Erie County Ag News

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County

FALL 2021

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Cornell Cooperative Extension | Erie County

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Cover photo PIXABAY

UPCOMING AGRICULTURAL EVENTS

SCRUB Twilight Workshop

Bubblers/Aerators for Greens Washing
October 6, 2021
6:30 - 8:00pm
Online Course
For growers wanting to install or improve a greens bubbler/aerator. Get feedback from growers who built/improved their own systems. Examine designs and DYI resources, as well as perceived quality and efficiency gains from bubblers as compared to other washing methods. This workshop features a panel of New York growers!
Register at:https://cvp.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=1571

Healthy, Hardy Heifers! Virtual Series Fall 2021

October 1,8,15,22, 29 November 5, 2021
November 12, and 19, 2021
Fridays from 12pm-12:45pm
Zoom
Join us VIRTUALLY for an 8-week series on heifer management topics from post-weaning to calving! Multiple presentations going on at the same time - you pick which topic interests you! Speakers for the juniors too.
Register at: https://swnydlfc.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=168

New York State Sheep & Wool Festival

October 16 - October 17, 2021
Saturday 9am-5pm, Sunday 9am-4pm
Dutchess Fairgrounds
Rhinebeck, NY
This year's event will be a combination of on-site and online.
Purchase Tickets: https://swnydlfc.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=1672

Income Tax Planning for Farms that File a Schedule F, Session 1

October 13, 2021
Session 1: Tax Planning, Goals, and Foundations
7pm - 8:30pm Online via Zoom
A three-part series for farms that are already filing a Schedule F covering tax planning and goals, handling farm profits/losses, and strategies to improve your tax position while also working positively with your accountant/tax preparer.
Register at: https://swnydlfc.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=1681

Income Tax Planning for Farms that File a Schedule F, Session 2

October 20, 2021
Session 2: Understanding the Schedule F, **Depreciation, Profit/Loss Determinations**
7pm - 8:30pm Online via Zoom
Register at: https://swnydlfc.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=1681

Income Tax Planning for Farms that File a Schedule F, Session 3

October 27, 2021
Session 3: Income Tax Planning Strategies and Timelines
7pm - 8:30pm Online via Zoom
Register at: https://swnydlfc.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=1681

Transition Cow Tuesdays Webinar Series

November 2, 9, 16, 23, 2021
December 7, and 14, 2021
12:30pm-1pm Webinar
Register at: https://swnydlfc.cce.cornell.edu/event.php?id=1676

Vaccine Hesitancy Follow-up

by John Whitney, Agriculture Educator, CCE Erie

The Summer 2021 edition of the Ag News, included an article titled" Vaccine Hesitancy on Farms and in Rural Communities / Encouraging Vaccination." As a follow-up to that article, the following is a link to an August 2021 U.S. Food and Drug Administration web page titled "COVID-19 Vaccination and the Food and Agriculture Sector" (https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/covid-19-vaccination-food-and-agriculture-sector). This link includes many resources for use by farms and food processors/distributors as we continue to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

By the time this Ag News is printed and distributed, I expect there will be significant updates to the FDA page reflecting the FDA's full approval of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine will now be marketed as Comirnaty (koe-mir'-na-tee) with current approval for the prevention of COVID-19 disease in individuals 16 years of age and older. The vaccine continues to be available under emergency use authorization (EUA), including for individuals 12 through 15 years of age and for the administration of a third dose in certain immunocompromised individuals and people aged 65 and older. Approvals of other vaccines and approvals of the vaccines for younger people is expected over the coming months along with additional approvals of "booster" doses for those of us who have already been fully vaccinated with any of the EUA vaccines.

Some have suggested that farm operators can be excellent spokespersons for encouraging vaccinations in rural communities where vaccine hesitancy has tended to be higher and where variants like the Delta variant are spreading rapidly. Reasoning includes the fact that most livestock farmers and ranchers, in particular, are very familiar with the use of vaccines and other protective agents and have an understanding and appreciation of the science behind the development, testing and application of these products. Farmers also tend to be among the most trusted members of their communities. Of course, not all farmers are comfortable in the roles of vaccine advocates and role models, even if they are personally supportive of vaccinations. National Public Radio aired a segment on this subject in early August. https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2021/08/07/1025412688/as-trusted-voices-farmers-could-be-key-to-boosting-rural-vaccination-rates

Clearly, some farmers are also vaccine hesitant or opposed to vaccinations for various reasons. Whether or not vaccine promotion is something you want to take on within your circle of contacts, either pro-actively or as the subject comes up in casual conversations is one more personal decision among so many others in the on-going effort to bring the COVD-19 pandemic under control throughout the country and around the world.■

Photo: Tira Chardz

COVID-19 and Vaccine Resources

COVID-19 and the Dairy Workforce – https://www.nmpf.org/covid-19-vaccination-the-dairy-workforce/

How to Talk About Vaccination with Your Employees – https://blogs.cornell.edu/scnydairyandfieldcrops/2021/04/20/how-to-talk-about-covid-19-vaccination-with-your-employees/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – https://www.cdc.ogv/coronavirus/2019-ncov

New York State Department of Health – https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov

Erie County Department of Health – https://www2.erie.gov/health/index.php!q=coronavirus

New York Extension Disaster Education Network – https://eden.cce.cornell.edu/

Cornell Institute for Food Safety – https://instituteforfoodsafety.cornell.edu/coronavirus-covid-19/

Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development / Corona Virus –http://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu/novel-coronavirus-covid-19/

Cornell Small Farms Resiliency Resources – https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/resources/farm-resilience/
Financial & Mental Health Resources for Farmers – https://www.nyfarmnet.org/

2 Minute Spanish Language Educational Video on COVID-19 – https://www.trabajadores.cornell.edu/

U.S Dept. of Agriculture Coronavirus Disease (topics under FAQs) – https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus

U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services / We Can Do This – https://wecandothis.hhs.gov

U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services / We Can Do This "Resources and Toolkits" – https://wecandothis.hhs.gov/resources

Introducing New Erie County Dairy Royalty

2021-2022 Erie County Dairy Princess Court: Left to Right - Loraina Mesch, Jolene Mesch, Paige Murray, Leslie Mesch, 2021-2022 Erie County Alternate Dairy Princess - Jocelyn Mesch, 2021-2022 Erie County Dairy Princess - Allison Gabel, 2021 NYS Alternate Dairy Princess - Holly Niefergold, Kelly Niefergold, Jessica Niefergold, Ashley Niefergold, and Allison Niefergold.

The Erie County Dairy Princess program is excited to introduce their recently crowned 2021 -2022 Dairy Princess and Alternate. Allison Gabel from Lawtons, NY has been selected as the Erie County Dairy Princess and Jocelyn Mesch from Collins, NY selected as the Erie County Alternate Dairy Princess, to represent our local dairy farmers to promote milk and dairy products. Holly Niefergold, our 2021 New York State Alternate Dairy Princess from Lawtons, NY had the honor of presenting the crowns to our new dairy princesses and court.

Allison Gabel is the daughter of Norbert (Bub) and Lynn Gabel of Lawtons. She will be entering her junior year in high school. Allison has been in 4-H youth development projects for 10 years and is in her 8th year raising and showing dairy cattle and pigs. She is a member of NYS Jr. Holstein Association and is also very active in her family's maple business. Allison's family has been involved in the dairy industry for many generations. Allison's Aunt Julie Gabel gave her a butter churn that was awarded to her when she served as the Erie County Dairy Princess in 1976. Allison looks forward to her 8th year in the Erie County Dairy Princess program. As the Dairy Princess she will be promoting our hardworking dairy farmers, and the nutritional value of dairy products throughout the county.

Jocelyn Mesch lives on a small dairy farm in Collins, NY with her parents and 4 younger siblings. Jocelyn is currently being homeschooled through her sophomore year. She is active in the Erie County 4-H livestock program with dairy, market beef, and market swine, and actively participates in the 4-H

Teen Ambassador program, which works closely with the Farm to School program. Jocelyn enjoys outdoor activities that involve working with her animals, hunting, and can be found sketching or painting in her spare time. Jocelyn is truly honored and excited to serve as the 2021-2022 Erie County Alternate Dairy Princess. She looks forward to promoting the dairy industry and being a voice for farmers throughout Erie County.

The Dairy Princess and her court of dairy ambassadors, welcomes you to visit the Erie County Dairy Princess booth at the upcoming 2021 Erie County Fair. They will be in the Agriculture Discovery Center near the milking parlor at the Erie County Fairgrounds in Hamburg, NY from August 11th through August 22nd sharing fun activities to learn about dairy and chances to win prizes. Hope to see you there!

