

Cornell University Cooperative Extension

Capital Area Agricultural & Horticulture Program Staff

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*The Ag Report is pro-
duced by
Aaron Gabriel*

Topics in this issue:

Planting hay

Corn information

Small Grain Forage

Cover Crops

Pastures

Brown Knapweed

Capital Area Ag Report May 3, 2017

**“Men and nature must work hand in hand.
The throwing out of balance of the resources of nature
throws out of balance also the lies of men.”
— Franklin D. Roosevelt**

**Do you have a field crop question?
Pest to identify?
Crop symptom to identify?
Then email or text me a picture:
adg12@cornell.edu
518-380-1496**

*Find me on Facebook—
<https://www.facebook.com/aaron.gabriel.5437>*

Announcements

FIELD CROP SCOUTING SCHEDULE (hands on learning of field crop agronomy and pest management)
RSVP (to Aaron, 518-380-1496, adg12@cornell.edu) appreciated but not necessary:

Tuesday, May 9 @ 1 pm. Matt Boelhke farm, 27 Dugway Lane, Hannacroix, Greene Co.

Tuesday, May 16 @ 1 pm. West Wind Farm, Czub family. 141 Verbeck Ave., Schaghticoke, Rensselaer Co.

*Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities
Cornell Cooperative Extension provides
equal program and employment opportunities*

Wednesday, May 24 @ 1 pm. Jeff Sills farm. 9883 Route 22, Hillsdale, Columbia Co.

Tuesday, May 30, 2017 @ 1pm, Will & Greg Randles farm. 990 Coach Rd., Agryle, Washington Co.

FYI

The May 2017 Penn State Dairy Outlook is available for download at <http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/j/w/jwd6/DairyOutlook%20may%202017.pdf>

Job Opportunity—NYC Urban Agriculture Specialist job posting will expire on Wednesday, May 31st; the links to the posting are:

Cornell Careers: http://tiny.cc/Urban_WDR_00010569

Academic Jobs Online (AJO): <https://academicjobsonline.org/ajo/jobs/9120>

Midwest Cover Crops Council Meeting Proceedings Online

The Midwest Cover Crops Council (MCCC) has posted the proceedings of its 2017 meeting, held in March. State reports from the MCCC business meeting are available, as well as the keynote speech on cover crop termination. Numerous presentations from the concurrent sessions on field crops, vegetable crops, and forage and grazing are also available online. (<http://mccc.msu.edu/about/meetings/#2017%20Meeting>)

Got an IPM question? Need to know the latest IPM information? The Northeastern IPM Center has got the answers with our spring webinar series, “The IPM Toolbox.” We’ve asked the experts to join us online for an hour of dialogue about an effective IPM practice, method, or effort. We have three webinars scheduled this month...

- **Katie Campbell-Nelson** (UMass Amherst) will discuss IPM planning for fruit and vegetables. **Tuesday, May 9, 2017.** 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm
- **Antonio DiTommaso** (Cornell University), **Norris Muth** (Juniata College), and **Hilary Sandler** (UMass) will discuss the most common weed control problems this time of year and how to address them using an IPM approach. **Tuesday, May 16, 2017.** 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm
- **Changlu Wang** (Rutgers University) will discuss his research project that successfully reduced cockroach infestation by 80% in public housing units in New Jersey. **Thursday, May 18, 2017.** 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

For more details and links to join the webinars, visit:

<http://neipmc.org/go/ipmtoolbox>

Hay Production Resources for New York and Similar Climates (hay manual) is on our blog at <http://blogs.cornell.edu/capitalareaagandhortprogram/hay-manual/>

Agronomy—Aaron Gabriel

Rain has held up field operations. Maybe not all the hay seedings have been completed. Some corn has been planted on gravelly soils and in the southern part of my region (Columbia Co.). High temps look to be in the low 60's at best for the next week and a half, and the 40's for low's. Planting warm season crops into cold soils can be counter productive. **Corn needs 50^o F soil temperature.** Consider the night temperatures rather than the day temps. Soils temps usually lag behind air temperature by a couple hours. If you have to get corn planted in cold conditions consider that:

- Manure and organic matter covering the soil insulates it and keeps it cool.
- A little tillage to warm up and dry out the surface may help. (Yes, I said the “tillage” word. Please don't report me. I also said “a little”.)
- Planting less than 1 1/2” deep is asking for reduced yields.
- Cold is one thing. Cold and wet is another and a recipe for disease, poor emergence, and low yields.

