

Cornell Cooperative Extension Delaware County



Manure: The Gift that Keeps on Giving

*Late summer/early fall is a great
time to give that gift to sod!*

By Paul Cerosaletti, Certified Crop Advisor,
Enhanced Manure Management Project Coordinator

Manure: A Valuable Gift.

Recently, a farmer quipped to me “Manure is the gift that keeps on giving”. He was referring to the long-term benefits manure provides over time to the crop, not just benefits for the immediate corn crop or hay cutting. Manure contains all 17 essential macro and micronutrients plants need, as well as added benefits of organic matter and microbes, both of which contribute to soil health. Healthy soils grow healthy crops, and healthy crops yield more feed. Cornell University Nutrient Management Spear Program has been conducting statewide Value of Manure studies (which include trials in Delaware County), and they have demonstrated the power of manure applications to benefit crops over multiple years. In two trials sites manure was applied only in 2023, and not in 2024 or 2025. Yield data was gathered in all years. What they documented was a higher yield from the manure treated plots, beyond the manure application year. In one trial site (Figure A), corn in manure treated plots continued to yield more than commercial fertilizer only plots not just in the year of manure application but even two years after the manure application was made.

Sods Can Benefit From Manure Nutrient Carry Over Too:

We might be tempted to think late season, fall applications (made in late August-October) have less value to us because the current crop year harvests have mostly, if not all been completed. The carry-over nutrient benefit of manure has real value. We should be considering late summer and early fall applications of manure to grass and mixed-grass (mostly grass) haycrops, to feed the plants and soils for the upcoming cropping years.

♦ Updates:

Harvesting What We've Grown

The first red leaves appearing always seem so stark, evoke emotion and spark thoughts of harvest, back to school, and change. It's a time to reap what we've sown over the growing season, to slow down, to rest and reset as daylight hours begin to dwindle, reflect on what has gone well and begin thinking about change as we prepare for what comes next.

Here at CCE Delaware we are in a similar position. Our new Demonstration Garden has been hugely productive, in crop and learning! The harvests fed campers, and it is continuing to produce harvest to be shared among our Master Gardeners and make donations. The garden was also a robust center of learning for campers and Master Gardeners a like.

We have worked with many of you over the summer as you took new knowledge from our spring programming and put it into action, and it is so rewarding to assist you grow your farms! We are using those questions to formulate our future programming and always invite you to share what you need and would like to see from us! Your success is our success! We recognize fall harvest is going to be a bit later this year, so you will notice a bulk of our programming will be pushed into a bit later start.

It is also a season of change here at CCE, we are so thankful for all of the growth and support we have been able to sustain in the last year as we have reached full staff. We are excited to continue to build on that momentum. This will likely take the shape of some role adjustments, more focused work, and more solications of input from you, our farmers, to assure we are meeting your needs in our work. Over the coming months you will likely see surveys in your inbox. We will keep them brief, so please take a few moment to share your thoughts.

Know that as we grow and change, our commitment to serving you and your needs is always forefront in endeavors!

Happy Harvest everyone ~ Desiree & your CCE Ag Team

Upcoming Programs

Look For These Upcoming Programs from our Watershed Ag team

- Horse Meeting
- Haycrop School
- Farm Safety Events
- Fall beef & small ruminants meetings



CCE Delaware Agriculture Program Staff

- *Desiree Kever, JD Ag Issues Leader*
- *Paul Cerosaletti, MS, CCA Agricultural Program Team Leader*
- *Lila Shafer, BT Horticulture*
- *Autumn Madugno, Ag in the Classroom Educator*
- *Jessica Ladd, Ag/HE Administrative Assistant*

NYC Watershed Agricultural Program Staff:

- *Dale Dewing, MS CCA Watershed Program Leader*
- *Meghan Potter, Precision Feed Management Team Leader*
- *Rich Toebe, PAS Watershed Livestock Educator*
- *April Wright Lucas, PAS CCA Precision Feed Management Specialist*
- *James Romack, MS Precision Feed Management Specialist*
- *Kim Holden, Sr. Administrative Assistant*



Upcoming Programs

Located at SUNY Delhi

New times! Keynote prior to lunch!

