Dairy Farming Now And Then?

By Kirk Shoen, Rensselaer County

2013 is well under way and we are starting to get an idea of how the year may shape up for farmers. There is no doubt in anyone’s mind that is in the agricultural industry, that the world is changing. It is easy to see, as you drive around the country side, that the local landscape has changed dramatically in the last few years. Even during the recent economic recession, fields once used for crops, were purchased, developed, and sold to homeowners in a matter of months. This is in stark contrast to the long gradual urban sprawl we have grown accustomed to. Local municipalities and agricultural land preservationists struggle to balance sensible community growth with the sustainability of modern farms. Farmers are buying land at an increased pace and at record prices to secure their own future.

The technological age is upon us, increasing crop productivity and yields. Many people have found it beneficial to purchase a computer program, smartphone app, or robot that can help in making daily decisions or even doing some of the work. Pressed for time and pressured for profits farmers are using many resources to make sound choices. While every agricultural venture provides valuable contributions, dairy is still one of the major industries that supports the New York State economy. NY ranks third in milk production, only behind California and Wisconsin. The following tables from the USDA-NASS Census [http://www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) show how area dairy farms have change from 1983, 1993, 2003 and 2013 is to be determined.

**Total Dairy Farms**

- 1983: 626
- 1993: 1,325
- 2003: 371

**Number Of Cows**

- 1983: 70,038
- 1993: 55,700
- 2003: 52,000

Continued on page 6
No more “Pork Butts?”

More than 350 different cuts of meat from both pork and beef are being renamed in an effort to simplify labeling for consumers. After two years of research, new names have been chosen that will help increase consumer confidence as they shop. For example, what used to be a “beef loin top sirloin steak, boneless” will now be labeled simply “sirloin steak.”

The names first were developed in the 1970’s with a focus on the processors and butchers, rather than consumers. The research that was done showed that consumers were confused by these names. Because of this confusion, shoppers didn’t always understand what the cuts were or what to do with them once they got home. These updates are in progress with the goal to have the transition completed before grilling season peaks. The new labeling will also include simple cooking guidelines, such as “grill” or “roast” depending on what the cut is best suited for. To see a list of the revised common names, visit http://www.meattrack.com/

This new classification should simplify things at the butcher’s counter and give producers an advantage, with the hope of driving up sales. If you are a beef or pork producer and find you have more questions, great websites to visit are http://www.pork.org/ and www.mybeefcheckoff.com. Both of these sites have great resources available including information on markets, industry news, consumers, promotion, fact sheets, and research. For example the Beef Check Off website includes a booklet on “Tips for Having the Beef Conversation” and “Beef Recipes.” These could be useful to you if you attend farmer’s markets or are responsible for selling your product. If you have any questions, Ashley can be contacted at arp253@cornell.edu or (518) 272-4210.

Source: Progressive Cattleman, May 2013

Steve Hadcock
Columbia County

Developing a Market Strategy

Do you have a marketing strategy for your farm? Some may answer; “I don’t sell directly to consumers, so I don’t need one.” That may be true, but each farm should consider a marketing strategy. Even if not selling directly to consumers, your farm is still “selling” the image of farming and all that comes with that.

Those that do sell directly to consumers should consider developing and refining a marketing strategy for their farm. Either spectrum of agricultural producer hopefully asks some
Top Quality Information is Critical to Agriculture Profitability

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In Rensselaer: 272-4210

David Chinery  Commercial Horticulture
Kirk Shoen  Farm Business Management
Ashley Pierce  General Agriculture

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Laurel Gailor  Forestry

Who Will Speak For You?

Someone passes out and whacks their head. Your mother-in-law falls and breaks a hip. The call comes in the middle of the night telling you about a car wreck.

All of these are situations that can cause a small bump in the roadway of your life. But what if something else is tied to the health crisis, are you prepared? Do any of these have a Health Care Proxy (a trusted someone designated to make health care decisions on their behalf)?

Do you have a Health Care Proxy? What about a Living Will? Do you know who will be authorized to make decisions? And know about your health insurance?

Continued on page 3
Who Will Speak........  Continued from page 3

If you said, your spouse – that is great except it is important to plan for worst case scenarios and often spouses are involved in the same accident.

It is a tough topic to talk about but not having the conversation may be even worse. The fear of the unknown for many of us can be worse than reality. Having a discussion and setting up a plan is not going to cause something awful to happen. The other fear that often paralyzes people is the fear of cost – how much? Where do I go? How do you do it?

But these documents can be easy to access, Health Care Proxy paperwork is up on the web right on the Department of Health’s website at http://www.health.ny.gov/forms/doh-1430.pdf.

