Spring is a time for new beginnings. This photo was taken on May 19th 2014 of a newly planted hay stand. Hope you all have a great season!

We have a Pasture Walk scheduled for May 18th. Details to follow in the May issue of Farm Flash.

April 2018
Table of Contents

Page 3-4  Upcoming Events
Page 5  Customer concerns coming down the “pipeline”
Page 6  Bunker Silo Covers:
Know what you are buying when replacing tire inventory
Page 7  The light and plight of Agriculture in Oneida County
Page 8-9  Spring snow melt, runoff and rains:
Plan today for tomorrow’s floods
Page 9  Planning ahead for the unexpected
Page 10-16  Crop Shorts (checking your corn planter)
Page 17  2018 Respiratory fit testing clinics

"Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities"
Upcoming Events

Quick Books for Farmers at CCE Oneida County
Saturday, April 28, 2018, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Join us for an introduction to Quick Books. Upon attending you will be offered a $100 reimbursement for the purchase of your software.

You will be introduced to how Quick Books can be used as a management tool to help guide you in decision making for your farming business.

We will cover the following:

- How to choose preferences for your farming operations
- How to generate invoices and cash receipts
- How to record expenses
- How to input loans, and liability obligations
- How to prepare meaningful reports

Register by April 26th at www.cceoneida/events

Public Hearing for Oneida County’s NYS Certified Agricultural District
Open Enrollment, May 1st at 1:00 PM at CCE Oneida County

F.A.R.M. Program Help Session
April 5th 12:30 to 2:30pm at CCE Oneida County
Have you recently had or are anticipating your F.A.R.M. Program evaluation of your dairy operation? Do you have questions on how best to provide the standard operating procedures and other required documentation? What resources can you rely on to fulfill the required employee training? Make plans to stop in and have your questions answered and get some assistance in preparing for your upcoming evaluation.

Reservations are required by April 4th
call or email Marylynn at 315-736-3394 ext. 132 or mrm7@cornell.edu by April 4th 2018.

Calf and Heifer Management Webinar
April 16th 1:00pm -2:00pm at CCE Oneida County
This free webinar will focus on the different strategies for executing the best management practices for your calves and heifers. The discussion will be led by Mat Haan and Cassie Yost out of Penn State Extension. Reservations are required 315-736-3394 ext. 132

You’re invited to the kick-off event for the Leatherstocking Region Chapter of the National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC).
Saturday, April 7 @ 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Origins Cafe, 558 Beaver Meadow Rd, Cooperstown, NY 13326
information, and to RSVP, Kelly & Greta leatherstocking.nyfc@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATES
Friday May 18th Pasture Walk: Details to Follow
Friday July 20th Composting Livestock Mortalities. TENTATIVE
Oneida County Dairy Promotion is looking for nominations for 2018:
Dairy Farmer of the Year, Ag Business of the Year & Silver Cow Award
Send your nomination letters which include details for why your
nomination should be selected for the award to,
Heather Pritchard, 5736 Shedd Road, Rome, NY 13440 or
E-mail Hprit66@verizon.net
The deadline for nominations is March 30th
Awards will be presented at the Dairy Princess Banquet at
Vernon Downs on Sunday, April 29th.
If any girls are interested in Dairy Princess or Court,
applications are available online.

Tractor Safety
Oneida County: April 24-26 from 8:30-3:00 each day.
For youth and adults 14 and over We invite and encourage all farm and
nonfarm youth and adults who will be working on or around machinery to
participate in the program.
The program will be held at Clinton Tractor in Clinton, NY. The cost for 4-H
members is $25. For non-members the cost is $30. Payments can be made
out to CCE Herkimer and mailed to 5657 State Route 5 Herkimer, NY
13350. Jennifer Collins at jlr34@cornell.edu or 315-866-7920
https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/TractorSafety2018_221

If you are interested in participating in an Ag Discussion
Forum with our County Leaders please reach out to Marty
Broccoli x121 or Bonnie Collins x104 at CCE Oneida County
315/736-3394. Even though the structure of the “Forum” is
not yet established we would like to pull together names of
those who would be interested in continuing to shine the light
and address the issues of our Agriculture community.

