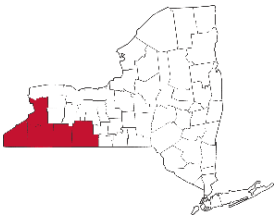
COWS CROPS & CRITTERS



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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Coming in June...

Grassland Manure Injection Demo

Location: Steuben County

...stay tuned for more details

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

THE INS AND OUTS OF PROCESSING, LABELING & HANDLING POULTRY FOR SALE

By Amy Barkley, Livestock Specialist, SWNYDLFC Team

Chicks are on the ground, the weather is warming, and in a few short weeks, the first batches of pasture raised chickens will be processed. For many, this means processing in preparation for sales off the farm or at farmer's markets. Bearing that in mind, there are requirements producers must follow to ensure food safety and legal packaging/labeling of that poultry for sale.

PROCESSING REGULATIONS

Farmers can either process poultry on their farm under the 1,000 bird exemption or through a certified 5A Small Enterprise exempted processor. Keep in mind that not all 5A certified facilities are permitted to process your chickens for you to then take home and sell. Many only process poultry for the grower's home use. Verify with your processor that they have the Small Enterprise exemption and can legally process poultry for resale.

If processing under the 1,000 bird exemption, you are permitted to process up to 1,000 bird units per year per farm. That number can include chickens, ducks, quail, or other poultry. Turkeys are the exception where one turkey is the equivalent to 4 chickens. For a real-life example, if you wanted to raise 400 chickens, 50 turkeys, and 50 ducks, that would be the equivalent of 650 bird units.

If you have more than 1,000 bird units to process for sale, you can do a combination of processing on-farm until the bird limit is reached and then send the rest to a 5A processor. If you're growing over 1,000 bird units, want to process on farm, and your intent is to keep some of those processed birds for home use, those birds don't count towards the 1,000 bird exemption. Just ensure that you have good records of how many birds you processed and how many you kept for home use vs sold in the case of an audit.

Some individuals like to expand their product offerings beyond whole birds. Legally, poultry processed under the 1,000 bird exemption can be cut into common cuts of wings, drumsticks, thighs, leg quarters, breasts, soup bones, organ meats, quartered birds and half birds (bone in or out, skin on or off). For further processed products, such as stock, ground, dehydrated, brined, or seasoned, live poultry needs to be processed by either a USDA processor or 5A Small Enterprise processor, and then further processed in a 20C licensed kitchen by a 20C licensed person. All products should be labeled for human consumption; pet treats and foods fall under additional licenses and regulations. All ingredients used in further processed products must also be listed.

There are best management practices associated with processing poultry on-farm to achieve quality and food safety. Those can be found in the Cornell On-Farm Poultry Slaughter Guidelines.

LABELING

New York State has adopted federal labeling requirements. This is to allow for full transparency of the product as well as provide contact information for traceability purposes. All poultry needs to be labeled with the following:

- Product name using the species and part (whole chicken, whole turkey with giblets, duck breast, chicken drumsticks, etc.)
- Inspection legend if processed at a 5A facility.
- Exempted notation if processed on-farm. That exact statement is, "Exempted — P.L. 90-492"
- Farm name and address
- Packed on date
- Sell by date, where fresh poultry must be marked that it is to be frozen within 4 days of processing. Frozen meat does not require a sell-by date, though most producers aim to sell their products within a year for best quality. Packaging that excludes air results in a product that maintains quality longer in frozen storage.
- If selling by the pound, price per pound, where you can only sell by the pound if weighing poultry using an Dept of Weights and Measures certified and inspected scale.
- If selling by the package rather than by the pound, a price per package.
- Safe Handling instructions, where the required wording is:
    - SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS
    - Keep refrigerated or frozen. Thaw in refrigerator or microwave.
    - Keep raw meat and poultry separate from other foods. Wash working surfaces (including cutting boards), utensils, and hands after touching raw meat or poultry.
    - Cook thoroughly.
    - Keep hot foods hot. Refrigerate leftovers immediately or discard.

…continued on page 4

THREE LEGAL AVENUES TO PROCESSING POULTRY IF YOUR GOAL IS TO SELL IT: AN ON-FARM PROCESSING AN EXEMPTION, A 5A EXEMPTION, OR A USDA EXEMPTION.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

REFRIGERATED POULTRY MUST STAY REFRIGERATED AND FROZEN POULTRY SHOULD STAY FROZEN DURING TRANSPORTATION AND STORAGE.

continued from page 3…

Claims cannot be made on the package without justification. Comparative wording such as "healthier" or "fresher" aren't allowed. Furthermore, neither are claims of nutritional values that deviate from USDA published values. Common areas where we see this expressed in poultry is “more vitamin A”, “less cholesterol”, “less saturated fat”, etc. If the meat is tested for nutritional content at a certified laboratory to make a claim, a standard nutrition label is required in addition to the claim. Otherwise, a nutrition label is not required.

