Pollinator Week

National Pollinator Week is a time to celebrate pollinators and spread the word about what you can do to protect them.

Twelve years ago the U.S. Senate’s unanimous approval and designation of a week in June as “National Pollinator Week” marked a necessary step toward addressing the urgent issue of declining pollinator populations. Pollinator Week has now grown into an international celebration of the valuable ecosystem services provided by bees, birds, butterflies, bats and beetles.

Pollinator Week was initiated and is managed by Pollinator Partnership.
We all know that if you can get a cow or heifer through the three weeks pre-calving, calving, and then the three weeks post-calving without incident then it’s very likely she will successfully complete the lactation. It’s pretty safe to say that the transition is a very critical period in a dairy cow’s life. Let’s face it, you’re basically trying to turn a couch potato into an Olympic-class athlete almost overnight.

When the system works it really works. However, when the 60-day cull rate begins to spike where is the first place we look to lay the blame? The nutritionist, right? Not quite, Univ. of Wisc. – Madison (UW-M) studies have shown that unless the diet is way off on protein, fiber, DCAD, etc. it doesn’t even make the list. Fortunately, there are five other factors that exert a greater influence and all can be controlled with good management.

**Fabulous Five**

1. **Adequate Bunk Space** – This is the most important factor affecting animal performance. It’s likely this is why we tend to think it is a nutritional rather than facilities problem – either way the animals are not getting the diet they require.

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To avoid overstocking and reducing bunk space during calving surges multiply the average number of calvings for the period by 140% and calculate bunk length and pen size based on that number of animals. Yes, this may seem overbuilt, but how much production is lost and money expended to treat early lactation maladies such as retained placentas, metritis, ketosis, milk fever, etc.?
2. Appropriately Sized Stalls - Late gestation cows, especially large framed breeds like Holsteins and Brown Swiss, require extra space when negotiating freestalls. On average cows are not getting smaller so the old freestall standard of 45”- 48” x 66” (brisket board) has been upgraded to 50”- 54” x 70”- 72”. This is just for the prefresh and post fresh groups – the previous dimensions still work for the rest of the herd. However, a 45” x 63” freestall will accommodate smaller breeds like Jerseys.

Is it worth it? Dr. Ken Nordlund, faculty researcher at UW-M (emeritus), relates the story of a herd he worked with on some transition cow issues. Prior to upgrading the stalls to the new dimensions there was a disparity in ME corrected milk between the first calf heifers and the mature cows. The first calf heifers did well, but the mature cows showed a 2,000 lb. deficit. After retrofitting the stalls, the deficit disappeared.

3. Soft Stall Surfaces – We know that deep bedded sand is the gold standard in the milking barn, and it’s no different here. Time budgets, hock lesions, locomotion scores, etc. are all improved on sand. However, when sand is not an option because of your manure handling system or other difficulty, deep bedded sawdust or chopped straw/hay works almost just as well. Unfortunately, according to UW-M studies mattresses didn’t fare as well. In fact, they noted that animals housed on stalls with mattresses spent more time standing or perched in the stalls, less time eating, and produced as much as 8 lbs. less milk per day. However, mattresses with >2” of bedding faired almost as well as deep bedded sand and may be a reasonable substitute where sand is not an option. Concrete, however, even with bedding or mattresses, is never an option for transition cows.

For bedded packs and composted packs figure on a minimum of 3” of bedding – sand, sawdust, straw – over a compacted, well drained subgrade.

4. Minimize social stress. No, that doesn’t mean you take away their Facebook, Twitter, and SnapChat privileges. It does, however, mean you need to limit the addition of new animals to only once per week. Any time animals are added to an existing group social turmoil ensues for the next 24-48 hours while the new additions are initiated and pecking orders are re-established. Often these interactions are quite physical and can result in terminal injuries. As you can imagine daily or even 2X-3X per week additions keeps the group in a constant boil. This may seem innocuous, but think of it this way: if the animals are running around and butting heads they are neither eating nor resting. As a result stress hormones increase, dry matter intakes decrease, and body fat is mobilized, which leads to an increased likelihood of fresh cow diseases such as ketosis and DA’s. Moreover, if animals are moved into
the prefresh pen 3 to 10 days prior to calving the likelihood further increases.

In a perfect world, each week you would assemble a group of late gestation cows and heifers whose expected calving dates are within a ~7-day window and at least three weeks out. You could adjust that range based on the number of animals or if there are any large breaks in the expected calving dates. The last thing you want to do is move only one animal (if it’s at all avoidable) or overload the prefresh group (see #1 & #2).

