

# Madison Manager



## BVD Test - New Requirement for Fair Animals in 2008

By Jerry Bertoldo, Extension Associate, Dairy

The NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets recently released a memo to accredited veterinarians with information on a new requirement for all cattle to be shown at all county fairs, youth fairs or the New York State Fair. Animals must test negative for BVD-PI or Bovine Virus Diarrhea-Persistently Infected. This condition has created havoc on dairy and beef farms for years.

**Where it starts:** Animals that are persistently infected are born with an incurable infection of BVD. Cattle cannot become a "PI" after they are born, but may heavily shed virus with an acute infection. BVD can manifest itself dramatically via abortions, respiratory disease and digestive problems, but more commonly causes early embryonic death and immune system suppression in cattle of all ages.

**Testing:** Sampling and submission to the Animal Health Diagnostic Center at Cornell must be done by a veterinarian. There is no minimum age limit on testing. Since the approved tests are considered extremely accurate regarding false positives or negatives, animals need to be tested only once in a lifetime.

The complete booklet of Animal Health Requirements for exhibition can be accessed at [www.agmkt.state.ny.us](http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us). It can be found by selecting "Fairs and Events" on the left margin of the page and by then selecting "Fair Regulations".

Remember: if you want your health papers on a timely basis, call your veterinarian early enough to allow time for shipping and lab turnaround.

## Information Forum on Natural Gas Exploration

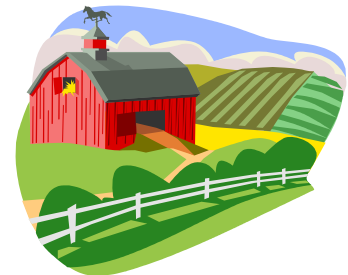
An Information Forum on Natural Gas Exploration and Leasing will be held on Wednesday, June 11 at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County beginning at 7 PM. The meeting will be held in the Ag Center at 100 Eaton Street in Morrisville.

Speakers will include Attorney Christopher Denton, Chemung County Farm Bureau President Ashur Terwilliger, and Matt Brower from the NYS Dept. of Ag and Markets. If you have questions, please contact Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County at 684-3001.

*Sponsored by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County  
and Madison County Farm Bureau.*

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## Meet the Ag Program Committee

By *Kathe Evans, CCE  
Madison Co.*

Doug Trew, Munnsville, joined the Agricultural Program Committee this year. He is a native of Munnsville and a graduate of SUNY Morrisville. He presently manages the dairy herd at SUNY Morrisville having started working there in 2006. The College dairy farm serves as a teaching vehicle for the Dairy program at Morrisville and houses a 250 cow milking herd. In addition, the farm produces energy from the methane digester at the farmstead. Doug enjoys working with the students and feels that allowing them to do the "real" work adds to their

educational experience.

Doug worked in partnership with his father for 17 years and on his own for 10 years on the home farm in Munnsville. He managed a 185 cow herd on the home farm and over 650 acres. Following his dispersal, Doug joined the staff at SUNY Morrisville.

Doug feels that the Extension mission should do more to educate the consumer about agriculture. He knows that most people



don't understand what commercial agriculture is all about and if the farming community does not do a good job of informing the public about the day to day running of agriculture, we will all lose out.

## Madison Bountu: Farmers' Market at Your Door

May 10, 2008

By: *Becca Brier-Rosenfield,  
Agricultural Economic  
Development Specialist*

Madison County, in collaboration with Chenango County, is creating a Mobile Farmers' Market called **Madison Bountu**. Customers (individual households, grocery stores, restaurants, etc.) will be able to order locally grown and processed items online and have them delivered directly to their door. Madison Bountu aims to support local farmers, producers and processors by creating new markets for locally produced food, which will build the local economy and community, as well as

provide healthy food to all citizens of greater Madison County in an environmentally responsible way. There will be two informational meetings for *consumers* interested in Madison Bountu: first, at the Hamilton Public Library Common Room, 13 Broad Street Hamilton, **Saturday, June 7, 10:00am**; second, at the Cazenovia Public Library Common Room, 100 Albany Street Cazenovia, **Saturday, June 14, 10:00am**. If you are interested in learning how you can support local farmers and purchase local food, as well as shape the formation of Madison Bountu, please join us for a discussion!

