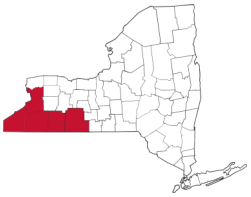
COWS CROPS & CRITTERS



A partnership between Cornell University & the CCE Associations of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, & Steuben Counties.

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Southwest New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Program

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Photo by Kelly Torrey

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Newsletter layout and design by Kelly Torrey.

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For accommodations or accessibility concerns, please contact our specialists at least one week prior to the scheduled event. If you need information provided in a different format, call 585-268-7644 ext. 10.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

COWS NOT REQUIRED (AT FIRST): REFLECTIONS FROM ON-FARM TRAININGS

By Katie Callero, Dairy Management Specialist, SWNYDLFC

This year I found myself more disappointed than ever with the groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil. I was truly hoping Phil wouldn't see his shadow and spring would be ushered in quickly. Sadly, the groundhog declared six more weeks of winter, and it looks like these cold days and nights are here to stay. Lately, I have come to find that my favorite respite from the cold weather is visiting farms and doing training with the staff with our educational models. The two models that I use most frequently is a calf tube feeding model (pictured) and a dystocia calving model affectionately named "Birtha". The great thing about these models is that it allows us to safely practice these technical skills without worrying about how mistakes will affect a live animal. Obviously, the models have shortcomings, but I find that they also bring an element of fun! Despite the language barrier, we all find times to laugh together, and I frequently see coworkers teasing one another during their turn practicing on the model. The absurdity (and cuteness) of working with the models turns what could be a mundane, routine refresher training into something fun, a little silly, and even community-building. I find that the greatest joy from all participants comes when the boss attempts to try their hand at working with the model. Everyone loves the chance to poke a little fun, the mood stays light, and it sends a strong message when leadership is willing to jump in alongside the team. Sometimes the best training happens when we're willing to laugh, try something new, and learn together before it really counts.

Photo by Katie Callero

ERIE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2026 Conservation Tree & Shrub Seedling Program

ORDER BY FEBRUARY 27, 2026. Seedling orders are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. As we have no control over the weather or your choice of planting sites, times or techniques, Erie County SWCD will not be responsible for your plant stock after it leaves our distribution center. We strive to purchase the highest quality plant material - refunds or replacements will only be given if we experience a problem with an entire plant species. Otherwise refunds/replacements will not be available. A fee will be applied for returned checks. No refunds will be offered for orders not picked-up. **All plants are sold for conservation purposes only.**

GROWTH RATE:	LIGHT PREFERENCE:	ADAPTATIONS/BEST USES:		
Fast	Full Sun	Wetlands	Windbreak	N NY Native
Moderate	Partial Sun	Christmas Trees	W Wood Products	
Slow	Shade	E Erosion Control	Wildlife Food/Cover	

HOW TO READ SEEDLING ORDER CHARTS:	VARIETY	GROWTH RATE	MATURE HEIGHT	SOIL PREFERENCE	LIGHT PREFERENCE	ADAPTATIONS/ BEST USES
	Red Osier Dogwood	↑	7 - 9'	Moist soils	☼ ◑	E N

Each year, many of our county Soil and Water Conservation Districts across the state hold annual seedling sales. These seedlings are native trees and shrubs that can be used for conservation purposes that include, but are not limited to, soil erosion protection, reforestation, wildlife habitat improvement, and windbreaks. The lists have similar species, including evergreens, softwoods, hardwoods, woody perennials, and forage producing species, but each office has a different set of plants they offer.

The state-wide DEC seedling sale information can be found here:
Ordering is open from 1/5/26 - 5/13/26
Shipping available
https://dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/saratoga-tree-nursery/spring-seedling-sale
518-581-1439
nysnursery@dec.ny.gov

Cattaraugus:
Orders due by 2/27/26
Pickup Friday, 5/8/26
https://cattcoswcd.org/tree-seedling-sale/
(716) 350-4018; cattcoswcd@gmail.com

Chautauqua:
Orders due by 4/1/26 or while supplies last
Pickup dates to be determined.
https://soilwater.org/annual-tree-shrub-sale/
(716) 338-0184; chaut-co@soilwater.org

Erie:
Orders due by 2/27/26
Pickup Saturday, 4/18/26
https://ecswcd.org/html/treeshrub.html
(716) 652-8480 ext 5

FARM TRAININGS CAN SERVE AS MORE THAN JUST A SKILLS REFRESHER; THEY'RE ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE TEAM TO BOND.

TREES AND SHRUBS COME BARE ROOT. MOST OF THESE SALES ARE FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED, SO GET YOUR ORDERS IN EARLY!

