



**NEW YORK CORN & SOYBEAN
GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

MAGAZINE

WINTER 2024



ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The New York Corn & Soybean Growers Association (NYCSGA) is a grassroots organization representing corn and soybean producers' interests.

The Association works to develop and expand markets, educate members and consumers, and enhance public policy for corn and soybean growers in the Empire State. We also sponsor research on corn and soybean production, utilization and marketing and host educational programs on management, production, and marketing. The Association is a Qualified State Soybean Board (QSSB) and administers New York's soybean checkoff.

NYCSGA has served as the QSSB for New York farmers as part of the national soy checkoff program since 2010. The farmer-driven board oversees and manages New York's share of funds received from the checkoff program.

Through the checkoff, each soybean farmer contributes one-half of one percent of the price of each bushel at the first point of sale. The NYCSGA Soybean Checkoff keeps one-half of the checkoff funds collected to conduct state-specific soy research and promotion activities on farmers' behalf.

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NEW YORK CORN & SOYBEAN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

WINTER 2024

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Reverdy Stein of River Ridge Farms in Piffard, NY wraps up a successful fall harvest.



Tom Corcoran, President,
New York Corn & Soybean
Growers Association

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Congratulations! You did it! We've made it through another growing season. Although a few fields had disappointing yields, most farmers I've spoken to were pleased with their yields and quality. I bet we will see outstanding soybean yield numbers at our Winter Expo.

Speaking of our Winter Expo, please join us January 16, 2025 in Syracuse for an educational day with fellow corn and soybean growers. Keep an eye on your inbox for registration information.

2025 is going to be an interesting year in our country as we welcome in a new administration. Our team at Ostroff Associates will be hard at work representing our members in Albany, and our national affiliates American Soybean Association (ASA) and National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) will be keeping us informed about news in Washington D.C.

During the coming months as you prepare your farm for spring, remember that the New York Corn & Soybean Growers Association (NYCSGA) Board of Directors and our Executive Director Colleen Klein are also hard at work fulfilling our mission to provide voice, value, and vision for all New York corn and soybean producers. We will continue to be the leading advocate for the sustainable growth of the New York corn and soybean industry through innovative initiatives, partnerships, and education. Thank you to all of our members who continue to strengthen our industry.

Hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season. Here's hoping 2025 will be your best year yet! ■



YOU'RE INVITED!



Thursday,
January 16, 2025



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Syracuse, NY

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2025

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2025

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their achievements
in agriculture!

Nominations are due December 15, 2024.



Shawn Hackett
Keynote Speaker

WINTER EXPO AGENDA

9:00 am	Registration Opens
10:00 am	NYCSGA Welcome & Year in Review
10:15 am	NYCSGA Annual Meeting
11:00 am	Policy State of the Union
12:00 pm	Awards Luncheon
1:00 pm	Core Content
3:00 pm	Keynote Speaker – Shawn Hackett
4:00 pm	Happy Hour

All New York corn and soybean farmers are invited to
attend the 2025 Winter Expo – see you there!



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NEW YORK AGRICULTURE IN ACTION

1. Aquaculture experts from China visit Du Mond Ag in Union Springs, NY

A U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC)-led aquaculture trade team from China visited Du Mond Ag in Union Springs, NY this fall. Todd Du Mond shared his farm's commitment to sustainability and the many practices they implement that make U.S. Soy second to none.

2. U.S. Soy advantages highlighted in Paris

New York Corn & Soybean Growers Association (NYCSGA) Vice President Brad Macauley joined USSEC in Paris, France to showcase U.S. Soy's advantages in sustainability and health at the Salon International de l'Alimentation (SIAL) International Food Exhibition.

3. National corn leaders gather in New York for fall policy meeting

New York delivered a flawless backdrop for the NYCSGA to host state and national executives from organizations affiliated with the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) this October. This meeting is an important opportunity for state and national leadership to discuss federal policy such as the farm bill and trade issues.

4. Renewable energy powers classrooms at SUNY Morrisville

SUNY Morrisville, a college collaborating with the National Oilheat Research Alliance (NORA) in their Renewable Energy Program, recently took delivery of B100 Bioheat® fuel, renewable energy they will use in their classrooms.

