

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Oneida County

Farm Flash



September 2026
Livestock Issue

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Upcoming Events

2026 Luminary Roadshow with Trees for Graziers

Friday, September 4 - 10:00 am
Breadtree Farms - 2129 Co Rd 153 Salem, NY

Join the Luminary Roadshow Series with Joshua Green from Trees for Graziers at Breadtree Farm! Explore how well designed silvopasture systems can improve livestock performance, farm resilience, and long term profitability.

Learn more and register online at
<https://tinyurl.com/56tcy6fc>

Grain Bin Safety and Confined Spaces Training

Thursday, September 10 - 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Bridgewater Farm Grain Storage Facility

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED: For questions or to register contact Marylynn Collins at (315) 736-3394 ext. 132.

This training is open to all area producers and volunteer fire department members. Join us for an opportunity to learn and observe how the cofferdam system (tube system) and related equipment can be used for grain entrapment and rescue missions. A review of confined space hazards and use of gas meters will also be discussed. **The guest presenter is Thomas Basher Jr. with Meridian Fire Training Solutions, LLC.**

Upcoming Events

Pork Production and Marketing Workshop

Monday, October 26 -
5:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Willowvale Fire Hall -
3459 Oneida St,
Chadwicks

Registration is \$10
payable at the door,
includes dinner.



Guest presenter is NY Pork Producers. Topics for discussion focused on production, bio security and marketing tools.

Please contact Marylynn Collins at (315) 736-3394 ext. 132 with questions.

Register online by scanning the QR Code above.

FARM Program Launches Open Comment Period

The National Dairy Farmer Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) program has opened for public comment on its proposed 2028 standards.

All dairy industry stakeholders are invited to provide feedback by October 2nd.



Upcoming Events

Save the Date - Taste of CNY

Saturday, November 7 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
North Star Orchards - Westmoreland

Food Sampling - Local Products for Sale -
Children's Activities - Live Music -
Fun for the Whole Family!

Taste of CNY Vendors Wanted

The Taste of Central New York is to highlight foods and crafts that are prepared from locally sourced products, (not all products need to be locally sourced). **The event runs from 10:00AM to 2:00PM on November 7, 2026 at North Star Orchards in Westmoreland, NY.** There is no fee to participate but Committee approval is required upon completion of your registration. Vendors are required to provide free samples of food and/or craft or an interactive experience.

If you are interested in attending as a vendor please scan the QR code or email Alex at ash273@cornell.edu for the registration link.



Using GDD Accumulations Post Silking to Refine Potential Harvest Dates

ML Collins

Welcome to September! We've made it through planting, multiple hay crop harvests (possibly aiming for another to boost inventories), manure applications and now it's time to direct your focus to corn silage harvest windows. I'll draw your attention to the Pro-Dairy article included in this issue that focuses on forage management. While it is from 2022, the considerations and harvest approaches are still relevant to initiating a successful corn silage harvest plan. Once silking occurs in your fields, tracking GDD for corn silage varieties post silking can serve as a tool to gauge when your variety is closer to maturity. Using the Climate Smart Farming GDD Tool allows you to monitor GDD at your specific location. You can pin multiple corn field locations and track the accumulation of GDD, and based on your varieties anticipated maturity dates, begin to arrive at an estimated harvest window. **Remember, the best way to determine when to begin chopping corn silage is to pull plants and perform whole plant dry matter counts.**

In the screenshot example on the next page, I used a fictitious SILKING DATE for a location in the town of Paris. I entered the silking date of July 4, 2026 in the "planting date" box. At this stage of growing season, we are using the accumulated GDD post silking to help us gauge harvest times, as opposed to monitoring for possible pest emergence. I used information from Table 1 on the next page to input the target GDD days post silking for my given corn variety's length of maturity, 750 GDD. The online GDD tool uses my inputs to generate the graph below. The green vertical line indicates when the targeted GDD has been reached and acts as a signal to then return the fields you are monitoring and perform whole plant dry matter samples.

Scan the QR Code for a video
on how to used the Climate
Smart Farming GDD Tool.