6 NEW(ISH) YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR FARMERS WHO WANT TO STRENGTHEN THEIR FINANCES

By Deborah Jeanne Sergeant, Correspondent, Lancaster News
(first published in Lancaster News, December 2025)

We may be in February but it's not too late to set intentions for the new year, including for your finances. In this article from *Lancaster Farming*, Adam Gilbert and Lori Shipman—financial consultants with NY FarmNet, share a few ideas for farm business owners to set financial resolutions to help their farms succeed in the new year.

KEEP BETTER RECORDS

"It's not only to file taxes, but to help the business," Gilbert said. He recommends keeping track of income, expenses, capital spending, and capital sales such as selling cattle or getting rid of equipment.

One easy way to do this is to use technology. It's ideal to use financial recordkeeping software that can be used on a mobile device and seamlessly integrate from the farm to the office.

Gilbert said farmers often miss keeping track of business trip miles, which provide a good deduction. He advises scheduling time for recordkeeping, such as first thing in the morning.

"It's like a doctor's appointment," Shipman added. "It's time set aside to focus on that."

SPEND TO GROW THE FARM

Sometimes farmers become too mentally tied up in potential tax savings instead of focusing on capital spending that will help the farm grow financially.
"You don't let the 'tax tail' wag the business dog," Gilbert said.

KEEP EVERYONE IN THE KNOW

It may not directly relate to financial success, but the overall success of the farm relies upon the farm's family members understanding the farm's mission in order to develop its legacy.

As a part of this, Shipman said the mature generation should know how they'll fund their retirement.
"Have they set aside retirement funds?" she said. "Are they going to take advantage of Social Security?"

TRANSITION PLAN

Instead of scrambling at the 11th hour after a crisis, such as a death, disabling illness, or farm accident, Shipman and Gilbert encourage farmers to plan years in advance for handing over the farm to the next generation.

"To do a farm transition, start early," Gilbert said. "The more time you have, the more time you have for a thoughtful transition. People have time to get comfortable and thoughtful in their new roles."

Transition planning begins with finding out if the children, nieces and nephews and grandkids even want the farm. Some middle aged and older farmers are shocked to learn the next generation doesn't want the business even though they are actively working on the farm.

Transition planning involves much more than a will to determine who receives the land, equipment and livestock.

"One thing I recommend is people do a transition plan before transitioning assets," Gilbert said. "Develop the management ability of the people you're going to transition the business to. Start that first. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for everyone."

If that sounds too "corporate," remember that businesses do this kind of planning, and running the farm like a business can help ensure its lasting success. Transition is such a pressing topic that Gilbert and another NY FarmNet associate give online seminars on the topic.

It can be tough for experienced farmers to trust "the kids" to run things (even though "the kids" may be in their 40s). Gilbert said farm owners need to start transitioning to new leadership in steps early on — and without giving excessive and unwanted input.

"Let them do it. Let them do their job and make mistakes," he said. "There are two things with mistakes: how quickly do they recognize they made their mistake and how quickly does it affect them?"

By putting each person who is part of the transition in charge of a small area on the farm to manage, the owners can both see how they'll do and also give each person an opportunity to lead without having too much responsibility at once.

"As they get more experience and knowledge, their area gets bigger," Gilbert said.

He said many people in the older generation grew up on the farm and experienced the farm's growth to its larger, current size. They may expect the next generation to be equipped to operate the farm at its present scope, even though they didn't have the same opportunity.

PLAN WHAT TO DO IN RETIREMENT

Many people plan to retire, but not what to do when they retire.

Gilbert encourages farmers to figure out what they want to do in retirement so they can step back from the day-to-day stress of the farm, allow the next generation to truly take the reins, and perhaps chase a few dreams, like travel, new hobbies or living in a warmer climate.

STAY EDUCATED ON AG

Even lifelong farmers can learn something new as

WE MAY BE INTO FEBRUARY ALREADY, BUT ITS NOT TOO LATE TO SET YOUR INTENTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO SET ASIDE TIME FOR RECORDKEEPING, CONSIDER INVESTMENTS THAT WILL GROW THE FARM, AND THINK EARLY ABOUT TRANSITION PLANNING.

additional research can indicate cost-saving farming methods.

Since winter is the slow season for most types of farming, Shipman wants more farmers to invest in their farm's future by attending farming conferences and other educational sessions.

She said that these can help farmers discover weaknesses in their farm operation and help the younger generation to learn more about their industry. Attending conferences can also help network with other farmers and resources that can help.

NY FarmNet offers free, confidential financial help for New York farmers. More information at cornell.edu/nyfarmnet. https://www.lancasterfarming.com/country-life/family/6-new-year-s-resolutions-for-farmers-who-want-to-strengthen-their-finances/article_29a8e7c0-75c3-5f98-bf29-3cf787f44171.html

TILE DRAINAGE SURVEY FOR FARMERS

Scan QR code or click the link to take the survey now.

https://cornell.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9nogL2dQ6CXxEeq

Farmers are invited to respond to a survey about tile drainage practices and benefits on farms in New York and Vermont.