CATSKILL REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL CONFERENCE

Save the date-January 8th, 2027

Keynote Presentation- Ray Dykeman
Building Wealth off the Farm

New and Improved Tracks:
Horse, Dairy, Livestock, Horticulture, Gazing

One-Day Event • Expert Presenters • Panels
Starting at 9:30AM

Sign up for more info here:



Watershed Agricultural Council
nycwatershed.org

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Delaware County



Corn Dry Down Scheduled Dates

10:00 AM-1:00 PM

In Conjunction with CCE CNY Team

Sept 21, 2026

Lutz Feed Mill

80 Lower River St Oneonta, NY

Sept 24, 2026

McDowell & Walker Store

4 Depot Street

Delhi, NY

Sept 29, 2026

Stamford Farmers Coop

6 South Street

Stamford, NY



Watershed Agricultural Council
nycwatershed.org



2026 Ag Program Sponsors

Platinum Sponsor:

- Albano's Precision Application
- Albano's Custom Harvesting
- Boville Farm
- Eklund Farm Machinery
- ZML

Gold Sponsor:

- Delaware Co. Farm Bureau
- Lutz Feed Company

Silver Sponsor:

- Robertsons Seed
- Stamford Farmers Cooperative
- Del-Rose Farm
- The Hanselman's
- Catskills Digital
- Inn at Octagon Acres

This support of our programming is very much appreciated by us & the farms we serve.

An Extended Thank You to our Ag program supporters and program grant donors

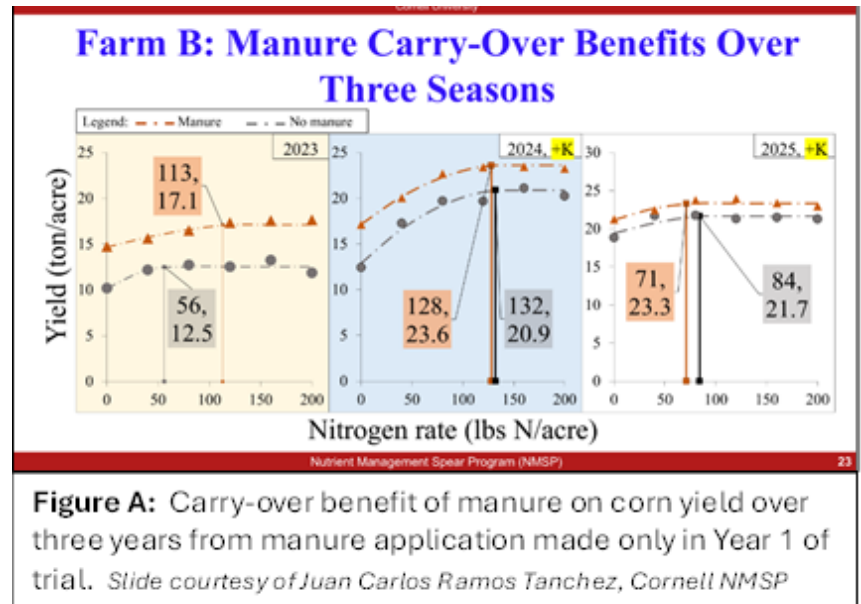
- O'Connor Foundation
- DelCo EcoDev
- NY Beef Industry Council
- Delaware County Rural Healthcare Alliance
- NY Pork Producers

The Gift That Keeps Giving Cont. From Cover

It is important to recognize the benefits of manure applications in late summer and early fall to an actively growing sod are an investment in the early cuttings of the next year's crop. This includes the immediate benefits of conserving the ammonia fraction of manure nitrogen through injection on a growing sod.

Simply put, the actively growing sods are able to utilize these nutrients prior to winter, and the sod goes into winter as a more robust crop. Coming out of the winter, these sods have nutrients available for early spring growth and jump out of the start gate with more vigor. While manure applications made later in the fall still have value to the crop in the spring, we believe those made before the sod goes dormant have the greatest benefit.

"...manure applications made in late summer and early fall to an actively growing sod are also an investment in the early cuttings of the next year's crop."



Late Summer/Early Fall manure applications on sods, especially injection, are a great time, place, and method to apply manure.

Photo courtesy of Paul Cerosaletti

Proof of the Manure Gift:

We are seeing farmers already reporting evidence of positive impacts from late summer/early fall manure applications on sods. In September and early October 2025, we injected manure on many sod fields across Delaware County through the Enhanced Manure Management Project. We have had several farms reporting the yield in the first and second cuttings of the 2026 haycrop season showed a noticeable benefit from those fall injection applications.

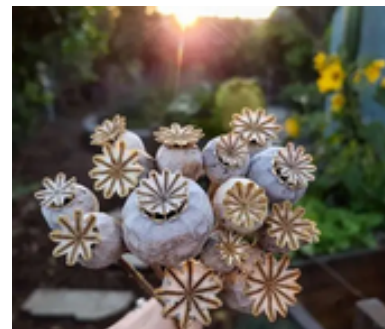
In one case, in a field that had not received manure for many years prior to fall 2025, the farmer reported a much-improved grass haystand, with more robust grass and fewer undesirable weeds. Fields that have not received manure in previous years will benefit the most from manure applications, especially compared to fields with regular and heavy manure history.

