



Using underutilized grasslands to improve the economic viability of the Southern Tier while providing viable careers for beginning farmers

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Stocker Short Course.

- As one of the few people unable to attend the actual Stocker Short Course in 2017, Jason Detzel, Ulster County Senior Resource Livestock Educator and owner of Diamond Hills Farm benefited from the archived recordings of the Short Course. Jason presented a webinar “Beef Stocker Production and Financial Analysis” on January 22.
- Weekly “2018 recap/2019 look-ahead” webinar presentations ensued from 4 of our 2017 Short Course participants. Recordings of the first two can be found at <http://blogs.cornell.edu/beefcattle/eventsprograms/southern-tier-stocker-initiative/>. The speakers were:
 1. First year stocker operator, Mike (and Michelle) MacFarland of Catontop Farm, Caton, NY, who started their enterprise with the purchase of 6 stockers in January 2018; and grew it to 21 by years end.
 2. Garry Wilson of Leroy, NY, who runs a cow/calf to finish operation, as well as runs 15 – 20 stockers a year.
 3. Vicki Kuipers who runs a small family farm in Byron, NY with her husband Les.
 4. Winnie and Paul Nelson of The Nelson Farm in Hamden, NY who stocker approximately 200 cattle.

Research.

What are the main hindrances preventing Upstate New York Farmers from embracing the Stocker enterprise?

Paper surveys intended to provide answers to this question debuted at this year's Farm Show at the NYS Fairgrounds in February. Subsequent data collection will include, but not limited to, online links, direct emails, in-person and distribution through CCE educators. The aim is to collect approximately 600 respondents' feedback at which time an analysis of data will be done.

USDA Market News Reports.

In the last quarter price and animal data were collected at 46 weekly auctions and 19 special beef feeder and dairy replacement auctions (<https://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news/livestock-poultry-and-grain-list-reports>), by Cornell/NYS/USDA Market News reporters. Auction prices on dairy x beef cross calves continue to document a \$70 - \$150/hd premium to Number 1 Holstein bull calves. Interest by producers in this cross bred calf was evident by attendance at the daylong session of the New York Beef Producer's Association Winter Management meeting in January (<http://www.nybpa.org/abwc.htm>). The day was focused entirely on the cross bred calf. Meetings and visits with dairies producing these calves and those interested in growing them continue. Where and how these calves can fit into the stocker enterprise remains not completely known. The value of collecting this market data and meeting with producers will provide a basis to answer these important questions.

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