The goal of the survey is to quantify the extent of tile drainage on farms, the ways and reasons it is utilized on farms and understand the benefits and challenges of this practice on crop production and related field practices.

This survey is being conducted by Cornell CALS PRO-DAIRY and Nutrient Management Spear Programs and the William H. Miner Agricultural Research Institute and is partially funded by the Northern NY Agricultural Development Fund, a farm-driven small grants program funding high priority, cutting edge research and technical assistance.

Questions about the survey?
Kirsten Workman kw566@cornell.edu
Allen Wilder wilder@whminer.com

Feel free to share with other farmers in your network!

Cornell CALS College of Agriculture and Life Sciences | PRO DAIRY Education & Applied Research | NMSP Nutrient Management Spear Program | Miner Institute

NY FARMNET'S ANDY GILBERT AND LORI SHIPMAN SHARE TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF YOUR FARM BUSINESS.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK ABOUT YOUR TILE DRAINAGE PRACTICES. SCAN THE QR CODE, USE THE LINK, OR ASK KATELYN MILLER FOR A PAPER SURVEY.

FRAMING THE DISCUSSION ON BMR CORN

By Joe Lawrence, PRO-DAIRY

Photo by Katelyn Miller

In the spring of 2025, Corteva announced they would discontinue the development of brown midrib (BMR) corn products. Given that the seed brands under the Corteva umbrella constitute a very significant portion of the BMR corn available in the market, this has caused significant discussion among dairy farmers and nutritionists who have found BMR to be a useful tool.

As numerous discussions on the topic have unfolded over the last several months, it has been apparent that sometimes the framing of the questions are not leading to the most productive discussions or decisions for a farm.

BMR IS ONE TOOL IN THE TOOLBOX

In my experience, for each farmer or nutritionist I know that found BMR to be a useful tool, there was one or more who did not. As with many tools in our toolbox to feed cows, its effectiveness often has as much to do with other factors in a farms feeding system as it does with the unique attributes of BMR itself. It is a great tool for some farms but not the singular key to successfully feeding cows.

IT IS MISLEADING TO TALK ABOUT REPLACEMENTS FOR BMR IN THE DIET

BMR is a unique trait with potential benefits to feeding ruminants in that it consistently has higher fiber digestibility than non-BMR corn silage. There are a number of other forages that have unique characteristics that are potentially beneficial to feeding ruminants, but none are a one-for-one replacement for BMR.

As with BMR, they all have their pros and cons. There are other crops with higher digestibility, such as other annual grasses with the BMR trait (sorghum, sundangrass, and millet) and low lignin alfalfa. However, the similarities with BMR corn silage mostly stop after the improved digestibility. These other crops all feed differently, playing different roles in the diet. They could be a useful tool in our feeding toolbox, but none fit in the diet exactly as BMR corn does.

Instead, various forms of short corn are garnering a lot of attention for potential positive feeding attributes and while the work certainly appears promising on the role these corn products could play in successful milk production, they are not a one-for-one replacement for BMR. They are another potential tool in the toolbox for successful milk production.

THE DIGESTIBILITY OF NON-BMR CORN IS NOT CONSISTENTLY "CLOSING THE GAP" WITH BMR

It is well documented that the fiber digestibility of corn silage is significantly influenced by the weather, and the digestibility of both non-BMR and BMR hybrids will fluctuate by year and location. In general, higher rainfall patterns lead to lower fiber digestibility. Furthermore, as observed in our New York and Vermont Hybrid Evaluation program and other publicly available datasets, the magnitude of the digestibility difference between non-BMR and BMR hybrids is influenced by the weather. One example of this is a trial we had several years ago where the same group of hybrids were planted at two different locations with differences in rainfall patterns.

The comparison of 30-hour neutral detergent fiber digestibility (NDFD) is shown in Table 1. While it is worth noting that in this, and most trials, non-BMR entries substantially outnumber the BMR entries, the trends shown here are consistent with other trials where BMR corn has been included. At both locations the BMR corn had a higher NDF digestibility than the non-BMR; however, the keys are the fact that there is a much larger spread between the BMR and non-BMR at the higher rainfall location (10 points versus 2.5 points) and the non-BMR at the lower rainfall location (66 NDFD) rivals the BMR (67.1 NDFD) at the higher rainfall location.

