Caring For Your Real Tree

Your real Christmas tree will last the entire Christmas season if you follow these few simple tips:

- Choose a fresh cut tree. The best way to ensure you have the freshest Christmas tree is to head out to your local New York State Christmas tree farm or lot.

- Fresh water - make sure you get your tree in water within the first 12 hours of bringing it home. If you're unable to do this, make sure you make a fresh cut one quarter inch up the trunk with a sharp saw. This reopens the tree stem so it can drink up water immediately. Your tree should have 1 quart of fresh water for each inch in diameter of your tree trunk.

- Monitor the water in your tree stand bucket daily and make sure your bucket never runs dry. Trees are very thirsty. They may drink up to a gallon of water a day. Don't allow your water level to drop below the fresh cut of your tree or the trunk may seal over.

- Keep your real Christmas tree away from sources of heat. This will dry the tree out quicker and you might have needle loss toward the end of the season.

- There is no reason to add preservatives. The National Christmas Tree Association doesn't recommend adding any type of manufactured preservative, Sprite or sugar to tree water. There are no studies that prove that adding any of these prolongs the freshness of your real Christmas tree. Subsequently, there is no need to drill holes in the base of your tree as it does not help in the uptake of water.

- Use lights that are low heat such as LED’s or miniature lights. This will reduce the drying of your tree, keeping it looking fresh and beautiful.

Visit Christmas Tree Farmers Association of New York to find a tree farm near you!  
http://christmastreesny.org/index.php

Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Steuben County
Governor Cuomo Announces
Extension of Real Property Tax
Exemption
on Farm Buildings

Extends Property Tax Exemptions for Next 10 Years on Buildings and Facilities Critical to Farming and Horticulture

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the extension of the state's Real Property Tax Law exemption on farm buildings, which will provide continued tax relief for New York farmers and growers. The Real Property Tax Law exempts agricultural producers from paying real property tax on buildings that are essential to the production of agricultural or horticultural products, such as temporary greenhouses, dairy barns and exercise arenas for horse-boarding operations.

"New York's agricultural industry is a major sector of our economy, and it's critical that we continue to support local farmers and growers," Governor Cuomo said. "This tax exemption will help New York's hard-working agricultural producers invest in their farms and grow their businesses, and as a result increase competitiveness and productivity for years to come."

"Agriculture is an essential part of New York's economy, and we are working to remove barriers to growth for farmers across the state," said Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul. "This new law lowers the property tax burden on New York farms, helping them to stay competitive in the global economy."

The Real Property Tax Law exemption was extended for the next 10 years and applies to newly constructed and re-constructed agricultural buildings through January 1, 2029. Since it was last renewed in 2008, the exemption for farm structures is estimated to have saved New York farmers more than $112.8 million. The exemption has helped support the growth of New York's agricultural industry by allowing farmers and growers to use the money saved to invest in their operations, purchase new equipment and modernize facilities, which increases the farms' competitiveness and profitability.

Agricultural buildings have been exempt from state taxation for decades, but the law granting the exemption was set to expire on New Year's Day 2019. The new law, sponsored by Assemblyman Bill Magee and Senator Patty Ritchie, amends New York State's Real Property Tax Law to extend the tax break and ensure it will remain in effect for the next decade.

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "We thank Governor Cuomo for signing this bill into law and we thank the State Legislature for passing this legislation. It extends a crucial tax break to our farmers and growers, who have historically relied on the exemption to improve operations, expand businesses and offset other expenses."

Acting Commissioner of Taxation and Finance Nonie Manion said, "Thanks to the extension of this property tax exemption, New York State farmers can now continue to receive this beneficial tax break. I applaud Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature for continuing to allow this valuable benefit."

Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Patty Ritchie said, "Our state's farmers work hard every day to produce world-class products that are enjoyed by their fellow New Yorkers, but sometimes they see minimal profit generated and, at times, can even experience losses, due to things like infrastructure costs. This vital legislation, which I was proud to sponsor, will deliver a property tax exemption for structures that play a key role to strengthen their bottom lines, which in turn will help bolster our state's agriculture industry for years to come."

Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Bill Magee said, "This property tax exemption law is extremely helpful to our farmers who rely on it to lower production costs. That, in turn, helps them to stay in business by keeping their farms in operation, maintaining our state's open
spaces, and growing food for New Yorkers."

New York Farm Bureau President David Fisher said, "This law, which keeps new farm buildings off the tax rolls for 10 years, is essential to encourage new farm investment, and it will make it more economical to grow family farm businesses. The tax savings is especially important in today's tough agricultural economy."

The law prohibits tax increases based on the value of construction or improvement of structures that are used for essential agricultural operations. That includes the cultivation, harvest and storage of commodities; the feeding, breeding and management of livestock; and housing for farm employees. Housing for immediate family members is not covered by the exemption unless the family members are non-owners and critical to the commercial operation of the farm.

A complete list of rules regarding the exemption can be found here https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/publications/orpts/farmbuilding.pdf.

**Dairy Groups Applaud Signing of New NAFTA Pact**

The trade deal includes reforms to Canada’s controversial dairy pricing system

National Milk Producers Federation

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ARLINGTON, Va. — The National Milk Producers Federation and the U.S. Dairy Export Council commended the Trump Administration today for signing the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which had been agreed to in principle on Sept. 30.

The USMCA will benefit America’s dairy sector by maintaining the overall U.S.-Mexico trading structure of the 24-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement, while incorporating new commitments to strengthen U.S. dairy export prospects throughout the North American region. Thanks to NAFTA, Mexico is currently the largest export destination for U.S. dairy products, accounting for $1.2 billion in sales last year. The United States commands a dominant market share in Mexico, with sales that amount to three quarters of its imported dairy products. Although the U.S. dairy industry had sought
deeper market expansion and stronger disciplines from Canada on dairy, NMPF and USDEC praised U.S. negotiators for their ardent efforts to address Canada’s pervasive trade-distorting practices. The trade deal includes reforms to Canada’s controversial dairy pricing system and some additional market access – key objectives of the U.S. dairy sector.

In addition to Canada-specific dairy provisions, the USCMA broke new ground by establishing a strong sanitary and phytosanitary chapter, as well as numerous provisions aimed at tackling the misuse of geographical indications that erect barriers to U.S. exports of products that rely on common food names.

Industry leaders said the ultimate impact of the agreement, which must be approved by Congress, will depend on how it’s implemented by the three countries. The U.S. dairy industry will engage with both parties in Congress to seek their support for the agreement’s passage while at the same time seeking assurances that Canada will comply with their commitments in a fair and transparent manner.

“The signing of the USMCA gives America’s dairy industry greater confidence as we head into 2019,” said Tom Vilsack, president and CEO of USDEC. “We trust that the administration will aggressively enforce both the letter and the spirit of the agreed upon text. Thus, it is imperative that the United States ensures that Canada implements its commitments in a manner consistent with the hard-fought transparency and market-reforming disciplines secured in this agreement.”

The dairy organizations urged the governments of the three nations to take the next step toward better trade relations by removing currently imposed tariffs on agricultural exports – as well as steel and aluminum – that have been sticking points in relations between the countries.

“We appreciate the Trump Administration for continually raising our issues of concern and fighting for a better agreement with Canada,” said Jim Mulhearn, president and CEO of NMPF. “This year has been a challenging one for dairy producers, who are dealing with continuing low prices and the damaging effects of retaliatory tariffs that have already cost them about $1.5 billion. With today’s signing, we encourage the administration to take a fresh look at other tariffs that are hampering North American trade, including the steel and aluminum tariffs still imposed on Mexico, and to continue making progress in striking new free trade agreements and resolving ongoing trade conflicts.”

**Project Helps Grape Growers Use New Technology Effectively in Vineyards**

By Christina Herrick
Senior Editor of American Fruit Grower® Magazine

At first glance, a vineyard might seem like a fairly predictable environment. But, think about all the variables in your growing area. Soil types can influence exactly how a canopy can perform, and that can impact yield. It’s not as simple as grapes hanging on a vine. As new technologies are developed to help automate vineyard production, it becomes increasingly important to understand how to use all the data generated.