The Erie County Dairy Princess and her Court are spokespersons for the dairy industry, helping support our local dairy farmers by promoting the nutritional value of milk and dairy products. They participate in community events, radio interviews, write articles for local newspapers, and teach children and adults about dairy farming and the health benefits of eating dairy products. If you would like to communicate with the dairy princess and her court regarding an event or to receive information, please contact Anita Richmond, Erie County Dairy Promotion Committee Chair at 716-725-9919.

Congratulations to our new Erie County Dairy Princess and her Court and best wishes with their dairy promotion activities throughout the upcoming year. ■

The Erie County Dairy Princess program is made possible through the support of the American Dairy Association North East, the local planning and management organization funded by dairy farmer checkoff dollars and local dairy farms and agribusinesses.

30% NYS Initiative: Opportunities, Barriers, and Pathways to Success

In the webinar **30% NYS Initiative: Opportunities, Barriers, and Pathways to Success,** Becky O'Connor and Cheryl Bilinski of CCE Harvest NY, and Cassandra Bull of CCE Allegany, presented an analysis of NY food product procurement data from school food authorities that qualified for the 30% NY Initiative in the 2019-2020 school year, and a subsequent survey of Food Service Directors. Hosted by the Farm to School Program Work Team, the webinar sheds light on procurement trends and the varying pathways, best practices, and strategic approaches to successfully achieving the 30% NYS Initiative. The webinar also includes a brief overview of the 30% NY Eligible Product Database.

The full recording, slide deck, and Q & A can be found on the Farm to School Program Work Team website.

https://cals.cornell.edu/30-nys-initiative-opportunities-barriers-and-pathways-success

Spotlight on East Hill Creamery

John Whitney, Agriculture Educator, CCE Erie County

This article is the ninth in a series focusing on vendors who are selling their wares at the Western New York Welcome Center's Taste NY Market. Thank you to East Hill Creamery owner/operators, Gary & Betty Burley, for meeting with me to share the Creamery's story along with some marketing tips and strategies.

Photo by John Whitney

If you travel Route 20A between Warsaw and Geneseo, you've almost certainly noticed the "cow tunnel" underpass just east of Warsaw. This privately funded and constructed underpass, allows East Hill Farms' cows to safely reach pastures on the north side of Route 20A without having to cross the road, delay traffic or risk car/cow collisions. As the farm expanded from the original 100 acres and 18 cows when it started in 1981, to the current 700 cow grass-fed dairy operation on over 1000 acres, the underpass was one of many changes. The most recent change for the Burley family is the building and operation of the East Hill Creamery on South Main Street in Perry, New York, making the Burley's now part of Wyoming County's long, rich cheese-making tradition.

"Grass-fed" is not a new idea. It's how cows have been seasonally managed for nearly all of their domesticated history. Modern dairy farming brought many changes that included shifting from pasturing animals during the growing season to confinement systems with the farms feeding harvested or purchased forages, grains and supplements year 'round. Those systems can be highly efficient and productive. So much so, that New York State and much of the country continues to have surplus milk supply and marketing problems with associated downward pressures on milk prices.

Pasture-based, grass-fed dairy production models saw a resurgence in interest and innovation with the advance of high-tensile steel fencing systems along with short-duration, paddock and strip grazing strategies that improve pasture yields and forage quality while greatly reducing operating expenses. These systems were becoming popular in other parts of the world including France and New Zealand before catching the interest of farms in North America. The Burley's were among the earliest adopters and adaptors in the region, investing in many miles of fencing and shifting to paddock-based, short-duration grazing suitable for the soils and climate of Wyoming County.

All of this led to many herd and land base expansions over the last four decades; always remaining committed to operating the farm as a grass-fed dairy with cows on pasture for as much of the year as conditions permit. The Burleys have also proven that fences don't need to be physical barriers. Most of the fencing on the Burley farm is a single strand of low-impedance charger-electrified smooth steel wire on widely spaced wooden posts. Uncrowded paddocks with abundant, high quality forage and access to water along with content, well-trained cows means that East Hill Farms hasn't felt it was necessary to build and maintain multi-strand fences that are typical of most high density, "New Zealand-style" grazing systems.

East Hill Farms is still believed to be the largest grazing herd in the Northeast. Graceland Dairies in Dansville, part of the family operation is run by one son and daughter and milks an additional 600 cows. East Hill Farms is run by another son and provides 100% of the milk for East Hill Creamery.

As Betty and Gary began thinking about transitioning out of their management roles in the dairy cow side of the operation and turning management responsibilities over to their adult children, they decided to act on their lifelong dream and vision of becoming cheesemakers. They knew many farms in the region used to operate or work closely with local farm-based creameries and milk plants. The artisanal, farm-to-table trend had already led to a number of start-up operations, all competing for market share with each other and with existing large, commercial scale cheese manufacturers. Betty and Gary knew they had to do something a little different from what was generally being done. They had heard that early European settlers in western Wyoming County had felt especially comfortable in the landscape in part because it resembled the rolling, alpine regions of their ancestral homelands. Traveling to France and the Alsace-Lorraine regions to visit the dairy and cheese making operations there helped convince Gary and Betty to commit to planning for construction and operation of a grass-fed, raw milk, "Alpine" style creamery.

Alpine cheese is a style of cheese made in the hilly and mountainous European Alps regions of France, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Bavaria. By centuries-old traditions and methods, the cheeses are made from unpasteurized ("raw") milk and all begin to take shape by pressing curds into cheese "wheels" of various sizes. Cheese connoisseurs will recognize varieties like Asiago, Comté, Gruyère, Emmenthal (aka "Swiss"), bergkäse, fontina, Reblochon, raclette, and taleggio. While the milk is traditionally not pasteurized for these cheeses, production follows strict standards including modern testing to ensure safety and consistent quality and characteristics. Textures range from semi-firm to firm with a dense paste and creamy meltability. Like fine wines, flavor profiles vary, tending to reflect the terroir of the region. Terroir, the flavor influences of the environment, is a term often applied to fine wines.

Photo by John Whitney

It also applies to artisanal cheeses. Animal species and breed differences, production methods, and age and storage conditions also greatly influence the cheese flavors and textures. Forage species, microclimates and even the time of the grazing season (early Spring, Summer, or Fall) influence the flavors with a few cheese varieties made exclusive from milk produced in specific seasons.

What this all meant for the Burleys is they knew they wanted to build a state-of-the-art facility based on Alpine cheese-making traditions but with modern amenities to meet quality criteria and the production efficiencies needed to be profitable in an increasingly competitive artisanal cheese-making market. The plant needed to be scalable for start-up production levels through peak production or even future expansion. The Burleys also wanted to make the plant and shop a destination venue for visitors to the area including campers and day trippers to nearby Letchworth State Park and vacationers at Silver Lake just to the west of Perry. Agri-tourism, agricultural education, and farm-to-table dining experiences were all considerations.

With Gary and Betty's substantial investments in planning, resources and farm equity, and with financial backing through a local bank, East Hill Creamery's plan took shape. The Burleys hired a dairy consultant, Alexandre Pellicier (www.alexandrepellicier.com). Pellicier is also a ranked French national team ski and

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mountaineering racer. He helped to design the facility and choose the right processing equipment, much of which was imported from Europe, including the large, open copper-lined vats where the cheese making begins after the creamery's own milk truck pulls up to the plant to unload the raw milk through the stainless steel piping system. The $6.5 million facility open for production and sales in 2016. Currently, the plant uses only a small percentage of East Hill Farms' total production although Burleys hope the percentage will increase significantly as production and sales continue to increase.

The unique ambiance and décor of the East Hill Creamery is a result of both the facility's design and the extensive use of red oak, cherry, hemlock, and white pine lumber and red oak beams from trees cut from the Burleys' own farm woodlots. Dan Wagner did the logging and Amish crews did the milling of the wood for beams, boards, and trim. The building features post and beam construction with mortise and tenon joinery exposed throughout the Amish-built facility. Much of the large, wooden furniture was made by Gary & Betty's son, Ryan. Historic images decorate the walls and help to tell the story of cheese making in the region. Windows allow visitors to view cheese making equipment and operations or to peek into the "cheese caves" used for storing and aging the cheese wheels. Caves? Well, not natural or rock-hewn caves, but high, vaulted ceiling, temperature and humidity controlled, earth and sod insulated concrete chambers designed to provide optimal conditions for storing and aging the East Hill Creamery alpine cheese lines.

