

Niagriculture

January 2005 Issue

2005 Events

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| January 11, 13 & 14 | Basic Finance Workshops (closest) Pembroke Town Hall (free) Register with Cathy Wallace at 585-658-3250 x 100, 10am – 3 on 11 & 13, 1:30 – 3:30 on 14 |
| January 19 | Corn Congress in Batavia |
| January 20 | Corn Congress in Waterloo |
| January 26 | Wind Energy Seminar for Farms, Batavia (see article) (details on registration later). |
| February 14-17 | Produce Marketing Conference and Empire State Fruit and Vegetable Expo OnCenter Convention Center, Square |
| February 22 | 7pm Pesticide Recertification Credits (3 hours applied for), Lockport, CCE |
| February 22 | 1pm Pesticide Testing. Call DEC 851-7220 at least one week before test. Contact Cornell Cooperative Extension two weeks before if you need materials to prepare. |
| March 3 | 8am – 10pm Intensive 1-day school on fruit planting systems (more information from Steve Hoying |
| March 8 | Marketing Products from Pasture-based production (Lockport or Knowlesville – to be determined) |
| March 18, 19 | 2005 Cornell Swine School and Trade Show – Morison Hall and Livestock Pavilion, Cornell (Saturday 19th designed for small farms and youth) |
| March 24 | LERGP Grape Growers' Conference at SUNY Fredonia, Fredonia, NY. |

MINIMUM WAGE STANDARDS FOR FARM WORKERS

The Minimum Wage Order for Farm Workers applies only to farm workers employed on farms where the total cash remuneration paid all persons employed on the farm exceeded \$3,000 in the previous calendar year.

The Minimum Wage Order for Farm Workers provides that all workers, with certain exceptions, must be paid at least \$6.00 per hour. This wage becomes effective on January 1, 2005. It will increase to \$6.75 per hour as of January 1, 2006 and to \$7.15 per hour as of January 1, 2007. This does not include members of the employer's

immediate family and minors under 17 years of age employed as hand harvest workers on the same farm as their parents or guardians and who are paid on a piece-rate basis at the same rate as employees over 17. **(We await information from the Labor Department on availability and access to a Youth Rate. You, like me, may wonder about the ability of young workers to produce enough to be worth \$6 or more per hour.)**

The wage order permits specified allowances to be deducted from the minimum wage for meals and lodging supplied by an employer. However, an allowance for lodging is not permitted in the case of seasonal migrant workers. Payments in kind may

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Cornell Cooperative Extension in Niagara County provides equal program and employment opportunities

be permitted at not more than the farm market value.

Employers must post a summary of the wage order in a conspicuous place(see last page enclosed) in their establishment. A copy of the general work agreement must also be posted

POSTING PROVISIONS

The employer must make a schedule for all minors and post it in a conspicuous place. The schedule sets forth the hours minors start and end work and time allotted for meals. The hours of work can be changed, as long as the changes are posted on the schedule. Minors may work only on the days and at the times posted on the schedule. If minors are present at other times or if no schedule is posted, it is a violation of the child labor law.

DO YOU KNOW OF YOUTHS WHO SHOULD HAVE A SAFE TRACTOR OPERATION COURSE?

It's been awhile since Niagara County has offered a tractor safety certification program. Requests tend to be quite scattered. Federal law requires youth, ages 14 and 15 to have 14 hours of training for tractor operation and an additional 10 hours for farm machinery (PTO) operation. 13-year-olds may take the course with their certificates held until their 14th birthday. If you have children, grandchildren, other young relatives or know of youth in the neighborhood that you might like to hire for a summer job, now is the time to tell us about this need. We make no promises but need your call to 433-2651 to let us know about your need.

HOW Will PROPOSED IMMIGRATION REFORM AFFECT YOUR HISPANIC WORKFORCE?

Negotiations kept immigration reform out of the latest U.S. Intelligence Plan. But, what can Hispanic employers and their workforce expect from future reform attempts? Join Washington D.C. insider Jim Holt, senior economist with McGuinness, Norris, and Williams Law Firm of Washington D.C., for "Agricultural Immigration Reform: How Bright is the Future?"

Holt is a featured presenter at Managing the Hispanic Workforce 2005, a conference for agricultural and horticultural employers:

NEW FOR 2005! Presentation topics include:

Agricultural Immigration Reform
Managing Employee Health and Safety
Designing and Implementing Effective Training Programs for Hispanic Workers
Four Factors for Success with Your Hispanic Employees

Understanding Your Hispanic Workforce

How to Develop a Multicultural Team

Employee Perspectives: Highlights from more than 100 interview surveys with Hispanic farm employees **January 18-19, 2005, Radisson Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center, Camp Hill, PA.**

On another note, you might be interested in the conference because of the following news item: (details on the conference are available from Cooperative Extension):

MARSHALLVILLE, Ohio (AP) - About 40 farm workers, mostly immigrants from Mexico, stayed on strike at a northeast Ohio dairy farm Monday, and were seeking support from a national farm labor organization. They walked off their jobs last week to support Caesar Lopez, the eighth worker fired at Stoll Farms in less than two months, the workers said.

