

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County's

# *Farm Flash*

---



Jerry Dell Farm 1995; Today the Harveststores are gone and 300 acres of pasture surround the farm.

### How to get started in Grazing

There are three ways to begin the evaluation of how grazing might impact your farm:

1. First is to contact your local Extension office to find out where to get information on grazing.
2. Second would be to contact your County SWCD office to inquire about planning a grazing system for your farm and whether there are any grants to help with the infrastructure required.
3. And third is to talk to other dairies in your area that practice grazing.

Story on page 4

*April 2009*



CCE of Oneida County  
 121 Second Street  
 Oriskany NY 13424  
 315-736-3394  
[www.cce.cornell.edu/oneida](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/oneida)



*Jeffrey Miller*  
 Agriculture Team Leader  
 E-mail @ [jjm14@cornell.edu](mailto:jjm14@cornell.edu)  
 736-3394 x120



*Cindy Cowles*  
 Agriculture Admin. Assistant/  
 Web Design/Tech Support  
 E-mail @ [clc66@cornell.edu](mailto:clc66@cornell.edu)  
 736-3394 x124



*Bonnie Collins*  
 Ag Farm Business  
 Management Educator  
 E-mail @ [bsc33@cornell.edu](mailto:bsc33@cornell.edu)  
 736-3394 x104



*Jim Manning*  
 Farm Business Manager  
 E-mail @ [jpm277@cornell.edu](mailto:jpm277@cornell.edu)  
 736-3394 x129



*Mary Wrege*  
 Renewable Energy Educator  
 E-mail @ [mpw57@cornell.edu](mailto:mpw57@cornell.edu)  
 736-3394 x131



*Heather Sweeney*  
 Dairy/Livestock Adult-Youth  
 E-mail @ [hes7@cornell.edu](mailto:hes7@cornell.edu)  
 736-3394 x122



*Marty Broccolli*  
 AED Specialist  
 E-mail @ [mjb83@cornell.edu](mailto:mjb83@cornell.edu)  
 736-3394 x121



*Remi Link*  
 AED Assistant  
 E-mail @ [rl368@cornell.edu](mailto:rl368@cornell.edu)  
 736-3394 x111



*Caroline Williams*  
 Rural Development  
 E-mail @ [jcw28@cornell.edu](mailto:jcw28@cornell.edu)  
 736-3394 x133

**CCE of Oneida County Farm Flash**  
**Table of Contents**

Page 4 –5	Hard Times Make for easy Choices (cover story)
Page 6	Changes in DMV Laws for Farmers
Page 8	Saving on Fertilizer
Page 9, 12-13	Preliminary DFBS Results for 2008
Page 11, 16	BMR Corn Silage
Page 13	Agricultural Safety Certification
Page 14-15	Switch-grass
Page 17	Earn Money with Carbon Credits
Page 18	Risk Management #8
Page 19	Tax Management and Planning
Page 20-21	Grass Variety Trial Results
Page 22-23	Cultivar Yield Trial Results

# Upcoming Events

## Your Forest Ownership

**" Will your woodlot weather these tough times"**

May 2, 2009, CCE Madison Co, Eaton St. Morrisville, 7:45am-4:30pm, cost \$5.00 per person. Includes lunch . A number of important topics will be covered including: Forest stewardship, Invasive species in forests, Where to go for help, EQIP forestry programs, American "Tree Farm" system, National wildlife Turkey Federation, 480a Forest assistance program, IRS-private forestry, ATV logging demonstration.

## Round Baler/Hay preservative workshop

Clinton Tractor, Rt. 12B Clinton

Thursday April 23, 2009 11am

**Pre-register** by April 17th

by calling Michele or Jason 853-6151

## Dairy Promotion Banquet and Pageant.

May 1st at 7:00 pm, Dibbles Inn in Vernon.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for children under 12.

Tickets will be available at the door or from a committee member



**Bob Pawloski**

335-2210

*Lime delivered in loads &  
spreader / 30 ton available*

### First Pioneer Farm Credit, ACA

Your First Choice For Financial Solutions

- ◆ Farm Loans
- ◆ Agribusiness Loans
- ◆ Leasing
- ◆ Appraisal Services
- ◆ Tax Services
- ◆ Financial Records
- ◆ Crop Insurance
- ◆ Credit Life Insurance
- ◆ Payroll Services
- ◆ Business Planning
- ◆ Estate Planning
- ◆ Profit Improvement

995 State Route 12◆PO Box 60◆Sangerfield, NY 13455  
(800) 762-3276◆(315) 841-3398◆ FAX (315) 841-3397  
[www.firstpioneer.com](http://www.firstpioneer.com)

### POHL'S FEEDWAY INC.

Feeds & Crop Needs  
Custom Mixed Feeds  
PO Box 246 4560 Verona Rd  
Vernon NY 13476

**Dana Pohl** Cell: 796-9005

**Gary E. Sherwood, CCA**

Cell: 796-9004

Phone: 315/829/2753  
Toll Free: 800/982/0851  
Fax: 315/829/2273

### **Hard Times Make for Easy Choices**

Written By Fay Benson, Graze NY educator  
with the South Central NY Dairy Team

Vaughn Sherman of Jerry Dell Farm, Dryden NY thought he had arrived at success with his dairy business in 1995; his BST treated herd of 300 milkers had the highest average production level in Cortland County, and his Harveststores were full of Alfalfa and Hi-Moisture Corn. By the spring of 1997 the creditors were calling, his cash flow failed to meet his cost of production and he was ready to talk to an auctioneer. A grazing advocate for the county stopped to talk to him about grazing. The hard times made the choice fairly easy; either, give up the business and the cows he loved, or take a chance on putting the cows out to graze.