The cheese "make room" features two large, stainless steel, copper-lined vats used for the early stages of cheese production. The copper lining is considered an important part of the process of making Alpine style cheese, impacting quality, flavor, aging and the preservation process. Extensive heating, cooling, processing and sanitation system piping and equipment, including modern plate coolers and humidity control units are all part of the investment in the state-of-the-art plant. Rennet and cultures are added and the milk is heated to the proper temperature for the cheese variety as the coagulation and curd formation is managed and monitored. The curds and whey mixture is pumped to the mold table where the curds are placed in plastic cheese mold wheels and the whey drains off. The mold wheels move to the press table where the vertical presses squeeze additional whey out of the wheels and the curds begin the consolidation process, staying in the presses for the length of time appropriate for the cheese type and wheel size, flipping several times to extract the whey while the curds re-knit. Different cheese varieties get different press treatments with different size wheels, re-cutting, and re-pressing and timing in the presses. "Silver Lake" cheese is pressed into 60 lb. wheels and processed at that size. "Underpass" begins as large wheels but the wheels are cut into five pieces, re-shaped and re-pressed into 12 lb. wheels. The cheese wheels are kept under high humidity at 80 degrees F. to quickly acidify from the milk's original pH of 6.8 to 5.1 in 24 hours prior to moving the cheese wheels into the next phases of processing and aging which include the brining room and cheese caves. Over the centuries, experimentation, intuition, careful observation, and experience helped humans figure out what is necessary to minimize or kill off harmful bacteria and molds that would cause the cheese to rot or be dangerous to consume while introducing the physical, chemical and biological factors that produce desirable flavors, textures and storage life of the products we call cheese.

The whey, typically a waste bi-product from cheesemaking, goes to a local dairy farm, Schreiber Dairy Farm, as part of the farm's livestock feed ration. Shreibers provide a truck and come to haul away the whey every time they get a call. "Whey has no shelf life," Gary said. He explained, it doesn't really fit East Hill Farms' pasture-based feeding model. Historically, cheese plants like those that dotted the landscape of Wyoming County were located near a water source both for cooling and processing water and, in less environmentally sensitive times, for disposal of the whey, sometimes directly into the streams. Feeding it back to cows is an excellent alternative to expensive treatment, wasteful, or environmentally harmful disposal.

East Hill Creamery has its own, on-site laboratory. Betty is certified to do the testing. Every milk load

Photo by John Whitney

is sampled and tested for antibiotics and harmful pathogens. Combined with an emphasis of high levels of sanitation, temperature and humidity control, the constant testing is critical to East Hill Creamery's commitment to safe and consistent production of high quality, artisanal, Alpine style cheeses.

To satisfy NYS Ag & Markets regulations, wheels need to be aged a minimum of 60 days before sale. For Alpine cheeses, this aging or ripening process, called affinage, includes the process of creating the white to golden rind on the cheese wheels through the early application of the "morge," a traditional mixture of salt water, yeast, and cultures. It doesn't end there, though. Twice a week, each of the numbered cheese wheels is rubbed with morge and flipped. That's no easy task, especially since some of the wheels weigh more than 60 lbs. each. Aging can continue for 2 years or longer with the wheels moving between different areas of the caves and from the young cheese cave to the aged cheese cave. Gary pointed out that the cheese caves were sized to be able to accommodate robots that may eventually take over some of the work. Two spare caves are currently used for storage and construction project staging. The Burleys look forward to the day when the plant is able to produce and market enough cheese to put them to use.

Some plants store and age their cheese wheels on stainless steel or plastic shelving, which Gary explained may have some advantages but can also contribute to quality or consistency problems. East Hill Creamery, instead uses removable shelves made of basswood, also harvested from the Burley's own farm woodlots. He said the light, absorbent, basswood planks, sanitized between aging cycles by both sun exposure and chlorine bleach baths and drying, are an important component of the East Hill Creamery's production environment. He believes they help maintain better moisture conditions for the wheels resting on the shelves and also provide favorable microenvironments for the good organisms that help form and maintain the rinds and influence flavors as the cheeses age.

What about the cheese? East Hill Creamery is currently producing four cheese lines in two styles:

- **Underpass**, the award-winning raclette-style cheese, made in 10-12 pound wheels is named after the Route 20A underpass
- **Underpass Reserve**, a longer-aged version of the

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Photo by John Whitney

signature Underpass cheese with a more robust flavor and firmer texture

- **Silver Lake,** is a gruyere-style made in larger, 60 pound wheels and aged for at least 9 to 12 months
- **Happy Accident,** a raclette-style cheese aged 3-4 months which, as the name suggests has a unique, tangy flavor profile resulting from a taste influencing "mistake" in the feeding of the cows.

For more details about East Hill Creamery's cheeses including suggested accompaniments and beer or wine pairings, see the Creamery's web page: www.easthillcreamery.com.

East Hill Creamery cheeses are sold in various package sizes from 4 oz., 8 oz. and 16 oz. packs to one-eighth, one-quarter and one-half wheels. Silver Lake Alpine Style cheese is also baked and sold as "cheese crisps" by the Trappist monks at Monks' Specialty Bakery at the Abbey of the Genesee in Piffard, New York. In addition to marketing their products through the Creamery's Cheese Shop and through on-line sales, including monthly subscription boxes, East Hill Creamery products can be found at many area farmers markets, grocery stores and food co-ops, delis, cafes, restaurants and specialty shops. The growing list of outlets is shown on the Creamery's web page. East Hill Creamery also sells wholesale through a number of regional distributors including, Finger Lakes Artisan Foods, Food Matters Again, and Headwater Food Hub.

A unique recent addition to the East Hill Creamery's marketing mix is the installation of a cheese vending machine, placed just outside the Cheese Shop. The Cheese Shop is open 7 days a week from 10 AM to 4 PM. The refrigerated vending machine is open 24/7 and accepts credit cards or cash. Gary noted that even when the shop is open, customers sometimes prefer to drive up and use the vending machine which contains every variety of cheese they make along with some extra goodies for meal or snacking variety. Visitors from the Johnstown, New York area stopped in the shop during the interview for this spotlight. In addition to sampling some cheese and buying some products from the store, one of the visitors said, "I love this cheese vending machine you have outside. It's the greatest thing ever!"

The Creamery currently employs three full-time staff and two part-time workers. Mike Lapiana is the East Hill Creamery's master cheesemaker and is a critical part of the success of the East Hill Creamery. Rebecca Grela, who supports the Creamery's sales and marketing efforts, assists with farmer's market bookings and staffing. Gary also staffs some of the markets where he enjoys talking about the East Hill Creamery and its Alpine style cheeses and cheese making tradition. He and Betty also regularly prepare sample plates to share with chefs and managers of area restaurants as part of their product promotion. This has led to many successful product placements and strategic alliances and to on-going additions to restaurant, bar and deli menus.

The Cheese Shop features both the East Hill Creamery's own cheeses and many other food, snack, beverage and gift items. Visitors can ring the bell if no one is at the counter, often because they are in the cutting

room, packing cheese shipments, or prepping for the next farm market or festival event. Part of the Burleys' 80-90 hour work weeks includes staffing the farmers markets that are considered important for helping to build brand recognition and loyalty and creating additional cash-flow.

East Hill Creamery's robust web page is maintained by Josh Wolcott. Josh also manages an associated enterprise in the Creamery building, The Chalet at East Hill. The Chalet was part of Gary & Betty's vision of combining a community and regional event center with the cheese plant. The Chalet is an impressive and attractive example of local craftsmanship combined with Alpine influences. The Chalet is designed as a four-season venue. It is fully handicap accessible with plenty of space to mingle or spread out and enjoy the ambiance and décor, peer into the cheese caves or make room, hang out on the balcony or relax in any of the three rooms included in venue rentals. East Hill Creamery doesn't hold a standing liquor license but secures event-specific licenses as needed. Rental tables, chairs, china, glassware, cutlery and linens are available. The facility also features a full kitchen. Of course, as with so many other events and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, this season's booking have all been cancelled or postponed. The Chalet is tentatively and optimistically booking for late 2020 and 2021, building in COVID-19 physical distancing and other safety protocols.

As Gary & Betty work to build brand recognition and customer loyalty, one of their goals is to expand the customer base in the immediate area. While the price point may be a factor, along with the ability to get the product in other local markets, Gary notes that they get very few visitors to the store from Perry or Silver Lake. Maybe they are "sneaking to the vending machine when we're not watching," Rebecca suggested with a chuckle.

