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Cornell Cooperative Extension

Southwest NY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program

swnydlfc.cce.cornell.edu

A partnership between Cornell University
and the CCE Associations in these five counties:
Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Steuben.

January 2021
Monthly Update

Happy New Year!

Farm Wage News for New York

By Richard Stup, Cornell University

New York's Farm Laborer Wage Board Recommends Retaining 60-hour Overtime Threshold

The year 2020 was certainly eventful for the agricultural workforce, and the drama extended until late in the afternoon on New Year's Eve. The New York Farm Labor Wage Board was created and charged by the 2019 Farm Laborer Fair Labor Practices Act (FLFLPA) to consider the overtime threshold of 60 hours and make a recommendation about whether the threshold should be lowered. In-person hearings were scheduled early in 2020 but only one event took place before the COVID-19 pandemic obliterated such events. Farm managers and employees were dramatically engaged as essential workers providing needed food supplies throughout the pandemic, nevertheless, they showed up in huge numbers to testify during virtual Wage Board hearings in August and September. The Wage Board continued its deliberations with December hearings that included very unusual, last-minute schedulings and postponements. Finally on December 31, 2020 at 4:00 PM, only hours before the deadline, the board met to render a decision. Chairperson Brenda McDuffie offered a motion to retain the 60-hour overtime threshold for 2021 and to reconvene a Wage Board near the end of 2021 to consider further action. Her motion was based on the extreme uncertainty and stress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the agricultural industry. NY Farm Bureau President David Fisher seconded the motion. Former AFL-CIO union president, Denis Hughes, offered a different motion that would include a two-year freeze on the current 60-hour threshold, followed by an 8-year incremental decrease of the threshold until it reach 40 hours per week, this motion died for lack of a second. Ultimately, McDuffie and Fisher voted as the majority to pass the recommendation to retain the 60-hour threshold for 2021, to let the industry get through the pandemic, and to revisit the issue with more data and input during November and December of 2021.

New York Minimum Wage Increased On Schedule

Employers should adjust wages to reflect required minimum wage increases that took place effective at 12:00 AM on December 31, 2020. Minimum wages in New York City were already at \$15/hour and did not increase, for Long Island and Westchester the minimum wage increased to \$14/hour, for the remainder of upstate New York the minimum wage increased to \$12.50/hour. See the NYS Department of Labor's website for more information about this issue. Long Island and Westchester minimum wage is scheduled to reach \$15/hour next year while the remainder of upstate will be notified about increases by the NYS Commissioner of Labor by October 1, 2021 and each year thereafter.



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Schools Seeking Beef and Pork for Farm to School Programs

By Becky O'Connor, Farm to Institution Coordinator, Cornell Cooperative Extension – Harvest NY

Schools across NYS are looking for NY raised beef and pork products to use in their school lunch programs. These schools are looking to qualify for the 30% NY Initiative by spending at least 30% of their lunch budget on foods grown, raised, and produced in NY. If they qualify, they will receive \$0.25 per meal in reimbursement from NYS—that's a \$0.19 increase from the \$0.056 they currently receive. It may sound like a small number, but multiplied by hundreds or thousands of meals served each day, the extra \$0.19 goes a long way and schools are using it to purchase even more NY agricultural products.

Harvest NY created a guide and video tutorial specifically for NYS food producers to help them understand this initiative and how their products might qualify. To access the guide, you can go to: https://harvestny.cce.cornell.edu/submission.php?id=131&crumb=local_foods|3

A few quick facts:

- For this initiative, a "New York State food product" is:
 - Anything grown, harvested, or produced in NY; OR
 - A food item processed inside or outside NYS comprising of 51% or more agricultural raw materials grown, harvested, or produced in NYS, by weight or volume.
- If a product is NYS Grown & Certified, it automatically counts.
- For products not NYS Grown & Certified, schools need to provide some backup demonstrating NY origin.
 - For meat, schools need to provide documentation from the farmer and the processor. There are Farm to School Coordinators across NYS who can help schools and producers with this paperwork, so don't let this put you off! This list of contacts can be found at this web address:
 - https://harvestny.cce.cornell.edu/submission.php?id=71&crumb=local_foods|3

