



Agriculture & Landscape
Program UMass Amherst

Crops, Dairy, Livestock News

Vol. 10:1, Summer 2007

Stephen J. Herbert,
Editor

Dept. of Plant, Soil,
and Insect Sciences
Dept. of Vet. and
Animal Sciences
Univ. of Massachusetts
Amherst MA 01003.

For further information
Phone: 413-545-2250

Email:
cdl@umext.umass.edu

Web Address:
www.umass.edu/cdl

In This Issue...

- * Barn Meeting - 2007
July 12 - Warren
- * On-Farm Research
Opportunities
- * UMass Crop Mgt
Research Field Day
- * 2006 Dairy Farm
Survey
- * Massachusetts
Pasture Walks
- * PCDA All Dairy
Breeds Show

Note: Mention of any
trade name or product
carries no implied
endorsement from
UMass Extension

**Central Massachusetts Dairy Producers' Association
Univ. of Massachusetts Amherst Extension & Expt. Stn.
Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
USDA - Farm Service Agency**

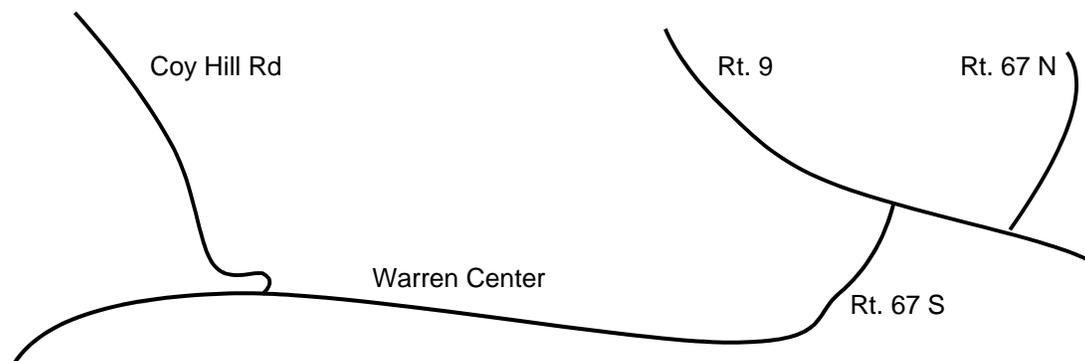
**Twilight Barn Meeting
Rocky Acres Farm
Thursday July 12, 2007**

Hosted by:
Bob and Marty Richardson
690 Coy Hill Rd
Warren Ma 01083

- 6:15 PM - Barn Visit and Social Interaction
- 6:35 PM - Research and Farm Survey Update - Masoud Hashemi and Stephen Herbert, UMass Extension
- 6:50 PM - Higher feed and fertilizer costs and alternatives - Stephen Herbert and Masoud Hashemi, UMass Extension
- 7:20 PM - Improving economic efficiency with pasture - Bob Richardson, farmer host and Stephen Herbert, UMass Extension
- 7:50 PM - Summer seeded annuals - field demonstration - Stephen Herbert UMass Extension
- 8:15 PM - USDA and State Agency Updates

Directions:

From Route 9 take Route 67 South through Warren Center to Coy Hill Rd on your right. The Richardson Farm is on your right after a long climb on Coy Hill Rd.



2007 Research Activities and On-Farm Opportunities

Through funding from Mass. Dept. of Agricultural Resources and the Agricultural Innovation Center Fund, Mass. Dept. of Protection, Mass. Dept. of Energy Resources, USDA's Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education programs, and the UMass Agricultural Experiment Station the Crops, Dairy, Livestock, Equine program is initiating several new thrusts in research and education to address the increased costs of feed, fertilizer, and indirectly fuel. Research is in place at the UMass farm and on several fields with cooperating farmers. As you read of the diverse activities below, if you wish to become involved in any activity on your farm, or have an idea then please give us a call (413-545-1843), or send an email to cdl@umext.umass.edu

Comparisons are being made for corn between early and late season hybrids for yields and grain contribution, the effect of planting date on yield, grain content and harvest date, and at harvest the effect of raising chopping height on yield to increase the proportion grain in silage. Summer annual crops, regular and BMR corn planted at extremely high densities, BMR sorghum-sudangrass, Japanese millet, and feed oat are being planted in narrow (7 inch) rows to determine yield for grazing, quality of the forage, and regrowth potential. We have also initiated an evaluation of 20 grain corn hybrids.

If farmers are able to harvest corn by late August or early September then they have the opportunity to recover considerable amounts of nitrogen from N not used by the corn crop and from fall applied

manure. Farm and University field experiments have shown early planted cover crops accumulated more than 100 lbs N/ac. If not taken up by cover crops this nitrogen (in the nitrate form) is lost during the fall and winter. More on-farm field evaluations are planned for this fall.

Local and regional efforts are also being made to increase the productivity and utilization of pastures. We are planning to evaluate up to 30 different pasture mixes or blends sold commercially in Massachusetts, Vermont and Pennsylvania, and a smaller number of blends on farms in all New England states. Other pasture related activities are also planned or are in progress.

Besides these activities for dairy and livestock producers we have begun an education effort for horse owners. This project is providing education and demonstrations on manure and composting, pasture and soil management, and hay. MassAggie seminars held earlier this year will be repeated.

We have also initiated research on biofuel crops and have 12 varieties of switchgrass under field evaluation from a 2006 seeding. More varieties were seeded this spring.

For more information contact any of CDLE team member at (www.umass.edu/cdl/team.html)

Stephen J. Herbert, Professor
Dept. of Plant, Soil, and Insect Sciences

UMass Crop Research and Education Center Field Day

Tuesday August 21, 2007
River Road, South Deerfield, MA

Tour/view the new equipment workshop and hay storage being built by the College of Natural Resources & the Environment and Univ. of Massachusetts Amherst to support research at South Deerfield.