The NYS Bar Association has posted a Living Will template http://www.nysba.org/Content/NavigationMenu/PublicResources/LivingWillHealthCareProxyForms/LivingWillEnglish.pdf.

Having some of this paperwork complete and copies in a known or multiple locations can help take the pressure off children/parents and spouses when something happens and decisions must be made. It allows the patient to still have a voice no matter the current condition, and that should reassure all of the people involved.

On The Lighter Side

A Humorous Look at Everyday Farm Life

My Trusty Adjustable Wrench

The one item every tool box must have is an adjustable wrench. No one tool in the history of tractor tool boxes has proved so versatile. In fact, the only tools Charles Lindberg brought with him on his famous 1927 solo flight across the Atlantic were a pair of pliers and an adjustable wrench. Now that's faith.

First of all, an adjustable wrench will fit almost any bolt or nut, even if it's metric. This is particularly important when you are restricted in the number of tools that can be carried in the tractor tool box. This limited space makes the ability of the adjustable wrench to do many different jobs particularly important. We learned the hard way to paint ours a bright orange color to make them more easily seen if dropped in the field.

In an emergency, an adjustable wrench can be used as a light duty hammer to drive out balky draw pins when unhitching implements. In a pinch, it can also serve as a hammer to drive a few nails. Trust me on this, any more than a few can be pretty hard on the fingers.

The standard twelve inch adjustable wrench will also serve as a pry bar just long enough to get your fingers out of a place they shouldn't be. I have also used one as fulcrum for a crow bar, to lift a fallen anvil off my foot.

When doing exacting carpentry work, an adjustable
You can rely on Farm Credit East for record-keeping and reporting

Sound financial management begins with reliable, real-time records and financial reports that enable you to identify key issues. Whether you're a small family business or a large operation with diverse markets, Farm Credit East can help.

For more information, watch our video on record-keeping services at youtube.com/FarmCreditEast.

The Affordable Care Act and Your Business

The new federal health care law called the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will soon change the way that businesses and/or employees will obtain their health insurance. Some employers will be mandated to provide health insurance for their employees. Others may want to offer insurance to assist in employee retention since there will be a tax penalty for any non-insured individuals.

Many sole proprietorships look for ways to find affordable health insurance for themselves and employees. ACA offers a 3-legged approach to resolve this problem: increased protection for the insured, cost containment and increased access to coverage and benefits through the exchange. Enrollment begins in October 2013, with a goal of providing health insurance for the 2.8 million New Yorkers who are uninsured. More than half of those work full time jobs!

Additionally, there are Tax Credits which some businesses may be eligible to receive. The benefit of the program may be a projected 66% reduction in health insurance premium costs, as well as the protections which will cover preventive care, no lifetime benefit caps, the right to appeal and a reduction in pre-existing condition exclusions.

To answer concerns regarding how ACA will directly impact you, Cornell Cooperative Extension in partnership with Community Health Advocates is providing free information to help answer some of the following questions:

What does ACA mean for individuals and businesses?
How do I know what I am supposed to do for my business?
Who can I talk to if I have issues with finding a plan or purchasing insurance?
What is the Individual Exchange for sole proprietors and individuals?
The statistics through 2003 show dramatic changes over a 20 year period. The number of farms has dropped substantially in every county. Historically high dairy counties have suffered heavy casualties, Rensselaer County 67% farm loss, Washington County 70% farm loss, Saratoga 73% farm loss and Columbia County with a whopping 78% dairy farm loss. A few brave souls have ventured into the dairy business, but the number of farms has continued to decline through 2013. Even though the number of farms has decreased, the number of cows and milk production has remained relatively unchanged. Steady, yearly increases in per cow milk production and farm growth may keep milk flowing in these counties, but only as long as they have land to support them. If you are in one of these counties or even surrounding counties, how does the area compare at this time. The question today is; is the large individual farm more profitable because it produces the same volume of milk as was once produced by a group of smaller independent farms? Because of the management, land base, geography, resources, and over all individuality of farms, that is a hard question to answer. Some farms have done very well, while others collapse under their own weight.

The following are a few key factors from Cornell University’s Dairy Farm Business Summary http://dfbs.dyson.cornell.edu/ that will help us understand if growth and technology has greatly improved the profitability and or sustainability of farms.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>No. of Farms</th>
<th>No. of Cows</th>
<th>Milk Marketed (thousands Lbs)</th>
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<th>No. of Cows</th>
<th>Milk Marketed (thousands Lbs)</th>
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</thead>
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<td><strong>52,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>876,500</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Put your business on the right track. Call us today!
In correlation with the local county data, the NY State DFBS data shows an increase in cow numbers and milk production. These increased directly with tillable acres. Farms have increased their net worth significantly, 87% over the last forty years. This can be expected with the increase in values of land, equipment, and animals. Debt per cow has increased steadily to pay for these expansions and it could be even higher in today’s numbers as farms struggle to gain resources for growth.