Today Jerry Dell is a successful dairy, the herd of 350 still grazes and in 2001 they certified organic. They have brought four family members back into the business, and the future looks bright. This transformation isn't guaranteed by the transition to grazing but the key to success seems to be not what works on most farms but rather what works for the individual farmer. Vaughn says that he was managing his farm to maximize production, a way that works for many operators. The problem was that it didn't work for him. Managing a grazing operation seems to fit his abilities better than the production style that he was operating in 1995.

During this period of low milk prices most farms are experiencing hard times. Hard times can be a good time to evaluate your business and decide whether changes are necessary. Grazing is a proven way to produce milk in New York. Generally there is less capitol required per cow, production may be lower but the cost of production will also be lower. It isn't for every farmer, but it is a viable alternative if it suits your management style. A key piece of advice if you are considering making any type of changes to your operation you need to have good records to guide you. Financial records allow you to monitor how the change is affecting your farm, before you have gone too far down the wrong road.

### **You Can't Manage What you don't Measure**

Since 1996 The Department of Applied Economics and Management at the Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has collected and published business summaries for 30-50 NY dairy farmers that make use of Intensive Grazing on their farms. The following are some of the excerpts from these Dairy Farm Business Summaries (DFBS).

<u>Item</u>	<u>Grazing Farms</u>	<u>Confinement Farms</u>
Number of cows	91	90
Milk sold/cow	17,025lbs.	18,982lbs.
Operating cost/ cwt	\$10.73	\$11.40
Total cost/cwt	\$16.21	\$16.81
Net Farm income/cow	\$467	\$365
% Return on equity	3.94%	1.18%
Purchased feed+crop exp./ cwt	\$5.05	\$5.29
Veterinary+medicine exp./ cow	\$65	\$87
Machinery cost/cow	\$509	\$591

\*This data was compiled from annual averages reported in the year-appropriate DFBS. The data set for each year may include different farms, as the farmers who return surveys vary.

### **Intensive Grazing vs. Confinement Farms: Average 1996-2006\***

One of the biggest challenges confinement dairies face when they begin the transition to a pasture based dairy is the probable drop in milk production. For years there has been an unstated link between milk production and profitability. Many dairies will give up on the transition when the level of milk in the bulk tank starts to drop. For those that complete the transition and who have kept good records, they find that there is usually an economic return from pasture, (as indicated by the above chart).

Profits are not the only benefits that NY dairy farmers have discovered by converting to a pasture based system. The Grazing-DFBS asks each year "Has the adoption of grazing impacted your family's' quality of life?" The respondents have answered positively 80% of the time. Some of the other comments are:

- Environmentally friendly
- Reduced chore time
- Healthier cows
- More opportunity to involve the children
- Positive comments from neighbors and tourists

**FARMERS REMINDED OF CHANGES  
TO SLOW MOVING VEHICLE LAWS**  
Slow Moving Vehicle and Lighting Changes Went into Effect Jan. 1, 2009

The following is a summary of three new laws, as well as lighting requirements that pertain to slow moving vehicles. For the exact language of the new laws, please refer to the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law at <http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menuf.cgi>  
New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law Section 100, paragraph (d): The law now pertains to every agricultural tractor, self-propelled implement of husbandry, and towed, mounted or semi-mounted implement of husbandry. Implement of husbandry means a vehicle designed or adapted exclusively for agricultural, horticultural or livestock raising operations or for lifting or carrying an implement of husbandry.

New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law Section 375, subdivision 36, paragraph (b): Farm machinery and implements of husbandry designed to operate at 25 mph or less, traveling on a public highway during day or night, whether self-propelled or used in combination, shall each separately display a slow-moving-vehicle emblem as specified by law. The previous law required an SMV emblem on either the tractor or the vehicle being towed, but not both.

New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law Section 376, subdivision 1, paragraph (a): It is unlawful to operate, drive, or park self-propelled agricultural equipment on any public highway or street during the period from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise and during other times as visibility for a distance of 1,000 feet ahead of or behind such agricultural equipment is not clear, unless such agricultural equipment is equipped with approved lamps that are lighted and in good working condition.

Lighting Requirements for Self-Propelled Agricultural Equipment:  
When lighting is required, all self-propelled agricultural equipment shall also be equipped in accordance with New York State Vehicle and Traffic Laws lighting requirements, which are as follows:

- Head lamps: must be two white lights on the front of the equipment, at the same level and as far apart as practicable
- Tail lamps: must be one red light at the rear of the equipment and as far to the left as practicable
- Combined hazard warning and turn signal lamps: must be two amber lights at least 1.1 meters (or 42 inches) high at the same level, as far apart as practicable, and visible from both the front and rear
- Rear reflectors: must be two red lights at the rear of the equipment, at the same level, and as far to the left as practicable

In addition to the announcing the changes in the law, the Departments of Agriculture and Markets, Motor Vehicles and Transportation, the New York State Police, the GTSC and NYCAMH, will collectively be launching a public education campaign aimed at educating both SMV users as well as general motorists. The program is anticipated to include published materials, website information and other components to be announced at a later date.