In larger herds an all-in strategy could be implemented and the animals managed as a specific group. As animals freshen and the group is depopulated the pen should be cleaned and sanitized prior to the new group coming in. Obviously, this means there would have to be at least three, preferably four, smaller pens in order to rotate the groups in and out.

For smaller herds the far-off dry cow and prefresh pens could be located adjacent to one another with only a bar gate between them. From a social standpoint this is really just one large pen so moves of animals from one group to the next may go unnoticed. (Of course, there’s always the potential for one boss cow to exhibit anti-social behavior.)

Just-in-time calving, where cows and heifers are moved just as the feet or head of the calf is showing, is gaining popularity on some larger dairies. Unfortunately, while it can be successful, this can also be a very labor intensive strategy. It requires 24-hour surveillance with someone walking past the pen every 30-60 minutes to pick up on cows in labor. The workers must be knowledgeable and observant enough to move the cow at just the right time – when calf parts are visible, not just mucous showing. Moving the cow too early increases the likelihood of stillbirth by 250%.

Time in these calving pens should only be hours not days. Cows tend to shed the most Mycoplasma and Salmonella right at freshening. So the pen should be cleaned and rebedded after each animal.

5. Effective Fresh Cow Protocols. As with the calving pens, so too, you need heads-up herdsmen and effective protocols in place to detect and treat early signs and symptoms of fresh cow maladies.

Research has shown some protocols common to successful fresh cow programs:

- Following cows to and from the parlor to observe behavior, gait, etc.
- Palpating udders in the parlor to check for fullness
- Time at feedbunk upon return to the pen – evaluating attitude and appetite
- Daily rectal temperatures
- Checking rumen motility with a stethoscope

So there you have it. Five manageable factors for promoting the success of the transition cow.

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**Springwater Agricultural Products**

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Crop Production Materials, Foliar Nutrition & Adjuvant Sales
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Wet Spring Can Impact Forage Quality for Entire Year
Fay Benson – SCNY Cornell Regional Dairy Team

June 10th is when farmers decide whether to use Prevented Planting payments. This year is more complicated because of the potential for further “Market Facilitation Program” payments being made by the government.

Once again we find ourselves watching the calendar days flipping by and continued wet weather keeping farmers from working in the field. If the wet weather continues to keep farmers from planting their corn and soybeans, it prevents them from a timely harvest of first cutting hay crops. This not only reduces the quality but sets the stage for the rest of the hay harvest though out the summer. For those farmers that purchased crop insurance on their corn or soybeans they can sleep a little easier at night. This is because they have options to leave fallow those fields that are too wet to plant or are drowned after they are planted by using the “Prevented Planting” or “Replant” options of their crop insurance policy.

A number of farmers I have interviewed claim their sole reason for buying crop insurance is for the prevented planting option which is available on corn and soybean policies. Prevented planting decisions should be made as you approach the final planting date for the crop. In New York, June 10th is the Final Planting Date for soybeans, and for silage and grain corn.

Replant payments
To receive Replant payments, you must have a loss of the lesser of 20 acres or 20% of the insured planted acres to qualify for a replant payment. Be sure to contact your crop insurance agent once you decide replant is needed. Do not destroy any evidence of the initial planting before reporting the loss to your sales agent.

Prevented Planting

Can be claimed as any insurable cause of loss that keeps you out of the fields prior to 6/10/2019, providing the cause is general in the area, and other requirements are met. If a farmer applies for prevented planting they will receive 55% of the crops guarantee for corn and 60% of the crop’s guarantee for soybeans. When signing up for crop insurance farmers have the option to increase their prevented planning coverage by 5% of their guarantee by paying a premium.

One added decision farmers will need to make this year is the possibilities of “Market Facilitation Program” payments being made by the government. If Prevented Planting is used those acres will have no bushels to apply for such payments.

If your planting is delayed or prevented due to an insurable cause, be sure to notify your crop insurance agent in writing within 72 hours of the final planting date for the affected crop. Additionally, if you participate in Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs, it is important to report your prevented planting acreage within 15 calendar days after the final planting date for the crop in order to receive prevented planting acreage credit.