The biggest challenge to integrating new technology has always been the question of how to use the data that is collected with sensors, drones, and other computer systems. And, this is where the Efficient Vineyard Project comes in. The project is a national USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)
Specialty Crop Research Initiative funded project. Terry Bates, Senior Research Associate at Cornell University’s School of Integrative Plant Sciences is the project leader. He is joined by leading experts to bring the grape industry into the future, including George Kantor, Senior Systems Scientist at the Robotics Institute at Carnegie Mellon University; James Taylor, Research Scientist at Irstea in France; Julian Alston, Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics of the University of California, Davis; and Tim Weigle, Senior Extension Associate with the New York State Integrated Pest Management Program and Cornell Cooperative Extension.

“This project is based in traditional and sound viticulture concepts: soil health, optimum light interception, appropriate crop load balance,” Bates says. “The goal of this project is to use new and available technology to spatially measure vineyard soil, canopy, and crop characteristics so [growers] can apply their viticulture knowledge appropriately across a vineyard block to achieve their production goals.”

What makes the Efficient Vineyard Project especially interesting is the multi-faceted approach to applying sensors and data in the vineyard. There are individual components of this project that pertain to different grape growers, whether you’re a juice, table, or winegrape grower. The research team is looking at mechanical shoot thinning, mechanical fruit thinning, variable rate lime application, crop estimation, and color development.

“There’s all these little components to this project all the way from sensor development to measuring,” he says. “Making sure the sensor is actually telling us what we want it to, then how it integrates with other data, and then how we put all of that together so it talks to machines.”

Application at Work
At the root of the Efficient Vineyard Project is effectively integrating precision agriculture into the vineyards while increasing efficiencies throughout the vineyard. The scope of this project includes precision vineyard sensing, spatial data, and economics. It is what Bates calls an “integrated look.”

“Managers are out there collecting these piles of pretty pictures on their desk,” he says. “They’re going, ‘What are we supposed to do with this stuff?’ This project gives them an option of ‘What can I actually do with this data.’”

For example, measurements taken with a Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) sensor are just an electric signal with viticulture information with it. NDVI readings can help assess the health of crops and plants. But, there’s no viticulture information included with the values collected. The Efficient Vineyard Project validates the readings with how they pertain to the vineyard itself.

“Part of our research is we use the sensors to measure and then we model what the sensors are telling us by going out and taking viticulture measurements against the sensor,” Bates says. “If I get a low NDVI measure, I’ll go measure the canopy and I’ll say ‘OK, I have 30% canopy fill here.’ That means something to a grower. Where if I have an NDVI value of .9, maybe there’s 70% canopy, and that means something to a grower.”

From there, the team can interpret the data and understand what it’s saying about vine balance, soil quality, or even about the berries themselves. For example, a grower can understand the soil conditions and vine size but also see that the crop load is too high or too low.

“There might be areas where I want to take off 0% crop, or there might be some areas where I want to take off 20%, and there might be some where I want to take off 30%. We build these spatial maps, and we add that map to a field computer that talks to the machine, which controls hydraulics,” he says. “The grower just drives the row, and the machine will speed up or slow down appropriately based on spatial data.”
Next Steps
Essentially, the Efficient Vineyard Project highlights the need for efficient farming with machines, doing the right thing at the right place, and at the right time.

“The problem with a mechanized vineyard is that you’re applying a uniform machine treatment across the whole vineyard in a non-uniform system,” Bates says. “This technology allows them to sit at a desk and say this is how my vineyard differs spatially. I can tell the tractor to do something different in areas A and C, and now I can manage that vineyard mechanically, variably, and keep it healthy and balanced and not have to rely on humans to do it.”

The 2019 season will be the final year of the Efficient Vineyard Project’s funding. However, the goal is to have all the pieces and parts in place to continue using what the research team has developed.

“My goal is to have all the tools in the toolbox in place so that we can continue doing the research after the project is over,” Bates says. “We’re not doing anything different than what a grower does in his vineyard in a particular area,” he says. “We take the approach of measure, model, manage.”