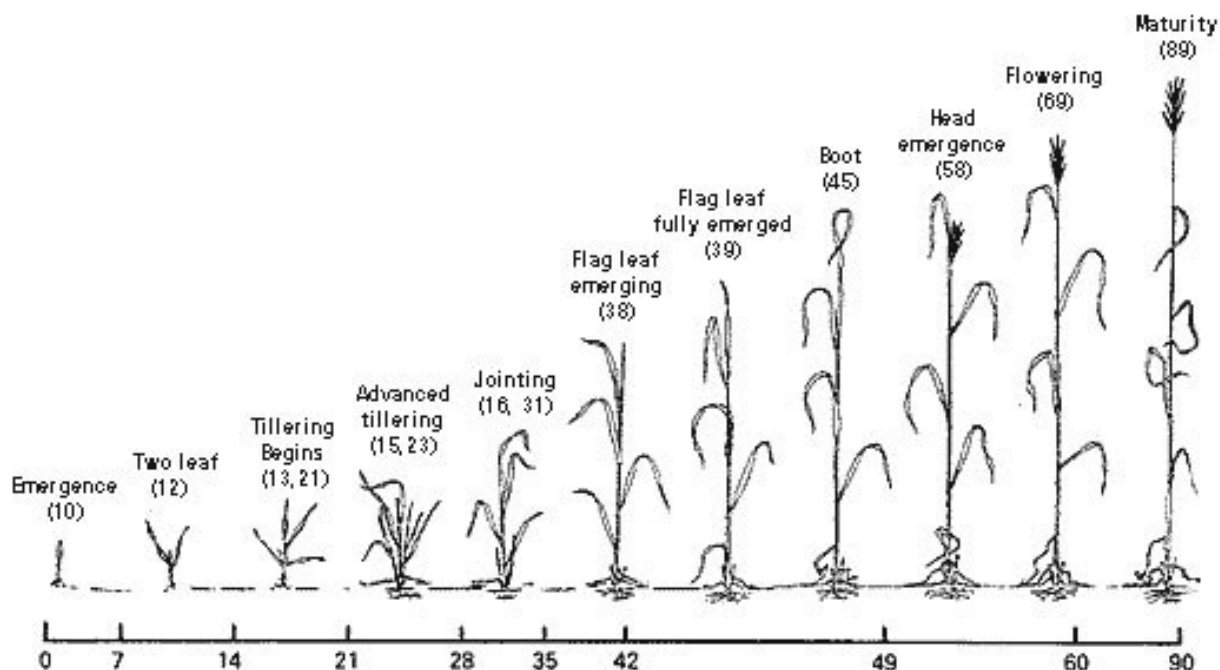
How late can you plant hay seedings? Grass should be planted no later than May 15th. Red clover and alfalfa should be planted no later than May 30th. After those dates, the tiny roots cannot grow downward fast enough to stay in moist soil as the season warms and soil moisture gets deeper and deeper. I saw orchard grass planted on June 21st one year. It was dry, but it rained 3” the day after planting. It came up great. But as usual, it dried out in July and then the weeds took over. Planting date is really set to manage moisture, but high heat could also hurt a new seeding of our cool-season grasses.

Did you frost-seed or inter-seed into an established hay field? The seedlings are going to need a chance to get established. Consider mowing or grazing the field / pasture early to let in the sun for the seedlings and to reduce competition. Be sure the ground is firm enough to not do damage. This photo shows clover seeded into orchardgrass (just emerging).