Table 1: Comparison of fiber digestibility of the same BMR and non-BMR hybrids at two locations

Location rainfall	Non-BMR average	BMR average
Lower	66.0	69.6
Higher	57.1	67.1

The context of location is critical to properly assessing the differences. It would not be appropriate to compare the non-BMR at the lower rainfall location to the BMR at the higher rainfall location but unfortunately these inappropriate comparisons have come up and are clouding the discussion around non-BMR "closing the gap" with BMR.

BMR CORN IS STILL AVAILABLE

While it is true that Corteva dominated the market with respect to number of BMR hybrids in North America, the BMR trait has been around for decades and is commercially available. The reality is the limited options available outside of this lineup may not provide the same portfolio of other traits (specifically genetically engineered

Continued on page 9...

THERE ARE FORAGES THAT ARE POTENTIALLY BENEFICIAL TO FEEDING RUMINANTS, BUT ARE NOT A ONE-FOR-ONE REPLACEMENT.

WHILE CORTEVA HAS DOMINATED THE BMR HYBRID MARKET, THE TRAIT HAS BEEN AROUND FOR DECADES AND IS COMMERCIALLY AVAILABLE.

DRONES IN AGRICULTURE: EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES

By Katelyn Miller, Field Crop Specialist, SWNYDLFC

As you may remember, I wrote an article some time ago that covered some of the considerations for making the decision around implementing drone use in your spray programs. The considerations highlighted mostly revolved around the benefits, costs, and regulations that need to be kept in mind, but was strongly geared towards the idea of if you were purchasing the technology. Even since writing that article, the technology continues to flourish, with more acreage each year being sprayed or scouted with drone technology.

For all intents and purposes, this article dives into the spray portion of drone usage. There are different programs that can be purchased for drone scouting, but I recommend researching the programs yourself and determining which ones best fit your needs. We have some exciting drone scouting efforts coming down the pipeline with a grant project beginning this summer, so stay tuned!

Now, I don't think that drones will completely replace boom sprayers, but there are scenarios in which drones present an interesting opportunity.

- It's no secret that our fields here in Southwest NY aren't exactly square, or flat. This can make spraying with booms challenging, as many commercial booms have a spray width of 90 feet. This makes field access for the equipment a restriction (extreme slopes are in this category too). Many of us live in rural areas, with the only road access to some fields being similar to a cow path, only allowing one lane of traffic. Driving any equipment on these roads is challenging but also adds an additional risk factor to the operator.
- In our region, there is limited fungicide use in corn. This could be due to a couple of factors, but equipment plays its part. There is limited access to crop dusters, as many require a specific field size to effectively spray and operate. Additionally, the access to spray booms that are tall enough for corn is extremely limited.
- There are some additional unique situations such as target spraying in season for weed escapes, and heavy or saturated soils where it may be historically difficult to get access for spraying in a timely manner.
- In Delaware County, CCE staff have a project in which they are evaluating drone spray usage among fencelines in pastures, which could present some interesting opportunities. While full project details haven't been shared yet, a field day was hosted to look at spraying multiflora rose.

While there has been an uptick in drone research occurring, the verdict is still out around consistent efficacy in spray patterns, including swatch width, coverage, and carrier volumes. A project conducted in Maryland claims that drones can achieve the same coverage as planes and helicopters between 2.5-5 gallons per acre, including similar droplet density and volume median diameter in soybeans. A corn trial out of Kentucky showed spray deposition was greater with a boom sprayer over a drone, but in part was influenced by flight speeds. An additional project coming out of Purdue showed that weed control was consistent among glufosinate and glyphosate active ingredients over different spray volumes, but there was minimal coverage below the canopy. But the biggest question to arise out of this project was swath width, as the target was 20 feet, but treatments never reached that far. An older DJI model was used, so it's possible that this could have impacted results as the technology has come a long way.

Another factor that needs to be considered in making drone spraying decisions is labeling on products (which shouldn't be a surprise, because the label is the law!). But there is verbiage that can promote or eliminate the use of drones for a product. Currently, there aren't many labels with drone verbiage explicitly listed. However, if products have listed "aerial applications", then drones may be used. A deeper dive into the label needs to be conducted to ensure that appropriate restrictions can be followed.
On the label, checking the minimum carrier volume for aerial use, as well as other restrictions such as height above canopy or nozzle size, will help determine if drones can be used to apply that product. There are some products in which it's off label to utilize low spray volumes, such as you would have with certain drones, even if the product is labeled for aerial use. Additionally, drones do not have the same nozzle choices as many of our boom sprayers.

Technology in agriculture is booming, and drones are no exception to this. More research still needs to be conducted to build out our understanding of efficacy, such as spray patterns, resulting coverage, carrier volumes, etc. For the time being, boom sprayers probably aren't going anywhere in our spray programs but drones present interesting opportunities to integrate into our systems.