Do not use any certified seals on the carton unless you have a current certification. This applies most often to organic or welfare claims. Welfare claims include certified cage free, free range, or pasture-raised. However, you can use descriptors of your management practices on your packaging, such as "turkeys raised on pasture" or "chickens fed non-GMO feed".

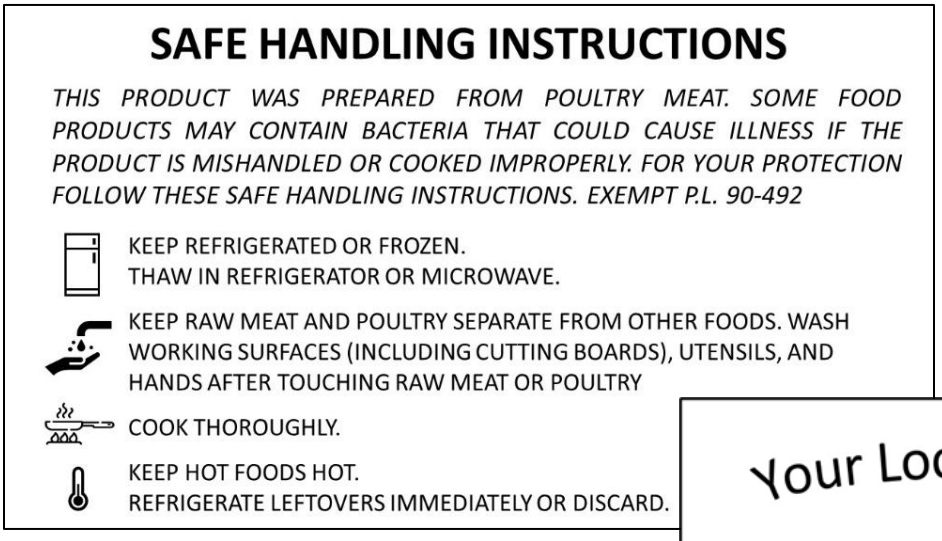
TRANSPORTATION:

Keep fresh poultry below 45°F and frozen poultry below 32°F during transport. This is best achieved by mobile coolers or freezers. Placing a thermometer in the cooler or freezer allows you to ensure that you are meeting food safety guidelines. Fully frozen poultry can last for a short time in coolers packed with ice, especially if it is coming out of a deep freeze (less than 0°F). Packing fresh refrigerated poultry products in ice can keep it food safe so long as the products aren’t transported for a long period of time. An abundance of loose ice is required to maintain proper food safe temperatures. Ice packs don’t provide enough cooling power to keep fresh poultry cool, even in insulated coolers, especially if it’s warm and sunny outside.

SALES:

Poultry that has been processed on-farm can only be sold to the end consumer, though you can make sales off the farm, through a farm stand or store you own, or through your stand at a farmer’s market. If your poultry was processed by a 5A Small Enterprise Exempt facility, you can sell meat to a wider range of customers, including direct sales, sales at stores other than those you own, hotels, restaurants, and institutions. USDA processing is required to sell poultry into NYS farm-to-school programs. USDA processing is also required to sell processed poultry across state lines.

If you have any questions about poultry processing or regulations, reach out to Amy Barkley at 716-640-0844 or amb544@cornell.edu.



Example of a safe handling instructions label.

Example of a complete poultry label (if you are affixing the safe handling instructions label separately) for on-farm processed poultry that allows flexibility in whether the product is fresh or frozen, and sold by the pound or by the item.

YOU CAN SELL FRESHLY PROCESSED REFRIGERATED POULTRY FOR UP TO 4 DAYS. AFTER THAT TIME, IT SHOULD BE FROZEN.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

PROCESSING LABELING IS VERY SPECIFIC – MAKE SURE YOU’VE GOT ALL OF THE REQUIRED INFORMATION!

RISING COSTS, TIGHT MARGINS: WHAT NEW YORK FARMERS ARE FACING – AND WHAT CAN HELP

By Kate McDonald Polakiewicz, Farm Business Management Specialist, SWNYDLFC Team

In speaking with many of you across our region lately- whether you're in the dairy, livestock, or field crops sectors- I've heard a theme: everything costs more, and margins feel tighter than ever.