Late Spring: Forage Considerations
Beyond Corn
By Joe Lawrence,
Dairy Forage Systems Specialist

Recent weather windows have allowed some progress around the state, however, current field conditions in many areas leave numerous questions and few good answers. With the need to address forage inventories for the coming winter, it may be helpful to think about what can be done to minimize the negative impacts of what mother nature has presented to us. Key decisions in the near future could make a difference between making the best of a bad situation and exacerbating the problems.

To start, the PRO-DAIRY website has resources with related information: • Stressed? What to do about it? • Forage Management: Salvaging a
Late Spring  Quality versus Quantity Simply having enough feed may be an issue when acres go unplanted. However, often in wet years having enough quality feed presents a bigger problem than having enough quantity. While numerous alternative forages have the potential to make lactating quality feed, they are more often considered a good option for non-lactating animals, a group that you may already have adequate supplies for after this year’s challenges with first cutting. This means that any opportunity to manage our corn and hay crops to optimize quality for lactating animals should receive extra emphasis.

Hay Crop Harvest The phrase “park the corn planter and cut hay” should be updated to say “park the corn planter and cut quality hay”. Addressing unplanted corn acres is certainly important; however, at this point if you have first cutting that still has a higher nutritional value, capturing that is a priority. • Store forages by quality o Consider storage options for over mature 1st cutting that will not compromise proper storage of higher quality feed later in the season. • Apply nitrogen on grasses after first cutting • Use harvest techniques to minimize time from mowing to ensiling o Fit harvest in to tighter weather windows o Capture higher quality o Help optimize the fermentation process • Maintain three to four inch cutting height: o For stand health (particularly with grass) o To minimize ash in forage o To aid in drying • Talk with your nutritionist about length of cut and fiber digestibility. See recent research from Miner Institute on this topic.

Corn Silage Refer to the accompany article PD-2019-06-01. Late planted corn for silage and GDD accumulation. for information on average growing degree day (GDD) accumulation and corn relative maturity. Summer Annual Forage Options Over the years we have become familiar with many summer annual options for forage. They all have strengths and weaknesses and it is important to think about how they will fit into your feeding programs.

Most of these crops feed differently compared to corn silage and haylage, so it is important to treat them accordingly. • What groups of animals do they work best for? • How many tons of a given crop do you need to produce to provide adequate inventories for the targeted group of animals? • How will you segregate these forages in storage to allow for feeding to targeted groups of animals? Keep in mind that due to soil conditions, annual forages often introduce the risk of picking up excess ground debris during harvest, leading to the potential for higher ash content in forages.

Seed supplies With the widespread impact of spring weather delays, the supply of shorter season corn and alternative summer annual forages is already tight. Working with your seed supplier to identify alternative forages to make up for any potential forage shortfalls will be important.

Make sure it’s BMR There are non-BMR versions of Sorghum, Sorghum x sudangrass, Millet and Sudangrass. With potential seed supply issues with these products, make sure you know what you are getting. While non-BMR varieties can be used, they will not provide the same feed quality as their BMR counterparts.

Alternative Forages • Long season corn • BMR Sorghum • BMR Sorghum x Sundangrass • BMR Sudangrass • Pearl Millet • Teff • Buckwheat • Oats (planted Late Summer) • Soybeans

The CCE North Country Regional Ag team has a summary of common options at their website. One option not listed in these resources is soybeans for forage. While this crop certainly presents some harvest and management challenges that need to be recognized when making a decision it has been used with some success. Soybeans for forage may be a consideration given potential seed availability and planting windows.

Purchasing Forage Now may be a good time to talk with neighbors. With instability in grain markets and late planting presenting questions of whether some corn will mature for grain, there may be opportunities to boost forage inventories. Capturing a later cutting of high quality hay through collaboration with a neighboring livestock farm may be another option.
Have You Considered Getting Your Maple Syrup Tested?
Maple syrup testing will be a special feature of the 2019 New York State Maple Tour

As a special feature of the 2019 NYS Maple Tour attendees can bring syrup samples for testing invert sugar levels and syrup density in brix. (Stock image via My Lil' Rotten, Flickr/Creative Commons)

HAMBURG, N.Y. — The 2019 New York State Maple Tour will be July 12-14, Friday through Sunday, hosted by the Western NY Maple Producers Association and centered at the Grange Building on the Erie County Fairground in Hamburg, NY. Maple operations in Erie and Wyoming County will be visited.

