Helping consumers find local products

CCE ag staff and volunteers helped to recruit and refresh the Steuben County farm guide for 2014. Since its last publication in 2009, the guide has added 16 farms, 10 more wineries, three new farm markets, and has four new breweries all located across Steuben County.

5,000 guides were printed, and nearly all have been distributed in four months. CCE plans to continue to recruit farms and reprint the farm guide for 2015.

Updates for 2015 Farm Guide Sought

CCE will be reprinting this popular guide to local farms this spring. Since its printing in July three more breweries have been established and requests from an addition six farms have been received to be added to the guide. If you have a farm business you want to have included in the farm guide please contact CCE for the application or visit our website to download a copy. Applications will be accepted from roadside stands, u-pick farms, greenhouses, farmer’s markets, meat and poultry producers, maple producers, honey producers, wineries, Christmas tree growers and other agriculture enterprises located within Steuben County. Applications must be received by March 1, 2015.
Sen. Charles Schumer offers a sniff of malted barley to reporters at a press conference Monday at Pioneer Malting in Chili. The Democratic senator is urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture to make crop insurance available for malt barley growers in New York State. The insurance is key to helping the state’s craft brewing and distilling industry grow, he said.

High on his to-do list for early 2015, U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., will be contacting U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack soon, urging him to include New York on the list of states eligible for the federal crop insurance program that covers malt barley, an essential ingredient in New York’s burgeoning craft brewing and distilling industries.

"The U.S.D.A. did not offer it to New York because it is a new crop here in New York," he said. But now that New York is among the top five states for brewing and distilling, it is key for growing the industry.

The first step is to persuade the U.S. Department of Agriculture to start the surveys and data collection. If the U.S. Department of Agriculture puts New York on the fast track for this program, it could be in place in a year, Schumer said.

Compared to feed barley, grown for livestock, malt barley is a much riskier and fussier crop to grow. It is prone to diseases that require rigorous spraying, and must be harvested at just the right time when moisture levels are in the appropriate window. Weather can also destroy or lower the yield. The crop must be stored properly and continuously monitored before it goes on to the malting process.

It takes about 35 to 50 pounds of malt barley to make a half-keg of beer, or about 15.5 gallons. But as the number of farm breweries and farm distilleries grow around the state, so too does the demand for malt barley.

For example, the state’s farm brewing law of 2013 requires farm breweries to use mandated proportions of New York-grown ingredients. Right now that proportion is 20 percent, but in 2018 it jumps to 60 percent and then in 2024, no less than 90 percent of the other ingredients (not counting water) must come from New York.

Right now, crop insurance is available for feed barley, which goes for livestock feed. But it
does not provide the compensation that is needed in the case of disease or bad weather, said Jeff Trout of Fayette, Seneca County.

"I grew malt barley, but could only get feed grain-quality barley coverage. I roughly figured the inputs are double from regular barley, but the payoff is four times what it is on regular barley. So there is a lot more risk there. It would be good if we could have that covered through crop insurance," said Trout. If the USDA can come up with crop insurance that matches the unique characteristic of malt barley that will be more appropriate for my business."

He has 125 acres set aside for malt barley in 2015 but would increase that acreage if malt barley crop insurance becomes available.

"It would help us get away from too much reliance on traditional soybean and corn market(s)," he added.

Andrew Suppo, one of the partners at Pioneer Brewing, said the biggest challenge for his operation, which sells to both brewers and distillers, is supply. Established farmers may be willing to put in 10 acres or so but without insurance they do not want to increase that acreage, he noted. New farmers either say no or if they try one season and fail, they are not willing to try again.

Bill Verbeten, an agronomist for Cornell Cooperative Extension's Northwest New York Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team, estimates there are 40 to 50 growers statewide currently invested in malt barley, and he works with about three dozen of them. He thinks at least half of these growers would sign on with crop insurance, perhaps more with the right education and outreach. Currently he believes about 75 percent have no coverage at all.