Gary especially loves the unique, pneumatically operated door between the shipping room and the loading dock. Unlike conventional, track-mounted overhead doors, the heavy-duty door provides a tight seal and stands up well to weather, wear and tear and the moisture conditions in the facility. It's another example of the Burleys' attention to detail that has helped the business get off to a good start, even with all the challenges.

In addition to the web page, East Hill Creamery has an active Facebook page, often featuring shots or videos of visits to regional farmer's markets along with product promotion and some of the backstory of the construction of the facility and milk production. East Hill Creamery's Facebook page includes the statement: *"We care for the land our cows graze on and sharing its bounty with people across the region. It's that love for our pastures, forests and cows that drives us to aim for sustainability in everything we do. We want to see this land and this business live on for generations…."*

"We're about three years into our five-year transitional plan," Gary explained. "As our children continue taking over the farming parts of the business, we'll be looking at shifting our land ownership to them as well." Eventually, the Burley's hope to sell the Creamery as a turnkey operation to someone who will carry on the making of Alpine style cheeses for the local and regional markets and beyond.

Thank you to Gary & Betty Burley for taking the time to discuss the East Hill Creamery and associated operations along with their continually evolving production and marketing strategies. I hope you'll have an opportunity to shop at the East Hill Creamery Store in Perry, New York, select some treats from the Creamery's vending machine outside the Creamery Store, sample and purchase cheese and cheese crisps at area farmers markets, or pick up products at any of the many regional grocery and specialty stores carrying East Hill Creamery cheeses. That includes the Taste NY Market at the Western New York Welcome Center. The Burleys are an example of how New York State farm families are continually adjusting to production and marketing challenges and meeting consumer needs and expectations. The East Hill Creamery is one of the many businesses working to make fresh, tasty and nutritious, locally grown and raised agricultural products available to consumers in the region. ■

European Corn Borer in Peppers

Elizabeth Buck, Regional Vegetalbe Specialist,
Cornell Vegetable Program

While European corn borer is primarily a sweet corn pest, it does attack peppers every year. There seems to be higher corn borer pressure in peppers this year, with a round of problems earlier and a second round of damage now.

What does the damage look like?

European corn borer larvae are caterpillars that make their way down to the fruit almost immediately after hatching. Young fruit are most susceptible, with a pest preference for walnut sized and smaller peppers. The caterpillars will drill the pepper fruit around the shoulders, including under the calyx. The entry hole is not always obvious because it can be located under the calyx of a mature pepper. The entry hole may also be in the stem of the pepper.

After entering the fruit, the caterpillar will feed internally for a period of time of more than a week. The actual length of time depends on ambient temperature during the feeding period. Mature larvae will exit the pepper, often through leaving low on the side wall or through the bottom. Immature caterpillars may be present in the fruit and can sometimes be heard rattling if you shake a shoulder drilled fruit.

Unfortunately, having a caterpillar in your pepper is not the most unsavory part of a corn borer infestation. These peppers often rot. And it is not a pleasant rot. Bacterial soft rots enter the pepper through the entry wound. The area around the wound becomes softened and mushy. As the rot progresses, it starts to become soupy and quickly spreads throughout the pepper. There can be a nasty bacterial soup inside the fruit and eventually fruit with bacterial soft rot will slough off the plant.

The bacterial soft rot problem deserves attention. In dense canopies and under favorable weather conditions the bacterial soft rot can take off all on its own and start attacking unwounded fruit. It is easily spread: your hands get covered in bacterial funk, falling dripping fruit spread bacteria, and splashing water spreads the bacterial soft rot. As an added bonus, the caterpillars don't like living in a soupy pepper and they'll seek out a new, drier home inside another fruit.

Management of the European Corn Borer

European corn borers are fairly easy to scout for in peppers. Their eggs look like pale patches of fish scales and are laid on the bottom of pepper leaves near the central vein. Eggs take 4-9 days to hatch, depending on the ambient temperature. Because eggs can take as little as 4 days to hatch, once a week scouting is insufficient to prevent damage. Eggs that have a dark spot in them are going to hatch within the next day. Mark plants with egg masses (a piece of bright duct tape on a leaf works well) to re-check daily so you can catch when the eggs change color. It is the change in egg appearance that allows you to accurately time your sprays.

In all cases, you want to time your sprays for just after hatch. Sprays are ineffective once the caterpillars enter the pepper. Again, the caterpillars are most attracted to the younger, walnut sized and smaller fruit. Since the undersides of leaves are an exceedingly difficult spray target, try your best to get coverage of smaller fruit.

In pepper, European corn borer can be treated with a number of pyrethroids (Hero, Gladiator, Leverage, Mustang Maxx, Warrior, etc), Group 28 materials (Coragen, Exirel, Minecto Pro), spinosyn materials from Group 5 (Radiant & Entrust), and the Group 22A material Avaunt eVo. Pyrethroids require a spray license and generally have a 7 day pre-harvest interval

(PHI). The Group 28s have a shorter 1 day PHI but also require a spray license in NY and some growers feel these chemistries have a high price point. Avaunt eVo has a 3 day PHI and does not require a license, but can only be used in bell pepper. That leaves the spinosyn class Group 5 materials Entrust (organic) and Radiant. Both materials have a 1 day PHI, do not require a license, and both can be used on wide variety of peppers.

Organic growers may try using Bt products in addition or rotation with Entrust. There will be some suppression from natural enemies and generalist predators like lady beetle larvae, lacewings, minute pirate bugs, and parasitoids. I think it is risky to solely rely upon generalists to provide control if you are finding multiple egg masses while scouting.

Monitoring for European Corn Borer

Three years ago I could say with confidence that growers could time their European corn borer (ECB) management activities based on the ECB numbers in the sweet corn pheromone trap report. The report shows when European corn borer adults are active in your area. Once adult flight activity picks up, growers should scout their peppers for egg masses and continue scouting twice weekly until the flight ends. Remember, you have to scout twice a week because eggs can hatch in only 4 days in warm weather and because you have to spray right at hatching to get effective control.

Now, I need to be more nuanced. For a long time there have been 2 races of ECB present in NY, called race E and race Z. Think of them as two different colors of Labrador retrievers, black for race E and yellow for race Z, if you will. Lately there's a new race of ECB showing up in NY called the hybrid race. I'm going to refer to it as the chocolate lab.

We have a long history of trapping for the black (race E) and yellow lab (race Z) varieties. We know how many degree days it takes for the adults to emerge, how long the flight should last, and how long after peak flight eggs hatch and damage begins for race E and race Z. We know that there is one generation

European Corn Borer damage to pepper. Photo by J. Reid, CCE

per year of the race Z yellow labs and two generations per year of the race E black labs. Because of all this, we could recommend that pepper growers watch the trap counts and time sprays according to the flights and feel confident that control would be high.

Assessing Risk for European Corn Borer Infestations in Pepper

The hybrid race undermines our confidence in relying only on the trap counts to provide high levels of control because we don't know enough about the flight and developmental windows of the chocolate lab hybrid race. We are just now learning how to successfully trap the hybrid race and just starting to develop insight into how long flights last, how many flights, how long for eggs to hatch, and which crops the hybrid race prefers.

So, are the corn traps a useful tool? Yes, absolutely. If there is a flight of the black or yellow lab varieties, you are at elevated risk of having a European corn borer infestation in your peppers. Can you rely solely on the traps? No. We can't just take on pepper scouting (and spraying) tasks based on trap counts anymore. Now

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we have to assume a general background level of risk. Until we have a better understanding of how the chocolate lab hybrids behave and develop, I expect we will continue to see egg masses and damage in production windows that don't align with the predictable black & yellow lab race E and Z flights.

What else contributes to elevated risk? The race E and Z corn borers prefer to lay eggs in corn. They are picky about staging, though. Both want to lay eggs on whorl stage corn and don't bother corn very much after tasseling. If the European corn borer cannot find corn of a suitable stage they will look for other host plants. This means that pepper plantings are at higher risk when surrounding cornfields have outgrown the whorl stage and are no longer attractive to the moths. In wet springs that delay field corn planting we can sometimes have peppers get attacked because the field corn is too little to be attractive when the first batch of adults begin flying. The size of the overall population contributes to risk, with more pressure leading to more problems in peppers. For the race E black labs that have 2 generations, risk can be higher for damage in the second generation if the first generation is left uncontrolled.

But what about the bacterial soft rot?

The bacterial soft rot that often comes in secondary to a European corn borer problem can become the primary cause of loss within the field. Some fruit that seem alright at picking may develop soft rot after harvest. Unfortunately, there is little that can be done to manage the problem by spraying. Copper is the go-to material for bacteria, but it cannot stop an already active infection and it cannot touch a problem on the inside of the fruit. Copper isn't going to save the day.