Late summer/early fall manure applications also have the benefit of helping us get storages empty before winter, so there are multiple benefits to these applications. Given that, late summer and early fall is a great time to give the **Gift of Manure to sods, a Gift that Keeps Giving!**

FRUIT & VEG CORNER

Saving Seeds from Your Fall Garden

Revised by Lila Kuhn Horticultrist



As the growing season comes to an end and fall is approaching, there is still plenty to do in the garden! Fall is a great time to save seeds from some of your favorite vegetables and flowers. Saving seeds is an easy way to carry your garden into next year, preserve varieties that performed well, and save a little money! When saving seeds, choose open-pollinated or heirloom varieties whenever possible. Their seeds are more likely to produce plants similar to the parent plant. It is also best to collect seeds from your healthiest and best-performing plants.

Vegetable Seeds - Seeds should be collected from fully mature produce. Some vegetables need to remain on the plant longer than you would normally leave them for eating. For example, cucumbers should be allowed to become large and yellow, while peppers should fully ripen before their seeds are collected. Beans and peas are some of the easiest seeds to save. Allow the pods to dry on the plant until they are brown and papery. Remove the seeds and allow them to finish drying in a cool, dry location for about a week. Tomatoes require an extra step because their seeds are surrounded by a gel that can inhibit germination. Scoop the seeds and gel into a small container with water and let them sit for several days. Rinse the seeds thoroughly and spread them out to dry completely.



Flower Seeds - Many flowers are easy to save seed from, including zinnias, marigolds, cosmos, sunflowers, and coneflowers. Allow the flower heads to dry on the plant, then cut and gently shake or rub them to release the seeds.

Storing Seeds - Seeds must be completely dry before storing. Place them in labeled paper envelopes or small airtight containers and include the plant variety and year collected. Store seeds somewhere cool, dark, and dry. If using a refrigerator, keep seeds in an airtight container to protect them from moisture. This fall, try saving seeds from one or two of your favorite plants. Come spring, you can plant something you grew from seed that you collected yourself!

For more information, visit [University of Minnesota Extension's guide to saving vegetable seeds](https://extension.umn.edu/garden-and-home/yard-and-garden/gardening-in-minnesota/saving-vegetable-seeds).

<https://extension.umn.edu/garden-and-home/yard-and-garden/gardening-in-minnesota/saving-vegetable-seeds>

Adapted from: Sow It Forward: A Home Gardener's Guide to Saving and Storing Seeds -The Daily Dirt



FOCUS ON FARM SAFETY

Manure Gas Safety Series-

A Three-Part Series By Jason Oliver, PhD

As we continue our year of a Focus on Farm Safety, we turn our attention to a silent killer found in one form or another on our farms- toxic and hazardous gases. From feed to manure storage, we encounter them on a daily basis.

In this issue we turn our attention to atmospheric hazards associated with manure and confined spaces on farms

Toxic gases

Toxic compounds potentially present in an agricultural confined space can cause sickness, health impairment and death. The effects of these compounds may be acute or chronic and will depend on the contaminant's concentration and the worker's length of exposure.

Permissible Exposure Limits (PEL) have been established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for most toxic compounds. OSHA recognized that many of its regulatory standards and established PELs are outdated. OSHA therefore recommends consulting other general and industry specific guidelines and standards and has the regulatory authority to enforce these other consensus standards. The National Institute for Occupational Health (NIOSH) recommends OSHA Recommended Exposure Limits (REL) that are intended to minimize exposure to hazardous substances in the workplace. The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) is a scientific association that establishes Threshold Limit Values (TLV), or the maximum average airborne concentration of a chemical substance to which a worker can be exposed to throughout their working lifetime without adverse health effects, to assist in the control of occupational health hazards.



Combustible gases

There is a specific mixture of oxygen (air) and fuel (combustible gas) that is flammable and can cause an explosion. The explosive range is defined as the range between the Lower Explosive Limit (LEL) and the Upper Explosive Limit (UEL). LEL is the lowest concentration of air and combustible gas where the gas will ignite, below this threshold the mixture is too lean. Combustible gases are often measured as % LEL. At 100% LEL, the combustible gas is at its LEL. For example, the LEL of methane is 5%. If the measured % LEL is 50%, the actual gas concentration is 2.5%. As LEL is gas specific, it is important that a gas meter is calibrated using the correct combustible gas. If the gas meter was calibrated using a different combustible gas than the gas being measured, a conversion will need to be made using correlation factors for combustible gases. Gas meters used for agriculture should be calibrated with methane as the target combustible gas. In a confined space, OSHA mandates a flammable gas concentration is below 10% LEL.

Oxygen deficiency and enrichment

The typical amount of oxygen in air is 20.9%. The primary hazard associated with a confined space is oxygen deficiency. Oxygen levels less than 19.5% are considered hazardous. Oxygen levels may be reduced in a confined space if they are consumed by combustion (e.g. welding or cutting torches), by decomposition of organic matter (e.g. manure), or by oxidation of metals (e.g. rust). Oxygen levels may also be reduced if they are absorbed by the vessel or contents it is storing, or if they are displaced by another gas (e.g. engine exhaust). In some cases, typically due to a leaking oxygen line or gas cylinder, oxygen levels can also be enriched above 23.5%, creating an extreme risk of fire.