- Any meat product must be processed in a USDA facility. The facility does not have to be in NYS.
- Schools are looking for a wide range of products: ground beef, ground pork, sausage links, sausage patties, hamburger patties, etc. Fat content can vary!
- Some schools are interested in one-time purchases, and others are looking to make several purchases throughout the school year.
- The amount of meat needed varies by district size. There are some very small school districts that might just need 15lbs!
- The price schools can pay also varies. In general, for ground beef schools in WNY and the Southern Tier have some current sources that range from about \$3.75-\$4.95/lb.
- Some districts need products delivered, but others can pick up from your farm.

There is a network of Farm to School Coordinators and Farm to School support personnel across NYS who help farmers like you get their products onto lunch trays in their communities. We know this information can be overwhelming, but we have successfully helped small and large farms work with schools, from delivery logistics all the way through paperwork.

Questions? Contact Becky O'Connor, WNY Farm to Institution Coordinator, Cornell Cooperative Extension – Harvest NY: rao84@cornell.edu or (845)706-0293.



Transitioning to Supervisor course offered

Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development has opened registration for a six-week course titled "Transitioning to Supervisor," which is part of a new Agricultural Supervisory Leadership certificate program. The course begins January 28 with an introduction to the curriculum and use of the web-based platform, Moodle. Cost is \$275. Class size is limited to 30 participants.

This is the course you've been waiting for: how to lead people in your farm business! Learn the essential skills for supervising more effectively and creating a great place to work.

Supervisors are critical to the success of farm businesses. They have a major impact both on employees' daily work experiences and on the production performance of the business. The Agricultural Supervisory Leadership certificate helps farm supervisors and managers learn and apply human resource management practices and leadership skills that foster rewarding workplaces and drive business results. Confident managers who thoughtfully apply leadership and management skills improve employee performance, develop teams, reduce employee turnover, and increase employee engagement. The courses within the certificate program will offer extensive practice and engagement activities to build confidence and skill sets.

Who should attend? This course, and the whole certificate series,

is appropriate for both new and experienced farm supervisors and managers, and those preparing to become supervisors. All participants will learn leadership concepts and practice skills that will improve their ability to build a positive workplace and get results through leading others.

The first course "Transitioning to Supervisor" helps new and experienced managers make the difficult, but critical, transition from individual performer to supervisor. Participants learn essential leadership skills, such as: building effective work relationships, essential communication skills, managing conflict, leading a multi-cultural team, and how to build an effective workplace culture. From the comfort of your home or office, watch prerecorded presentations on your own schedule, and engage with classmates and instructors during weekly, live discussion sessions. Corresponding assignments are due each week. To get the most out of the experience, expect to spend approximately two hours per week on lessons and assignments.

Course instructors include: Richard Stup, Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development Specialist, and Elizabeth Higgins, Ag Business Management/Production Economics Extension Specialist with the Eastern New York Commercial Horticulture team. Direct questions to Rachel McCarthy, Agricultural Supervisory Leadership Coordinator, at rachel.mccarthy@cornell.edu.

Narrow down the cause of calf scours

By Abby Bauer, Associate Editor of *Hoard's Dairyman*

The two or so months prior to weaning really lay the foundation for a healthy, productive dairy animal. It is important to review the success of your preweaned calf program every now and then.

Margaret Quaassdorff, dairy management specialist for Cornell University Extension, talked about factors to track when it comes to preweaned calves during a Pro-Dairy "Trouble shooting herd health issues on your dairy" podcast. One of them is percent death loss.

"The overall benchmark goal is to be under 5% of calves that die prior to weaning," she shared. Beyond that number, Quaassdorff said to also track the causes contributing to death loss.

"Scours is one of the most common issues with calves, but troubleshooting why they have scours can be tricky," she said. Quaassdorff explained that scours can be caused by pathogenic factors, nutritional factors, or a combination of the two.

