As I wrote December 2011, (http://advancedagsys.com/newsletters/), the sorghum species has tremendous potential under dry conditions. With the development of shorter season varieties (83 day), this potential has moved north. As long as the summer is warm, it will continue to move north. The BMR 6 gene prevalent in the varieties we tested; has been shown to produce the same milk as high quality corn silage. Because a greater percentage of the energy is contained in highly digestible forage, rumen pH’s are higher and so components are benefited. As we have entered a new weather pattern of cool Pacific and warm Atlantic (a natural process that has been going for centuries - nothing to do with political climate change) we are expecting more radical weather for the next 10 – 15 years. Growing a number of different high yield, high quality forages, will reduce your risk of drastic shifts in forage supply or quality. Sorghum is one of those new crops.

The first thing most farmers learned is if your sorghum seed supply only plants half the acreage it is supposed to, you over planted. It is the most common mistake. Most drills have to plug every other hole in order to get the seeding rate low enough without planting sorghum flour (ground up seeds). Newer ones have gear reductions for correct planting. Over planting sorghum, like over planted corn, assures that the crop will probably start lodging about the time it heads. The fortunate part is that BMR sorghum will lodge about 1 to 2 feet off the ground. This gives enough clearance for a row-less chopper head to slip under and get the entire crop (picture above). The farmer reported that they had to take the snouts off to allow the lodged material to feed in. Another farm that planted with a drill in twin rows on 30 inch centers was able to get all the material by going one direction after a severe thunderstorm laid the crop down at boot stage. In another field after a sequence of severe thunderstorms pushed the crop even flatter on the ground, the farmer was able to get the entire crop by mowing with his condition-less hay mower and put-ting it directly into the windrow for chopping. This is not a step we want to plan on taking as the extra trip increases the cost of producing the crop.

As with any new crop there is a learning curve. My job is to make the mistakes so you don’t have to (so I am qualified as a professional screw-up??). A number of farms have also helped by contributing both mistakes and advances in how to manage this crop.

The first thing most farmers learned is if your sorghum seed supply only plants half the acreage it is supposed to, you over planted. It is the most common mistake. Most drills have to plug every other hole in order to get the seeding rate low enough without planting sorghum flour (ground up seeds). Newer ones have gear reductions for correct planting. Over planting sorghum, like over planted corn, assures that the crop will probably start lodging about the time it heads. The fortunate part is that BMR sorghum will lodge about 1 to 2 feet off the ground. This gives enough clearance for a row-less chopper head to slip under and get the entire crop (picture above). The farmer reported that they had to take the snouts off to allow the lodged material to feed in. Another farm that planted with a drill in twin rows on 30 inch centers was able to get all the material by going one direction after a severe thunderstorm laid the crop down at boot stage. In another field after a sequence of severe thunderstorms pushed the crop even flatter on the ground, the farmer was able to get the entire crop by mowing with his condition-less hay mower and put-ting it directly into the windrow for chopping. This is not a step we want to plan on taking as the extra trip increases the cost of producing the crop.

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PRO-DAIRY Dairy Farm Water Use Calculator Now Online for March 31 Reporting Deadline  Pg. 3
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Dairy Market Watch  Pg. 7
Until we can do more research, I am leaning toward a corn planter with sorghum drums planting on 15 inch rows for uniform stand establishment. Accurate seed indexing is becoming more important in a number of crops (wheat, triticale, soybeans), but especially in sorghum. Our own planter (a 1960’s era press wheel drill) was set to plant every other row (12 inch center to center) at 8 lbs./acre. It tended to plant single seeds and then dropped a clump. The weak bunch that was then produced tended to lodge first, knocking down the stronger plants. There are several vegetable planters out there that have the ability to plant sorghum size seeds in a single pattern on narrow rows.