Resources:

"Evaluating Efficacy of Aerial Pesticide Spray Applications Using Drones", University of Maryland Extension

- https://ukrec.mgcafe.uky.edu/articles/ground-truthing-drone-fungicide-efficacy
- https://www.farmprogress.com/technology/drone-research-offers-mixed-findings

WHILE I DON'T THINK THAT DRONES WILL COMPLETELY REPLACE BOOM SPRAYERS, THEY PRESENT SOME INTERESTING OPPORTUNITIES.

CHECK THE LABEL TO MAKE SURE THAT DRONES CAN BE USED, INCLUDING CHECKING SPRAY VOLUME AND AERIAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS.

INTERPRETING FORAGE REPORTS FOR LIVESTOCK

By Amy Barkley, Livestock Management Specialist, SWNYDLFC

When farmers approach me about diet formulations or to discuss if their forage is going to meet their livestock's nutritional needs, we always discuss testing the forage. There are many estimations and assumptions that we can make about forage quality such as moisture content, quality of fermentation, and general nutritional quality. While these estimations can give you an idea of which animal groups to feed which lots of hay or baleage, they do not provide you with a clear understanding of how well they'll meet nutritional requirements. When designing rations with components outside of forage, such as corn, wheat, or soy, knowing exactly what we're working with for the base of the diet can help us develop a complete ration that will meet your production goals.

Once the decision has been made to get the forage tested, the next step is to interpret the results. This article outlines the items that I always use when evaluating forages on their own and for use in ration balancing.

Moisture is a key indicator of what kind of forage we're working with and helps indicate if that forage has been properly put up. Dry hay should have a moisture content under 15%, and ideally closer to 10%. Wetter hay is not only a fire risk, but it can grow mold, which can be unattractive to livestock at best, and at worst cause respiratory issues and toxic effects. Baleage is wetter, having a moisture range of between 40% and 60%. If baleage moisture is on the far ends of or outside of this range, then the fermentation profile should be evaluated in addition to the texture and aroma of the bales to see if the bale properly fermented, reducing the risks of molds, clostridia (botulism), or listeria.

Moisture content is also used to understand the percentage of dry matter in a sample. Most reports provide nutrient values on both an "as-sampled basis" and "dry matter basis". All animal feeding recommendations are based on dry matter, and this column of the report is used to formulate diets and compare forage values to animal requirements.

Crude Protein is the amount of protein in a sample. Well managed stands of mixed grasses and legumes that are harvested before they head out typically provide enough protein to meet the needs of most classes of livestock. However, protein concentration decreases as forages mature and can be impacted by management of the forage prior to and during baling. Stand composition also impacts the protein concentration of the forages, with more legume-forward stands having higher protein than all-grass or mixed perennial plant stands.

Total digestible nutrients (TDN) is a measure of the amount of digestible carbohydrates in a forage. While dairy animals tend to need a more specific breakout of the carbohydrate classes providing the diet's energy (ADF, NDF, Lignin, etc.), the carbohydrate energy in most livestock diets is built based on TDN only. Animals that are still growing, are in late-stage pregnancy, or are finishing all have higher energy needs. The majority of our cool season forages, even when ideally managed, do not meet the energy demands of some of our animal groups on their own, such as sheep and goats feeding multiple offspring and animals in their finishing stage, especially those that are expected to put on weight quickly. So, knowing the TDN helps us to ensure that animals are getting the energy they need from the forage alone or if supplementation is needed to meet the producer's goals.

Ash percentage is a value that indicates how well the harvest went. This value includes the minerals in the forage itself as well as any soil picked up during raking and baling. This number should be under 10%. Rates that are higher indicate that equipment should be adjusted to raise cutting height and reduce the aggression of the rakes. We're concerned about high ash levels not only because they reduce the overall nutrition of a bale, but also because fermented forages with more ash have a greater chance of developing significant listeria or clostridia populations that can cause illness in the animals consuming it.

Calcium and phosphorus are evaluated to help understand if the ratio meets animal requirements on its own or if they'll have to be supplemented. The optimal ratio of Ca:P is 2:1. Depending on the species, different ratios can be tolerated. Many times, ratios that are too far off can be adjusted through the use of lick tubs, free choice minerals, and mixed rations.

Copper is the final value to pay close attention to, especially for sheep producers. While required in small amounts for proper immune function, sheep are very sensitive to levels of copper and only require about 5 ppm in their diets. Levels exceeding 12 ppm become concerning. If levels exceed 12 ppm, the level of molybdenum is reviewed as well. Sheep can tolerate higher levels of copper (20-25 ppm) if molybdenum meets a level of 3 ppm or greater. Keeping the Cu:Mb ratio >10:1 within the range of 5 ppm – 25 ppm of copper is ideal.