"It is important to consider age," she said. "If scours occur during the first few days of life, it's a good hint to look back at the maternity area for clues." She explained that scours this early in life are typically caused by *E. coli* bacteria and result from a cleanliness issue — a dirty calving environment, dirty feeding equipment, or colostrum that wasn't collected in a clean manner.

"Your extension specialist, veterinarian, or nutritionist may be able to help you conduct a cleanliness audit to help pinpoint sources of contamination," she added.

If scours occur closer to a week of age, Quaassdorff said that is more likely a virus issue, and this warrants a call to a veterinarian to discuss vaccination protocols.

Fix feeding practices

Scours can also come from nutritional factors. According to Alycia

Drwencke, another dairy management specialist for Cornell University Extension, "One common myth is that nutritional scours result from feeding too much milk, but that is rarely the case. Loose manure does not equate to scours."

She said more commonly, nutritional scours result from an issue with the milk being fed. That can include improper or inconsistent percent solids in milk replacer or inconsistent or inadequate mixing technique.

If calves are fed milk at a temperature too low or too high, scours can occur as well. To reduce the risk, mix milk or milk replacer at 110°F to 120°F. By the time calves are fed, Drwencke said it should be cooled to 101°F to 105°F.

A full potential milk diet can be fed at a rate of 2.5 pounds of milk solids in 8 to 12 quarts per day without scours, she said. Milk should be delivered two times a day, three times a day, or multiple times per day with an automatic feeder.

Also, pay attention to the calf starter. "It's important to feed starter with quality, palatable ingredients, and that the percent of fines or dust in the grain is minimal. Calves typically don't eat fines, and they often won't pick around them," Drwencke shared.

She said to make sure grain stays fresh and dry. "After a rain event or if water or milk splashes into the feed, it becomes much less appealing to the calf and more appealing to flies," she said.

Wet feed or manure in starter makes it more likely to grow mold or harbor other pathogens that can cause health problems, reduce feed intake, and prevent growth in your calves.

Finally, don't forget that water is also an important nutrient for calves. "Providing free access to water at all times helps maximize grain consumption and proper hydration," Drwencke said.

Are Those Cows Cold?

By Alycia Drwencke, Dairy Management Specialist, with the *SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program*

The cold weather and snow are in full swing, with several months of these climatic conditions ahead. During this season, it is common to still see cows outside of a barn, perhaps even in the middle of a blizzard. While this may seem strange or concerning, it is important to remember that cows are better equipped to handle inclement weather than humans, and farmers closely monitor their animals for signs they are cold.

In order to manage in cold weather, cows have three primary adaptations. First, cows will grow a thick, long haired coat that insulates them from wind and cold temperatures. As long as their coat stays dry and clean, it will help protect them. If a cow is seen with a layer of snow on their back, that means their coat is doing its job and keeping the cold out. Second, cows will increase their body weight as farmers feed them extra portions before the winter sets in to help them cope with the cold. While it is important to make sure cows don't gain too much weight, a small increase that is managed by the farm's nutritionist is helpful. Third, cows experience increased metabolic rates to produce more body heat. This increase in body heat helps keep them warm and is made possible by the farmer feeding larger quantities during the cold season. Cows will convert the energy in their feed to body heat, keeping their internal temperature more stable. Providing adequate amounts of feed and access to shelter combined with the cows' physical adaptations can help them successfully cope with

cold weather.

In addition, cows can be monitored for signs of cold stress. These can include cows gathering in tight clusters, decreased heart and respiration rate or body temperature, shivering, cold extremities (such as ears, udders, tails, hooves, or legs) or rigid muscles. Cows are more at risk of being cold if they are skinny, their hair coat is wet or muddy, or they are either very young or old. If cows do not have adequate protection, frost bite is more likely to occur in sensitive body parts such as ears, udders, or hooves. Prevention and timely identification and correction of a problem are key during cold weather.

While cows are better adapted to cold weather than humans, farms should monitor their herd for signs of cold stress. With a little extra care, cows can manage colder temperatures in a safe and productive way.