Slow Moving Vehicle emblems must always be kept clean and must be replaced when faded. It is illegal to use SMV emblems as driveway or mailbox markers, which can confuse the meaning of the SMV emblem and lead to its loss of effectiveness as a warning device.

For questions about the New York State Vehicle and Traffic law or the changes to the law that went into effect this year, contact your local New York State Police Troop Traffic Section.

The New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH) offers a variety of farm safety and health services to the agricultural community, including roadway safety presentations to agricultural audiences. For specific information on agricultural machinery and roadway safety, contact Jim Carrabba at 800-343-7527 x239 or [jcarrabba@nycamh.com](mailto:jcarrabba@nycamh.com). All NYCAMH safety services are voluntary, available at no cost, and strictly confidential.

For additional information on SMV emblems, please refer to the State Vehicle and Traffic Regulations Title 15 Part 68 Slow-Moving Vehicle Emblem (15 NYCRR 68). For additional information on required lighting equipment, refer to the State Vehicle and Traffic Regulations Title 15 Part 43 Motor Vehicle Lighting (15 NYCRR 43.9) Section 43.9 Lighting Requirements on agricultural equipment. These regulations can be found at <http://www.dos.state.ny.us/info/nycrr.htm> and selecting the Department of Motor Vehicles.

**FARM WANTED:** Couple looking for 100 – 300 acre dairy farm that has room for vegetable production and/or small greenhouse. Barns to hold 75-100 cows and 50-75 heifers. Contact Keith at 1-410-482-8661

**Pastures for Rent:** Town of Verona. 30 acres with 4 rotating pastures. High tensile fence, barn access for shade and weather protection. Water and grain included. May through November. If interested, please call Ken Brewer at 829-4983 (home) or 935-7735 (cell) or email [kbrewer286@poisinello.com](mailto:kbrewer286@poisinello.com)

**Saving on fertilizer**  
**Karl Czymmek and Quirine Ketterings**  
**Department of Animal Science, Cornell University**  
February 2009

1. **Rotate from sod to corn.** Rotation breaks will give the first year corn crop a yield boost without requiring extra inputs. There are many studies that show a rotation benefit. Whether it is a change in soil conditions, nutrient status, or a reduction in pest damage yields of crops are usually improved by rotation. Improved yields usually mean improved profitability.
2. **Eliminate sidedress and manure N** on first year corn after alfalfa or grass sods. Many growers are attracted to spread manure on that old grass sod that will be rotated to corn the next year. The fact is that the upcoming corn crop will not yield any better in response to the additional N that will be placed in the field so s/he would be better off applying that manure to a field that needed the N more like second third or fourth year corn.
3. **Test your soils.** Take soil samples before manure application to see where P and K are needed most. Then, prioritize fields that need N *AND* are low to medium in P and K to take advantage of all three macronutrients in manure. At this time potassium (k) is the most expensive nutrient. Having your soil tested and limiting your k application to crop requirements can save your money.
4. **Eliminate starter P** from corn fields that are high (that get manure) or very high (manure or not) in soil test P. Eliminating the P from a 200# rate of 13-13-13- to 50 acres of corn can save you over \$500.00.
5. **Know the fertilizer value of your manure.** Get it tested. Cooperative Extension has test kits from Dairyone that you can use to send a sample of your manure for testing. You can use this information to identify how much N,P & K you have already applied to your fields with manure and help plan where you should apply the rest.
6. **Apply manure based on crop need.** Because most sod N is released to the following corn crop in the first two years, third and fourth year corn needs the most N from other sources. In the past we may have sought to apply rates of manure to meet the N needs of our corn crop while over supplying P and K. Under today's economic conditions it makes sense to apply manure at rates that help to meet the N, P and K requirements without over supplying nutrients where possible.
7. **Follow Cornell guidelines for potassium.** Cornell guidelines for potash are based on crop response trials and they show that most of our soils have tremendous K supplying capacity. Limited testing of K needs for alfalfa in recent years confirms a lack of a yield response if fields are high or very high in K.

8. **Spring incorporate** manure on the day of application to double the N value where this is possible.
9. **Request an ISNT test for your soil samples to prioritize manure and fertilizer use.** The Illinois Soil N Test can help identify fields that do not need manure or sidedress N.
10. **Reduce or eliminate starter fertilizer** on corn fields that receive generous amounts of manure.

If you need proof that these practices work on your farm, try some test strips in your fields to see for yourself! For more information, see the Agronomy Factsheet Series on the Nutrient Management Spear Program website:

<http://nmssp.css.cornell.edu/publications/factsheets.asp>.