While the net worth of farms has progressed along with those of the businesses assets, farmers’ income levels have not kept up, they were 61% in 1993 and only about 7% in 2003. Will the dairy industry data currently being analyzed show an income level representative of what the owner of a multi-million dollar business makes in other industries or will the numbers continue to indicate that this is not the case. Keep in mind that these numbers are only from a few select years. Dairy farming has been on an increasingly shortening cycle of profit and loss. The actual 2013 profitability numbers may be a surprise to everyone. Overall profitability equals sustainability. The dilemma that we face is ensuring that farms are profitable. Regardless of size, if a farm is not profitable it is not sustainable. Like every business, farming is cyclical. As the small farms give way to larger ones, a few key players may control the market. If that occurs, incomes may increase and people may jump back into the business. For now, it’s hard to convince the next generation to take over a multi-million dollar obligation if it promises a small paycheck.

A bright spot is that farmers are definitely working smarter instead of harder these days. Technology has greatly improved their lives. Managers actually have time to manage vs. laboring constantly. Mechanical advances and robotics have taken on a lot of the once back breaking manual labor. Computers and electronics allow for real-time data collection and analysis. Employees are becoming more skilled and owners are using technologies like smart phones to be highly efficient. Global companies have taken notice and are spending vast amounts of money on agricultural research. They have realized that we need farmers because without them we are all doomed.

One of the many benefits of the DFBS is its ability to provide operations numbers over a long period of time. If you are one of the farms that completes the DFBS you can look at the trend for these and other factors for your operation. You can also purchase a copy of the Dairy Farm Business Summary http://dfbs.dyson.cornell.edu/. Remember it’s never too late to complete your 2012 summary.

Feel free to contact me with questions about the DFBS or any other agricultural topic, Kirk Shoen, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rensselaer County at (518-272-4210) ex 113 kjs264@cornell.edu. Source: “Dairy Farm Workforce Trends: Where Are We and Where Are We Headed?” By Cathy Wickswat.

### Feature Article

**Impatiens Downy Mildew In The Landscape**

Submitted by Chuck Schmidt, CAAHP

Downy mildew, caused by Plasmopara obducens, is a new threat to Impatiens walleriana landscape plantings. In the fall of 2011, downy mildew was seen in landscapes in CA, CT, FL, IL, IN, NY, MA, MN, OH, and WI. Since then, cases of impatiens downy mildew have been reported in nearly every state from the east coast to the mid-west and Continued on page 10
Ask Extension: How do I dispose of my on-farm Sharps?

By: Nancy Glazier, NNY Dairy, Livestock, Field Crops Team, Cornell Cooperative Extension. Ag Focus

Sharps disposal, needles and scalpels, can be a large or small farm issue. They should not be disposed of in the trash or dumpster, due to the risk of injuring or causing illness to those workers who handle the trash. This includes loose or container disposal. After medical waste washed up on East Coast beaches Congress took the initiative to enact legislation. The Medical Waste Tracking Act of 1988 defines medical waste as "any solid waste that is generated in the diagnosis, treatment, or immunization of human beings or animals, in research pertaining thereto, or in the production or testing of biologicals." This includes sharps.

Collection

The first step in the disposal process is finding a collection container. Commercial sharps disposal containers are available, though they do not need to be purchased. A question to ask yourself, how many needles are used on-farm, to size your container. An empty laundry detergent, bleach or fabric softener jug would work, as well as a five-gallon pail with a lid. The container should not be breakable or easily punctured, should be sturdy and stays upright so nothing falls out. To protect others on the farm, the container should be labeled, "CONTAINS SHARPS". Keep away from children! Don’t use food (juice) containers as an added safety factor. To save space, syringes may be disposed of separately. Take care not to stick yourself removing the needle from the syringe. A pair of pliers works to do this.

Disposal

When the sharps container gets nearly full, it is time to dispose of it. There are some options; some are free while others are fee based. Free ones first.

Sharps are sharps, whether human or veterinary use. NYS Department of Health has a directory of locations that offer free sharps disposal. Hospitals, nursing homes, some pharmacies are listed by county. This program was established to curtail the reuse of needles to prevent the spread of AIDS. Take advantage of the free service. Here’s the link: http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/harm_reduction/needles_syringes/sharps/docs/alternate_sites.pdf. This directory was updated February 2012.