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Dairy Market Watch
Newsletter
December 2020

An educational newsletter to keep producers informed of changing market factors affecting the dairy industry.

Milk Component Prices			Milk Class Prices				Statistical Uniform Price & PPD				
Month	Butterfat	Protein	I (Boston)	II	III	IV	Jamestown, NY		Albany, NY		Albany \$/gal. to farmer
Nov 19	\$2.32	\$3.91	\$21.39	\$16.85	\$20.45	\$16.60	\$18.05	(\$2.40)	\$18.65	(\$1.80)	\$1.61
Dec 19	\$2.19	\$3.65	\$22.58	\$16.81	\$19.37	\$16.70	\$18.13	(\$1.24)	\$18.73	(\$0.64)	\$1.61
Jan 20	\$2.11	\$2.96	\$22.26	\$17.05	\$17.05	\$16.65	\$17.63	\$0.58	\$18.23	\$1.18	\$1.57
Feb 20	\$1.98	\$3.03	\$20.80	\$16.84	\$17.00	\$16.20	\$16.97	(\$0.03)	\$17.57	\$0.57	\$1.51
Mar 20	\$1.92	\$2.84	\$20.71	\$16.75	\$16.25	\$14.87	\$16.59	\$0.34	\$17.19	\$0.94	\$1.48
Apr 20	\$1.32	\$2.48	\$19.89	\$13.87	\$13.07	\$11.40	\$13.77	\$0.77	\$14.37	\$1.30	\$1.24
May 20	\$1.38	\$2.09	\$16.20	\$12.30	\$12.14	\$10.67	\$12.32	\$0.18	\$12.92	\$0.78	\$1.11
June 20	\$1.86	\$4.53	\$14.67	\$12.99	\$21.04	\$12.90	\$14.51	(\$6.53)	\$15.11	(\$5.93)	\$1.30
July 20	\$1.95	\$5.62	\$19.81	\$13.79	\$24.54	\$13.76	\$17.93	(\$6.61)	\$18.53	(\$6.01)	\$1.60
Aug 20	\$1.63	\$4.44	\$23.03	\$13.27	\$19.77	\$12.53	\$16.87	(\$2.90)	\$17.47	(\$2.30)	\$1.51
Sep 20	\$1.59	\$3.39	\$21.69	\$13.16	\$16.43	\$12.75	\$15.65	(\$0.78)	\$16.25	(\$0.18)	\$1.40
Oct 20	\$1.64	\$5.01	\$18.45	\$13.63	\$21.61	\$13.47	\$15.92	(\$5.69)	\$16.52	(\$5.09)	\$1.41
Nov 20	\$1.56	\$5.62	\$21.29	\$13.86	\$23.34	\$13.30	\$17.12	(6.22)	\$17.72	(\$5.62)	\$1.53

November Utilization (Northeast): Class I = 31.2%; Class II = 23.3%; Class III = 26.5%; Class IV = 19.0%.
Class I = fluid milk; Class II = soft products, cream, and yogurt; Class III = cheese (American, Italian), evaporated and condensed products; Class IV = butter and milk powder.

Dairy Commodity Markets (USDA Dairy Market News – Volume 87, Report 51, December 18th, 2020)

Cheese: Cheese market tones have continued at relatively stable conditions. Regarding demand, similar notes are being reported week by week. Some retail cheese buyers have returned as markets stabilize, but food service demand remains problematic, to put it lightly. Milk is widely available nationwide. Spot prices were wholly discounted and that is expected to remain into early 2021. Cheese inventories are a growing concern for Western contacts. Midwestern contacts report positive notes regarding staffing shortages due to COVID-19, but potential absences remain at the forefront of their schedule planning.

