Supporting New York’s Dairy Community – NYS Funded Outreach Programs

Cornell Pro-Dairy
Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development
New York FarmNet

Julie C. Suarez, Associate Dean Cornell CALS
Cornell Pro-Dairy

Core Focus:
✓ Farm business management and business development:
✓ Environmental stewardship and renewable energy
✓ Cropping and dairy management systems, farm animal welfare
✓ Youth and professional development
✓ Cornell Pro-Dairy also administers the Dairy Advancement Program (DAP)

Outcome: Stronger, more competitive dairy farms with expertise available to all size and types of dairy farms

Recent efforts:
➢ 3,773 read Pro-Dairy’s Managing during COVID-19 reports (2020)
➢ Podcasts reached 6,783 listeners (2020) and webinars on 66 subjects reached 8,172
➢ 664 on-line certificates - Calf and Heifer, Milk Quality, Transition Cow, Dairy Cattle Reproductive (English and Spanish) and Forage Management (since 2017)
➢ Continuing education for CAFO engineers
➢ 449 graduates of Junior Dairy Leaders (15 years)
➢ Dairy Farm Business Summary with 108 farms and 129,549 cows
➢ In-person and virtual conferences (dairy management, nutrition and herd health, etc.)

https://cals.cornell.edu/pro-dairy
Cornell Pro-Dairy – Dairy Advancement Program (DAP)

Core Focus:

• Business Project Funds
  • Business planning, record keeping systems, operational planning and advisory teams

• Environmental Project Funds
  • Develop Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans farms with < 300 cows
  • Engineering services for Best Management Practices < 700 cows

Outcome: Address specific barriers to success on New York dairy farms

Recent efforts:

➢ Grants for 92 environmental planning type projects (2020)
➢ Grants for 50 business plans (2020)
➢ Five Strategic Focus Groups in 2020-21 with 40 farms; minimum of 7 farms in each group:
  ➢ organic
  ➢ labor
  ➢ dairy profit monitor
  ➢ calf management
  ➢ reduced antibiotic use

https://cals.cornell.edu/pro-dairy/our-expertise/dairy-advancement-program
DAP addresses two key challenges:

- Environmental Projects
- Business Planning
Cornell Ag Workforce Development

Core Focus:
- Employment Law Compliance
- Management Development – supervisory and leadership
- COVID-19 Response
- Workforce Development
- For all ag sectors – owners, managers and aspiring managers
- NEW: Agricultural Supervisory Leadership Certificate Program. 60 participants in first class!

Outcome: Stronger HR programs on farms and farm labor law compliance

Recent efforts:
- Addressing the latest farm labor issues with online or in-person sessions (Labor Road Show)
- Ag Workforce Journal blog had 13,356 users and 29,048 page views (June–August 2021)
- Developed employee onboarding program to assist farms to bring new employees into the farm business.
- Developed Farm Employee Compensation Benchmark and template for Business Safety Plans and other tools
- Developed guidance for Essential Workers Arriving in NY from U.S. States with Significant Community Spread
- Ongoing “NY Farm Workforce in Transition” project on how farms are adapting to changing labor markets and regulations and to identify management practices and technologies that farms are using successfully

https://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu/
- Transitioning to Supervisor: Develop essential communication skills and manage conflict. Lead a multi-cultural team. Build an effective culture.

- Organizing Work for High Quality Results: Develop clear expectations and SOP’s. Delegate effectively. Diagnose and correct performance problems.


- Staffing and Organizing Your Team: Develop job descriptions. Learn how to find potential employees, interview and select the right people.
New York FarmNet

Core Focus:

✓ Free, confidential service to assist individuals and farm families in time of crisis

✓ Financial and family consultants initially meet with farm clients together to evaluate needs and determine next steps

✓ Operates an 800 helpline for individuals seeking support and guidance

✓ 25 financial and 21 family consultants (in the works to hire 6 more consultants).

✓ In addition to personal and mental health assistance, the program also helps with business plans and succession planning

Outcome: Assist farmers, farm families and agribusiness employees facing difficult times, stress and transition

Recent efforts:

➢ 683 open cases as of early October 2021; 241 new cases in 2021

➢ 391 incoming calls on 800 helpline from January thru August, 2021; 7% increase

➢ Assisted (2021) with 70 succession plans, 52 business plans, 26 grant applications, 22 loan applications and 14 exit plans.

➢ Family consultants focus on personal and family well-being – within the business and at home

• Highest number of cases is in dairy sector (189) followed by livestock (101) and field crops (73)

• 92% of program clients surveyed stated they would encourage others to contact NY FarmNet.

https://www.nyfarmnet.org/
Core Focus:

✓ Comprehensive training and consulting for the dairy industry to assist in the sustainable manufacture of safe, quality dairy products

✓ Course topics on milk and dairy product quality and safety, basic dairy microbiology, GMPs, unit operations, sanitation, food safety plans, audits, and state and federal regulations

✓ Certificates for fluid milk production, cheese production, ice cream production, and production of yogurt and other cultured dairy products

Outcome: Strengthen dairy industry / dairy processing with focus on food safety and dairy science outreach

Recent efforts (2020):

➢ 28 events involving 1,297 participants with 13,978 contact hours

➢ 20 courses offered including 13 new online courses reaching 787 participants with 11,665 contact hours

➢ Program spearheaded COVID-19 “office hours”, which held >50 sessions to date that helped dairy industry address COVID-19 and minimizes the risk of shut-down and business interruptions

➢ Dairy Foods Extension provides hands-on training to more than 200 industry professionals and students at the Cornell Dairy Plant annually

➢ Boot camp for high school students on intro to dairy processing (Genesee Economic Development)

➢ https://cals.cornell.edu/dairy-extension
What else?

- Cornell Small Farms Program
  - https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/online-courses/
- Organic Dairy Task Force
- Degree programs
  - https://cals.cornell.edu/education/degrees-programs/animal-science-major-minor
  - https://cals.cornell.edu/education/degrees-programs/graduate-field-animal-science/dairy-business-management-focus-area

CCE regional dairy, livestock & field crops teams