Watch for article # 2 on Using Gas Meters for Manure Gas Safety



When Will Corn Silage Be Ready to Harvest in 2026?

Written By Paul Cerosaletti, Extension Educator CCEDC

*Knowing the Date When Tasseling/Silking Occurs,
Allows a Reasonable Forecast of the Harvest Window!*



A cold spring caused many farms to delay their planting to avoid emergence struggles. These delays give cause to speculate just when to expect corn to reach silage dry matter targets in 2026. We have an early window into when this might be achieved by recording the tasseling/silking dates for fields and then predicting growing degree day (GDD) accumulation following this date. This year we saw early fields tasseling around July 25th.

Research has shown that shorter season corn hybrids (less than 100-day relative maturity) need about 760 GDD from tasseling/silking to reach 32% whole dry matter (DM), and approximately 850 GDD to get to 36% whole plant DM. This all depends on the remainder of the year, and precipitation can have a big impact on whole plant dry matter, so time will tell.

We can use the Climate Smart Farming web-based GDD tool to predict when a corn crop might be ready. See the recent article by Dale Dewing on how to use this tool to do so on our CCE website. (<https://ccedelaware.org/resources/looking-forward-to-corn-silage-harvest>)

Using this tool for Delhi & Stamford field locations, and selecting four tasseling dates, we forecast the following dates for corn to reach 32% and 36% DM. Do the results surprise you? The key will be to monitor tasseling dates and whole plant dry matters as we near the forecasted dates. We have scheduled corn dry down days again this year, with dates based on our predictions.

Tassel Date	Predicted Date to Reach Target Whole Plant Dry Matter ¹													
	Walton		Franklin		Delhi		Davenport Center		Stamford		New Kingston		Andes	
	32% DM	36% DM	32% DM	36% DM	32% DM	36% DM	32% DM	36% DM	32% DM	36% DM	32% DM	36% DM	32% DM	36% DM
7/24	Sept 6	Sept 12	Sept 6	Sept 15	Sept 8	Sept 15	Sept 11	Sept 20	Sept 13	Sept 22	Sept 13	Sept 21	Sept 16	Sept 28
7/31	Sept 14	Sept 22	Sept 15	Sept 26	Sept 18	Sept 26	Sept 21	Oct 1	Sept 23	Oct 4	Sept 23	Oct 4	Sept 29	Oct 15
8/7	Sept 27	Oct 7	Sept 30	Oct 12	Oct 2	Oct 14	Oct 7	Oct 27	Oct 10	X ²	Oct 10	X ²	Oct 26	X ²
8/14	Oct 13	X ²	Oct 20	X ²	Oct 22	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²	X ²	Oct 22	X ²	X ²	X ²

¹ Does not account for frosting of corn and recommended harvest timing

² Will not make it before November

CORNELL CONNECTIONS

The Manager's Challenge - My time During Harvest (or any Other Critical Time)

Written by Dr. Robert Milligan

Crop managers and livestock managers with crops have been anticipating and preparing for harvest for weeks and months. Now it is time for managers to be doers (chop, combine, plant cover crops, etc.). Right? Well, yes and no. Yes because, with everything ready to go, you can now lead by example – use your pacesetting leadership style. No, however, because you still are the leader. If you devote all or too much of your time to doing, the productivity of others on your team will suffer. So what roles are needed NOW by you as the leader?



First, you are still the leader and must continue to provide direction by reinforcing the vision and the plans you have made. There will also be numerous times when those plans must be changed – call audibles. You must then make certain everyone understands the new plan – provide clarity – “chalk the field.”

In your role as the leader in order to maximize the productivity of each individual and thus the team, you must successfully execute the following roles.

Training

I am certain you have completed all possible training in preparation for the busy season. Unfortunately, there often is no substitute for the real thing. Also, many operations occur only once a year and those who have completed the task before may still need training especially if technology or procedures have been changed or updated.

For training, it is easy to skip key steps. Use the prepare – tell – show – do – review training sequence and only skip steps when you are absolutely certain that the step is not needed. The review step is crucial and is not limited to a final summary. It includes circling back to answer questions and concerns the employee may have. It is important to tell him or her that you will be circling back so they do not think you are “checking up on them.” Rather you are helping them succeed. In your review you might even use my favorite two question: what is going well and what could be going better?

Positive Feedback, Encouragement, and Support

You and your team are entering the harvest season with great enthusiasm. You must lead to maintain that enthusiasm. It will naturally wane as the season goes on. It can also be sapped by setbacks from inclement weather, machinery breakdowns, unexpected low production, long hours.