NYSDEC website lists municipalities that hold Household Hazardous Waste Collection Programs. These may be annual events; a few are available year-round by appointment. Here’s the web listing: http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8780.html. These are usually free.

Many veterinary clinics for a fee will collect and dispose of sharps. Check with your vet to see if they offer this service. Some programs are available where a container is purchased and for a fee the container is mailed back for disposal. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for this service. One example is: http://www.sharpsdisposal.com/.

One last option here may be to purchase a needle destruction device. Search for that phrase and check out those options.

And as always, if you don’t have internet access or if you have questions regarding any of this, call your local extension office or Tom Gallagher 518-765-3511.
Pasture Management Tips:
By: Karen Hoffman, NYS Grazing Specialist, Ag Focus

Taking a pasture sample is usually a good idea a few times during the grazing season. The results will help you to determine if your management needs fine tuning, if your animals are getting adequate nutrition, and may flag some soil nutrient needs. This is true regardless of which kind, class, or species of livestock you have on your farm.

After the first rotation, when the pasture is really beginning to grow quickly, is a good time to sample. The spring flush is usually very high quality feed, but if temperatures are too cold, the sky is not sunny enough, or rainfall is inadequate, the quality may not be as good as expected.

To sample, “graze” a paddock that is the correct height (6 to 8 inches) and that your animals will be in soon. If the pasture doesn’t taste very good...oh, wait, you shouldn’t actually eat it! Use your hand to graze the pasture as your animals would, selecting plants that you know they would and avoiding those you know they won’t eat. Collect a large number of handfuls from across the paddock, and put them in a plastic bag. Be sure to compact the sample as much as possible so you maximize the amount of forage in the bag - since it’s only about 20% dry matter, the lab needs a bigger volume to run the analysis on. If you can’t take the sample directly to the lab, freeze it for 12 to 24 hours before putting the sample in the mail. This stops the plant from continuing to photosynthesize, and prevents it from respiring - both of which can change the analysis results. Next month we’ll share a bit on how to interpret the results of your pasture sample.

Help us Meat the Need
Do you have an animal you plan to cull?
Right now we have additional funding available to help cover the processing costs for donated culled animals including:
- cows (steers and dairy)
- sheep
- pigs
- chickens

Help us Meat the Need, the Food Bank will arrange for a USDA processor to handle the animal. The Food Bank will cover transportation costs and the cost of the processing, you just don’t own the animal.

Would you like more information? Please contact our Food Industry staff at 518.286.3691 and they will be more than happy to arrange a donation and answer any questions you may have.

Joanne Dwyer, ext. 225 or joanned@regionalfoodbank.net
Jennifer Jennings, ext. 286 or jenniferj@regionalfoodbank.net

The Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York works with farmers and other food industry donors in 25 counties to prevent the waste of unmarketable food and distribute it to over 5,000 nonprofit programs. In 2014, the Food Bank distributed over 27.7 million pounds of food and grocery items to these programs, a 45% increase since 2008.
Impatiens Downy...... Continued from page 7 the western coast states. In some areas, particularly in droughty parts of the country, the disease was not widespread in 2012, though in many others the effects were devastating, resulting in numerous landscape failures and replanting. All cultivars of Impatiens walleriana (standard garden impatiens, including double impatiens and mini-impatiens) as well as any I. walleriana interspecific hybrids (such as Fusion® and Butterfly® impatiens) are susceptible. I. balsamina (balsam impatiens or garden balsam) are also susceptible.

New Guinea impatiens, Impatiens hawkeri, as well as hybrids such as SunPatiens® are not susceptible to impatiens downy mildew, nor are other garden plants. Other plants can be susceptible to different downy mildew pathogens, but are not susceptible to the impatiens downy mildew caused by P. obducens. In host range trials conducted at the Long Island Horticultural Research & Extension Center, heavy downy mildew sporulation was seen on Impatiens hochstetteri and sporulation was also seen associated with small leaf spots on I. flanaganiae, I. capensis, I. auricoma, and I. arguta. Leaf samples have been sent to USDA-ARS for molecular analysis to see if the downy mildew affecting these other impatiens is genetically identical to the strains troubling I. walleriana.

Early symptoms on I. walleriana can be very subtle. Look for a slight stippling or chlorosis (yellowing) of the leaves. These symptoms might appear similar to a nutritional deficiency or spider mite injury. Leaves can flag or curl downward, sometimes giving the appearance that the plants need to be watered. Under humid conditions, you will see a coating of white-colored sporulation on the undersurfaces of some leaves. Sporulation may not always be present or easy to find: look closely at any chlorotic or downward curled leaves. If infected when young, plants will appear stunted; in advanced stages, plants will drop their leaves and flowers and the stems will collapse. Symptoms on I. balsamina appear as discrete leaf spots with corresponding sporula-
tation on the leaf undersides.