4-H Clover Campaign at TSC
April 11th through April 22nd
Monies raised at TSC stores in Utica & Rome
directly funds the Oneida County 4H Program
Please purchase a CLOVER by donating $1 at the Checkout

Grantsmanship Training
CCE will be hosting a 5 day Grantwriting Training
April 9—April 13 each day 8:30 to 5
Are you working to change your community?
Will more funding help you create that change?
Join generations of social advocates who have achieved success by
attending our New York grant proposal writing course.
Learn how to get funding for your nonprofit!
You’ll learn how to do the research, make a plan, and secure the
funding you need.
REGISTRATION REQUIRED! By April 4th  www.tgci.com
Questions? Contact us at: registrar@tgci.com or 800-421-9512.
While it may seem that the topic of GMO free feeds is stealing the spotlight, it turns out there are additional concerns that consumers are paying closer attention to that may or may not affect current dairy industry practices and procedures. The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), shared the following 5 themes during the organizations’ annual meeting earlier this year. Take them for what it’s worth. At the very least, by keeping ourselves in the know we can better educate our future dairy product consumers and be better prepared to explain the how’s and why’s of an industry that is tasked with feeding a growing population. The emerging consumer issues to keep on your radar are as follows:

- **Pain Management:** As it relates to calf disbudding techniques. Consumers are looking for pain mitigation practices on farms. We know that polled genetics exists in the beef industry, will this genetic improvement make its way into the dairy industry at some point?
- **Animal Housing:** Stocking densities in dairy facilities.
- **Reproductive Hormones:** Consumers are looking to understand how they impact the cow and the dairy product.
- **Employee Safety:** Safety of farm workers and human resources will continue to gain consumers attention.
- **Calf Care:** As it relates to cow-calf separation practices. Supposedly, consumers in the EU are already asking if it is possible to keep nose to nose contact between dam and newborn for the first two months.

### Farmers, do you need help?

Need to take a sick day? Would you like to take a vacation or just a day away from the farm? **Farmsitters Chore Services** is made up of former dairy farmers. We will make sure your animals are well cared for. Call Terrance (315) 397-2593 References

### FOR SALE:

12’ x 32’ Greenhouse, sections are assembled and are ready to be transported to your site by you. The plans are printed from Mikesplans.com $700.00. Ashley Stove for sale, also. Contact 315 335 9143 if interested.

### No Health Insurance? High Deductible?

If you are 40 years old or older, The Cancer Services Program may be able to help you get screenings for, breast cervical or colon cancer. Call 315-798-5248 for more information.

### Contact Information for Local Agencies that support Agriculture

NYS DEC 793-2554, Oneida County Soil & Water 736-3334
Natural Resource Conservation Service 736-3316
FSA 315-736-3316
New York Farm Bureau with support from Northeast Dairy Producers Association and PRO-DAIRY continue to work with NYS DEC to address challenges with the new regulations for waste tire usage. While discussions continue and progress is being made, the implementation deadline (May 2018) is approaching and many farms are taking steps to comply. We should appreciate that DEC has indicated a willingness to use enforcement discretion, meaning there will be some level of flexibility in the enforcement of this regulation, at least initially. But the lack of suitable replacement options and uncertainty about what to do with existing tire stocks on farms as well as costs for all of this present serious challenges and are part of the ongoing discussion agenda with DEC.

Caution: It is important to understand that radial tire sidewalls may contain protruding wires that present a hazard to workers and could penetrate plastic covers and contribute metal into the feed supply. Consider if this risk is worth taking with your herd. Bias ply sidewalls without wires can be purchased, but supply and availability are reported to be limited. One producer reports noticing an increase in hardware disease after cutting a number of radial tires in half, and cases declined substantially after eliminating those from use on the bunker. We are also hearing that some receivers of used tires require them to be clean - not simply rain clean, but hosed off. To avoid rejected loads, be sure you know the requirements before sending old tires for disposal. Be aware that burning and on-farm burial of used tires is not legal.

For more general information on the topic, see the article Reducing Mosquito Breeding Sites When Using Tires as Anchors for Silo Covers. (Visit Penn State Extension website)

For more details on the new regulations for waste tire usage please visit the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation website at: https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/materials_minerals_pdf/enfdisltr.pdf.
The following words were articulated at the 2018 State of the County Message on March 8, 2018 at Daniel’s Restaurant, by the Oneida County executive Anthony J. Picente Jr.

