



NNYADP Project Success Story

Practical Research & Results for
NY Farms, Economy & Communities
*in Clinton, Essex, Franklin,
Jefferson, Lewis & St. Lawrence Counties*

Forage Variety Trial Data Online

This December 30, 2012 Plattsburgh Press-Republican article is reprinted for educational-use only.

CHAZY, NY -- Data that Northern New York farmers can use to plan their 2013 forage crop production for dairy/livestock feed and cash-crop sales is now online on the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program website at www.nnyagdev.org.

The New York Forage Legume and Grass Variety Yield Trials Summary for 2012 — Season Totals report includes data for 200-plus varieties of alfalfa, red clover, birdsfoot trefoil, and perennial forage grasses including timothy, orchardgrass, tall fescue, bromegrass and perennial ryegrass.



Photo: Michael Davis

Grass variety trial plots at Willsboro Research Farm in Willsboro, NY.

A team of researchers led by Dr. Don Viands and Dr. Julie L. Hansen of the Cornell University Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics conducted the trials at Miner Institute in Chazy, the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station in Ithaca, SUNY Cobleskill and a farm in Perry.

Plant breeders, who provide seed for the trials, continue to develop new and improved cultivars. Funding from the farmer-led Northern New York Agricultural Development Program supports the variety trials that provide **critical forage quality and yield evaluation under regional growing conditions**.

Data from several years of trials at Miner Institute is being used to identify the varieties that can be successfully grown on Northern New York soils and those that have **more tolerance to weather conditions and pests found in the region**. Some of the trials evaluated varieties of alfalfa for resistance to the potato leafhopper pest.

The most recent alfalfa variety trial at Miner Institute suffered from ice sheeting.

"Winterkill is a common problem for crops in Northern New York when snow cover shrinks and leaves crops with less insulation against extreme cold. **Trials that identify the varieties that do well and those that cannot tolerate the regional conditions are valuable to both producers and the seed companies** that provide the seed for evaluation," said Northern New York Agricultural Development Program Coordinator Margaret E. Smith with the Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics at Cornell University.

The Northern New York Agricultural Development Program is a farmer-led research, outreach and technical assistance program specifically for Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties.

Learn more about the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program and its' research, outreach and technical assistance projects online at www.nnyagdev.org



NNYADP Project Success Story

Practical Research & Results for
NY Farms, Economy & Communities
*in Clinton, Essex, Franklin,
Jefferson, Lewis & St. Lawrence Counties*

Mass Nutrient Balancing for Small Dairies

Adapted from Small Farms Quarterly article by Sara Zglobicki, reprinted for educational-use only.

"I'm hoping to save money on crop expenses and have as good or better crops. I remember a time when nutrients were not expensive; now they are very dear. We have to change with the times... and it is economical to utilize on-farm resources. We have nutrients here...(with) cows on the farm; **we should use the manure while trying to eliminate some fertilizer costs,**" says Dave Vincent, of Vincent Farms LLC, in Malone, NY (Franklin County).

Vincent runs a dairy with his brother Silas, milking 150 cows and growing corn, alfalfa, grass hay and oats. The brothers are collaborating with a dairy nutritionist, crop consultants, and Cornell extension personnel on the Whole Farm Analysis project, funded in part by the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program and conducted by the Cornell Nutrient Management Spear Program (NMSP).

The Vincents have participated in the Mass Nutrient Balance (MNB) project for three years. Each year, they received a MNB report showing the difference between the amount of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium imported onto the farm through feed, fertilizer and bedding purchases and the amount exported from the farm in milk, meat, crops, manure or compost.

"With the Mass Nutrient Balance project, farmers see how their nutrient balances compare with their peers. This leads farmers to ask what they do differently from other farmers with lower nutrient balances but similar milk production levels. If a farm balance looks high [more nutrients imported to the farm than leaving] when compared to other farms, **farmers want to know how they can reduce their farm's mass nutrient balance,**" explains project coordinator Patty Ristow, an extension associate with the NMSP.

The nutrient management tools developed and being calibrated by this project for Northern New York farms help to pinpoint nutrient sources and assist farmers in identifying opportunities to improve nutrient efficiency.

"If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. As a farmer, having numbers show how you are doing is crucial to help you see where improvements may be possible," says farm nutritionist Dave Kinney.

Dave Vincent adds, **"I'm interested in good stewardship so the next generation has something to grow crops on."**



Dave and Silas Vincent at their Malone, NY, farm.

Photo: Carl Tillinghast

**Learn more about the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program
and its' research, outreach and technical assistance projects online at www.nnyagdev.org**