Early symptoms of leaf chlorosis and curling

Sporulation on undersides of infected leaves

Leaf drop symptoms.

(All Photos: Margery Daughtrey)

Information about impatiens downy mildew in the landscape and considerations for management:

- Downy mildew can spread to healthy impatiens plants via water splash from nearby infected plants, windborne spores from infected plants in nearby landscapes, or from oospores that have survived overwinter in the soil.
- It is not yet definitively known how far the windblown downy mildew spores can spread; at a minimum the spores can spread hundreds of yards, though it is possible that the spores can spread many miles. It is also not yet known exactly how long oospores of Plasmopara obducens will survive in the soil. Oospores of other species of Plasmopara are known to be viable for 5-10 years.
- Impatiens should not be planted in a landscape in which impatiens downy mildew has been previously found. Due to how widespread and destructive impatiens downy mildew was in our local landscapes last season, it should be considered very risky to plant large plantings of impatiens – consider planting plants other than garden impatiens. Remember that New Guinea impatiens and other garden plants are not susceptible to impatiens downy mildew. See Continued on page 12
Impatiens Downy...... Continued from page 11
http://ccesuffolk.org/floriculture-program for some suggestions for other shade plants.

- If garden impatiens are planted in a landscape, watch carefully for symptoms of yellowing foliage or stunting, look for the diagnostic white sporulation on the undersurface of leaves. Sporulation can often be found when there are no other obvious symptoms. If found, entirely remove and dispose of infected plants—it is not recommended to compost the infected plant material.

- Downy mildew thrives in moist or humid conditions. New infections will occur when there are long periods of leaf wetness. Overhead irrigation (especially night-time irrigation), crowded plant spacing, shading, or any condition that results in long periods of leaf wetness will increase the risk of infection and the rate of disease development and spread. Plants with limited exposure to these conditions will have a better chance of remaining healthy, but are not completely free of risk.

- Once an impatiens plant is infected it will not recover, though speed of disease progression will depend on environmental conditions. Fungicides with activity for downy mildew might offer protection for healthy plants, but would need reapplication for season-long management. Plants treated with certain fungicides before leaving the production greenhouse will be protected, but only for as long as the fungicide activity lasts.

- For additional pictures of symptoms and more information on Downy Mildew visit: http://ccesuffolk.org/floriculture-program (scroll down to Fact Sheets and Information). Also visit the resources posted by the American Floral Endowment at www.endowment.org/afe-news/press-releases/221-controlling-downy-mildew-on-impatiens.html.

3/14/13 Nora Catlin1 and Margery Daughtrey2
This fact sheet is available in color online at: http://ccesuffolk.org/floriculture-program (Scroll down to ‘Fact Sheets and Information’)

Washington County Crowns New Dairy Princess Team!
On Friday, April 26 during the 48th Annual Washington County Dairy Princess Pageant, Alison Parrott of Hartford was crowned the 2013-2014 Dairy Princess. Emily Campbell of Hebron was named Alternate Dairy Princess.

Before a crowd at the Hartford Firehouse and after a dinner catered by What’s Cookin?, the candidates gave a speech on the “Wonderful World of Dairy” and each answered an impromptu question. The daughter of Jeff Parrott and Linda Parrott-Fuller, Alison who is a junior at Hartford Central, spoke on how she realized the need for educating kids and the public about where milk comes from. Emily, a Granville Central junior and daughter of Brian and Mary Kay Campbell, gave a speech about growing up on a dairy
farm and appreciating all of the effort that goes into the production of milk.

Outgoing Dairy Princess Breana Scribner of Argyle, discussed all that she had learned during her year and celebrated by thanking the 48 Dairy Ambassadors who help at various promotions and functions around the county.

Courtney Luskins, NYS Dairy Princess and Rensselaer County resident, was also on hand to assist with the dairy promotion message and pass out some promotional door prizes.

Please look for the Washington County Dairy Princess Team of Alison and Emily as they visit activities and promotions around the area and appear in the newspapers and radio. And as always, we encourage you to enjoy your 3 servings of dairy every day!

The new 2013-2014 Dairy Princess Team, Dairy Princess Alison Parrott of Hartford (left) and Dairy Princess Alternate Emily Campbell of Hebron, pose with outgoing Dairy Princess Breana Scribner.