“Agriculture is the largest industry in Oneida County and it continues to be an ever-changing one. In 2017, we completed our 10-year Farmland Protection Plan and have begun to implement the action items identified to assist the growth and sustainability of our farming community. We have increased ag-tourism and begun to institute a comprehensive zoning initiative called Ag-Friendly.

While we continue to make progress in some areas, there are still serious issues facing agriculture sustainability in our community. Like those all across the nation, Oneida County farmers are aging. According to recent studies, more than half the farmers in the United States are 55 or older. Together with Cornell Cooperative Extension, MVCC and other local schools and our UAS Test Site, we will begin an Ag in the Classroom Initiative. This initiative is aimed at increasing our outreach to school-aged children in order to engage them in all aspects of agriculture.

This will be a comprehensive initiative led by Mary Beth McEwen, executive director of Cornell Cooperative Extension. We will begin phase one this year by creating an Ambassadors in Agriculture program. Ag in the 21st century has changed. A focus has emerged on tourism and new technology in addition to traditional farming. This program will use local ambassadors who have excelled in agricultural careers to speak to area kids. This engagement will help us to begin to change perceptions.

In Oneida County there are more than 200 dairy farms with 18,000 milking cows and over 500 full-time employees. Our dairy farms represent close to 25 percent of the land mass in Oneida County.

Dairy farmers are facing obstacles including frozen credit from feed and seed producers and difficulty in receiving loans and financing. We hear horror stories of dealing with the paperwork governing milk regulations from the federal government and problems with worker’s compensation and insurance, as well as many other issues. We need to not only recognize how important this industry is to Oneida County but be willing to try and find creative ways to help create solutions. This year we will hold a dairy farmers forum with our partners at CCE and formulate an Oneida County Dairy Farmers Sustainability Plan. Maybe some of these issues are beyond our ability to solve locally, but we can create an agenda and advocate on our dairy farmers’ behalf to our representatives in Albany and Washington with a clear message and one voice. “

Cornell Cooperative Extension along with many of their partners will continue to work hard with our agricultural community to bring these words into action. However we need your help. If you are interested in participating in an Ag Discussion Forum with our County Leaders please reach out to Marty Broccoli or Bonnie Collins at CCE Oneida County at 315/736-3394. Even though the structure of the “Forum” is not yet established we would like to pull together names of those who would be interested in continuing to shine the light and address the issues of our Agriculture community.
Is your operation protected from flooding due to snow melt and heavy rains?
- Will you, your family and employee’s health and lives be protected?
- Will your operation be able to recover from a flood?
- Will knee-deep water submerge the early season corn, wheat, and soybeans?
- Will layers of sand and gravel washed from the river cover productive farmland?
- Will floodwaters compromise the safety of your livestock?
- Will lagoons and manure pits be able to handle the extra volume of water?
- Will your manure spreading plans be adequate to keep wells, waterways, watersheds and soils safe?

A good plan that covers the steps you should take before, during, and after a flood can minimize injuries and reduce damage to your operation. Without a flood emergency plan, you may waste time, not be able to get needed resources, and be less likely to make the best decisions. Whether CAFO status or not, good management and planning is essential for your farm’s long-term viability. Whether you have questions about your manure storages and spreading plans, or with streambank or waterway stabilization and protection, the folks at Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) can assist with technical recommendations.

How Does AEM work and what is it?
Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) is a voluntary, incentive-based program that helps farmers make common-sense, cost-effective, and science-based decisions to meet business objectives while protecting and conserving New York State’s natural resources. Our local SWCD in Oneida County leads our local AEM effort.

AEM is designed to work with farmers to further protect those important natural resources. By participating in AEM, farmers can document their environmental stewardship and further advance their positive contributions to their communities, our food systems, the economy, and the environment.

The AEM 5-tier approach:
AEM uses a five-tier voluntary approach to:
1. gauge interest,
2. assess existing stewardship and environmental concerns,
3. develop farm-specific conservation plans,
4. implement the best management practices identified in the plan,
5. and update plans and conservation practices over time.

The Approach:

**TIER 1:** A short questionnaire summarizes current farm activities, future plans and identifies environmental conservation interests.