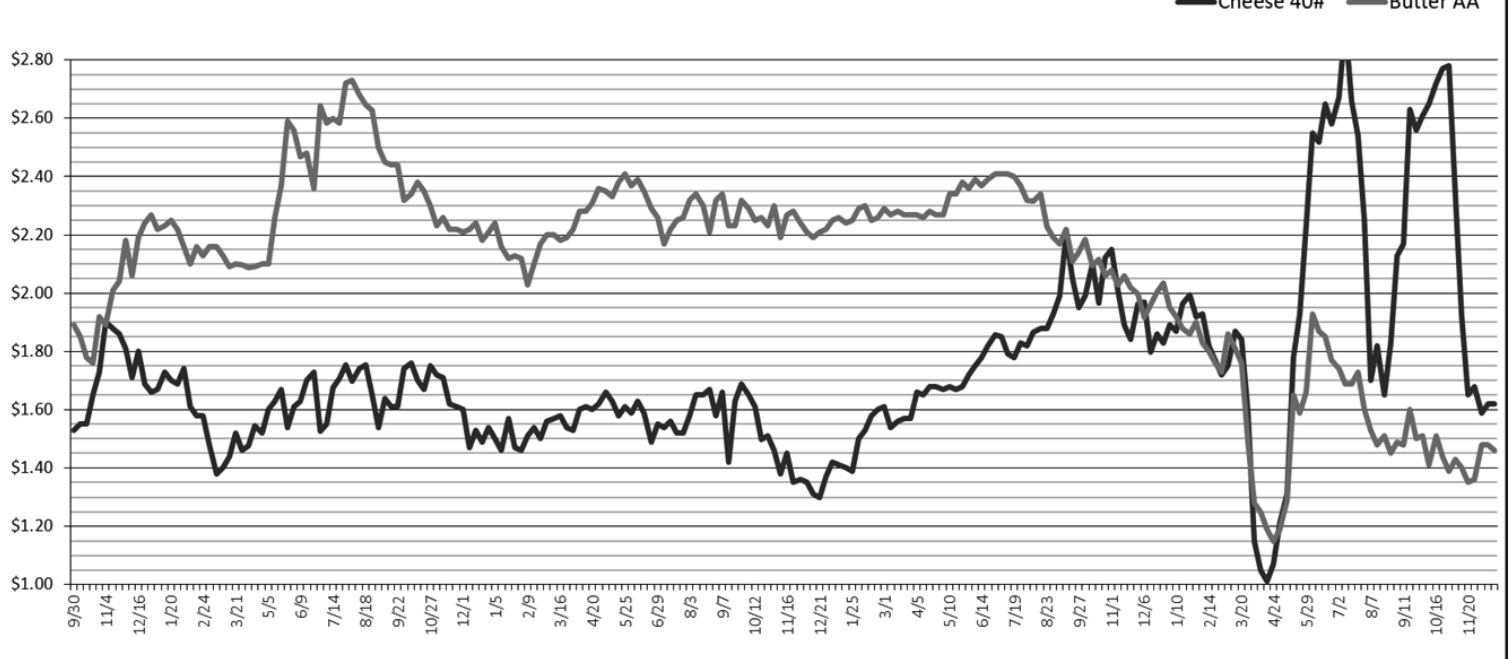
Fluid Milk: Farm level milk production is steady to increasing across the regions as cows respond to somewhat cooler and favorable temperatures. Bottling shipments across the country are mixed. Class I milk demand pushed up some in the South Central area and Midwest. In California, bottled milk demand is starting to slow down as schools prepare to close for the winter break. Class I sales are stable to declining in Arizona. As a winter snowstorm develops in the Northeast, the region is experiencing a spike in Class I sales. Operations are importing milk from other regions to supply Class I demand in Florida. Cream sales are down a bit, ahead of the upcoming holiday. Suppliers are trying to ensure that all loads have a destination over the next few weeks.

Dry Products: Nonfat dry milk prices are mixed. Trading has been slow this week in a fairly quiet spot market. Export demand is supporting firm prices and helping to balance inventories. Dry buttermilk prices were steady to higher throughout the regions. Buttermilk is available, but more so in the condensed form. End users are looking to work out FY2021 contracts. Dry whey prices are steady to higher in a firm market as limited offerings drive price points. Demand is solid from international and domestic buyers.