Growers interested in this project are encouraged to visit EfficientVineyard.com to understand more about the project. The research team also hosts webinars the second Tuesday of every month for growers interested in incorporating the technologies in their own vineyards.

Exploring Small Farm Anaerobic Digester Technology

Three dates to choose from: December 5, 2018 (10:00 am - 2:00 pm); February 7, 2019 (10:00 am - 2:00 pm); or March 6, 2019 (6:00 pm - 9:00 pm)
CCE Learning Farm, located at 2043 State Highway 68, Canton, NY

CCE of St. Lawrence County is offering three FREE workshops showcasing the research results from their feasibility study of anaerobic digester technology on small farms. The research was conducted by their partners at Clarkson University using the anaerobic digester at the Extension Learning Farm, which is fed both manure from a dairy operation and vegetable waste from their commercial kitchen. The digester heats a small greenhouse that starts seedling plants. They have a small scale vegetable only digester as well. The research and program targets small dairies under 200 head, livestock producers, horticulture producers and anyone interested in alternative energy. A catered meal is provided.

Participants within the North Country Region will be given a $25 stipend to help cover travel costs, those from outside the region will be given $50. To receive the stipend, participants will need to complete a pre/post-test survey.
Contact Bobbi-Jo Robar Administrative Assistant, bmr37@cornell.edu, 315-379-9192 x237

Springwater Agricultural Products
8663 Strutt Street, Springwater NY
585-315-1094 or 607-759-0405

Crop Production Materials, Foliar Nutrition & Adjuvant Sales
SeedWay, NK&WL, Seed Sales:
Corn, Soybeans, Small Grains, Forage & Pasture Grasses
Sun up until Sun down! Dave & Penny
Farm tested with farm-friendly prices.
Introduction to Hydroponics Workshop

Location: Room 110 at CCE Chemung (425 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elmira, NY 14904)
Date: Tuesday January 15, 2019
Time: 5:30-7:30pm

Do you have an interest in learning more about hydroponics? If so, please join us for this introductory workshop at CCE Chemung. Jake Holley and Dylan Kovach of Dr. Mattson’s Lab in the Department of Horticulture at Cornell University will be joining and giving us an overview of the different types of hydroponics systems out there today. They will also be able to help answer any questions you may have in regards to getting started in hydroponics. So, come prepared with questions and to take notes!

Cost to attend it $5 per person. Youth 12 and under are welcome and free. Pre-registration is recommended in order to ensure enough seats, handouts, and refreshments. For more information and to pre-register, please contact Shona Ort, Ag Educator with CCE Chemung, at 607-734-4453 ext 227 or sbo6@cornell.edu.

Please note that Steuben County is not specifically listed, but this is the closest event to us and we are welcome to attend.
To All New York Dairy and Livestock Producers:
David Smith, DVM
Director, Division of Animal Industry
New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

Many of you are aware that companies that have been picking up dead stock from farms have halted pick-ups. The NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM) is discussing the situation with the companies to determine a course of action regarding the disposal of downed and dead animals. In the meantime, New York producers will need to consider other methods of disposal. The following information is provided as guidance; however, these activities may also be subject to local law.

On-Farm Burial
On-farm burial may be a viable option for many farms. New York Agriculture and Markets Law has the following provisions for disposal. These provisions are applicable to all farms, including farms operating under a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) permit.

https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/AI/AILaws/Article_26_Circ_916_Cruelty_to_Animals.pdf

§ 377. Disposal of dead animals.
(1) The carcasses of large domestic animals, including but not limited to horses, cows, sheep, swine, goats and mules, which have died otherwise than by slaughter, shall be buried at least three feet below the surface of the ground or otherwise disposed of in a sanitary manner by the owner of such animals, whether the carcasses are located on the premises of such owner or elsewhere. Such disposal shall be completed within seventy-two hours after the owner is directed to do so by any peace officer, acting pursuant to his special duties, police officer, or by a designated representative of the commissioner.

(2) Notwithstanding section forty-one of this chapter, any violation of this section shall constitute a violation. This section shall not apply to animal carcasses used for experimental or teaching purposes.