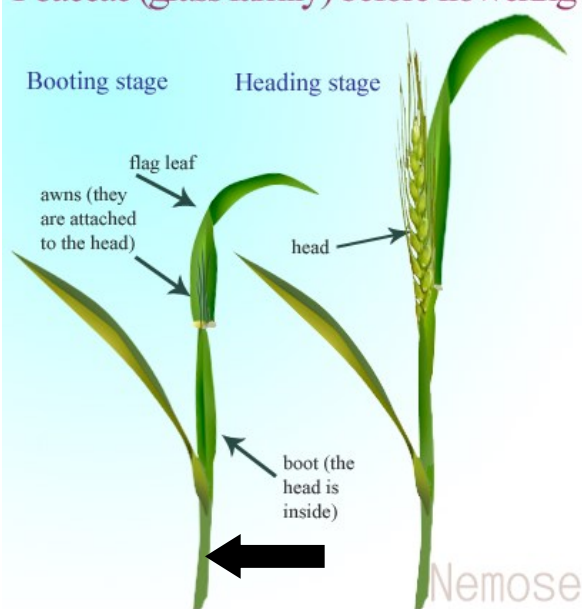


The grass must be managed to give the clover a chance.

Keep an eye on winter rye and winter triticale. They are in the stem elongation phase of growth—a function of day-length (and temperature only a little). Harvest at the “flag leaf stage” for top quality (tip of the last leaf is popping through the top leaf collar, but the leaf collar and leaf sheet of the last leaf are still wrapped in the sheath of the next to last leaf). See the diagrams on the next page.



Poaceae (grass family) before flowering



When harvesting small grains for dairy-quality feed, the seedhead should be within the sheath of the next to last leaf—inside the sheath indicated by the black arrow.

Pastures are about ready to be grazed in many locations. Give plants time to grow and establish new roots. Then graze down to no less than 4 inches. If you do not let new roots grow in the spring, the plants will have no deep roots when the dry spells come. Then you have to feed hay.

Spring Barley is being planted and is emerging in some areas. *Growing malting barley is very different that growing barley for feed.* Go to our Malting Barley webpage to learn the quality parameters needed for malting barley and how to grow it—<https://fieldcrops.cals.cornell.edu/small-grains/malting-barley>.

Malting Barley in Columbia County

The dense areas are unintended planting across end rows. Organic farmers often plant fields twice, planting perpendicular rows to shade out weeds more quickly.



Mixed-species Cover Crops was the topic of a May 1st Twilight meeting led by Justin O’Dea of CCE Ulster Co., and Ebony Murrell. Ebony is working on the project, Multifunctional Cover Crop Cocktails for Organic Systems at Penn State— <http://agsci.psu.edu/organic/research-and-extension/cover-crop-cocktails>.

In this photos there is winter canola, winter triticale, crimson clover, and Austrian winter pea. This mix has three different plant families, each with a different function. By having a diversity of root systems you improve the soil microbes and the physical structure of the soil. The canola is attracting pollinators. Of course, the legumes are adding nitrogen. There is tons of cover crop information on the web. Contact me if you cannot find what you are looking for.



SO MANY INPUTS TO CHOOSE FROM! How do you decide which inputs to use when growing

corn??? As I have looked at information and research on various inputs (pop-up fertilizer, seed inoculants, enhanced-efficiency fertilizers), I learned that many products will do what they say, but will be profitable only in certain circumstances. So, put in test strips of new products and methods, to see when something works and when it does not. If a products sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Go to www.fieldcrops.org for information.

Brown Knapweed is a nasty weed that will ruin hay. It is unpalatable and can take over hay fields. I noticed that I see it on hay farms, and not dairy farms. So a while back, I surveyed dairy farmers in our area to see if they have brown knapweed. Some said they were not familiar with it and others said that they do not have it. I think that the intensive harvest schedule and fertility on dairy farms favors the hay crop and not the knapweed.



How brown knapweed looks now.

An illustration to ID brown knapweed. The flower is easily identified.



Knapweed can be hard to control. The most effective herbicides are not registered in NY. When used, the herbicides remain active in the manure of animals that eat the treated hay. Then it causes havoc when the composted manure and used in gardens.

We were able to control it (so far) on one farm. The fields were newly rented, low in pH and fertility. A new seeding of orchardgrass was infested with brown knapweed. So, lime and fertilizer was applied, and it was sprayed with a common growth regulator herbicide for grass hay. ADDITONALLY, the field was mowed (rotary mower) three times during last year. This year, you can barely find a knapweed. The with and without management results are below (pictures taken at the same time).

