

AG FOCUS



Photo Credit: Jarmila Haseler

Corn, Soybean & Small Grain Winter Congresses Get a Needed Facelift

Mike Stanyard

The team made some big changes to the winter congresses in 2024! The Corn Congress (Jan. 4) and Soybean & Small Grains Congress (Feb. 14) were both one-day events at a new location, the DoubleTree by Hilton Rochester Hotel. Our traditional east and west locations were unable to accommodate our needs, so we moved to a central location for growers in the 10-county NWNY region. These winter congresses are the largest commodity specific programs for corn, soybean, and wheat in NY.

This year's programs looked at addressing new agricultural technology and pest issues and providing potential crop management options for growers to continue to succeed in 2024. We had specialists from Michigan State, Canada, Purdue, and North Dakota State along with Cornell faculty. Forty different industry sponsors set up booths to support our programs and educate growers about their new products.

Almost 600 participants attended the two congresses. Participants learned valuable information on spray technology, herbicide resistance, and controlling vomitoxin, tar spot, white mold and. There were also some interesting grower panels on spraying with drones, irrigation, and high management wheat with growers from New York, Ohio, and Michigan. Everyone praised how good the program was, liked the new facility, enjoyed the interaction with other farmers they hadn't met before and visiting the exhibitor booths. Many needed their DEC pesticide applicator credits, and they received 5.5 if they attended both meetings. We have already booked the hotel for 2025 and hope to continue to grow participation.

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NWNY Staff



Nancy Glazier
Small Farms, Livestock

Genesee County
585.315.7746 (cell)
nig3@cornell.edu



John Hanchar
Farm Business

Livingston County
585.991.5438 (office)
585.233.9249 (cell)
jjh6@cornell.edu



Melissa Keller
Field Support Specialist

Genesee County
585.813.5782 (cell)
mk2594@cornell.edu



Ashley Knapp
Administrative Assistant

Genesee County
585.343.3040 x 138 (office)
585.549.0630 (cell)
ak2367@cornell.edu



Jodi Letham
Field Crops & Soils

Livingston County
585.689.3423 (cell)
jll347@cornell.edu



Kaitlyn Lutz
Bilingual Dairy Management

Ontario County
585.689.3114 (cell)
kal263@cornell.edu



Margaret Quaassdorff
Dairy Management

Genesee County
585.343.3040 x 133 (office)
585.405.2567 (cell)
maq27@cornell.edu



Mike Stanyard
Field Crops & IPM

Wayne County
315.331.8415 x 123 (office)
585.764.8452 (cell)
mjs88@cornell.edu

Check Out The NWNY Team Blog!

Features Crop Alerts, Dairy Alerts,
Bilingual (Spanish) Resources,
Upcoming Events: and more from our
team members.

[HERE](#)



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Hands-On Animal Care Training Workshops Meet Annual FARM Program Training Requirements

Kaitlyn Lutz

The National Milk Producer Federation and Dairy Management Inc. launched the FARM program in 2009. This program, which stands for Farmers Assuring Responsible Management, helps to set the baseline standards for animal care, environmental stewardship, and workforce development for the US dairy industry. As part of the animal care branch of FARM, annual training is required for any employee with responsibilities in the following areas: animal stockmanship, calf care, non-ambulatory cattle, fitness for transport and euthanasia. In July of this year, a new set of standards will be rolled-out in FARM version 5.0, meaning all farms participating in FARM (98% of US farms), must be updated on the new standards.

To both relay the changes with the new FARM version 5.0 standards while at the same time providing necessary training for dairy employees, statewide dairy specialists and PRO-DAIRY teamed together to bring one-day hands-on animal care training workshops to ten locations across the state. The NWNy team participated in the development of training materials used across the state and hosted two workshops in our region. All workshops were taught in English and Spanish, and participants received a certificate of completion to serve as documentation of their annual training.

The NWNy workshops were held in Ontario and Orleans counties and drew 36 participants from farms representing over 15,000 cows, dairy co-operatives, and industry. New interactive hands-on models were used to teach activities such as pain control for disbudding, esophageal tube-feeding of calves and proper euthanasia techniques. Participants noted that they liked the small groups, discussion-based learning, hands-on activities, and FARM version 5.0 updates. One participant said that he enjoyed everything as the activities were engaging and involved real-life situations.

See photos in the next column.



A participant practicing placement of an esophageal tube on a calf model. Photo credit: K. Lutz.

NWNy New Field Support Specialist Melissa Keller

Melissa Keller of Corfu joins us as the Field Support Specialist. Keller attended Cobleskill and earned degrees in Animal Science and Agriculture Business Management. While at Cobleskill she was actively involved in Block and Bridle, Collegiate Farm Bureau and Agriculture Business Club. She was employed through various internships focused on animal science, crop production, and direct to consumer produce sales. Following her graduation, she spent time working in the dairy industry as a herdsman. Melissa is excited to join the Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Team and continue to learn and grow in the agriculture industry. Outside of her duties, Melissa will continue to be an active 4-H Volunteer and enjoys spending time with her dog, Milo, her family, and taking on new projects!