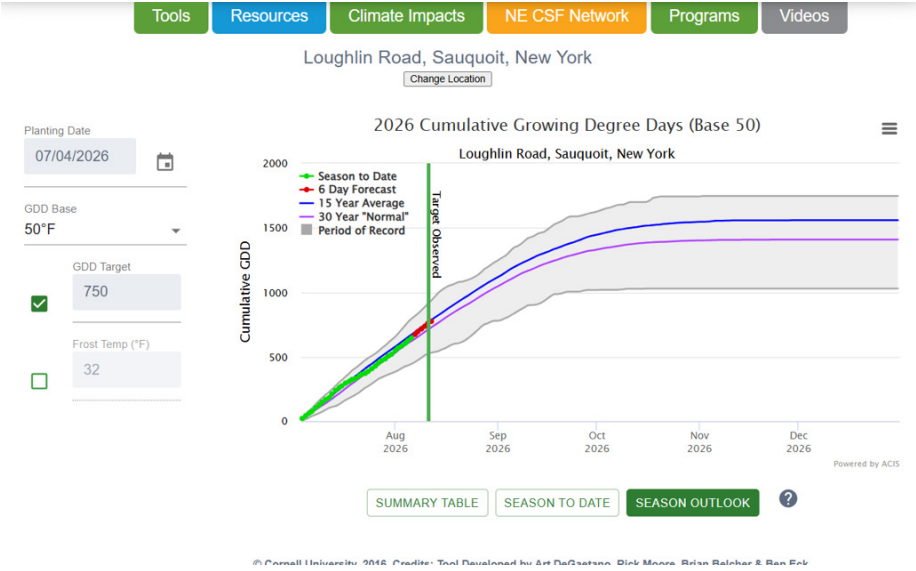


TABLE 1: Approximate Growing Degree Days needed from silking to silage harvest

Hybrid Relative Maturity	GDD's (86/50)
101-110	800
96-100	750
<96	750 or slight less (extrapolated)

Recording Silking/Tasseling Dates for Corn Fields

Joe Lawrence - Cornell CALS - PRO DAIRY

Tracking Growing Degree Days (GDD's) is an effective way to monitor the progress of a corn crop and in recent years a number of online tools to track GDD's were developed. For the Northeast, the Climate Smart Funding GDD tool from Cornell is a great option. Dr. Kitty O'Neil with the North Country Regional Ag Team prepared an instructional video to use the tool (scan the QR Code on page 5 to view the video). While this tool was designed to estimate GDD accumulation from planting, you can simply enter in silking/tasseling date in the planning date box to track accumulation from that date.

One approach to predict corn maturity with GDD's is to monitor GDD's from planting to harvest and some seed brands provide estimates of GDD's needed from different hybrids. For corn, the 86/50 method is used to calculate GDD's. This references a base temperature of 50°F and a maximum of 86°F.

A few considerations to keep in mind:

- The numbers provided for a hybrid are often from planting to physiological maturity (black layer) which is past the silage stage. A rough rule of thumb is to subtract 150 GDD's from this number to estimate the number needed for silage harvest.
- Studies have shown a fair amount of variation in the GDD's required from planting to silking, which could be exacerbated by the variable weather conditions experienced so far in 2022.

Research in NY by Dr. Bill Cox assessed the number of GDD's required from silking to silage harvest timing in a multi-year study. While there is still some variability in GDD requirements from silking to silage harvest timing, this method offers better results than using full season numbers as it takes out the early season variability of GDD's needed from planting to silking. The average GDD's reported in the study are shown in Table 1 (can be viewed on page 6).

This study used 32 percent whole plant dry matter (DM) as the target for silage harvest; however, a better target is 35 percent whole plant DM. Therefore, the GDD targets reported in the study offers a sort of early warning for harvest.

Once corn begins the dry down process an average rate of dry down is 0.5 percent per day (with a range of zero to one percent per day) indicating that the crop may reach 35 percent DM approximately six days after reaching these GDD targets for 32 percent DM.

When a field reaches these GDD targets, it is a good time to sample fields and dry down samples for whole plant DM to further refine harvest timing.

2026-2027 Regional Master Gardener Training

CCCEOC is accepting applications for its upcoming Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) training program. This regional training will be offered in partnership with CCE Madison County and will begin in October 2026. The training fee is \$175 and will be due after an applicant is accepted into the program.

Individuals interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer can contact Holly Wise at 315-736-3394 or email hlw2@cornell.edu for an application packet. Applications must be submitted by September 12, 2026.

The Farm Employer Overtime Credit Advance Program

Matt Volz

New York State Agriculture and Markets is now accepting applications for the Farm Employer Overtime Credit Advance program. This program is part of an effort on behalf of the state to help farmers with rising labor costs given the increasing number of hours that require overtime pay. As you may know, the current threshold at which overtime pay is required is 52 hours a week. This number will decrease by four hours every two years until 2032, when all hours worked by farm employees beyond 40 hours will require overtime pay.