Agonomic Field Studies and Crop Management Discussions (10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., \$20 for lunch and tour, \$15 if more than two from one farm)

- Corn hybrid selection for yield and increased grain content.
- Seeding date affects on yield and grain contribution.
- Grain corn hybrid evaluation.
- Field corn genetics.
- Narrow row-high density summer annuals (corn, Japanese millet, BMR sorghum/sudangrass, oat).
- Nitrogen contribution and corn growth following time of seeding cover crops the previous fall.
- Pasture variety/blend evaluations.
- Fencing for rotational and strip grazing.
- Switchgrass variety evaluation (2006 and 2007 seedings).

Vegetable Crop Field Studies (4:00 to 7:00 p.m., \$20 for refreshments and tour, \$15 if more than two from one farm; Disease Diagnostic Clinic for on-site disease identification.)

- New ethnic vegetables for production in Massachusetts.
- Edamame (vegetable soybean) diversity.
- Biological and chemical controls for *Phytophthora capsici* in squash.
- Organic weed management for stale seedbed and between plastic.
- Selection of cold hardy greens.
- Selection for market qualities in aji dulce pepper.
- Managing nitrogen in sweet corn.

Follow directions from I-91 (above) for Riverland Farm. Before crossing the bridge over the CT River, turn left onto River Rd. Pass the Turf Farm and a subdivision. The Crops Research Farm is on the left.

2006 Dairy Farm Survey

Results of the 2006 survey of 34 dairy farms revealed a diverse assortment of management practices. For example, almost all farmers do soil testing, at least occasionally, while almost 75% had rarely or never analyzed the manure. Most relied on fertilizer companies for soil sampling, but those who did analyze manure took the samples themselves

(77%). Certain changes in management on many farms would reduce farm costs. Many farmers have participated in nutrient management planning but still most have not calibrated their manure spreader, and need to better optimize nitrogen management. Results of the survey will be presented at the field meetings and in future extension newsletters.

Garrabrants Named Director of UMass Extension

Nancy Garrabrants, former director of the Stockbridge School, has been named director of UMass Extension, according to Vice Provost for Outreach Sharon Fross.

Garrabrants served as director and assistant dean of the Stockbridge School from 1998 to 2006. She is currently a lecturer in the Plant, Soil and Insect Sciences Department, where she has taught since 1980.

"Nancy Garrabrants brings to her new role an ability to put that planning to work as a critical component of furthering Extension's work within the Commonwealth," said Fross. "She is intimately familiar with the landscape of Massachusetts, with the state's Extension programs, and with the University's ongoing commitment as a land-grant university to address critical needs."

Fross said that Garrabrants has worked with varied constituencies across the commonwealth, including the Massachusetts Center for Career and Technical Education Steering committee, the Northeast Service Providers Consortium, the Massachusetts Flower Growers Association and

Massachusetts Flower Growers Association and the American Institute of Floral Designers. In addition, she taught horticulture at the State University of New York at Cobleskill.

Garrabrants is a graduate of the University Without Walls program and completed her master's degree in Plant and Soil Sciences in 1987. She said she has always felt a deep connection to Extension's mission and programming. "I consider myself fortunate to be the next director of this dynamic organization," she said. "UMass Extension has a long history of assisting families, youth, businesses and communities in improving the quality of life within our state and beyond."

She will assume her duties as UMass Extension director on Aug. 20. She succeeds Robert Schrader, who has served as interim director for the past three years, ushering Extension through a comprehensive five-year planning process for Extension programs, including Agricultural and Landscape, Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Nutrition Education, and 4-H.

From: UMass In The Loop - June 14, 2007.

First Annual MA PDCA All Breeds Show

August 9 & 10, 2007 - Franklin County Fairgrounds, Greenfield, MA

Youth Showmanship & Clinic - August 9th - 7:00 PM

All dairy breeds show for youth and adults will be held on August 10th starting at 9:30 AM

For information and entries contact either Andrew Samuelson at jersey_cow_guy@yahoo.com or Carrie Chickering-Sears at ccsears@umext.umass.edu or (413) 665-2275

Massachusetts Pasture Walks

Several Massachusetts pasture walks organized by NOFA/Mass, USDA-NRCS and UMass Extension are listed below. Topics will vary slightly but should include pasture management, organic transition and herd health, forage species, soil fertility, fencing and water systems, and summer and winter grazing options.

For updates and directions, check the NOFA/Mass website www.nofamass.org/programs/organicdairy/ featuring Organic Dairy Farming, the UMass Crops, Dairy, Livestock, Equine website www.umass.edu/cdl news section, or contact Kate Rossiter at (413) 625-0118. All are from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. unless time stated.

Thursday, June 28
Sunbrite Farm, Dave Duprey
Bernardston, MA

Thursday, July 12 (starts at 6:15 pm)
Rocky Acres Farm, Robert and Martha Richardson
Warren, MA (see announcement on page 1)

Wednesday, July 25
Cricket Creek Farm, Jason and Amy Demay
Williamstown, MA

Tuesday, August 28
Appleton Farms, Mike Victor
Ipswich, MA

Wednesday, September 12
Highlawn Farm, Brian Stone
Lee, MA

Wednesday, September 26
Chase Hill Farm, Mark and Jeanette Fellows
Warwick, MA

Wednesday, October 17
Breese Hollow Farm, Chuck and Diane Phippen
Hoosick Falls, NY

Saturday, October 27 (a.m and p.m. programs)
Woolly Mammoth Farm, Matt Rulevich
S. Dartmouth, MA