Butter: Butter production shows no sign of slowing across the nation as churners are operating 7 day schedules to process heavy cream volumes. Retail demand is good, with some descent from last week, as the bulk of holiday shipments are being delivered. Food service orders have slowed even more, compounding manufacturers' efforts to lighten inventories before the end of the year. The butter market undertone is unsettled at this point.

Friday CME Cash Prices					
Dates	11/20	11/25	12/4	12/11	12/18
Butter	\$1.35	\$1.36	\$1.48	\$1.48	\$1.46
Cheese (40# Blocks)	\$1.65	\$1.68	\$1.59	\$1.62	\$1.62

Weekly Average CME Cash Price - 2016 to Present



Opportunity knocks—will you answer the door?

By Mike North

This is an excerpt from the originally published article available here: <https://hoards.com/article-29197-opportunity-knocks-&mdash-will-you-answer-the-door.html>

There is no question that dairy prices have recently walked through levels of uncertainty never realized or equaled in our lifetime. On a month-to-month basis, Class III prices routinely swung \$5 per hundredweight (cwt.) or more during the 2020 calendar year. The lack of price stability has become a foregone conclusion.

Dairy markets faced a number of unique impacts. Food box buy ups injected new life into fading prices with each new round of announcements. The discussion of negative producer price differentials (PPDs) took on a life of its own and swung to levels never before imagined. In the wake of a federal election, USDA-sponsored buying programs appear to be sunseting, reducing domestic cheese purchases. At the same time, new cheese production capacity is ramping up, milk production is on a tear, and price volatility is still very much alive . . . albeit trending in a new direction.

Two November tales

The month of November started off with all the optimism that carried dairymen through the darkness of a newly charted, COVID-interrupted path. Block cheese prices reached as high as \$2.78 per pound in the CME spot session, while Cheddar barrels set new record highs at that same time of \$2.53 per pound. Class III prices in the December contract peaked out the week prior at \$21.16 per cwt. By the end of the month, blocks were more than a dollar lower, barrels fell to \$1.40 (a price not seen since August), and Class III December futures were hovering just north of \$15.50 per cwt.

What happened?

Very suddenly, the demand for fresh cheese product dried up. A market that saw ongoing deliberate daily bids for product evaporated overnight and left the very few sellers scrambling to clean out any and all uncommitted product. Price movement traveled the razor's edge, leaving participants with much more than

a little rash. While nearby futures contracts were defined by unprecedented volatility, more deferred pricing opportunities in the 2021 calendar were a bit more stable. In the time spent pressuring the \$5 drop in December futures, the Class III price average for the first quarter (Q1) of 2021 dropped just 80 cents from its early November peak. Second-quarter 2021 Class III prices actually rallied higher while these others were falling. The same was true in the back half of the year. This is where perspective comes into play. If we are to assimilate back to what I dare call "normal," one should respect what is normal for the first half of any new calendar year. Again, maintaining Class III as the benchmark, the period of 2016 through 2020 has witnessed first-half price averages as outlined in the table based on USDA data.

The best year since 2014? If futures prices as outlined should stand as they are today, they will serve as the single best outcome the period has witnessed going back to 2014. Now consider what we know . . . or what we don't know.

The big picture

Perhaps there are still more questions than answers. Maybe what we don't know outweighs what we do know. However, price is always the focal point. We can talk very plainly and very absolutely about this number. Very plainly and very absolutely, today's first half 2021 Class III futures values are better than any outcome witnessed since the last big run in price in 2014. So, how are you managing that?

Risk management is nothing more than accepting the uncertainty of our future and then moving beyond that acknowledgment to build levels of certainty into your revenues, costs, or margins.

Several tools exist to help build certainty around a very uncertain, constantly volatile milk price.

Opportunity is indeed knocking. Will you answer the door?

Someone at the Farm Tested Positive for COVID-19 — Now What?

