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MS Animal Science Exploring Barriers to Development of Stocker Cattle Operations in New York

Funding is available for a 2-year assistantship for a MS student in the Field of Animal Science in the Graduate School at Cornell University. The project is to identify barriers that prevent more wide-spread stocker cattle operations in the Southern Tier of New York (STNY). STNY includes the counties of Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Schuyler, Steuben, Tompkins, and Tioga.

STNY once had numerous small to mid-sized dairy farms. Dairy farming has shifted to larger acreages of land that support row crops needed to feed high-producing dairy cows. Without row-crop-producing land, a high percentage of STNY dairies have gone out of business, idling millions of acres that are well-suited to high-quality forage production. There are thriving stocker enterprises in states in the mid-southern US. Why are stocker operations not more prevalent in STNY? And, once the barriers are known, what are some solutions to overcoming them? The MS student will conduct research using tools such as surveys, case studies, and traditional experimentation to answer these questions.

A BS in Animal Science or a related field is required. Experience with the stocker enterprises is desirable. As the project may involve behavioral decisions by animal and land owners, experience with the social sciences could be beneficial.

Assistantships in the Cornell Graduate Field of Animal Science include full tuition (\$20,800), health insurance (\$2,712 in 2017-2018), and an annual stipend of \$29,657. More information on the Cornell University graduate school can be found at <https://ansci.cals.cornell.edu/graduate>. The application process starts at <http://gradschool.cornell.edu/admissions/apply>. Please contact bjj6@cornell.edu if you have specific questions about the application.

This project is supported by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets project “Stocker cattle: Using underutilized grasslands to improve economic viability of the Southern Tier while providing viable careers for beginning farmers.”