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2018 CAT 938M HIGH LIFT WHEEL LOADER; with Pin-On 5.25 Cu. Yd. Roll-Bul Bucket with Bolt-On Cutting Edge; EROPS; 36,216 lb. Operating Weight; ***NEW BRIDGESTONE 20.5R25 TIRES***; 4,764 Hours - \$159,900



2020 JOHN DEERE 6250 ULTIMATE TRACTOR PACKAGE; MFWD Tractor w/Full Suspension Cab; VT 31 MPH Trans.; Auto-Track Ready; Front & Rear PTO's and 3-Point Hitch; 600/70R30 Front Tires; 710/70R42 Rear - Both at 100%; 2 Front SCV's; 4 Rear SCV's; Premium Seat; 3,057 Hours; Stk. # 6250R - \$184,900



2014 PETERBILT 367 FUEL TANK TRUCK; Clean; Cummins ISX 550 HP; 18-Spd. Manual TRI-DRIVE; Double Frame Fuel Tank Truck w/Aluminum 6,200 Gal. Fuel Tank; (5) Compartments; (2) Reels; 20K Front Axle; 69K Full Locking Rears; Air Ride Susp.; 353,819 Miles; Stk. # 6938 - \$95,900



2007 MACK CTP713 FUEL TANK TRUCK; Mack MP-405M; Allison Auto. Trans.; Clean, Double Frame Fuel Tank w/Aluminum Manufacturing 4,700 Gal Fuel Tank; (5) Compartments; 18K F/A; 46K Rears; Air Ride Susp.; 274" WB; 182" CT; 23" 6" Frame Behind Cab; 209,176 Miles; Stk. # 6916 - \$69,900



2006 WESTERN STAR 4900 CAB & CHASSIS; Clean; Heavy Single Frame; 430 HP CAT C13; 18-Spd. Manual; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; AirLiner Susp.; 3,91 Ratio; 316" WB; 216" CT; 26" Frame Behind Cab; PTO; 3278,770 Miles; Stk. # 6854 - \$62,500



2009 INTERNATIONAL PAYSTAR 5600i; Cummins 430 HP; Engine Brake; Allison Automatic Trans.; 20K F/A; 65K Rears; Hendrickson Spring; 244" WB; PTO; Double Frame; Supreme 1400T Tailgate Chute; (2) Mixing Augers; Wide Rear Conveyor; 35,054 Miles; Stk. # 6901 - \$119,500



2008 PETERBILT 365 TANK TRUCK; Double Frame w/4,400 Gal. Steel Tank; Cummins 410 HP; 13-Spd.; 14.6K F/A; 44K Full Locking Rears on Air Trac Susp.; 228" WB; 156" CT; 21" Frame Behind Cab; PTO; 529,094 Miles; Stk. # 6857 - \$44,900



2000 PETERBILT 357 w/KUHN KNIGHT VT180 VERTICAL FEED MIXER; Truck Scale System; Cummins ISM (Recent In-Frame Overhaul); Allison Auto. (Reman Weller Trans.); 20K F/A; 46K Rears; 397,000 Miles; 6,889 Hours; Stk. # 6829 - \$83,900



2006 PETERBILT 357 CAB & CHASSIS; 335 HP CAT C11; Allison Auto. Trans.; 20K F/A; 46K Locking Rears; Chalmers Susp.; 254" WB; 170" CT; 21" 6" Frame Behind Cab; 205,344 Miles; Stk. # 6822 - \$56,900



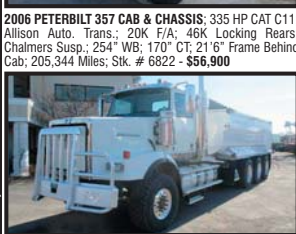
2007 WESTERN STAR 6900 CAB & CHASSIS; XD TRI-DRIVE; Double Frame; 490 HP Reman Detroit 14L Engine In 2015; Allison RDS4500 Trans.; 20K F/A; 69K Full Locking Rears; 272" WB; 330" Bridge; 25" 6" Frame Behind Cab; Front Engine PTO; 7.17 Ratio; Stk. # 6481 - \$62,500



2002 INTERNATIONAL 2574 CAB & CHASSIS; Double Frame; 335+ HP Cummins ISM; Allison 4560P 5-Spd. Auto.; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; Hendrickson Spring Susp.; 5.38 Ratio; 252" WB; 20" 6" Frame Behind Cab; 174" CT; 42,229 Miles; Stk. # 6929 - \$58,900



2013 PETERBILT 367 DAYCAB; Very Clean; 390 HP Cummins ISX; Allison Auto. Trans.; 212" WB; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; Wetline; Air Trac Susp.; 18,400 lb. Chassis Weight; 15" Frame Behind Cab; 130" CT; 213,229 Miles; Stk. # 6768 - \$74,900



2015 WESTERN STAR 4900SB TRI-DRIVE DUMP TRUCK; Double Frame; 560 HP Detroit DD16; 18-Spd. Manual; 20" Tub Style Steel body; 20K F/A; 57K Full Locking Rears; Plumbed for Pup Trailer; AirLiner Susp.; 355,813 Miles; Stk. # 6780 - \$91,900