Your first line of attack to maintain enthusiasm and productivity is positive feedback. Remember we humans, unlike combines, can think, speak, and feel. Employees desperately seek and respond positively to quality feedback, recognition, and rewards. Believe me, employees respond positively even when they do not show a positive response.

To be most effective, positive feedback must be specific. Rather than just saying “You are doing a good job,” use Ken Blanchard’s “catch your employees doing something right” to be specific: “Great job Jack, I noticed you were especially careful as you combined around those telephone poles.”

Why is encouragement so important? “Encouragement is to raise confidence to the point where one dares to do what is difficult.” This quote from Values.com emphasizes the importance of encouragement to you and your employees’ confidence, focus, and performance, especially in busy or difficult times.

Effective and heartfelt encouragement will go a long way to maintain high levels of enthusiasm. Look for appropriate places to express encouragement:



- ***"I know we can do this."***
- ***"I have confidence in you."***
- ***"I know this will turn out well."***
- ***"You can do it."***

You can show your support and caring for your team without using valuable time. As you interact with your team, show interest in each individual as a human being. Even during harvest life is not just about work. Ask about their families and friends. Comment about things you have heard or seen. Maybe one of your employees has children on the local sports teams, a friend who won an award, or the family participated in a volunteer effort. You may also gain information that can be used to provide a better schedule so employees can attend important family events.

Fall Cover Crop Establishment Tips

Watershed Agricultural Council
nycwatershed.org



Written by Dale Dewing, Watershed Team Leader

Cover cropping after summer annual crops, like corn silage, do a lot for building soil health and saving surplus nutrients for future crops. Winter Rye is the most widely used and most reliable species for fall cover crops. Winter Triticale is also popular in some places, but requires an earlier planting date, and is more susceptible to poor drainage fields. Triticale is often preferred for Winter Forage (harvesting for forage next spring), but Winter Rye can give acceptable yield and quality also.



Plant as soon as corn silage has been harvested.

- Plant in mid-September for best results, acceptable results can be achieved planting as late as October 15. Planting later can do well in some years, but is less reliable.
- Earlier planting produces more biomass both in the fall and the spring. Later planting will produce limited growth in the fall, but can still give significant biomass later in the spring.

Use enough seed

- We recommend drilling 115 lbs/acre at $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep.
- Broadcast seeding can give acceptable results, but increase seeding rate to 150 lbs/acre. Rolling or a light discing will increase the resulting stand.



If you are considering harvesting Winter Forage in the spring:

- Plant as early as possible, getting plants up and into a tillering stage before winter is essential to get good yields. For Winter Triticale, shoot for drilling before October 1.
- Drill the seed at the recommended rate and depth.
- We recommend using certified seed, remember this is a forage crop.
- Fertilize with nitrogen (about 60#/ac) or apply manure after planting to encourage more tillering and a thick stand.
- Harvest in Mid-May at flag leaf stage for maximum yield and quality.

Master Gardener Volunteer Helpline



We're excited to introduce our new Master Gardener Helpline! Have a pest problem? A persistent weed? Questions on your veggie, fruit,

flower gardens or lawns- visit our new helpline! Click https://cornell.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6YDx or scan the QR code below.

This will take you directly to the questionnaire to share all the details you have on your problem or question, including any photos. Photos are especially important to more accurately answer your questions and provide correct information.

Easily accessible from your phone, you can ask your questions and snap your photos all at once!

One of our Master Gardener Volunteers will review your inquiry and be in contact with research-based solutions/ answers to you inquiry.



Hay Wanted!!

NYPD is exploring taking bids to supply hay to feed the horses serving in their Mounted Units.

What: Timothy/Orchard grass square bales averaging 50lbs, delivered

When & Where: Annual contract, deliveries are expected to be every 3 weeks, averaging 535 Bales/3 Weeks.

- Deliveries are expected to be primarily to each of NYPD Mounted Unit's (4) Troop locations.
 - Troop B (Manhattan) 553 West 53rd Street, NY, NY 10019
 - Troop D (Bronx) Huntington Estate, Pelham Bay Park, Bronx, NY 10464
 - Troop E (Brooklyn) 28-15 Brighton 3rd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11235
 - Troop F (Queens) 198-15 Grand Central Parkway, Queens, NY 11423

If you have capacity and are interested in bidding please contact Desiree by **September 18th**.
dnk2@cornell.edu or 607.865.6531

NYS DAIRY MODERNIZATION GRANT OPENS ROUND 2

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) and the Farm and Food Growth Fund (FFGF) are administrating the Dairy Modernization Grant program, which will provide grants for on-farm milk storage and transfer technologies and infrastructure which will improve dairy supply chain efficiency and avoid raw milk dumping related to emergency events. Funds provided by this grant to farms and agricultural marketing cooperatives are intended be used for the services and expenses to expand on-farm milk storage capacity, improve efficiencies, invest in milk transfer systems, cooling technologies, or other purposes deemed necessary to further opportunities for dairy farmers to transport or store their products.