Ration Article
Are Your Cows Overstocked?
By Phil Durst, Michigan State University Extension

Does it really matter if cows are overstocked in a pen? Research shows that there are several ways in which overcrowding negatively impacts cows.

How different is the feed at various locations along the feed bunk? That was one of the measures reported at a Michigan State University Extension meeting of a TMR audit performed by feed company representatives on a local farm. At the time, I thought it was interesting, but did not appreciate how significant it can be.

Combine variation in feed quantity or quality along a feed bunk with overcrowding in a pen, and you will get competition with winners and losers. Julie Huzzey from the University

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Insurance coverage options to fit your needs.
As an agribusiness professional, you need flexible, tailored insurance coverage that addresses specific exposures and goals. Your Farm Family agent will help you prioritize and evaluate coverage options so you can make decisions that best meet your needs and budget.

<table>
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<th>Property/Casualty Insurance Products:</th>
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For more information contact:
Eric J. DeSimone, CLU
(518) 877-0525
258 Ushers Road, Suite 200 Clifton Park, NY 12018
*Providing agricultural insurance services for 25 years*
Spreading Out A 6-inch Layer for Packing Bunks

Aaron Gabriel, CAAHP

There are a few things that are critical to properly packing a bunk silo—tractor weight, time spent packing, and spreading truck-loads of forage into a six-inch layer before packing. How do you know you have spread the load of forage six inches?? The table below should be helpful. Simply calculate your truck volume in cubic feet by multiplying the box width, height, and length. Then determine from the table how wide and long you need to spread each load to get a layer six inches deep. Then pack like a maniac to preserve all your hard work. Fifteen pounds of dry matter per cubic

Huzzey reported that increased cortisol may change energy metabolism and result in higher NEFA (non-esterified fatty acids) levels.

One method that cows compensate for overcrowding at the feed bunk is to consume feed at a faster rate while spending less time at the feed bunk. While dry matter intake may not decrease in these cows, the effectiveness of the cow in nutrient absorption and digestibility may be reduced significantly due to the slug feeding.

Studies by Huzzey also showed when the stalls are limited, cows will lay down at the expense of spending time at the feed bunk. For instance, when cows in overstocked groups—in this case by 50 percent—return from milking, they are more likely to go lay down than to go to the feed bunk. In fact, they lay down 13 minutes sooner than cows did where the density of cows per stall was 1:1.

When space is limited, cows will attempt to displace cows standing at the feed bunk by head butting. Animals in a group may be classified as those who are “less successful” at displacing others (they are more often displaced), “moderately successful” (they are as likely to displace others as to be displaced) or “highly successful” (displace others more often than they are displaced). In a mixed group, the low success group is generally heifers. The low success group has higher cortisol levels and is the group that will benefit the most from regrouping or lower density.

Short-term overcrowding may be necessary in expanding herds or when heifer calf births are high. Cattle can compensate to some degree for these times unless they are vulnerable for other reasons. Transition groups should be considered high risk and overcrowding either the feed bunk or stall space should be avoided. Close up dry cows may not be able to compensate or recover from competition for feeding or lying space.

It can be tempting to overcrowd groups regularly, but we are learning more about the negative impacts on cow health, welfare and ultimately cow productivity and profitability. Give your cows the space they need, and they will give you the performance you need. Management should change in order to reduce the impacts of overcrowding. More frequent feeding and pushing up of feed, more frequent scraping of manure and good bed maintenance should be priorities.
foot (about 42 lbs at 35% moisture) should be your minimum goal of silage density.

**SIX-inch layer width & length for a given truck volume**
(truck box volume = ft wide X ft high X ft long)

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**What’s So Different about Biodiesel Fuel? (Part 1)**

[from Renewable and Alternative Energy Fact Sheet (Penn State Univ.)]
Submitted by Aaron Gabriel, CAAHP

(With new opportunities to buy biodiesel in the region, I will be submitting a series of articles on biodiesel. For more information go to [http://extension.psu.edu/energy/biofuels](http://extension.psu.edu/energy/biofuels) and [http://www.extension.org/pages/28783/farm-energy-biodiesel-table-of-contents].)