2014 PETERBILT 367 DOUBLE FRAME SLEEPER TRUCK; 48" Flat Top Sleeper; 550 HP Cummins ISX Engine; 18-Spd. Manual; 14,32K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; Neway Susp.; 232" WB; 436,000 Miles; Stk. # 6794 & 6795 - \$51,900 EACH



2002 STERLING L9500 CRANE TRUCK; w/MT24562 Knuckle Boom Crane; 350 HP Cummins ISM; 8LL Trans.; 62" Reach/5,000 lbs. Lift Capacity; 24" 6" Steel Flabed; 20K F/A; 46K Full Locking Rears; Stereable Lift Axle; T-Ride Susp.; 270" WB; 30" Frame Behind Cab; 208" CT; 181,868 Miles; Stk. # 6750 - \$51,900



2015 FREIGHTLINER 114SD TRI-DRIVE VAC TRUCK with Vac-Con System; 470 HP Detroit DD13; Eaton Fuller Auto. Trans.; Dumping Tank; Fresh Water Tanks; Dynablast 420,000 BTU Boiler; Telescopic Boom w/8" Suction Hose; 20K F/A; 69K Locking Rears; AirLiner Susp.; 4.56 Ratio; 160,524 Miles; Stk. # 6917 - \$129,900



(2) 2007 MACK CHN613 DAY CAB TRACTOR; Low Mileage; 380/410 HP Mack AC; 13-Spd. Manual; 14K F/A; 44K Rears On Camelback Susp.; 210" WB; Wetline; 63K/45K/53K Miles; Stk. #6873/6872/6895 - \$42,900



2012 MACK LEU813 PACKER; Double Frame; Labrie Side Load Packer; 20K F/A; 46K Rears; Haulmax Susp.; Allison Auto. Trans.; LH/RH Side Drives; 212" WB; 180" CT; 20" 6" Frame Behind Cab if the Packer is Removed. ***HP Can Be Increased to 395-425 with Software Flash***; 59,375 Miles/13,276 Hours - \$48,850



2003 KENWORTH T800 FLATBED; Heavy Single Frame; 395 HP CAT C12; Allison Auto. Trans.; 15' 6" x 102" Steel Deck; 19K 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



2004 STERLING L9500 DUMP TRUCK; Double Frame; Mercedes OM 460LA 18-Spd. Manual; 24" Alltab Alum. Body w/60" Sides and 6" Sideboards; Tarp; 20K F/A; 46K Locking Rears; Hendrickson HN Susp.; (4) 11K Stereable Lift Axles; 425/65R22.5 Front; 11R24.5 Drive Tires; 310" WB; 246" CVT; 24" 6" Frame Behind Cab; 583,000 Miles; Stk. # 6931 - \$69,900



2007 STERLING LT9500 CAB & CHASSIS; Clean; Double Frame; 385 HP CAT C13; Allison Auto.; 20K F/A; 46K R/A; Hendrickson Spring Susp.; 248" WB; 184" CT; 21" Frame Behind Cab (Muffler Takes Up 14"); 276,988 Miles; Stk. # 6914 - \$49,500



2009 INTERNATIONAL 5600i w/NATIONAL 600E CRANE; Cummins 425 HP; Allison Auto.; Full Lockers; 20K F/A; 46K Rears; Air Ride Susp.; 250" WB; PTO; Double Frame; 20-Ton Capacity Crane; 27 ft. - 66 ft. Section Boom; 25,576 Miles; 2,168 Hours; Stk. # 6915 - \$93,900



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 - \$78,500



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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Part II: A Systems Approach to Heifer Enterprise Management

Margaret Quaassdorff

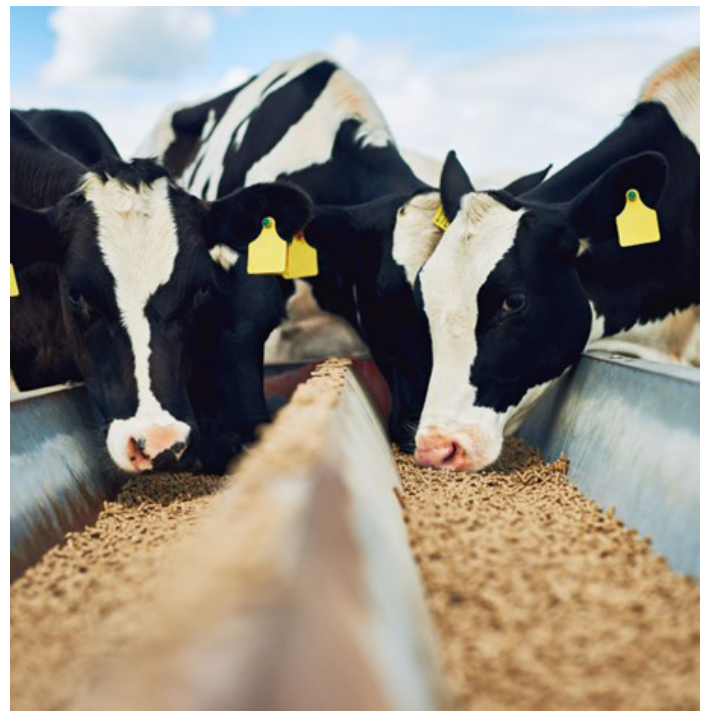
Within your dairy system, look at the way you raise your replacement heifers as an entire system on its own. Operations management involves analyzing components of that system, which has many levels of decision-making, goal setting, evaluation, and adjustment of approach. The targeted outcome of the system is the creation of an end-product that is a high-quality, healthy cow that reaches her highest genetic potential; one that was efficiently raised and contributes to the profitability of the herd as soon as possible.

