Sept/Oct 2025

AG NEWS

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Delaware County

WHEN WILL CORN SILAGE BE READY FOR HARVEST IN 2025?

Watershed Agricultural Council

Written by Dale Dewing MS, CCA Watershed

Research in New York shows that tracking Growing Degree Days (GDD) from tasseling is a good way to predict when corn silage will reach 32% dry matter, the earliest we recommend harvesting. Hybrids grown in our area require about 750 GDD from tasseling to 32% DM.

The table below shows predicted date at 750 GDD for tasseling dates at one-week intervals starting July 23, about the time the earliest fields in our area started tasseling.

Joe Lawrence, Pro-Dairy Forage Specialist, reminds us, once corn begins the dry down process, an average rate of dry down is ½ percent per day (with a range of 0% to 1% percent per day) for example the crop may reach 35 percent DM approximately six days after reaching these GDD targets for 32 percent DM. So, for silos that work best with drier corn silage, your best harvest dates will be a bit later than those shown below.

Some later planted corn likely will not make 32% DM before a frost. If you have fields at risk of frost before they reach ideal silage stage, be prepared to harvest quickly after frost, since frosted corn can dry down fast and move from too wet to too dry quickly.

Recommended Corn Silage Dry Matter Range	
Storage Type	**Dry Matter %**
Bunk silos and piles	32-36
Bags	32-36
Concrete Uprights	35-38

Harvesting corn too wet results in poor fermentation, reduced silage quality and increased silo effluent. Excessively dry silage will also have poor fermentation and lower feed value.

Predicted Date at 750 GDD for Tasseling Dates at One-Week Intervals				
	Tasseling Date			
	7/23	7/30	8/6	8/13
Andes	22-Sep	14-Oct	15-Oct	X
Bloomville	13-Sep	28-Sep	13-Oct	16-Nov
Davenport Center	13-Sep	29-Sep	15-Oct	15-Nov
Franklin	9-Sep	24-Sep	6-Oct	4-Nov
Hobart	16-Sep	2-Oct	20-Oct	12-Nov
New Kingston	13-Sep	1-Oct	18-Oct	20-Nov
Stamford	14-Sep	30-Sep	16-Oct	16-Nov
Unadilla	9-Sep	23-Sep	4-Oct	30-Oct
Walton	7-Sep	21-Sep	2-Oct	21-Oct
Historically likely frost will have already occurred				

Updates: Staffing

Welcome

The CCE Delaware County Ag team welcomes!

CCE Delaware Agriculture Program Staff

- *Paul Cerosaletti, MS, CCA Agricultural Program Team Leader*
- *Desiree Keever, JD Farm Business Management & Ag Economic Development*
- *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*

As summer draws to a close and a new season begins, CCE is excited to welcome Meghan Potter and Autumn Madugno as the newest members of our team!

Meghan Potter is our Precision Feed Management Team Leader. In this role, Meghan and the PFM team will work with farms to focus on increasing nutrient efficiency and balancing home-grown feeds with purchased feeds to maximize profitability. The PFM team will help to optimize crop production and minimize nutrient over-feeding, nutrient excretion in manure and nutrient accumulation in the soil.

Proud to be a native, she was born and raised on her family's dairy farm right in the heart of Delaware County. Her younger years were busy with the Dairy Promotion Committee, Delaware Academy FFA, and heavy involvement in Delaware County 4-H, participating in dairy judging, quiz bowl, Camp Shankitunk, exhibiting at the Delaware Co Fair and leading a local 4-H club, the Merry Dairy Milkers. Meghan attended SUNY Cobleskill and then went on to receive her Bachelor's of Science and Master's of Science from Penn State University, specializing in dairy nutrition and Animal Science.

This led to an engaging career in the animal feed industry working with farmers and feed companies all over the northeast. Most recently, Meghan was a calf Specialist at Denkavit, the only milk replacer company to have a manufacturing plant located in the northeast. Now, she and her husband, Joe, are the owners/operators of Potter Family Ranch; approximately 150 beef cattle, making them the proud 4th generation of farmers on their Hamden, NY land. Though beef cattle housed on a former dairy farm is not a unique concept, the Potters have been able to utilize land for their cattle that had formerly never been used as pasture as well as making improvements in forage quality and beef productivity.

Meghan and Joe enjoy harescramble dirtbike races with their grown children, Emily and Ian, as well as sharing their farm with their grandson Maverick.

Meghan still enjoys exhibiting their cattle at the Walton Fair and her new hobby of canine dock diving with their Australian Cattle Dog, Mick.

Autumn comes on board as the new Agriculture in the Classroom educator for Franklin Central School. Raised on a Delaware County dairy farm, Autumn developed a strong foundation in agriculture and deepened her interest through active participation in Delaware County 4-H. She is completing her Bachelor's of Animal Science and Industry at Kansas State University and will graduate this December.

Autumn is eager to bring her knowledge and enthusiasm for agriculture to the classroom, providing students with meaningful opportunities to learn about the industry's importance and impact.

CCEDC Forges New Ag In the Classroom Program

We are excited to partner with Franklin Central School District to offer regular Ag In the Classroom Programming for the elementary students of the district! In this new partnership, CCEDC will provide an Ag in the Classroom Educator to provide ag specific programming and enrichment to students as part of their regular school day.

This program will take students on a journey to discover how impactful agriculture is on their daily lives, from the foods they eat, clothes they wear, open spaces they enjoy and the backbone of our local economy with fun, hands on activities! We are grateful to be a part of this unique project and thrilled to help share the importance and value of agriculture with the next generation of consumers!