The long term lodging answer lies in incorporating the brachytic dwarf gene in the shorter season varieties. This produces a much shortened stalk that has the leaves close together (see photo). The stalk though is 2 – 3 times larger in diameter. Thus, it will pro-duce the yield without the lodging. The analogy is of a 7 ft. tall basketball player and a 6 ft. tall football linebacker. The linebacker will outweigh the basketball player every time. The same with the brachytic dwarf varieties; they are football linebackers. The field results are showing excellent yields without lodging. At this point the only variety is a very long season type that has to be grown south of the Mason-Dixon Line (lower edge of Pennsylvania). We will be testing new varieties that are in the 90 day range. This is still a bit long for northern half of our region to grow in combination with double crop winter for-age, but there are new shorter season ones in the breeding line. There is also a BMR brachytic dwarf sorghum-Sudan that we will include in our trials. We will keep you posted on how the new ones did as we complete the research each year. It is a rapidly changing scene and we are learning as we go.

What We Learned This Year: Drills can be set for 8 lbs./acre seed rate if you plug every other hole. You can also use a drill to plant twin rows on 30 inch centers for harvest by regular corn choppers. We used Concept treated seed that allowed us to use atrazine and Dual for weed control. Once the plants reached knee high, the ground was completely shaded (drill gave 12 inch row width). At the Cornell Valatie Research Farm, early corn reached 15 tons/acre before dying in the drought. The longer season corn managed to stay alive and was very short but produced a good ear from the later rains. In spite of a dry June, extreme dryness most of July (burst of rain at the end of the month) and dry for much of the first half of August, we achieved an average of 20.5 tons/acre @ 35% dry matter from the BMR Sorghum. Our plots started to lodge in the thunder storms of late August when they were starting to fill the seed heads; but were knee high before bending horizontal which allowed for harvest. In spite of being at above optimum moisture we were able to get excellent fermentation. Read the October 2012 newsletter (http://advancedagsys.com/newsletters/), on how we can wet forages and ferment them safely for high forage diets.

Thomas Kilcer, Advanced Ag Systems
Sign up for Email Alerts!


This seasonal scouting report provides information on the presence, identification, and management guidelines for significant field crop pests in New York. This report provides timely information to help users learn about, and better anticipate current and emerging problems and improve their integrated pest management efforts.

To receive these weekly email alerts, simply email Kerri Bartlett at ksb29@cornell.edu. We keep your email address private, and we make every effort to keep the email alerts brief and to the point!

New Website helps you Find Your Farmer!

CCE has developed a new website designed to create an easy connection between consumers and farms that are selling locally raised meats. Visit www.meatsuite.com and check out the diverse livestock products available. Have a farm that sells meat? Add your farm to the Meat Suite website! Click the “add your farm” link on the home page or contact Kerri Bartlett at 607-664-2311 to sign up!

PRO-DAIRY Dairy Farm Water Use Calculator Now Online for March 31 Reporting Deadline

The Calculator and DEC form are online at: http://www.manuremanagement.cornell.edu/. Click the water use reporting button on the right.

PRO-DAIRY and DEC held a Webinar on Monday to unveil the PRO-DAIRY Water Use Calculator. The Calculator, developed by PRO-DAIRY and accepted by NY DEC as one way to determine water use for unmetered systems, uses sound science equations from published papers to help estimate a farm’s water use. The downloadable Calculator has two main components. First, it estimates a farm's water use. Second, it can automatically complete the required DEC water use reporting form if the farm’s average daily water use is on average 100,000 gallon/day or more for any month of the 2012 year.

NY State law indicates that: Agricultural water users withdrawing an average of 100,000 gallons or more of water per day in any month during the previous year (2012) from any combination of groundwater and surface freshwater sources are required to register their water withdrawals with NYSDEC. This year the deadline is March 31st, 2013.

All other farms using freshwater for agricultural purposes at a monthly average rate of less than 100,000 gallons of water per day for all months
are exempt from reporting. However, DEC indicates that farms currently under the reporting threshold may also want to report their 2012 water use as these farms will be able to avoid a permit in the future should they eventually exceed the 100,000 gallon threshold.

Talk to your planner or contact DEC for more information on this concept.