As a special feature of the 2019 NYS Maple Tour attendees can bring syrup samples for testing invert sugar levels and syrup density in brix. Syrup samples (¾ oz. will be plenty) should be brought to the tour registration table on Friday evening. If you make any crystalized maple value added products such as maple granulated sugar, maple candy, maple cream or maple coated nuts this testing for Invert and Density and be valuable information or serve as a comparison with tests you may have been conducting. Also, Bourbon Syrup can be tested for the alcohol percent. This testing is possible because of a grant from the Genesee Valley Regional Market Authority and WNY Maple Producers. Results will be returned to you at the banquet on Saturday night.

Descriptions of the sites to be visited and registration information about the tour are available at cornellmaple.com and nysmaple.com.

–New York State Maple Tour

Destructive Plant Pest Thwarted by Two Native Fungi
By Krishna Ramanujan

Cornell-led research reports that two local fungal pathogens could potentially curb an invasive insect that has New York vineyard owners on edge. Above, spotted lanternfly adults and fourth-instar nymphs, with the bright red coloring, feed on a grapevine. Photo by Eric H. Clifton/Cornell University

Cornell-led research reports that two local fungal pathogens could potentially curb an invasive insect that has New York vineyard owners on edge.

The spotted lanternfly feeds on more than 70 plant species, including grape vines and apple trees. Now, the paper, “A pair of native fungal pathogens drives decline of a new invasive herbivore,” led by Eric Clifton, a postdoctoral researcher in the lab of Cornell professor of entomology and co-author Ann Hajek, describes how two unrelated fungi, Batkoa major and Beauveria bassiana, have been decimating spotted lanternfly (Lycorma delicatula) populations near Reading, Pennsylvania.

“The finding is important because these naturally occurring pathogens could be used to develop methods for more environmentally-friendly control of this damaging invader,” Hajek said.

“It's a great example of how a major new invasive herbivore can be suppressed by native
pathogens,” Clifton said. “Nobody stepped in to
do this; it all happened naturally.”

Native to China, Taiwan and Vietnam, the
spotted lanternfly was first discovered in
southeastern Pennsylvania in 2014 and
has spread to seven more states. Adult insects
occasionally have been sighted in New York,
but there are no signs yet of large populations.
Entomologists and growers believe it’s just a
matter of time before spotted lanternflies settle
in New York, which boasts a nearly $5
billion grape, grape juice and wine industry, and
also stands as the country’s second-largest
apple producing state. In Pennsylvania, spotted
lanternflies have damaged at least a half-dozen
vineyards from 2017 to 2018. While there are no
reports of spotted lanternfly infecting apple
orchards in the U.S., the insects have damaged
apples in Korea.

In late 2017 Clifton and Hajek began responding
to reports of fungi killing the insects in Berks
County, Pennsylvania. In early October 2018,
they investigated a site near an apple orchard.
“It was clear anywhere you walked, you’d see
dozens of lanternflies killed by Beauveria on the
ground, and then you’d see cadavers all over
the trees killed by Batkoa,” Clifton said. At the
same time, they have just one ant, one stonefly,
and a beetle killed by Beauveria and no other
insects killed by Batkoa in the area.

Back at the lab, the researchers used genetic
techniques to identify the two fungi. They found
that 97% of lanternflies on tree trunks were
killed by B. major, while on the ground 51% of
cadavers were killed by B. bassiana and the rest
by B. major.

Very little is known about B. major. “This fungus
is more difficult to grow in the lab than Beauveria
bassiana,” Clifton said. In nature, insects pick up
spores of B. major on contact, and the fungus
then enters the insect’s body through weak
spots in the outer cuticle or “skin”. This fungus
tends to anchor its dead insect host to a plant or
tree as the spores start to develop on the outer
body and the infective spores are then shot off.
Spores are produced for a short period of time,
and after spores have spread and infected new
lanternflies, traces of them in the environment
are hard to find. Hajek intends to study B. major
further in the future.

B. bassiana, a soil fungus, has been heavily
researched. It belongs to an entirely different
order of fungi from B. major, though the two
infect insects in a similar manner, through
surface contact, and both kill insect hosts.

The success of invasive species has been partly
attributed to a lack of natural enemies. Conversely, Clifton suspects that one reason
these two fungi infect spotted lanternflies but not
other local insects is that the lanternflies lack the
immunity that has evolved in local species,
though more research is needed to verify the
theory.

Clifton and Hajek plan to search the area for
other insects known to be susceptible to these
fungi, collect soil samples from the area,
quantify the density of these fungi and test
biopesticides based on B. bassiana. Some have
already been approved by the Environmental
Protection Agency.