Cultural controls provide better odds of success. First off, scout for ECB egg masses and manage those well to prevent wounding. Next, make sure there is good airflow in your canopy to allow the dew and rainfall to dry out quickly. Remove weeds and consider whether your plant spacing might be too tight. Stake plants that insist on falling over on one another.

The best thing to do is to remove any ECB damaged fruit and any fruit with any softness early and often. Peppers will continue to invest in a damaged fruit until it falls off from the plant on its own. The energetic investment in damaged fruit is a waste. Removing damaged fruit allows the crop to focus all its resources on maturing marketable fruit. Early and frequent removal limits the amount of wasted energy and also reduces the amount of time that bacterial soup that can develop and spread within the canopy which should limit the overall quantity of nastiness. Be suspicious of fruit that seem to be ripening too early or unevenly, they are often damaged. Because the bacteria will splash back up onto the plants in the rain, it is better to remove the soft rot fruit from the field, if possible. It is also a good practice for workers to carry Clorox wipes or rubbing alcohol to frequently wipe down their hands when they are working through a canopy with a bacterial soft rot problem. ■

European Corn Borer, ECB Frank Peairs, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org

Food entrepreneurship 101: a 3-part webinar series

1) SESSION 1: WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO RUN A FOOD BUSINESS?

You have a dream. Learn about the legal requirements, focus, and mindset needed.
OCT 5, 2021, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM EST

2) SESSION 2: PRICING FOR PROFIT

Review of the pricing sheet. It is important to make a profit with every unit you sell.
OCTOBER 12, 2021, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM EST

3) SESSION 3: SUCCESSFUL MARKETING

Creating a unique story, identifying your target market and understanding your competition.
OCTOBER 19, 2021, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM EST

PRICE:

NONMEMBER PRICE: $100 (includes membership to organization for the rest of 2021)
MEMBER PRICE: $20

REGISTER BY OCTOBER 1, 2021:

https://www.eventbrite.com/e/food-entrepreneurship-101-tickets-168609977983

ABOUT:

New York Small Scale Food Processors Association is pleased to announce the first in a series of webinars in October 2021, to assist farmers, chefs, and food entrepreneurs in learning the building blocks to run a successful food business.

Led by recognized leaders in the small-scale food production industry, members of NYSSFPA will lead participants through the mindset and legal requirements to begin. The first 3-part webinar will address the tools needed to price your product profitably, and how to showcase your product in the best light to generate revenue.

Upon registration, you will receive worksheets to assist you during the sessions. Please note that the one-time registration fee covers all three workshops. Here is a description of each session, which builds upon the previous.

THE ASIAN LONGHORNED TICK

How to protect your livestock and farm

ASIAN LONGHORNED TICK QUICK FACTS

- An invasive species detected in the U.S. in 2017
- Most active April-October
- Activity level peaks in August
- Live in grassy areas near forests & meadows
- Can reproduce without mating

An adult female Asian longhorned tick (left) and a nymph (right)

An Asian longhorned tick infestation on the udder of a cow

⚠ DANGERS OF ASIAN LONGHORNED TICKS ⚠

> In their native areas, Asian longhorned ticks can spread different bacteria and viruses that **can make humans and animals sick.**

> **Quick population growth and a higher chance of infestations.**

> In very bad infestation cases, they have caused blood loss in cattle, which led to **reduced productivity, growth, and sometimes death of the animal.**

An Asian longhorned tick infestation on the backside of a cow

TIP!
Consult a veterinarian for information on anti-tick medication.

REMEMBER!
Follow all milk & meat regulations associated with drug use.

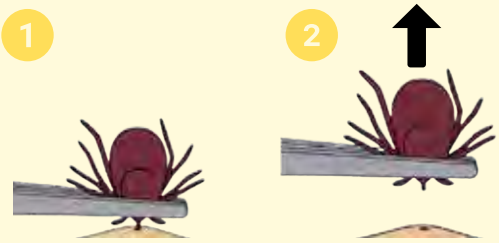
TIP!
Organic producers must check with their certifier before using any anti-tick products.

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR FARM FROM TICKS

1. Avoid overgrowth of the pasture
2. Prevent deer from entering or getting near the farm. Many types of ticks regularly attach to deer.
3. Consider using acaricides and other anti-tick products. Scan the QR code for specific options that are safe for cattle.
4. Regularly check livestock for ticks

FOUND A TICK ON YOURSELF OR LIVESTOCK?

Remove it! Use clean tweezers and follow the two steps below. Be sure to clean the tick-bite area with soap and water



FOUND TICKS ON YOUR FARM?

If you find a tick infestation on your livestock, contact a veterinarian.

Veterinarians can safely remove ticks, treat livestock if they have been affected, and submit ticks for identification.

A permethrin-treated shirt available at insectshield.com.

Permethrin-treated gaiters available at rei.com.

HOW TO KEEP YOURSELF AND FARM WORKERS SAFE

1. Use permethrin-treated clothing. Permethrin is an insecticide that protects against many insects including ticks, mosquitoes, and fleas. Shirts, gaiters, and pants are a great way to reduce skin exposure and protect against ticks.
2. Tuck in clothing. Tuck pants into boots and shirts into pants. This reduces skin exposure.
3. Do frequent tick checks on yourself and others.

Keeping your farm safe from ticks leads to a healthy and productive farm! Take steps now to make sure your farm stays happy and healthy!

Photo of female and nymph Asian longhorned tick courtesy of James Occi.
Tick infestation photos courtesy of Phurchhoki Sherpa.

Farmer Tax School Series Announced

Katelyn Walley-Stoll, Cooperative Extension, SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops

Join Cornell Cooperative Extension Farm Business Management Specialists from across the state for their virtual Farmer Tax School, offered in October 2021 through January 2022. This educational series offers courses designed to inform and empower farm managers to better understand their tax obligations, management strategies, and improve farm profitability. For more information, visit tinyurl.com/ccetaxschool.

Each course, outlined below, has its own fee. There are scholarships available for those experiencing financial hardship. The courses will be offered virtually via live and interactive zoom webinar. For those without internet access, there will be a call-in option available with the opportunity to receive paper copies of the presentation via mail. Each presentation will be recorded and sent to those who are registered (even if you can't attend the live event).

Register at least three business days in advance of the workshop. You can register for one, some of, or all courses. This series has options for agricultural producers of all shapes, sizes, and time in business.

Income Tax Planning for Farms that File a Schedule F

Wednesdays, October 13th, 20th, 27th
7pm - 8:30pm
$25/farm

A three-part series for farms that are already filing a Schedule F covering tax planning and goals, handling farm profits/losses, and strategies to improve your tax position while also working positively with your accountant/tax preparer. Our first session will provide an overview of tax planning, the management of tax liability, and assessing your record keeping system. Second session will delve into everything Schedule F - depreciation and classifying revenues and expenses. The final session will be led by a professional tax-preparer who will introduce tax planning strategies and the timeline for implementation with ample time for questions and discussion.

Farm Financial Records for Decision Making & Tax Management

Thursday, December 2nd
7pm - 9pm
$10/farm

A primer for beginning farmers, or a tune-up for those already in production, on recording income and annual expenses, capital expenditures and depreciation with additional information covering loans & credit card or revolving loan payments, sales of business assets, and deducting losses.

Tax Management for Beginning and Small Farm Businesses

Tuesday, January 18th
7pm - 9pm
$10/farm

A one-night virtual meeting for beginning and part-time farmers that provides useful tax information enabling participants to be make better tax decisions for their business. Federal and state income taxes will be covered.
Tax regulations specific to NYS will be covered as well.

Farm Specific Tax Code Benefits

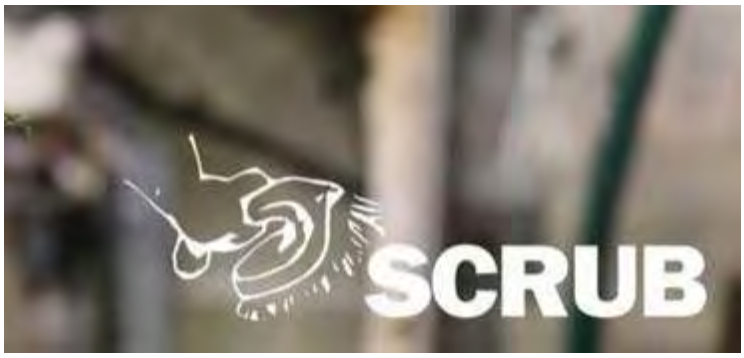
Tuesday, January 25th
7pm - 8:30pm
$5/farm

For farm businesses of all shapes and sizes, tune in to learn more about the tax advantages available for farms. This workshop will include information for the current tax season.