### PRELIMINARY DFBS RESULTS FOR 2008

Cornell has released preliminary results of the 2008 Dairy Farm Business Summary (DFBS) based on 54 New York dairy farms that participated in both 2007 and 2008. Since the milk price situation has changed dramatically going into 2009, the most interesting numbers to look at may be the costs of milk production. For more information about the Dairy Farm Business Summary, contact Jim Manning or Bonnie Collins. (continued on page 12)

#### LOUIS J. GALE & SON, INC.

Waterville, N.Y. 13480  
7889 Canning Factory Road  
841-8411 OR 841-8410

RETAIL FEED—GRAIN—SEED  
CUSTOM MIXING & GRINDING  
LIME & HI MAG LIME  
GROW RIGHT FERTILIZER  
PESTICIDES—CORN DRYING



Clinton, NY • 315-853-6151 • [www.clintontractor.net](http://www.clintontractor.net)

#### **Horse Paddock for Rent.** Clinton area.

Has new 16x24 run-in-shed, new fencing, water-feeder in paddock. Approx 3 acres, more land is available .

#### **Grass-Fed Beef Steers for Sale.** Ready for butcher now.

Call 853-2579 or 796-0808 for details

**NOTICE:** Dairy Farmers - H.P. Hood in Vernon is still looking for local farmers interested in feeding Whey by-product. If interested, contact Phillip Campbell or Steve Shaw at 829-2350. For more information contact Marty Broccoli, CCE at 736-3394 Ext. 121.

**Mark Smith**  
Full Time Forage Specialist  
Smith Ag Service

PO Box 1018  
Morrisville NY 13408  
315-684-7737  
315-447-7579 Mobile



- \*Grain Corn
- \*Silage Corn
- \*Alfalfa and Grass
- \*BMR Corn
- \*Silage Inoculants



**PERFORMANCE  
PREMIXES**


Sales Agent for  
**Pioneer Hi-Bred**   
Oneida & Herkimer Co.

Sales Agent for Browns Feed  
- BULK - BAG

*"Let the Performance Begin"*  
Call Andy Mower Owner/  
President  
315-734-1705  
*Serving The Dairy Industry for 21  
years*

**Home of:**  
Quickcow Booster  
Quickcow  
Caps  
Custom  
Minerals  
Milk






**S.V.I.C.**  
*'Insure and Be Sure'*

**Sauquoit Valley Insurance Co.**

Farmowner ★ Homeowner ★ Manufactured Homes  
Dwelling Fire ★ Farm Fire ★ Commercial Fire  
Inland Marine ★ Landlord Policies

P.O. Box 453 • 10170 Roberts Road • Sauquoit NY 13456  
(315) 737-5911 • Fax: (315) 737-6887 • sjeffers@sauquoitvalley.com



**Andrew M. Dugan, P.A.S.**  
Vice President

PO Box 127  
7593 Route 20  
Sangerfield, NY 13455

Tel: 800-228-2709  
Fax: 315-841-4121  
Home: 607-847-9875  
Cell: 315-525-7711  
Email: adugan@bluseal.com

**Setting the Standard**

andy.dugan@bluseal.com

*Established in 1946*

Sangerfield 1975 ~ Canastota ~ Cowsville 1986

**WHITE'S**  
FARM SUPPLY, INC. 

**Your Parts Specialists**

Rt. 31 Canastota 697-2214    Rt. 26 Lowville 376-0300    Rt. 12 Waterville 841-4181

Visit our website:  
[www.whitesfarmssupply.com](http://www.whitesfarmssupply.com) 



**T & P Sales and Service**  
*Agricultural Spray Materials  
Corn and Grass Seed  
Bulk & Bag Feed  
Custom Soybeans Roasting*

**Buddy Richardson & Family**  
Skinner Rd. Vernon Center, NY  
(315) 829-8000

## Tayl-Wind Farm: Incorporating BMR Corn Silage

By Jeff Miller

Glenn Taylor of Tayl-Wind Farm shared his experience with BMR corn silage with the 58 farmers who attended this years' Oneida County Crop Congress hosted by Clinton Tractor. Glenn stated that he was initially intrigued with the information that came out on brown mid-rib (BMR) corn indicating its increased digestibility. He noted that BMR corn was discovered in the 1920s, that studies conducted in the 1970s indicated an increased rate of weight gain in sheep in response to BMR feeding trials and more was learned about lignin content of BMR varieties in the 90s. He noted from what he read that BMR corn had more digestible fiber, lower lignin and a faster rate of passage. Glenn also noted that not all of the characteristics of BMR corn are positive. He stated that yields are about 10% less on his farm which is comprised of very productive soils that are well to excessively well drained. BMR corn also has some issues with standability and are slow to dry down. Five years ago BMR seed sales people would say to plant BMR hybrids only on your best ground and also on your plowed down sod to reduce the stress on the crop. Research and development has continued with new, shorter season varieties being developed for the northeast (95-105 day maturity) and hybrids that are more hardy than they used to be.

Glenn planted 12 acres of BMR corn as a trial in 2006. He figured that would give him enough silage to feed to his two high end groups for a period of at least 3 months when mixed 50:50 with conventional corn silage. He saw a response relatively quickly with an increase of about 3lbs more milk per cow per day across the whole herd, which was closer to 4.5lbs/cow/day for the animals receiving the BMR corn silage.

