
Upcoming programs, workshops and trainings.

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Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Ulster, Orange, Sullivan
and Dutchess Counties

Southeastern New York Region Cornell Cooperative Extension Livestock Team



Weekly Livestock & Pasture Update - April 2nd, 2018

Working with Your Processor

I am happy to report that we had a very healthy turnout for our "Working with your Processor" symposium last week. Most of the question and concerns fell into two groups.

How do I ensure that my animals get in because there seems to be less processors than there used to be, and how should I cut up animals to sell for market? It is true that there are fewer processors but on top of that there are a lot more regulations and that cost money to implement. The processors themselves are reporting to us that there is barely enough business to keep them afloat because there are very few folks processing in the spring time. To make a long story short, don't count on more processors opening up in our area BUT you can and should develop relationships with a few of them in the area. The general consensus is that anything within about 4 hours can be considered local and that would give Ulster County residents access to about EIGHT different processors. As far as the second question goes, you've got to match your product to your market and that requires a business analysis and

plan to target. Check out the tips below and let me know if you have any further questions about working with your meat processor.

This can be one of the most convoluted processes for small farms to navigate and I am constantly fielding calls asking for advice on the process, the regulations surrounding slaughter, and where these products can be sold or distributed.

What follows are some general tips that I have acquired for when it's time to process your animals.

1. Make your appointments at least 6 months in advance for large animals. Most ranchers and farmers will routinely make all of their appointments a year in advance for their entire season and if you call a couple of months out you will most certainly be put on the waiting list.
1. If you do find yourself in a bind here is a handy map of all of the USDA inspected slaughterhouses in New York State. With a few phone calls you can usually find someone to process your animal in some of the less populated areas of the state, although this will certainly require a longer trip.

<http://www.cceoneida.com/assets/Agriculture-Files/Buy-Local/Slaughterhouse-Map-updated-2015.pdf>

1. Communicate with your processor! Every facility has their own cut sheet and a certain way that they do things. Before you fill out your cut sheet, sit down and think about what you or your customers are going to want as far as cuts go. Do you want to sell one or two pound packages of hamburger, do you want your steaks cut in 1 inch or 2 inch widths, and are you going to keep and package your organ meats? You need to know this before you go in to fill out your cut sheet. And don't be afraid to ask questions. These guys are the experts and if they are not willing to give you a little of their time to get things right for the customer then maybe this partnership is not such a good fit?
1. Talk to other farmers in the area. Ask them what they liked and possibly didn't like about certain processors. Most farmers are more than happy to share their opinion and tend to be very loyal to the processors that they feel do a good job.
1. Shop around. Most processors have websites that list their kill fee and price per pound for processing. Each facility does this differently and even though one place is less expensive it does not mean they are the best choice.
1. The USDA makes the rules for retail cuts and each animal is a little different. A simplified version of these regulations is that cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs must be inspected at a USDA slaughterhouse to be sold at retail. Poultry can be processed and sold on farm or at farmers market as long as you are doing the work and are processing less than 1000 birds per year. Poultry can be sold to stores and restaurants if they are butchered under a 5-A license. The different types of 5-A licenses are complicated so review the booklet or talk to your local 5-A processor about your options for selling your finished poultry in retail establishments.
1. Custom slaughterhouses are not USDA certified. These facilities are most often used to process deer and wild game in season. They can and often do process livestock but these cuts cannot be sold as retail and will often have a "not for sale" stamp on the packaging.
1. For a product such as bacon to be smoked it often has to be shipped offsite to a different facility. The process of smoking is also governed by USDA rules and regulation and many slaughterhouses do not have the space to devote to this. This means it will take longer to get your cuts back if the pieces need to be sent out to another facility.
1. Talk to your butcher about less than ideal animals. There are times, especially in cattle, where the animal may look finished and ready from the outside but when they process the carcass they find the meat to be less than ideal. Selling tough steaks is not easy so instructing the processor that if the steaks are not up to muster he should grind them for burger or make stew meat. Granted you will not have the premium steaks to sell but you will not have to sell marginal steaks either.
1. Moving animals to processing is going to be the most traumatic thing they ever experience. From loading to riding in an enclosed box behind a moving vehicle, this are all things that are both unnatural and terrifying for the animals. There is no rationalizing this with the stock but you can make your load in easier by prepping in the days prior to putting them in trailer. Put the trailer in the field and put treats in it to entice them to walk in. If that is not possible then use treats and low stress handling to catch, sort, and push through the handling facilities in preparation for the load out.

