,995# R/A; Spring Susp.; 180" WB; Hydraulic Brakes; 4.33 Ratio; 219,000/212,000 Miles; Stk. # 6648/6664 - \$52,900	2004 VOLVO VHD64 CAB & CHASSIS: Heavy Single Frame; Volvo 365 HP; Allison Auto. Trans.; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; T-Ride Susp.; 214" WB; 150" CT; 18"6" Frame; 153,968 Miles; Stk. # 6758 - \$49,900	2007 WESTERN STAR 4900SA CLEAN HEAVY SPEC SLEEPER TRUCK; CAT C15 475 HP; w/34" Mid Roof Sleeper; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; AirLiner Suspension; 244" WB; 4.10 Ratio; 276,693 Miles; Stk. # 6733 - \$55,900	2015 INTERNATIONAL PROSTAR CLEAN DAYCAB; 500 HP Cummins ISX, 18-Spd. Manual; 13,220# F/A; 46,000# Full Locking Rears; 190" WB; Hendrickson Air Ride Susp.; Wetline; 603,768 Miles; Stk. # 6624 - \$42,000
46K Rears w/Wetline 	104 ft. Height Tri-Drive Bucket Truck 	Heavy Spec  47,723 Miles	Allison Auto.  Heavy Spec
(2) 2013 VOLVO VNL300 DAYCABS; 475 HP Volvo D13; 13-Spd. Manual Trans.; 14,320# F/A; 46,000# R/A; Air Ride Susp.; 189" WB; Wetline System/PTO; 485,000 Miles; Stk. # 6678/6679 - \$47,900	2007 INTERNATIONAL PAYSTAR 5600; Cummins ISM 385 HP; Eaton-Fuller Autoshift Trans.; TRI-DRIVE; Double Frame Bucket Truck w/Altec AM900-E100 Boom; 104.6' Working Height; (4) Outriggers; 20K F/A; 52,998# Locking Rears; Newway Susp.; 294" Bridge; PTO; Wetkit; Pintle Hitch; 36,335 Miles; Stk. # 6693 - \$94,900	2007 PETERBILT 357 HOT OIL TRUCK; CAT 370 HP; 8LL Trans.; w/MCM Hydraulic Pump; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears on Hendrickson Haulmax Susp.; 12,350# Steerable Lift Axle; 230" WB; 144" CT; 17"6" Frame Behind Cab; 47,723 Miles; Stk. # 6755 - \$68,900	2003 KENWORTH T800 FLATBED; Heavy Single Frame; 395 HP CAT C12; Allison Auto. Trans.; 15"6" x 102" Steel Deck; 18K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; On Haulmax Susp.; 196" WB; 122" CT; 14"8" Frame Behind Cab; 4.56 Ratio; 233,014 Miles; Stk. # 6767 - \$58,900
Rear Mounted Knuckleboom  Flatbed Truck	Allison Auto.  Heavy Chassis	46K Rears  Automatic	46K Rears  525 HP
2007 KENWORTH T800; CAT 335; 10-Spd.; Palfinger PK9501 Rear Mounted Knuckleboom Powered Pony Motor; 42" Forks; 44K F/A; 44K Full Locking Rears On Newway Air Ride; 22"6" x 96" Aluminum Deck; 4.63 Ratio; 256" WB; 182" CT; 23" Frame Behind Cab; 252,135 Miles; Stk. # 6309 - \$44,900	2006 MACK GRANITE CV713 CAB & CHASSIS; Double Frame; Mack 375 HP; Allison Auto. Trans.; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; Chalmers Susp.; 230" WB; 150" CT; 18"6" Frame Behind Cab; Newway Susp.; 294" Bridge; PTO; Wetkit; Pintle Hitch; 36,335 Miles; Stk. # 6693 - \$94,900	2013 MACK PINNACLE CXU613; Clean Daycab Tractor; 500 HP Mack MP8; MDRIE Auto. Trans.; 14.6K F/A; 46K R/A; Air Ride Susp.; 12R22.5 Front, 11R22.5 Rear Tires; 226" WB; Wetline; 569,438 Miles; Stk. # 6713 - \$54,900	2016 FREIGHTLINER CORONADO 122 DAYCAB; Clean; Cummins ISX 525 HP; 18-Spd. Manual; 14.7K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; 201" WB; AirLiner Susp.; 3.91 Ratio; 557,561 Miles; Stk. # 6700 - \$65,900
264K Miles  6NZ CAT Heavy Spec	46K Rears  56,000 Miles	Knuckle Boom Crane Truck 	20K/46K Rears  Allison Auto. 560 HP
