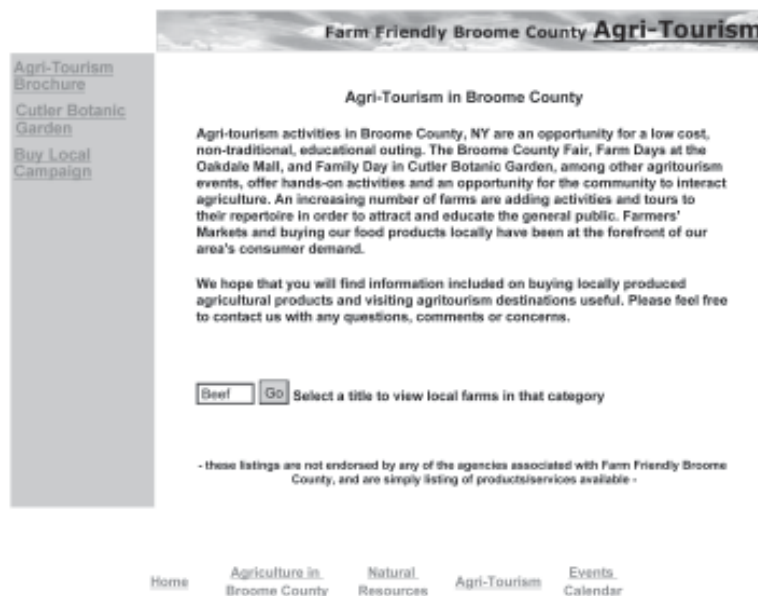


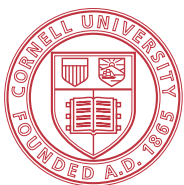
Livestock Manager

November/December 2007 Volume 2 Issue 5



NEW AGRICULTURAL WEBSITE LAUNCHED

A new agricultural website focusing on Broome County has been launched. <http://www.farmbroome.com>. This website was a collaborative effort between multiple agencies devoted to the sustainability and profitability of agriculture in our county. It features technical information, an events calendar, production information, natural resources information and forums for producers. Information on the website will be continuously updated so visit often. Please visit the website and click on the "Contact Us" link to sign up for information in your interest area. There is also an area to leave comments.



Cornell Cooperative Extension Broome County

840 Upper Front Street
Binghamton, New York 13905-1500
t. 607.772.8953
f. 607.723.5951
<http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/broome>

Brian Aukema
*Livestock Agricultural
Educator*
607-584-9967
BJA14@cornell.edu

Laura Biasillo
*Agricultural Economic
Development Specialist*
607-584-5007
LW257@cornell.edu

Susan Fahrenz
*Administration
Assistant*
607-584-9966
SAF222@cornell.edu

Livestock Manager

MAKING THE ORGANIC TRANSITION

Are you interested in making the transition to organic production for either your dairy (cow, sheep or goat), or for meats? Do the organic guidelines confuse you? Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County, in collaboration with the Northeast Organic Farmers Association of New York Licensing, Inc., will be offering two workshops on making the transition to organic production. The session on Tuesday November 13th will focus on the organic transition for dairies. The session on Wednesday November 14th will focus on making the organic transition for those involved in meat production. There is no charge for either workshop, but pre-registration is requested. For more information, or to register, please contact Susan at (607) 584-9966.

Mushroom Log Inoculation Demonstration:

Thursday November 15, 2007

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

\$10 per person

Pre-registration requested by calling Susan at 584-9966

Learn the best types of wood, when to cut down the trees and how to inoculate logs with spawn plugs of Shitakes and a few other fine edible mushrooms.

Speaker: Richard F. Progovitz

Certified & Registered Mold Inspector with NACHI Registered Environmental Expert Witness

COMPUTER CLASSES

Computer classes for beginners will be offered at the computer lab at Cooperative Extension of Broome County each Monday in November. These classes will focus on how to use the Microsoft Office suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) for agriculture, how to utilize the Internet to search and using email. For dates of the workshops, refer to the events calendar, for more information, or to sign up, contact Susan at (607) 584-9966. The cost per workshop is \$5 per farm.

FARMER-TO-FARMER NETWORKING

In the coming months Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County will host farmer-to-farmer networking sessions for the following groups of producers: those interested in grass-based systems of production, those interested in diversifying their on-farm operation and those interested in the production of value-added goods from their livestock (whether it be from sheep, goats, or dairy cows). Groups will meet several times during the coming months at extension and also out in the field. Come to the first meeting for each to meet and engage with your fellow producers and plan the meetings for the rest of the year.

Monday November 26th, 2007 @ 7pm: Farmer-to-Farmer Networking Session for those producers interested in grass-based systems of production. These can include poultry, beef, sheep, goats, horses and dairy.

Tuesday November 27th, 2007 @ 7pm: Farmer-to-Farmer Networking Session for those producers interested in diversifying their on-farm operation. This can include using low tunnels for a fruit and/or vegetable operation, adding another type of livestock to compliment those already being raised and more.

Thursday November 29th, 2007 @ 7pm: Farmer-to-Farmer Networking Session for those producers interested in the production of value-added goods made from livestock. These products can include dairy products, soaps, fiber and much more.

Call Susan at (607) 584-9966 to register for any of the networking sessions.