Stay on the Lookout:
Late Fall/Winter Programming

- Becoming a New York Grown & Certified Farm
- Marketing your Direct-to-Consumer Products in a Digital World
- Identifying Your Farm Successor
- Transitioning Farm Managment
- Dairy Heifer Management

2025 Ag Program Sponsors

Platinum Sponsor:
- Farm Credit East ACA
- Delaware County Farm Bureau
- Albano's Precision Application

Gold Sponsor:
- Lutz Feed Co.

Silver Sponsor:
- Wayne Bank

Bronze Sponsor:
- Stamford Farmers Cooperative

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

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

Upcoming Programs

Watershed Agricultural Council

Farm Truck & Trailer Safety Demo

Sept 25, 2025 5:30 PM-7:00 PM

Bud Gladstone Farm
300 Gambichler Rd Andes, NY
Hamburgers & Hot dogs provided

Join Sergeant Benjamin Emery, NY State Trooper with the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Unit will lead a discussion on farm truck/trailer safety.

- Rules & Regulations, enforcement
- When is a CDL required
- How to avoid common shortcomings

Register with Kim Holden by 9/24/25 (607)510-7126 or kmh19@cornell.edu

Pasture Walk at Sunny Alp Farm

Sept 28, 2025 12:30PM-2:30 PM

221 Wickham Rd Stamford, NY
Light Lunch will be served.

Pasture walk will feature how Sunny Alp successfully uses pasture for the primary feed source for their grass-fed dairy during the grazing season.

Register with Kim Holden by 9/16/25 (607) 510-7126 or kmh19@cornell.edu

3 Events sponsored by the Watershed Agricultural Council

Preparing Your Farm For Succession

Sept 29, 2025 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM

CCE Hamden Office
34570 St Hwy 10 Hamden, NY
Refreshments & Workbook Provided

Workshop will be an interactive work session with:

- Focus on the financial health of your farm business
- identify the assets to be transferred and the tools available to transfer
- Identify which documents will be needed
- Consider Estate Planning needs & Tax Implications

Register with Kim Holden by 9/26/25 (607) 510-7126 or kmh19@cornell.edu

Join the Conversation

Watershed Agricultural Council

Selecting Quality Queens With Cory Stevens & Octavio Vasquez

Preregistration Required
Register at https://eshpa.org/

Saturday, September 13, 2025
9:00 AM 3:00 PM

Kutik's Everything Bees LLC
3442 New York 12 Oxford, NY, 13830

$25.00 per person Chicken BBQ Provided.

Workshop will feature an overview of:

- UbeeO and Harbo and freeze kill methods of selecting for Varro mite resistance.
- Discussion of other selection criteria used for producing quality queens.
- Hands on demos of each method

Workshop provides practical experience for queen breeders to experience these methods.

Stay Connected:

- ccedelaware.org
- Follow us on Facebook: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Delaware County: Agriculture
- Email: delaware@cornell.edu
- Phone 607.865.6531

2025-26 4H Enrollment

*The **enrollment deadline** for the 2025-2026 4-H year has been set for **December 1, 2025**. All youth participants, club leaders, and committee members must complete their enrollment forms by this date. Be sure to get your forms submitted on time so you don't miss out on the exciting year ahead in 4-H!*

Please note: all volunteers are required to complete a background check every three years as part of the enrollment process. The 4-H office will contact you if you're due.

Upcoming Programs:

Harvest Your Vision: Business Plan Writing Workshop Series

BACK by popular demand: an interactive workshop series where you will learn & write each of the components of a **complete business plan**. Each session will focus on one section of a plan, with opportunity for feedback and **one on one support** to write a business plan tailored to your farm and vision for your business. This is an important tool in propelling your farm forward with focus, a key to successful grant funding and optimizing interest rates.

All session will begin at 6pm.

- Session 1: Wednesday Oct. 1st **Farm Vision, Operations & Management**
- Session 2: Wednesday Oct 15th **Market Analysis & Product Pricing**
- Session 3: Wednesday Oct 29th **SWOT Analysis**
- Session 4: Wednesday Nov. 12th **Financial Summary**
- Session 5: Wednesday Dec 3rd **Business Strategies & Implementation Plan**
- Session 6: Wednesday Dec 17th **Financial Projections**

Presented by CCE Delaware & Delaware Economic Development
CCE Delaware
34570 St. Hwy. 10, Hamden
$45 per farm, **limit 6 farms**
Register @:
https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/Harvestyourvision3_212

Or call the office at: 607.865.6531

Grow With Grants

Wednesday, October 8th 6:30-8pm
CCE Hamden Office
34570 St. Hwy. 10, Hamden, NY
No Cost to attend

Register:
https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/growwithgrants_212
Call: 607.865.6531

- Looking to apply for a grant that requires a Federal UEI (unique entity identification) Number?
- Want to better understand the grant application and scoring process?
- Looking to utilize AI or a grant writer to enhance your application?

This is the session for you! Grant season is upon us, so let's take a look at how to put together a competitive application to take advantage of available funding to **GROW** your ag business. This will also include an overview of the typical types of projects that catch funders' eyes as well as how to tell your farm business story in a compelling way.