As the name suggests, the Farmer Employer Overtime Credit Advance program allows farm employers to apply for an advance reimbursement for eligible overtime paid from January 1 through July 31, 2026. Eligible overtime here means any hours over 52 but not more than 60. Why are hours over 60 not eligible? Overtime has been required for farm workers for hours worked past 60 hours since 2020. This program aims to keep overtime requirements consistent with that previous standard and will continue to bridge the gap between the decreasing threshold and the 60-hour mark. In 2028, when the threshold for overtime pay becomes 48 hours, eligible hours will be from 48 to 60, and so on (see table on the next page).

Applications will be accepted by Ag & Markets until September 30th. If a farmer's application is approved, they will receive a certificate which will then need to be submitted to the NY Department of Taxation and Finance by November 1st. Once the certificate is verified, a reimbursement will be sent to the farmer. Farmers that apply for the advance may still apply at year end for a credit for any eligible overtime hours paid August 1 through December 31, 2026.

Starting on:	Hours in excess of:	And no more than:
January 1, 2024	56 hours	60 hours
January 1, 2026	52 hours	60 hours
January 1, 2028	48 hours	60 hours
January 1, 2030	44 hours	60 hours
January 1, 2032	40 hours	60 hours

Farmers are not required to apply for the advance credit. A credit for the full year of overtime hours paid may be applied for at year's end. The deadline for all year-end credit applications, whether full or partial, will be February 1.

For more information or to apply, visit:

agriculture.ny.gov/farming/farm-employer-overtime-credit-advance

If you need assistance understanding this program or deciding whether to apply for the advance credit, please feel free to reach out to me at mcv54@cornell.edu or by phone at (315) 736-3394 ext. 177. If nothing else, it's a great reason to get your books up to date. As always, having your books in order will position you to take advantage of opportunities as they come along, as well as handling the unexpected bumps in the road we all experience as farm business owners.

Market Musings: Why Sell at a Farmers Market? Part 2

JB Riffle

When deciding whether to sell at a farmers' market, vendors ultimately want to know one thing: **Will it help my bottom line?**

Selling at a farmer's market can improve profitability in both direct and indirect ways. Last month, we explored three direct benefits that can increase revenue. This month, we'll look at three indirect benefits that can help your business grow and become more profitable over time.

Passive Name Recognition - One often overlook benefit of selling at a farmers' market is the name recognition that comes from having hundreds of customers see your farm name and logo each week. Over time, this increased visibility builds brand awareness and helps customers recognize and remember your business. As familiarity grows, customers are more likely to recommend your products to friends and family when discussing where to find local food and agricultural products.

This indirect benefit becomes a direct one when that recognition translates into actual sales. In a future edition of *Farm Flash*, we'll discuss how vendors can maximize the effectiveness of their signage and displays to create stronger connections with customers.

Everyone Benefits from Collective Advertising - Another underrated benefit of participating in a farmers' market is the additional marketing generated by fellow vendors. Most vendors promote the market through social media, email, newsletters, website and other outreach efforts because they share a common goal: attracting customers to the market.

If a market has 30 vendors and even half of them actively promote the market, that's 15 businesses directing customers to the same destination. This collective advertising expands the market's reach far beyond what any single vendor could accomplish alone.

This indirect benefit becomes a direct one when those marketing efforts bring more shoppers to the market and convert them into paying customers. In a future edition of *Farm Flash*, we'll explore effective email and social media marketing strategies.

Customer Loyalty Through Consistency - Perhaps the most valuable indirect benefit of selling at a farmers' market is the opportunity to build a loyal customer base. Vendors who provide consistent experiences can establish lasting relationships that encourage repeat business.

Building customer loyalty starts with a few simple practices:

- Attend the market regularly, ideally every week.
- Set up in the same location whenever possible.
- Offer consistent products and pricing.
- Develop positive relationships with customers through friendly, reliable service.

Over time, these habits help customers know what to expect and give them reasons to return week after week.

Looking Ahead - Name recognition, collective advertising, and customer loyalty are just three of the many ways farmers' markets can contribute to long-term business success.

Next month, we'll explore how to select the right market for your business and how to set prices that support maximum profitability.

Oneida County Public Market

Every Saturday starting May 23 from 9:00am to 1:00pm
at Utica's Union Station - 321 Main St, Utica

A Solid Weaning Plan Pays Out

ML Collins

In reviewing recent beef market reports and cattle on feed reports compiled by notable livestock market analysts, one take home message is clear: "We're not done with high prices yet." This quote is from Ferrell Peel, Oklahoma State University Extension Livestock Marketing Specialist. Peel explained that while one recent report shared a slight blip in heifers being retained, it is by no means an indicator that our national beef herd is beginning to rebuild. Extensive drought conditions across much of the larger beef producing states, combined with aging beef producers and climbing interest rates lend to the continued slow crawl in the rebuilding effort. It will take several more years before we see improvement in overall native beef numbers. So, in the meantime cow/calf operators should be aiming to ride out these strong cattle prices for as long as possible.