Livestock Manager

2007 Lambing and Kidding School

Saturday, December 8, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Carroll Community College, Westminster, Maryland

The 2007 Lambing and Kidding School will be held Saturday, December 8, 2007, at Carroll Community College in Westminster, Maryland. The featured speaker will be Dr. Kevin Pelzer, Production Management Medicine Specialist from the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in Blacksburg, Virginia. Breakout sessions will be held to meet the diverse interests and needs of small ruminant producers in Maryland and surrounding states.

The registration fee is \$75 per person; \$40 for each additional family (or farm) member. The fee includes lunch, refreshments, resource notebook, and a lambing and kidding kit. Additional notebooks and kits may be purchased for \$10 and \$30, respectively. They must be purchased at the time of registration.

Checks made payable to the **University of Maryland** should be sent to: Lambing and Kidding School, Western Maryland Research & Education Center, 18330 Keedysville Road, Keedysville, MD 21756. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept credit card or online payments.

THE REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS MONDAY, NOVEMBER 26.

For information about the school, contact Susan Schoenian at (301) 432-2767 x343 or sschoen@umd.edu or Cindy Mason at (301) 432-2767 x301 or cmason@umd.edu.

NOFA-NY Organic Farming and Gardening Conference

January 25th to 27th, 2008

Saratoga Hotel and Conference Center, Saratoga Springs, NY - Featuring Dr. Terry Wollen, DVM from Heifer International, Dr. Ann Wells, DVM from Springpond Holistic Animal Health in Arkansas, and a number of New York's finest graziers of various types and combinations of livestock with practical information to share! For more information visit www.nofany.org.



Sheep Shearing School 8 & 9 March 2008

The shearing school will be held at the Cornell Teaching & Research Center Sheep Farm near Harford, NY south of Dryden, NY off of Route 38 on Slaterville Road.

Instruction will include the shearing pattern, blade sharpening techniques, physical fitness, handpiece maintenance and more. The instructor is Doug Rathke from Minnesota. Rathke is one of the top shearers in the United States and has had extensive training from the New Zealand Wools. Rathke is skilled at both machine and blade shearing.

The registration cost is \$135 per person. Deadline for registration is February 20, 2008.

If you are unable to attend the shearing school, but are still interested in learning more about sheep shearing an instructional video tape or DVD is available. This 90-minute "how-to" video is filled with useful tips and information on shearing. The cost of the video or DVD is \$44.95 and may be obtained at the address below.

To register for either shearing school or to purchase the video or DVD send your name, mailing address, phone number and a check or money order in US funds made payable to Doug Rathke and mail to Doug Rathke, 61231 MN Hwy 7, Hutchinson, MN 55350. Call 320-587-6094 if you have any questions..

Livestock Manager

Free Farm Energy Audits Available for Dairy Farms

By Dick Peterson, Northeast Agriculture Technology Corp.

When was the last time you had an energy audit conducted on your farm? More than five years ago? Never? If you answered yes to either of those questions, its time to consider an energy audit. Most farm energy audits identify numerous, easy, low-cost ways to reduce energy consumption and save money. Qualified farm energy analysts can identify the best ways to save energy on your farm. A Farm Energy Audit Report will provide extensive details about your farm energy use, patterns of use, opportunities for reductions in use, and the cost to install energy conservation measures.

Need to buy equipment to save energy? The Farm Energy Audit Report will tell you where funds are available to help you buy the necessary equipment to improve your energy efficiency. But often, no purchase is necessary. Sometimes, just following some simple maintenance procedures can improve energy efficiency. The audit report will make maintenance suggestions that can reduce your energy bills.

Northeast Agriculture Technology Corporation (NATC) is a Flex Tech contractor for the New York State Energy, Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). Under the Flex Tech program, NATC can perform farm energy audits and NYSERDA will cover all or most of the cost of an audit on your farm. NATC is working with Cornell Cooperative Extension in several counties across the state to encourage farm owners to request an energy audit. Its a simple, painless process, and we encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to find out just how energy is used on your farm.

To complete an audit, we need some basic information:

Farm name

Farm owner

Address

Phone number

FAX number (if you have one)

Milking herd size

Number of youngstock

Annual milk production

Type of facility (tie-stall, freestall with parlor, etc.)

Your electric utility (delivery)

Your electricity supplier (if different from your delivery company)

Total annual electricity cost for the farm

Total annual kilowatt-hour use on the farm

Total non-field fossil fuel use (fuel oil, propane for water and/or space heating)

We also need to see your monthly electricity bills for the last 12 months to analyze energy use profiles. All of this information provides a basis for a complete energy audit. While we are at your farm, we inventory all electrical and other non-field energy-using equipment and determine daily operating times. All of the information is used to develop a very detailed audit report that shows you how energy is used on your farm, how you compare with other similar farms, and how you can improve energy efficiency and save money.

If you want an energy audit for your dairy farm, just call NATC at 607-266-9007 or e-mail us at natc244@verizon.net. This is an opportunity you shouldnt pass up.

Livestock Manager

FARMER'S GUIDE TO TRUCK & FARM IMPLEMENT LAWS & REGULATIONS

New York Farm Bureau is pleased to announce that it has recently published the "Farmer's Guide to Truck & Farm Implement Laws & Regulations - Third Edition". Since the printing of the first such publication in 1997, this book has proven to be a valuable resource for farmers. The Farm Family insurance companies have joined us in making this resource possible by underwriting some of the costs of producing the guide.