5. First retail fuel station for renewable diesel opens in Hunts Point

New York's first retail fuel station for renewable diesel (RD) opened in Hunts Point, marking a significant step toward cleaner air with sustainable, low-carbon, non-fossil fuel options in the community. Highlighting the need for renewable fuels in Hunts Point – an area with disproportionately high rates of asthma, as reported by the health department – the grand opening event showcased the immediate benefits of RD. ■

Chronicles of Colleen

The Diary of a Girl Who Chases Magic Beans

By Colleen Klein, Executive Director, New York
Corn & Soybean Growers Association

Day 1 (Sunday/Monday)

I left Wyoming County in the middle of the night. It was damp, dark and hard to see to the depth of the half-harvested fields, but that didn't stop me from imagining the stories they hold. It's a tale that tells itself as you journey from West to East across the Empire State. As I drive, I think of the saga of soybeans, nestled in their now crisp pods set on skeleton stems, the growing season complete but path that was just beginning.



Colleen Klein,
NYCSGA Executive
Director

In the heart of New York dairy country, they lie in wait, their fate likely to end in passage through a bovine before ultimately reaching a human mouth in the form of milk or meat, a less obvious path in the story about how we feed the world. The relationship between crops and cows is a natural partnership but one that we so often fail to explain in the always push-pull rhetoric of conversations about our food system.

New York is such a special place because in a matter of hours, you can find yourself from the rolling hills of the Genesee Valley with its rich fertile agricultural lands to the glittering streets of Manhattan and one of the largest consumer bases in the country. Mouths to feed? From animals to people, we've got 'em everywhere.

The city holds collection of the most exciting uses of soybeans in the world, just a few hours from where they are grown. In addition to their many culinary uses, you can also find soy-based hydrolytic fluid powering the elevator system in the Statue of Liberty, fueling the city's municipal vehicle fleets, and in tires, sustainable plywood, paints, and synthetic lawns.

A few minutes later, you can be in one of the largest travel hubs in the world, the John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK). JFK airport is on the forefront of sustainable air travel with Jet Blue recently announcing its commitment to use sustainable aviation fuel, a product that uses non-petroleum feedstocks, at the airport. It also houses the Department of Transportation Fleet Services responsible for maintaining hundreds of biodiesel powered vehicles in the city.

JFK also happens to be where I am standing now, about to exit the country on another fantastic journey to chase the magic of United States grown soybeans. I'm on a flight to Dubai, a long trip which will eventually land me in Bangalore, India at a future time I can't

quite wrap my head around. I'm excited about soybeans and equally worried about missing the Bills game.

I travel ahead in time and touchdown in Dubai – and I race to see if my guy Josh Allen has secured enough touchdowns for a win. Has he? No. Not to worry, the resilience of a Bills fan is not unlike that of the American farmer, strong and unwavering.

After a lengthy layover, I arrive at the final destination. Bangalore is bustling. At 6:00 pm, the sun is down but the lights are up. The ride from the airport to the hotel reminds me of Manhattan with its bright lights, brilliant billboards, and questionable driving. The shuttle driver apologetically explains the traffic situation to me but he needn't. Luxury brand ads are everywhere; this is not a city that is shy about where it wants to go.

I am greeted at the hotel with a level of professionalism and hospitality that is so



accommodating it makes me uncomfortable. We have become desensitized to a general lack of kindness and respect for each other in the U.S. that has it become normal to me, and this interaction makes that ever more obvious. I am tired but grateful to be here and look forward to what the week holds.

Day 2 (Tuesday)

I settle in with my colleagues for a briefing on the current state-of-affairs in India. We are treated to a robust presentation by Kevin Roepke, U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) Regional Director of South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Kevin is extremely knowledgeable, and I am suddenly worried I didn't do enough homework.

India is the world's most populous country boasting 1.4 billion inhabitants. With so many mouths to feed, it's not surprising to learn of the opportunities for U.S. soybeans. Chandrasekar Sankaranarayanan, the South Asia Aquaculture



Lead, tells us about the exciting developments in aquaculture, the fastest growing food production sector. I learn the term "blue revolution," which refers to the significant growth globally in aquaculture. I find the farming of fish fascinating. The U.S. is the number one importer of frozen shrimp from India, so for seafood lovers like me,

we're part of the movement!

Feeding people globally is one of my favorite topics, and Deeba Giannoulus, the Regional Head of Corporate Affairs at USSEC, delivers an inspiring brief on their "Right to Protein" initiative, which strives to raise awareness about the importance of protein in human diets and to encourage sustainable consumption and production of protein sources, particularly focusing on soy protein. Through campaigns and educational outreach, the initiative works to improve nutritional outcomes, tackle protein deficiency, and encourage sustainable agricultural practices worldwide. It's a program they should be particularly proud of, in my humble opinion.