This is Part II of “A Systems Approach to Heifer Enterprise Management” written in the April issue of Ag Focus.

Number of heifers needed annually. This is not always a straightforward answer on a farm. There are several factors to consider including: Herd Size (milking and dry), Age at First Calving, Cull Rate, Calving Interval, Non-completion Rate, Calf Mortality Rate, Calf Sex Ratio. Somewhere in one of these factors you also need to account for early pregnancy loss and stillbirths. It can be common that 20-25% of heifers born never make it to the milking string. If you only assume a cull rate of 35%, a 1,000-cow dairy needs 350 replacements each year. Keeping in mind a 77% heifer completion rate, you would actually need 455 heifer calves born to achieve the 350 replacements per year. If that is further discounted by a 5% DOA, the actual number of heifers needed jumps to 477. Additionally, make sure to take a look at pregnancy rates and breeding efficiency. A herd with a 30% preg rate will produce more heifer calves per year than a herd with 23%. Herds with higher preg rates still may not be achieving the number of heifers they need annually due to other management factors, and that’s where sexed semen comes in to influence the heifer calf to bull calf ratio.

Number of heifers produced annually. Strategies regarding the number of heifers to produce annually have changed over the last several years. Traditionally, dairy farmers tried to produce as many heifers as possible, with the strategy to sell “excess” calves or weaned heifers, or as springers. Right

now, the market is showing that with elevated feed and labor costs, farmers are typically breaking even with this strategy as long as the quality of the heifer is there. If they were planning an expansion, or operated with a high cull rate, those heifers would enter the milking herd. Today it is common to see the strategy has changed to focus on producing only as many as heifers as needed for replacement; with those coming out of the best genetics in the herd, with the remainder being bred to beef sires to create the beef x dairy calf co-product. With the price of week old beef x dairy calves being \$800-\$1000 in our region, it is helping to shift the breeding strategy in this direction. However, it is important to remember that breeding decisions today will give us a calf in a minimum of 9 months from now, and that the future price of a beef x dairy calf is not guaranteed. Of course, some farmers still opt to purchase replacements instead of raising their own based on the type of facilities they have, the skill level in raising high-quality replacements, the cost involved, and the labor needed to accomplish this part of a successful heifer replacement system. The risk of this strategy is the rising market price and availability of springing heifers (around \$2800), as well as biosecurity and quality risks of bring unknown outside animals to your farm. Regardless of which strategy your farm chooses, it is important to do a monthly check-in on your inventories to see if you are still on track with your farm goals and how it relates to your whole-system approach.



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- **BQA Transportation Opportunity:** Participate in a unique opportunity to learn about Beef Quality Assurance Transportation. Walk around a truck and trailer to learn pre-trip procedures, ensuring the safety and comfort of livestock during transit.

Take advantage of this opportunity to network with experts, fellow producers, and stakeholders and take your beef and dairy operations to new heights. Register now to secure your spot at this exciting event!

Dung Beetles in Your Cattle Pastures, Part 2

Nancy Glazier

I will be sampling and setting up funnel traps on four beef farms this summer as part of a statewide study looking for dung beetles. Our 2022 study was conducted to identify which species were present in NYS. This summer we will be sampling to gauge impact of insecticides (specifically feed-through products) on adult dung beetles.

Dung beetles are in the Scarab family, the same family as European chafers and are anywhere from ¼" to ½" in length. They range in color from black to brown to red; some have patterns on their wing covers. They remove pats from the pasture, which exposes more grass for grazing and reduces livestock pasture rejection. They are also nitrogen recyclers; they bury manure in the soil and prevent nitrogen loss to the atmosphere. Dung beetles also dry out manure pats which reduce the suitability for pest species to breed and reduce cattle parasite populations. These beetles can do a great job of controlling horn fly reproduction. They also contribute to the added accumulation of soil organic matter.

There are three types of dung beetles: rollers, tunnelers and dwellers. Females roll a manure ball away and lay an egg in it, bury it, and cover it with loose soil. The ball provides a continuous food source for their offspring. In 2022, we did not find any rollers in NY.

A second group is the tunnelers. They dig a tunnel under the manure pat, place manure balls inside for their larvae and fill with loose soil. The tunnelers can be spotted by the piles of loose soil next to or on top of the crust of a dung pile. This group provides the most rapid degradation of the pat. Soil moisture is critical for both breeding and dung burial among species of these first two groups. The ground needs to be moist to allow them to dig. Three species of tunnelers were found in 2022.

The third group is the dwellers, the most common type found in NY. They stay right in the pat to reproduce. They form the brood balls within the pat. We previously found 10 species of dwellers.

Dung beetles are drawn to the fresh pile by smell. They detect smell with their antennae which have plate-like ovals or "clubs" on the ends. Their antennae are a distinguishing characteristic of scarab beetles. Research has found some beetles will fly up to 10 miles to find fresh manure. Some even catch rides on the tips of livestock tails. The adults feed on the liquid portion of the manure.