On August 15th, 2011, Governor Cuomo signed a law that updates water use reporting and permit requirements for users of large volumes of water in NY. [http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/86747.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/86747.html). NYSDEC indicates that reporting water usage provides them with needed information to manage the state’s water resources. The law has a provision that waives reporting fees for agricultural users. It also exempts some agricultural water users from reporting and clarifies obligations for other farms.

Water use on a dairy farm depends on many factors, most notably: number of animals, level of milk production, size of milking center and other areas cleaned with fresh water, use of a milk pre-cooler and/or summer cooling of cows (sprinklers), and, for some cases, irrigation of crops.

For farms with multiple sites, generally, locations that are contiguous or that share water supplies should aggregate water use for reporting purposes.

Farms solely on public water supplies are NOT required to register because their water use will be reported by the municipal water provider.

Because it can be difficult to accurately estimate water use for many dairy operations, the PRO-DAIRY Environmental Systems Group developed this Calculator for use by farmers and their advisors, and it replaces the lookup tables developed by PRO-DAIRY last year.

The Calculator can be used to estimate a farmstead’s water use (barns, milking center, etc.) and also has provisions for entering in other uses of water on the farm such as crop irrigation. Based on inputs by the user, the Calculator estimates the average daily water use for each month. While the estimating formulas were developed for Holstein water consumption, Jersey cow water consumption is close enough that in the overall calculation of water usage is not significantly affected.

The Calculator estimates water use each month.
and saves the data for future use as well. Users will need to input overall herd demographics, herd dry matter intake and milk production to use the Calculator. It was designed to streamline calculations and form filling, yet meets the requirements of DEC, including generating required reporting information and automatically completing the newly released updated DEC reporting forms. The Calculator can also estimate fresh water use for operations such as milking preparation, CIP, floor wash down, milk cooling, heat stress abatement, and irrigation if relevant.

“The Calculator was developed so it can be used by dairy farmers and their advisors to accurately estimate a farm’s water use while minimizing the inputs required by the user. It is designed with flexibility in mind so it can cover virtually all scenarios” said PRO-DAIRY’s Curt Gooch.

If a farm has water meters on all water sources or if they are on municipal water, then PRO-DAIRY recommends metered data be used to complete the DEC forms. The updated DEC forms are also posted on the Web site.

Farms that have more than one location within a 40 mile radius should be reported as one farm. The water use amounts in the report are subject to FOIL, but specific locations of water withdrawal are not, said DEC’s Richard Kruzansky.

DEC released a new reporting form this year. The form can automatically be completed by the Calculator and submitted electronically or printed and returned to NYSDEC by US mail. Farmers should discuss business confidentiality issues with their legal advisors.

The DEC reporting form is designed for a broad range of users and asks for information that many dairies are unlikely to have ready access to. Producers are encouraged to answer as completely as possible, and to do the best they can with information gaps.

- Questions regarding the DEC reporting form and the regulation may be directed to Mr. Richard Kruzansky, NYSDEC (rhkruzan@gw.dec.state.ny.us, or call 518-402-8182).
- General questions on water use reporting may be directed to PRO-DAIRY’s Karl Czymmek (kjc12@cornell.edu, or call 607-592-2634) or Curt Gooch (cag26@cornell.edu, or call 607-255-2088).
- Technical questions on using the water use calculator may be directed to PRO-DAIRY’s Tim Shelford (tjs47@cornell.edu).

Presentations from Group-Housed Calf Program Available for Download

Select presentations from 2012 Group-Housed Calf Systems Symposium and 2013 Operations Managers Conference are now available for download. Please visit the PRO-DAIRY Conferences and Events website and click on the conference you are interested in to access these files on the Proceedings page. Additional softcover copies are also available for purchase.

The State Public Commission Rules to Increase Funds Available For Digesters

The State Public Commission in January authorized the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to double the maximum incentive offered through the Anaerobic Digester Program (ADG Program). This increase was announced in Governor Cuomo's ADG initiative.
The maximum incentive available in the Customer-Sited Tier Anaerobic Digester Biogas-to-Electricity Program will increase from $1 million to up to $2 million per installation. NYSERDA will not increase the overall ADG budget as $44 million in funds remain through 2015, according to the Commissioner’s report. NYSERDA will be required to reduce incentive levels for installations that take advantage of non-RPS incentives.