**TIER 2:** Worksheets help farmers understand and document current environmental practices while assessing potential environmental concerns.

**TIER 3:** Local teams of resource professionals help farmers develop environmental farm plans to address concerns identified in Tier 1 and Tier 2.

**TIER 4:** AEM partners provide technical, educational, and/or financial assistance to help farmers implement priority practices from their Tier 3 environmental farm plans.

**TIER 5:** Opportunity to evaluate and update plans and/or implemented practices to ensure continued environmental conservation and farm viability.
Planning Ahead for the Unexpected
Submitted by Marylynn Collins

In light of the recent undercover videos from several Florida dairies attempting to expose supposed animal abuse, the American Dairy Association North East has made available the following recommended on farm practices.

1. **Do the right thing.** Above all else, make sure your farm is exceeding all expectations for animal care, cleanliness and environmental responsibility whether there is a camera on you or not.

2. **Hire the right people.** Do background checks, reference checks and ask for actual Social Security cards. Put new hires on probation and watch them closely. If it doesn’t feel right, it probably isn’t. If a potential hire is suspicious, share that information with other farmers.

3. **Empower your farm workers.** Let them know of their importance as a team member in protecting your farm, and that you expect them to immediately report any strange behaviors or actions, or if they suspect any undercover activity.

4. **See it? Stop it!** Use the “See it? Stop it!” program to enable employees to stop and report animal abuse.

5. **Partner each new hire with a trusted employee.** The new employee will learn best practices for your farm, and you'll benefit from another set of eyes watching them closely. Also, don’t be shy about asking other employees about the new worker.

6. **Set expectations for animal care.** If you don't have them, establish animal care protocols, such as the National Dairy FARM Program, and train your employees. Require ANY farm worker that handles animals to sign a document stating that they understand your animal care expectations, and ask them to immediately report any actions that do not comply.

7. **Stay in touch with us.** Our staff is trained to manage crisis situations and work with media inquiries.

Contact Beth Meyer, 315.491.3892 or bmeyer@milk4u.org.
Timely information all season long

Did you have a lot of yellowing in alfalfa in your second cutting last year? Low yields? Did you identify the cause to be potato leaf hopper and use an appropriate measure to manage the pest. CCE staff scout local fields each week, make notes of crop conditions, pests, field conditions and summarize the information into a short weekly crop report and make it available to any grower by email. Last year we reported a number of local fields with potato leaf hopper populations over threshold on June 23rd and options for their control.

In addition, staff have pheromone traps posted at key locations in the county to monitor flights of black cutworm, armyworm and western bean cutworm. Did you know that we had a ten-fold increase in western bean cutworm last season? And as if that isn’t enough our staff take hay samples for lab analysis at 5 locations each week starting the first week of May and report NDF, CP, NEL and height of alfalfa at each site showing the rate of change in quality each week until the second week of June.

How do you get this valuable information? Just call Cooperative Extension: 315-736-3394 ext. 120 and leave your email address.

Corn

2017 Cornell Corn grain variety trial results

This table summarizes the results across 4 sites for early and medium early corn varieties (1900-2300GDDs)

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<th>Brand</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Yield Bu/A</th>
<th>% Moisture</th>
<th>Y/M Ratio</th>
<th>% Stalk Ldg</th>
<th>% Root Ldg</th>
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Mean Yield: 234
Mean S.D.: 19
Mean C.V.: 8.3
LSD(.05): 16
11 Top Tips for Preseason Corn Planter Readiness
January 30, 2018 | Posted in Seeding & Planting Source: DuPont Pioneer

Go through this quick checklist before you start planting this spring.

1. **Level the Planter.** Check the hitch height. The tractor hitch height may vary due to the tractor tire size, tractor manufacturer and the type of planter (drawbar vs. three-point hitch). Refer to the planter operator's manual for set up. Make sure the planter's tool bar is level (vertically) or running slightly up hill. When planters tip down, coulters run too deep and closing wheels run too shallow.

2. **Check Bushings and Parallel Linkage.** Worn bushings increase row bounce which increases seed bounce. Stand behind the row unit and wiggle it up and down and back and forth checking to make sure bushings are tight.