“If you like apples, if you like grapes and wine, if
you like beer (which requires hops, another
plant eaten by spotted lanternflies), spotted
lanternflies can attack those, and that has
growers worried,” Clifton said.

Louela Castrillo, an entomologist at the United
States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Agricultural Research Service on Cornell’s
campus, and Andrii Gryganskyi, a molecular
biologist at L.F. Lambert Spawn Co., are co-
authors of the study.

The study was funded by the USDA
If You Plant It, They Will Come: Attracting Natural Enemies of Pests
Amara Dunn

This coreopsis flower (Coreopsis lanceolata) is more than just pretty; it also provides pollen and nectar for natural enemies to eat (when they aren’t eating pests!).

At this time of year, glossy catalogs start arriving in my mailbox full of pictures of all the beautiful fruits, vegetables, and flowers that I could grow after the snow melts. What these pictures don’t usually show are the arthropod (insect, mite, and related species) pests that can’t wait to eat what I plant. There are many IPM strategies you can use to fight back against these pests, and you can learn more here.

One of these strategies (and seldom is a single strategy sufficient) is to think about what else is growing near the vegetables, fruits, and flowers you want to protect. There aren’t just pest arthropods in your garden. These pests have natural enemies, too. If you provide good habitat for the natural enemies (including food and shelter), you will attract more natural enemies, and they are likely to consume more pests, protecting your plants. This is one way to practice conservation biocontrol – protecting and supporting the biocontrol organisms (natural enemies) that are already present.

So, what makes good habitat for natural enemies? In general, plants that bloom throughout the growing season (early spring to late fall) provide pollen and nectar to the natural enemies that use these as alternate food sources (in addition to pests). These plants also provide good shelter, both for natural enemies and the arthropods (including some pests) they feed on. As these natural enemies reproduce in the habitat you have created for them, they will also venture beyond this habitat and into your fruit, vegetable, and other flower plants, where they will eat more pests.

This butterfly is finding nectar at a purple coneflower (Echinacea purpurea). Pollen and nectar are also important food sources for some natural enemies.

What is good habitat for natural enemies is also (in general) good habitat for pollinators. You have probably already heard how important pollinator protection is. Those glossy catalogs (or wherever else you buy your seeds or plants) likely sell species and varieties labeled as being “good for pollinators”. Just make sure you include plenty of variety. Because most plants (especially perennials) bloom for a limited time, you will need multiple species to ensure season-long blooms. Also, the variation in height and structure of the plants will provide diverse habitat for all of the different natural enemies you want to attract.
And what about protecting a larger area of plants (like a 5-acre field of pumpkins on a farm)? Will creating habitat for natural enemies help with pest control? The answer is complicated. It probably depends on a lot of things. How big the field is, how much habitat there is and where it’s located, which pests are a problem, and other pest management strategies (especially use of chemical pesticides) will have an impact. Research has shown that in some scenarios, yes, providing habitat for natural enemies can reduce some pest populations in some crops (one example).

Later this spring, I and two of my NYS IPM colleagues (Dr. Betsy Lamb and Brian Eshenaur) will set up a field experiment that will answer this question (over the next several years) in a Christmas tree planting. We will also compare different strategies for creating this habitat (seeds versus plants, and different weed control methods). Stay tuned for updates!

In the meantime, for suggestions on what flower species make good pollinator (and natural enemy) habitat, you can start by checking out lists of plants that provide good habitat for pollinators (also this one), or searchable databases of pollinator habitat plants. Your local Cornell Cooperative Extension office is another great resource. The Xerces Society also a resource on Habitat Planning for Beneficial Insects.

ALBANY — This week, the State Senate passed seven bills sponsored by Senator Jen Metzger to reduce the student debt carried by young farmers, eliminate unnecessary regulatory burdens, and expand access to technical assistance and markets. The package also included legislation co-sponsored by Metzger to expand farmers markets and encourage new farmers through a BOCES apprentice program. All of the bills won wide bipartisan support in the Senate.

“This package of legislation supports our long-term commitment to New York’s agricultural community, made up primarily of family-owned farms. We are making it easier for a new generation of farmers to enter the field, and helping existing farmers expand markets for the rich diversity of products that we produce,” said Senator Metzger, Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee. “These bills also help to mitigate some of the financial and other obstacles that farmers face, particularly new farmers.”