We meet virtually with Joanna Brown, the United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) Ag Attaché at the U.S. Embassy. The genetically engineered regulations in India have been a challenge for imports from the U.S., but one they are continuing to work on.

After a day that has left me full of information and curiosities, we head out on a field trip to CP Foods India, which is collectively the world's largest producer of feeds. We encounter a bit of a language barrier, but not to worry Jim Sutter, CEO of USSEC, guides us seamlessly through it.

I'm continuously left in awe of Jim's endless energy. He's a true soybean believer whose global network is so expansive it's hard to wrap your mind around. He is met with incredible admiration by all of our hosts, and it does not go unnoticed by anyone in his company. I want his secret to seemingly endless energy and positivity. I hope it's the magic of the beans and that it's contagious.

Day 3 (Wednesday)

We start the day with a connection to home. It is a small world, after all. Venkateshwara Hatcheries began in 1971 as the sole franchisee of Babcock Poultry – then based out of Ithaca, NY. They bred a chicken specifically designed for India's climate and production challenges. Today Venky's, as it's known, is the largest provider of day-old chicks in the country, enjoying 75% of the market share. Dr. Harsh Kumar Shetty of their flagship brand Vencobb is a very engaging man, and he passionately shares with us the history and nuances of the poultry industry in India. With feed being an important and pressing issue in coming years, a partnership and preference for U.S. Soy appears paramount.

Continuing on our path to understanding poultry, we are joined by Suresh Chitturi, Managing Director at Srinivasa Farms, who talks to us about all-things-eggs. The potential for



increased egg consumption in the country is significant and enforces the previous message that there will be needs for which our product is an egg-cellent fit.

At this point, it has become abundantly evident that while there is a definite need for assistance in providing for the countries growing protein needs, there is also an extreme pride in what the agriculture industry is already achieving there. There's a delicate balance here that I internally note we would do well not to disrupt. Our efforts should be seen as complimentary to – not in competition with – India's own farmers.

We head out on another afternoon adventure, finding ourselves at Evolved Foods, a company whose mission is to take India from protein deficient to protein sufficient one

meal at a time. Evolved Foods offers plant-based meat flavored foods targeted at vegans and vegetarians. Their website describes their products as “a juicy and chewy whole muscle texture plant protein made from soy protein, rice protein, and coconut fat. This versatile, ready-to-cook ingredient can be used to prepare your favorite dishes to make them delicious, nutritious, and protein rich.” I'm intrigued.

“Belief and beans may not grow stalks into the sky, but they do grow relationships, and that's where the true magic lies.”

When we arrive, their chef is busy preparing a variety of their offerings for us to sample. This meat-loving group is skeptical but mostly optimistic. Indian food is notoriously spicy, which deters some of us – but not this girl. I don't know if I'll regret it, but I request for them to turn up the heat.

We sample chili basil stir fry, Karnataka donne biryani, and mangaluru ghee roast – among other things – and I love it. They've created a product that is full of texture and flavor and I have to say, very meat-like. My only disappointment is

learning that we can't get it at home yet. I'd love to put their products into rotation in our home. We also learn about the to-go market strategy that is

prevalent here – a theme that will continue to resurface the rest of the trip.

From here we travel to Fresh-To-Home, an impressive venture that offers processed, packaged, and delivered fish, shrimp, chicken, and lamb. They utilize an incredible technology supported interface that allows their customers to purchase meats from an app and have fresh product at their home in “10 minutes.”

We hear this delivery time quoted a lot, and I try to understand how that can be possible in a city as large and populated as Bangalore where delivery is conducted via tuktuk.

The CEO of Fresh-To-Home is an impressively humble man considering his achievements. He was the former head of Zynga who created a little game called Farmville you may have heard of. It is clear that Bangalore's reputation as the Silicon Valley of India is definitely at play here. Everything is being done by app, from ordering to payment systems and beyond.

We are treated to more food. It is delicious, and I wonder when I'm going to reach my spice threshold – but I'm not there yet! This is good news because we still have a dinner with Franklin Manuel, head of oilseeds with Cargill India, on the agenda.