3. **Drive System.** Check every chain. Kinked chains cause shock and vibration in the meter. Start with fresh, lubricated chains and check them daily. Include transmission chains, meter drive chains and insecticide box chains.

4. **Calibrate Corn Meters.** Calibrated meters can help add six or more bushels per acre. On finger units check brushes, fingers, springs, back plates and seed belts for wear. On air or vacuum planters check brushes, gaskets and disks or drums for cracks or wear. Replace all worn parts. A good cleaning will also help improve performance. It is recommended having finger units set on a MeterMax¹ planter stand.

5. **Double disk openers.** Test to make sure there is good contact between the double disks. Slide a business card from the top down along the front of the disks until the card won't lower any further. Mark that spot with chalk. Then, take the card from the back and slide it forward until it stops. Mark that spot and measure the distance between the two marks. If it is less than two inches, re-shim or replace the disks. In general, the disks must be replaced when they lose 1/2 inches in diameter.

6. **Depth wheels.** Check rubber tires for cracks and wear. Wheels should run tight against double disk openers to ensure seed furrow does not collapse. Reduced inner diameter gauge wheels help to reduce sidewall compaction in wetter conditions such as reduced or no-till.

7. **Seed Tubes.** Inspect seed tubes for wear at the bottom. If the tubes have a small dog ear flap on the left side of the seed tube, turn constantly. They should gently turn sporadically, especially through areas of thick residue.

8. **Closing Wheel System.** Consider an alternative to rubber closing wheels. For cool, moist planting conditions, take a look at running one spike wheel (15 inches) and one rubber wheel (13 inches). The spike wheel can help chop the sidewall improving fracturing and sealing in the tough soil conditions. For no-till, an even more aggressive approach may improve trench closing. Two 13" spike wheels with a drag chain provide the most aggressive action.

9. **Closing Wheel Alignment.** With your planter sitting on concrete, pull ahead about 5 feet. Look at the mark left behind the planter by the double disk openers. The mark should run right down the centerline between closing wheels. If a closing wheel is running too close to the mark, adjust the closing wheels to bring it back to center.

10. **Row Cleaners.** With higher levels of residue and more corn-on-corn, almost any planter can benefit from well adjusted row cleaners. Row cleaners sweep residue from the row, warming the soil around the seed trench, reducing wicking and seedling blight. Make sure row cleaners gently sweep residue - you don't want to move soil, just residue. Watch the row cleaners running. They shouldn't

11. **Get Organized.** Have your Crop Field Plans by hybrid/variety and populations organized; seed ready, planter monitors working/programmed and tractors/tenders in tune.
Hay

Alfalfa population checks  April is a great time to evaluate your hay stands. You can fashion a 2’x1’ rectangle out of 1” pvc and use it as a tool to measure alfalfa populations. Throw the rectangle and count the live alfalfa crowns in it at 5 locations in the field. Divide the number you counted by 2 to obtain the crowns /sq ft. If you have 5 or more crowns per sq ft manage the field for the alfalfa. If you have 4 or less crowns / sq ft manage the field as a grass hay stand or consider rotating to another crop.

Fertilizing intensively managed grass hay fields  On productive grass hay fields that are well drained and can be harvested most years in the second week of May, consider nitrogen and sulfur applications at green up to maximize yield and hay protein levels. We have cool season grasses in our hay stands that produce 40-45% of their annual growth in the spring. Nitrogen is usually the limiting nutrient for optimal growth and when supplied can result in maximum yields. Ev Thomas, Miner Institute, has calculated (ROI) return on investment for N applications over several seasons with varying prices of N fertilizer and his calculation is usually in the range of $1 worth of N fertilizer producing $3 worth of quality hay. An available source of sulfur applied with the nitrogen mainly helps with efficient protein production in the plant. A typical fertilizer blend for intensive grass production applied at green up will have 100 lbs of N and 10 lbs of sulfur ie 50lbs of ammonium sulfate (AS) blended with 200 lbs of area per acre. Consider treating your urea with agrotain or super U to reduce N losses from volatilization.

Selection of alfalfa and grasses as forage for high producing dairy cows  There are a couple of important discoveries from Jerry Cherney’s research studies of low lignin alfalfa varieties and grass selection for forage in high producing dairy diets. The chart below is from the first year of a trial conducted in Oneida county and it shows that low lignin alfalfa varieties have competitive yields and significantly higher digestibility than commercial varieties. He has written articles showing that even though they may be priced higher, they have an economic advantage.