This guide provides an overview of the myriad of New York State and federal laws and regulations related to farm vehicles and implements. Sections include: Licensing; Registration of both Farm Plate and Agricultural Vehicles; General Vehicle Regulations; and Farm Implements and Equipment. Although this guide is a comprehensive tool, it is not intended to be all-inclusive and is published as an informational resource only.

The "Farmer's Guide to Truck & Farm Implement Laws & Regulations - Third Edition" for NYFB members and law enforcement personnel price is \$20.00 per copy, and to other non-members the price is \$40.00 per copy. To get a copy of this publication, please contact the NYFB Legal Affairs Department at 1-800-342-4143.

2007 SMALL FARMS SUMMIT INVITATION TO FARMERS

The 2006 Small Farm Summit and follow-up report has gotten the attention of New York's agriculture community and institutions. Now, the 2007 Summit depends on the active participation of farmers at each of our four sites. This year we are especially looking for more dairy farmers to participate, particularly during the morning session with Commissioner Hooker and Mark Kenville. If you are a small-scale farmer of any kind and are interested in participating in the 2007 Summit, please contact Joanna Green at 607-255-9227 or jg16@cornell.edu. The Summit will take place from 10AM to 3PM on Thursday November 29th in 300 Rice Hall on the Cornell Campus, as well as at sites in Belmont, Malone, and Voorheesville, NY.

In the morning, we are very pleased to be joined by Patrick Hooker, NYS Commissioner of Agriculture. Farmers at any of the four videoconference sites will have an opportunity to voice questions, suggestions and concerns directly to Commissioner Hooker and to hear his thinking on important small farm issues and opportunities. In addition we will be joined by Mark Kenville, Director of the new NYS Center for Dairy Excellence, who will share his thoughts about how the Center can address small dairy needs and opportunities.

Finally, we will have several high-level Cornell administrators participating in the Summit this year, who will offer their reflections at the end of the day.

THE NEW USDA STANDARDS ON GRASS FED

Standards will go into effect Nov. 15

Grass (Forage) Fed Grass and forage shall be the feed source consumed for the lifetime of the ruminant animal, with the exception of milk consumed prior to weaning. The diet shall be derived solely from forage consisting of grass (annual and perennial), forbs (e.g., legumes, Brassica), browse, or cereal grain crops in the vegetative (pre-grain) state. Animals cannot be fed grain or grain byproducts and must have continuous access to pasture during the growing season. Hay, haylage, baleage, silage, crop residue without grain, and other roughage sources may also be included as acceptable feed sources.

Routine mineral and vitamin supplementation may also be included in the feeding regimen. If incidental supplementation occurs due to inadvertent exposure to non-forage feedstuffs or to ensure the animals well being at all times during adverse environmental or physical conditions, the producer must fully document (e.g., receipts, ingredients, and tear tags) the supplementation that occurs including the amount, the frequency, and the supplements provided.

For a complete discussion on how these standards were determined go to <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20071800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2007/pdf/E7-20328.pdf>

Livestock Manager

DID THE LOCKER PLANT STEAL SOME OF MY MEAT?

By Duane M. Wulf, Ph.D. Department of Animal and Range Sciences, South Dakota State University. <http://ars.sdstate.edu/MeatSci/May99-1.htm>

To determine how much meat you should get from a market animal:

Pounds of Meat = (Dressing Percent X Carcass Cutting Yield) X Live Weight

Therefore, two factors affect the percentage of meat that you will receive:

1. Dressing Percentage
2. Carcass Cutting Yield

Dressing Percentage

Dressing Percentage = The percentage of the live animal that ends up as carcass.

Dressing Percentage = Carcass Weight / Live Weight X 100

Dressing Percentage is affected by:

1. **Gut fill** - The more gut fill at the time the live weight is taken, the lower the dressing percentage will be. If an animal is weighed right off of full feed, the dressing percentage will be 2 to 5% lower than if the animal is fasted for 24 hours prior to weighing.
2. **Muscling** - A heavier muscled animal will have a higher dressing percentage than a light muscled animal.
3. **Fatness** - A fatter animal will have a higher dressing percentage than a lean animal.
4. **Mud** - Cattle with a lot of mud attached to their hide will have a lower dressing percentage than clean cattle.
5. **Wool** - Lambs with long wool will have a lower dressing percentage than recently-shorn lambs.

Average Dressing Percentages

Beef cattle: 62%

Dairy steers: 59%

Market hogs: 74%

Market lambs: 54% (shorn)

Carcass Cutting Yield

Carcass Cutting Yield = The percentage of the carcass that ends up as meat.