Ag Energy Workshop Featuring Ag Solar

Wednesday, October 22nd
10-Noon Ag Energy NY Farm Energy Efficiency
12:00-12:30 Lunch
12:30-2 Ag Solar & Agrivoltarics
CCE Hamden Office, 34570 St. Hwy. 10, Hamden
No Cost to attend

Ag Energy Farm Efficiency: Learn how to identify and prioritize on-farm energy efficiency opportunities to ***lower costs*** and improve operations. We'll introduce practical tools and resources developed by Ag Energy NY to help better understand energy use and ***explore energy-saving technologies***. Gain insights on how to connect with service providers and ***access available grants, loans, and rebates—making energy upgrades more accessible and affordable.***

Lunch & Networking

Ag Solar & Agrivoltarics: Understand how solar energy can be integrated into your agricultural operations—whether through ***powering farm*** equipment, reducing hot water costs, or leasing ***land for solar development***. Explore key considerations for farm-scale and large-scale solar projects, including how to evaluate lease agreements, navigate permitting and siting processes, and address common concerns like land use and panel safety.

We'll also discuss emerging opportunities in agrivoltaics, where land is used for both farming and solar energy production.

Register by October 20th , Limited to 40 Inperson Attendees
Zoom option will be available
https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/AgEnergy_212
or Call 607.865.6531

When Will Corn Silage be Ready for Harvest in 2025?

[continued from page 1]

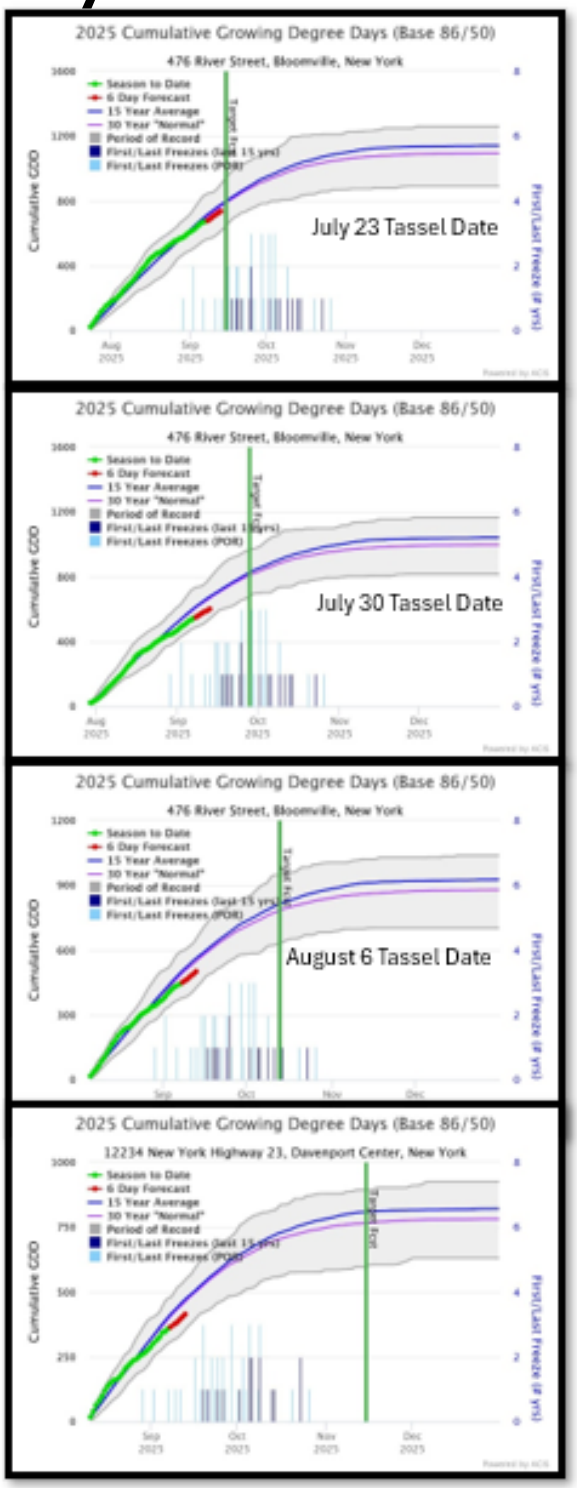
As an example, I've included the predicted growing degree day accumulation graphs for Bloomville. For each graph, notice the tasseling date. The growing degree-days start at zero for the prediction and the lines go up each day by the number of degree days observed (green dots) or predicted (red dots). The blue line shows the last 15-year average and the purple line shows the 30-year "normal" accumulation. The top and the bottom of the gray area indicate the highest and lowest limits observed. The vertical lines at the bottom of the graph show the dates of the first 32^0 frost observed, the darker lines show the last 15 years. The bold green vertical line shows the predicted day to reach 750 GDD from the selected tasseling date (this is when we would predict corn tasseling that day would reach 32% DM, and a potential first harvest day).

All the GDD lines start above the long-term average, but dip below the average line for the past couple weeks.

You will notice that GDD accumulation is faster in August, slows considerably in September and becomes almost flat in October. This explains why for the 7/30 to 8/6 tassel dates each one week later tasseling date results in a 10 day to 2 week later 750 GDD prediction, and for the 8/13 tasseling date it predicts an addition 3 weeks to reach 750 GDD.

You can explore this tool yourself at

https://climatesmartfarming.org/tools/csf-growing-degree-day-calculator/.



Model runs 9/8//25

CSF Climate Smart Farming
A program of Cornell University

CORNELL CONNECTIONS

Monitor Your Own Behavior in Busy Times

Written by Dr. Robert Milligan, Emertius Professor of Agricultural Economics, Cornell University

Harvest is upon us! Added to the usual long hours and stress are the return of our sons and daughters to the classroom, the crazy labor market especially for immigrant labor, and uncertainty about the Big Wonderful Bill. Monitoring our own emotions and behaviors will reduce our stress and enable us to create clarity and reasonableness for our workforce.

One critical difference between we human beings and tractors, combines, etc. is that each of us is very unique. We are born with certain tendencies and natural reactions. You may well have completed leadership and/or personality profiles to better understand your tendencies and natural reactions.