(continued on page 16)

### *GROWMARK FS*

PO Box 65 Office: 315/841/8886  
7610 State Route 20 1/800/852/5003  
Sangerfield NY 13455 Fax: 315/841/4405  
Sangerfield@growmarkfs.com

Fertilizer, Lime, Seed, Agronomy  
Satisfying Customers, Profitably



### *Reach for your Star®*



1-800-NBT-BANK • [www.nbtbank.com](http://www.nbtbank.com)

*With Offices in:*

*Clinton, Herkimer, New Hartford,*

*Rome and Whitesboro*

Member FDIC

ACCRUAL OPERATING EX-PENSES	2007		2008	
	<u>Per cow</u>	<u>Per cwt</u>	<u>Per cow</u>	<u>Per cwt</u>
Hired labor	\$ 581	\$ 2.44	\$ 631	\$ 2.58
Dairy grain & concentrate	\$ 1,205	\$ 5.06	\$ 1,455	\$ 5.95
Dairy roughage	\$ 98	\$ 0.41	\$ 95	\$ 0.39
Nondairy feed	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Professional nutritional services	\$ 2	\$ 0.01	\$ 2	\$ 0.01
Machine hire, rent & lease	\$ 106	\$ 0.45	\$ 96	\$ 0.39
Machine repair & vehicle expense	\$ 182	\$ 0.76	\$ 200	\$ 0.82
Fuel, oil & grease	\$ 151	\$ 0.63	\$ 216	\$ 0.88
Replacement livestock	\$ 36	\$ 0.15	\$ 31	\$ 0.13
Breeding	\$ 59	\$ 0.25	\$ 67	\$ 0.27
Veterinary & medicine	\$ 150	\$ 0.63	\$ 155	\$ 0.63
Milk marketing	\$ 195	\$ 0.82	\$ 224	\$ 0.91
Bedding	\$ 83	\$ 0.35	\$ 88	\$ 0.36
Milking supplies	\$ 77	\$ 0.32	\$ 83	\$ 0.34

Cattle lease	\$	2	\$	0.01	\$	1	\$	-
Custom boarding	\$	95	\$	0.40	\$	108	\$	0.44
BST expense	\$	63	\$	0.26	\$	56	\$	0.23
Livestock professional fees	\$	12	\$	0.05	\$	13	\$	0.05
Other livestock expense	\$	21	\$	0.09	\$	15	\$	0.06
Fertilizer & lime	\$	78	\$	0.33	\$	114	\$	0.46
Seeds & plants	\$	57	\$	0.24	\$	76	\$	0.31
Spray & other crop expense	\$	52	\$	0.22	\$	57	\$	0.23
Crop professional fees	\$	7	\$	0.03	\$	6	\$	0.02
Land, building & fence repair	\$	75	\$	0.31	\$	73	\$	0.30
Taxes	\$	47	\$	0.20	\$	44	\$	0.18
Real estate rent & lease	\$	50	\$	0.21	\$	58	\$	0.24
Insurance	\$	36	\$	0.15	\$	37	\$	0.15
Utilities	\$	97	\$	0.41	\$	95	\$	0.39
Interest paid	\$	185	\$	0.78	\$	139	\$	0.57
Other professional fees	\$	18	\$	0.08	\$	18	\$	0.07
Miscellaneous	\$	26	\$	0.11	\$	28	\$	0.11
Total Operating Expenses	\$	3,847	\$	16.17	\$	4,278	\$	17.48

## STRAPPED FOR CASH: CONSIDER GRASS

By Mary Wrege

On Feb. 13, 2009 at CCE Oneida County, Dr. Hilary Mayton reviewed findings of the perennial grass research project initiated at Cornell University in 2007. She provided the audience with practical agronomic and plant variety information to those individuals who are considering planting perennial grasses for energy uses, either on their own or rented land. It may serve as an additional income stream for farmers as well as landowners.

The project is part of a multi-disciplinary renewable energy research effort supported by the New York Farm Viability Institute (NYFVI), Cornell University, the College Agriculture and Life Sciences, and the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program (NNYADP).

The research project was initiated in response to the need for information on planting and managing warm season perennial grass crops for the emerging agricultural energy industry in NYS.

A main goal of the project is to increase production of perennial grasses for use as bioenergy feedstock to support the alternative energy industry. The close proximity of agricultural land in the Northeast to major population and transportation centers makes this region ideal for development of bioenergy crops and industrial by-products for conversion to liquid fuels, gases, and products for combustion. Production of warm season perennial grass field crops for dedicated use as bioenergy crops has the potential to increase revenue for NYS's agricultural industry and transportation sectors, make use of idle farmland, and expand options to the livestock industry for manure management.

The US Department of Energy's Biomass Research Program has selected **switchgrass** as the model perennial grass bioenergy crop and the initial field trials are primarily focused on this species.

The Forage Program at Cornell established research trials and large scale field trials consisting of both monoculture and mixed species stands of switchgrass, big bluestem varieties, and other warm season species in diverse regions of NY.

These grasses were selected because of their ability to produce high yields and for their adaptability to diverse regions of the country.