There are some great resources for all of the regulations dealing with processing in the state. Below is a link to [Direct Marketing Livestock & Poultry](#) in the state. This is an invaluable resource for all things livestock and has an extensive section on slaughter and marketing regulations.

This is the last stage in producing animal products. In some cases you have spent years tending to these animals so you absolutely must ensure that the product coming out the processor is the best it can be.

Fall Issue of Livestock 360 is Now Available[Link to Livestock Weekly Blog Spot](#)[CCE Livestock Resource Pages \(lots of information on all types of livestock, common and not so much\)](#)Photo Credit: Andrew Milligan, [young highland cow](#)

Livestock/Field Crops Program Announcements
(in chronological order, new announcements are in red)**Hudson Valley Farm Link Network**
A Project of the American Farmland Trust

In response to farmland loss, the challenges faced by farmers in accessing farmland and the difficulties faced by families as they try to transfer their farms, agriculture and conservation groups came together to create the Hudson Valley Farmlink Network. The Hudson Valley Farmlink Network is a partnership of 15 organizations, coordinated by American Farmland Trust, offering the Hudson Valley Farmland Finder website, training and networking events, and one-on-one assistance for farmers and landowners.

The Hudson Valley Farmlink Network serves 13 counties: Albany, Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Rensselaer, Rockland, Saratoga, Sullivan, Ulster, Washington, and Westchester.

Please contact us with questions and to receive assistance with finding your farm, developing your farm succession plans, preparing your land for agriculture or conserving your farm.

[Hudson Valley Farmland Finder](#)

Rabbits for Beginners (rescheduled due to weather!)
Thursday, April 5th, 2018, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
CCE Ulster
232 Plaza Road
Kingston, NY 12401

Are you interested in growing rabbits to sell as food or breeding stock? Our guest presenter, Ashley Pierce, will review all the techniques and knowledge you need to get started with your very own successful and profitable rabbit enterprise.

Further details and registration options will be posted. To be sent a brochure and registration information as soon as it becomes available, contact Carrie at 845-340-3990 x311 or email cad266@cornell.edu.

[More Information on Beginning Rabbits Course](#)

Adult Tractor Safety Workshop
Saturday April 21st, 2018, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Hudson River Tractor
2173 New York 203
Chatham, NY

A workshop for adults who wish to enhance or improve their machinery handling skills enabling to better operate and maintain farm machinery. The cost is \$5 if you preregister or \$10 at the door. You can register by calling Tove Ford @ 518-765-3518

[Adult Tractor Course Link](#)

Small Ruminant Parasite Control
Tuesday, May 1, 2018, 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Tuesday, May 8, 2018, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

CCE Ulster
232 Plaza Road
Kingston, NY 12401

Parasites are the most important limiting factor in small ruminant flocks. In this class Jason Detzel, our Livestock Educator, will discuss the lifecycle and biology of parasites affecting small ruminants and the many ways to treat them.

A fecal egg count is a simple procedure you can perform at home to get an approximation of the parasite load that your sheep or goats are carrying. In addition to learning more about this, we'll go over management techniques that will allow you to:

- lower your counts
- treat to avoid resistance
- promote healthy flocks.

At the completion of the course you will have monthly access to the CCEUC microscope to analyze your own samples for a small fee.

[More Information on Parasite Control Course](#)

Lamb/ Goat Processing Workshop at SUNY Cobleskill
September 14th, 2018
SUNY Cobleskill
State Route 7
Cobleskill, NY

Harvest New York, in collaboration with SUNY Cobleskill, is offering workshops for animal producers on meat processing to maximize profit! Classroom materials and lunch are provided.

Register:<http://cceschoharie-otsego.org/events/2018/01/18/lamhttps://www.htrnews.com/story/opinion/2018/02/09/wisconsin-climate-change-how-eating-steak-can-make-difference-nissa-enos/316798002/b-goat-processing-workshop>

Livestock/Rancher Research

Why do Dairies Spread so Much Manure in the Spring

I've gotten two calls about this topic last week so if this is something that you have been wondering about...here ya go!

[The sweet smell of spring manure](#)
[Spring manure applications considerations](#)

FALL EDITION! **It's HERE! Livestock 360 is back.**

The Fall Issue of Livestock 360 the newsletter of the Southeast NY Livestock Team, is available. If you are not on the distribution list for this newsletter and would like to receive it, at the bottom of this e-mail choose "update subscription preferences" and select Commercial Livestock Production or Backyard Livestock Production.

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