Capital Area Ag Report
June 27, 2013

“When you change the way you see things. The things you see will change.” — NE Dairy Business, p. 8, 9/07

Announcements

**DAIRY TOURS**

**Wednesday, July 10, 1 to 3 pm**—Hill-Over Holsteins— Fred & Donna Barringer, 7441 State Rte 22, Copake. “Details make the difference” on this 84-cow tie-stall herd. The sell their own bottled milk at their farm store & home delivery. *See the farm profile in this issue.*

**Wednesday, July 24, 1 to 3 pm**—Dutch Hollow Jerseys— Chittenden family, 101 Running Creek Rd., Kinderhook. High-quality milk marketed in unique ways.

**August**—one more tentative tour. Stay tuned.

Please RSVP so we have enough materials for you. Contact Katie Close (kec98@cornell.edu, 518-925-5806) or Aaron Gabriel (adg12@cornell.edu, 518-380-1496).

**Wednesday, July 24, 6 - 8:30 pm** - Soybean Marketing 101 - at the Carolina House, 59 Broad St. (Route 9), Kinderhook. Put on by the **NY Corn & Soybean Growers Association**, Karen Thorp, of DeLong Grain Company and Jeremy Forrett of Crop Growers, Farm Credit East. Karen will cover the benefits of grain contracting and how it can improve a farm operation’s bottom line, while Jeremy present how forward contracting and crop insurance work together. Attendance at this workshop will include a complimentary dinner, a chance win an Ipad mini, and a complimentary ticket to the NYCSGA Summer Crop Tour on Tuesday Aug. 13. **Attendees must RSVP by Friday, July 19th to Julia Robbins, juliacrobbins@gmail.com or 315-583-5296.**

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities
Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities
Weather Data—June 27, 2013

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Growing Degree Days (86/50) for corn growth stages:

- Emergence – 100 to 120 GDD
- Leaf development 65 GDD each
- Silking to silage harvest (68% moisture) – 800 GDD
- Silking to black layer (full maturity) – 1200 – 1400 GDD
FYI

Do you have garlic mustard in your forest land? Ethan Strayer, a graduate student at Middlebury College in Vermont, (estrayer@middlebury.edu) is doing research to determine what effect this weed may have on the forest understory. Please email him if you have a sizeable area of this weed in your woodlot that he can use for his study.

Corn: Corn is liking the heat and hating the water-logged soils. The Adapt-N tool for calculating the amount of side-dress nitrogen needed, based on rain and temperature has been adjusted to compensate for our unusually high amount of rain and nitrogen losses. On two fields, the PSNT nitrate levels were 5 ppm and 8 ppm—very low. Should you fertilize corn with nitrogen?? I ask this because nitrogen is easily lost in well-drained soils by leaching, and it is lost in heavy, water-logged soils by denitrification. The nitrate in the soil is converted by bacteria to nitrous oxide. Nitrous oxide (N$_2$O) is a very potent greenhouse gas. It is >200 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas—farmers and environmentalists alike despise this stuff. So, should you apply N if it will likely be lost? If the forecast says the rain will moderate in the next couple weeks, then apply N as usual. If rain will continue and you have well-drained soils, my suggestion is to apply small amounts of N in more than one application—give corn what it needs in the short term. Avoid losing N by applying several small doses. If you have heavy water-logged soils, you have to wait to get on the field anyway. If the rain does not end, then save your money and do not apply N that will certainly be lost and drowning roots will not be able to take up. It is a tough situation.

Unplanted acres? Last year we planted a 96-day corn on June 25 for some test plots and got 25 tons/ac of silage. At some point it will not make sense to plant corn. BMR sorghum-sudan will be a good alternative. It will have to be wilted before chopping. Since so much nitrogen has been lost from the soil, a dose of N will be needed. See the fact sheets at http://nmsp.cals.cornell.edu/guidelines/factsheets.html.
**Alfalfa:** The diseases that I saw were at a low incidence, but there were a few different ones. Harvesting is the best remedy, but leave 6 weeks between cuttings so that you do not stress plants more. Keep an eye out for leaf and stem diseases.