Carcass Cutting Yield = Pounds of Meat / Carcass Weight X 100

Carcass Cutting Yield is affected by:

1. **Fatness** - Leaner animals will have higher carcass cutting yields than fatter animals.
2. **Muscling** - More muscular animals will have higher carcass cutting yields than less muscular animals.
3. **Bone-in versus Boneless** - This will dramatically affect carcass cutting yield. If more boneless cuts that are made, then the carcass cutting yield will be lower than if bone-in cuts are made. If bone-in chuck roasts, rib steaks, T-bones, and bone-in sirloin steaks are made, the carcass cutting yield will be much higher than if boneless chuck roasts, rib-eye steaks, strip steaks, and boneless sirloin steaks are made. It is important to note that the amount of edible meat will not change, but boneless cuts will take up less room in your freezer. If you get soup bones and short ribs, the carcass cutting yield will be higher than if you have these items boned and put into ground beef.
4. **The Amount of Fat Remaining on the Meat Cuts** - If the meat cutter leaves more surface fat on the meat cuts, then the carcass cutting yield will be higher than if the meat cuts are closely-trimmed.
5. **The Leanness of the Ground Product** - If the ground product (ground beef, ground pork, pork sausage, ground lamb) is made very lean, then the carcass cutting yield will be lower than if the ground product is made with more fat. For example, a typical beef carcass could have 20 more pounds of ground beef if it is made into 70% lean ground beef than if it is made into 92% lean ground beef.

Beef Examples:

Average beef animal, weighed full, 1200 lbs.

Bone-in steaks and roasts, regular trimmed, regular ground beef:

Livestock Manager

$(.61 \times .71) \times 1200 = 43\% \times 1200 = \mathbf{516 \text{ lbs. of meat}}$

Some bone-in and some boneless steaks and roasts, closely trimmed, regular ground beef:

$(.61 \times .67) \times 1200 = 41\% \times 1200 = \mathbf{492 \text{ lbs. of meat}}$

Boneless steaks and roasts, closely trimmed, lean ground beef:

$(.61 \times .62) \times 1200 = 38\% \times 1200 = \mathbf{456 \text{ lbs. of meat}}$

Pork Example:

Note: The dressing percentages and carcass cutting yields in these examples are for skin-on pork carcasses. Many meat plants skin pork carcasses. Skinned carcasses will have lower dressing percentages and higher carcass cutting yields. However, you will still come up with the same answer when calculating the amount of meat so these examples still apply. In other words, you will get the same amount of meat from a pig whether the carcass is skinned or not.

Average market hog, weighed full, 250 lbs., bone-in chops and roasts, closely trimmed, regular ground pork/sausage:

$(.72 \times .74) \times 250 = 53\% \times 250 = 133 \text{ lbs. of meat}$

Lamb Example:

Average market lamb, shorn, weighed full, 120 lbs., bone-in chops and roasts, closely trimmed, regular ground lamb:

$(.51 \times .75) \times 120 = 38\% \times 120 = 46 \text{ lbs. of meat}$

Another great resource for Carcass Yield can be found at: www.uvm.edu/livestock/beef/?Page=meatyield.html



SO YOU WANT TO START A GOAT DAIRY?

By Dot Hempler, Owner/Operator;
Triple “H” Ranch, Goat Dairy & Farm Store
(presented at Caprine Outing 2002)

Starting a goat dairy is something that many goat hobbyists consider. It seems like the logical thing to do when you have productive animals and no outlet for all that wonderful milk they produce. For some of us, it is the right route to take. Keep in mind, it is not a glorious nor easy route. First, ask yourself, do I have the emotional, physical, and finan-

cial ability to consider doing this? I suggest you tour as many goat dairies as possible and consider employment at a dairy. Talk to people who are successful at what you want to do. This will give you a better idea of the demands that your goat dairy will make of you. Look at how farmers have built their milkhouses and cheese plants. Write down your plans and both short and long-term goals. Do a 2-3 year financial prospectus on paper. Try to guesstimate what your income and expenses will be. Putting things on paper makes it clearer to see if this dream can become a reality. Another financial consideration is that of marketing. Do you have the means to market your product?

Geographic location is important. Having a product is a small part, having the means to market it is crucial. It takes an enormous amount of planning, research, money, and physical labor to start a successful and profitable dairy business. Keep in mind, it will not be an overnight success. Some of us have spent years becoming successful.

If you decide to take the plunge, I would suggest you follow some or all of these steps.

Contact your state Dept. of Agriculture and Markets and request a copy of the regulations for dairy plants. A field inspector may come to your farm and give you some suggestions and advice also. The inspectors are there to guide you and can be a great resource. They can also be quite intimidating and sometimes difficult. For that reason (from my experience) it is very wise to empower yourself with knowledge and be strong enough to stand up for what you know.

Livestock Manager

Everything you construct, do, and market, will have requirements to meet. When you get the regulations manual, read it front to back again and again. Some of it is difficult to interpret. Your ability to interpret the manual and be able to stand up for that interpretation will be a powerful tool.

Take a good look at your herd, your assets and your financial state. Do you want to use your life savings or take a business loan to start your dairy? Traditional financial institutions are sometimes reluctant to finance dairy operations. Check into small business loan groups (often run by small towns who want new innovative businesses) or Farm Credit Financial Institutions.

Buying a herd or expanding your own is fairly easy. Finding small, affordable equipment can be very frustrating and sometimes almost impossible. Many cheese-makers, myself included, were unable to locate the necessary equipment. By shopping around for components and enlisting the help of a steel fabricator, small cheese vats and other equipment can come to life. Despite getting inexpensive components, my 40-gallon cheese vat ultimately cost \$5,000.00. But, a new one would have cost 2-3 times that. Finding a milking system and headstalls can be difficult too. Check with your inspector. Sometimes they will allow you to use portable milking systems (such as those sold through Heogger's Supply).