**Introduction**

Biodiesel is a liquid fuel that is created by chemically processing vegetable oil and altering its properties to make it perform more like petroleum diesel fuel. It was first evaluated seriously in the late 1970s but was not widely adopted at that time. The topic of biodiesel fuel has been receiving a great deal of interest recently, and both large- and small-scale manufacturers have started production at locations throughout the state. However, many people are still uncertain about whether biodiesel is a reliable, safe fuel to use for diesel engines. This fact sheet explains the major differences between biodiesel and petroleum diesel (also called petrodiesel), including information about biodiesel additives and blends. The companion fact sheet in this series Using Biodiesel Fuel in Your Engine explains the performance you can expect when running an engine on biodiesel.
Properties of Biodiesel Versus Petroleum Diesel

The sizes of the molecules in biodiesel and petroleum diesel are about the same, but they differ in chemical structure. Biodiesel molecules consist almost entirely of chemicals called fatty acid methyl esters (FAME), which contain unsaturated “olefin” components. Low-sulfur petroleum diesel, on the other hand, consists of about 95 percent saturated hydrocarbons and 5 percent aromatic compounds.¹

The differences in chemical composition and structure between petroleum diesel and biodiesel result in several notable variations in the physical properties of the two fuels. The seven most significant differences are as follows:

1. Biodiesel has higher lubricity (it is more “slippery”) than petroleum diesel. This is a good thing, as it can be expected to reduce engine wear.

2. Biodiesel contains practically no sulfur. This is also a good thing, as it can be expected to result in reduced pollution from engines using biodiesel.

3. Biodiesel has a higher oxygen content (usually 10 to 12 percent) than petroleum diesel. This should result in lower pollution emissions. But, relative to petroleum diesel, it causes slightly reduced peak engine power (~4 percent).

4. Biodiesel tends to thicken and “gel up” at low temperatures more readily than petroleum diesel. Some types of oil are more of a problem than others. This is a concern, especially for the cold winters that are typical to Pennsylvania.

5. Biodiesel is more likely to oxidize (react with oxygen) to form a semisolid gel-like mass. This is a concern, especially for extended fuel storage and when using engines that are only operated occasionally (such as standby power generators). A good method for storage is to use a dry, semi-sealed, cool, light-tight container.

6. Biodiesel is more chemically active as a solvent than petroleum diesel. As a result, it can be more aggressive to some materials that are normally considered safe for diesel fuel.

7. Biodiesel is much less toxic than petroleum diesel. This can be a real benefit for spill cleanups.

The quality of petroleum diesel fuel tends to be more uniform and reliable, especially when compared to small-scale production of biodiesel where quality control may or may not have been good. Petroleum diesel can vary in quality from plant to plant or from region to region, but the variations are typically much smaller. Poor-quality biodiesel fuel can lead to many problems in engine performance, and care should be taken to ensure that your fuel is of good quality (see the Renewable and Alternative Energy Fact Sheet: Using Biodiesel Fuel in Your Engine). Biodiesel that conforms to ASTM standard D6751 should be of a consistent, high quality.

In all fairness, we should mention that petroleum diesel has also demonstrated problems with oxidative stability and low-temperature performance, although biodiesel, at present, seems to be more susceptible.

On Farm Cooling Grant Available

Cornell Cooperative Extension is once again making farmers aware of a NYS grant for building a cooling space on their farm. Enough grant funds have been obtained to fund up to 60 farms with a 50/50 match program up to $3000.

Applicants who are interested should complete a fairly short but comprehensive 4-page application. A cover letter with relevant contact info and other details is posted at http://bit.ly/FarmCoolingProject. Or call Sandy at 518-380-1498 to receive it in the mail or by fax.

For help answering technical questions with the application, see the contact info on the cover letter for the CCE specialist in your particular commodity/region.

All applications should be returned to: Cooling Project, CCE Wayne, 1581 Rte 88N, Newark, NY 14513 or emailed to wayne@cornell.edu. Overall questions about the project can be directed to Beth Claypoole, Executive Director CCE Wayne County, 315-331-8415. The deadline is June 14, 2013.
2013 Cornell Maple Program Webinar Marketing Series
with Stephen Childs, NYS Maple Specialist

The 2013 Cornell Maple Program Webinar Marketing Series will feature market planning and developing a maple marketing plan. This program is sponsored by the New York State Farm Viability Institute.

For those who have joined us in the past, the software used for webinars by Cornell has changed. You can join the webinar by going to https://cornell.webex.com/cornell/onstage/g.php?ta=a&d=643804515 You will be asked to register which will include your basic contact information. If you are asked for a password it is simply “maple” no caps or quotes just the word maple. Each program will run from 7 to 8 pm and with the new software it should be viewable on smart phones, tablets or similar equipment. This year’s webinars are very similar to the series conducted in 2012.