2002 WESTERN STAR 4964 DAYCAB TRI-DRIVE CAB & CHASSIS; 475 HP CAT C15 "6NZ"; Jake; 18-Spd. Manual; Double Frame; 316" Bridge Measurement; 4.56 Ratio; AirLiner Susp.; 24" Frame Behind Cab; 264,000 Miles; Stk. # 6746 - \$62,900	2008 MACK CHU613; 415 HP Mack MP8; 13-Spd. Manual; Clean, Low Mileage Daycab w/208" WB; 14.32K F/A; 46K Rears; Camelback Susp.; Wetline; 4.17 Ratio; 51,772 Miles; Stk. # 6685 - \$54,000	2002 STERLING LT9500 CRANE TRUCK; w/MT24562 Knuckle Boom Crane; 350 HP Cummins ISL; 8LL Trans.; 62" Reach/5,000 lbs. Lift Capacity; 24"6" Steel Deck; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; Steerable Lift Axle; T-Ride Susp.; 270" WB; 30" Frame Behind Cab; 208" CT; 181,868 Miles; Stk. # 6750 - \$51,900	2014 WESTERN STAR 4900SF DOUBLE FRAME SLEEPER CAB & CHASSIS; 560 HP Detroit DD16; Allison 4500 RDS Trans.; 52" Mid Roof Bunk; 296" WB; 20"6" Frame Behind Bunk; 146" CT; AirLiner Susp.; PTO; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; Hitch; 508,000 Miles; Stk. # 6729 - \$59,900
59,000 Mile Garbage Truck 	Brand New 2023 Chassis 	22,500 Miles  Like New Packer	Clean Vac Truck 
2012 MACK LEU613 GARBAGE TRUCK; Mack MP7-325M; Allison Auto. Trans.; 20K F/A; 46K R/A; Haulmax Susp.; Labrie Side Load Packer; Both LH/RH Side Drives; 212" WB; 180" CT; 20"6" Frame Behind Cab If Packer Is Removed; **HP Can Be Increased To 395-425 HP w/Software Flash**; 59,000 Miles; Stk. # 6725 - CALL	2023 WESTERN STAR 4700SB BRAND NEW!! CAB & CHASSIS; TWIN STEER; 450 HP Detroit Diesel DD13; 9LL Trans.; 40K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; Haulmax Susp.; 270" WB; 22" Frame Behind Cab; 170" CT; 12" x 1/2" Thick Steel Frame; 3.91 Ratio; Includes Factory Warranty; Stk. # 6740 - CALL	2015 MACK LEU613; Mack MP7-325M **HP CAN BE INCREASED TO 395-425 WITH SOFTWARE FLASH**; Allison Auto. Trans.; Double Frame Cabover Truck w/Haul-Air Equipment Systems 25 Cu. Yd. Side Load Packer; 18K F/A; 46K Locking Rears; Haulmax Susp.; Both LH/RH Side Drives; 176" WB; 150" CT; 17" Frame Behind Cab If Hydraulic Tank Is Removed/Re-located; 22,557 Miles; Stk. # 6739 - \$49,900	2006 INTERNATIONAL 7600 w/VAC-CON VXP04212-LHE VAC SYSTEM; 380 HP CAT C13; 20K F/A; 46K R/A; Hendrickson Susp.; 258" WB; Dumping Steel Tank w/Hydraulic Tailgate & Locks; 8" Suction Hose On Telescopic Boom w/Remote; Dynablast-Hot Water Pressure Washer; 3.91 Ratio; **Vacuum System Can Be Removed**; 216" Frame Behind Cab; 178" CT; 82,550 Miles; Stk. # 6743 - \$48,900
Well Maintained Fleet 	20K/46K Locking Rears 	THE BEAST. SIZE DOES MATTER! 	Cummins N14  Allison Auto. 20K/46K Rears
(4) 2012 PETERBILT 367 DUMP TRUCKS; 485 HP Cummins ISX; 18-Spd. Manual; 21" Alum. Body w/Tarp; Air Tarp; 20K F/A; 20K Non-Steerable Lift; 46K Full Locking R/A; Plumbed For Trailer; 274" WB; Dual Exhaust & Air Cleaners; 857K/801K/840K/953K Miles; No Blowby - Run Great; Stk. # 6667 - \$49,900 Each	2006 MACK GRANITE CT713 WITH NATIONAL CRANE; 400B Crane; Mack 370 HP; Eaton-Fuller 9LL Trans.; 55' Boom & 8-Ton Capacity; (4) Outriggers; 252" WB; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; Hendrickson Haulmax Susp.; 198" CT; 218" Frame Behind Cab; 114,624 Miles; Stk. # 6711 - \$63,900	2000 OSHKOSH; Detroit Diesel V8 500 HP Turbo Diesel Engine; Engine Brake; Automatic Trans.; 86,000 lb. GVWR; Two 55,000 lb. Winches; Aux. Winch; 8x8; Rear Wheel Steer; Exhaust Brake; Air Ride Susp.; PTO; Fifth Wheel Ramp Plates; Central Tire Inflation System; Stk. # 6696 - \$88,900	1999 INTERNATIONAL PAYSTAR 5000 DOUBLE FRAME DAYCAB; Cummins N14 370+ HP; Allison Auto. Trans.; 184" WB; NEWAY Air Ride; Wetline; Rubber 95%; 90,427 Miles; Stk. # 6745 - \$39,900