Talk to contractors, plumbers, electricians, and friends to get service quotes and ideas. Finding reliable and affordable craftsmen can be difficult. Contractors don't often have a clue about dairies and regulations. Your job will be to interpret and ensure that they work according to the specifications. Most of these "experts" will cost you \$30-\$40 an hour, and it will undoubtedly take many hours!

Do you have potable water or will you need to have a well dug? Water too has to meet requirements, as does your well. You will also need an approved septic system. The average well and septic system can cost about \$10,000.00.

Do you have a "customer friendly" and "liability free" barnyard? Do you have enough parking space for customers? Most cheese-makers do market products on and off farm, so you can expect that you will have farm-visitors and customers. Check with an insurance company regarding adequate liability coverage and product liability. This protects you if someone gets hurt or claims that your product made them sick. Search around because many companies do not offer product liability. If you plan to market off the farm, (and most likely you will out of necessity) look into potential customers (i.e. restaurants, farm stands, gourmet shops, small retail stores, and CSAs). Check with local regulatory agencies regarding any necessary vendors permits. Check with your local zoning board. Some towns won't allow dairies or farm stands in certain zoned areas. Do some research into obtaining your own cheese plant supplies (containers, lids, boxes, labels, etc.) all of these items will need approval by the Dept. of Ag and Markets.

This may all seem quite overwhelming, but it is possible with the right amount of ingenuity and determination!



CATTLE PRICES SEEN STRONG INTO 2008

By Janie Gabbett on 10/23/2007 for **Meatingplace.com**

Tight cattle supplies and strong prices are likely to remain in place through the first quarter of 2008, even though more cattle are moving to feedlots, accord to economists analyzing USDA's latest Cattle on Feed report.

"More cattle were placed on feed during September than industry insiders expected," American Farm Bureau Federation Livestock Economist Jim Sartwelle wrote in an analysis of the report. "That is the only piece of bearish news in this latest report. We expect fed-cattle prices to remain in

the low- to mid-\$90s per hundredweight through the rest of the year."

USDA said on Friday that about 10.97 million cattle and calves were on feed in the country's largest feedlots (those with the capacity to feed more than 1,000 head) as of Oct. 1, down 4 percent from a year ago. Placements during September, at 2.43 million head, were up 9 percent from a year ago, exceeding analysts' expectations of a roughly 5 percent increase.

Livestock Manager

Purdue University Agricultural Economist Chris Hurt told **Meatingplace.com** feedlot managers are becoming more comfortable moving cattle into feedlots because the large corn crop has increased confidence in corn supplies and reduced fears of extremely high corn prices.

Hurt forecast finished cattle prices at \$90 to \$95 in the fourth quarter of 2007. He put first quarter 2008 prices in a range from \$92 to \$98, with second quarter prices expected about \$1 higher. During all of 2008, he expects cattle prices to average about \$93.

High prices will eventually encourage cow herd expansion, but that is not expected until at least mid-2008 or even 2009, according to Hurt.

SELLING SMART

by Robert J. Melchior

Market Coordinator, Northeast Sheep and Goat Marketing Program at Cornell University

Farmer education courses always emphasize two ways to increase profits; reduced cost and improved efficiency. An alternative would be raising prices. This is not normally pursued because farmers are typically commodity producers with little market power to influence prices. Even in this situation, livestock producers are able to position their output to gain premium prices in the market place.

Utilizing lambs as an example, many producers in the Northeast have long bred their ewes to lamb early in the year in order to take advantage of the specialty demand for small “hot house” lambs at Easter. These lambs can typically sell for \$1.50 - \$2.00 per pound for a 40 lb lamb, yielding \$60 to \$80 — or about as good a return as provided by a lamb born in April and sold in October as a feeder. These producers have positioned their product in a certain time and weight range to improve the price they receive. This takes understanding of special marketing opportunities, in this case Easter, and the flexibility and control necessary to produce at the special time required to service that market.

Well, we can scour the calendar for other dates and other special situations where well-positioned production can bring premium prices and, in fact, several web sites, including the Cornell Sheep Program’s (www.sheep.cornell.edu), will direct searchers to holidays with specific livestock requirements.

Other marketing strategies can also be employed to accomplish higher prices. Knowing the pricing cycles that exist for your livestock is probably the easiest. Others would include selling further down the marketing chain, establishing marketing relationships where your product will receive preference over the general market, and targeting the type or size livestock you produce to that demanded by a particular market.

The pricing cycles for lamb and goat are similar. They are influenced by demand (when is the product consumed) and supply (when does the product become available to the marketplace). Typically prices for an eighty pound lamb reach a low point between September and November (supply heavy), begin to rise after Thanksgiving (consumption increasing-supply decreasing), and reach high levels February through May (low supply). June, July and August prices reflect a thin market (light supply and light demand) and can be volatile with a downward bias. These price trends can be influenced by many other factors including weather, the incidence of holidays, and the economy or public confidence. By positioning when on the calendar your product will be available, you increase your chances of receiving improved prices.

One point should be added to a discussion of timing your deliveries into the market. That is that quality will almost always command a premium. Quality is enhanced the younger the lamb is presented to the market. Conversely it is not wise to “store” a lamb for a better market later on because what you gain in market timing you more than lose in quality.