There are several predatory beetles that can be found in manure as well. They feed on the horn and face fly maggots. These include hister beetles, water beetles and rove beetles.

The summer weather may impact the species we find. In 2022, dung beetle populations tapered off as the season went on. This was probably due to drought conditions found in the pastures.

You can look for dung beetles in your own pastures without a trap. Just look for holes or loose soil around the pats or take a shovel or the toe of your shoe and open it up. You may be surprised at all the beneficial activity in there!

<https://cals.cornell.edu/new-york-state-integrated-pest-management/eco-resilience/beneficial-insects/visual-guide-dung-beetles#dwellers>



The holes in this manure pat indicate insect activity.



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Field Crop Budget Program for the NWNY Region -- Planned Effort Seeking Comments, Suggestions, Expressions of Interest

John Hanchar

Summary

- NWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program staff are considering establishing an effort to increase farm business owners' abilities to develop crop budgets, and use information to improve financial planning and control efforts.
- Budgeting -- developing projections, estimates of expected future economic performance -- is an important characteristic of sound financial planning and control.
- NWNY Program staff seek input from growers, and other industry stakeholders regarding, needs, expectations, interest, and other thoughts to improve the likelihood that the project best benefits farm business owners.

Background

Late last year, and early this year has seen a slight uptick in interest, conversations regarding crop budgets. The availability of tools and approaches, assistance with developing budgets, developing research based crop budget information by crop for the region, and other topics describe areas of interest.

Proposed Plan of Work

Initial, early thoughts for this proposed work follow.

Sources of risk faced by farm business owners include production, price (marketing), human resources, legal, and financial. Strategies for managing financial risk include sound financial management, with emphasis on planning, and control functions.

- Planning -- Where is the business, or enterprise now financially, economically? Where do I want the business to be financially, economically? How will I get the business, or enterprise to where I want it to be?
- Control -- monitoring the condition, and performance of the business with emphasis on economic performance; evaluating results relative to expected results, and compared to objectives, and goals

Budgets -- projections, estimates, of future economic performance -- are characteristic of sound financial management. For example, a crop budget, a summary of projected costs, revenues, and returns for an enterprise, for example, soybeans.

- provides helpful information for decision making -- crop selection, optimal cropping program specifics (input levels; tillage, planting, and harvesting practices; nutrient and pest management)
- allows the farm business owner to compare actual performance to expected results for problem solving purposes

Numerous crop budgeting tools for analysts, farm business owners, and advisors are available. Farm business owners wanting to realize the benefits of budgeting, seek tools that are effective, efficient, workable given needs, and anticipated uses. The proposed work described here will address these needs. Selected aspects of a response follow.

NWNY Program staff will work with farm business owners, and others to form a project advisory, cooperator group -- farm business owners; others from the region's ag industry; others from the Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; and others. The project team will review, and revise a plan of work with needs/opportunities, planned response, expected outcomes, and anticipated impacts. A review of previous work with emphasis on available budget tools, pilot testing of promising alternative approaches, and an outreach effort will likely be prominent features of the planned response.

Closing Thoughts

If the topic of crop budgeting interests you, then please contact John Hanchar at jjh6@cornell.edu or (585) 233-9249. The NWNY Program welcomes comments, suggestions, and thoughts on all aspects of the topic, including the project plan of work outlined above. Responses will be used to gauge interest in the topic, and develop a final project statement to address needs.

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New Technology To Help Manage A Small Dairy

Fay Benson

Crosswinds Farm in Rock Stream, NY is an example of a small dairy model that is becoming popular in New York and the Northeast, where the farm vertically integrates production, processing, and sales. Crosswinds milks 25 cows, pasteurizes and bottles the milk for fluid sales, as well as produces yogurt, gelato and cheeses. They have an on-farm store where they direct market these products to the consumer. With all these enterprises, owners, Sarah & Charlie Morrow, were looking for help to manage some of the herds person's duties without adding extra labor. Sarah wrote a grant to the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NEDBIC) to purchase SmaXtec boluses for each of the cows and heifers. (see photo) These transponders help with heat detection, monitoring rumen efficiency, calving alerts, as well as other general health alerts. The investment has proven to be a way to have more eyes on the animals 24/7 without hiring more people.



The boluses were first used on their farm in June 2023. Sarah said that in the short time of their use the boluses

have made an impact on the farm's profitability as well as the welfare of the animals. Sarah does the artificial breeding on the farm, her breedings per conception rate is currently 80% compared to American Breeder Service's average of 35-40% for milking animals and 55-60% for heifers. Even with the boluses success Sarah expects to see more improvements as she learns to use the data to fit her animals' circumstances.

The boluses are designed to be given orally to each animal and will stay permanently in the reticulum (part of the rumen). They are read in real time by a reader connected to a base station within 200+ yards of the animal. The readings include: the animals' activity, body temperature, rumen pH, as well as other bodily functions. From this information the company has developed algorithms to provide actionable information for the farmer delivered to their phone or computer, such as when the animal is ready to breed, how well the rumen is functioning, body temperature. Since the bolus is sensing the information from inside the cow it is more accurate than external transponders. The health alerts will allow the farmer to proactively treat the animal before they show clinical symptoms which sometimes allows a change in

management rather than the use of synthetic treatments. The data provided to the farmer allows for viewing the health and activity of individual animals as well as reporting the data holistically for the herd.