This isn't just perception- it's backed by the numbers. Dairy alone accounts for roughly two-thirds of New York's total farm revenue, but 2026 is shaping up to be a challenging year. Milk prices are projected to be $2.50–$3.00/cwt lower than last year, while many farms continue to deal with high input costs, putting pressure on profitability. Even in years when margins briefly improve, rising costs for labor, energy, and financing remain persistent challenges across the Northeast.

So, what exactly is driving these higher costs- and what can farmers do about it?

Energy often flies under the radar, but it's a major expense on farms. From milking systems and milk cooling to grain drying, ventilation, and irrigation, farms rely heavily on electricity and fuel. Agencies like NYSERDA emphasize that energy is a "significant expense" across agricultural operations. Even more challenging, energy prices can fluctuate and are often outside a farmer's control. Electricity pricing structures- like time-of-use rates- can also shift costs depending on when energy is used, adding another layer of complexity to managing expenses.

Weather variability has also played a role in higher input costs. In parts of the Northeast, reduced forage quality has forced farms to purchase additional feed, increasing overall costs. Fertilizer and seed costs for forage production remain elevated compared to historical norms, and interest rates have made financing inputs more expensive.

While feed and fuel prices tend to get the headlines, labor is quietly becoming one of the most challenging- and expensive- inputs on New York farms. New York has some of the highest farm labor costs in the country, driven in part by minimum wage increases and overtime requirements. For labor-intensive operations- especially dairy, which requires 365-day staffing- this adds up quickly. Cost is only half the story- finding and keeping good employees is just as challenging. Many farms are competing with construction, manufacturing, and service industries that can sometimes offer more predictable hours or less physically demanding work. Even when positions on farm are filled, turnover can be high, which brings hidden costs like training time, and reduced efficiency during transitions.

At the same time costs are rising, commodity prices aren't always keeping up. Dairy is a clear example: lower milk prices combined with steady or rising costs mean tighter margins and, in some cases, breakeven or worse months. This mismatch- high costs, and uncertain prices—is one of the biggest risks facing farms today.

Given all this, what strategies can be used to manage high costs and protect profitability? There's no silver bullet, but many farms are finding success by focusing on efficiency, risk management, and strategic investment.

The most profitable farms are often the most efficient, not necessarily the biggest. For dairy farms, that might mean improving feed efficiency or milk per cow. For crop farms, it could be fine-tuning nutrient management or reducing passes across the field. Research from Cornell CALS highlights that farms producing more of their own high-quality feed and making better use of manure inputs can reduce both costs and environmental impact. Even small efficiency gains, like less shrink, better timing, and improved ration balancing- can add up quickly.

In taking a hard look at energy use, energy efficiency is one of the more actionable areas for cost savings. Options include upgrading to energy-efficient motors, pumps, or lighting; installing variable speed drives; improving insulation in milk houses or barns; and conducting a farm energy audit (often with cost-share support). Programs through NYSERDA can help offset the upfront cost of upgrades, making improvements more financially feasible. Some farms are also exploring load shifting- running energy-intensive tasks during off-peak hours- to take advantage of lower electricity rates.

When prices are volatile, risk management tools become even more important. For dairy farms, programs like the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) or forward contracting can help protect against downside risk. Crop farmers may use crop insurance, forward pricing, or hedging strategies. These tools won't increase prices, but they can provide more predictable income, something that's increasingly valuable in uncertain markets.

With higher interest rates, every capital purchase deserves extra scrutiny. When making a new purchase, ask: Will this investment reduce labor or input costs? Does it improve efficiency or production? How quickly will it pay for itself? In some cases, repairing or optimizing existing equipment may be more cost-effective than buying new.

Some farms are adding value or diversifying income streams to spread risk. Examples include direct marketing (farm stands, on-farm processing); custom work or equipment sharing; or adding complementary enterprises. Diversification isn't right for every operation, but it can provide additional revenue streams that aren't tied to commodity price swings.

There's no question that rising input and energy costs are putting pressure on farms. But there's also a clear pattern among farms that are navigating these challenges successfully: they're focusing on efficiency, managing risk, and making strategic- not reactive- decisions.

Margins may be tight, but opportunities still exist. Often, it's not about one big change- it's about a series of small, intentional improvements that, over time, make a meaningful difference.