Western New York and the Finger Lakes are a prime growing region for malt barley because of the climate, soils and proximity to beer makers, distillers and malthouses. His estimates, based on seed sales, is that the state will have 3,000 to 4,000 acres in malt barley production in 2015. The demand in the next decade could justify as much as 30,000 acres.

"The crop insurance is an important tool that will help reduce risk," he said.

Schumer is also asking the U.S. Small Business Administration and the USDA educate malt barley growers and malt houses about federal financing that could help them purchase new equipment, build testing labs, improve storage and expand their operations.

**Beef Farm Account Book Available**

The Cornell Beef Farm Account Book is once again available. The accounting record book is designed specifically for beef producers. A complete and accurate set of financial records helps producers develop accurate tax returns but as important gives them the data to analyze their business. Using this accounting record book the farm manager will have the data needed to complete the Beef Farm Business Summary. The Farm Business Summary is a confidential analysis of business records to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the beef enterprise. This allows for better decision making to increase farm profitability.

To purchase a copy of the Cornell Beef Farm Account Book, contact your local Cornell Cooperative Extension Livestock Educator or Tom Gallagher, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Albany County, tjg3@cornell.edu, 518-765-3500.

To learn more about participating in the Beef Farm Business Summary, contact your local Cornell Cooperative Extension Livestock Educator or Mike Baker, Beef Extension Specialist, 114 Morrison Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, 607-255-5923, mjb28@cornell.edu.
The Sulfur Situation

In the past, our region of the state rarely suffered from sulfur deficiencies, primarily due to sulfur deposition from power plants in the Midwest. Millions of pounds of sulfur-containing acid rain would fall onto our area, and even though we frequently have to lime to correct the related pH issue, plenty of “free” sulfur was deposited for our crops to use in the process. However, regulation on smog emissions has decreased the amount of sulfur gas released to the environment, as seen by the maps below. This equates to a change of 9 lbs S deposited during the early 80’s to 4lbs S deposited per year in today’s realm.

What does this have to do with my farm? Now may be the time that we will need to consider sulfur applications to our alfalfa and corn field. Currently, soil test do not regularly report sulfur recommendations for our crops, thus tissue sampling is still the best way to determine deficiencies. Corn stands or older alfalfa stands not receiving manure on course-textured, low organic matter soils are at highest risk for sulfur deficiency. Remember, sulfur is only needed in smaller amounts (the crop is only removing 5-15 lbs S per acre), so don’t run out to buy large amounts without consulting with your local crop advisor.

Transition Calf Housing
John Tyson, Agricultural Engineer, PSU

The group of animals that have recently been weaned and grouped together are often called the Transition Calf Group. But too often this group of animals becomes The Forgotten Group. We focus labor and capital on keeping calves healthy and growing and on catching heifers in heat and getting them bred, but if we lose a month of time between these two points we will never get it back.

The group of animals that have recently been weaned and grouped together are often called the Transition Calf Group. However I also hear this called the ‘stunting group’ on too many farms. Meaning that what was a very healthy calf growing at a good rate of gain per day and on track to freshen at 22 to 23 months of age now slows down her growth, battles health issues, and may not be fresh until 25 or 26 months. So why is this? Maybe it’s poor nutrition, but more than likely it is improper housing, animal care, and management.

This group of animals is far too often the forgotten group. We focus labor and capital on keeping calves healthy and growing and on catching heifers in heat and getting them bred, but if we lose a month of time between these two points we will never get it back.
So what things should we look at for this group? First this is often the first time animals are in a group. I like to compare it to Kindergarten. When it was just you, or maybe you and one other sibling, you didn’t have much competition for your parents’ attention, getting lunch, or something to drink. However, when you went to school you had to compete with 15 or more other kids for the teacher’s attention. Lunch and recess were only at certain times of the day, and you had to go someplace else for it. Are your calves being put in a sink or swim environment?