Making Farming Easier for a New Generation of Farmers

A third of New York farmers are 65 or older. Several bills help to address the issue of succession of farm ownership by supporting new and young farmers:

Young Farmer Loan Forgiveness (Metzger – S5715): Expands eligibility under the New York State Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Incentive Program, which helps young and beginning farmers, who obtain an undergraduate degree from a New York State college or university, pursue careers in farming. The program offers young farmers up to $10,000 per year in student debt forgiveness for up to five years. The bill removes the requirement that an applicant must have graduated from college within the previous two years and replaces it with the qualification that an applicant must not have previously farmed for more than ten consecutive years.

Expanding Beginning Farmers Fund Eligibility (Metzger – S5716): Making it easier for new farmers to access grant funding by
easing some of the restrictions on eligibility. In particular, it takes into consideration the importance of farm investments and allows new farmers who may be reporting less than $10,000 in annual farm income to be considered for funding.

**Young Farmer Apprentice Program** (May – S3837): Creates a young farmer apprentice program, under the direction of Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), to help the next generation of farmers learn and develop skills.

**Helping Farms Expand Markets for their Goods**

Several bills offer technical assistance to New York farmers and help to expand markets:

**Food Hub Support** (Metzger – S4653): This bill helps New York farmers compete in regional and national markets by providing technical assistance to small-scale producers and processors looking for opportunities to coordinate with each other to achieve economies of scale. Using mechanisms such as food hubs to aggregate, process, and transport agricultural products, New York farms will be able to better meet the needs of larger-scale purchasers. It also provides information about local, state, federal and private grants available to farmers to help them to scale their operations.

**Agriculture Hotline** (Metzger – S4655): Creates a “one-stop” hotline, developed under the guidance of Cornell Cooperative Extension, to offer farmers and those interested in becoming involved in the agriculture industry with information on farm management, finances, grant opportunities, research, marketing and more.

**Farmers Markets in Parks** (Metzger – S5822A): Permits the establishment of farmers' markets at local and state parks, increasing New Yorker’s access to locally grown and produced food, and providing new opportunities for producers to reach local consumers.

**Expanding Regional Markets** (Kennedy – S251): Creates and expands regional farmers’ markets focused on bulk and wholesale volume purchasers. This bill facilitates bringing more New York grown and produced products to New York consumers, with a particular emphasis on areas known as ‘food deserts’ that lack access to fresh, local produce.

**Alleviating Regulatory Burdens**

These bills make it easier for farms to operate and reduce unnecessary costs:

**Agricultural District Protections** (Metzger – S5437): This bill allows contractors working on a farm to be included under agricultural district protections so that they are not subjected to nuisance and other lawsuits resulting from doing the job the farm hired them to do.

**Reducing Farm Vehicle Paperwork** (Metzger – S4945): This bill alleviates a regulatory burden on farmers by reducing the paperwork required for farm plated vehicles, while continuing to give New York farmers a reduced rate for vehicle and plate registration for vehicles used exclusively in agricultural production.

**Keeping Agricultural Property Taxes Affordable** (Metzger S5755): Passed last week, this bill will help keep down property taxes for farmers by providing a 10-year tax exemption on agricultural buildings and structures, and making it easier to receive an agricultural assessment by streamlining the process. The bill also allows farmers to appeal to a small claims court in a valuation dispute, just like residential landowners are able to do.

“What I’m seeing as a trend with the Senator is a push to help new and smaller farms expand into agriculture, which is crucial to the success of the industry in the state,” explains Sarah Dressel of Dressel Farms, the first woman and youngest person to lead the New York Apple Association. “As a young farmer, I’m very aware of how fortunate I am to have the farm establishment that my family has built, and how tough it is for other young people to get involved. The average age of the American farmer is
almost 60, so having legislation like this that appeals to younger entrepreneurs is so important. It’s encouraging to see Senator Metzger take such a vested interest in keeping agriculture viable within the state.”

“Young farmers in New York State are working hard to build careers in agriculture,” says Martin Lemos, Interim Executive Director of the National Young Farmers Coalition. “They are seeking out training opportunities, investing in their operations, and managing the risks of running a small business in order to sustain our state’s farm communities. As the average age of farmers in our state nears 60 years, our agricultural economy depends on the success of these enterprising farmers. We are grateful to Chairwoman Metzger and Senator May for their leadership in advancing proposals that invest in the next generation of farmers.”