The Department also recommends the following considerations for onsite burial:

- Locate onsite mortality management activities so that prevailing winds and landscape elements minimize odors and protect visual resources.
- Locate the facility down-gradient from springs or wells whenever possible; at least 200 feet from wells and open water; above the 100-year floodplain elevation; and avoid areas with seasonally high-water tables. (Please note that State law requires that the highest part of the buried animal must have at least 3 feet of soil over it and burial must occur within 72 hours.)
- Onsite mortalities should not be disposed in liquid manure storages.
- Any farm operating under a CAFO permit must carefully observe the provisions of the permit and the farms Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP), including working with their AEM Certified Planner.
On-Farm Composting

You may also choose to compost dead animals.

Farms operating under a CAFO permit that choose to compost must do so in accordance with the 2014 Cornell Waste Management Institute recommendations “Composting Animal Mortalities” http://cwmi.css.cornell.edu/composting.htm or the NY 316 NRCS Standards as planned in their CNMP.


In addition, under State law, up to 10 carcasses per year can be from off-site sources, and the animal carcasses must be placed within the compost pile on the day received (6 NYCRR Part 360-3.2(a)(4)). To handle additional off-site animals, the farm must obtain a solid waste management facility registration under 6 NYCRR Part 360-3.2(b)(3). The registration form can be found at: http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/52706.html#Application_Forms.

Animal Health Best Practices

The Department strongly recommends the following precautions:

- Be decisive when it’s time to cull an animal. Make the decision early while the cow is still marketable. With disposal being more difficult now, it’s more likely that every dealer, market, and slaughter buyer will be refusing marginal (weak/nonthriving) calves and cull cows for fear that they will not make it successfully all the way to slaughter.

- If chemical euthanasia is used to dispatch an animal on the farm, the option for composting might be restricted due to chemical exposure to birds of prey, scavengers and neighbors' free-roaming dogs. You must take precautions to be sure that dogs, cats, and wildlife cannot gain access to the animals being composted.

- Do not delay burial or encasement in a composting bed. The longer you wait to deal with a mortality, the more difficult the carcass will be to handle and the chances of spreading disease will increase.
MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

A Unique Management Education Opportunity

February 26 - 27, 2019
Doubletree Hotel
6301 State Route 298, East Syracuse, New York 13057

AGENDA

Topic Area 1: Lean Manufacturing  Lean manufacturing is a systematic method for waste minimization within a manufacturing system without sacrificing productivity. Implementation leads to better recognition and permanent solutions to disruptions of processes. Presentations will discuss how lean principles can be implemented on-farm for improved efficiency of daily operations.

Presenters:
Carl Lehrkinds, Lehrkinds Coca-Cola and Mountain County Distributing
Cheryl Jones, University of Kentucky

Topic Area 2: Joint Ventures - Governance, Compensation, and Exit Strategies  Agricultural producers form joint ventures to achieve higher economic value by working as a group on an activity important to each producer’s business. Whether or not the potential value is achieved hinges on effective decision-making and communications as they work together on their common interest. Presentations will discuss governance, compensation, and exit strategies related to joint ventures.

Presenters:
David Chattleton, Tiverton
Mike Fassler, The Family Business Consulting Group
Doug Claussen, K Coe Isom
Shannon Ferrell, Oklahoma State University and Ferrell Law Firm

REGISTRATION

Before February 1  After February 1
Full Symposium    $375  $425
One Day Only      $225  $250

Register by going to:  https://prodairy.cals.cornell.edu/conferences/cdep-symposium/registration/
Operations management on dairy farms is integral to the success of the farm business. The Operations Managers Conference provides an opportunity for people responsible for day to day activities on dairy farms to increase their management operations skills while interacting with other managers.

Four general sessions and fourteen choices of breakout sessions will offer valuable continuing education and applicable strategies for your team, whether their focus is cows, crops or people.