Secondly, the ventilation for this group needs to be looked at a little differently than older heifers. Transition animals are less than 300 pounds at this age. So while lots of fresh air to remove moisture and provide good ventilation is important, care must be taken to not have cold drafts in this shelter. Linked to this is bedding. Because they lack the body mass to hold in heat, during cold weather bedding like straw or fodder that allows the animal to make a nest is a better option than most other sources. Bedding is also an important part of controlling moisture in the shelter by soaking up manure and urine and keeping high traffic areas like the feeder and waterer areas dry.

To help stop drafts in cold weather the recommendation is to provide a solid divider from floor to ceiling every 20 to 30 feet between pens. This does two things; it gives animal something solid to lie against and also stops air from traveling the entire length of the shelter at animal level.

Next, look at resting space per animal. Common recommendations are 30 to 35 square feet per animal. However, remember that space does not include the 6 to 8 feet around the feeder and waterer area, where we don’t really want animals lying anyway. If animals will be housed here until they weigh 500 to 600 pounds, I would move that resting area recommendation up to 40 square feet per animal.

Now think of this shelter in the other extreme. What happens in the summer? Can the shelter be opened enough to provide control of not only moisture but also heat? Perhaps circulation fans need to be added to help provide a cooling breeze on hot summer afternoons. The tough part of ventilation with this group of animals is that what is a draft on a 20-degree winter day is a cool breeze on a hot summer afternoon, and the design and management of the shelter must be able to cover both extremes.

NY FarmNet presents: Who Will Manage Your Farm Tomorrow?
Tuesday, January 13, 2015 to Wednesday, January 14, 2015
Doubletree Hotel 6301 State Route 298, East Syracuse, NY 13057

Choosing and developing future farm managers is the focus of, “Who Will Manage Your Farm Tomorrow,” slated for January 13th-14th at the DoubleTree Hotel in East Syracuse. This conference provides farm families and their advisors critical information for helping the next generation find success on the farm and identifies effective management transfer strategies to implement.

Danny Klinefelter, Ph.D is the conference keynote speaker. In 2013, Top Producer magazine named him one of 30 innovators who have had the biggest impact on agriculture during the past three decades. Dr. Klinefelter is a Professor and Extension Economist with Texas AgriLife Extension and Texas A&M University and founder and former director of The Executive Program for Agricultural Producers (TEPAP). In addition, Klinefelter is co-director of the Texas A&M Family and Owner-Managed Business Program and serves as executive secretary for the Association of Agricultural Production Executives (AAPEX).

At dinner on January 13th, author and consultant Mark Andrew (Andy) Junkin will lead a discussion based on his book, “Farming with Family Ain’t Always Easy”. Based in Canada, Junkin is passionate about evangelizing the need for farmers to rethink how they make decisions together in the context of operating and managing a family business.

“Farmers need to have in place a plan for their farm business that will ensure a successful transition of management and ownership to the...
next generation,” said Ed Staehr, executive
director of NY FarmNet and a senior extension
associate with the Dyson School at Cornell
University.

NY FarmNet provides free and confidential
technical assistance in farm management and
family relationships. NY FarmNet is an extension
and outreach program of the Charles H. Dyson
School of Applied Economics and Management
at Cornell University.

The New York State Department of Agriculture
and Markets, Crop Insurance Education
Program; and Farm Credit East are platinum-
level sponsors of this meeting.

Registration, including all meals and materials is
FREE.

For more information, contact 1-800-547-3276 or
email dlw56@cornell.edu.

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New York

JANUARY 19-22, 2015
Oncenter Convention Center

Tuesday: Potato & Tree Fruit
Potato Highlights:
- The potential for bindweed control with
- Matrix, and Reflex newly registered in
- potatoes
- Potato variety development for the
- eastern seaboard
- Potato storage management in a wet
- year
- Report on the National Potato Council
- Late blight update – 2014
- Stories from the sweet potato field

Tree Fruit
- Getting the most of Honeycrisp
- Orchards
- Apple rootstocks & Varieties: Just made
- for each other
- New Pests

Wednesday: Farmers’ Market Info & tree
fruit
- Building your customer base at markets
- Optimizing High Density Orchard
- systems
- Weed management in perennial fruits

Thursday: Hops, Barley, Hard Cider & Berry
crops!