Franklin confirms much of the information we have already learned but expands on the rapidly growing dairy sector which I have been anxiously waiting to explore. A dairy girl at heart, this segment of the industry really captures my attention. Although we are on a soybean adventure, we talk quite a bit about corn demand from the government for corn-based ethanol. They're moving toward E20 by the end of 2025, but lack the crops in the country to make this happen.

I head to bed full of food and thought and look forward to our exploration of the dairy sector on tomorrow.

Day 4 (Thursday)

Breakfast consists of a buffet of local delights and a meeting with Neerja Shrivastava of NUQO India and Divya Ghulati from the Compound Livestock Feed Manufacturers Association in which we gain further insight into the feed sector, which is dominated by dairy, poultry, and aquaculture.

Following breakfast, we take an exhilarating van ride through the jewel-toned streets of Bangalore. The Garden City is a mix of lush, curling limbs of historic greenery and unexpected surprises. I am bordering on being obnoxious in my quest for a glance at the population of rogue cows I hear shuffling through the streets. India is not only the most populated country in the world, but also the largest producer of milk. It accomplishes this through farms with only two to three cows a piece, which is mind blowing to me. I finally see a cow and let everyone know about it.

We speed into the countryside where we visit the Center of Excellence for Animal Husbandry (CEAH). Monkeys swing through the trees and

a handful of emus watch on as we exit the van. We meet a vibrant and personable Dr. Mahesh Subash Patlapti and his team. He radiates pride in his facility as he and his colleagues welcome us into his office. CEAH is a project from the central government of India that exists to upskill its workforce in the animal husbandry sector. The 600+ acre campus includes a model poultry farm, mother bull dairy farm, dairy bull artificial insemination farm, and instructional facilities.

We visit a Karnataka Milk Federation Farm, a modernized dairy facility that reminds me much more of what we see at home in the dairy sector. The facility houses a collection of doe-eyed Jerseys – a familiar sight – and a breed that I think is a Tharparker (but I'm not confident in this identification). The dairy industry in India is comprised of many a water buffalo, which is certainly something I am not accustomed to seeing but I find fascinating.

From there we head back into the city and make a quick stop at Nandu's Outlet another example of direct to customer marketing in India. The outlet features numerous protein options. The chain prides itself on supply chain visibility and transparency which is the drive behind their fully vertically integrated model.

We end the day with thoughtful reflection over a, explosion of sweet, spicy and savory flavors at Thai meal that I won't soon forget.



Day 5 (Friday)

I take myself on a cultural tour. Well, not really. I enlist the help of Soma Shekar, a mild mannered guide from the hotel, to take me on a cultural tour. This is for the best since I'm prone to getting myself into trouble. I haven't come this far not to experience what the local culture has to offer! We head to the Bangalore Palace followed by the Lalbagh Botanical Gardens, Cubbon Park, and Shivoham Shiva Temple. He

makes sure I'm heading home with a collection of silk scarfs and that I don't wander off. I'm not a fan of the haggle culture, but I try to participate. By the end of the day, I am thankful but overstimulated and ready to return home.

Day 6 (Saturday)

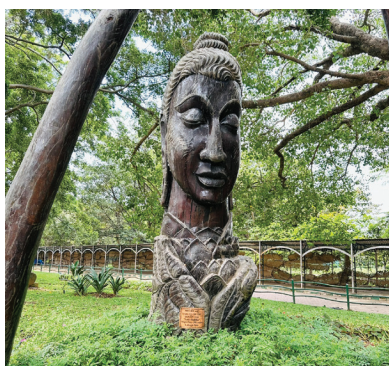
I fly backward in time and land back in New York at 9:00 am on Saturday. I lengthen my journey home by stopping in Ithaca, NY to have lunch with my daughter Harley, a freshman at Cornell University. I know that already her eyes are more open to the world than mine were at 18 years old, and for that I am so grateful. We enjoy a meal together, and I reflect on how much of this journey and our life generally revolves around connection over food. It's that fundamental fact that makes my job so rewarding.

My parents took my siblings and I to Disney World every year when we were kids, and subsequently, I thought my numerous trips 'round and 'round the World Showcase at Epcot meant I was well-travelled. Reader, I was not. As many young and old alike do, I also delighted in It's A Small World, loving to ride the slow moving boat through the whimsical whirling's of little people and the kaleidoscope of colors from around the globe. The catchy tune still sticks in my head, the message so simple about what a

small world it is and how we are all connected, and it sure does remind me of exactly what I do today. Today, I find magic in moments, in life, in beans, in real time.