References:

- Farm Credit East's Dairy Industry Snapshot https://www.farmcrediteast.com/en/resources/industry-trends-and-outlooks/reports/dairy-industry-snapshot
- 2025 State of Dairy: Northeast: Growth-minded and cautious https://www.agproud.com/articles/61103-2025-state-of-dairy-northeast-growth-minded-and-cautious
- NYSERDA, Agriculture https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/agriculture
- Time-of-Use Rates and Electricity Costs of Representative New York Dairy Farms https://ecommons.cornell.edu/entities/publication/62f2a3d1-3591-4150-9338-eb394984f350
- With sustainable practices, New York dairy farms lower emissions, Cornell CALS https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2025/04/sustainable-practices-new-york-dairy-farms-lower-emissions

2026 Pasture Walk

Saturday, June 20th

11am-2pm | The Vanstrom Homestead

431 Ericsson Road, Kennedy NY14747

Sam and Eric Vanstrom, along with their children and parents, run a 165-acre farm located in Kennedy, NY. They are reformed dairy farmers that now manage beef, sheep, and chickens on pasture. Their intensive grazing management system has evolved from the dairy cattle to their current livestock. The Vanstroms look forward to discussing valuable tips and knowledge with you!

Highlights:

- Multi-species rotational grazing discussion
- Forage sampling/reading results, Amy Barkley, Livestock Specialist SWNYDLFC
- Soil sampling/reading results, WNY Crop Managment
- Demonstration on high-tensile fencing installment, Eric Vanstrom

$15 to attend per guest
Lunch is included
Pre-registration is required at
https://tinyurl.com/2026PastureWalk
or scan the QR code below
For any questions or assistance needed, please call Hailey Laramie at 814-558-4642

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Southwest NY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program

New York Beef Producers Association NYBPA

Western New York Crop Management

Chautauqua County Soil & Water Conservation District

UTILIZING MULTIPLE SPECIES IN A GRAZING SYSTEM CAN IMPROVE PASTURE MANAGEMENT & MITIGATE RISK FOR ANY ONE LIVESTOCK ENTERPRISE.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY STATIONS IN FENCE BUILDING, SOIL TESTING, AND FORAGE TESTING WILL FOLLOW THE FARM TOUR.

DRY COW DECISIONS: IS SELECTIVE THERAPY THE RIGHT FIT?

By Katie Callero, Dairy Management Specialist, SWNYDLFC Team

Our team recently hosted a milk quality educational event in collaboration with Springville Veterinary Services and Cornell Quality Milk Production Services. During the program, Dr. Amy Stuart presented "Cutting Cost, Not Corners: Targeted Mastitis and Dry Cow Treatment," which got me thinking about how more dairies might be interested in adopting this approach and ultimately inspired me to write this article. As I put this together, I leaned on the American Association of Bovine Practitioners *Selective Dry Cow Therapy Implementation Guidelines* (March 2024) to make sure the information reflects current recommendations. With margins tight across the dairy industry, many farms are looking for practical ways to cut costs without sacrificing milk quality or herd health, and this is exactly what Dr. Amy emphasized in her talk.

Responsible antibiotic stewardship is an important goal for veterinarians and selective dry-cow therapy (SDCT) is a great way to minimize antibiotic use on farms which benefits the environment and your wallet. The general premise of SDCT is to only treat the cows who are at the highest risk of having a subclinical mastitis infection with antibiotics and cows that are identified as low risk only receiving a teat sealant. Historically, recommendations were to use blanket dry-cow therapy (BDCT) due to the high prevalence of subclinical mastitis in dairy cows. More recent recommendations suggest that farms should work with their veterinarians to determine whether SDCT is an appropriate fit, as it may not benefit every operation. To help guide that conversation, here is a checklist of criteria to help you decide if it is worth reaching out to your veterinarian.

If you answered yes to most of these questions, SDCT may be a good fit for your farm and is worth discussing further with your veterinarian.

Selective Dry Cow Therapy Readiness Checklist

- ✓ Is everyone on your farm on board with this idea?
- ✓ Do you have a strong working relationship with your veterinarian?
- ✓ Have you successfully implemented new management strategies previously?
- ✓ Do you have written or digital documentation of treatments?
- ✓ Is there sufficient health data on individual cows recorded to identify their risk status?
- ✓ Is your bulk tank somatic cell count (SCC) regularly less than 250,000 cells/mL?
- ✓ Are you routinely detecting visually abnormal milk?
- ✓ Do you have regular DHI testing or other form of routine individual SCC?
- ✓ Do you have reliable and systematic dry-off procedures currently in place?
- ✓ Are you using teat sealants correctly and consistently?