A typical lamb or goat can be handled many times on its path to the consumer. Each handler provides a service and gets paid. Generally if the producer can eliminate several of the intermediary steps (and is willing to assume the functions fulfilled by these market participants), he can expand his share of the proceeds. A typical market chain for lambs in the

Livestock Manager

Northeast is as follows:

- Producer
- Feeder
- Country Auction
- Dealer
- Terminal Auction
- Slaughter House
- Breaker Distributor
- Retailer
- Consumer

Obviously by selling directly to the consumer the producer has the potential to maximize his proceeds. However, it should not be assumed that this is necessarily the most profitable or most efficient sales procedure. Other participants in the market chain are specialists in their particular function and should be able to provide that function at a lower cost than the typical producer. A retailer, for example, doing a volume business should be able to provide distribution more efficiently (lower cost per unit) than the typical farmer. Producers, therefore, need to evaluate which functions they can assume based on their special advantages and interests.

Other industries have long known the advantages of relationship transactions. Service industries with little product differentiation have long relied on this method of selling. If you are consistently working with a marketer and providing a significant volume over the course of the relationship, you frequently will receive superior treatment. For example, if you are dealing directly with a retailer and providing a large portion of his requirements and he is not in an extremely competitive position, market price movements can become less relevant and you can hold prices while the market has fallen or perhaps is nonexistent. Another example would be where a retailer has a continuous demand for a normally seasonal product like hothouse lambs. If you maintain a relationship with the retailer you will be in a position to supply that product on a continuous basis even though the open market price for those lambs has dropped or is nonexistent. It is also important to remember that retailers, slaughterhouses and sale barns are in business 52 weeks a year. While business volume may ebb and flow, these firms need product on a continuous basis and your relationship and importance to your customer will be enhanced to the extent that you are supplying when others are not.

Another suggestion for marketers is to note that all ethnic groups seem to have different preferences for the size and type of lambs and goats they prefer. Being aware that demand for a certain weight of animal will keep prices for that product at a premium to others can be an important factor in maximizing income. For example, in the Northeast, due to ethnic demands, light lambs (60-80 lbs) sell at a premium to heavy lambs (100-120 lbs), a category where we compete with Western and import production. Raising lambs much beyond the eighty pound range, while it might be psychologically satisfying, is likely, in the current environment, to actually reduce the total dollars that you receive. In summary, marketing can be complicated and that is one of the reasons why specialists like dealers and distributors exist. It is imperative for producers to know some of the basics about the market they service in order to plan production and perhaps genetics to meet the requirements of that market.

YOUTH MEAT GOAT RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Please share the following youth meat goat resources with young people who share your interests. There are new record books available for youth who are currently raising yearling does that have never kidded. All of the meat goat record books are available on the web at <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/4H/meatgoats/index.html>.

These record books should be used by youth competing in the Meat Goat Project Notebook Competition at State Fair and for the Kimber Hamm Goat Rancher award. The record books include:

ÀÜÛ NY State 4-H Meat Goat Breeding Stock Doe Kid Record Book.

Livestock Manager

ÀÛÛ NY State 4-H Meat Goat Breeding Stock Dry Yearling Record Book - NEW!!

ÀÛÛ NY State 4-H Meat Goat Doe Breeding Stock Adult Doe Record Book.

ÀÛÛ NY State 4-H Market Kid Record Book.

ÀÛÛ NY State 4-H Cloverbud Meat Goat Record Book - designed for Cloverbuds with either a market kid or a breeding doe project.

ÀÛÛ NY State 4-H 1st Year Meat Goat Record Book - designed for 4-Hers in their first year of a goat project; covers both market kid and breeding doe projects.

The National 4-H Skills for Life Meat Goat Activity Guides are available to order at <http://www.n4hccs.org/shop/products.asp?action=list&cat=5&subcat=44&l=L1> while the Dairy Goat Activity Guides are at www.n4hccs.org/shop/products.asp?action=list&cat=5&subcat=23&l=L1.

EXCERPTS FROM BEEF CATTLE COMMENTS

Prepared by Mike Baker

1. NEW YORK FEEDERS CONFERENCE AND WINTER MANAGEMENT MEETING

January 25 & 26, 2008. Syracuse.

Feeders Conference. January 25. Utilizing Idled Grasslands. It is estimated that there are 3 million acres of idled farmland in New York. A significant proportion of this land is owned by non-farmers. Many of these landowners are, however, interested in having the land used for agricultural purposes. Often, they will allow use of this land by farmers for minimal to no cost. Since land cost and the production of feed is one of the highest expenses of the livestock enterprise, access to land at a low cost provides a competitive advantage to livestock owners in New York.

Topics will include:

- Gaining access to idled lands: tax incentives, contracts, agreements
- Fencing and water development
- Conversion of goldenrod to productive pasture
- Enterprise opportunities: custom grazing, stocker cattle

Winter Management Meeting. January 26. Health Issues for the Cow Calf Herd. According to Standardized Performance Analysis (SPA), health costs in the most profitable herds are second to feed costs. How are profitable herds spending their health dollars?

Topics will include:

- Scours
- Calving difficulty
- Vaccines for the cow herd
- MLV vs killed vaccines
- Respiratory disease
- NYSCHAP program
- Cost of health programs
- Pinkeye, foot rot
- Genetic selection for health
- Annual health calendar

For more information contact Mike Baker, 607-255-5923, mjb28@cornell.edu or Megan Galloway, NY Beef Producer's Association, 607-965-8282, nybpa2@aol.com.