What can be funded?

Capital projects related to: expansion of on-farm milk storage capacity, efficiency improvements directly related to milk storage or transportation, milk transfer systems, cooling technologies, other purposes deemed necessary to further opportunities for dairy farmers to transport or store their products.

Funding Information?

\$8.5 million available for awards at a minimum of \$50,000 to a maximum award of \$250,000 with NO match requirement. Projects must be completed within 24 months of execution of grant agreement.

Applications close October 28, 2026 5:00p.m. EST

virtual office hour September 9, 2026 @ noon. Register & get more information @

<https://ffgrowthfund.org/dairymodernization>

CORNELL CONNECTIONS

Beef Carcass Yields

Watershed Agricultural Council
nycwatershed.org

By Meghan Potter, CCE PFM Team Leader
with support from Dr. Adam Murray

This time of year, many customers are looking to fill their freezers with beef for the winter. One of the biggest questions producers are faced with is some variation on "how much meat will that give me in my freezer?" Here are some tips to help you answer that question, and to keep in mind as you are producing animals to best satisfy your customers.

Dressing Percentage:

When harvesting beef, the amount of meat you receive will depend on many factors. One step in determining yield from a beef carcass is to determine the dressing percentage. Dressing Percentage is the proportion of carcass weight relative to live weight. Typically, the dressing percentage is 55-64% of live weight in a finished steer. Dressing percentage is after the removal of blood, organs, digestive tract contents, head, feet and lower leg, tail and hide.

Here are some things that can influence dressing percent.



Factors Influencing Dressing %

- Heavy muscling ↑
- More gut fill ↓
- Heifer typically ↓
- Bull ↑
- Dirty hide ↓
- Heavy condition ↑
- Degree of finish ↑↓

HOW MUCH BEEF IN A STEER?

When harvesting beef, the amount of meat you receive will depend on many factors.

PART 2 - CARCASS TO CUTS

CUT PERCENTAGE

About 55-62% of carcass weight

~455 lb. of cuts from
a 1200 pound calf



1200 lb. calf

62%

The dressing percentage of beef ranges from 60-65%, depending on muscling, fat and fill.



744 lb. carcass

Retail cut yield varies based on...

Muscling - more muscling will increase cut weight

Fat - fat will be trimmed away and decrease cut weights.

Breed - more heavily muscled, beef-type cattle will have heavier cuts, whereas lighter muscled, dairy calves have more bone and lower cut weights.

Cuts chosen - bone-in cuts will have more weight than boneless.

Skill of processors - more experienced processors will be more efficient and have less loss and greater cut weights.



Rib and Loin steaks
82 lbs. (80-100 steaks)



Chuck and Round roasts
140 lbs. (80-100 roasts)



Misc. cuts - 62 lbs.



Ground beef
170 lbs.

Estimated cut-out weights (pounds) for different weight calves

Live weight	Carcass weight	Retail cut weight	Rib & Loin Steaks	Chuck & Round Roasts	Misc. Cuts	Ground Beef
1400	868	531	96	159	72	196
1000	620	378	68	113	51	140
800*	480	278	50	83	38	103
600*	360	209	38	63	28	77

*Lighter weight calves will have lower dressing and cut-out percentages

Prepared by:
Janeal Yancey, PhD
momatthemeatcounter.blogspot.com

U of A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

Yield Grade:

Yield Grade estimates the amount of boneless, closely trimmed retail cuts. Yield grade is on a 1 – 5 scale, with 1 being the most favorable. A yield grade of 1 means a very trim, yet heavily muscled animal. A yield grade of 5 is a lighter muscled animal.

4 factors used to predict yield, also termed "cutability"

1. Hot carcass weight (HCW)
2. Ribeye area at the 12th rib (REA)
3. 12th rib fat thickness
4. Estimated percent of internal fat (% KPH)

USDA YIELD GRADE	SALABLE BEEF FROM HCW
Yield Grade 1	55% or more
Yield Grade 2	~52%
Yield Grade 3	~50
Yield Grade 4	~48%
Yield Grade 5	45% or less

Strategies to Reduce the Incidence of Milk Fever in Your Herd:

Exploring Research on DCAD Dry Cow Diets Second article of a 3-part series

by Dr. Thomas R. Overton, Department of Animal Science at
Cornell University



The concept of managing pre-calving Dietary Cation Anion Difference (DCAD) for improved health and performance of dairy cattle has existed for nearly 50 years. It is well-established that decreasing the dietary cation-anion difference in the diet fed during the dry period improves calcium status and decreases risk of hypocalcemia immediately after calving. Several mechanisms are likely responsible for this, including increased calcium flux related to increased urinary calcium excretion and increased sensitivity of tissues to parathyroid hormone for cows fed acidified diets. Research from our laboratory here at Cornell demonstrates that further decreasing the DCAD of a low potassium diet using anionic salts increased blood calcium levels, dry matter intake (DMI) after calving, and milk yield.