There are sponsorship opportunities available to help off-set the cost of the program. Farm Financial Services Providers are encouraged to join as a sponsor. This will add their name to a service directory that will be made available electronically and in print to all participants. Sponsorships are available for $100/organization and will also collect information about services offered, location, and contact information.

Register online

www.tinyurl.com/ccetaxschool



SCRUB Twilight Workshop Series

Bubblers/Aerators for Greens Washing

October 6, 2021
6:30 - 8:00pm
Online Course

For growers wanting to install or improve a greens bubbler/aerator. Get feedback from growers who built/improved their own systems. Examine designs and DYI resources, as well as perceived quality and efficiency gains from bubblers as compared to other washing methods. This workshop features a panel of New York growers!

Complete this form to register for a workshop from this series.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf8NNjCD9FbI0ER7X_5426nHQGBoWJ7LrluvVX1uEIXM3KA2w/viewform

Estate Planning: When Is Unequal Fair?

Kathleen McCormick, Agriculure Educator, CCE Erie

Photo: Rawpixel

All parents face some tough decisions when it comes to estate planning. One of the most difficult is how to divide their assets among their children. For most parents, it boils down to deciding whether the division should be equal or fair. Equal is easy. Each child receives the same amount when the estate is distributed. Fair is trickier. The estate is distributed according to contribution and/or need.

Farming parents have an added complication. One of their assets is a business. If none of the children want to farm, an equal distribution of assets can be the easiest and fairest way to go. But what about those parents who have some children who want to continue farming and some who don't. Dividing assets becomes a much stickier problem. Here's how one expert put it:

"It's tempting to think, They're my kids, and they should all get equal shares. With that attitude, passing on the ag operation as a viable entity will require jumping some tremendous hurdles. First, the business operation probably isn't going to be able to afford to buy out the off farm heirs – principal and interest payments may be overwhelming, and the size of the operation may be insufficient to support a family. Second, joint ownership of the business by people who will certainly have different goals will make decision making difficult. Don't force siblings with different goals to work together. Finally, dividing the business assets equally does not reward the child who worked on the operation. This is not being fair."

Parental Calculus

Sometimes parents who have children who want to continue farming conclude that unequal is fair. This decision can involve some complicated parental calculus. Here's list of factors other farm parents considered in their calculus.

- Off-farm heirs received college tuition, a down payment on a house or other compensation, so they received some of their inheritance early.
- On-farm heirs helped create part of the final estate of the parents by actively contributing to the parents' business over the years, so they are entitled to more.
- On-farm heirs are getting delayed compensation for work performed in years when they were underpaid.

- On-farm heirs have been or will be attending to the majority of the physical and business needs of the parents in their retirement

Putting a Value on Sweat Equity

For parents who do decide that unequal is fair, one of the struggles is figuring out how to put a dollar value on what on-farm heirs bring to the business. Here's how one farm dealt with it.

Farm Value 1990 2021	 $300,000 $1,500,000	On-farm heir joins operation
Net growth in value	$1,200,000	Parents credit the on-farm heir with 50% of the growth.
Distribution at Death		
On-farm heir	$100,000 $200,000 $600,000	1/3 of 1990 farm value 1/3 of parents share of net growth 50% of net growth in value
Off-farm heirs (each)	$100,000 $200,000	1/3 of 1990 farm value 1/3 of parents share of net growth

The family has three children. One of them joined the business in 1990 when the business was worth $300,000. The business has grown in value to $1.5 million since 1990. The parents attributed much of this growth to the labor and energy the child who joined the business brought to it. For example, they purchased a neighbor's land, rented additional land and added a cow/calf enterprise. The child who joined the business was paid a modest wage and allowed to use the machinery as he developed his own farming business, but they all know that the profit and business growth is worth far more than what the child was paid or would have paid to rent equipment.

The parents knew that dividing the farm into three equal pieces would mean that none of the pieces were large enough to sustain a viable operation or generate enough income for the on-farm child to buy the others out. They also felt that they may have actually retired earlier and sold some of their land if their child hadn't joined the business.

The parents eventually decided that each child contributed equally to the business while they were growing up so they divided the 1990 value of the farm equally among the children. They reasoned that the on-farm child was responsible for half of the business growth since 1990 so they allocated $600,000 (half of the $1.2 million increase in business value since 1990) to the child who returned. The remaining $600,000 was divided equally among the children. The numbers are laid out in the table above.

In the end, the parents felt that this division of assets was fair even though it wasn't equal.

Unequal But Fair Tools

For parents who want to keep a farm intact across generations, fair means figuring out how to ensure a relatively equal distribution without gutting the farm operation. For many families, the highest value asset is the land and there may not be many other assets to help them balance what on- and off-farm heirs receive. Here are some ways it can be done.

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- Buy/Sell Agreements – Parents write buy/sell agreements with on-farm heirs, committing to exact sale prices, terms, and timing of payments on farm properties. These agreements can provide the on-farm heirs a guarantee of property purchase at an acceptable pace and price, and guarantee off-farm heirs a fair price.
- Life Insurance – Parents have a couple of options regarding life insurance. One is to purchase life insurance on themselves and list the off-farm heirs as the beneficiaries. This would provide off-farm heirs with cash generated by the insurance, leaving the farm assets intact for the on-farm heirs. Another option is to gift some money to the on-farm heirs so that they can purchase life insurance on the parents. The on-farm heirs would be listed as beneficiaries. Upon death of the parents, the on-farm heirs would have cash to buy out the off-farm heirs.
- Living Trust – Parents establish a trust with a provision that gives the on-farm heirs the right to purchase farm assets from the trust at predetermined prices, terms and conditions over a number of years. This guarantees the off-farm heirs their percentage of the estate over time.
- Will – A will can be used to equalize or to make fair any previous distributions to heirs. The will may make special provisions to fit the situation. If any heir has received earlier compensation, they may now get less than other heirs. Off-farm heirs may be given an inheritance of cash, non-farm assets or remote land holdings. Farm assets are transferred to the on-farm heirs.

Photo: Pixabay

Pitfalls to Avoid

Here's a list of estate planning pitfalls that can lead to deep disappointment and hard feelings among your children.

- Giving children grossly unequal shares of the estate. Parents can use the tools described above to make the distribution relatively equal.
- Requiring off-farm heirs to take their inheritance in the business as a long-term loan to on-farm heirs. Putting siblings in debtor/creditor roles can weaken even the tightest sibling bonds.
- Planning late. Some of the ways to make shares of your estate more equal can take years to fully implement. Postponing estate planning will reduce your options.
- Not telling your children about your estate plans. Surprises can destroy trust and make children feel betrayed. Helping your children understand your view of fair will go a long way toward preserving family harmony in the long-term. Your children may not agree with your view of fair, but they may appreciate your transparency and think twice about contesting the will. And you may learn something from talking with your children that can be incorporated into your estate plan in a way that keeps peace in the family.
- Failing to plan at all. Not planning will force your children to decide how to split the assets, putting an unnecessary strain on their relationships and the business at much greater risk of failure.

Avoiding these pitfalls means getting started now. Parents can use the worksheet on the following page to start thinking about what matters to you when it comes to your children and the farm. ■

Planning For the Future - Family Considerations

This worksheet is intended to help you start thinking about what matters to you when it comes to your children and the farm. There is space at the bottom for your thoughts about why something is or isn't important to you. It may be helpful for both parents to complete the worksheet independently before sharing the results with one another. Comparing and discussing your answers together will help you both get a clearer picture of what is most important to each person and lay the groundwork for discussing your plans with your children.

Rate the importance of each item below (1= not important, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = very important).	1	2	3
I want the farm operation and family land to remain in our family's possession.			
I want the land to be actively farmed after I/we retire.			
I want our children to continue managing the family farm operation and lands.			
I want the division of property to be equal in dollar value among our children.			
I want the division of property among our children to be fair (not necessarily equal).			
I want to give financial help to our children who choose to continue actively farming the land.			
I want to give financial help to our children who choose off-farm careers.			
I want our children to play a part in the decision-making for the future of our farm operation and lands.			