WHERE:
Doubletree by Hilton
6301 State Route 298
East Syracuse, NY 13057
Reservations: 315-432-0200

REGISTRATION FEES:
General Registration - $275.00
NEDPA Producer Member - $250.00
Extension, University & NS Government Staff - $200.00
Student - $100.00

All fees are per person and may not be split between members of the same company/farm.
Early Bird Deadline: January 1, 2019

Register by going to:
https://prodairy.cals.cornell.edu/conferences/operations-managers-conference/registration/

Questions: Contact Heather Darrow at 607-255-4478

Sponsorship and exhibit opportunities are available
MONROE CO., N.Y. — Field trips are usually associated with school groups but this one was different. It was organized by CCE-MC for the group of 10 farmers who are participating in the Monroe County Agritourism project. This project, funded by the Genesee Valley Regional Market Authority (GVRMA) and administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County, aims to develop agritourism by reconnecting farmers with the wider community, grow the public’s awareness of agriculture and increase farmers' revenues.

The field trip was an opportunity for the farmers to visit an established and successful agritourism business. Becker Farms, in Gasport, NY, was founded in 1894 as a fruit and vegetable operation. About 25 years ago, the current owners began changing the farm’s focus to differentiate their business from others. Starting with U-pick apples, they began sharing their own on-farm experience with visitors. The instant success of the U-pick venture led to new attractions that were created by converting old farm buildings. Today you can enjoy their winery, brewery and beer garden, a “Fall Fiesta” barn with pumpkin patch, hayrides and even a petting zoo. The farm also has a number of spacious venues available for weddings and other functions. The latest addition to this list is a cidery that uses apples from the farm’s orchards.

Given the diversity of the agritourism selection, Becker Farms was the perfect spot for our group of farmers to visit. They met owners Melinda & Oscar Viscarra, who shared the story of their farm’s transformation. They also pointed out challenges associated with having public on their farm such as sufficient parking, rule enforcement and visitor safety. Despite challenges, they have plans for future expansion: construction of cottages for on-farm stays. Farmers also had a chance to observe Melinda hosting a group of kindergarteners and skillfully hold their attention with stories about the life on a farm.

On the ride home, the farmers shared their latest experience with excitement. Some planned to try out new activities on their farm, while others talked of expanding existing ones. Here are a few quotes from some of the participants:

“We very much we enjoyed the GVRMA field trip to Becker Farms today. It gave us a first-hand look at a farm venture that has successfully
combined many of the aspects of agritourism that we learned about in the (GVRMA) program. It was very encouraging." (Grace and Phil Durgin, Durgin Family Farm)

“Great field trip to Becker Farms! What an amazing operation they have. In terms of agritourism, that was the perfect place to visit. They are truly doing it all and having lots of success. Very inspiring!

“I thought the presentation was very well executed and relevant to our group. It didn’t seem as though we were in their way at all. I even liked the school age presentation that we were allowed to observe.

“Also, I do appreciate the van ride. It was very nice to chat with the other farmers on the way there and back. Please keep me in mind for the next one…” (Shane Camman, Camman Acres LLC)

The field trip was a success! It inspired the farmers, increased their confidence to explore and grow the agritourism potential of their own farms.

**Corn Congress - Batavia Location**
**January 10, 2018**
**10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Quality Inn & Suites 8250 Park Road
Batavia, NY 14020

$35.00 enrolled with NWNY Team (additional attendee $30.00 ea.)  $50.00 Not enrolled with NWNY Team  At the Door  $50.00

Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops

Cathy Wallace 585-343-3040 x138

**Topics to be covered:**
- Using Corn Yield Data to Develop Yield Stability Zones
- Why is 300 bu/ac Corn the Goal When the Genetic Potential is 1000?
- Corn Silage Trials, so Much More than Yields
- Managing Corn in a No-Till System
- GMO Free Corn Pest Management: Insects & Weeds
- Western Bean Cutworm Resistance: Where do We Go from Here?