2. STRETCHING FEED SUPPLIES

With hay supplies short in many parts of the state, beef producers will need to stretch available feed resources. Below are some suggestions.

Livestock Manager

1. **Determine pregnancy.** This is definitely not the year to keep open cows. Based on a relatively high market for cull cows, an open cow will never produce enough future calves to cover the cost of feeding her without income from a calf.
2. **Cull the herd.** Eliminating low producing cows is always profitable. Take a hard look at weaning weights, cow age, temperament, feet, leg and udder structure.
3. **Inventory herd into:**
 - a. Mature cows (cows carrying their 4th calf)
 - b. Young cows (cows carrying 2nd & 3rd calf)
 - c. 1st calf heifers
 - d. Replacement heifers.

Nutrient requirements decrease as from a to d above. Allocate best feeds to younger animals.

4. **Estimate feed needs.** A cow will consume 2.2% of her body weight in dry matter. This equates to 25-30 lbs of hay/cow.
5. **Analyze feed.** Targeting feeding requires knowing the energy and protein content of the feed. Over feeding is an economic problem and under feeding can result in poor growth, calf vigor and re-breeding.
6. **Body condition score you herd.** Mature cows should be in a BCS of 5-6, while younger cattle should be BCS 6-7 (see table below)

Body Condition Score Appearance

- 4 Pressure required to feel backbone. Ribs are relatively pronounced. Hook and pin bones smooth, but prominent.
 - 5 Can feel fat cover over ribs, but still slightly visible. Observe fat on either side of tail head. Backbone barely visible.
 - 6 Individual ribs not obvious; has some fat cover over ribs and hip bones. Can feel spine but is not sharp.
-
7. **Manage feeding.** Easier said than done, but if a cow only needs 30 lbs of hay/day, don't free choice hay. She may be hungry, which means you need good fences, but if you know the nutrient content of the feed, the weight of the bales and the weight of your cows, you can limit feed to meet the nutrient requirements of the herd.
 8. **Use round bale feeders to reduce waste.** Dr. Dan Buskirk and associates at Michigan State University evaluated 4 round bale feeder designs for the amount of hay that was wasted. Results of hay waste and intake are shown in table below.

| Item | Type of Hay Feeder Used | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------|---------|--------|
| | Cone | Ring | Trailer | Cradle |
| Daily Hay Disappearance, Lb | 26.4 | 26.6 | 30.6 | 28.4 |
| Daily Hay Waste, Pounds/Cow | 0.9 | 1.5 | 3.5 | 4.2 |
| Hay Waste, % of Disappearance | 3.5 | 6.1 | 11.4 | 14.6 |
| Daily Hay Intake, Lb/Cow | 25.3 | 25.1 | 27.1 | 24.2 |
| Intake per Cow, % of Body Wt | 1.8 | 1.8 | 2.0 | 1.8 |

Conclusions: Round bale feeders of all designs prevent cattle from walking on and lying in hay, thus reducing wastage when compared to allowing cattle free access to round bales. But among the various feeder designs, there are differences in wastage allowed. In the trial cited here, the difference in hay waste between the high and low feeder design was 3.3 pounds. Again, comparing the low and high values, this would have been enough hay saved from every 8 cows to have been able to feed 1 more cow.

9. **Provide protection.** Cows allowed access to a wind break (natural or man made) and kept out of the mud require 10% less energy than cows without protection.

Livestock Manager

10. Alternative feeds. Alternate feeds can be fed, providing they are economical, don't exceed recommended amounts fed and labor and facilities are adaptable. Contact your nutritionist or extension agent for guidance.

| Feedstuff | Amount suggested (Lbs per cow per day) | Notes |
|--|---|--|
| Corn | 5-8 | Relatively expensive this year |
| Corn gluten feed | 5 | Generally limit to 0.5% of body weight; blends well with corn or soybean hulls if higher consumption is desired. |
| Soybean hulls | 5 to 10 | Can feed even higher, but cost is a factor |
| Distiller's dry grains (DDG) | 5 to 8 | 8 – 10 % fat makes energy comparable to corn; research shows it lowers hay consumption |
| Distiller's wet or moderately wet grains | Same as DDG on dry matter basis, except water increases weight ¹ | Price at source is often good relative to dry, but trucking and storage costs may limit utilization |
| Wheat midds | 5 | Often priced competitively; not as palatable |
| Whole cottonseed | 5-6 | Can be fed on dry sod |

¹For example, if feeding a 60% moisture product, the dry matter percentage is 40%. If you want to feed 5 pounds of dry matter with this product you divide by the dry matter percentage / 100. Therefore, you would feed 12.5 pounds of the feed on an "as fed" basis. (5 ÷ 0.4 = 12.5)

(Table, courtesy of Dr. Warren Gill, University of Tennessee.)

3. FEEDERS CORNER

a. Effects of Bovine Respiratory Disease Treatment on Feedlot Performance and Carcass Traits

The objective of this Iowa State Univ. study was to examine the effects of bovine respiratory disease (BRD) on economically important performance and carcass traits, and to determine the impact of genetics on susceptibility to BRD. The data set consisted of performance and health records on 1,714 Angus-sired calves fed at various feedlots over a 3-year period (2003-2005).