*Downy mildew—yellow blotches above and purplish/gray velvety growth on the leaf underside.*

**Soybeans:** What a difference two days makes! Last week at our soybean IPM field day, we looked at one field that was planted, then got two days of cold rain. And a second field that was planted after that rain. The first suffered from a low plant population and we found seedcorn maggot pupae in the soil where plants were missing. *(Do we rely on seed-applied insecticides too much?)* The second field had a nice stand and a population of about 130,000 plants/acre. Soybeans must be planted into warm soil (>60°F).

**Small Grains:** Grains are maturing. Check for head blight and develop a strategy to minimize any possible mycotoxin contamination.—run the blower high at harvest to remove shriveled seeds (they have the greatest concentration of mycotoxin); send samples off for a test before harvest so that you know what you have; harvest around head blight hot spots; secure markets for the quality of grain that you have (livestock markets for mildly contaminated grain).

*The wheat head at front and center in this photo is white/tan color and has head blight.*

**Grasses:** For topdressing nitrogen, I would follow the same recommendations that I gave for corn. If phosphorus and potassium levels are low in the soil, do not forget these two nutrients. They are needed to keep plants healthy, especially in these wet and stressful conditions. **Armyworm** have been found in very sparse hotspots around the state. Keep an eye out.

*Lepto leaf spot—spots begin on the upper leaves, unlike most leaf spots which begin on the lower leaves. A yellow halo around dark brown centers.*

**Storing large round hay bales:** The key is to store them on at least 4 inches of stone; minimize bale-to-bale contact; cover with a tarp, but put a spacer so condensation does not collect where the tarp touches the bale.
“Details Make the Difference”
Dairy Tour at Hill-Over-Holsteins
Fred & Donna Barringer
July 10, 1 – 3 pm
7441 State Route 22, Copake, NY

What strengths does it take to be successful in dairy farming? When asked to Fred Barringer his response, “Details, details make the difference. Everyone can feed and milk cows, but it’s all in the details.” When you walk onto this facility, the details show. The cows are nearly spotless with washed tails, clean beds and clean walk ways. And Fred does not compromise to produce high-quality milk which he has bottled for retail sales. He is proud to have his name on the label.

Since the 1980’s Fred Barringer has operated his farm, Hill-Over-Holsteins in Copake, NY. Hill-Over-Holsteins is a registered herd that is composed of 5 cow families. It is an rBST-free dairy, milking 72 cows in a tie-stall barn. They focus very strongly on milk quality. “Most important thing we do is milk.” said Fred Barringer. Currently there are a dozen dry cows and 70 replacements, which are all raised on site. The cows receive a TMR diet and are turned out onto 2 acres of pasture every night. They rotate 40 acres of paddocks, making sure they always have enough high-quality forage.

On a small farm, getting all the tasks done in a timely and efficient manner is a big challenge. Fred operates his farm mainly with the help of two Hispanics. Fred is involved daily on his farm feeding cows, milking, and clipping pastures along with many other tasks. The two hired men, Jose and Willie help him with milking, feeding calves, bedding and any other daily
chores. All the crop work on 230 acres is hired out. Fred maintains control of his crops and feed by purchasing all the crop inputs and paying two local farmers to bring in their machinery from planting through harvest and storage. One farmer plants and harvests the corn silage and haylage, which are packed into Fred’s bunks. Another grows, stores, and roasts his soybeans. A manure spreader and rotary mower are all the machinery that Fred owns for field work.

To capture more profit, Fred and his wife Donna, established Hill-Over Healthy & Fresh, LLC two years ago, to retail their bottled milk. Currently each week, one ton of milk is bottled at a licensed facility. Donna manages the on-farm store, home delivery, and farmer’s market sales. They have learned a lot about retailing milk. In the store, they also sell locally produced ice cream, cheese, yogurt, and maple. Retailing milk is now an important part of their business plan to improve profitability.

The July 10\textsuperscript{th} dairy tour will be a time for farmers to see how Hill-Over-Holsteins and Hill-Over Healthy & Fresh, LLC operate in a challenging dairy industry. The guided tour begins promptly at 1 pm and ends at 3 pm. The farm and store are located at 7441 State Route 22, Copake, NY, just north of the intersection of Rte 22 and County Rte 3. Please RSVP, so we can print enough tour packets. Contact Katie Close (kee98@cornell.edu, 518-925-5806) or Aaron Gabriel (adg12@cornell.edu, 518-380-1496).

This is what Fred’s barn looks like on a surprise visit.