**Speakers:**

**Dr. J. Julian Smith**
Dr. Smith is currently President and Co-Founder of CZO Agronomics, a global consulting group devoted to technical advisory and end-to-end project management services in agribusiness and horticulture. Before founding CZO Agronomics, Dr. Smith was the Director of Discovery & Innovation for Brandt Consolidated, Inc. in Springfield, Illinois leading the company’s plant health research and new product development team. Prior to joining Brandt, Dr. Smith was the Vice-President of Plant Nutrition at Loveland Industries (UAP).

Dr. Smith is a widely published agricultural professional in the fields of agronomy, environmental issues and precision agriculture. His career has been primarily concerned with plant nutrition and specialty products, as well as their positioning within the agricultural market-places of North America and Europe. The latter half of Dr. Smith’s career has focused on micro-nutrient, biostimulant, biological and plant growth regulator product application for all crops.

**Jim Hershey**
Jim Hershey owns and operates a 600 acre livestock and grain farm located in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania and has been operating a Crop Management Service that covers several thousand acres. Jim is presently serving as President of the Pa No-Till Alliance where their mission is to promote No-Till, Cover Crops and Soil Health for generations to come. He has been practicing No-Till for more than 25 years and Cover Cropping for 15 years.

Mr. Hershey’s operation has been a leader in Cover Crop Interseeding where they have been marketing interseeders commercially. One has planted several thousand acres in N.Y. the last 3 years with great success. Jim has also installed a ZRX roller on his corn planter to be able to roll and plant into green cover. This has helped reduce weed pressure, less herbicide, build organic matter while conserving moisture and nutrients.

Other locations are available and listed on the website.
[https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=586](https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=586)
**DAIRY MARKET WATCH**

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**October Utilization (Northeast):** Class I = 35%; Class II = 25%; Class III = 27%; Class IV = 13%.

*Class I = fluid milk; Class II = soft products, cream, and yogurt; Class III = cheese (American, Italian), evaporated and condensed products; Class IV = butter and milk powder.*

**Cheese:** Following a recovery period on CME cheese markets throughout last week, Thanksgiving week has wreaked havoc on any short-lived gains. Contacts were anxious of markets finding a longer-term bullishness, and they are far from resting comfortably after the short week’s downward movements. Holiday retail cheese advertisements are running full bore, and food service orders for pizza style cheeses are keeping mozzarella and provolone producers busy. Conversely, Northeastern and Midwestern contacts suggest some cheesemakers are taking extra days off, more so than in prior Thanksgiving weeks. This has led to more discounted milk making its way into the vats of producers who are running normal or heavier production schedules. According to some contacts, one bullish note regarding current cheese prices is as inventories begin to clear, and as milk availability has been down relative to past years, 2019 could see some positive market directions. Some anticipate this may not come into fruition until the second half of the year.

**Butter:** While some butter plant managers across the nation are planning to close facilities for the remainder of the current holiday week, others anticipate being busy producing butter. In the East, cream supplies are becoming more accessible for churning. Based on the CME Group, with various periods and averages used, this week, bulk butter pricing varies among regions: East, 5.0 cents to 8.0 cents above the market; Central, 4.0 cents to 7.0 cents above the market; West, 1.0 cent to 7.0 cents above the market.

**Dry Products:** Low/medium heat nonfat dry milk (NDM) spot prices were steady on the short trading week. A strengthening U.S. dollar is somewhat limiting international sales; however, domestic demand is fair. Supplies remain limited in the fall season, but some buyers have suggested they will be looking to stock up in the next couple weeks.

**Friday CME Cash Prices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>10/26</th>
<th>11/2</th>
<th>11/9</th>
<th>11/16</th>
<th>11/21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>$2.23</td>
<td>$2.30</td>
<td>$2.19</td>
<td>$2.28</td>
<td>$2.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese (40# Blocks)</td>
<td>$1.51</td>
<td>$1.46</td>
<td>$1.38</td>
<td>$1.45</td>
<td>$1.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Butter and cheese prices normally don’t weaken like this as we approach the holiday season. So why the decline in prices? It is somewhat puzzling. Sales of fluid (beverage) milk continue its downward trend being 2.5% lower January through September. Butter and cheese are somewhat mixed but still are higher. Perhaps as prices fall buyers take a wait and see attitude to see how low prices may fall before increasing purchases for the upcoming holidays knowing that stocks are more than adequate to meet their needs.

