



Cornell University Cooperative Extension Niagara County

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Niagriculture

March 2008 Issue

- April 1 Local Sourcing – Farms and Restaurants: 6-7:30 pm – Market Arcade Building, 617 Main Street, Buffalo (Between Chipewa and Tupper. \$10 suggested donation for non-members of Buffalo First
See item below
- April 4 Multi-county Pesticide Training Course: CCE-Orleans Co. Trolley Building, 12690 NYS Rt. 31, Albion (in hamlet of Knowlesville). Be signed in by 1 pm – 4:15 pm. Contact 433-8839 x221; \$15 enrollees; \$30 non-enrollees. Pay at the door but call ahead so that we can plan for definitely schedule category teachers. 1.5 core credits plus 1.5 credits category 21,22,23,25 or 1a (may be used for core if not needed as category) This is the only local spring recertification class for Niagara County
- April 8 Ag Career Day, Experiment Station, Geneva
April 8 Farm Truck Inspection Clinic, Orleans Co. Fairgrounds Contact: Kim Hazel 585.798.4265 x 26 \$5
- April 8 Wayne DEC Special Permit Training Class for Non-Certified
April 9 Orleans Applicators/Handlers of Federally Restricted-Use Pesticides
9-12 English session; 1-4:30 Spanish \$15/applicator attn. Kim Hazel 585-798-4265 x26
- April 14 7-10 pm CCE – Niagara County Update on Bee Health Geri Hens
Modest fee
- April 19 Nate Herendeen’s retirement party, Batavia Party House.**
Contact: Karen Krysa 433-8839 x221
- April 24, Exploring the Small Farms Dream Contact Paul Lehman 433-8839
May 1, 8, 15 7 pm
June 5 Small Grains Field Day, Aurora Research Farm Contact Mike Stanyard

Pesticide Recertification

The calendar item, above (April 4th) is self-explanatory. We do ask that you call ahead since there will be an hour-long break-out session and we don't want to schedule instructors if there is no pre-registration in a category.

Apr 1: Local Food Sourcing

An intensive brainstorming seminar to connect restaurants and farmers and get more locally produced food into Buffalo's restaurants, grocery stores, and institutions. The group, Buffalo First will also begin to examine some of the area's best green sourcing options, buyer's collectives and establish a local/sustainable wish list. The Growing Green Program from the Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP) will share their experience observing local sourcing networks from across the country. Co-sponsors include MAP, Slow Food Buffalo and area farmers' markets. See calendar, above.

Contact: Amy Kedron - info@buffalofirst.org

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

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

High Cost of Western New York Electricity

Much of the retail cost of electricity for farmers in New York State is attributable to the high wheeling charges (transport and delivery) and taxes on the electricity – something that is very difficult to change short of finding the political will, statewide, to do. For some farmers, if you are able to expand your operation to make use of 75 kW of new net load, the Empower Niagara project may have promise for offering low-cost power to you. Two Niagara County farmers are submitting applications and there is an ongoing application period. To get an idea of what 75 kW means:

- Obtain a list of equipment that will be utilized in any expansion project, that contains nameplate data (kW or horsepower)
- One horsepower is equal to .746kW of connected demand.
- 100 horsepower therefore would be equal to 74.6kW, which is the minimum amount of net new load to be eligible for Empower Niagara Power. Actual price depends on the demand continuous or otherwise.

Michael Casale of the Niagara County Department of Economic Development encourages contact by those who may have expansion plans but for whom this 75kW is too high a threshold. That would give him leverage to suggest others are interested but at a lower level of usage. He's at Michael.casale@niagaracounty.com or phone: 278-8752.

Cornell Soil Health Tests - subsidized to be only \$20 per sample!

As we approach April, which is a good time to sample and test your soils, consider using the expertise of the Cornell Soil Health Team. In 2008, you can have a thorough analysis of your soils using the current subsidized program, which offers a complete analysis of chemical, physical, and biological aspects of your soil health for only \$20. This is different from the simple analysis you receive from the Cornell Nutrient Analysis Lab, which provides simply chemical compositions of you soil. This project's aim is to assess NY agricultural soil health as more of an integrative approach by looking at biological, chemical, AND physical qualities of your soil.

From the cover letter of the NY Farm Viability Institute Soil Health Test Subsidy Project: "The test integrates the assessment of 15 individual physical, biological and chemical soil measurements and synthesizes the information into a user-friendly report. The information learned from this test can serve as a baseline assessment of the sampled field. Subsequent sampling and analysis of the soil collected from the same field (or section of field) can be used to determine the impact of newly implemented or changes in soil management practices (e.g. use of rye grain cover crops, incorporation of organic amendments, tillage practices, etc.) made to improve soil health or specifically to address the potential soil health constraints identified by the soil health test report."

Of course, in order to participate in the program, you need to include information to the team members on how you used (or did not use) your test results to modify your soil practices to improve soil health. The time has come to think "long term." Your soil health will not improve dramatically after only one season of improved practices; however, years down the road, your vines will be thanking you!

For more information, please feel free to contact any area specialist or, locally, Paul Lehman at 433-8839 x 241. See the Cornell Soil Health Program website: <http://soilhealth.cals.cornell.edu>

Of 520 Respondents to a Town of Newstead (Erie County (survey – at election sites and on line), 84.6 % said that protecting active farmland in the town was important.

Submitted by,
Paul E. Lehman
Extension Educator