By Joan Sinclair Petzen and Libby Eiholzer with NWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops



At this writing in Mid-December 2020, community spread of COVID-19 is gaining momentum in rural areas of New York. As employers, farmers have certain responsibilities when one of their workforce tests positive for COVID-19. Because farmworkers are essential workers, there is sometimes confusion about what quarantine means for those who have come in close contact with the person who has received a positive diagnosis. In this article, you will find resources to help you sort out your responsibilities as an employer and know what steps to take should someone associated with your business test positive.

Once someone tests positive, the local health department (LHD) will work closely with that individual to isolate and trace contacts who may have been exposed during the incubation period for COVID-19. Businesses will be asked to assist the LHD with identifying close contacts of any worker who tests positive. This is where your Forward NY Safety Plan will come in handy. All businesses including farms are required to have one. The LHD will likely ask to review your plan to help you strengthen the processes you have in place to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Now is a good time to review the plan, update it if needed and be certain you are doing a good job of tracking contacts at your place of business. For assistance, your first and most knowledgeable resource is your LHD. Please reach out to them. They are striving to connect with people who test positive and complete contact tracing within forty-eight hours of the report of a positive test.

Essential workers on farms may continue to work on farms during quarantine. Guidance from New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYS DAM) addresses quarantine for essential workers who have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID, as well as isolation and requirements for going back to work for

people with positive tests. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides information on quarantine and explains the difference between that and isolation: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>.

The United States Department of Labor details the responsibilities of employers under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) to provide paid leave for employees affected by COVID-19 or who are caring for family members affected. Employers with fewer than 500 employees are able to receive a tax credit for paid leave provided under FFCRA. The tax credit reimburses the employer for qualified sick or family leave wages, qualified health plan expenses and Medicare tax credit. To claim the credits, employer can (1) assess federal employment taxes that would otherwise be deposited, (2) claim the tax credit on their Form 943, Employers' Annual Federal Tax Return for Agricultural Employees or (3) request an advance of the credits not covered by assessing federal employment tax deposit by filing Form 7200 Advance Payment of Employer Credit Due to COVID-19.

Local health officials confirm that most of the spread of COVID-19 in our rural communities can be traced back to small gatherings of people without adequate precautionary measures. Now is a good time to remind your workforce about the importance of wearing a face covering, hand washing or sanitizing, social distancing and staying home to stay healthy. Many people are craving social interaction after many months of limiting our interactions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. With cases on the rise and our health care system once again being tested for its capacity to take care of those seriously ill with COVID-19, everyone must continue to adhere to prevention practices until vaccinations and warmer seasons have slowed the spread of the virus.

In summary, if someone from your farm tests positive for COVID-19, follow your Forward NY Safety Plan, and be sure you are doing a good job of tracking contacts. Work with your LHD to quarantine or isolate individuals as required. Understand when your essential workers may still be able to work during quarantine. Be aware of your employees' rights and your employer responsibilities under FFCRA for paid time off if employees are sick with COVID-19 or caring for a family member who is. Know you can apply for tax credits for qualified wages, health care plan expenses and Medicare tax paid under FFCRA. And most importantly, continue to do the very best you can to provide a safe and healthy work environment where people have adequate time for rest, so they are ready and able to come to work as needed.



SOUTHWEST NEW YORK FIELD CROP CHRONICLE

Compiled by Josh Putman - Field Crops Specialist, SWNY Dairy, Livestock, Field Crops Program

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6 January 2021

Southwest New York Field Crop Series 2021

Join Field Crops Specialist, Josh Putman, for a virtual webinar series focused on problematic weeds, diseases, and insects of Southwest New York and best management practices.

REGISTRATION

Cost: \$45/person payable via card on our website

Your registration fee covers all 3 classes.

Register online today at:

<https://tinyurl.com/ycul2s3o>

Questions?

Contact Josh Putman at:

716-490-5572 or jap473@cornell.edu

Webinar links and call-in numbers will be shared by the email you registered with.

You must be present for the entire session to receive credits for that day.

This event will be offered via **ZOOM** video conferencing software. Participants will need to use a computer, tablet, or phone with video and audio capabilities.