As we mature, we learn that our natural tendencies, reactions, and behaviors do not always serve us well. We learn to react thoughtfully rather than instinctively. Managers who are naturally very controlling (coercive and authoritative leadership styles) learn that there are times when listening and coaching are more important than their natural reactions. Managers whose instinctive reaction is to lead only or mainly by example (pacesetting leadership style) learn that they first need to teach, coach, and engage their employees.

The challenge is that when we get busy and stressed, we tend to revert to our natural tendencies, reactions, and behaviors – to become more instinctive. A great example is the owner of a business whose natural tendency is to be very analytical and to carefully research and study every decision. When this owner's business faces challenges, the danger is that the owner will isolate himself or herself in the office analyzing every decision and the excessive need for analysis paralyzes the ability to make decisions. He or she has fallen into the trap of over using his or her natural tendencies when under stress.

In busy times make certain your are not falling into this trap of reverting to overusing your natural tendencies, reactions, and behaviors. Two suggestions. First, take the time frequently to reflect back on your interactions with people to determine that you have not fallen into this trap.
Second, focus on using our oft discussed listening tactic of pausing a second or two before responding. This will provide the time for a more thoughtful less instinctive response.

CORNELL CONNECTIONS

SEPT/OCT 2025

Management Considerations for Immature and Frosted Corn Silage

Contributed by Paul Cerosaletti, MS, CCA, CCE Ag Program leader; Adapted from the Cornell Publication "Management Consideration for Immature and Frosted Corn Silage" by L. E. Chase

Growing season in New York has again not been "normal." Wet conditions delayed planting in many areas of the state. Later in the growing season, some areas were dry. On many farms, there are large differences in corn maturity between fields. There is a possibility that some corn will not reach "normal" maturity when it is harvested. Growing degree days in August and September will be key in determining maturity at harvest. An early frost will further complicate the situation.

What can we do to manage corn harvest in this situation? The key will be to apply the basic principles of harvest, storage and feeding of the 2019 corn crop. Dairy producers have been through this situation a few times in the last 10 years and have some experience in managing this situation. The key points to concentrate on for the 2019 corn crop are:

Nutrient Composition:

Immature corn will be wet (30% DM), higher in crude protein sugar and NDF and lower in starch than mature corn. NDF digestibility is difficult to predict due to environmental conditions at different phases of plant growth. Energy value of immature corn will be 80 – 95 % of normal maturity corn silage

Harvesting:

Do everything possible to harvest corn silage at the right dry matter content. The target range for harvest is 32 – 38% dry matter (DM). The goal is for the average DM to be 34 – 36% in bunker silos.

- Use whole plant dry matter to determine when to harvest. With many hybrids, milk line is not a good indicator of harvest time.
- If plant dry matter is determined with a Koster tester, the value obtained is about 2 units higher than the actual plant dry matter. A DM of 33% using a Koster tester is about 31% DM in the plant. This needs to be considered when determining harvest time. -
- Whole plant dry down rates are about 0.5% per day in September. If the corn plant is 28% DM today, it will take about 8 days to reach 32% DM. Dry down rates are variable due to weather conditions. Check whole plant DM before starting to harvest.
- If the immature corn is harvest at < 30% DM, kernel processing may not be needed
- Monitor particle size and kernel breakage during harvest. This is the only way to determine if the settings are right.
- Kernel breakage should be > 90%.
- Considering increasing length of cut, especially for baggers or upright silos. This may help reduce with silage effluent. Particle size distribution using the Penn State particle separator:
- 2 screens + pan
    - Top screen = 10-20% of the total weight
    - Middle screen = 40 – 60%.
    - Pan = < 40% o 3 screens + pan
    - Top screen = 5 – 15% of total weight.
    - 2 nd screen = >50%.
    - 3 rd screen = < 30% ▪ Pan = < 5%

CORNELL CONNECTIONS

Management Considerations for Immature and Frosted Corn Silage Cont:

- You may need to recheck the settings during harvest since factors such as hybrid, stand density, maturity and DM influence particle size and kernel breakage.
- Consider the use of research proven bacterial silage inoculant to assist improving fermentation efficiency and dry matter recovery. Follow the directions for handling and use.
- Take some samples for forage analysis to characterize nutrient composition and planning the feeding program. Analyses should include DM, CP, NDF, starch and NDF digestibility.

Storage:

- Try to store immature and normal corn silage in separate facilities. This provides for better flexibility at feeding time and allocation to specific animal groups.
- Make sure you have enough packing tractor weight. The thumb rule is 800 lbs. of packing tractor weight for each ton of silage delivered per hour. If the filling rate is 100 tons/hour, you would need 80,000 lbs. of packing tractor.
- Pack in thin layers (5-7 inches).
- Consider covering the silo walls with plastic on the inside to minimize air infiltration through cracks and joints.
- Seal the silo with plastic and tires or the newer lower oxygen permeability cover.

Frosted Corn:

In some years, there is a killing frost before corn has reached maturity for harvest. Key points to consider in this situation are:

- The leaves will quickly turn brown and the plant will appear “dry”. This gives a false reading on whole plant DM since the leaves are only 10 – 15% of the total plant weight on a DM basis. Most of the plant moisture is in the ear and stalk.
- Whole plant DM needs to be determined to assess when to harvest. Corn for silage should be > 32% DM before starting harvest.
- Frost may kill some if the normal bacteria on the plant. A research proven inoculant may assist in getting a good fermentation started.
- Harvest as quickly as possible. This lowers the risk of the plant getting too dry and potential mold growth on the ear.
- Follow the guidelines listed above for packing and sealing the silo

Summary:

- Harvest at > 32% DM. -
- Monitor forage particle size and kernel breakage.
- Take samples for forage analysis during harvest.
- Store immature or frosted silage in separate storage facilities.
- Pack and seal the silo. - Consider the use of a research proven inoculant.