If you are a farmer/producer/processor interested in learning how your agricultural product(s) can be included in Madison Bountu, please contact Becca at 315-684-3001 x 118 or 315-697-9817. Brochures will be mailed out to producers shortly regarding Madison Bountu's protocols and regulations. Madison Bountu understands that farmers with a product to direct market may already have an outlet for those goods. For this first year, we hope you might consider selling excess products (for example, if you have a bumper broccoli crop) through Madison Bountu.

## Upcoming Events

### June 5 - Small Grains

**Management Field Day,** Robert Musgrave Research Farm, Cornell University, 1256 Poplar Ridge Rd., Aurora. Time: 9:30am - noon. All are welcome to attend and there is no fee! For more information please contact Larissa Smith, 607-255-2177, [lls14@cornell.edu](mailto:lls14@cornell.edu) or Gary Bergstrom, [gcb3@cornell.edu](mailto:gcb3@cornell.edu). NYS-DEC Pesticide Appl. Recertification Credits available. Category 1a - 1.25, Category 10 - 1.5, Category 21 - 1.5, Category 4 - 0.25.

### June 7 - Madison Bountu: Mobile Farmers' Market at Your Door, Consumer

Meeting: Hamilton Public Library Common Room 13 Broad Street Hamilton, NY on Saturday at 10:00am.

### June 11 - Information Forum on Natural Gas Exploration,

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# High Quality Forage Critical this Year

From Penn State FCN

With the high commodity feed costs the production of the highest quality first cutting becomes more of an economical incentive for timely harvest than ever before. It has been said many times before but will be especially critical this year but high quality forage production means timely harvest often during narrow windows of opportunity. Avoid any delay in harvesting first cutting! Its been said before but always worth repeating. When it is time to make forage Stop planting corn and make hay!!

Forage producers know that the first cutting of alfalfa and grasses is the largest yielding cutting each year. Some estimates show first cutting can be 40% of total yields. Because of this, first cutting has the potential to provide forage feeders with either some outstanding forage quality or unfortunately, large amounts of poor quality forage for the entire feeding season.

First cutting also sets the stage for all preceding forage harvests. A delay in first cutting will significantly reduce quality and reduce maximum forage yields for the season. Are you ready for forage harvest?

Many of the top quality producers don't get caught behind on first cutting. If weather conditions in early



Here are a few production pointers for making quality haylage and baleage. Optimum moisture levels for grass crops are 45 to 63%.

to mid-May are suitable for cutting forage grasses and alfalfa they don't delay. Many growers harvest alfalfa stands as early as late pre-bud or at sign of first bud to maximize forage quality if there is a window of harvest opportunity. Weather may turn wet and keep you out of the fields for 10 days or more and the resulting forage will be disaster for a feeding program. When taking an early harvest (pre or early bud) allow at least 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> cutting to reach early bloom, top-dress (K<sub>2</sub>O) and stay ahead of potato leafhoppers this summer to allow the stand to build up root reserves.

Because of the importance of getting forage harvested on time and quickly and the fact that a heavy first cutting will slow harvest speed, haylage or baleage should be the harvest method of choice.

Because alfalfa is high in calcium, which buffers haylage fermentation, moisture levels for alfalfa haylage should be slightly less, 40 to 55% moisture. If making baleage, be sure to wrap bales with at least 6, preferably 8 mils. of plastic to ensure an airtight seal. Wrapping should take place within 24 hours, preferably sooner.