For a full schedule of events & to register
visit: www.nysvga.org
What is ARC and PLC?

The Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill combine provisions from previous programs delivered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) (the counter-cyclical portion of the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program, the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program and the Average Crop Revenue Election Program) with revenue insurance delivered by the Risk Management Agency. Owners must make a one-time election to reallocate crop bases, update program payment yields and producers select the type of coverage (price protection, county revenue protection, and/or individual revenue protection) for crop years 2014-2018.

Base Acre Reallocation
Owners of farms have a one-time opportunity to:
- Retain the farm’s 2013 base acres or;
- Reallocate base acres

All landowners and each farm operator have been provided with a summary of all covered commodities planted or considered planted (P&CP) during the 2008-2012 crop years as reported on form FSA-578, and will have the opportunity to update those records. Once records have been updated, the landowner will have the opportunity to redistribute the farm’s base acres based on a proration of each covered commodity planted or considered planted in crop years 2009 through 2012 to the total acres of all covered commodities planted or considered planted during the time. The planting history for 2008 was provided as information for yield updates only.

Yield Update
Land owners are provided a one-time opportunity to update program payment yields for each covered commodity for which they have base acres using 90% of the farm’s 2008-2012 average yield per planted acre, excluding any year in which the covered commodity was not planted. Producers with a yield in any of the 2008-2012 years that is less than 75% of the county average can substitute that yield in the calculation with a yield equal to 75% of the county average yield. Program payment yields are used to determine payment amounts for the PLC program; however, all farm owners have the option of updating yields regardless of program participation.

Price Loss Coverage (PLC)
- Commodity does NOT need to be planted
- Shields producer from low commodity prices

County Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC-CO)
- Based on County Average Yields- 5 yr. Olympic average (drop the high/drop the low)
- Protects against crop revenue shortfalls

Individual Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC-IC)
- Based on Individual Farm Average Yields
- Protects against crop revenue shortfalls
- Must submit individual farm production records
We Weed Our Gardens,
But Should We Also Weed Our Woods?
By Brett Chedzoy (bjc226@cornell.edu)

YES! Trees, like any other plants, benefit from increased growing space and sunlight. The “best” trees in our woods (based on our individual criteria of what makes one tree more favorable than another) can be thought of as the vegetable plants in our garden. If we weed around them, they’ll grow large and productive. And if we don’t, the results are usually disappointing. By contrast, if we do a poor job of weeding our gardens – or remove the tomato plants instead of the weeds – we can correct our mistakes the following spring. Correcting such a mistake in our woodlots (removing the “best” trees instead of the weed trees) may take many decades, and the woods may never recover to its full productive potential.

But wait - if I cut the larger trees in my woods, won’t the smaller ones grow more and take their place? The answer is “usually, no”. To understand why, we first need to think about how our current woods originated. Nearly all forests in New York originated on abandoned agricultural land (yes, the green hills that abound in the area were once pastures and fields, as evidenced by historic photos, old fences and plow furrows). In this part of the world, when land is no longer grazed, plowed or mowed in some fashion, it reverts back to forest through a process known as “succession”. Prior to the modern era of forest invasive plants (examples: multiflora rose and honeysuckle) and high whitetail deer populations that selectively over-browse young trees seedlings, typical forest succession on an acre of abandoned agricultural land was for +100,000 seedlings per acre to become 10,000 saplings, which became~ 1,000 “pole-sized” trees, ultimately resulting in what we see in many woods today: a few hundred trees per acre ranging in size from poles to “sawtimber”. The strong got stronger, and the weak succumbed to natural attrition. Despite the range in diameters, woods that originate under these conditions are known as “even-aged” forests. The difference in diameters is a reflection of competition. Those that won the race for the sky utilized more sunlight through photosynthesis to produce wider growth rings and larger diameters.