Fruit & Veg Corner

Winterization Tips for Garden & Field Health

Written by Lila Shafer, BT Horticulturist

As summer draws to a close and the cooler months approach, now is the perfect time to start thinking about winterizing your gardens and fields. Taking a few proactive steps this season can make a big difference in preserving soil health and setting the stage for a successful growing season next year.
Healthy soil is the foundation of a thriving garden or field. With the right care during fall and winter, you can protect your soil from erosion, compaction, and nutrient loss. Here are a few effective ways to care for your soil during the colder months:

Mulch for Insulation: Apply a layer of organic mulch to help regulate soil temperature, retain moisture, and prevent erosion caused by winter weather.

Clear Debris and Weeds: Remove dead plants, fallen leaves, and weeds to reduce the risk of pests and diseases overwintering in your garden.

Compost: Continue composting garden waste and food scraps throughout the winter. Composting adds valuable nutrients to the soil, encourages the growth of beneficial microorganisms, and improves the soil structure.

Avoid Soil Compaction: Minimize foot traffic and heavy equipment on wet soil to preserve structure and aeration.

Protect Soil Structure: Cover bare soil with straw, leaf litter, or landscape fabric to guard against erosion from wind and rain.

Monitor Moisture Levels: Keep an eye on moisture, raised beds and containers can dry out or become too saturated even in winter.

Plant Cover Crops: Sow cover crops like rye, clover, or hairy vetch to prevent erosion, add organic matter, and improve soil fertility.

Overwinter Containers: Clean and store unused containers or insulate those left outdoors to prevent cracking and nutrient loss.

SEPT/OCT 2025

Fruit & Veg Corner

Controlling Japanese Knotweed

Reported by Lila Schafer, BT Horticulturists. Information collected by Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership

CRISP
Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership
www.catskillinvasives.com

Japanese Knotweed – Fallopia japonic

Japanese knotweed is an aggressive, herbaceous perennial invasive across much of the United States, including New York State. Originally introduced from eastern Asia (Japan, Korea, and China) in the late 1800s as an ornamental plant, it has since spread rapidly and now poses a serious threat to native ecosystems, infrastructure, and agriculture. Although unrelated, knotweed closely resembles bamboo due to its hollow, jointed stems and papery sheaths at the nodes. The leaves are broad, up to six inches long with a heart-shaped base that tapers to a point. From August to September, it produces clusters of small greenish-white flowers.

Knotweed is highly adaptable and thrives in areas where many other plants struggle. It can tolerate shade, drought, high heat, saline soils (like those along roadsides), and wet environments, making it especially common in disturbed areas, riparian corridors, and roadside ditches. It spreads primarily through an extensive underground rhizome system, forming dense stands that outcompete native plants and significantly reduce biodiversity.

Management Challenges

Controlling knotweed requires long-term, persistent effort. Small, new infestations may be managed by hand-digging or cutting, but these methods are rarely effective for larger patches. Mowing is not recommended, as even small plant fragments can resprout and worsen the problem.

One physical control method involves cutting the plant and covering the area with heavy-duty tarps or landscape fabric. While this can suppress growth over time, the material often needs to be replaced annually or more often, as knotweed can puncture most coverings.

Herbicide application remains the most effective control strategy. Stem injection is the preferred method for targeted treatment, especially in sensitive areas, though foliar sprays can also be effective if timed correctly. Early detection and rapid response are key. Once established, Japanese knotweed is extremely difficult to eradicate.

NY Grown & Certified News

What:

Launched in 2016, the New York State Grown & Certified program assures consumers the food they are buying is local and produced to a higher standard by requiring participating producers to adopt food safety standards and enroll in an environmental management program. Since the program began, New York State Grown & Certified has grown and evolved to cover 20 commodities.

This voluntary program is a cooperative effort among producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers, restaurants, and the NYS Department of Ag & Markets to meet consumer demand for high-quality food and local agricultural products.

HOW:

Certification for products that are grown and produced in NY can be achieved through an application to the program after the farm has enrolled in a 3rd party food safety verification program, where applicable and participate in an environmental management program.

Recertification must be done periodically to verify continued participation. Want to get started? CCE Delaware is happy to help!

WHEN:

Enroll anytime, recertify as required when your Agricultural Environmental Managment Plan requires recertification or when your food safety verification requires an update.

WHY:

1. A higher standard of production.
2. Increased marketing opportunities for your products, with instilled customer confidence via 3rd Party reassurance, and NY Grown & Certified campaign efforts.
3. Access funds through the cooperative marketing program, Ag & Markets Funding Opportunities, and the current NY Grown & Certified Infrastructure, Technology, Research & Development Grant Program (ITRD Program).

Two Delaware County farms have been awarded funding under the ITRD program in its first round!

Interested in learning more or becoming certified? CCE DC and Delaware County Economic Development will be hosting a session with Ag & Markets to facilitate certification.

Energy Corner

Cornell Cooperative Extension
Smart Energy Choices

Upgrade Your Home with NYSERDA

NYSERDA offers programs and funding to help New Yorkers make energy efficiency upgrades in their homes. From insulation and air sealing to efficient heating and cooling systems, these programs make it easier and more affordable to save energy, reduce bills, and increase comfort.

Contact Sam Edel, Delaware County Community Energy Advisor 607-366-0833 x 3 or se379@cornell.edu for more information.