Opportunity to capitalize on the continued strong beef prices exists as we prepare to address weaning the 2026 calf crop. Whether you intend to market your feeder calves this fall or have plans to finish them on farm, a successful weaning phase starts with solid planning and mindfulness.

- **Take a Good Look Around:** Monitor your pasture conditions, look at your brood cows body condition. Should you consider weaning early? Do you have the forage inventory to wean early?
- **Vaccination Protocol:** Feeder cattle that are well vaccinated, meaning they've received a booster and vaccinations timely (not on the day of shipping) bring more money at the sale. Do not leave money on the table. Buyers prefer backgrounded calves: vaccinated, not abruptly weaned, wormed, and on feed. Consult your herd veterinarian to review your vaccination protocols.
- **Plane of Nutrition and Water Availability Matter:** Weaning is stressful in itself. Do not further stress the animal by short-changing the nutrition program. Allocate your better-quality forages (good digestibility and protein content) to the calves you intend to wean. Ensure the water source is palatable and easy to access. Water that can't be reached, can't be consumed. Water is especially important during weaning to prevent dehydration and is critical for rumen digestion.

- **Keep Your Eyes on the Prize:** Allow extra time to monitor and observe weaned calves. Walk through the group calmly observing for poor doers and unthrifty herd mates. Animals do not like to be singled out and can easily mask the signs of illness while you are in close proximity. Practice observing the group in a way that they do not realize you are there so you can truly assess for changing health concerns.

Cover Crops - Local Perspective

Jeff Miller - OCSWCD

- I would rate soil loss prevention as the number one objective for establishing a cover crop. The fields that are most vulnerable to erosion locally are fields of corn harvested for silage that have very little or no crop residue, most vegetable fields and soybean fields also because there is little crop residue.
- Corn silage harvest usually occurs in September which gives ample time for oats, wheat and triticale, or rye to establish. Drilling allows you to use lower seeding rates and yields the best stands because of better soil seed contact and improved germination.
- Local growers have been successful at over-seeding soybeans (yellow leaf stage) with a drone. There are more choices of cover crops: oats, wheat, triticale, rye because of early timing. Aerial application also reduces compaction.
- Soybeans harvested before mid-October can have a successful cover crop if rye is drilled immediately following harvest at higher seeding rates.
- Corn fields harvested for grain usually have enough crop residue for erosion control.
- Another reason to plant cover crops is weed control and if you use good management practices for establishment for erosion control you will have good weed control.
- Another benefit of cover crops (living plants) is their supply of food for the biology in the soil. These living plants provide food for the biology in the soil for a long period after you have removed the crop. The increase in quantity and activity of the biology in the soil helps release plant available nutrients to your growing crops. Soil micro (fungi and bacteria) and macro organisms (earthworms, ground beetles, etc.) also help create pores and soil structure that help improve root growth and development.

Cover Crops for Field Crop Systems

Nicole Smaranda, Quirine Ketterings. Karl Czymmek, Thomas Bjorkman, Janice Degni, Joe Lawrence, and Mike Stanyard

A well-managed cover crop can conserve and protect the soil, boost productivity capture nitrogen and phosphorus leftover from a main crop or from fall applied manure, and if harvested in the spring, provide additional forage for dairy cattle and other livestock. For field crop rotations on dairy farms in the Northeast, cereal rye, triticale, wheat, and annual ryegrass are good options in rotation with corn silage or small grains as they are winter hardy. Oats are a good option for their quick emergence and abundant biomass in the fall but oats winter-kill. For any cover crop, an establishment and termination plan should be in place before planting. This fact sheet describes general establishment and termination methods, and planting timing of winter cereal cover crops for field crop systems in the northeast.

Establishment - Cover crops can be established with broadcast seeders, drills, or aerial application.

Broadcast Seeding

- Equipment: Use a broadcast seeder or high clearance machinery for planting into standing crop. Plant as the canopy is closing to avoid competition with the main crop.
- Seeding rate: Generally, 10-20% higher than needed for drilling. See table 1.
- Pro: It is faster and therefore less expensive than drilling.
- Con: Emergence is typically lower due to poor soil to seed contact as compared to drilling.