Limit bale diameter to 4 feet to minimize handling extremely heavy bales and ensure safety. Store bales on the ends, which have significantly more layers of plastic wrap, for protection. Mark and store by cuttings. Baleage made with optimum moisture conditions, at earlier stages of maturity and wrapped properly has the potential for 12 months or longer storage. Bales made under less optimum conditions will not have the storability and may need to be fed out in 3 to 6 months

## Upcoming Events

**June 14 -- Madison Bounty: Mobile Farmers' Market at Your Door, Consumer Meetings:** Cazenovia Public Library Common Room, 100 Albany Street Cazenovia, NY On Saturday at 10:00am.

**July 8 - Seed Growers' Field Day - 2008,** NYSIP Foundation Seed Barn, Ithaca, NY. Registration at 9am and program begins at 9:30am. DEC & CCA Credits available.

**July 9 - New York Weed Science Field Days,** Valatie Research Farm, Valatie NY. Registration at 9:30am & program 10:00-12:00 Corn Weed Control (Hahn)

**July 16 - New York Weed Science Field Days,** H.C. Thompson Vegetable Research Farm, Freeville NY. Registration at 8:00 am & program 8:30-11:30am **Vegetable Crop Weed Control** (Bellinder). Pre-registration required by July 7th. Cost will be \$8.00 per person, which included refreshments and an informational packet. Please call 607-255-7889 to obtain a registration form.

**June 11 - Information Forum on Natural Gas Exploration,** An Information Forum on Natural Gas Exploration and Leasing will be held at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County beginning at 7 PM. The meeting will be held

## Resources from Cornell Small Farm Program:

### Small Ruminant Dairy Project Quarterly Newsletter

The UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture is now offering a Small Ruminant Dairy Project Quarterly Newsletter. For more information on the Small Ruminant Dairy Project or to sign up for the newsletter please contact Carol Delaney at (802) 656-0915, UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 63 Carrigan Drive, Burlington, VT 05405 or [Carol.Delaney@uvm.edu](mailto:Carol.Delaney@uvm.edu). Previous issues may be read online at: [www.uvm.edu/~susagctr/srdpnewsletter.html/](http://www.uvm.edu/~susagctr/srdpnewsletter.html/)

### Resources for Raspberry & Blackberry Growers Now Online

Growing raspberries and blackberries in Northern New York using high tunnels just got a lot easier. The Northern New York Agricultural Development Program just uploaded the new High Tunnel Raspberries and Blackberries guide to its website [www.nnyagdev.org](http://www.nnyagdev.org). Researchers at Cornell and Pennsylvania State universities have published the guide on the latest and ongoing high tunnel research in the Northeast region of the U.S. The color photo-filled High Tunnel Raspberries and Blackberries includes information on using the relatively inexpensive, usually unheated hoop

structures called high tunnels for starting fruit earlier in the spring and producing berries later in the fall season. There are sections on site selection; the types of tunnels; construction; plant selection; tunnel, crop and pest management; early and late season extension techniques; and budgeting. High Tunnel Raspberries and Blackberries, the production guide and other high tunnel information links are online on the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program website at <http://www.nnyagdev.org/>.

### Presentations from 2008 Northeast Grasstravaganza Available Online

The Northeast Grazing Guide, the official website of the Northeast Pasture Consortium, will soon have the presentations given at the Annual Meeting held in Binghamton available to view. If you want to see the research that is happening and some of the results, go to <http://www.umaine.edu/grazingguide/>. Likewise, presentations from Northeast Grasstravaganza will soon be available to view at <http://www.cnyrcd.org/>. So, if you missed either event and were interested in any of the presentations, you can at least get a sense of what the various speakers discussed.