NYS AGRITOURISM CONFERENCE

November 10-11, 2025 at the Saratoga Springs City Center

- 2 Full days of information
- Over 18 speakers offered across two different tracks
- Hands on sessions both days

Register Online
https://bit.ly/nysagritourismconf

The Agritourism Brief

Offering Tours:

Agritourism Project Work Team

1 Why?

- Diversify farm income
- Provide a positive farm experience for the community
- Educate the public about farming and where their food comes from.

2 Who is Your Audience?

Define your audience to tailor your marketing. Your audience will vary depending on what type of farm tour you are offering.

- Is the tour for adults? Example: Farm Brewery Tour
- Is the tour for a school group or family? Example: Interactive educational tour of u-pick pumpkins

3 How Much Time Will The Tour Take?

Tour time will be different for each operation size & offerings. It is a good idea to rehearse the tour ahead of time to make sure that enough time is planned for the tour. You'll also want to make sure to put time in for questions & answers, purchases and people to enjoy any offered activities!

4 How Much Should You Charge?

Is your offering simply a tour or are your customers getting other items/experiences (u-pick apples, wagon ride, etc.) out of the tour?

Depending on what you offer, you may want to offer free tours because, it'll lead to additional revenue from farm produce sales. Other models might be a group rate, individual rates, entrance fees, or a school group.

School districts may have a set group fee that they can pay or a max individual fee per kid, due to funding sources such as district budget, school support assoiations, parents, grants, etc.

5 Public v Private Tours

Tours are a great way to highlight your operation: however, it's a good idea to determine what types of tours you're willing to host. Here are some ideas:
Public Set Tour Times: You may only be able to offer tours to the public at a set time/day of the week. This allows for scheduling a tour guide. It's important to clearly communicate times & days.
Public On-Going Tours: Often customers decide last minute to visit a farm. To accommodate this, you will need to assure tour guide availability.
Private Tours: These are the most controlled tours because you'll know exactly how many will be attending and the timing of the tour.

6 How?

Who Should Lead the Tour? The tour guide will be the face of your operation. Customers like to meet the farmer but that might not always be the person leading the tour.

What Will Customers See? It's important to have a good plan for what the audience will be seeing on the tour. Ideally, the tour should start at the beginning of the farm and end a the farm shop. At the beginning and along the way, it's important to point out any potential hazards or no trespassing areas.

CORNELL CONNECTIONS

Understanding Consumer Response to Meat Prices at Farmers' Markets

Luca Rigotti, Matthew N. LeRoux, Leslie Verteramo Chiu, and Todd M. Schmit
Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management Cornell University

Many farmers' market vendors make pricing decisions based on experience, intuition, or what neighboring vendors charge. While these strategies may work in the short term, they don't reflect actual market conditions or provide the precision needed in a market that's becoming increasingly competitive, especially as grocery stores begin offering more locally branded products. This study helps bridge that knowledge gap. By analyzing two years of point-of-sale data from multiple meat vendors in New York State, we explore how customers respond to different meat prices. The result is a powerful dataset that can guide better pricing decisions and ultimately improve farm profitability.

A central concept in this study is how much customer demand changes when prices change, referred to as the price elasticity of demand. When demand is own-price elastic, a small increase in the price of a specific product (for example, a 1% price increase in pork) causes a relatively large drop (more than 1%) in the quantity sold of that same product. Conversely, if it's inelastic, the quantity sold doesn't change much when the price changes. We also look at cross-price elasticity, which reflects whether customers substitute one product for another, like switching from beef to chicken when the price of beef rises. Understanding own-price and cross-price elasticities among meats gives us insight into how flexible shoppers are when making decisions and whether they are comparing across vendors and meat types.

A Unique Market Environment-Unlike grocery stores, farmers' markets operate in a distinct environment. Vendors are often the producers themselves, meaning they manage both production and sales to consumers. Farmers' market vendors typically attend markets once per week, sell a limited and seasonal inventory, and foster direct
relationships with customers. All these factors influence how consumers behave and respond to pricing.

In this study, we analyzed over 40,000 transactions from six livestock farms at 15 different farmers' markets. Our economic analysis accounted for variations across farms and farmers' markets, product quality differences by cuts, and seasonal factors, allowing us to estimate specifically how customers react to changes in prices for beef, pork, and chicken. Our primary hypothesis was that customers will be relatively less sensitive to price changes at farmers markets than those in traditional retail settings, largely due to closer relationships with vendors and a shared commitment to local food systems. We also hypothesized that customers don't easily substitute meat types in farmers markets, either because of vendor loyalty or limited species availability at any given market.

Key Findings:

- Pork and chicken showed elastic demand, meaning price increases are likely to reduce total revenue.
- Beef demand was relatively inelastic, suggesting that moderate price increases may not significantly affect sales.
- There was no evidence of cross-price effects, indicating that consumers don't typically switch between species based on price. This may be partly due to the fact that not all vendors offer all species at once, limiting shoppers' ability to substitute. In other words, cross-price elasticities are hard to identify when customers aren't presented with the full set of choices simultaneously.

What This Means for Farmers:
These results suggest that pricing decisions at farmers' markets are more consequential than they might seem. Because pork and chicken buyers are more price-sensitive, vendors selling these products need to analyze carefully when considering price increases. Raising prices could lead to fewer sales and reduced revenue. Instead, these vendors might explore bundling products, adjusting portion sizes, or offering promotions to increase the perceived value without changing prices.

For beef vendors, there is more flexibility. With more inelastic demand, a modest price increase might improve revenue without driving away customers. However, this should still be done cautiously and ideally tested with sales data over a few weeks.