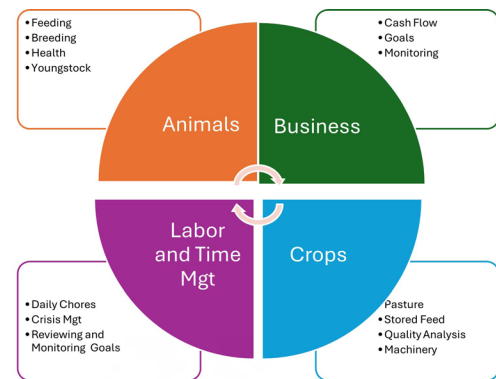
Some of the challenges Sarah has come up against have been in the form of the algorithms used by the company developed for milking herds fed a total mixed ration (TMR). The Crosswinds herd is entirely forage or grass based. The rumen data is useful but what is a normally functioning rumen for a grass-based cow versus the functioning of a cow that is fed 30% to 50% grain?

With the location of the animals switching from barn to pastures, Sarah has plans to position the receiving wand to fit both locations (see photo). This will improve the accuracy of the information received by the base station and the information sent to her.



Management for the production of milk on a dairy farm requires many components concerning the animals, crops, labor and business (see diagram). Overlap with similar management circles needed for the vertical integration of

processing and sales, you can imagine the complexities of the business structure for Crosswinds Dairy. The adoption of the SmaXtec boluses has helped lighten the herd management load for Sarah and Charlie. They are grateful to the NEDBIC for helping with this experiment of the new technology and its appropriateness in helping to keep a small dairy viable.



SIDEBAR:

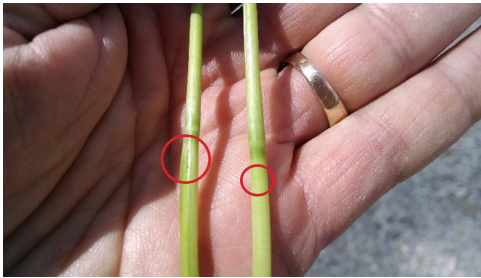
Sarah and Charlie along with the Cornell NWN Dairy and Field Crop Team will host a pasture walk at Crosswinds Dairy on June 18th at 1-3pm, so other dairies can see how it might fit their operations.

Spring Crop Comments

Mike Stanyard

Identifying Feekes Stage 6 and Nitrogen Timing

Our winter wheat around the region looks really good! Most of our wheat should be into Feekes Stage (FS) 6 (jointing) this week. FS 6 means that the plant is no longer concerned about putting on new tillers and is focused on stem elongation and grain development. This stage can be determined by checking the lower part of the main stem. If you can feel a small bump (first node) in the lower stem, then you are at FS 6. This is also an important time to apply your nitrogen. Whether it is the second round of your split-applied program or your first shot on a field with plenty of tillers, now is the time to get the nitrogen applied!



First nodes visible on the tillers at Feekes stage 6. Photo: M. Stanyard CCE/NWNY Team

Herbicides and Wheat

Plants are also more susceptible to herbicide injury after FS 6. It is crucial to understand what stage your wheat is in to avoid unnecessary yield losses and off label applications.

- **Osprey Xtra** can be applied up until FS 6 (jointing) for roughstalk bluegrass or cheat control.
- Applications of **2,4-D, Banvel, Clarity, MCPA** can be risky after Feekes Stage 6 and is not recommended. Some labels allow up until Feekes Stage 9 (Boot Stage) but the risk gradually increases from FS 6 to FS 9.
- **Harmony Extra** must be applied before the flag leaf is visible and is the best product for chickweed control.
- **Huskie** has a Special Local Needs 24(c) label for maretail control in wheat up until flag leaf emergence. Make sure you look at the 24(c) label as the rate is higher than the regular label.
- **Axial XL** is labeled for the control of grasses in wheat and barley. Axial can be applied to wheat and barley from the 2-leaf stage to pre-boot stage. It is labeled for Foxtail (giant, green and yellow), volunteer and wild oats, annual ryegrass, barnyardgrass and canarygrass. For optimal control, it is recommended to apply when grasses have between 1 and 5 leaves on the main stem or prior to emergence of the 3rd tiller. **THIS PRODUCT IS NOT LABELED FOR OATS!!!**

Possible Early Insect Feeding

With the mild winter and warmer than usual spring temperatures the overwintering insects could be getting an earlier start. Two pests that overwinter as adults in NY are the cereal leaf beetle and the alfalfa weevil. Both spend the cold months buried in hedgerows and woodlots.

Alfalfa weevils can come out early to do a little feeding and the females will chew a hole in the stem of the alfalfa and lay her eggs inside. As temperatures warm up, the young larvae hatch and migrate up to the developing leaves. They will hide in the developing trifoliates and feed on the new growth. I usually see the first injury on south facing slopes that warm up quicker. Feeding looks like someone shot a shotgun across the top of the plants. This shot-hole feeding damage will become worse as larvae grow (see picture). Most years we don't have to spray with an insecticide before first cutting. Treatment threshold on first cut is if 40% of the stems have tip-feeding injury (ie. 20 out of 50 stems).