### New York Organic Dairy Initiative releases new "Organic Crops for Organic Dairies" CD

The NY Organic Dairy Initiative, a project of the Cornell Small Farms Program and funded by the NY Farm Viability Initiative, has responded to the critical shortage of organic grain available for organic livestock production by creating a CD titled "Organic Crops for Organic Dairies". The CD is a compilation of some of the most up-to-date resources on growing organic field crops, covering everything from technical information to certification requirements, soil amendments, weed management and business tools. A complete index and an online download of the CD's contents may be found at the New York Organic Dairy Initiative's website. Visit:

[www.organic.cornell.edu](http://www.organic.cornell.edu) and click on "Organic Dairy". The CD has received much attention this past winter after it was first presented at the NY Certified Organic meeting in January. Since that presentation The Rodale Institute asked for a copy of the NYODI Transition Spreadsheet, which they used to demonstrate to the PA State Legislature the potential profit that was achievable by transitioning to organic crop production. PA is considering offering a tax

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# Upcoming Events

in the Ag Center at 100 Eaton Street in Morrisville. Contact our office for more information, 315-684-3001 or email at [madison@cornell.edu](mailto:madison@cornell.edu)

**July 16 - New York Weed Science Field Days**, Robert B. Musgrave Research Farm, Aurora, NY. 12:00-1:30 pm NYSABA Pork BBQ lunch at the research farm, until it's gone. **Cost:** \$12.00 pre-sale before July 4th. Contact Jeanette Marvin at 315-986-9320 or email [jmarvin@rochester.rr.com](mailto:jmarvin@rochester.rr.com) to obtain a BBQ Ticket Request Form. Or you can pay \$15.00 at the door. Registration at 1:30pm and program 2:00-5:00pm Field Crop Weed Control (Hahn).

**July 19 - Madison County 4-H Youth Fair**, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County Office Bldg. Morrisville. 10:00-4:00pm.

**July 22 & 23 - 4-H Dairy, Beef, Annual Black & White Show**, CCE Madison County, Morrisville

**July 25 & 26 - 4-H Horse Show**, Morrisville State College Horse Complex

**July 23 - Aurora Field Day - 2008**, Robert Musgrave Research Farm, Aurora, NY. Registration at 9:30am and from 10:00-3:00pm Tours of Plots. DEC & CCA Credits available.

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incentive to farmers transitioning their land to organic crop production. To date 3 of the 4 New York state organic processors have purchased 400 copies of the CD to pass out to their farmers. In addition 100 copies have been given out to farmers at meetings this past winter.

Many people are interested in the technical info contained on the CD but the most useful tools to

insure a successful, sustainable business are the spread sheets. These allow the individual farm to input their own information and accurately evaluate changes and practices on their farm. This summer the NYODI will be holding an Adobe Breeze training workshop to familiarize extension personnel, processor field people, agri-service, and farmers on the use of spreadsheets contained on the CD: NYODI Transition,

Petersen's Constants for grain and forage, and the Manure nutrient calculator.

To get the files contained on the CD visit [www.organic.cornell.edu](http://www.organic.cornell.edu) and click on the NY ODI link. Or if you are an organic dairy producer ask your field person for a copy of the CD. Others and Cornell Extension personnel can contact Sharon VanDeuson at 607-753-5213 or [shv7@cornell.edu](mailto:shv7@cornell.edu)

# Upcoming Events

**July 27-29 - New York State Maple Tour.** Join us for a scenic and informative New York State Maple Tour that will provide you with many ideas for your maple business. Registration and information posted available at <http://www.cornellmaple.com>. Registration deadline: July 11, 2008

**August 21 - September 1, NYS Fair,** Fairgrounds, Syracuse.

**October 28 - Field Crop Dealer Meetings, Albany, NY.** Best Western, Albany Airport Inn, 200 Wolf Rd. Registration at 9:00am and Program 9:45-3:00 pm. DEC & CCA Credits Available.

**October 29 - Field Crop Dealer Meetings, New Hartford, NY.** Holiday Inn, 1777 Burrstone Rd. Registration at 9:00am and Program 9:45-3:00 pm. DEC & CCA Credits Available.