Additionally, since cross-price responses are limited and not all farms offer all species, each vendor's product occupies a relatively independent space in the market. This vendor loyalty is a unique strength, one that should be reinforced through storytelling (a narrative of the farm), branding, and consistent quality. With increasing availability of "local" labels in grocery stores, FM vendors must be more intentional and strategic than ever.

Final Takeaways
Farmers must become more aware of how pricing affects their bottom line. This study makes it clear that price setting shouldn't be guesswork. Point-of-sale systems are now affordable and easy to use, and the data they provide can be transformative. By tracking sales across time and products, vendors can spot trends, test pricing strategies, and refine their approach. Vendors should also keep an eye on their competitors in grocery stores. As traditional retailers lean into local food marketing, farmers' markets are no longer the only place offering "local" meat. Farmers who understand how their prices compare, and how their customers respond, are better equipped to maintain their competitive edge.

In short, this research highlights the importance of combining local knowledge with real sales data. With a better grasp of how prices impact sales, farmers can adjust strategies in ways that strengthen their position in a changing marketplace.

If you would like to read the full article, you can find it in the following link:
https://ssrn.com/abstract=5157766 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5157766

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GRANT OPPORTUNITY

NYFB Mini-Grant Challenge 2025

Win $2,500 or $5,000 to Grow Your Farm!

Got a project that could transform your farm? The NYFB Mini Grant Challenge is your chance to win $2,500 or $5,000 to support improvements that boost resilience or profitability—whether it's diversification, conservation, labor solutions, or marketing upgrades.

All NYFB members are invited to submit a short application describing their proposed project. Selected finalists will pitch their ideas live at the NYFB State Annual Convention on December 3, in front of hundreds of attendees. It's not just a chance to win funding—it's an opportunity to gain visibility and connect with ag leaders across the state.

Deadline to apply: **November 15**

Don't miss this opportunity to move your farm forward.

Local Foods Map Now Available

Desiree Keever,
Farm Business Management Educator

In collaboration with the Delaware County Economic Development Office, CCE has launched Delaware Bounty, a local food map. The map was debuted at the 2025 Delaware County Fairy and already has over 2,500 copies in circulation! Physical full size, high gloss paper maps will be printed as needed, so if you missed the 1st round of participant farmer recruitment, you can still sign up!

We are also in the development stages of launching a companion website, which will create a resource that is continuously updated as farms wish to participate with the program. Farms will have the opportunity to link their websites, and for farms who do not have a website of their own, this will be a platform to establish a digital presence.

Want to enroll? Scan here:

or visit:
https://cornell.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0jjJ6lvMQVviA74

Resources You Can Use- Marketing in Roadside Stands

Liz Higgins, Agricultural Business Management Specialist

If you are thinking about building a farm market or farm stand this is the report for you! This extension publication is an oldie (1992) but a goodie.

This publication goes into the nuts and bolts of selecting a site, designing and building a farm market, including market layout and market structure & facilities.

The content is still very relevant - the lighting section is pre-LED but the overall design concepts are still good. I can't think of a better single (free) resource for farm stand design. You are still responsible for ensuring that your project meets local, state and federal laws and regulations and as the guide is 30+ years old.

Scan to access:

PUTTING KNOWLEDGE TO WORK

Understanding Meat Harvest Yields

Desiree Keever, Farm Business Management Educator with contributions from 4H

This time of year is traditional harvest time for more than field crops, with many of us finishing and processing our meat animals so as not to overwinter them. We are seeing more direct to consumer sales to achieve greater margins on investments, and sometimes the most practical way to do this is by the whole, half or quarter of an animal. While this allows for more options in processing facilities and alleviates the need to have inventory on hand, market individual cuts of meat and decreases product handling, it does require more consumer education.

When we sell an animal by hanging weight, customers often need help deciding on how to have it cut. They also often don't understand what that whole, half or quarter of an animal will yield in finished cuts of meat in their freezers. If those conversations don't happen, it can lead to confusion, frustration and distrust. Here are some helpful tools, offered by our 4H team from the livestock auction that will also be helpful for you when marketing your meats to educate your customers on what to expect as yield.

Beef

Using a 1,100lb steer with a dressing percentage of 60%, will yield a 660lb carcass. That will break down to the following retail cuts:

Rump, boneless	3.5%	23.1 lbs
Inside Round Steak	4.5%	29.7 lbs
Outside Round Steak	4.6%	30.4 lbs
Round Tip	2.6%	17.2 lbs
Sirloin Steak	8.7%	57.4 lbs
Short Loin	5.2%	34.3 lbs
Rib, Short Cut	6.2%	40.9 lbs
Blade, Chuck	9.4%	62 lbs
Chuck, Arm, Boneless	6.1%	40.3 lbs
Brisket, Boneless	2.3%	15.2 lbs
Flank Steak	0.5%	3.3 lbs
Lean Trim	11.3%	74.6 lbs
Ground Beef	12.2%	80.5 lbs
Waste	22.9%	151.1 lbs

Pork

Using a 220 lb hog with a dressing percentage of 72%, will yield a 158lb carcass. That will break down to the following retail cuts:

Ham	18.0%	23.1 lbs	Loin Chops	5.0%	34.3 lbs
Bacon	14.5%	29.7 lbs	Ground (sausage)	7.0%	40.9 lbs
Pork Roast	12.5%	30.4 lbs	Misc. Cuts	5.0%	62 lbs
Butt Roast	6.0%	17.2 lbs	Jowls/ Trimmings	4.0%	40.3 lbs
Picnic Roast	8.5%	57.4 lbs	Lard	19.5%	15.2 lbs