Drill Seeding

- Equipment: Drill Seeder
- Seeding rate: See table 1
- Pro: High germination rates because of good seed to soil contact.
- Con: Typically done after harvest of main crop, limiting time for fall growth of the cover crop. Due to equipment limitation, narrow widths require more time and energy to interseed an acre with a drill than to broadcast seed on the surface.

Aerial Seeding

- Equipment: Airplane, helicopter, or drone with seed dispersal attachment. Rotary or fixed wing.
- Seeding rate: Generally, 25-50% higher than needed with drilling to compensate for lower emergence.
- Pro: Planting into a standing crop is possible, allowing for earlier planting. Minimizes compaction in fields because of decreased traffic, and is the fastest planting method of the three.
- Con: Emergence rate is often low due to poor seed to soil contact, requiring higher seeding rates. Limited number of operators.

Cover Crop	Benefits	Establishment	Termination options
oats	Quick to emerge Good weed competition	-august – early September -broadcast or overseed -drill 80-110 lbs/ac., higher seeding rate for later planting	Winter kill
Wheat and triticale	Good weed competition Longer erosion protection	Drill or broadcast 75lbs/ac Mid-late september	Glyphosate application very successful for wheat triticale and rye
Rye grain	Tolerates later seeding then oats and wheat Best cool season crop for N retention	Early august- mid October Drill, broadcast or aerial application 60-90 lbs/ac higher rates for later planting and no incorporation	Tillage: plowing recommended because of the root mass balls Must wait until milk stage for crimping which makes this practice less viable
Annual ryegrass	Quick to emerge Erosion control Tolerates wet soils Good weed competition	July 20-sept 15 Interseed Drill at 10-20lbs /ac	Will not winterkill Will reseed if not terminated in time Terminate before 6" height Plow or use glyphosate

Table 1

Termination - A cover crop can winter-kill, or be terminated chemically or mechanically.

Winter-kill

- Pro: No field operation required. No early burndown necessary in spring, and the vegetation mat after winter may reduce dominance of spring weeds.
- Con: Lack of a live root system can increase erosion risk in the spring. Mat of dead forage keeps soil cooler and wetter which may delay planting. Nutrient leakage from dead foliage may be more prone to winter losses.

Tillage

- Pro: Incorporates cover crop into soil, allowing soils to warm up quicker and cover crop biomass to breakdown more rapidly. Tillage can be combined with manure application. For faster decomposition, till when the cover crop is young and green (carbon to nitrogen ratio is less than 20).
- Con: Tillage may require more than one pass, disturbs soil (nutrient loss, organic matter loss, and risk of compaction), and is not suitable for no-till systems. Terminating a young cover crop can cause weeds to grow before seeding the main crop.

Chemical

- Pro: A burndown program is most effective on crops that are not yet flowering, and this timing gits well with an early planted main crop. Compatible with no-till.
- Con: Weather will determine effectiveness of herbicides. Cool, cloudy conditions slow rate of herbicide uptake and may limit field access due to wet soils. Herbicide selection depends on the crop rotation.

Summary - Cover crops can be established by drill, broadcast, or aerial seeding. Seeding rate should be adjusted to the planting method and date. Common methods for termination including winter kill, tillage, and chemical. The method should be chosen based on the timing of the following crop the winter hardiness of the cover crop, and the rate of spring maturation of the cover crop. Having a plan for establishment and spring management is an important part of managing cover crops. The overall benefits include spring weed control, erosion reduction, nutrient cycling, and improved soil health.

Disclaimer

This fact sheet reflects the current (and past) authors' best effort to interpret a complex body of scientific research, and to translate this into practical management options. Following the guidance provided in this fact sheet does not assure compliance with any applicable law, rule, regulation or standard, or the achievement of particular discharge levels from agricultural land.

Many more fact sheets produced by the Cornell Nutrient Management Spear program are available on a range of nutrient management topics and can be accessed at this link <http://nm-sp.cals.cornell.edu/>

NYS Grown & Certified Research and Development Grant

Provides \$10,000–\$50,000 to eligible New York farmers, food processors, distributors, and other businesses enrolled in the NYS Grown & Certified Program to support research and development activities for new or expanded NYS Grown & Certified products. Eligible expenses may include product development, market research, food lab testing, pilot runs, and technical services. A 10% match is required, and applications are accepted on a rolling basis through October 25, 2027, or until funds are exhausted. Learn more at <https://tinyurl.com/ycx68kyy>

Aeration in Manure Storage

Jeff Miller, Tim Wimmer, and Hayleigh Gates - Oneida County Soil and Water Conservation District



Oneida County SWCD staff attended a tour of Indian Camp Farm and Dairy in Chenango County. The pictures above show the layout of pipes attached to the base of the manure pit, manifold, pump room and agitation of the manure slurry from the aeration system.