In another study at the University of Florida, researchers fed either positive or negative DCAD diets with two different sources of Vitamin D (cholecalciferol or calcidiol) during the dry period. They found that feeding negative DCAD during the dry period increased concentrations of total and ionized calcium circulating in the bloodstream after calving, but post-calving DMI or milk yield were not improved. It was noted in their findings that the source of Vitamin D did not affect circulating calcium concentrations, but that calcidiol supplementation during the dry period increased postpartum milk yield. A third study reported that replacing 3 mg/d of cholecalciferol with calcidiol in negative DCAD prepartum diets increased both colostrum and milk yield during early lactation.

Subsequent research on this topic was conducted later to determine whether any relationship existed between the degree of acidification and the duration of feeding DCAD diets. It was found that while feeding more negative DCAD diets suppressed DMI during the dry period, those diets tended to increase ionized blood calcium concentrations on the day of calving and did not affect animal performance after calving. It was noted that feeding the DCAD diet for a longer period of time (42 vs 21 days) did not affect blood calcium levels, but decreased milk yield by 5 pounds per day.

Similar conclusions were drawn by two comparative studies. These studies utilized data gleaned from over 40 previous research trials that have been published in the past 5 to 10 years. These widespread studies summarize previously conducted research trials that explore the effects of DCAD and other macrominerals on hypocalcemia and animal performance. One study developed a predictive model which showed that decreasing DCAD resulted in a predicted decrease in DMI of 1.5 and 0.8 pounds per day for first calf heifers and older cows respectively. More importantly, that model predicted an increase in post-calving DMI of about 2 pounds per day for cows fed negative DCAD during the dry period. There appeared to be an interaction between the number of lactations per cow and the use of DCAD diets during the dry period. The study suggested that cows second lactation or greater that were fed the negative DCAD diet, produced about 3.5 pounds more milk per day in early lactation. Conversely, milk production in first calf heifers was unaffected by feeding them DCAD diets prior to calving. In addition, the more negative pre-calving DCAD was also predicted to increase post-calving blood calcium levels, and decrease incidence of milk fever, retained placenta, and metritis.

Dietary calcium supplementation used in conjunction with low DCAD diets fed during the dry period continue to be an active area of discussion and debate in the industry. A study completed more than 20 years ago concluded that concurrently decreasing the DCAD and increasing dietary calcium concentration improved blood calcium levels after calving. However, the effects of DCAD and supplementation could not be separated in that experiment. A more recent study in which dry cows were fed either moderate or low DCAD diets along with either 1.3% or 1.8% of DM calcium supplementation during the dry period was done to look at the same relationships. Few differences in circulating blood calcium concentrations or performance were observed, except that the cows fed 1.8% calcium diets had higher circulating blood calcium concentrations on the day after calving and cows fed low DCAD diet made more milk after 45 DIM.



Lastly, the review of one study done in 2020, found that while feeding negative DCAD diets to dry cows slightly decreased their pre-calving DMI, those diets increased both the ionized and total calcium concentrations in the cow's blood immediately after calving, at 24 hours after calving, and increased total calcium concentrations at 48 hours post-calving. Post-calving DMI (% of body weight) tended to be increased for cows fed negative DCAD during the dry period, but milk production was unaffected.

In recent work, the Overton lab published results from a study conducted to look at the degree of DCAD implementation and pre-calving dietary calcium levels in the dry diet. The cows were fed diets with either partial or full acidification supplemented by either 0.7% or 1.5% DM dietary calcium. Neither pre-calving nor post-calving DMI were affected by the degree of acidification, and the overall differences were minimal. However, feeding higher dietary calcium during the dry period increased DMI by 1.5 pounds per day and energy-corrected milk yield by approximately 4 pounds per day over the first 9 weeks of lactation.

Research references available upon request.

In next issue of Ag News, Dr. Overton will discuss the use of calcium binders.



Precision Manure Field Day

Wednesday September 9th 2026,
10:00 am–3:30 pm



Joleanna Holsteins - 309 Covered Bridge Rd, Unadilla, NY 13849

Agenda

10:00 – Registration

10:30 - Welcome and Introductions 10 mins

Paul Cerosaletti - CCE Delaware County, Graydon Dutcher, Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District

10:40 - Value and Variability of Manure for Corn and Hay crop Production 30 mins

Speakers: Dr. Quirine Ketterings, Juan Carlos Ramos Sanchez, Helen Solecki Cornell Nutrient Management Spear Program, Dale Dewing Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County

- Results of Local and statewide manure fertility research; Nitrogen Benefits of Manure Injection; Impacts of manure injection on sod production.