“With respect to the doubling of the incentive, we believe increasing the upper limit to $2 million is reasonable given the importance of the benefits that could be achieved and the typical installation and operating costs noted by NYSERDA in its petition for medium to larger sized systems,” according to the report. “We will require that NYSERDA continue to divide the incentives between upfront capacity payments and longer-term production payments to help ensure that systems remain operational.”

Questions regarding the DEC reporting form and the regulation may be directed to Mr. Richard Kruzansky, NYSDEC (rhkruzan@gw.dec.state.ny.us, or call 518-402-8182).

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Dairy Market Watch

Milk Component | Milk Class Prices | Statistical Uniform Price & PPD

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<th>Month</th>
<th>Butterfat</th>
<th>Protein</th>
<th>I(Boston)</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>Jamestown, NY</th>
<th>Albany, NY</th>
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<td>$2.73</td>
<td>$22.05</td>
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<td>$18.58</td>
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<td>$19.18</td>
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January Utilization (Northeast): Class I = 39%; Class II = 26%; Class III = 23%; Class IV = 12%
[Class I = processed as beverage milk; Class II = soft products, cream, yogurt and cottage cheese; Class III = cheese (American, Italian), evaporated and condensed products, Class IV = butter, nonfat and whole milk powder.]

Dairy Commodity Markets (USDA Dairy Market News):

**Butter:** Friday CME cash prices: 1/25 $1.51, 2/1 $1.56, 2/8 $1.56, 2/14 $1.61, and 2/22 $1.59. Butter production is active throughout the country. Those facilities with the ability to churn indicate cream multiples are such that churning is more of a financial benefit than selling cream loads destined for butter usage.

**Cheese:** Friday CME cash prices (40# blocks): 1/25 $1.65, 2/1 $1.65, 2/8 $1.65, 2/14 $1.68, and 2/22 $1.63. Cheese production across the US is up as available milk supplies are headed to cheese plants in many parts of the country. Retail sales are reported to be in line with expectations. Increased national pizza promotions have added to mozzarella demand. Export sales are said to be increasing.
**Dry Products:** Dry product markets trended lower this week as buyers are often content to wait from week to week before filling near term needs. Nonfat dry milk prices in the East/Central and West registered decreases. Although some dairy indices are on the rise, many manufacturers indicate spot sales are shouldering substantial volumes.

**Fluid Milk:** Farm milk production is uneven throughout the country with central milk supplies steady to slightly higher, supplies increasing in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast areas, and small increases in California/Arizona. Challenges facing dairy farmers include drought affected forage quality/quantity and high purchased feed costs. Anecdotal reports are coming from some areas of dairies seeking foreclosure and liquidation.

**Milk Production:** Milk production in the 23 major States during January totaled 15.9 billion pounds, up 0.6 percent from January 2012. Production per cow in the 23 major States averaged 1,871 pounds for January, 11 pounds above January 2012. The number of milk cows on farms in the 23 major States was 8.50 million head, 2000 head less than January 2012, but 6,000 head more than December 2012.

**Comments:**
Milk production is still being tracked as one major factor in how milk prices will shape up for 2013. USDA’s release of January milk production showed that milk production continues to run higher than a year ago, but just 0.5% higher. Northeast states are all showing increases in milk production mainly due to better milk per cow. January compared to a year ago shows production up 3.1% in New York.

According to the USDA, even large dairies suffered from 2012 tight margins. For the first time, the largest herds (2,000+ cows) declined from the year before, down 20, to 780. Other size categories of herds also decreased; as a result, the percentage of milk produced by the largest herds changed very little last year. Herds of 500+ cows represented about 5.7% of the nation’s total herds, contained about 59% of all U.S. dairy cows, and produced about 63% of all U.S. milk.