Photo: Rawpixel

NYS Dept of Agriculture Confirms Box Tree Moth Found in Western NY

from the Dept of Agriculture and Markets with additional information from Sharon Bachman, CCE Erie

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) today confirmed the detection of box tree moth in parts of Western New York, near the Canadian border in Niagara County. Box tree moth is an invasive pest from East Asia that poses a major threat to the boxwood plant, an ornamental shrub that is a valuable part of the U.S. nursery industry, with an annual economic impact estimated at $141 million (American Hort). AGM is urging residents and the horticultural industry to spot and report the box tree moth to the Department through its reporting tool at: https://arcg.is/1Df8Se.

State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "The box tree moth is a highly destructive pest that is a threat to the health of our boxwood plants. We are asking residents to help aid in our efforts to find the box tree moth so that we can better assess impacted areas and reduce its spread in New York State."

In July, AGM detected five adult box tree moths in various locations in Niagara County. Because they were detected near the Canadian border, it appears the moths may have flown or been blown into the area from Canada.

AGM Division of Plant Industry staff started surveying for the invasive pest in high-risk areas in Niagara County when the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reported that boxwood plants imported from Canada this past spring could have been infested with the box tree moth. The host plants in Niagara County where the adult moths were trapped were damaged due to flooding.

In addition, on August 6, 2021 an AGM Inspector in Niagara County received a referral from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation regarding the presence of box tree moth larvae in a residential landscape in Youngstown, New York. The inspector visited the site and collected several larvae, which have since been confirmed as box tree moth by Cornell University and USDA's National Identification Services.

AGM and USDA are continuing to survey for box tree moth and are urging residents and the horticultural industry to look for and report any signs of infestation. Residents can help by following these steps:

- Check any boxwood plants you have for signs of box tree moth life stages.
- If you find any signs of infestation, take a picture, and report it to https://arcg.is/1Df8Se.
- Please cooperate with agriculture officials if asked for permission to access your property for visual inspection of boxwood plants, or for placement of a box tree moth trap.

Allen Proxmire, National Policy Manager in USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service said, "We need the public's help to eradicate this pest. If you find signs of infestation in your boxwoods, please take pictures and include them in your report." Proxmire recommended that residents contact their county Cornell Cooperative Extension service for information about pesticides available to consumers to kill the insects. A list of pesticide options for New York, developed with the input from Dan Gilrein from Cornell is available here: https://ir4.cals.ncsu.edu/ehc/InvasiveSpecies/BTM_FactSheet_PotentialMitigationOptions_20210527.pdf

Our local AGM inspector noted that it might be hard for homeowners to get adequate control with available pesticide treatments, as boxwoods are dense bushes with many places for insects to avoid spray coverage, and the moth is known to have several active life stages at a time.

During the hot days in August, the AGM inspectors reported finding moths flying in the shade near

boxwood plantings. The box tree moths are going through several generations and are expected to be active late into the fall. Box tree moth larvae are easily recognizable; they are green and yellow with white, yellow, and black stripes and black spots. https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/sa_insects/box-tree-moth Signs of damage may not appear at the beginning of an infestation because young larvae hide among twigs and leaves. Signs of a box tree moth feeding on a plant include chewed, cut, or missing leaves, yellowing or brown leaves, white webbing, and green-black excrement on or around the plant.

Adult box tree moths generally have white bodies with a brown head and abdomen. Their wings are white and slightly iridescent, with an irregular thick brown border. Some adults have completely brown wings with a small white streak on each forewing. Males and females can show both colorations. ■

Photo: Box Tree Moth

How and Why Do Schools Purchase Locally-Grown Food?

The Cornell Cooperative Extension Farm to School Program Work Team funded a special edition of Fresh Bites, a publication of the NY School Nutrition Association, to tell these stories. The e-magazine focuses on the 30% NY Initiative, an incentive program that provides a higher per-meal reimbursement for schools that use 30% or more of their lunch budget to purchase NY grown, raised, and produced foods. It highlights strategies for finding, affording, promoting, and serving local foods, including a mini-podcast series where Food Service Directors talk about their unique experiences with the initiative.

Erie County farmers, growers, and producers who are interested in learning more about Farm to School or how they can sell their products to schools should reach out to Becky O'Connor, Farm to Institution Coordinator with CCE Harvest NY: rao84@cornell.edu or (845)706-0293.

Check out the e-magazine here.

https://publications.nyschoolnutrition.org/view/151986692/14-15/

Taking, Preparing, and Submitting a Soil Sample for Testing

Amy Barkley, Livestock and Beginning Farm Specialist,
SWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program

Soil testing is an easy way to identify and quantify nutrient imbalances in our agricultural soils. Tests will identify major nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium as well as pH, organic matter, and some micronutrients. Whether you are sampling pastures, orchards, or crop fields, understanding the nutrient contents of your soil can allow you to make management decisions to help your crops thrive.

Timing:

Samples can be taken in either the fall or spring. They should be taken following crop removal, prior to planting and/or fertilizing, or before green-up in the spring. A soil testing schedule should be established to help understand nutrient levels and how they change over time. It is recommended to test soils before planting a crop in an area that has not been tested before. Once there is an understanding of the soil quality and a crop has been established, soil tests should be taken every 2 years if planting annual crops such as corn, soybeans, or vegetable crops, and every 3 years if the field is planted in a perennial crop such as pasture or an orchard. This will allow for the regular identification and correction of nutrient deficiencies.

Where to Sample:

Each individual field, pasture, or parcel should be tested separately, since management styles and naturally occurring differences due to field location and soil type will impact soil structure and nutrition. If a larger field exceeds 15 acres, it is recommended that field be divided up into 15-acre parcels, with each tested separately. When dividing fields, there can be natural divisions, such as upland vs lowland or recently cleared vs previously cleared areas. These areas should be tested separately anyway, since large changes in topography or field age can influence soil type and nutrient content. Other areas that should be either tested separately (if they are going to be planted) or left out of a sample include: low spots; areas against a stream, pond, or livestock waterer; eroded areas; areas with obvious changes in soil type or structure; areas where wood piles have been recently burned; and old fence rows.

A soil sample is made up of 10-15 core samples from a single field or area. When taking cores, the pattern of sampling should allow for the most representative sample. Sampling in a random pattern, diagonal line, or zig-zag pattern is most representative. It is not recommended to sample in a straight line across the center of a field or to sample all in one area. These two techniques will yield non-representative samples, which will skew results.

Equipment needed:

To take a core sample, a soil probe, auger, or spade can be used. A bucket for each sampled field will be needed to contain and mix the core samples.

Taking a sample:

Each parcel or field sample will be made up of 10-15 core samples. Core samples are vertical slices or tubes of soil which represent the plow depth (for annual crops) or the majority of the root growth depth (for perennial crops). The core sampling depth will depend on the crops to be planted in the next three years. For pastures, no-till fields, or gardens, test 4-6 inches down. Plowed field sampling depth is the depth of tillage. Orchards will need samples between 8-14 inches in depth, depending on the species present.

Before taking the sample, remove any organic matter from the soil surface. This can be stubble, leaves, or living vegetation. Next, if using a soil probe or auger, insert or twist until the pre-determined sampling depth is reached, then take the core sample and add it to the sample bucket. If using a shovel, dig a straight-sided hole to the depth to be sampled. Then, take a 1-2” slice of soil straight down along the side of the hole. Remove the excess soil on either side of the blade, leaving a 1-2” wide core of soil in the center. This is the core which is then be placed in the bucket.

Preparing the sample for submission:

Once the core samples are collected, break them up to create a uniform mixture of soil. At this point, remove any large roots, rocks, or pieces of organic matter remaining in the sample.