Average yields of these grasses range from 3-7 dry tons/acre in the Northeast. Life cycle analyses of the perennial grasses have demonstrated that they will reduce greenhouse gas emissions when used as an alternative to fossil fuels.

In addition they can reduce soil erosion and improve soil health and structure through production of an extensive root system.

Warm season grasses take longer to establish than cool season grasses during establishment in the cooler climate of New York

These warm season grasses can tolerate soils with low pH and have low fertility requirements. In addition, it has been shown through research trials in other regions of the country that yields of 5-10 dry tons per acre can be achieved in a one-cut harvest management system. It is important to follow recommendations closely to increase chances for a successful seeding. With very good weed control, it will take 2-3 years for the stand to reach full potential. The '**Cave-in-rock**' variety of switchgrass is presently the highest yielding commercially available switchgrass adapted in New York; '**Carthage**' is another variety with high biomass potential. If used for forage, '**Shawnee**', a selection out of Cave-in-Rock, for higher *in vitro* digestibility would be the best choice for this region of the country. It is important to follow recommendations closely to increase chances for a successful seeding. With very good weed control, it will take 2-3 years for the stand to reach full potential.

**Site preparation and establishment.** Warm season grasses in the Northeast climate do not compete well with cool season grasses and weeds. Site selection and preparation are important for successful establishment. If possible, warm season grasses should be seeded in fields with low weed pressure. Roundup (glyphosate) should be applied in the fall prior to plowing and seeding. In the spring, a second application of Roundup is recommended if weeds are a concern. The fields should then be plowed and cultipacked before seeding. Warm season grasses should be seeded mid May until mid June.

**Markets and utilization.** Some of the warm season grasses can be used for livestock bedding, forage and grazing. The agricultural energy market is in the developmental stage but is anticipated to open up over the next few years. As renewable energy technology advances, this project will provide up-to-date information on new developments in the industry. Hopefully this information will enable NYS growers to make informative decisions concerning production of bioenergy crops.

**Additional information.** Listed below are sources for additional information on warm season perennial grass establishment, production and utilization. For more information on this project contact

Dr. Hilary Mayton ([hsm1@cornell.edu](mailto:hsm1@cornell.edu)) (607-255-5043 or 607-339-7216) Web-site: (<http://nybiofuels.info>)

Dr. Paul Salon, USDA/NRC S Plant Materials Center Big Flats, NY  
<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/nypmc/>

One source of seed has been : Ernst Conservation Seeds, LLP 9006 Mercer Pike, Meadville, PA 16335 [www.ernstseed.com](http://www.ernstseed.com)

Glenn works with his nutritionist to balance his ration and has made some significant changes since incorporating BMR corn silage. Incorporating BMR corn silage has helped Glenn increase the total forages fed in the ration to about 60% of the total ration on a dry matter basis. That was a 4-6% increase from his previous ration. He has also reduced corn meal by 3-5lbs/cow/day and decreased starch levels by 2-3%. Glenn has also decreased protein levels in the TMR. Tayl-Wind Farm has had to increase fiber levels a little bit through the addition of hay or straw to their TMR to help slow the rate of passage.

Glenn noted that there are some increased costs including seed costs of \$300/bag or more for the BMR seed, the cost of separate storage and the lower yield of BMR corn. He finished his discussion by stating that the benefits definitely outweigh the costs. As mentioned above he has increased milk production while decreasing purchased feeds. He also stated that the higher forage levels in the herds diet has improved herd health. Glenn has increased his acreage planted to BMR hybrids each year and plans to plant 70 acres in 2009.



---

Cows at Tayl-Wind Farm consuming a TMR containing BMR corn silage

## **EARN MONEY WITH CARBON CREDITS**

*Income and Environmental Opportunities*

*From Carbon Credit Trading*

Isn't it ironic? The thought of earning money for something you cannot touch, see or feel is hard to imagine; however, that is exactly what is happening on farmland around the country. Carbon Credits can be earned by farmers who reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into the atmosphere.

On March 11, 2009 Cornell Cooperative Extension hosted a basic review of Carbon Credits and how this emerging industry of buying and selling these entities can influence agriculture. The field practices used by farmers to minimally disturb the soil through methods such as no-till farming and reforestation actually increase carbon levels in the soil. Left undisturbed over time soil carbon will grow to amounts of 6-8%. This process of "growing carbon reserves in the soil" is highly attractive to industries such as utilities, manufactures and others.

These companies, by their very nature, emit carbon on a daily basis. Many companies want to reduce (or will be mandated to reduce) their impact to the atmosphere. Some organizations are preparing themselves for the time when there may be strict regulations on the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> they can emit into the air.

This could be achieved through technologic improvements to their company or by purchasing carbon credits from others who are readily able to provide them. (This is the basis for the concept of "*Cap & Trade*".) This is where the agricultural community becomes a key component and can benefit financially.

Companies are looking to purchase credits from farmers already doing practices to improve (reduce) their carbon footprint.

When farmers adhere to these practices, such as no-till, forest conservation and use of biofuels, they are not only benefiting their soil and farm, but they are also being stewards of the environment. If they are interested and can follow some simple rules, their conservation practices can lead to new revenue.