![Chart showing NDFD % for HiGest and Pioneer seeding year harvests]

Oneida County, 2015

- HiGest
- Pioneer

Seeding year harvests, 2015

- 9% (1st year)
- 14% (2nd year)
- 7% (3rd year)
In addition he has shown that mixed swards have many advantages over clear alfalfa stands but that once the stand exceeds 30% grass (by dry matter) that yield advantages and quality start to suffer. He showed in studies using, tall fescues, meadow fescues, orchardgrass varieties and festulolium that meadow fescues were the best fit for the quality forages required by high producing dairy. The two reasons for the better fit were that meadow fescues ability to retain quality longer before cutting and that they are less competitive with alfalfa. The graph below shows how quickly grasses move above the 30%.

Grass tetany
Grass tetany is not very common in the northeast but since we are on the cusp of a new pasture season it seems appropriate to sensitize farmers to this potential problem. Grass tetany is a serious, often fatal metabolic disorder characterized by low levels of magnesium in the blood serum of cattle. It primarily affects older cows, nursing calves less than two months old, but it may also occur in young or dry cows and growing calves. It happens most frequently when cattle are grazing succulent, immature grass and of-ten affects the best cows in the herd. High nitrogen fertilization reduces magnesium availability, especially on soils high in potassium or aluminum. Grass tetany occurs most frequently in the spring, often following a cool period (temperatures between 45 and 60°F) when grass is growing rapidly, but also is seen in the fall with new growth of cool season grasses.

Typical signs of grass tetany begin with an uncoordinated gait and terminate with convulsions, coma, and death. Animals on pasture are often found dead without illness having been observed. The prevention of grass tetany depends largely on avoiding conditions that cause it. Graze less susceptible animals on high risk pastures. Steers, heifers, dry cows, and cows with calves over 4 months old are less likely to develop tetany. The use of dolomite or high Mg limestone on pastures and including legumes in pasture mixes will decrease the incidence of tetany in grazing cattle. In areas where tetany frequently occurs, feed cows supplemental magnesium. Supplementation increases blood magnesium levels and alleviates much of the grass tetany problem. Adequate amounts of magnesium must be consumed on a daily basis.
Small Grains

Winter Wheat  Scout fields for weeds to plan application of an appropriate herbicide if needed. Apply part of your N at green up and the balance just before tillering. Consider N rates up to ¾ lb of N per bu of yield goal.

Spring malting barley
Choose a variety that is adapted to NY.

Plant at 2 bu/ac at 1-1.5” depth. Consider all sources of N and apply a conservative amount of N like 20-30lbs of N/ac. Make sure you have a market before you plant.

Oats  We have increasing numbers of fields with crown rust. The alternate host of this disease is buckthorn. One of the IPM control measures for this disease is removal of buckthorn that is adjacent to fields where you produce oats. The table below indicates the susceptibility (S) or resistance (R) of some varieties of oats to crown rust from tests conducted by Cornell 2015-2017. Hayden Oats have good yield and resistance and will most likely be available in our area.
Soybeans
Most local growers use glyphosate resistant beans and only glyphosate for weed control. I made note of a very few fields that had a small number of marestail plants in them at the end of last season. Clearly they were glyphosate resistant because they were the only weeds in these fields. If you have noted the same situation in one or more of your fields you can use a burn down with 24D or gramoxone preplant to control these glyphosate resistant weeds and apply glyphosate 3 weeks after planting soybeans for broad spectrum weed control. A second choice would be to apply extendimax (new dicamba and glyphosate) to xtend beans (dicamba and glyphosate tolerant soybeans) or Enlist duo (24D choline and glyphosate) to enlist soybeans (24D choline and glyphosate tolerant soybeans).