A floor-mounted, low-power manure aeration/bubbler system is an automated on-floor piping network driven by a low-pressure, high-volume blower that intermittently bubbles air in liquid slurry to maintain a homogeneous mixture, aerated environment, that helps eliminate crusting, and reduce toxic gas production like methane, ammonia and hydrogen sulfide.

Core Components

- **Motor & Blower:** Typically uses a 5.5 to 7.5 HP electric motor paired with a roots-style or screw-type blower delivering high-volume air at low pressure (approx. 5 to 10 PIS).
- **In-Floor Piping:** Corrosion-resistant 50mm class-D uPVC or specialized lines secured directly to the tank or pit floor using heavy-duty stainless-steel fasteners and brackets.
- **Valves & Outlets:** Utilizes an automated 24V rotary valve (such as a 12-position distributor) to sequence air flow dynamically to specific branch line equipped with self-closing neoprene non-return valves.
- **Aeration Systems:** Can be installed when new storage systems are being constructed and existing storages can be emptied and retrofitted with aeration systems.
- **Approximate Costs:** \$6-10/sq ft.

Operational Mechanics

- **Timed Cycles:** Are controlled by the farmer and each farm can have different objectives. Farmers can set up section of the aeration system to turn on and off for short cycles, a few time a day to maintain an aerobic environment throughout the storage. This management would reduce the production of methane which is associated with global warming, and hydrogen sulfide and ammonia that negatively impact air quality. Farmers can manage the system to reduce crust formation so mechanical agitation is not required before spreading. Creating and maintaining an aerobic environment reduces ammonia N formation which is volatile and supports ammonium N production which is not volatile. This increases the amount of nitrogen that is in the manure when applied to farm fields.
- **Sequential Purging:** The farmer controls the rotary valves which direct air to each manifold or section, forcing powerful air jets that create physical bubbling action and vertical mixing turbulence from top to bottom. One of the farmers shared that he increases aeration before he plans to spread manure to break up any crusting that may have occurred.
- **Aerobic Transition:** Introducing oxygen shifts the environment from anaerobic to aerobic, fostering bacteria that break down volatile fatty acids. Volatile fatty acids are closely associated with strong unpleasant odors.

Key Benefits

- **Gases & Odor:** Dramatically cuts down noxious odors and harmful gas emissions, including hydrogen sulfide, methane, and ammonia. Estimated 50% reduction in CO2 equivalent emissions. Increases CO2 and methane in the atmosphere are linked with global climate change.

- **Nutrient Retention:** Preserves and evaluates fertilizer value, showing increases in total nitrogen and ammonium nitrogen levels.
- **Labor & Safety:** Eliminates the need for disruptive, dangerous tractor-driven mechanical PTO agitation and prevents heavy solid crust buildup.
- **Potential Funding Assistance:** Through NRCS or Ag & markets. If you have questions please call Oneida County SWCD at (315) 736-3334.

Caution:

- Farmers who use sand or limestone for bedding that is transferred to the manure storage **can not** use the aeration bubbler system. The sediment will collect in the bottom of the pit and clog the aeration system.

Spotted Lanternfly

Jessica Pyrda - OCSWCD

By now you have probably heard of the spotted lanternfly (SLF), an invasive plant-hopper from Asia. SLF is considered a serious agricultural threat. While its presence has not yet been identified in Oneida County, it has been confirmed in NYS.

In the spring, SLF eggs hatch, the insects spend the summer cycling through their instar/nymph stages. Some may reach adulthood as early as July. Once the eggs hatch, the nymphs start sucking saps from host plant species. While feeding, adults secrete a honeydew-like substance on the plants, which causes mold to form. This heavy feeding behavior combined with mold weakens plants and can eventually kill them.

Human activity seems to be the main cause of the spread of SLF. Egg masses can be laid on any outdoor surface. They have been found attached to vehicles and firewood. All nymphal stages can jump, adults can fly short distances, they have been found flying into open vehicle windows and truck beds.

While tree of heaven seems to be the preferred host species for adults, the instars are not as picky and will feed on a variety of species. The more SLF is researched, the more host species we find. At this time, it has been found feeding on grapes, black walnut, hops, maples, willow, apple, blueberry, mulberry, figs, stone fruit, birch sycamore, lilac, poplar, staghorn sumac, and Virginia creeper.

While outside this season please be on the lookout for instars and adults. If found please take a picture and email that with the location to spottedlanternfly@agriculture.ny.gov. Please kill any SLF after reporting it.