If one looks closely, the smaller poles are almost always sugar maple, beech and/or hemlock. These are the only three commercially-important tree species in our woods that can tolerate significant levels of shade. Less shade-tolerant species like oaks, hickories, ash and cherry can only survive if they have their crows (heads) up in the sunlight of the upper canopy, and therefore are usually found only in the larger diameter classes. And yes, there are always exceptions to the rule such as an older age class of “remnant trees” (those that were pasture shade trees or formed hedgerows on the former agricultural landscape) – or a younger age class of shade-tolerant species that originated during some past disturbance to the woods like logging, storm damage or a pest outbreak. But most of our woods are even-aged. Consequently, tree diameter is not only a reflection of past growth – but also of future potential. The US Forest Service has demonstrated through research that larger trees in even-aged forests will grow three to eight times faster than small trees (of the same age) when released by removing less-desirable trees that are in close proximity and competing for sunlight. Known as “thinning” in forestry, this woodlot management practice can greatly enhance the vigor and production of your best trees. For a well-written landowner guide to woodlot thinning, visit: http://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/ctm/ctm_index.html - or search “Crop Tree Management in Eastern Hardwoods".
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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>
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**November Utilization (Northeast):** Class I = 36%; Class II = 22%; Class III = 25%; Class IV = 17%

*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.*

**Butter:** Butter makers have completed holiday orders and now are looking to restock depleted inventories. The market tone is steady. However, sales are slowing and some market participants expect prices to weaken as supplies build seasonally. Given heavy milk and cream supplies, many manufacturers were running close to full schedules. Export ordering is lackluster as U.S. prices are uncompetitive in the international markets.

**Cheese:** Most cheese plants will be operating through the holidays this week and next, but some have decided to close part of the time. Plants wishing to make cheese have all the milk necessary, sometimes at prices below Class prices. Those not operating are reducing hours for reasons other than milk availability. Price uncertainty is a concern throughout the industry. Demand is expected to be good, at least through the football playoff season until the Super Bowl. After that, multiple factors such as the anticipated continuing strong milk supply, international pricing, and potentially weaker demand are increasingly discussed as matters of concern.

**Dry Products:** Low/medium heat nonfat dry milk prices are unchanged to lower. Supplies are exceeding existing demand. Production is very active. There is more interest by producers to place multiple load transactions with buyers in the coming weeks. End users and resellers are negotiating for the best possible terms on new purchases. Lactose prices decreased as buyers appear to be sitting on the sidelines until the first few weeks of 2015.

**Fluid Milk:** Manufacturing milk supplies have significantly increased across the country as bottling demand and production of holiday related products have declined. Butter/powder and cheese manufacturers will manage milk intakes through the balance of the week. Where possible, plant managers are working together to maximize processing room and tanker availability. Cream supplies are heavy this week with increased volumes going to churns. Cream multiples moved lower as numerous cream based product manufacturers reduced operation schedules over the holiday period.

**Milk Production:** Milk production in the 23 major States during November totaled 15.5 billion pounds, up 3.5 percent from November 2013. Production per cow in the 23 major States averaged 1,806 pounds for November, 41 pounds above November 2013. This is the highest production per cow for the month of November since the 23 State series began in 2003.
The USDA estimates that November milk production will be 3.4% higher than last year. Cow numbers have been increasing slowly, with November’s numbers only 4,000 head above October, and will likely round out at 9.255 million by the end of the year. Milk per cow has increased to an average of 22,261 pounds, 2% higher than last year. Total milk production for the year is estimated to be 205.8 billion pounds, 2.3% more than last year (Cropp, Bob. Memo to Dairy-L. December 21, 2014).

Penn State’s measure of Income Over Feed Cost (IOFC) fell by almost 8% in November, but is still above last year’s levels. This month’s feed cost is $0.11/cow/day more than it was in October, making November’s value of IOFC $11.17/cow/day. Last year in November, that value was 9% lower at $10.25 (Dunn, Jim. Penn State Dairy Outlook, December 2014).