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June's Most Unwanted Field Crops Pests

Mike Stanyard

Even though our growing season has been behind this spring, rest-assured the pests that like to eat them will be here in June! Here are the top six to look for in corn, alfalfa and soybean.

Black Cutworm (BCW). This moth usually is the first uninvited guest of the season. Pheromone traps have been catching BCW since mid-April and some big flights have been recorded since early May. There are plenty of cover crops and grassy areas to lay eggs so it looks like we will be on the watch in early June for BCW larvae activity in corn fields. Tune into the NWNY team blog for weekly pheromone trap and degree day updates for your area.

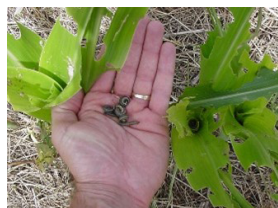
Walk the rows looking for cut, wilting, or missing plants. If you find an injured plant, dig in the soil around the base. BCW are nocturnal and will hide under the soil during the day. If 5% or more of the plants in the cornfield are



cut or injured, an insecticide spray is warranted. You can view our video on how to scout for BCW at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CZExOQwS-I>.

Common Armyworm (CAW). Like BCW, the first CAW were caught on April 20 and there numbers have stayed relatively low. Armyworm infestations can be found each year in barley, rye and wheat. They also can cause problems in grass fields, pastures, mixed grass/alfalfa seedlings and corn. Remember to look for the blackbirds to help you find where the CAW are feeding in small grains.

With the increase in the use of cover crops, we have the potential to see more larvae injury in corn. CAW larvae feed from the outside edge of the leaf towards the midrib. Leaves look very ragged. Larvae feed at night and hide in the corn whorls during the day. Penn State recommends "Control efforts are usually not economical unless 10 percent or more of the plants are infested".



Potato Leafhopper (PLH). Since PLH fly in each year from the south it is hard to predict their arrival. There are no pheromone traps to monitor them. I have seen leafhoppers as early as May 6th and as late as June 7th. As of May 10th, no PLH have been found in NY. Second cut regrowth and new seedlings are the most vulnerable. PLH feed by piercing and sucking the plant sap from the plant. The resulting hopper burn (yellow leaves) and stunting means that we missed our opportunity for timely management.



PLH management is based of plant height and leaf-hoppers per sweep. Cornell recommends taking five sets of sweeps with a sweep net (10 sweeps per set) per field and calculating a PLH (adults & nymphs, see picture) per sweep for each set. The economic thresholds for PLH are listed below.

Plant Height	PLH per Sweep
< 3 inches	0.2
3 to 7 inches	0.5
8 to 10 inches	1
11 to 14 inches	2
15+ inches	> 2.0

Alfalfa Weevil. The adult weevils do overwinter here in NY and are usually a potential problem in first cut alfalfa. Weevils have been easy to find but damage has not been economic so far. Hopefully, we can get first cut in the bunk with no problems. Don't forget about second cut regrowth. If we have lots of small larvae emerged at first cutting, they can eat regrowth as fast as it emerges. If 50% of regrowth shows feeding injury, spraying is justified. Here's another team video to learn how to assess and scout for weevil larvae injury, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0S6OjkF13Y>.



Soybean Aphids. We are still not sure what soybean aphids are going to do yet. They have not been an issue the last couple of seasons. In most years, I will observe the first winged females flying to soybeans during the first week of June. A high percentage of our soybeans are still being treated with a systemic insecticide seed treatment which will reduce the success of

June's Most Unwanted Field Crops Pests Cont.

this initial flight. This seed treatment will not be effective against later summer flights. Always look at the newest growth for the first colonies. Hopefully, natural enemies like lady beetles can take over and keep aphid populations in check. If not, foliar insecticide applications are very effective. The unpredictability of this insect makes scouting your beans even



more important! Remember: Treatment threshold is 250 aphids per plant. Here's another video on how to scout for early soybean aphids, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ww-WEQSnD0LM>.