PESTICIDE RECERTIFICATION

Just some reminders to help you avoid disappointment...on pesticide recertification credits:

- Keep the copies of your recertification credits in a safe place. No one will do it for you. And when you do send them in to Albany, send the originals and keep photocopies as back up proof. Some DEC people would even say to send them in by certified mail if you distrust the postal service's ability to deliver without fail. One county agent uses a hole punch on the certificates so that growers can keep the certificates in their loose leaf certification notebook!
- One grower thought he was allowed to add the credits (cumulatively) for various categories approved for credits. No! If you are privately certified, you can use the

credits awarded for private categories (private categories are numbers 21 – 41). Commercially certified people can use credits awarded for categories 1A – 12. But, you can't count them twice or more. You never get more credits than there are hours in the class and sometimes less, if the content isn't approved as pesticide safety.

- If you need 12 credits to recertify, as a private applicator, 25% of them (3) must be in your area of certification. A vegetable grower would need 3 credits in category 23 (vegetables). The rest (9) can be from any private category (eg. Category 24 – greenhouse and florist) or from a line listed as "All" or "Core." If the vegetable grower had all his credits from category 23, that would be ok.
- **If you are in a bind and are getting close to a deadline**, it is possible to schedule a sit down with an easy-to-use "reading and find the answer" lesson on our computer. We have 3 approved modules worth 4.5 credits all together. That's not 12 but it should help you out if you're a little short.
- We'll be offering 3 "core" credits sometime in February at Cooperative Extension, Niagara County. Call 433-2651 to be on the list for notification

PRODUCE MARKETING CONFERENCE TO JOIN 2005 EMPIRE STATE FRUIT & VEGETABLE EXPO - FEB. 14-17, SYRACUSE

The Produce Marketing Conference, sponsored jointly by Cornell University and Michigan State University, will join with the 2005 Empire State Fruit and Vegetable Expo February 14-17 at the On center Convention Center in Syracuse.

The Produce Marketing Conference will kick off with a pre-conference tour on February 14, and visit sites of interest to anyone in the produce business. The Produce Marketing Conference will also feature a full day of educational sessions on February 15, focusing on produce marketing trends, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), opportunities to sell to food service and non-traditional retailers, and a hands-on case study of

decision-making in produce marketing. Keynoting the conference will be Ed McLaughlin, leader of the Cornell Food Industry Management Program, who will discuss trends and opportunities in produce industries. The Produce Marketing Conference will wrap up on February 16 with Joe Ferrara, a New York Department of Agriculture and Markets food security consultant, who will discuss food security issues facing New York agri-businesses. Suzanne Thornsbury of the Michigan State University Department of Agricultural Economics will discuss global competition and trends in the fruit and vegetable industries.

In addition to the Produce Marketing Conference program, the Expo will have full-day educational sessions scheduled February 15-17 focusing on a variety of commodities grown in New York State. Over 115 exhibitors will be at the trade show. For more information on the Produce Marketing Conference, contact senior extension associate Wen-fei Uva at WL32@cornell.edu. The conference program and pre-registration form will soon be available on the Expo Web site (www.nysaes.cornell.edu/hort/04expo). Financial support for the annual Cornell-MSU Produce Marketing Conference is provided by Michigan State University's Project GREEN (Generating Research and Extension to meet Economic and Environmental Needs) and Cornell Cooperative Extension.

THE WIND ENERGY CONFERENCE

The Wind Energy Conference we have been planning is now scheduled for Wednesday, January 26, 2005 at Genesee Community College. The program will be divided into three sessions: Session A, for commercial wind energy plans; Session B, teleconference with Iowa landowners; and Session C, small-scale wind energy opportunities.

Session A will focus on commercial wind energy options, i.e. wind energy turbines sited on landowners property with all of the energy produced going onto the grid. This session would be for landowners who are currently being approached and asked to lease land to the wind energy companies for 15-25 years.

Session B will be a video conference with a group of landowners in Iowa who have land leases with a wind energy project that began in 2000.

Session C will focus on "small-scale, on-site" wind energy systems for farms, businesses, municipalities, and institutions. This session would be for individuals who would like to learn more about putting wind turbines on their property to generate electricity for their farm, business, municipality, or institution. A key component for this session would be someone to share information about the availability of federal and state incentives (grants and low interest loans).

Editor

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