3.0 DEC Credits in categories 1a, 10, 21, and 23 have been approved for this series!

***DEC credits will be given at the conclusion of each day in the series.**

January 19th 11am-12pm:

Palmer amaranth and other problematic weeds of SWNY - Best management practices going forward

We now have the problematic weed, Palmer amaranth, in SWNY and best management practices for this weed will be shared. We will also explore herbicide programs for managing weeds in corn and soybeans as well as discuss new research from Cornell University.

January 20th 11am-12pm:

Have you seen this disease? New diseases threaten field crop production in SWNY

Detailed information around integrated pest management and strategies for controlling these pests in corn and soybean production systems in SWNY; specifically disease control.

Several of the surrounding states are noticing the new disease, Tar Spot of Corn, and it is making its way north. Here we will explore management options for ear rots, stalk rots, and other diseases in NY.

January 21st 11am-12pm:

The soybean cyst nematode - Robbing U.S. yields since 1954

It was confirmed in 2020 that Soybean Cyst Nematode has spread to 23 additional counties in NY. SCN is the most destructive pest of soybeans in the US. We will learn about management options for this pest as well as other pests in the state.



Photo provided by Dr. Lynn Sosnoskie



Photo by Josh Putman

HELPING YOU PUT KNOWLEDGE TO WORK

The SWNY Dairy, Livestock & Fields Crops Program offers educational programming and research based information to agricultural producers, growers, and agribusinesses. Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and education recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individual with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities. For more information, please contact Josh Putman 716-490-5572 or jap473@cornell.edu.

Safety for Supplementing Heat to Livestock on the Farm

By Amy Barkley, Livestock and Beginning Farms Specialist, with the SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program

While most livestock can tolerate colder temperatures well, there are times when providing supplemental heat may be necessary to promote their health and welfare. Newborn animals entering the world in the middle of the coldest months is just one example. While there are many ways to supplement heat, mindful steps need to be taken to ensure that those heat sources are both effective and safe.

Heat lamps are one of the most commonly used heat sources due to their low cost and simplicity. However, they are a major cause of barn fires, making design selection crucial for safety. Lamps should have solid ceramic bases, thick, intact cords, and a protective covering around the bulb. The protective covering, which is made of a wire or plastic, keeps the bulb from touching the ground should the heat lamp fall, and reduces the risk of animals potentially breaking the bulb.

Other options for heating include radiant plates, heat pads, and gas heaters, though these should be rated for barn use, firmly affixed to the wall, ceiling, or floor, and kept out of reach of livestock. Portable space heaters are not a good idea, since they can be knocked over by animals. Ideally, heaters should have an automatic shut-off in the case they are tipped.

A few general rules can help promote safe heating. Dust accumulations on any heater should be removed regularly. If possible, heaters should be kept at least two feet away from flammable items such as wood, bedding, fertilizer, pesticides, or cobwebs. Any device should be plugged directly into the wall; using extension cords can increase the risk of fire and malfunctions.

Commercial-sized (5 - 10 pound) fire extinguishers should be kept within easy reach in and around farm buildings. An ABC extinguisher is best, since it can tackle the various fire classes that can start within a barn. The installation of fire alarms, especially in areas where supplemental heat is used, can provide advance notice of a fire. This can result in quicker response times, saving a barn or livestock. Having an emergency plan in place in the case of a fire, including a list of contacts and evacuation plan, is advantageous should an adverse event happen.

Supplemental heat is a tool that can be used to maintain the health and comfort of some newborn animals such as chicks, piglets, kids, and lambs; smaller livestock like rabbits, which may be more sensitive to cold; and individuals in poor health which cannot make enough of their own body heat. While heating a livestock area can present risks, they can be mitigated by following the considerations above.

Photo Caption:

Heat lamps have varying levels of safety. In this image, the most expensive, safest style is on the top, and the cheapest, riskiest style is on the bottom. Photo by Michael Glos of Kingbird Farm. This photo was originally shared by the Cornell Small Farms Program.

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