Slugs. There are three species found in our soybeans but the most common is the gray garden slug. This species overwinters in the egg stage and hatches in the spring right when young seedlings are emerging. The young slugs feed on the leaf tissue. They hide where it is moist and cool during the day and will come out in the evening to feed. Their

slime trails are a sure sign that they are present. Even a little bit of tillage seems to be enough to disturb their feeding. Many farms are running over their fields lightly with one of the vertical tillage implements and getting good results. Pelletized slug baits containing metaldehyde (Deadline MP) can be very effective at reducing slug populations quickly but they do not last very long in the field, are pricey and difficult to apply.



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Heat Stress in Beef Cattle

Nancy Glazier

As we turn the calendar to June, now is perfect time to prepare for the summer season and heat stress. As Margaret covered in her March article covering heat stress with calves, the same principles hold true: livestock in the NWN region are impacted by seasonal heat stress. Their bodies are challenged and must adapt to heat quickly. Humidity compounds heat stress.

The thermoneutral zone for cattle is approximately between 41 and 75 degrees F. This is the zone where they don't need to generate or dissipate extra heat. Their normal internal temperature is an average 101.5 degrees. Their core temperature peaks about two hours after the temperature peaks and may take four to six hours to return to normal. If nighttime temperatures do not fall below 70 degrees cattle will not cool down before the next day when temperatures rise. High humidity can exacerbate high temperatures and make it feel even hotter.

Know the signs of heat stress, which include reduced feed intake, rapid respiration, and panting. The next step is to know how to prevent or at least prepare for it.

- Adequate cool water. Cattle will drink more water when it is hot. Cool water is the quickest way for them to cool their core temperature down. If flow is low, add a larger or additional tank.
- **Air flow/ventilation.** If cattle are outside on pasture, make sure they are in a pasture with adequate air movement. If in a barn, open doors and windows to allow air movement.
- **Pasture flies.** Cattle tend to bunch when hot and the flies are biting so practice fly control and appropriate IPM practices to reduce breeding areas.
- **Working cattle.** Try to avoid hot days and evenings for working cattle through a chute. If necessary, do so early morning.

The Meat Animal Research Center in Nebraska has found four factors that can influence an individual animal's risk of heat stress. They include genetics, health, production

status, and previous heat exposure.

Genetics: British breeds are less heat tolerant. Black or dark hair coats absorb more heat than light colored coats. Also, calmer cattle are more heat tolerant than more excitable cattle.

Health: Sick animals may have higher core temperatures. Cattle that previously had pneumonia will have reduced heat tolerance.

Production status: Heat has a greater impact on fat cattle and poor condition cattle.

Previous exposure: Cattle that have not been preconditioned to hot weather will have a greater stress response. Cattle need to be acclimated to warm temperatures.

These are a few things to consider. Fortunately, we live in a more temperate climate here in the Northeast and usually deal with short-term heat waves. It is still important to know how to handle them.

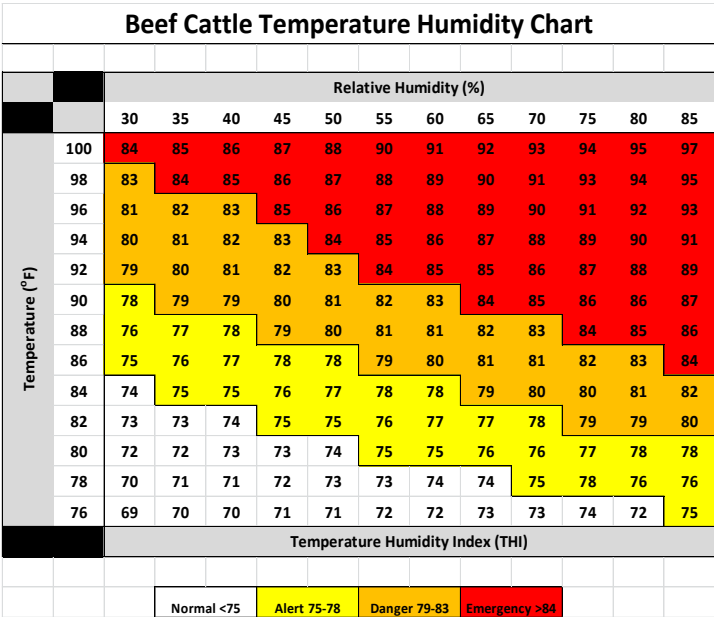


Figure 1: Cattle Temperature Humidity Index Chart

Figure 1 shows the impact humidity has on temperature. Do not work or transport cattle when the index is in the Danger or Emergency zones. From University of Nebraska Lincoln.