## **Are Your Farm Business Management Skills Ready for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Risk Management (#8)**

Farming is a risky business. The ups and downs of the commodity markets serve as a constant reminder of this often-heard statement. But price variations are only one type of risk that a farm manager faces. The farm business manager also faces production risks, financial risks, legal risks, human risks, and strategic risks.

Because some risks faced by the farm business manager are so common, several alternative methods for reducing the impact of these risks have been developed. To reduce the effect of price uncertainty, producers can use forward price contracts, futures contracts or options to transfer the risk of price fluctuations to others. Variations in the crop yields can be insured against by the purchase of crop insurance. Human and legal risks are also frequently managed through the use of insurance, such as life insurance, health insurance, and liability insurance. Financial risk arises from the additional financial obligation associated with debt financing or leverage. This source of risk is often managed by implementing operating strategies to insure that adequate cash reserves are maintained or overall debt levels are kept low.

Strategic risk is more difficult to manage. Such risk arises from the forces that are shaping the changes that are occurring in the industry. Unlike the other risk types, there are no tools or techniques for transferring these risks to others. Managing strategic risks requires creative strategies. An on-going assessment of trends and the continual monitoring of the ability of the business to take advantage of these trends is central to the management of strategic risks. This on-going process provides a method for the early detection and response to a change in a trend's direction. The development of contingency plans for alternative future situations helps the farm business manager maintain flexibility and adapt to changes that occur in the political stability of the world's economies; federal, state, and local policies; industry dynamics; and social trends.

Indicators of Strong Risk Management Skills:

- Establishing appropriate levels of liability, life, and health insurance.
- Developing contingency plans.
- Collecting information about important trends in the world economy.
- Understanding the size of the financial, human, and legal risks that the business faces.
- Developing backup management that could replace the principal manager in the case of an emergency.

(This is the eighth and last in a series adapted from a publication of Purdue Extension; to get a copy of the full publication, contact Jim Manning at 736-3394 ext. 129 or [jpm277@cornell.edu](mailto:jpm277@cornell.edu))

**Tax Management & Planning**  
**By Bonnie Collins**

**Income Averaging:**

The goal of Tax management and planning is to increase after tax earnings. One of the tools to consider in tax management and planning is "Income Averaging". Income averaging has been available since 1998. Taxable farm income may be averaged in total or part by allocating it to the 3 prior years (base year). Income averaging will have the greatest attraction to farmers who have income much higher than the preceding three years. ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)). Income averaging can be used by individuals, a partner in a partnership, or a shareholder in an S corporation.

The calculations for income averaging use marginal tax rates and is for farmers who have made only limited capital expenditures eligible for section 179 expensing or 50% first year additional depreciation. Although the concept for income averaging is simple to understand using a tax professional to complete Schedule J (form 1040) is worth the time and effort.

**Forgiveness of Debt:**

If your debt is canceled or forgiven, other than as a gift or bequest to you, you must include the canceled amount in gross income for tax purposes. Report the canceled amount on line 10 of Schedule F (form 1040), if you incurred the debt in your farming business. If the debt is a non-business debt, report the canceled amount on line 21 of Form 1040.

**For Additional Help:**

Download Publication 225-Farmers Tax Guide from the Internal Revenue Service (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p225.pdf> ). This tax guide provides clear explanations and examples. You can also call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 and receive help with your specific question or have Publication 225 mailed to you.

Call a Farm Business Management Educator, Bonnie Collins (ext.104) or Jim Manning (ext. 129) at 736-3394 for assistance in answering your questions.

## Grass Variety

**Table 5a: Spring, First Harvest Forage Quality Data for Grass Varieties - 2007**

NDF = neutral detergent fiber. NDFD = digestible NDF, RFQ = relative feed quality

First harvest forage RFQ, milk per ton, and milk per acre were predicted by using MILK2006 from U

Boot Stage is date when 5 heads in a 3.5 x 16 foot plot were visible

Ar

Forage Quality at Boot Stage 2007				
	Date at Boot Stage	% NDF	% NDFD	Date at Harvest
<b>Orchardgrass</b>				
Icon	16-May	49	87	28-May
Checkmate (OG0001)	16-May	47	87	28-May
Stampede	16-May	50	84	28-May
Quick Draw	12-May	46	87	28-May
Baridana	19-May	48	85	28-May
Barexcel	16-May	50	83	28-May
Crown Royale	14-May	49	85	28-May
Intensiv	21-May	52	83	28-May
Pizza	21-May	50	86	28-May
<b>Timothy</b>				
Treasure	30-May	56	77	28-May
Talon	30-May	57	77	28-May
Glacier	30-May	56	76	28-May
GO-LMT-04	4-Jun	51	79	28-May
Chazy	2-Jun	53	78	28-May
Climax	4-Jun	60	76	28-May
<b>Perennial Ryegrass</b>				
Bastion	21-May	38	81	28-May
Clermont	4-Jun	39	84	28-May
Citadel	4-Jun	39	84	28-May
Green Gold	4-Jun	35	84	28-May
Barnhem	30-May	39	82	28-May
<b>Festulolium</b>				
Salino	30-May	44	80	28-May
Felopa	30-May	42	82	28-May
Agula	30-May	38	86	28-May
Spring Green	27-May	42	81	28-May
<b>Tall and Meadow Fescue</b>				
Select	25-May	50	74	28-May
Bull	21-May	46	75	28-May
Barcarella	27-May	45	77	28-May
Jesup MaxQ	21-May	45	74	28-May
Bartura (Meadow Fes.)	25-May	43	80	28-May
Pradel (Meadow Fes.)	25-May	47	81	28-May

## Trial Results

### 2007 DATA for trial planted in 2005

om U. of Wisconsin.