**October 30 - Field Crop Dealer Meetings, Batavia, NY.** Batavia Party House, 5762 East Main Rd. Registration at 9:00am and Program 9:45-3:00 pm. DEC & CCA Credits Available.

**October 31 - Field Crop Dealer Meetings, Auburn, NY.** Holiday Inn, 75 North Street. Registration at 9:00am and Program 9:45-3:00 pm. DEC & CCA Credits Available.

## Such is Life on a Grass Based Dairy Farm

By Karen Baase, Extension Issue Leader

Have you ever seen 400 cows walking in single file, heading out to pasture? It's a sight from New Zealand, Australia, or maybe even England or Ireland.

But for us Central New Yorkers, there's no need to travel overseas. Madison County has its very own seasonal, grass based dairy that milks over 400 cows. It's on Route 12B between Hamilton and Earlville. EFS LLC, locally known as the Rivington Farm, is owned and operated by Bruce, Nancy, Brian, Scott, and Jamie Rivington.

Three hundred sixty calves have been born on the farm since March 6<sup>th</sup>. Managing that job - calving season - is quite a feat, especially when you consider the time it takes to



Nancy Rivington stands next to one of the Rivingtons' "Mob Feeders".

manage, watch and care for just one or two cows expected to calve on the same day. Multiply that by 400+ and spread it over a 12 week "window".

Thankfully, the most hectic part of the calving season is behind them. There are only 50 more to go. Whew!

With calving season winding down, there's still the milking, fencing, and making sure that newborns get off to a good start. Half of the calves are

kept, all of the heifers and some of the bulls. For Nancy, Brian and a couple of the farm's employees, taking care of the calves is just one of the jobs they do everyday.

One of two calf barns has 8 large, newly constructed calf pens, each holding around 25 calves. Each group is fed milk using 2 or 3 "Mob Feeders". Each feeder accommodates up to 10 calves. The Rivingtons have already started to wean the early March calves, who are seeing the Mob Feeder just once a day. This group is eating enough grain and hay, with plenty of fresh water, to carry them through. Soon they will be ready to enter the "great outdoors" in June where they'll learn the realities of high

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tensile fencing and how to move to a new paddock every day.

This is just one of the norms on a seasonal dairy. Calving takes place at the same time that grass is starting to grow. The cow takes advantage of lush spring grass, while her calf begins its own journey down a similar path. And once the grazing season ends, and the cows have "settled" (pregnant), they all -

including the Rivingtons - take a break from milking twice a day and make preparations for the next season.

Such is life on a grass based dairy.



*Calves have plenty of fresh air, feed, and space.*

## The Cheap Can Turn Out to be Expensive. Stick To the Basics!

*Virginia Ishler, Extension Associate,  
Nutrient Management Dairy Alliance, A  
Penn State Cooperative Extension Initiative*

Everyone is feeling the crunch of high fuel and food costs and the dairy industry is no exception. In the last few months it has become very expensive to feed cows. If milk prices drop and feed costs continue to rise, then profit margins will shrink. Every dairy operation has its unique set of challenges; however there are a few management and nutrition options that can help maintain profit (income over feed costs).

- 1. Excellent forage quality is the foundation on which good rations are built.** It won't be long until producers are harvesting first cut haycrop silage. Make sure that the moisture content is appropriate for the storage structure so as to avoid issues with improper fermentation. Harvesting at the correct stage of maturity will increase the odds of highly digestible forage. With increasing corn and soybean prices, strategies to improve forage quality should allow higher forage rations and less grain to be fed.
- 2. Examine the big picture when evaluating commodity or grain prices.** Best cost rations tend to be more profitable than least cost. Know what you are buying. Evaluate the nutrient analysis

and physical appearance. If a commodity is priced cheap and it is inconsistent in analysis and/or has an extremely dark color (possibly indicating heat damage), then the commodity may turn into a very expensive purchase. Cows may drop in production and/or components, which ultimately may lead to lower profits.