With high beef prices, dairy cow slaughter should continue to run well above a year ago, reducing cow numbers for at least the first half of the year. There is a large inventory of dairy replacements ready to enter the milking herd, although replacements as a percent of the U.S. milking herd are slightly lower than last year. On January 1st dairy replacements were 2% lower than a year ago but still at 49.4 per 100 milk cows. The number of replacements has more than offset increased slaughter increasing cow numbers since October.

The economy is showing growth here in the U.S., and the world supply and demand situation is forecasted to remain relatively tight. The USDA’s latest quarterly “Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade” projected dairy exports at $5 billion. If realized, fiscal year 2013 dairy product exports would be down about $170 million from FY ‘12. Imports would be about $87 million more than FY ‘12.
The USDA projected a rebound in U.S. corn and soybean yields in 2013 that, along with high planted acreage, opens the door to record-large crops and for prices to tumble from 2012/13 levels. The USDA forecasts the U.S. corn crop at 14.350 billion bushels, up 35 percent on the year, and soybean output at 3.405 billion bushels, up 13 percent.
DAIRY OF DISTINCTION
2013 New York Application
DairyofDistinction.com

Purpose of Program
Attractive dairy farms give the consumer greater confidence in the wholesomeness of milk and stimulate milk sales which encourages public support of the dairy industry. The award gives recognition to the dairy farmer for maintaining a well-kept farmstead.

Eligibility
All Northeast dairy farms producing milk for sale are invited to submit an application for the award. Dairies receiving the 10 highest scores in each of the 10 districts will receive an 18”x24” Dairy of Distinction sign to be displayed in front of their farm.

Application

Name________________________ Farm Name________________________

Mailing address________________ Town_________ Zip_________

Phone number________________ Email________________

Milk Cooperative or Handler ________________________________

Location (driving directions for judging team)________________________

County where farm is located___________________________________

I hereby apply to the Northeast Dairy Farm Beautification Committee to have my dairy scored in accordance with the rules of the program for the purpose of obtaining a Dairy of Distinction sign to be displayed on my premises (No producer will be charged for scoring or sign expense).

________________________ Date________________________

Signature of owner/operator

_____ Please check if farm is rented or leased

Application must be postmarked by April 15 to:
Nancy Putman
80 Chipman Corners Road
Lisbon, NY 13658
TRADING POST:

For Sale:  
- 588 white plow 6-18” high clearance, spring reset w/side hill hitch, $2,500.  
- Harsh stationary mixer, Mod. 290/232 bu w/electronic scale, 4 augers, s.s. bottom, $4,000.  
- Reel Augie portable mixer, Mod. 2300 w/dry hay max kit, $4,000.  
- Brillon 10’ seeder, $2,500.  
- Plate cooler, 81 plates, expandable universal, $700.  
- Lock ups – 44’ cows, 70’ calves, $150/10’ section.  
- 8 Boumatic claws w/Flowstar tops, Delaval shells, plus extra parts.  

Phone: 607-857-4610

Would you like to know more about an insect, or how to deal with an insect problem in or around the home, or on plants in your vegetable or flower garden, in your yard, or on indoor plants? If so, the Insect Diagnostic Lab, a program of Cornell Cooperative Extension in the Department of Entomology, can help. For a $25 fee, an insect or related arthropod can be shipped to us, or a detailed photo can be emailed, for expert determination. Our newly hired diagnostician, Jason Dombroskie, Ph.D., has a broad entomological knowledge, and many years of experience identifying insects and other arthropods. More information about this service, including a collection of factsheets covering commonly encountered outdoor and indoor insects, can be found at http://entomology.cornell.edu/IDL

COMING EVENTS:

March 18 - Marketing NY Farm Products to Bed & Breakfast Innkeepers  Another Way to Market NY Farm Products. 9 am-Noon at New York Wine & Culinary Ctr., 800 So. Main St., Canandaigua, NY. Register online at: https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/BandBCanandaigua_225 by March 11. Workshops designed to bring B&B innkeepers together with farmers with products for sale. The project's goal is to give innkeepers and farmers a chance to meet, get acquainted, encourage transactions, and, finally, to promote these opportunities in the future in a systematic way.