Ammonium Nitrate was at spring green-up at a rate of 200 lb/A or 66 units of N per A.

#### Forage Quality at First Harvest in 2007

Yield (t/a) Harvest 1	% NDF	% NDFD	RFQ	Milk per Ton	Milk per Acre
2.79	50	85	130	3,454	9643
2.75	50	85	133	3,477	9562
2.58	51	81	129	3,381	8728
2.55	52	83	125	3,373	8603
2.36	49	88	137	3,547	8368
2.46	50	81	132	3,398	8364
2.41	51	86	128	3,454	8337
2.10	48	86	139	3,534	7423
2.04	47	88	142	3,592	7326
3.01	50	84	124	3,451	10397
2.99	51	83	123	3,430	10246
2.72	48	82	131	3,469	9429
2.49	46	87	142	3,628	9027
2.20	44	87	148	3,672	8084
2.18	47	86	137	3,591	7823
0.87	35	90	203	3,979	3481
0.77	34	87	209	3,938	3035
0.53	33	86	217	3,962	2090
0.36	31	86	231	4,009	1440
0.21	30	84	243	4,012	841
1.61	36	86	190	3,880	6233
1.55	37	87	188	3,858	5988
1.52	36	87	192	3,893	5922
1.19	35	88	201	3,939	4698
2.78	43	78	155	3,546	9850
2.66	47	75	139	3,394	9046
2.43	44	80	151	3,550	8617
2.36	43	77	155	3,518	8297
2.06	40	85	168	3,735	7680
1.52	41	84	167	3,708	5634

**New York Cultivar Yield trial Results-  
2008 Forage Yields**

Summary of Alfalfa Cultivar Performance 2006 - 2008

Cultivar	Yielded in the Top 50% of the Trial(s)*		Total No. of harvests
	Avg. % of Cks	No. of harvests	
4A421	109	32	32
54V46	109	32	32
Guardsmen II	106	30	39
ReGen	109	21	21
4S419	113	18	18
Genoa	110	18	18
PerForm	107	18	18
DKA34-17RR	106	14	14
Lightning EXTRA	110	14	14
Mariner III	108	14	14
Starbuck	109	14	14
53Q30	106	9	18
6415	112	9	16
Baralfa 32IQ	106	9	18
Milestone	107	9	18
Prolific	104	9	18
WL 348 AP	106	9	9
Marvel	110	8	8
Radiant-AM	109	8	14
WL 355 RR	107	8	14
55V48	106	7	7
A 5225	103	7	7
FSG 351	104	7	7
Keystone	103	7	7
4G418RR	106	6	14
WL 343 HQ	109	6	21
FSG 406	107	4	7
Lander	104	3	7

**Ithaca, Tompkins County, Sown May 5, 2005**

	2008	3-Yr.	
	Total Season	Total	% of Cks.
- tons per acre dry matter -			
4S419	6.24	17.48	113
6415	6.06	17.34	112
Genoa	5.74	16.57	107
PerForm	5.71	16.50	106
54V46	5.66	16.49	106
5312 (check)	5.48	16.47	106
Baralfa 32IQ	5.40	16.47	106
4A421	5.76	16.42	106
Guardzman II	5.68	16.31	105
Prolific	5.45	16.07	104
Milestone	5.64	16.05	103
Integrity	5.48	15.96	103
Guardzman	5.33	15.95	103
361 HY	5.28	15.87	102
Oneida VR (check)	5.12	15.43	99
Oneida Ultra	5.25	15.40	99
53Q30	5.23	15.18	98
4R429	5.19	15.05	97
Vernal (check)	4.96	14.68	95
			Ck. Mean
Trial Mean (T/A)	5.43	15.91	15.53
5% LSD	0.43	0.99	
CV(%)	6.4	5.0	

**WARNER SALES & SERVICE, INC.**

6470 Greenway New London Rd.  
Rome, NY 13440  
Phone: 315-336-0311  
Email: sales@warnerss.com

SALES SERVICE

RENTALS

**HUSTLER** 



 **Bobcat**



CAROLINA EASTERN-VAIL, INC.

**CAROVAIL**

For all your needs  
Fertilizer • Seed • Crop Protection  
Custom Application



(315) 841-3201 • 888-991-9292 • Fax 315-841-4339

E-Mail: carovail@cnyemail.com

8341 US State Route 20 • Oriskany Falls, NY 13425



Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension  
Oneida County

121 Second Street  
Oriskany, NY 13424

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit  
US Postage  
Paid  
Oriskany, NY  
13424  
Permit # 68