In summary, there are many important things that forage testing can tell us. If you're interested in learning how to sample your forage, interpret the results, and/or build diets for sheep, goats, and/or cattle, and you are in the SWNY region, please reach out to Amy Barkley at 716-640-0844 or amb544@cornell.edu.

Additional Resources:
Neary, M. (2002). Copper toxicity in sheep. Accessed February 3, 2026, from https://ag.purdue.edu/department/ansc/sheep/_docs/copper_toxicity.pdf
Schoenian, S. (2020). Copper toxicity in sheep. Accessed February 3, 2026, from https://www.sheepandgoat.com/cutox

FIRST OR SECOND CUTTING TELLS US LESS ABOUT THE FORAGE QUALITY THAN DOES THE MATURITY OF THE FORAGES HARVESTED.

SOIL PHOSPHORUS LEVELS CAN RESULT IN EXCESSIVE UPTAKE OF PHOSPHORUS BY SOME PLANT SPECIES.

Dairy One

FORAGE LABORATORY
730 Warren Road, Ithaca, NY 14850
Ph: 800.496.3344 Fax: 607.257.1350
http://www.dairyone.com

DATE SAMPLED	LAB RECEIVED	DATE PRINTED	LAB USE
	02/13/14	02/14/14	.919

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTIONS
LOT D ALFALFA

JOHN A FARMER
123 STREET
SOMEWHERE, NY 12345

KIND DESCRIPTION	CODE	LAB SAMPLE
LEGUME HAY	100	3046900

DESCRIPTION 1
STANDARD

ANALYSIS RESULTS

COMPONENTS	AS SAMPLED BASIS	DRY MATTER BASIS
% Moisture	8.1	
% Dry Matter	91.9	
% Crude Protein	18.7	20.4
% Available Protein	17.6	19.2
% ADICP	1.1	1.2
% Adjusted Crude Protein	18.7	20.4
Soluble Protein % CP		47
Degradable Protein%CP		73
% NDICP	2.7	3.0
% Acid Detergent Fiber	28.2	30.7
% Neutral Detergent Fiber	36.9	40.2
% Lignin	5.9	6.4
% NFC	26.2	28.5
% Starch	.9	1.0
% WSC (Water Sol. Carbs.)	8.5	9.3
% ESC (Simple Sugars)	6.5	7.1
% Crude Fat	2.3	2.5
% Ash	10.42	11.34
% TDN	58	63
NEL, Mcal/Lb	.61	.66
NEM, Mcal/Lb	.58	.63
NEG, Mcal/Lb	.33	.36
Relative Feed Value		150
% Calcium	1.13	1.23
% Phosphorus	.20	.22
% Magnesium	.20	.22
% Potassium	1.50	1.63
% Sodium	.124	.135
PPM Iron	1,550	1,690
PPM Zinc	22	24
PPM Copper	11	12
PPM Manganese	42	46
PPM Molybdenum	1.1	1.2
% Sulfur	.21	.23
% Chloride Ion	.41	.45
IVTD 30hr, % of DM		78
NDFD 30hr, % of NDF		44
kd, %/hr		4.99
% Lysine	.95	1.04
% Methionine	.29	.32
Horse DE, Mcal/Lb	.99	1.08

ENERGY TABLE - NRC 2001		
	Mcal/Lb	Mcal/Kg
DE, 1X	1.25	2.75
ME, 1X	1.05	2.32
NEL, 3X	0.60	1.32
NEM, 3X	0.63	1.39
NEG, 3X	0.37	0.81
TDN1X,%	59	

...from page 6... FRAMING THE DISCUSSION ON BMR CORN

pest management traits) that has been offered by the Corteva lineup. It is reasonable to expect that where there is a market opportunity, a business will work to meet the need; however, it could take several years for this to happen. Important talking points for strategizing forage plans on your farm:

- BMR corn is one tool in the toolbox that worked better for some farms than others.
- There are numerous other forage tools in the toolbox that can aid in successful milk production, but none are a one-for-one replacement for BMR corn in the ration.
- BMR corn is not going away entirely; however, at least in the short-term available options with other desired agronomic traits may be limited. This will affect decisions on which acres are appropriate to grow it upon.

HAVING THE NUTRIENT VALUES OF FORAGE HELPS NUTRITIONISTS CREATE MORE PRECISE DIETS FOR THE ANIMALS GROUPS THAT YOU'RE FEEDING.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

INTERESTED IN TESTING FORAGE, INTERPRETING RESULTS, OR BUILDING DIETS? REACH OUT TO AMY BARKLEY!

