“Happiness is a conscious choice, not an automatic response”. — Mildred Barthel

Announcements

Wednesday, May 7, 6:30 pm—On-Farm Hay Management Meeting—Evaluating and Managing Hay Fields—at Juniper Farm (Mary Menard & Larry Hume), Cassidy Ln, Shushan. ID weeds and desired hay species. Managing soils, hay crop, harvest, and pests. RSVP appreciated and for questions contact Aaron, 518-380-1496 (call or text), adg12@cornell.edu. RAIN OR SHINE. (DIRECTIONS: State Rte 22 to Co Rte 64, continue 1.1 mi, then go straight onto Perry Hill Rd; continue 0.1 mi & bear right onto Juniper Swamp Rd.; after 0.8 mi continue left on Juniper Swamp Rd.; continue 1.8 miles to Cassidy Ln on the right; Go up Cassidy Ln.)

Wednesday, June 11, 6:30 pm—On-Farm Hay Management Meeting—Conditioning Hay With A Macerator & Using Hay Preservatives— at (Don) Skott Farm & Equipment, intersection of Quaker and Grove Side Rd (Co Rte 109). Demonstration of the Macerator 6610 (made by AgLand Industries, Inc) which super conditions hay with its roller mill system to speed up drying time by one day with the proper weather. Also see and discuss propionate hay preservative applicator and use. RSVP appreciated and for questions contact Aaron, 518-380-1496 (call or text), adg12@cornell.edu. RAIN OR SHINE. DIRECTIONS: From Rte 7 in Pittstown, go north on Co Rte 109 (Groveside Rd.) for 2.1 mi , farm is on the left at Quaker Rd.; From
State Rte 67 in Buskirk, go south on Co Rte 103 (Buskirk/West Hoosick Rd) after 2.5 mi, turn left then right to stay on Rte 103; continue 1.4 mi, then turn right onto Co Rte 109, Long Woods Rd.; continue 0.8 mi and bear left to stay on Co Rte 109 / Groveside Rd.; continue 1.7 miles to Quaker Rd. intersection and farm is on the right.

**FYI**

N.Y. bans hunting of invasive pig—Eurasian boar sightings should be reported to local DEC office. You would think that you should shoot them, but if DEC has a trap nearby, shooting one will scare the others so they do not return to the area, or the trap. Read the full article at http://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/local/2014/04/28/new-york-eurasian-boar-eradication-hunting/8414445/.

Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management (http://icwdm.org/) is an excellent source of information.

“GPS Farm Sprayer” is a smart phone app that provides GPS guidance for $5. It is not completely accurate, but you can test it and compensate for its accuracy. Accuracy will depend
on your smartphone ability. It can make spreading fertilizer and other broadcast applications much easier. Considering that $800 or so is the lowest cost “light bar” I can find, this app may be just the ticket for small operations. I have used it and I like it. My fields are not square.

**Corn:** Remember that corn needs soil to be 50°F for germinations, but warmer is better. When soils are cold, the seed just sits there, which means there is more opportunity for insects, disease, and birds to get it. It is like the risk of going down a dark alley in a bad neighborhood. If you pass through it quickly, your chances of getting mugged are much less, than if you stroll slowly through and stop to dilly dally. Be as patient as you can in corn planting to wait for warm soil. We do not want seeds to get “mugged”. That can cost a couple tons per acre.

If you are adding zinc in the starter fertilizer band, then you need to limit the phosphorus in the starter to 20 lbs. P and Zn will bind together and become unavailable. If you need lots of P or Zn, then you will need to broadcast them as well as putting them in the starter fertilizer.

**Alfalfa:** It is getting late even for hay seedings. The Cornell Guides says that hay seedings have increased risk after May 1st in southern NY and after May 15th in northern NY. That is because the depth to soil moisture rapidly gets deeper and deeper as summer approaches. The root may not grow fast enough to stay in moist soil. No-till seeding can give an advantage, if all the other conditions are right. You need good soil tilth—crumbly, not-compacted soil, and the proper soil moisture at planting, so that seed furrow is not smeared and so that good seed to soil contact is created with the closing wheel.

I just bought a bag of grass seed and half of the weight is seed coating and half is seed. Should you change your seeding rate?? I do not have a good answer. Coated seed is supposed to have better emergence. Every pound of reed canarygrass seed is enough for 12 seeds per square foot. So, you would think that 5 lbs/ac would (60 seeds/sq ft) would be enough, rather than the usual 10 lbs/ac. Perhaps it is, **IF** every seed has a fighting chance. **Seedbed preparation and no-till drill adjustments are now more critical, if we are planting less seed.** You can find a table of seeds/lb at http://extension.psu.edu/agronomy-guide/average-bushel-weights.

I am seeing more random dead alfalfa plants in fields. The roots I dug up seem to have Fusarium. There is a very thin red streak going up the root. The crown is a dark, watery looking brown color and slightly soft. It should be a healthy white and firm.

![Healthy root on left, diseased on right.](image1)

![Healthy on left, diseased on right with yellowing crop and red streak.](image2)
Pasture: I see animals out grazing, but pastures still seem a bit short to me. They are growing faster now, but wait until grasses are about 6 inches tall before you put animals in a paddock for a brief grazing. Then move them on. Plants need to come out of dormancy and be active enough to send energy to the roots before grazing off the leaves.

Be sure to worm animals based on a program you have developed with a veterinarian.

Small Grains: Bill Verbeten and Mike Stanyard, CCE Northwest NY Team, have very good updates on small grain management in his “Crop Alert” newsletter. Find it at http://www.nwnyteam.org/submission.php?id=86&crumb=forages2.