- 3. If you are not doing so already, start monitoring income over feed costs (IOFC).** This measurement will help in deciding when it is time to make some ration changes. If a particular feed is increasing in price, but cows are performing well and IOFC is still meeting or exceeding the benchmarks, then it may not be time to remove that commodity from the ration.

- 4. In order to control costs, know what and how much your cows are consuming.** This requires checking dry matters on all high moisture ingredients on a daily or at least weekly basis and adjusting rations accordingly. Producers can not afford to be overfeeding forages and risk running out of inventory or overfeeding concentrates at today's current prices. Monitoring dry matter intake efficiency (DMIE) can be a barometer for when ration

adjustments may be needed. A realistic goal for most herds is maintaining a DMIE of 1.4 to 1.6. If efficiencies are lower than 1.4, then cows are not very efficient in converting nutrients to milk. If efficiencies are too high, then there is the risk of cows losing too much body condition, which may have ramifications on reproduction and long term performance. Use energy corrected milk divided by dry matter intake to calculate DMIE.

- 5. Environmental issues related to water and air quality are not diminishing.** There are some nutritional strategies that can help improve IOFC and improve the environment. If appropriate, removing inorganic phosphorus sources from the diet would be a simple change. It may only make a difference of a few cents per cow per day, but it will be money in your pocket. Formulating diets for the cow's requirement for protein is timely right now. However, if feed management practices are not good, then lowering protein in the diet to meet the cow's requirement may end up negatively affecting IOFC. It is extremely important to work with a good nutritionist or consultant before implementing this option.

These are just a few points to consider with increasing prices. Right now is the time to be asking questions on how to maintain profits. Think about strategies that can be implemented on the farm to control costs.

**NYS Agricultural Society Seeks NY Farms With Successful Farm Safety Programs; \$500 Awards  
Applications Due: July 1, 2008**

Agricultural Safety and Health are important issues to the New York State Agricultural Society. The benefits of a planned and meaningful farm safety program don't end with reducing simple injuries and down time; the rewards often include saving lives of family members and employees. The Society's Farm Safety Award recognizes New York farm operators who have unique and successful farm safety programs for their employees. Applications must be submitted by July 1 and include a summary of farm safety programs and activities. Nominees are evaluated, and up to 2 farms are selected to receive recognition and a cash award of \$500 per farm, sponsored by Cargill, Inc.

To apply or nominate someone, Clip the following application or visit [www.nysagsociety.org](http://www.nysagsociety.org) (Awards & Contests, Farm Safety). Applications are also available by contacting the Society's Executive Secretary, Penny Heritage, at 518-384-1715.

**NYS Agricultural Society: NY Farm Safety Award Application**

FARM NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_ FARM TYPE: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your farm's policy or philosophy regarding safety?

Example of management's commitment to safety:

How are employees encouraged to participate in the safety process? (Two examples)

Does your farm have?

\_\_\_\_ Safety committee

\_\_\_\_ An incentive/motivation program

\_\_\_\_ Employee wellness program

\_\_\_\_ A formal training/mentoring program

\_\_\_\_ Safety inspection program

\_\_\_\_ Hazard correction program

What are some of the key elements of your safety and health program?

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return application by July 1 to:**

Eric Hallman, Agricultural Safety Specialist  
6054 Burr Rd., Trumansburg, NY 14886  
Ph: 607-387-3041

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Non-Profit Rate  
U.S. Postage Paid  
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## *Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities*

### Madison Manager

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The *Madison Manager* is edited by Kathe Evans and produced by Darlene Curtis. For more information contact Cornell Cooperative Extension of Madison County P.O. Box 1209, 100 Eaton St., Morrisville, NY 13408. phone: 315-684-3001 or fax: 315-684-9290, [www.cce.cornell.edu/madison](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/madison).

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