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Hay! What Time Is It?

Jodi Letham

Growing up on a farm, my sisters and I couldn't wait to help Pap and Dad make hay. Riding the horses across the fields that were freshly mowed, checking to see how quickly it was drying down and waiting for the signal from Pap that we were ready to bale those small squares.



Photo taken by Jenna Letham. Letham Family checking to see if the Hay is ready to bale.

There are many factors to consider when determining the optimal time to mow hay. What type of forage and its maturity come first. When grasses have had 6 to 8 weeks of growth or have reached "late boot stage" in the spring, it is optimal to harvest the first cut. Each subsequent cut is dependent on fertility and moisture.

Next, think about the best time of day to cut hay. Regarding nutritional value, the sugar content of plants peaks around sunset; however, due to wetness, we typically don't want to cut hay at night. The best time to begin is as soon as the morning dew has dried. You won't lose a lot of sugar content, and you'll get the longest drying time possible.

Some hay producers need to bale hay with a reduced sugar content if their customers feed older horses or if a horse has been diagnosed with Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS). For a balanced diet, I recommend consulting a veterinarian and an equine nutritionist. I do receive a lot of questions around this topic so here are some helpful tips for baling hay for lower Non-structural Carbohydrate (NSC):

1. Ensure that your soil does not lack Nitrogen and Phosphorus, as this will cause grasses to store more sugar and grow more slowly.
2. Cutting in cooler weather and earlier in the day before 10 am, if possible, will result in lower NSC in the final product.
3. Cutting when the weather is predicted to be cloudy and cool will increase the time it takes for the hay to dry. The longer it takes for the hay to dry the lower the sugar levels become.

4. A light rain after the hay is freshly cut will actually decrease the sugar content without losing too much protein content.

5. Letting grass mature will result in lower sugars. In mixed stands, base your harvest off the grass maturity instead of the alfalfa.

Adapted from: <https://www.insightfulequine.com/5-tips-for-baling-hay-with-a-lower-sugar-content/>

When it is time to cut hay, it is impossible to predict what Mother Nature will provide. In the event of cooler weather, create a distinct pile in the barn, label it, and feed or sell it accordingly. Obtaining a nutritional analysis of your hay is always recommended. Equi-Analytical <https://equi-analytical.com/> is the lab I recommend using.

Corn and Soybean Stand Assessment

Jodi Letham

Corn Stand Assessment

Fields typically have some stand variability between well-drained areas and the poorly drained areas. For corn planted on 30" rows measure 17 feet 5 inches, which represents 1/1000 of an acre. Count the plants in that distance. The number you get multiply by 1,000 to get your plants per acre. For example you count 25 plants x 1,000 = 25,000 plants per acre. Do this in multiple areas of the field to determine your average for the field. Knowing the planting times as it relates to yield potential is key when deciding whether to replant. If replant is necessary, it would be better to plant a shorter season hybrid to aid in a more uniform field dry down.

Soybean Stand Assessment

The soybean plant has the ability to branch and fill in; however, there are limits to the lowest population establishment without losing high yields. The other thing to consider is that the yield penalty isn't as severe for planting soybeans in late May and early June as compared to corn. However, don't be too quick to replant a field with reduced emergence.

Alright, so how do you assess soybean stands? Soybeans are more difficult than corn since

Corn and Soybean Stand Assessment Cont.

there are multiple row width options. For 30" rows it's just like the example above. Soybeans planted on 15" rows, you double that distance and measure off 34 feet 10 inches and count the plants. Again, the number of plants x 1,000 = plant population per acre. You'll want to take multiple counts of adjacent rows in different areas of the field to get an overall stand for the field. For drilled soybeans, you can

use a hula-hoop method by randomly tossing the hoop and counting the plants inside the circle. Convert the plants per hoop to plants per acre by multiplying the number of plants by the appropriate factor. A 28 inch hoop is the easiest to calculate since the multiplication factor is 10,000, so 13 plants in the circle x 10,000=130,000 plants per acre.

This article draws heavily from PSU Extension. For more information: <https://extension.psu.edu/assessing-corn-and-soybean-populations-and-replanting-decisions>



Figure 1: Purdue Extension Entomology YouTube Channel

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