Resources:

- American Association of Bovine Practitioners, "Selective Dry Cow Therapy Implementation Guidelines" March 2024. https://aabp.org/committees/resources/DryCowGL_2024.pdf

SELECTIVE DRY COW THERAPY COULD HELP YOU CUT DOWN ON ANTIBIOTIC COSTS.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR VETERINARIAN IS KEY TO THE SUCCESS OF A SELECTIVE DRY COW THERAPY PROGRAM.

Internal Parasite IPM and FAMACHA Training for Sheep, Goats, and Camelids

Saturday, May 23rd, 9am - 12pm

CCE Chautauqua at JCC Carnahan Center, Jamestown, NY

Learn about integrated pest management practices that are key to reducing internal parasite loads and dewormer resistance in sheep, goats, and camelids. When not managed properly, internal parasites can be a costly financial burden to farms. All who take this training will learn about:

- Common internal parasites and their lifecycles
- Strategies to reduce the need for antiparasitic drugs
- Developing an effective grazing plan to reduce worm burdens
- Practical, effective ways to use dewormers

Everyone will receive hands-on practice with performing FAMACHA exams and 5-Point Checks©. Students successfully completing this course will receive a FAMACHA card to use on their farm, and will receive a certificate of completion.

Your instructors will be Jess Waltemyer, Cornell's PRO-LIVESTOCK Small Ruminant Specialist and Amy Barkley, Livestock Specialist with the CCE SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program.

This event is free to attend!

Register by Friday, May 22nd, at https://tinyurl.com/FAMACHAJamestown or by contacting Amy Barkley at amb544@cornell.edu or (716) 640-0844

NORTHEAST EXTENSION RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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For accommodations, please reach out to Amy Barkley at amb544@cornell.edu or (716) 640-0844.

BRING YOUR QUESTIONS! OUR GUEST SPEAKERS ARE HERE TO GET THEM ANSWERED.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

THIS TRAINING IS FREE BECAUSE OF THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF NERME THROUGH USDA/NIFA.

FIRST CUTTING FORAGE QUALITY DECISIONS

By Katelyn Miller, Field Crop & Forage Specialist, SWNYDLFC Team

For all the podcast enthusiasts, I recently listened to one from Agrarian Solutions that invited Joe Lawrence, Forage Systems Specialist from PRO-DAIRY to provide insight into forage quality. This discussion was focused on considerations for harvesting quality forage, with a high focus on first cutting haylage, which we're gearing up to harvest now, if you haven't already.

First cutting comprises 40-50% of our haylage yield for the year and *can be* some of the highest quality recognizing the cooler, spring temperatures. You'll notice how I emphasized 'can be', as this is entirely dependent on harvest timing. It's important to remember that you are setting up a large component of your forage for the year with this one harvest.

BACK TO THE BASICS

First, you have to establish the fundamentals. According to Joe, these include:

- The interaction between safety and preparation.
- Flexibility in your storage system.
- Overall storage area structural integrity

When you are harvesting first cutting on your farm, you're also typically balancing other timely activities like spreading manure and planting corn. Before the season starts, it's a great idea to service equipment, not only so you're ready to roll when the weather's right, but also to help avoid breakdowns. Spring is typically a season characterized by a large workload and minimal sleep. Coupled with breakdowns, it can become an unsafe situation quickly. Our other fundamentals focus on the storage areas. There is great emphasis put on harvesting a quality crop, but the same prioritization is not always put to storage. For my thoughts on this, check out January's issue of CCC for "Feed Quality Doesn't Stop at the Chopper." When there are concerns with structural integrity, it impacts the effectiveness and efficiency of packing feed while also being a safety issue. Additionally, having enough space is crucial, as it allows you to effectively separate feeds out based on quality. Have you had a time where you had to feed through lower quality forage just to get to the high-quality forage? It's certainly not ideal, which makes separating feeds a useful tool. You should have a plan before you start harvesting on where forage will go. If it's lactating quality, where will it go? If it rains, and we can't harvest when we want it, where will it go?