Jen Metzger represents the 42nd Senate District, which includes all of Sullivan County and parts of Delaware, Orange, and Ulster Counties. Senator Metzger serves as Chair of the Agriculture Committee and sits on the Environmental Conservation, Education, Health, Energy and Telecommunications, Local Government, Women’s Issues, Domestic Animal Welfare, and Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Committees.

–The Office of State Senator Jen Metzger
Workshop:

Tomato Troubles

July 18, 2019; 1:30 – 2:30 PM. Tomatoes are one of the most popular home garden vegetables. This workshop will discuss some of the diseases, pests, and pathogens that can affect your plants and produce, such as blight, blossom end rot, fruit cracks, cutworms, etc. Also bring your questions and concerns and learn how to find the answers to your tomato problems.

Speaker: Chris Gagliardo, Chemung County Master Gardener
Place: Steele Memorial Library (large conference room), 101 E Church Street, Elmira, NY

Workshop fee: Free, but a $3 suggested donation helps support our Horticulture Program.

Please register with CCE Chemung at 607-734-4453, or jy578@cornell.edu.
Cheese: Milk supplies for cheese producers are available. That said, relative to previous years, it is noticeably less plentiful. Still, milk in all regions is clearing into Class III production. Food service demand is quieter, as schools have begun to break in parts of the nation, while others will break in upcoming weeks. Overall, though, demand is fairly steady. Cheese inventories are balanced to long, and vary widely by region. Cheese market tones are generally steady.

**Dry Products:** While low/medium heat nonfat dry milk markets are mostly steady, slight drawbacks in prices occur across regions, leading into the Memorial holiday. Some market participants are finding alternative protein products more equitable for end-use. Dry buttermilk markets are variable as regional tightness encourages some price changes. Demand is moderate to good. Dry whey markets are steady to higher in the Central region, steady to lower in the West, and weaker in the Northeast. Inventories are growing. Dry whole milk prices shifted higher as spot availability lessens. Production is limited as processors prioritize dryer time. Whey protein 34 percent prices adjusted higher through the range and mostly series. Offers have declined as manufactures develop higher protein dairy ingredients. Lactose market is unchanged. Stocks are growing. Casein prices firmed. Buyers’ purchasing options are reduced with declines in Oceania output.

**Fluid Milk:** Through much of the country, fluid milk output is increasing. However, in California, Arizona, the Pacific Northwest and Central regions, industry contacts suggest the spring milk levels are not as high as they may typically be at this time of year. Cow culling has been heavy in the Upper Midwest, Mid-East and Eastern regions, and many farmers are calling it quits. Bottling demand is mixed across the country. Some areas are seeing a ripple of activity before the spring holidays, while others have lower sales. Some butter makers expect cream supplies to tighten and affordable cream to become less accessible as ice cream makers ramp up in the next few weeks.

**Bottler:** Industry contacts across the nation relay that production levels are transitioning from active to stagnant as large cream volumes continue clearing into Class II manufacturing. Producers have noted a dip in interest from both retail and wholesale customers whose holiday purchase orders have been satisfied. Bulk butter demand is generally steady. In general butter stocks are steady to slightly building.

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**DAIRY MARKET WATCH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milk Component Prices</th>
<th>Milk Class Prices</th>
<th>Statistical Uniform Price &amp; PPD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Jamestown, NY]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Butterfat</td>
<td>Protein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 18</td>
<td>$2.51</td>
<td>$1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 18</td>
<td>$2.62</td>
<td>$1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 18</td>
<td>$2.66</td>
<td>$1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 18</td>
<td>$2.52</td>
<td>$1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 18</td>
<td>$2.60</td>
<td>$1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 18</td>
<td>$2.54</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>$2.56</td>
<td>$1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 18</td>
<td>$2.53</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 18</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td>$1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 19</td>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td>$1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 19</td>
<td>$2.53</td>
<td>$1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 19</td>
<td>$2.55</td>
<td>$1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 19</td>
<td>$2.54</td>
<td>$1.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

April Utilization (Northeast): Class I = 31%; Class II = 24%; Class III = 25%; Class IV = 20%.

**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.**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Friday CME Cash Prices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>$2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/3</td>
<td>$2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/10</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/17</td>
<td>$2.34</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/24</td>
<td>$2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese (40# Blocks)</td>
<td>$1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Increases in milk production well below one percent from last quarter of 2018 and going into this year with February milk production just 0.1% higher than a year ago, March production actually 0.6% lower than a year ago and April’s production up just 0.1%, has reduced dairy product production and increased dairy product prices. The latest dairy product production for March compared to a year ago showed production down 3.9% for butter, 3.2% for cheddar cheese, 0.7% for total cheese, 8.0% for nonfat dry milk and 14.2% for dry whey. Lower production has tightened stock levels.