OVERCROWDING HACKS

By Margaret Quaassdorff, Dairy Management Specialist, NWNYDLFC

(first published in CCE NWNYDLFC Ag Focus Newsletter July 2025)

There are many farms in expansion mode in our region. During this time, we know that cows and workers are stressed and are asked to do their best in systems that were not meant to accommodate so many animals. A dairy can still function well when pens are overcrowded, and many do chronically. The key is to provide the best possible access to comfortable stalls, and to remove other stressors that may be adding up elsewhere. When additional stressors compound crowding stress, then dairies start to experience more issues. Here are a few areas to consider in order to help alleviate crowding stress for the cows in your pens.

Photo by Kelly Torrey

FREESTALL MAINTENANCE AND BED AVAILABILITY

When was the last time you walked your freestalls and checked the status of each bed? Cow pushers and those who bed and maintain the stalls know which stalls the cows do not lay in for whatever reason. Ask them to mark those stalls with some tape, and review why it is undesirable to the cows. Are the loops bent making it too narrow to enter? Is it wet from a leaking waterer, or from rain or snow blowing in and a barrier could be put in place? Is the mattress or other stall surface properly maintained and comfortable, or does it need to be replaced? Are neck rails and brisket boards in the correct position to allow cows to enter and lay down comfortably? Fixing stalls that are currently not being used is the first step to decreasing stocking density rate…and stress.

REBALANCE GROUPS TO "UNDER-CROWD" FRESH COWS AND CHOOSE TO OVERCROWD LATER LACTATION COWS

Typically, we try to keep milking groups balanced, but heat stress in the summer along with natural seasonality can reduce the number of pregnancies, causing calving slugs at different times of the year. This can be a perpetual cycle, but recognizing which months of the year the fresh cow pen has extra pressure, and choosing to move some cows out of that area quicker than the standard time, and adding extra cows in the later lactation groups (and adjusting the ration for the potentially increased milk production in that group) is a strategy worth considering.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO, AND AVAILABILITY OF, FEED

One of the areas we can change management for some relief in times of overcrowding stress is at the feedbunk. Make sure the nutritionist has the right information to design a ration that is well-balanced for the stage and status of cows in the group. If you are planning a group change, help them to understand better what the dynamic of the new group is. Relaying the changes to the feeder is also key.

Increase your pushups. Overcrowded cows tend to eat in rotation, or sittings. If they have reservations at 7pm, it is important to push up after the 6pm sitting to ensure similar availability and quality for them. Most cows will not change their preferred feeding location along the bunk. Feed heavy on the ends of the barns and where many cows prefer to eat the most. Watch that cows do not run out of feed along the bunk or in these highly desired eating areas. Feeding to slick bunks is asking for trouble in an over-crowded herd.

Cows who are crowded eat faster, leading to potential rumen upsets, lower rumen efficiency, and maybe lower de novo fatty acid synthesis and components. It might be an interesting discussion with your nutritionist to see if there are changes that can be made to optimize rumen health in these conditions.

CONSIDER GOING TO 2X FROM 3X MILKING

Hear me out. If there is so much rushing to get cows through the parlor three times daily, get the beds maintained, and feed the cows, that your system is inconsistent on milking and feed availability and access to the cows, then you may be better off trading that extra milking for consistency. This, of course, is something to talk over with your consultants. Ask them, with our resources and management capabilities, how much milk should my herd be able to make at 3x daily milking? If that is way below the average for other 3x herds, and consistency and time budgets seem to be the bottleneck, you may actually gain in milk production by switching to twice daily milking.

Each dairy is going to be different as to which options they possess to help alleviate facility stress on their cows. The best thing to do is to evaluate the system as a whole, and start making small improvements in several areas. They will add up, and the cows will thank you in strong production and components with fewer negative health incidences.

WALK YOUR FREESTALLS AND CHECK THE STATUS OF EACH BED. YOU MAY FIND BEDS THAT ARE NEVER USED AND NEED REPAIRING BEFORE COWS WILL LAY IN THEM.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

INCREASE YOUR FEED PUSHUPS WHEN OVERCROWDED.

NEW YORK PORK PRODUCERS

PRODUCER SUMMIT & Annual Meeting

Join NYPP for the 2026 Producer Summit, where producers of all sizes and production styles will explore marketing, branding, selling pork, and current consumer trends through practical sessions designed to help build demand, connect with customers, and add value to their operations. Featured sessions include:

MARKETING THAT MOVES PORK: WHAT SUCCESSFUL DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER PRODUCERS DO DIFFERENTLY
Katie Olthoff
Founder, Chop Local

MEATSUITE: PRACTICAL PRICING AND MARKETING FOR DIRECT TO CONSUMER SALES
Matt LeRoux
Extension Associate, Cornell Cooperative Extension

MARKETING SHOW PIGS WITH PURPOSE
Lexi Marek Beeler
Founder, LMB Consulting

March 13th & 14th, 2026

The Appley Center
2798 Lake Moraine Rd.
Hamilton, NY

REGISTER BY FEB 26TH AT :
newyorkpork.org/events

MORE INFO

Youth Programming on Friday Night!
Dedicated sessions and activities for youth 8+ involved in pork production and showing.