A distinct piece of the fundamentals conversation that was highlighted was an article from Dr. Marvin Hall at PennState. In this article, he ranked the impact of six factors on forage quality:

1. **Harvest timing**: forage quality is not static in a plant
2. **Crop species**: protein content differs between grasses, legumes and other species
3. **Harvest and storage**: improper harvest techniques can cause leaf loss, while improper storage can dramatically lower quality
4. **Environment**: temperature, sunlight, moisture (especially rain timing)
5. **Soil fertility**: pH and basic nutrition are needed to support a healthy, productive crop
6. **Variety/cultivar**: differences in cultivars are minimal, but should be selected based on things such as your soil type and disease pressure

This article from 1993 goes to highlight that the basics of harvesting quality forages have remained consistent for years.

ALTERNATIVE FORAGES

In recent years, there has been a bigger shift of folks using small grains for forages. It's important to keep in mind that these should be managed and considered as a strategic tool and a part of the crop rotation, rather than an emergency crop. When you treat it is a backup, the results tend to reflect that. In NY, double cropping can be more challenging as opposed to areas like southern PA. Management has to be updated to reflect and support the addition of these types of crops, such as scaling back the relative maturities being used. Additionally, sizing it to the farm is incredibly important. You want to be able to harvest the crop without compromising anything else. Consider what you can reasonably manage.

HARVESTING

Harvesting forages comes with the recognition that there are often tradeoffs between yield, quality, and logistics. But that doesn't mean that you shouldn't strive to balance all three. When you're making your harvest plans, remember that every hay field has the potential to make high-quality, lactating dairy feed. Pre-determining what livestock group you're planning to feed with a certain field isn't the best strategy. You should make decisions on the timeliness that you can get into the field. You may 'pre-select' a field to be for lactating cows, but if it rains when you want to harvest and you're delayed a week, that puts a large wrench in the plans. Would you rather be on the hunt for high-quality forage to make milk, or for lower-quality feed for heifers? Which one is more expensive? Make selections based on reality of harvest timing, rather than shooting for feeding specific groups.

At the end of the day, the goal shouldn't be to maximize tonnage from the field but instead maximize tonnage in front of the animals. Forage quality problems rarely announce themselves early. Don't sacrifice quality just to try and build inventory.

FIRST CUTTING COMPRISES 40-50% OF HAYLAGE YIELD FOR THE YEAR.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

THE GOAL SHOULD BE TO MAXIMIZE TONNAGE IN FRONT OF THE COW, RATHER THAN FROM THE FIELD.

WHAT'S THE SWEEP ON INSECTS THIS SEASON?

By Katelyn Miller, Field Crop & Forage Specialist, SWNYDLFC Team

Every year I get asked, "What pests are we dealing with this year"? I wish it was a clear answer, but our ability to predict pest pressure is about as accurate as long-term weather forecasts. Jokes aside, it is incredibly difficult to 'predict' what is going to happen, but we can evaluate historic insect populations, weather, and consider biology to give us a better idea of what we could see this growing season.

This winter fit the bill of 'a classic NY winter' as I heard many refer to it, with cold temperatures, high snowfall amounts in areas, and stretches of negative wind chills. Outside of the Northeast, the south experienced a deep freeze, a relatively uncommon phenomenon. We can make the overall assessment that it was cold, but was it cold enough to actually impact insect populations?

Most insects are cold-blooded, meaning that they can match the temperature of their own bodies to the surrounding environment. They are impacted by air temperature, as opposed to wind chills like we are, with many containing antifreeze compounds (glycerol) that lower the freezing point of water in their bodies.

Here in Northeast, we have some insects that overwinter, but a majority migrate in spring. One overwintering pest is alfalfa weevil, where adults survive in leaf litter, alfalfa stubble, or nearby grassy areas. Once temperatures rise in those first warm spring days, they become active. It takes a temperature of 13°F at the soil surface to cause 20-30% mortality, with a small amount able to survive down to 1°F. Snow cover doesn't cause mortality and insulates the pests from temperatures (but also helps protect plants from winterkill). Throughout the region, snowfall amounts and cover were variable, which will impact mortality, but it's a challenging figure to accurately forecast.

Soybean aphids overwinter but also migrate in. This insect overwinters as eggs on buckthorn, where there is typically less protection from snow cover. Eggs will freeze between 25-35°F, with many freezing at 29°F. There is some mortality that is caused in the fall due to factors like dehydration and cold snaps. In the past few years, there has not been widespread soybean aphid pressure, and mostly has been isolated fields. Even if mortality rises above 50%, they can migrate from the south to cause issues in a growing season. When factoring out wind chills, the reality is that there probably wasn't much mortality of aphids due to low temperatures.