2014 has been a great year for the dairy industry in terms of milk prices, and that time is slowly coming to an end as we move into 2015. We know that milk prices will be falling as we move into the new year, however there is still much speculation as to how far they will actually drop over the coming months. 2015 projections have certainly been lowered from forecasts made earlier this year, estimating that Class III prices could drop down towards $15 by February.

Throughout 2014, the export market has played a critical role in domestic prices farmers receive, and it will continue to impact our milk prices. This year, U.S. dairy exports set a new record, and peaked in March, accounting for 17.7% of all milk product sales. China’s massive push on importing dairy products helped achieve this early in the year, but as their stockpiles increased and they began to pull back from importing dairy products, reducing its imports from the first part of the year by more than 50%, we saw our prices start to slide. Looking into 2015, the beginning of the year could bring turmoil for dairy exports. The U.S. dollar continues to strengthen, reducing our price competitiveness in the international market. Russia, who has banned dairy imports from the EU, and China combined account for 20% of the export market. Without those two major players on the buying field, and increased milk production across major international milk producers, world dairy product prices have dropped far below U.S. prices. Exports compared to what they were a year ago have fallen 82% for butter, 3% for cheese, 25% for nonfat dry milk, 9% for dry whey, and now account for less than 15% of U.S. milk production. The high U.S. prices are also attracting imports which, compared to a year ago, are 42% higher for butter and 12% higher for cheese (Cropp, Bob. Memo to Dairy-L. December 21, 2014).

There are several other factors that will come into play affecting 2015 milk prices. The U.S. Economy will continue to improve and increase in domestic dairy sales. Feed prices are projected to remain low. However, major exporters (Oceania, the European Union, and the U.S.) have had, and will continue to have, increases in milk production that will affect export pricing. We also don’t yet know how factors such as extreme drought in California, the beginning of an El Niño event, and uncertain demand strength from China will affect pricing. This year will also be interesting to see the need for and the effectiveness of the new Margin Protection Program (Stephenson, Mark. 2015 Dairy Outlook from Dyson Agribusiness Conference. December 2014).

Katelyn Walley-Stoll • Extension Educator - Farm Business Management • 716-664-9502 Ext. 202 • kaw249@cornell.edu

Schuyler and Steuben January 2015
COMING EVENTS:

January 14 - Farm Marketing Basics
How to Effectively Sell Your Farm Products.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Steuben County will be hosting a marketing workshop on January 14th from 6:00 until 8:00 pm at the Civil Defense Center, 7220 State Route 54 Bath NY 14810. Learn how to improve your farm marketing skills and promote your agricultural product effectively. Kristin Park, marketing specialist from Cornell University, will be presenting on basic marketing topics such as assembling an attractive farm stand/ farm market display, creating informative and attractive promotional materials, how to set price, and what you need to know about farm product insurance. This class is ideal for farmers who sell from home, at farmers’ markets or roadside stand and for those just considering selling farm products.

Pre-registration is appreciated, but not required, contact CCE Steuben at 607-664-2300 or email Stephanie at sms64@cornell.edu by January 12th. There is no cost for this workshop.

January 31 – Beginner Beekeeping
10am – Noon, Civil Defense Center, 7220 State Route 54, Bath
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Steuben County will be offering a class for beginner beekeepers or anyone interested in starting the hobby of beekeeping. Course material will cover introductory information needed for anyone starting out with honey bees, including necessary equipment, where to find bees and basic beekeeping skills. A course handout and reference guide will be provided. A honey tasting will be held so that participants can experience a few local varieties of honey. A Q&A session will follow the lecture and power point presentation. The instructor is Cathy Halm, a 15 year beekeeping veteran and owner of Leo's Honey House. To register for the class, call 664-2300 or email Kerri at ksb29@cornell.edu. The cost for the class is $10.00.

February 24 – Crop Symposium
Civil Defense Center, Bath

March 27 – Locally Grown Food Festival
Union Hall, Corning