Weevil feeding damage to alfalfa leaves on the right. Photo: M. Stanyard CCE/NWNY Team

The first **Cereal leaf beetles** were spotted on April 10 and have been active in wheat fields. Oats are their favored small grain food source, but wheat is all that is available right now. These small metallic blue beetles with a red head will be looking for mates. The adults do a little leaf feeding but there are no injury thresholds for adults in small grains. Once they are paired up, egg-laying will not be far behind. The small bright orange elongated eggs can usually be found along the midrib of the leaf usually singly or in small chains. They will get darker as they get close to hatching. The young larvae are actually bright orange but will look black and slimy as they cover themselves in their own excrement. The larvae strip the green upper layer off the leaves and all that will remain is a thin white layer. **Spray threshold is three eggs and larvae per plant or one larva per flag leaf.** Make sure to scout your oats as you may have an opportunity to add an insecticide to your herbicide application if needed.



Cereal leaf beetle adult, eggs and larva. Photo: M. Stanyard CCE/NWNY Team

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Northwest NY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program
Southwest NY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program

VALUE-ADDED DAIRY PROCESSING DISCUSSION GROUPS



SAVE THE DATE

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Times To Be Announced

MAY 2: JESS MAY, FARM CREDIT EAST (WEBINAR)

MAY 3: EDEN VALLEY CREAMERY, SOUTH DAYTON, NY

MAY 16: SHTAYBURNE FARM CREAMERY, ROCK STREAM, NY

MAY ##: BURLEY BERRIES & BLOOMS, WARSAW, NY

For more details, or to register, please call:

Margaret Quaassdorff at 585-405-2567

or Katelyn Walley at 716-640-0522

Registration required. Light lunch served at each location.

FARM Program Version 5.0 Updates

Kaitlyn Lutz

This past March, regional dairy specialists from across the state teamed up with PRO-DAIRY to offer ten, one-day workshops covering the FARM program's annual training requirements. As most of you are aware, FARM stands for Farmers Assuring Responsible Management. It was developed by the National Milk Producer's Federation in 2009 with the goal of setting the baseline standards for animal care for the US dairy industry in response to customer concerns. Since that time, FARM has grown beyond just animal care and now has voluntary evaluation tools and resources in the areas of antibiotic stewardship, environmental stewardship, biosecurity and workforce development.

Every three years, the FARM program guidelines are reviewed and updated. This review process took place last year and version 5.0 will go into effect starting July 1st, 2024. Here is an overview of the changes you will see under the new revisions.

Locomotion:

In addition to maintaining 95% or more of the lactating herd score 2 or less on the FARM locomotion scorecard, herds will be expected to have 85% or more of the lactating herd score 1 or less. A score of 1 is normal, 2 is mild lameness like a stiff or abnormal gait and a 3 is severe as in a cow clearly limping. If these criteria aren't met, herds will have up to 3 years to make an improvement (Continuous Improvement Plan).

Disbudding:

Although pain control for disbudding was required in version 4.0, farms that are not providing appropriate pain control will now only have 9 months from their audit to come into compliance. Version 5.0 also outlines the allowed methods of disbudding which include caustic paste or cautery. A farm using a different method, gauging for example, will have 9 months to switch to an approved method.

Pre-weaned Calves:

The protocols for pre-weaned calves will need to be more specific come version 5.0. They must demonstrate that pre-weaned calves are provided the adequate quality and quantity of colostrum or colostrum replacer or demonstrate evidence of successful transfer of passive immunity (i.e. serum total proteins)

Continuing Education:

Farms with family employees who are not currently documenting annual animal care training must begin this practice within 9 months. The five areas in which training is required include calf care, stockmanship, fitness for transport, non-ambulatory cattle and euthanasia. Only the employees involved in these areas are required to undergo annual training. The training can be in-person with your veterinarian, viewing a video, reading an article or any other creative method you think of, as long as it is documented! I encourage you to take the opportunity to review SOP's as well as relevant data from the past year (i.e. total proteins on calves) with your crew.

Euthanasia:

A euthanasia protocol was required in version 4.0, but this protocol will now require there to be two people listed who can perform euthanasia as well as the method used to confirm death.

The FARM program gives farmers an opportunity to provide input during the revision process, so keep that in mind in three years when the program is up for revision again! For further information as well as many excellent resources for animal and employee management visit the [FARM website](#). Another excellent resource is the catalog of Merck 365 Training videos, which are available in English and Spanish.



Reviewing safety when moving a non-ambulatory cow. Photo credit: J. Canzonier.