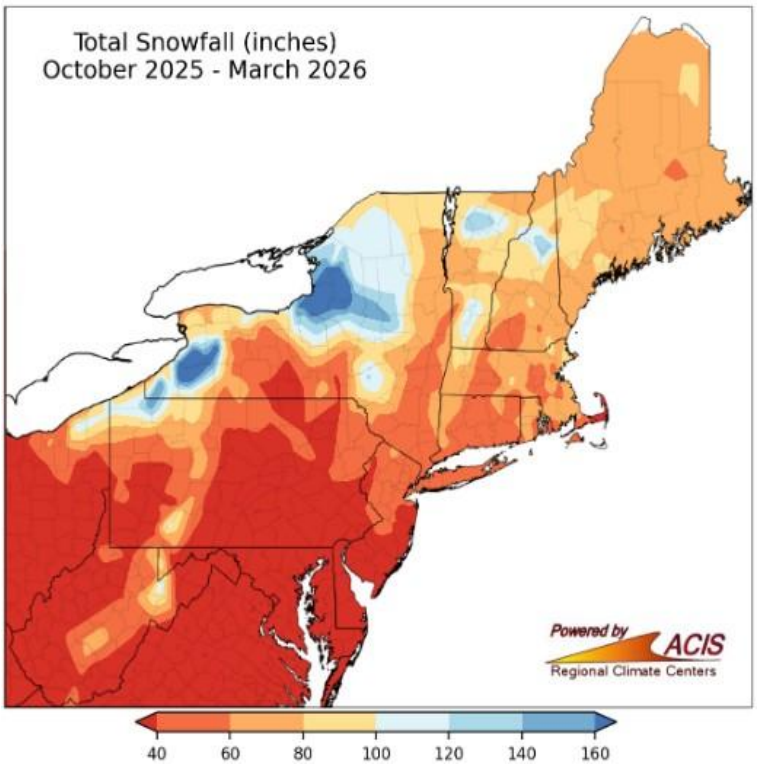
Insects that migrate every year to the Northeast include potato leafhopper (PLH), common armyworm (CAW), and black cutworm (BCW). Typically, PLH migrates from mid-May to early June, so we'll likely start seeing them soon. Once these insects catch the southerly winds, they can be here in the Northeast in 2-3 days, or even sooner under ideal conditions. This speed also can apply to CAW and BCW. With the deep freeze that took place in the south, I was curious to see what the timeline of arrival would look like for these insects. With the freezing temperatures, mortality could have occurred, or they got pushed further south extending their timeline of arrival. In the case of CAW and BCW, it doesn't seem to have impacted the arrival of these pests in the Northeast, as I am already getting catches in my pheromone traps that I placed on April 17th. I even have had a significant flight recorded for BCW in Arkport on May 1st (>15 moths).

So, was it cold enough to impact insect populations? The short answer is probably not. Like any year, consistent scouting will continue to help you stay on top of arising pest issues.

Resources:

- https://nedews.nrcc.cornell.edu/
- https://blog-crop-news.extension.umn.edu/2026/02/is-it-cold-enough-yet-insect.html

Graphic from Northeast Regional Climate Center



WAS IT COLD ENOUGH TO IMPACT INSECTS? THE SHORT ANSWER IS PROBABLY NOT.

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

CONSISTENT SCOUTING WILL CONTINUE TO HELP YOU STAY ON TOP OF ARISING PEST ISSUES.