EPA requires mandatory training for use of labeled dicamba products on Roundup Ready 2 Xtend soybeans. The training course takes about 1 ½ hours and provides dicamba use certification for pesticide license holders and applicators who would be spraying the dicamba products labeled for the crop system. A training session was held in Utica on March 28. You can find out if any other training sessions will be offered from Jeff Phillips, Monsanto, Chemistry Account Manager, 42 Botsford Street, Poland, Ohio 44514 330-757-6654 office cell; jeffrey.i.phillips@monsanto.com

Strip Tillage is a tillage tool that has row units that are comprised of row cleaners in front of opening disks followed by gangs of coulters and finally rolling baskets that are designed to clear 10-12” wide rows and till up the soil to a shallow depth providing an enhanced seed bed for planting. The residue clearing and shallow tillage helps to warm up the soil while providing some loosening of soil in the zone where the seed is to be placed. The picture below is an example of one yetter strip till row unit:

The major benefit is that 2/3 of the field remains untouched which helps it to retain and improve soil structure. Strip tillage also reduces the costs and delays of full surface tillage as strip tillers need much less horsepower per row unit and use much less fuel/acre and strips are usually planted the following day.
Strip tillage units have been equipped with fertilizer storage and application equipment to insert needed nutrients like phosphorus in bands that will be adjacent to where seeds are placed by the planter. Sometimes growers apply nutrients like potassium placed several inches away from the planned seed slot to avoid salt injury. Growers are combining these activities to avoid potential additional trips in the field reducing costs and potentially compaction. Strip tillers and planters should have the same number of row units and row spacing to facilitate placement of the seed in the tilled strip. Much greater precision is required with strip tillage and RTK GPS equipped with auto steer is required. You should work with someone on developing a partial budget analysis to determine the cost/benefit of using this practice on your farm.

**Blue River see and spray machine** has artificial intelligence recognizing the difference between crop plants and weeds and spot spraying only the weeds leading to a 90% reduction in herbicide use and lowering potential for off target drift. This apparatus is in final testing stages with plans to apply herbicides to over 200 cotton and soybean fields in the 2018 growing season. This unit below is an 8 row applicator that operates at 4mph. The newest machine is 12 rows operating at 6mph which can cover roughly 17 acres and hour.
There were changes to the worker protection standard last year that included the requirement that all agricultural workers must be medically evaluated and fit test for respirators if they are mixing, handling, or applying pesticides whose labels require respiratory protection; there is no exemption for owners or immediate family members.

The New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) is pleased to provide respirator fit testing clinics located in eight of the state’s nine DEC regions (New York City, Region 2 excluded). During the clinics NYCAMH will provide medical evaluations; respirator fit tests; and WPS compliant trainings on how to properly inspect, put on, take off, fit, seal check, use, clean, maintain, and store respirators. Clinic appointments are one hour long, and groups of 4 workers can be seen at a time. Medical evaluations, fit tests, and trainings are available in both English and Spanish.

Below are the two closest clinics:

**DEC Region 7, Central New York**
Counties served: Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Oswego, Tioga, Tompkins
Dates: Tuesday-Thursday, April 17-19, 2018
Location: New York State Grange, 100 Grange Place, Cortland, NY 13045
Accepting appointments: Monday, March 19 - Friday, April 13, 2018

**DEC Region 6, Western Adirondacks**
Counties served: Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, St. Lawrence
Dates: Tuesday-Thursday, June 5-7, 2018
Location: CCE Jefferson County, 203 North Hamilton St, Watertown, NY 13601
Accepting appointments: Monday, May 7 - Friday, June, 1, 2018

To schedule an appointment please call the NYCAMH office during the date range listed above for the clinic you would like to attend, and ask to speak with farm respirator clinic scheduler. We can be reached at either 607-547-6023, or toll-free 800-343-7527, Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:30.

When calling to schedule an appointment please have the following information available:
- Total number of people attending from your farm
- Name of each person being scheduled
- Language spoken by each attendee
- Make and model of each respirator to be tested

A respirator fit test ensures that a particular make, model, and size of respirator fits the wearer’s face and will meet the wearer’s needs. A fit test is specific to the make, model, and size of respirator. If a worker wears more than one style of respirator, including filtering face pieces, they must be fit tested for each one. Please keep in mind while determining who will come to the clinic that a clean-shaven face is a necessity for masks to be effective and for fit testing to be possible.

It is important to us that your workers be protected from any respiratory hazards. It is important to us that you be protected from potential OSHA or DEC fines. If you have any questions, please call us at 607-547-6023 or 800-343-7527.
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