SLF Life Cycle

Damage from Weather Events on Your Farm

Farms are encourage to **DOCUMENT AND SHARE** any impacts the weather may have had on their home or business. This could include structure damage, crop loss, inventory loss due to power outages, damage to equipment or fencing, and more. If your farm experienced any sort of damage, please reach out to any of the folks listed below. **The more impact information that is collected, the greater likelihood of a disaster declaration which can bring vital emergency support and awareness.**

Reporting Weather Related Impacts

- First, ensure that all the people and animals on your farm are safe, and that there aren't any unsafe working conditions created because of the weather (check your structures!). **If there is an emergency, call 911 - don't try to manage it all on your own!**
- Second, document all negative weather impact for your farm and their estimated financial cost. Take photos, make estimates, and put it all in a safe place.
- Reach out to your insurance providers - farm, vehicle, crop, etc. to initiate the claim process as needed.

- Finally, share your information with any of the ag support agencies listed below. We all work together to collect storm damage information and funnel it up to the appropriate entities to hopefully have Ag and Markets initiate a natural disaster declaration.
 - NYS Ag & Markets Agriculture Sector Disaster Damage Portal
<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/8c5bf33f24c8432e9d6550dab b18c207>
 - Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County: Marylynn Collins (315) 736-3394 ext. 132
 - USDA/FSA Service Center: Oneida County (316) 736-3316
 - Oneida County Farm Bureau: John Wagner (315) 761-9770

Empire State Development Invest in Your Future Campaign

Explore valuable funding support for New York State businesses through the Invest in Your Future initiative. This program connects entrepreneurs and small business owners with loan resources, financial support options, and guidance designed to help you launch, sustain, and grow your business. Whether you're seeking startup capital, working capital to expand, or assistance navigating financing options, these resources can help you move forward with confidence. Learn more online at <https://tinyurl.com/443tvacx>

Help Improve How Agricultural Information Reaches NY Farmers

NY FarmNet is inviting New York farmers to complete a brief survey about how they find and use agricultural information. The results will help identify which sources farmers trust, where information gaps exist, and how Extension services, universities, and government agencies can make resources more relevant and accessible. Respondents will be entered for a chance to win one of twenty \$100 cash prizes.



Scan the QR Code to take the Survey.

New World Screw Worm: Updates & Considerations

ML Collins

You may recall first reading about the growing issue with the New World Screw Worm (NWSW) in our July issue of *Farm Flash* or perhaps read guidance documents distributed by some local milk cooperatives. At the time of this article the status here in New York State remains the same: NWSW has not been reported here. It is an issue in Texas and New Mexico. There is no need to press the panic button, but this topic does warrant a moderate level of awareness and perhaps consideration for changing some management practices moving forward. Despite the growing presence of this healthy-flesh consuming maggot in southern-border states the USDA has agreed to a phased re-opening of the border to allow Mexican cattle flow once again into the United States. Officials are confident that a combined effort between U.S. and Mexico will ensure that every animal enter the U.S. will be thoroughly inspected for the presence of NWSW.

We know that these larvae will not withstand our winter climate and before you know it many growers will be anticipating the first hard freeze. Beef and dairy producers in our region are not likely to be impacted by this pest, but an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, right? Systems in place at the border to monitor each and every animal could fail; infected animals could slip through.

What if next year is different, what if the fly is able to travel further North? Where are areas of risks on your farms? Dairy operations can mitigate risks by implementing solid Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques well in advance of next year's fly season. Newborn calf management practices like umbilical cords, banding, ear tag sights, disbudding areas and open wounds are all areas that should be closely monitored, especially as warmer weather ramps up.

For the cow/calf operator a tight calving window has always been a goal, but there's an additional advantage at play. In the event that NWSW arrives closer to the Northeast, tightening up your calving window will reduce the number of vulnerable calves on the ground at any one time.

Mother Nature Must Be Crazy: What To Do When More Rain Causes More Droughts

Joseph Armstrong - Country Folks

We joke about the weather in New York always changing, but when you have a farm to run it's not always a laughing matter. Sometimes our weather patterns can spell disaster.

In a recent workshop on agricultural resilience in the Mohawk Valley, CCE Statewide Ag Climate Resiliency Specialist Kitty O'Neil discussed how climate change is reshaping farming conditions in New York. From thermal shifts to bigger storms, our region is already feeling the effects. O'Neil focused on helping farmers understand their exposure and begin planning to face the challenges our climate is bringing to their farms.