Lamb/Goat

Using a 100 lb lamb with a dressing percentage of 50%, will yield a 50lb carcass. That will break down to the following retail cuts:

Leg	34.0%	17.0 lbs	Breast, Flank & Shank (50%)usable	8.0%	4.0 lbs
Loin	12.0%	6.0 lbs			
Back	10.0%	5.0 lbs			
Shoulder	30.0%	15.0 lbs	Waste/ trim	6.0%	3.0 lbs

SEPT/OCT 2025

PUTTING KNOWLEDGE TO WORK

Watershed Agricultural Council
nycwatershed.org

Forage Management for Ag Bags and Bunk Silos

April Wright Lucas, PAS, CCA Precision Feed Management Specialist

There are many parallels in managing silage across storage systems. The key is to have the correct ensiling moisture to ensure there is an anerobic condition (no air). Similarly, managing to have clean feed, known as *feed hygiene*, is important for protecting the rumen environment from contamination and supporting efficient milk and component production.

When sampling forages from ag bags and bunk silo faces, we often find loose forages. The feed face should be tight, flat, and dense. Bacteria and yeasts which are not fit to feed the herd, can grow and multiply in loose silages. A silage sample starting at 10,000 cells per gram, when exposed to air can multiply to one million cell per gram in a 12-hour period.

This important because wild yeast consumes the lactic acid generated by proper fermentation to help preserve silage and maintain the pH target range, 3.7 to 4.2. When pH rises above 5.0 the environment is altered allowing spoilage bacteria and molds to thrive and cause further degradation. Corn Silage is more prone to wild yeast formation. Furthermore, heat is generated from microbial activity in the silage and is a major sign of spoilage, loss of energy, and nutrient degradation.

Some of the factors that influence spoilage speed when exposed to air are:

- Length of fermentation; wait at least 21 days before opening an ag bag or bunk silo to allow for proper fermentation. During this time fermentation is going through the process of forage stabilization.

- Temperature; warmer weather increases the growth of spoilage microbes. Silage can spoil quicker in the summer months.

- Inoculants can slow the spoilage process. Divided into two categories: Homofermenters, which only produce lactic acid and will help maintain shelf life, and Heterfermenters, which produce both lactic and acetic acid. An example is L. buchneri which produces an acetic acid that has antifungal properties to improve aerobic stability.

- Density; high density silage slows the rate of air ingress, extending the feed out time before spoilage occurs. This is also subject to dry matter concentration, theoretical length cut (TLC), and packing density. The general rule is to pack at about 14 pounds per cubic foot. This can be measured with a specialized probe but with extreme caution. Ag Bags and bunk silo faces have been known to fall on people who are in proximity of the face. Make sure you take appropriate safety measures and do so with another person present.

- Bunk silos need to be continuously packed during filling. Tractor weight and filling speed can make or break your wallet. Harvesting excellent quality forage can go to waste if the bunk silo is not packed well. If you need help, ask us.

- Particle size for good compaction and less porosity is important. Research by (Muck and Kung, 2007) recommends a TLC for silages should be in the range of ⅜ to ½ inch. When ensiling corn with a whole plant dry matter less than 30%, kernel processing will increase seepage loss.

Studies of silage density have shown variation. Please see the figure below.

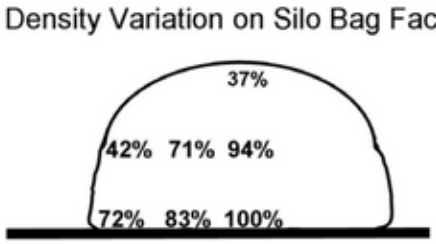


Figure 1 Reprinted from "Focus on Forage" University of Wisconsin Forage Team

- Feed Out Management: the rate of removal and the smoothness of the face are critical in maintaining forage quality.

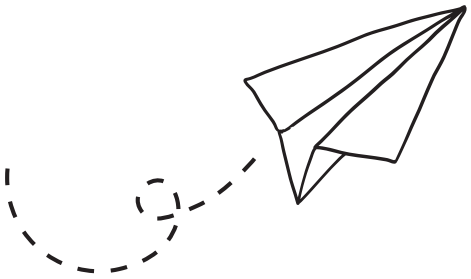
Forage production and storage is a huge investment and properly feeding it will pay dividends in production. Recently a farmer shared that he decided to make a management change and now maintains a flat face with no excess feed left over. His cows gained significant butterfat production from 3.51% to 4.68% as a result of improved feed hygiene, a very welcome payback indeed!

Forage removal rate should be 4 to 6 inches in the cold months and at least 6 inches in warmer months. However, 12 inches would be better. Cut back the plastic only to the amount of silage you will be removing and keep weight on the front end of the plastic to avoid air penetration between the plastic and silage. This can be done with split tires or long sandbags on bunk silos; on ag bags tying tires or cement blocks on a rope that reaches down to the ground. This will allow for moving it backwards at feed out. Heavy chains have also been used and work well.

Scrape down on the face to prevent the silage from splitting further back thus preventing air infiltration. Lifting at the base of an ag bag or bunk will cause a split and can also become a safety factor for anyone performing sampling, plastic cleanup, or shoveling silage.

Other tips include draping a green ag bag cover to prevent bird damage. Mowing around ag bags and maintaining a wide enough space between bags to run a mower will help deter wild critters from making holes. When there is damage to an ag bag, do not wait, reseal it immediately!

Good silage management is key to your feed quality and thus your herd performance. If you have any questions, are looking for further information, or need reference materials, please do not hesitate to let us know. Be safe!



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