The higher average dairy product prices is pushing milk prices higher. The Class III price which was below $14 for both January and February was $15.96 in April and will be near $16.35 for May. The Class IV price which was $15.48 in January was $15.72 in April and will be near $16.30 for May. Dairy exports impact dairy product prices. March exports compared to a year ago showed nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder exports 10% lower with exports down 21% to Mexico and 86% to China. Butter exports were 33% lower, and total whey product exports 22% lower due to whey exports down 52% to China, the result of China’s retaliatory tariffs, but also the African Swine fever which has taken a toll on China’s swine herd. But, cheese exports have been increasing. February cheese exports were 16% higher than a year ago, the second highest volume ever, and March exports were 10% higher for a record volume. While cheese exports to Mexico were down 17% as retaliatory tariffs on U.S. cheese remain in place cheese exports to South Korea were 39% higher, with record exports to Southeast Asia up 33%, and up 28% to Japan, 22% to MENA and 33% to Central America. South Korea surpassed Mexico as the largest cheese market for the first time in four years.

Key factors indicate that milk prices will continue to strengthen as we progress through the year. Milk production is forecasted to increase no more than 0.5% for the year. It appears the spring flush in milk production will be weaker than normal. The late wet and rather cool spring has delayed the planting for corn and soybeans. Portions of some wet fields in the Corn Belt may not get planted. There are reports of winter kill of alfalfa in Wisconsin. And the weather forecast is for above normal wet weather going into June could make harvesting of first crop alfalfa difficult and lowering its quality. All of which can make higher feed prices and lower quality forage going into fall and winter and lowering increases in milk per cow. Fluid (beverage) milk sales continues on the downward trend making more milk available for manufactured products like cheese. Compared to a year ago first quarter conventional fluid milk sales were 2.2% lower, fluid organic milk sales 4.5% lower resulting in total fluid milk sales 2.4% lower. But, with continued growth in the economy, low unemployment and high wages modest growth in butter and cheese sales is anticipated to increase total domestic sales of milk.

Where dairy exports are headed will have a major bearing how much milk prices improve. President Trump just announced that tariffs on Canada and Mexico aluminum and steel have been lifted. In response Canada and Mexico will lift retaliatory tariffs on U.S. dairy products. The lifting of Mexico’s retaliatory tariffs on U.S. cheese could resume higher cheese exports to Mexico by last quarter of this year. Increased tariffs imposed by the U.S. on China’s goods and China retaliating with higher tariffs on U.S. dairy products could further reduce dairy exports to China. Unless the U.S./China trade dispute is ended exports to China will not improve in 2019. We can expect continued relatively strong exports to South Korea, Southeast Asia and maybe to Japan and Central America. So while trade volume may end up lower than last year exports should still be at a level to add support to milk prices. It now looks like there is a good possibility that milk prices could strengthen considerably last quarter of the year. A Class III price near $17 by June and in the high $17’s by September or October seems possible. Current Class III futures are not quite that optimistic reaching low $17’s August through November before falling back below $17 in December. Class IV prices could be in the $17’s from July through the end of the year. Current Class IV futures reflect this price pattern. But, it wouldn’t take big changes in the level of milk production and/or dairy exports to drive milk prices either higher of lower than this.
COMING EVENTS

July 7-14-CCE Steuben Invasive Species Evening Workshop during Invasive Species Week,
Time and Place TBD in Bath, NY
We’ll be covering a host of different species and environments, and taking your questions on what to
do to prevent or treat infestation on your property. Greg Muller, DEC Senior Forester and another guest
will be joining us. Come learn and talk about spotted lanternfly, Asian longhorned beetle, hemlock
wooly adelgid, emerald ash borer, and others.
Look for more upcoming details on our Facebook page or website, www.putknowledge2work.org

July 18, 2019; 1:30 – 2:30 PM. Tomato Troubles - Steele Memorial Library (large conference room),
101 E Church Street, Elmira, NY  See ad in this issue for more information.

FOR LEASE/RENT

Available For Rent: Steuben County SWCD has an Esch 10’ No-Till Drill for rent. Rates are $12-$25/acre based
on number of acres planted. Delivery/pickup available. Please call (607)776-7398 ext.3 for more information.

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 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.