If the soil lab being used requests it, the sample can now be dried. Drying is achieved by spreading each mixed sample separately out on a sheet of newspaper, cardboard flat, or sheet pan, and dried at room temperature. If desired, a

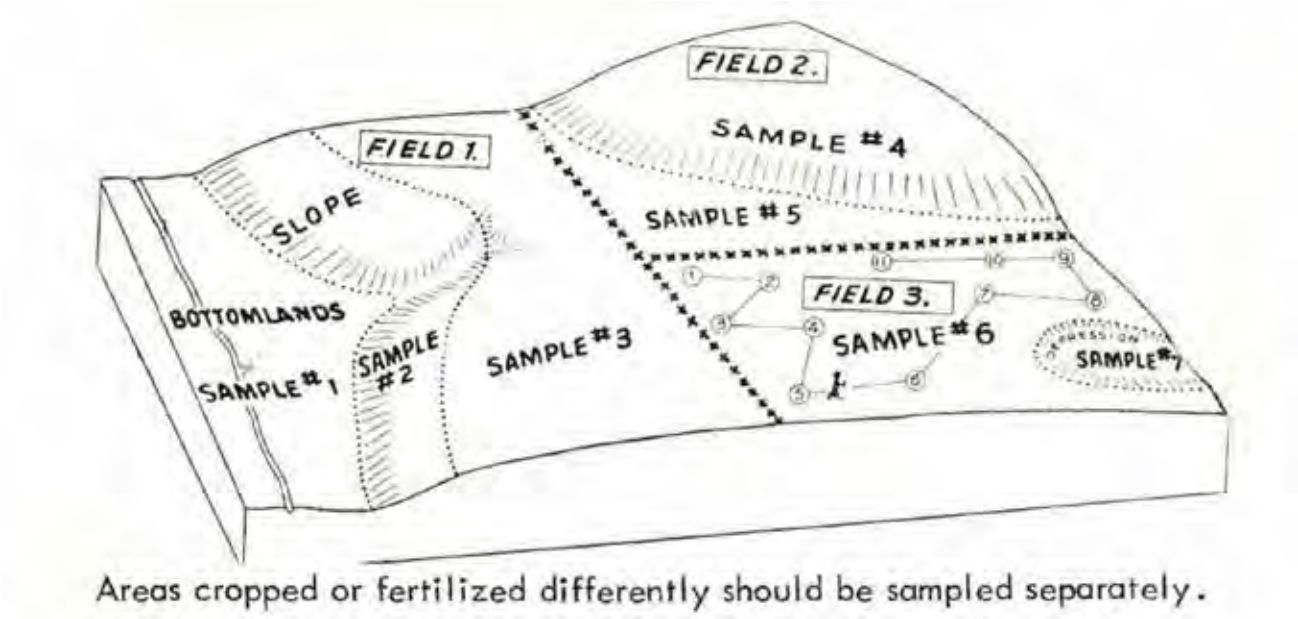


Photo: from UGA Extension

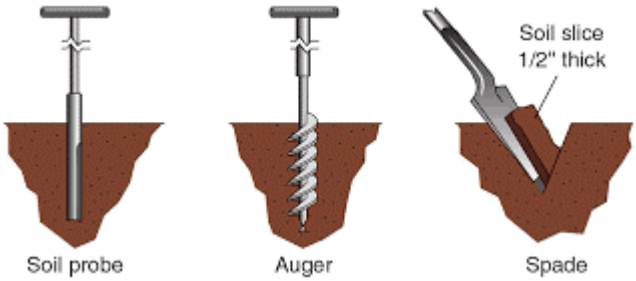
fan can be used to help speed up the process. It is not recommended that the sample be heated to dry it, as this may alter the test results. The drying process will take about 72 hours. Every 24 hours, thoroughly mix the sample to speed up drying and to help mix it further.

Once the sample is dry, place 2-3 cups of it into a sealable bag labeled with your name, the date the sample was taken, and the field ID. This should match what is entered on the sample submission form and should match your records. The bag can be a Ziploc, whirl-pak, or bag that comes with a soil test kit.

Filling out the submission form:

Complete all parts of the sample submission form, including field characteristics, prior crops, future crops, and soil type. Soil labs will typically have a key on the submission form to use to fill out soil characteristics, as well as a list of crop codes to select from to identify which crops have been planted prior and which are anticipated to be planted in the future. Soil name is a vital component, especially for those submitting samples to Dairy-One. This is because Dairy-One maintains a research-based repository of fertilization needs based on crop and soil type for farms in New York. This information allows the lab to make precise recommendations, which takes out the time needed for a farmer to otherwise research and calculate fertility needs. The soil name can be found using the USDA-NRCS (United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service) Web Soil Survey at https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov. A detailed video explaining how to use the tool can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yl2T8DCyY1Y&t=489s.

For more information about soil testing or report interpretation, you can reach out to Amy Barkley, Livestock and Beginning Farm Specialist, at amb544@cornell.edu or (716) 640 – 0844.



There are three primary soil sampling tools: a soil probe, and auger, and a spade. Photo from USDA-NRCS

SWNY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program New Dairy Management Specialist – Camila Lage

Dairy Management Specialist
CCE Steuben County
20 East Morris Street
Bath, NY 14810
cell 607-422-6788
cd546@cornell.edu

Camila Lage will be working on research and outreach related to dairy herd health and management, calf and heifer rearing, milk quality, nutrition, and improving efficiency and environmental sustainability of dairies.

Camila grew up in the largest milk producing state of Brazil. She graduated as a Veterinarian from the Federal University of Minas Gerais - Brazil, where she also got her MSc. and Ph.D. in Animal Science with a focus on calf rearing. Camila spent 2 years of her Ph.D. program at Penn State as a visiting scholar, working with Dairy Nutrition, especially related to protein nutrition. Camila then worked as a Postdoc at the University of California-Davis, where she worked with the economic opportunities of implementing automatic milking technologies in dairy farms. She is looking forward to working with producers in the area and connecting the agricultural industry to Cornell resources.

SAM & DUNS: Register Your Business Now So You Don't Miss A Funding Opportunity Later

CCE Livestock Program Work Team

It is not uncommon for a farm and/or business to miss out on a grant opportunity simply because they could not get their SAM or DUNS registration completed in time for an application deadline. Registering only requires a little of your time, but it can take weeks to receive your number. If you intend to apply for federal grant funds anytime in the future, we strongly recommend registering your farm or business now, so you'll be prepared for grant opportunities that may come your way.

What are SAM and DUNS? They are registries for businesses. SAM is used by the US government for entities that receive federal funds. DUNS, which stands for "data universal numbering system," is used to register hundreds of millions global businesses. Enrolling in both registries is NECESSARY to receive federal grants—like from the USDA--and is FREE & EASY.

How do I do it? Start by applying for a DUNS number. To do this you can call 1-(866) 705-5711 or visit https://www.dnb.com/duns-number.html or www.dnb.com. To complete the process to obtain a DUNS number, you will need to provide the following information:

- Legal name of your business entity
- Address
- Phone number
- Name of the CEO or business owner
- Legal structure or type of business (corporation, partnership, proprietorship, etc.)
- Year the entity was created
- Primary line of business
- Total number of employees (full- and part-time)

Once you have been assigned a DUNS number, you must annually register on SAM.gov to remain eligible to receive program financial assistance. To complete the process on SAM, you will need the same kind of information used to obtain your DUNS number as well as your Tax Identification Number (TIN) and other data to complete registration and reporting requirements.

NOTE: *Never pay or attempt to register for SAM on a .com website. Use only the links provided above. There are dozens of scam companies online that will attempt to charge you for this free service, including offers to renew your SAM, which is required annually. NEVER pay, just keep your log-in information in a safe place and log-in to renew as needed.*

Taste NY at the Western NY Welcome Center's Farmers Market

2022 Season kicks off Wednesdays from 4-7pm starting June 22-October 5th, 2022

Photos: Molly Vigrass

The Taste NY at the Western NY Welcome Center Farmers' Market would like to invite you to be a vendor at our 3nd Annual Farmers' Market this season. Our goal is to provide a venue where local farmers can come together to provide a variety of fresh, healthy local produce, meat, dairy, and eggs directly to our residents and visitors.

The Farmers' Market will be held every Wednesday from 4pm-7pm, June 22, 2022 through October 5, 2022. It is located at the Western NY Welcome Center, 1999 Alvin Road in Grand Island, NY. The Western NY Welcome Center outdoor space is an ideal location for a Farmers' Market, complete with a pergola and plenty of space for vendors. Your health and safety and that of our staff and customers are our top priority and best practices will be in place to stay safe while at the market.

In an effort to bring high quality products to our community and support our local farmers, we ask that all products sold at the market are fresh, local, and grown in New York State. All products sold by a specific vendor must be grown by that vendor. Purchasing from a wholesaler is not allowed under any circumstances. Vendors that are interested in selling at the Taste NY at the Western NY Welcome Center Farmers' Market are encouraged to complete and submit the application that can be obtained through the Market Manager. There is no fee for each 10' x 10' space, it is FREE for the entire market season. Space is limited.

We also sell fresh produce throughout the season inside our Taste NY store, which takes advantage of our location for residents and tourists visiting our area. We will need products to sell and are counting on you to sell us these additional products! We hope this will make our location that much more appealing to you.

Contact Taste NY Market Manager Molly Vigrass by phone at 716-773-0970 or by email at erietasteny@cornell.edu if you have any questions or would like to obtain an application.

We hope you are interested in participating in our market and look forward to receiving your application to join our Farmers Market this year. ■

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Erie County

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Erie County Ag News

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Erie County

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