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HPAI in Cattle Now Named BIAV



At the time of writing this update, April 15th, 2024, the American Association of Bovine Practitioners has decided to name the disease previously called HPAI in dairy cattle, bovine influenza A virus or BIAV. The name change reflects the fact that this virus acts very differently in cattle than it does in birds, specifically causing much lower rates of morbidity and mortality. They are encouraging the dairy industry to adopt this new name when referring to cattle infected with the H5N1 virus

Forage Quality & 1st Cutting

Jodi Letham

We are so excited to be back in the field with you! To kick off the season, let's start with knowing when the right time for 1st cutting of hay crops will be. Harvest is not linked to a certain calendar date but instead is dependent on growing degree day accumulation (heat) and soil moisture. Now is the time to check your winter triticale's growth stage. Triticale should be harvested at Feekes 9-flag leaf stage for optimal quality. At this stage the collar of the flag leaf will be visible. Many fields across the region are just entering Feekes Stage 8. At stage 8 the flag leaf is just emerging from the top of the plant. Fields will need to be closely monitored over the next 2 weeks to ensure harvest occurs at the right time. Mike Stanyard put together a short video showing the optimal time for triticale harvest and how to determine Feekes stage 9, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIk2X-tM84Q>

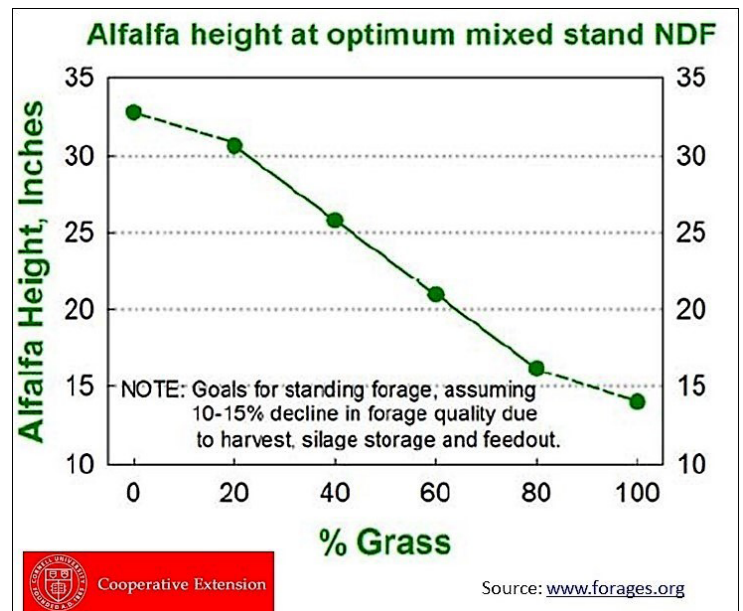
Harvesting hay at the proper growth stage will also ensure high quality feed and hopefully can reduce the amount of grain supplemented in the feed ration. A guide and chart have been provided below to help you determine proper timing to obtain the highest quality forage.

Measuring the height of alfalfa has been proven to be the best indicator of harvest time for your local climatic conditions and individual fields. Predicting percentages of mixed stands can be difficult and a high percentage of people tend to overestimate the amount of alfalfa in the stand. Sampling and weighing the grass and alfalfa samples can help determine the mix percentage and train your eye to estimate hay mix percentage with more accuracy. Dr. Cherney of Cornell has developed an accurate system to assist in your percentage prediction at <https://forages.org/> Click on the grass, alfalfa-grass, or the alfalfa estimator to initiate prediction. You will be asked to enter in alfalfa height, percent grass, NDF target, and weather (normal, hot, cool) and the system will tell you how many days until your field, under your conditions will be at peak quality for harvest.

To help give the producer an idea of when to harvest first cutting, Melissa and I will be out measuring alfalfa height to predict Neutral Detergent Fiber (NDF) for alfalfa, alfalfa-grass mixtures and grass stands in several fields across the 10 counties. Field locations will reflect the diversity of heat, elevation and soil moisture in the area.

Here are helpful numbers when using alfalfa and grass height as an indicator of NDF content:

Percentage Stand	Alfalfa Height	NDF Goal	What to do:
100 % Grass Stand	13 Inches tall	50% NDF	Start to cut Grass Stands
50% Grass- 50% Alfalfa	23 Inches tall	44% NDF	Cut your Mixed Stands
100 % Alfalfa	30 Inches tall	40% NDF	Cut Alfalfa Stands



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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 14

Agritourism Webinar: Overview
of Agritourism Business Plan in
AgPlan

12PM - 1PM : Zoom : Free

Registration:

[https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu/
events.php](https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu/events.php)

May 23

Cornell Cow Convos Podcast
Episode 9

Release for Listening

Listen Here:

[https://soundcloud.com/user-
301921459-118136586/e2-preventative-
health-care-in-cows](https://soundcloud.com/user-301921459-118136586/e2-preventative-health-care-in-cows)

June 15

Parasite Management of Sheep
& Goats

10AM - 3PM : CCE Orleans
Education Center : \$20

Registration:

[https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu/
events.php](https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu/events.php)

June 18

Pasture Walk

1PM - 3PM : Crosswinds Dairy :
Free

Registration:

[https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu/
events.php](https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu/events.php)

Value-Added Dairy Processing Discussion Groups

May 2 - Jess May: Farm Credit East (Webinar)
May 3 - Eden Valley Creamery: South Dayton, NY
May 16 - Shtayburne Farm Creamery: Rock Stream, NY
Upcoming May Date - Burley Berries & Blooms: Warsaw, NY

Call Margaret Quaassdorff with Questions
585-405-2567

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