- Sire, percent shrink upon entrance to the feedlot, and disposition score were all shown to have significant effects (P<0.05) on the number of times an animal was treated for BRD.
- Sex was not a significant predictor of number of BRD treatments.
- Number of treatments for BRD significantly affected avg. daily gain, weight per day of age, hot carcass weight, yield grade, marbling score, and ribeye area.

The authors concluded that number of treatments for BRD has significant consequences on economically important feedlot performance and carcass traits (*From Beef Cattle Research Update, Michigan State University. Schneider et al. 2007. Midwest Section ASAS. Abstract 39*).

Livestock Manager

b. Feedlot Treatment Benchmarks.

Goals for treatment of incoming feeder cattle (Bob Smith, DVM, of Veterinary Research and Consulting Services):

- 80% response to first treatment,
- 70% response to second treatment,
- 4-7% mortality
- cull-to-death ratio of 0.5:1.0 to 1:1.

c. Temperament Affects Performance

Darrell Busby, Iowa Beef Extension Specialist, SW Iowa recently reported on data collected on cattle fed in their Tri-County Steer Carcass Futurity. A summary of his data is presented below.

Compared to docile cattle, aggressive cattle:

- Gained 8.2% less in the feedlot
- Used feed 1.8% less efficiently
- Had 20% fewer Choice or higher carcasses
- Had 115% more Standard carcasses
- Had 51% fewer CAB carcasses
- Showed a decreased profit of \$62.19/head

Disposition score by breed

| Breed | Disposition Score |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Hereford | 1.3 |
| Simmental, Red Angus, Angus | 1.6 |
| Gelbvieh | 1.7 |
| Charolais | 1.8 |
| Limosin | 1.9 |
| Brangus | 2.2 |

Disposition score 1=docile, 2=restless, 3=nervous

Effect of using a hot shot on performance and disposition score

| | Day 1 no hot shot | Day 2 no hot shot | Day 1 no hotshot | Day 2 use of hot shot |
|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Processing time, sec/hd | 42.8 | 36.9 | 43.8 | 36.9 |
| | | (-9.3) | | (-6.9) |
| Disposition score | 2.01 | 1.84 | 1.62 | 2.20 |
| | | (-0.17) | | (+0.58) |

Disposition score 1=docile, 2=restless, 3=nervous

Conclusion:

- Hot shots increased disposition score without decreasing processing time.
- Breed has less effect on disposition than does management.

(Source: 2007 National Beef Cattle Evaluation Consortium's "Brown Bagger Symposium.)

Livestock Manager

To/Do November/December

- Pregnancy test and cull all open cows.
- Cull problem cows and marginal producers. Production data is easily obtained using CHAPS.
- If you have access to corn stalk fields you can reduce feed costs to less than \$0.10/hd/day.
- Wean calves less than 120 days old before hard winter weather sets in. They will do better on grain plus hay, than if left on their dams.
- Calves kept over the winter should be fed to gain 1.3-1.5 lb/day. Full fed legume/grass hay plus 5-6 lbs. of grain will support this level of growth.
- Take forage sample for nutrient analysis. Depending on your locality, hay may be in short supply or of poor quality. Allocating the best feed to younger, higher producing animals will stretch out your supply. If practical feed and manage separately: 1) weaned heifer calves 2) first and second calf heifers and old thin cows, 3) the rest of the dry herd, 4) lactating cows and their calves, and 5) herd sires.

Calendar of Events

November 2007

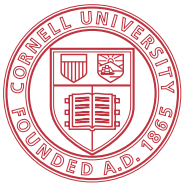
- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Forestry Financials-CCE-BC |
| 5 | Computer Class on Word-CCE-BC |
| 8 | Scaling up for Farmers CSA's-CCE-BC |
| 10 | Bio-Energy Workshop-CCE-BC |
| 10 | Soap Making Using Goats Milk-CCE-BC |
| 12 | Computer Class-Excel-CCE-BC |
| 13 | Making the Organic Transition -Dairy-CCE-BC |
| 14 | Making the Organic Transition-F&V/Meat-CCE-BC |
| 15 | Log Inoculation Demonstration-CCE-BC |
| 19 | Computer Class-Email and Internet |
| 26 | Computer Class-Publisher-CCE-BC |
| 26 | Farmer-to Farmer Networking Session-CCE-BC |
| 27 | Scaling up for Farmers: production methods-CCE-BC |
| 27 | Farmer-to Farmer Networking Session-CCE-BC |
| 29 | Farmer-to Farmer Networking Session-CCE-BC |

December 2007

- | | |
|----|--|
| 3 | Scaling Up for Farmers, Wholesale-CCE-BC |
| 8 | 2007 Lambing and Kidding School-Maryland |
| 18 | Agribusiness Confernce-Cornell-255-8429 |

Save the Date:

Northeast Grasstravaganza 2008, March 28-29 at the Holiday Inn Arena, Binghamton, NY - Save the dates for this HUGE grazing conference featuring speakers Kathy Voth, Kevin Fulton, Janet McNally, David Smith, and Dan Barber. Hosted by Central NY RC&D with cooperation from NY farmers, NYS GLCI, USDA-NRCS, Cornell Small Farms Program, Cornell University Cooperative Extension, County SWCD's, and Rural Health Network of South Central NY.



Cornell Cooperative Extension Broome County

840 Upper Front Street Binghamton, New York 13905-1500

NON-PROFIT ORG.

U.S. Postage

PAID

Binghamton, NY 13905

Permit No. 81
