



Northern New York Agricultural Development Program News

PRESS RELEASE: April 2, 2013

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NNYADP Research Provides Critical Data to Region's Soybean Producers

Northern New York farmers planted nearly 15,000 acres of soybeans in 2012. To help them select soybean seed with the best potential to produce both high quality and high yield under the unique growing conditions of their region, the farmer-driven Northern New York Agricultural Development Program (NNYADP) conducts on-farm variety trials.

The NNYADP-funded variety trials provide side-by-side comparison data for germination, yield, moisture, disease resistance, and other production factors under the regional growing conditions.

Trial leader Dr. William J. Cox of Cornell University says he expects the acreage of soybeans grown in Northern New York to increase.

"It is no longer too cool to produce soybeans in Northern New York with the development of high-yielding Group I soybean varieties and the warmer summers in the region. As global warming continues over the next several decades, Northern New York may prove to be an ideal region for soybean production," says the Cornell Crop and Soil Sciences professor.

Cox notes that some NNY farmers have already capitalized on the warming trend as evidenced by the increase in soybean acreage in the NNY region from 5,000 acres grown in 2007 to nearly 15,000 acres grown in 2012. Soybeans are crop grown to feed dairy cows and other livestock and for cash sales domestically and by export.

Dairyman and crop grower Ron Robbins of Robbins Farms in Sackets Harbor, NY, says, "The Northern New York Agricultural Development Program research trials produce practical results. These on-farm, year-to-year evaluations of how well soybean and corn varieties will produce under our regional growing conditions support the long-term economic viability of agriculture in the North Country."

Robbins is among the Northern New York growers who are harvesting soybeans for shipment to overseas markets. The number of railroad cars loaded with NNY-grown soybeans has grown exponentially from 14 in 2010 to 50 loads in 2012.

New York Corn and Soybean Growers Association Executive Director Julia Robbins says, "Research that provides growers with current and localized data for making corn and soybean seed-buying decisions is a key component for helping growers take advantage of the increasing global interest in these crops."

The results of the NNYADP-funded soybean trials at Miner Institute at Chazy, NY, in 2012 showed 16 Group I varieties averaged 81 bushels per acre (bu/ac) with a range in yield of 73-93 bu/ac.

“Such high yields indicate that climate conditions are certainly not a limiting factor to soybean yields in Northern New York. Soybeans do not require too many inputs so variety selection is a major determinant to successful soybean production as indicated by the range in yield in the trials. Variety trials in the region can help farmers select the right variety for production and profit,” Cox says.

The Northern New York Agricultural Development Program is a farmer-driven research, outreach and technical assistance for Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties. NNYADP projects receive funding from the New York State Senate with support from the New York State Assembly. The Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station provided additional funding and support for the NNY soybean and corn trials.

The results of NNY soybean and corn hybrid trials are posted in the Field Crops section of the Northern New York Agricultural Development Program website at www.nnyagdev.org and available from local Cornell Cooperative Extension offices.