- May 2nd Maple Marketing Webinar I – Maple Marketing Overview
- June 6th Maple Marketing Webinar II – Getting started on a maple marketing plan
- July 11th Maple Marketing Webinar III – Developing your plan for marketing from the farm
- August 22 – September 2 – Maple Marketing Experience Opportunity at the New York State Fair
- September 5th Maple Marketing Webinar IV – Developing your plan for retail marketing on the road
- October 3rd Maple Marketing Webinar V – Developing your plan for wholesale marketing
- November 7th Maple Marketing Webinar VI – Developing your plan for bulk marketing
- December 5th Maple Marketing Webinar VII – Developing your plan for keeping in contact with your customers
- Past webinars can be viewed by going to www.cornellmaple.com

June 3 - 6, 2013 Cornell University’s 2013 Dairy Nutrition Shortcourse at Miner Institute, Chazy, New York. Registration opens: Monday, April 15, please visit http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/dm/dncourse/index.html. The Dairy Nutrition and Management shortcourse is designed to expose nutritionists, allied industry professionals, and veterinarians to the latest research and its application within dairy nutrition and management. This shortcourse is taught in odd-numbered years at Miner Institute by Cornell faculty, Miner Institute staff, and guest speakers from other Universities.

June 5, 2013 PASTURE GRAZING FOR PROFIT at the USDA Service Center, Route 66, Ghent, NY from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, please contact Eileen at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties, (518) 622-9820. If you plan to stay for lunch, the cost is $10/person. Please bring payment the day of the workshop.

The Hudson Mohawk Resource Conservation and Development Council, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Columbia and Greene Counties, Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, NYS Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative and Grazin’ Angus Acres is pleased to announce a great line-up including:

- Mick Bessire, CCE of Columbia and Greene Counties – Costs and Potential Returns of Grazing on Pasture
- Karen Hoffman, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - Nutritional Attributes of Well-Managed Pastures
- Laura Sagar, Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District and Jim Unser, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - Overview of Programs and Funding Available through SWCDO and USDA NRCS

After lunch, we will travel to Grazin’ Angus Acres, to visit a “premier” grass-based livestock operation in Columbia County, featuring a purebred Angus cow-calf breeding herd, along with the production and marketing of grass-finished beef, pastured chicken and eggs, and meadow-raised pork. The Gibson and Stark families will host our group on a pasture-walk and tour of their farm.

Continued on page 18
Around the Community

June 8, 2013 Spring Herb & Garden Day at McLane Audubon Center, 84 Silk Farm Road, Concord NH 03301. Please visit www.nofanh.org for more info.

June 13, 2013 Basic Farm Business Management Planning 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at CCE-Columbia Cty. 479 Rte 66, Hudson, NY. Helping your farm business achieve success. Registration is $25. For more info contact Gale at 518-765-3500 or Sandy Buxton 518-380-1498 or sab22@cornell.edu.

June 13-15, 2013 The 3rd Annual Wool Pool, at Washington County Fairgrounds, just off Route 29, Greenwich, NY. The Southern Adirondack Fiber Producers Cooperative will again be accepting clean white wool, white offsorts, and natural colored fleeces for re-sale to a large international wool buyer. More details will follow. Large farms, please plan to bring your wool on Thursday. Farms of all sizes are asked to send a representative to help with the sorting and baling – this event is put on by a member-owned cooperative; and your help is needed!

Crop Insurance/Risk Management

Farming is a high-risk business. The Department has partnered with the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) to provide education opportunities to producers about crop insurance and risk management. Throughout the year, concentrated in the winter months, Cornell Cooperative Extension staff and other educators are offering workshops on crop insurance topics and are available at booths at all major trade shows in the state. In addition, educators can be scheduled to make presentations to producer groups upon request.

Our objective is to provide producers with enough information about crop insurance to make an informed decision about whether to use currently available crop insurance and risk management strategies.

Crop Insurance Basics
• Types of Crop Insurance
• Crop Insurance and Disaster Payments
• Is My Crop Covered in My County?
• Federal Subsidies for Crop Insurance Premiums
• Finding an Agent
• Important Deadlines!

Insurance Information by Crop
• Perennial Fruit (Apples, Grapes, Peaches)
• Field Crops (Corn, Soybeans)
• Vegetables (Cabbage, Dry Beans, Green Peas, Onions, Potatoes, Processing Beans, Sweet Corn)
• Nursery & Greenhouse Crops
• Perennial Crops (Barley, Oats, Wheat)
• Pasture, Rangeland & Forage (PRF) (Hay, Forage, Pasture)
• Apiculture
• Dairy – Livestock Gross Margin (LGM)
• Beginning Farmers

Upcoming Events and Education Opportunities
For questions, contact your crop insurance agent, your FSA agent or Sarah Johnston - NYS Dept of Agriculture and Markets · 518-457-4531
### March 2013

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| JUNE 2013

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