Inspired by Annie's: Build a Social Media Strategy for Success

Annie's Project

Annie's Project seeks to empower farm women through education, networks and resources. We welcome, and encourage, learning and sharing amongst farm women as we help you grow as decision-makers and leaders on your farm.

Topics Covered:

- Social Media 101
- Cyber-Security & Safety Using AI
- Identification of Your Target Audience
- Learn to Use Analytics & Data
- Learn About Tools & Content Strategies
- Create a Social Media Plan for 2026!

WEDNESDAYS IN MARCH
3/11, 3/18 & 3/25
11:30AM-1:30PM
ZOOM

OPTION TO JOIN LIVE AT SELECT CCE OFFICES

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Cost: $25
Register by March 6th
https://tinyurl.com/mrrr7jw6

Cornell Cooperative Extension
ANNIE'S PROJECT
EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

NYSDEC HOW TO GET CERTIFIED COURSE

MARCH 3, 2026
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
28 PARKSIDE DRIVE ELLICOTTVILLE, NY 14731

What topics are being covered in this course?

- *how to become certified*
- *how to maintain certification*
- *worker protection standard*
- *record keeping*
- *test taking strategies*

How do I prepare for the exam?

This course will be followed with an exam on March 10th.
Books need to be purchased from the Cornell Bookstore. You will need to purchase a CORE manual, as well as the category manual. Private categories that you can become certified in include:

- *21: Field and Forage*
- *22: Fruit*
- *23: Vegetable*
- *24: Greenhouse and Florist*
- *25: Nursery, Ornamentals & Turf*
- *31: Agricultural Animal Pest Control*

What do I need to bring to register for the exam?

- *valid NYS identification*
- *check or money order for $100 made out to NYSDEC*

How do I know if I am eligible to take the exam?

- *applicants must be 17 years of age or older **AND***
- *have at least one year of full-time experience within the last three years in the use of pesticides in the category or categories that the individual is seeking certification; **OR***
- *have completed a comprehensive 30-hour training course, approved by the department; **OR***
- *have received an associate degree or higher from an accredited college or university which covers the topics listed in Section 325.18, and related categories in Sections 325.16 or 325.17; **OR***
- *have one year of verifiable experience as a commercial applicator in a corresponding commercial category; **OR***
- *certification in another state that New York has reciprocity (CT, IN, NJ, OH, PA, RI, VT)*

Already certified? This course comes with DEC recertification credits.

The Equal Education and Opportunity Statementis our university commitment to a welcoming and supportive community for students, faculty and staff.

FARMERS MARKET RESEARCH PROJECT

From Data to Dollars:

Making Data-driven Decisions to Increase Farmers Market Success

TUESDAYS March 3-April 7, 7-8:30 PM
via Zoom Free, Registration required.

The Cornell Agricultural Marketing Research Program and Penn State University are excited to present a new,
6-week course, **"From Data to Dollars: Making Data-driven Decisions to Increase Farmers Market Success,"** as part of Cornell's Farmers Market Research Project. The course is for farmers with experience selling at farmers markets who wish to increase their earnings through management and marketing practices. Participants should either already use or intend to adopt the use of a Point of Sale (POS) system, like Square, to get the most benefit.

This course aims to give farmers tools and techniques that increase their daily sales at farmers markets. A key component is group sharing through interactive questions and instructor-led group discussions. In addition to time spent on weekly webinars, participants should plan to spend about 1-2 hours each week working on course assignments, to be discussed the following week. Each week, the course will build on previous weeks' topics, resulting in a well-rounded understanding of how to implement data-driven decisions and advance your goals.

What You'll Learn:

- An understanding of consumer-focused marketing strategy.
- To develop a simple, actionable marketing plan for the 2026 season.
- Step-by-step guidance on setting up and using a POS system effectively.
- Insights from experienced farmers market vendors.
- Tools to monitor and improve your market metrics.

The course is free and only open to farmers in NY and PA. To register, please fill in the registration form:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfpjcx3Dzr4wku8IlE2YStlKj7SgHhzQZPXXAddWfF2TGp4ew/viewform

NY PORK PRODUCERS: REGISTRATION IS FREE FOR MEMBERS, AND YOU CAN BECOME A MEMBER ONLINE BEFORE YOU REGISTER.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

CHECK OUT UPCOMING EVENTS ON OUR WEBSITE: SWNYDLFC.CCE.CORNELL.EDU/EVENTS

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