She outlined the process she calls the "Steps to Resilience" as follows:

- Understand exposure - Build a team to establish shared goals
- Assess vulnerability & risk - Agree on potential impacts of greatest concern
- Prioritize & plan - Establish methods for reducing unacceptable risks and make a realistic plan, weighing resources and benefits
- Take action - Implement those plans since the environment is constantly fluctuating, this process should be viewed as a cycle, not a one-and-done process. Every season comes with its own unique challenges.

Frost Damage - Winter and spring are warming faster than summer and autumn, driven by rising greenhouse gases. Average annual temperatures continue to climb, with Syracuse now about 2.8°F warmer than in the 1980s. The growing season is lengthening, though still unpredictable with a lot of variation from year to year, and the last frost of spring and the first frost in autumn are trending to arrive later than before.

These shifts bring both opportunities and challenges: there's more time for cover crops to establish in autumn and maybe a bonus fast-growing crop, but there's also increased pest and disease pressure, erratic freeze/thaw cycles and muddy spring conditions that shorten planting windows.

Even as winters warm, later spring frosts especially threaten tree fruit and grapes. Earlier bud development means blossoms are more exposed when temperatures dip. O'Neil observed, "Winter cold is becoming less severe, but spring freezes have not decreased at the same pace as buds and flowers develop."

Tools like [Grape Cold Hardiness Risk Assessment](#) and the [CSF Apple Stage & Freeze Damage Probability Tool](#) helps farmers compare crop hardiness to foretasted lows. As O'Neil noted, frost and blossom lines on the apple frost tool "shouldn't touch," making monitoring essential.

Heat Stress - Days over 90°F aren't rising sharply, but maximum temperatures are increasing everywhere in New York State. Heat stress is better measured through the Temperature-Humidity Index (THI), which works similarly to a "feels-like," temperature.

For example, lactating dairy cows begin experiencing stress at a THI of 68. Thirty years of Syracuse data show an increasing trend from 40 to 60 hours above stress thresholds. Over the same 30-year period, nights per year that don't get cooler so livestock can recover have increased from two to nine, drastically impacting milk production if it continues for more than a day.

In drier environments, farmers can cool their barns with mist alone because it evaporates quickly, but in the Northeast where the air is more humid it doesn't work. Farmers are adjusting by avoiding livestock movement on hot days, calving earlier in the year, improving shade with silvopasture systems and using water drip and other cooling methods suited to our humidity.

Hydrological Paradox - New York is getting wetter overall, with only the Long Island area trending drier. Otsego County now receives about 12 more inches of rain per year than in the 1980s, while Syracuse has gained 5.9 inches. Heavy storms are becoming more frequent, with 100-year (1% probability) events occurring closer to every 56 (in Cooperstown) to 72 (in Trenton Falls) years rather than every 100 years. However, just because we're getting more rain doesn't mean we have more water available.

Water from gentle, all day showers penetrates the soil and remains available to plants, animals and people. Water from intense downpours runs off quickly, reducing infiltration and leaving less soil moisture for the weeks that follow.

O'Neil said, "The atmosphere sucks up more water when it's hot and it sucks up more moisture out of the soil, and with less rain we have less water in soil." This creates a hydrological paradox; more rain and more drought, a "weather whiplash" effect that farmers face more frequently.

Adaptation & Survival - Farmers have access to a growing suite of climate-smart tools, including freeze risk models, irrigation timing tools, cover crop schedulers, NEWA's pest and disease forecasts (and others in the development stages which can be found at climatesmartfarming.org/tools).

USDA's Adaptation Resources for Agriculture was described by O'Neil as a "gold-standard: for building a farm-specific plan. Strategies include high tunnels for high-value crops, reduced tillage, improved soil health, drainage and water capture systems and shifting planting dates. Every farm's exposure and risks are different, and capital, labor and local conditions shape what's possible.

Climate change is reshaping agriculture in the Mohawk Valley, but farmers have tools and strategies to build resilience. Developing a full adaptation plan takes time, but starting the process quickly is important for everyone facing these challenges.

As O'Neil reiterated, everyone's second step - assess vulnerability and risk - is different, and farmers are welcome to reach out to her at kitty.oneil@cornell.edu with questions as they navigate these changes.



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Learn more and register:
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**September 16th, 2026
1-4pm**

**Salt City Harvest Farm
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This event is organized by the Institute for Sustainability Engagement (ISE) at Syracuse University, in partnership with the New York Center for Organics Recycling and Education (NYCORE) at Cornell University, with funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Syracuse University is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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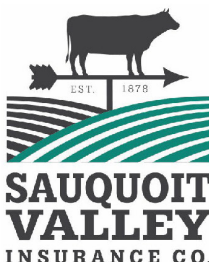
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