11:10 – Precision Ag technology for Manure Applications 20 mins

Speakers: Kirsten Workman Cornell Pro Dairy, Paul Cerosaletti Cornell Cooperative Extension Delaware County

11:30 - Producer Panel – 1 Year Later - Experiences with Disk Coulter Manure Injection - stubble & sod 30 mins

Panel Moderator – Kirsten Workman Cornell Pro Dairy – **Speakers** TBA

12:00 - LUNCH –BBQ Beef 45 mins

12:45 - Manure Gas Safety: 10 mins

Speaker: Jason Oliver Cornell Pro Dairy

- Manure gases education and safety

12:55 – Manure Injection in Stubble demo - Albanos Precision Application 25 mins

1:20 – Manure Confined Spaces Safety Training; - 20 mins

Speakers: Jason Oliver and Kirsten Workman, Cornell Pro Dairy

- Identifying and managing safety around confined spaces on manure handling equipment and structures

1:40 – Semi-Solid Application Demonstrations 25 mins

Albanos Precision Application, Eklund Farm Machinery and H&S manufacturing

2:05 – Farm Truck Safety Inspection - What to Look for; What to Do. 40 mins

Speaker: Mark Miller – NYS DOT commercial truck inspector and truck mechanic

2:45 – Sod Manure Injection Demo

Albanos Precision Application and ZML Manufacturing

3:15 - Manure Gas Meter Distribution and Training and Depart

Certified Crop
Advisor Credits
Available!

Complimentary Manure Gas Alert Meter - 1 per first 20 NY farms with manure storages registered & attending

Cost: \$10 per person

RSVP by 9/4 to Donna Wood @ 607-865-7090 or email - donna-wood@dcswcd.org

This work is supported by the Conservation Innovation Grants program at USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service.



The Agritourism Brief

Implementing Outdoor Recreation on the Farm

Agritourism Project Work Team

1

Why Outdoor Recreation?

- Way to leverage your existing natural resources
- Appeal to families with young children, fitness motivated individuals, those who enjoy nature, etc...

2

Overview of Models

- Guided instruction
- Self-guided hikes/trails/explorations
- Partnership with land conservancy/land trusts
- Activities with animals
- Leverage/partner with other activities in the area
- Partner with organizations such as FarmStayUSA

3

Leverage People's Interests

One aspect many farms pride themselves on is the biological diversity you are able to cultivate and maintain through a variety of methods. Leverage that! Consider reaching out to groups in your area that have interests in these areas. These could include:

- Birding Clubs
- Naturalist Clubs
- Hiking Clubs
- Trail Running or Running Clubs
- Painters (Plein Air painting is all the rage!)
- College Programs

4

Does Your Infrastructure Support Outdoor Recreation?

If you are planning to invite people onto your farm for outdoor recreation activities, you will want to ensure you have the facilities to support it. This could include a pavilion or other location for gathering prior to, and after, events. It could include yurt style housing if you are considering farm stays. It could also include bathrooms, parking, and other amenities which encourage people to stay longer.

5

The Values of Partnership

There are many pro's to partnership when it comes to outdoor recreation. These can include:

- Publicity
- Reduction of liability
- Access to volunteer labor (farms cannot have volunteers unless it is structured as a non-profit)

Think outside the box! Consider complimentary groups that share a love of the outdoors --

- snowmobile clubs, audubon societies etc...

6

CONSIDER THE LIABILITY & RISKS

Questions to ask yourself:

- Does the farm have the right insurance to cover this?
- What signage for activities is needed to be clear where people are and are NOT welcome, to outline the potential risks of participation, etc. ?
- What system should be put in place if an accident occurs? This can include accident report forms, contact information for your insurance company, EMS services, etc...
- Does your business structure support these risks? Is your farm incorporated, an LLC or a sole proprietorship?

7

Don't Forget About the Upsell!

Take some lessons from retail! If you produce raw agricultural products, such as beef, consider creating a scenario where you can sell prepared food, in addition to the raw product. If people are staying to participate in an outdoor recreation experience, they may be more likely to "hang around" for the restaurant/food truck using your products -- and you'll make more money!



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Presented by the Cornell Cooperative Extension Agritourism Program Work Team

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Registration Required. No Walk-Ins Accepted

October 9th & 10th

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OR

Register by Telephone Message September 16th - October 1st: (607) 865-6474

Businesses & Farms ONLY, Friday, October 9th

Businesses & Municipalities from 10:00 am-Noon

Farms from 12:15pm - 2:00pm (no fee)

Households ONLY, Saturday, October 10th from 8:00am - Noon (no fee)

Questions? Email Us : cleansweepdelaware@gmail.com

CLEAN SWEEP Sponsored By: Delaware County Department of Public Works, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the Watershed Agricultural Council. With funding from Delaware County, NYSDEC, and WAC

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