Dairy exports explain some of the weakness in dairy product prices except for butter. While September butterfat exports were 168% higher than a year ago cheese exports were down 9%, a 20-month low. Exports of cheese to U.S. largest market Mexico was down 10% and down 63% to China reflecting the effect of retaliatory tariffs by these two countries. Dry whey exports were down 6% mainly due to a 38% decline to China, U.S. largest market. Nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder exports remain strong being 30% higher than a year ago due to a 40% increase to Mexico. Mexico did not place retaliatory tariffs on nonfat dry milk.

The forecast is for higher milk prices in 2019, but not to the level dairy producers are hoping for. If current Class III futures hold the Class III price would average about a $1.20 higher than this year at $15.85. USDA is forecasting the Class III price to average $15.15 to $16.05. Current Class IV futures average $15.80 for the year about $1.60 higher than this year. USDA’s forecasts the Class IV price to average a little lower than this for the year at $14.35 to $15.35. There is a good probability that Class III prices could average higher starting in the low $15’s the start of the year, improving to the higher $15’s by the end of the second quarter and then moving into the $16’s reaching the higher $16’s for the last quarter. But, the level of milk production and dairy exports will be determining factors.

USDA shows October milk production slowing which is good news for milk prices. October milk production was just 0.8% higher than a year ago compared to a 1.3% increase for September. Milk per cow as up 1.1% but milk cow numbers were down 43,000 head since January and 30,000 from a year ago. Unfortunately, cow numbers are down from more than a more normal number of dairy producers exiting the industry, the result of four consecutive years of low milk prices. USDA is forecasting a 1.4% increase in milk production next year from an average of 10,000 fewer milk cows being more than offset by 1.5% more milk per cow. The 1.5% more per cow maybe on the high side considering a projected 1.2% increase this year and the possible forage quality issues in the Northeast and Midwest this winter. USDA is forecasting a 6.7% decrease in dairy exports on a milkfat basis and a 2.2% decrease on a skim solids basis. While a decrease in dairy exports is not positive for milk prices a growth in milk production of less than 1.5% should still strengthen milk prices in 2019. Any improvement in exports and/or less milk production than now forecasted would push milk prices even higher.
COMING EVENTS

December 14 – 11am-2pm-Feed Dealers Seminar 2018, CCE-Genesee County, 420 E. Main St., Batavia, NY. Seminars are specifically targeted for nutritionists, veterinarians, crop and management consultants, extension educators, and dairy producers with specific interest in nutrition-oriented topics. Pre-registration is requested by 12/7/18, call: 585-343-3040, ext. 138 or email lr532@cornell.edu. Cost $30/person, $25/each additional person, lunch provided

December 19 – 8:30am-3:00pm-WNY Soil Health Alliance Workshop and Annual Meeting, Quality Inn & Suites, 8250 park Road, Batavia, NY. Kris Nichols will be presenting information on Regenerative Farming Practices and Hands-on Tools for Assessing Soil Health. John Wallace will be presenting Penn State Research on Weed Management and Soil Health Practices. For more information, contact: Dennis Kirby at 585-589-5959. DEC & CCA credits pending.

FOR LEASE/RENT

Seeking conservation minded individual with interests in permaculture to rent 3-4 acre, gentle grade, southern exposure field for agricultural production in Steuben County, NY. Acceptable practices include organic vegetable production, small scale poultry, and organic greenhouse or high tunnel production. Other considerations will be determined by owner. Improved, uncultivated ground will require proper preparation for success. Currently no housing available on the property, but can be discussed with owner in the future. Contact CCE Steuben at 607-664-2574 for further information.

Attention Christmas Tree Farmers I have 40-60 acres to lease at a reasonable rate. The property is located in Steuben County between Bath and Hornell. Contact Merwyn Crane at 1-315-591-8104.

Attention Cattle Farmers: I have pasture/farmland for rent, 40-50 acres, reasonable rate. Located in Steuben County on State Rt. 63. Contact Marian Crawford at 585-728-5303.