March 20, 2013 - Getting More Forage per Acre with Winter Forage!  
1:00 – 3:30pm, Bath Fire Hall. Featuring Tom Kilcer, Advanced Ag Systems  
Tom will discuss his research with various crop rotations, types of winter forages he recommends for the northeast, and explain how you can get the most forage out of every acre! We will also have a short presentation on Shredlage for corn silage. What are the potential impacts on DMI, milk production, and bunk density compared to traditional chopping?  
RSVP by March 18th, cost to attend is $10 ($5 for each additional person from the same farm). Light refreshments provided.

March 26 - Schuyler County Agricultural Plastics Recycling Day  
Don’t burn it or bury it – recycle it! Bunk Cover, Bale Wrap, Ag Bags, Greenhouse Film, Maple Tubing and others! Participants must follow simple Best Management Practices to participate. For details call Jenna Hicks, Environmental Science Educator at 607-535-7161 or jlh254@cornell.edu. Please register online here and Jenna will contact you to set up an appointment to visit your farm and arrange for your recycling day appointment time. See flyer here.

April 19, 2013- Locally Grown Foods Festival  
5:00 – 8:00pm, Union Hall Corning  
Sample a variety of dishes prepared with local meats, veggies, & cheese.
Commitment to Quality and Service

Since 1912, providing you quality feed and independent service for Western NY farmers.

- Full Line of Complete Feeds at Competitive Prices -
- “Exclusive” Extruded Full Fat Soybeans -
- “Steamed Rolled” Flaked Corn -
- Customized Feeds and Complete Nutritional Feed Programs -
- Dairy Production Consultant -
- Fertilizer Blending: Liquid and Granular -
- Custom Spraying and Crop Service -
- Exclusive Manufacturer of “Country Magic Dog and Cat Food” -
- Working Relationships with Your Vet and Consultants for “YOUR Bottom Line” -
- PLUS Access to the Latest Technology in the Feed Nutrition Business -

See our great prices on Carhart Jackets and clothing to keep you warm this winter!

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www.reisdorfbros.com

2013
March 12 - The Art Of Beekeeping – What’s All The Buzz About?
7 – 9 p.m. Silver Spoon Cafe, Human Services Building, 323 Owego St, Montour Falls. Presenter Paul Marcellus will discuss beekeeping for all. Topics of Discussion: Bees – Basics/Assembly of equipment/Supply Sources/Best Management Practices/What To Do When Your Bees Arrive/Harvesting Honey/Seasonal Transitions For The Hive/Keeping Healthy Bees. $15 per person or $25 per couple. Pre-registration required by March 8, 2013. For questions or more information, contact Roger Ort, CCE Schuyler County Horticulture Program Educator at rlo28@cornell.edu or call 607-535-7161.

March 16 & 17 - NYS Maple Weekend at Cornell University’s Arnot Forest
8 a.m. - 4 p.m. both days. For a complete list of activities on this special weekend, please visit: www.arnotforest.info

March 16 or March 23. Fruit Tree Workshops
9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (or afternoon only 1-2:30 p.m.) Reisinger’s Apple Country, 2750 Apple Lane, Watkins Glen. Topics include: Grafting onto an older tree/Pruning stone fruits, pears, apples and berries/Pruning younger trees up to mature trees/Renovating an older fruit tree for better production (off site)/General fruit tree care/wildlife control. Remember to dress for the weather! Light refreshments will be provided (bring a bagged lunch). No tools will be needed for this workshop. This is a joint venture with the Cornell Cooperative Extension offices of Schuyler and Steuben Counties. Pre-registration required at by March 15, 2013. There is a $20 fee for this workshop ($35/couple) or $10/person for afternoon only (1-2:30 p.m.) For questions or
more information, contact Roger Ort, CCE Schuyler County Horticulture Program Educator at rlo28@cornell.edu or call 607-535-7161.