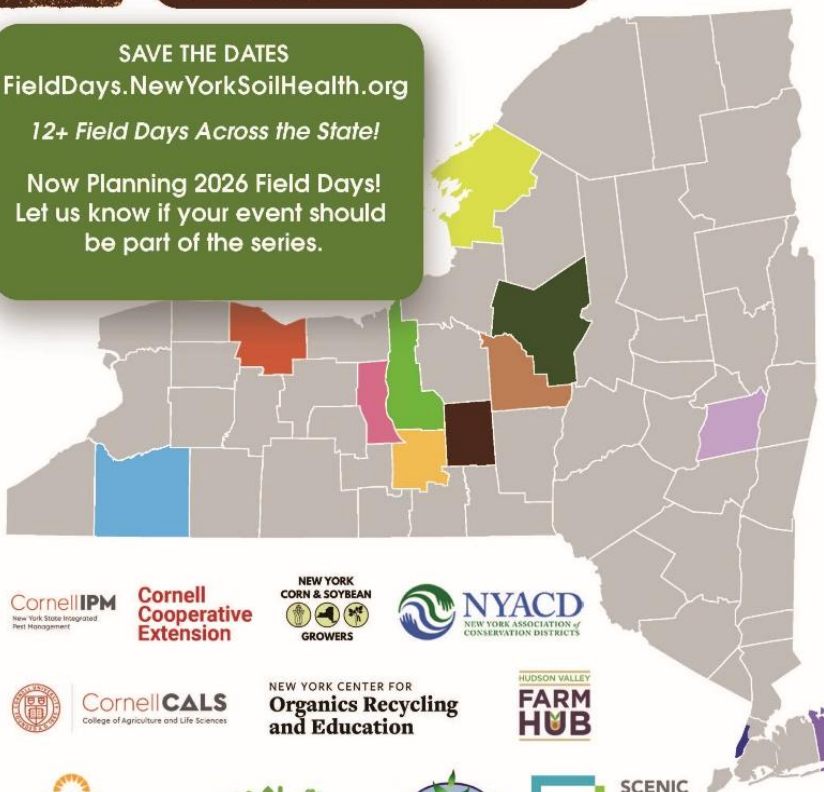
2026 Soil Health FIELD DAYS

NEW YORK SOIL HEALTH

SAVE THE DATES
FieldDays.NewYorkSoilHealth.org

12+ Field Days Across the State!

Now Planning 2026 Field Days! Let us know if your event should be part of the series.



April 18 | 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM | Ithaca, NY
Ithaca Commons (Tompkins Co.)
Topic: Ecological Gardening

June 25 | 9:00 AM –12:00 PM | Adams, NY
Sheland Farms (Jefferson Co.)
Topic: Soil Health & Nutrient Mgmt in Dairy Systems

June 30 | 10:00 AM –1:00 PM | Farmersville Station, NY
Nichols Farm (Cattaraugus Co.)
Topic: Soil Health

August 4 | 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM | Glenmont, NY
Bethlehem Environmental Commons (Albany Co.)
Topic: Soil Health and Cover Crops

August 13 | 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM | Seneca Falls, NY
Rodman Lott & Son Farms (Seneca Co.)
Topic: Soil Health & Cover Crops in Field Crops

August 27 | 9:00 AM –3:30 PM | Cazenovia, NY
Gianforte Farm (Madison Co.)
Topic: Soil Health in Organic Field Crops

TBD | TBD
TBD (Oneida Co.)
Topic: TBD

TBD | TBD
TBD (NYC)
Topic: TBD

TBD | TBD
TBD (Cortland Co.)
Topic: Soil Health in Pasture Systems

TBD | TBD
TBD (Cayuga Co.)
Topic: Cover Crops and Soil Health

TBD | TBD
TBD (Monroe Co.)
Topic: Urban Soil Health and Heavy Metals

TBD | TBD
TBD (Suffolk Co.)
Topic: Urban Soil Health and Heavy Metals

Cornell IPM · Cornell Cooperative Extension · New York Corn & Soybean Growers · NYACD New York Association of Conservation Districts · Cornell CALS College of Agriculture and Life Sciences · New York Center for Organics Recycling and Education · Hudson Valley Farm Hub · King's AgriSeeds · American Farmland Trust Saving the Land That Sustains Us · Cayuga Ag · Scenic Hudson .org · New York State Agriculture and Markets · USDA United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service · NOFA-NY Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York · PRO DAIRY Education & Applied Research

04.29.2026

The State's CCE Livestock Processing Directory is in transition to the MeatSuite website!

If you're a processor, and want to be added to this new, free online directory, please reach out to Matt LeRoux (mnl28@cornell.edu) or Amy Barkley (amb544@cornell.edu or 716-640-0844) to get started.

MEATSUITE.com

Please note that this replaces the previous livestock directories created in 2020-2024, and previous information is not automatically carried over to the new site. Each interested processor will need to submit a new request to be added if they're not already.

Processor Directory

The directory can be accessed at: https://www.meatsuite.com/processor/

WE'RE HOSTING A SOIL HEALTH FIELD DAY ON JUNE 30TH. DETAILS COMING SOON!

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE INFORMATION: SWNYDLFC.CCE.CORNELL.EDU

COWS CROPS & CRITTERS

SWNY Dairy, Livestock
& Field Crops Program
5435 County Rd 48
Belmont, NY 14813

Want to go green?

You can opt to receive the newsletter via email instead of a paper version. You'll receive the SAME version as the paper copy.

Questions?
Contact Kelly
585.268.7644 ext. 10
KLB288@cornell.edu

THANK YOU FOR BEING OUR SPONSOR!