In the most famous story of magic beans, Jack and the Beanstalk, Jack begins with an innocent quest to help his family but is quickly swept away by the allure of the magic bean. His intentions, though pure, get him into trouble when he sees a path to alleviating his family's suffering. The Giant's possessions weren't his to take, and although he and his mother lived happily ever after, we are left wondering if it was really the right thing to do. I'd be lying if I said it didn't cross my mind more than once that magical things like missions and markets are exciting but also very complex tales that warrant a lot of thought and intensely positive intentions to not go awry.

The purpose of this mission was to elevate preference for U.S. soybeans, differentiate them, and aid in attaining market access. That all begins with meaningful connection, which we absolutely accomplished. Connection is hard to measure, but I do know that when everyone works together, more is accomplished. Belief and beans may not grow stalks into the sky, but they do grow relationships, and that's where the true magic lies. ■





INDIA
South Asia Region

COUNTRY STATS

POPULATION (2023):

1.4 billion (Urbanization 35%)

POPULATION (2050):

1.66 billion (Urbanization ~>60%)

GDP (2023):

3.7 trillion

AVG. ECONOMIC GROWTH (2019-2023): **4.1%**

PER CAPITA INCOME (2023):

\$2,642

MARKET SNAPSHOT: INDIA

India is now considered the world's most populous country. Currently, India is the world's largest producer of milk, 2nd-largest producer of aquaculture, 3rd-largest producer of eggs and 6th-largest producer of broiler meat and has recently overtaken Mexico as the world's 4th-highest animal feed market. The country marked a watershed moment in 2021 when it first allowed imports of genetically modified soybean meal. India is also the world's largest importer of vegetable oils and soybean oil.

U.S. Soy has been collaborating in India since 1996.

MARKET STATS

Soy Usage by Sector 2022

Animal Protein (total)	6 MMT (100%)	Aquaculture	1 MMT (200%)
Pork	negligible	Oil	4.5 MMT (200%)
Poultry	4 MMT (91%)	Soy food	1 MMT (250%)
Cattle & Sheep	0.25 MMT (5%)	Other	0.15 MMT (3%)

MMT=million metric tons

SOY MARKET SIZE MY 2022/23

Product	Total Volume
Whole Bean	12 MMT
Soybean Meal	6-6.5 MMT
Soybean Oil	5 MMT
Soy Food	1.5 MMT
Soybean Isolate	20 K (60% U.S.)

MMT=million metric tons

Soil Health and Corn Silage Performance: Comparing Grain and Dairy Field Systems

By **Kirsten Workman**, Nutrient Management and Environmental Sustainability Specialist, PRO-DAIRY, and **Joe Lawrence**, Dairy Forage Systems Specialist, PRO-DAIRY



Kirsten Workman,
PRO-DAIRY Nutrient
Management and
Environmental
Sustainability
Specialist



Joe Lawrence,
PRO-DAIRY Dairy
Forage Systems
Specialist

Soil health is a key focus of corn growers working toward safeguarding their operation against increasingly challenging growing conditions and larger sustainability goals. Understanding the contributing factors that lead to resilient cropping systems in New York is an important part of farms meeting those goals. With funding support from the New York Corn and Soybean Growers Association (NYCSGA) Corn Research and Education Program, soil health data was collected from the New York Corn Silage Hybrid Evaluation Program in 2023.

The annual hybrid evaluation program offers the opportunity to compare the same hybrids in different growing environments. Measuring key soil health parameters at each location with the Cornell Assessment of Soil Health (CASH) test offered additional insight into the role of soil health in the overall performance of the crop grown at each location.

Location characteristics

The Oakfield and Madrid locations represent a common dairy rotation (corn silage in rotation with perennial hay crops) including manure inputs. In contrast, the Aurora location has a history of a row crop rotation with no manure inputs. The soil type differed by location; however, all three have the same corn silage yield index (Table 1).

Growing Degree Day (GDD) patterns and totals were very similar (Table 2). Rainfall patterns varied more by month; however, totals were similar between Aurora and Madrid (Table 2). Oakfield received significantly less rainfall (Table 2); however, given the strong yields (Table 3), it is unlikely the rainfall had a negative impact on crop performance.

Crop performance

Given the limited number of locations and uncontrolled variables between locations, this project does not definitively link correlation or causation between specific soil health parameters and crop performance. However, the trends observed offer insight into the broader impacts of soil health. Yield performance was similar at Oakfield and Madrid, with both averaging significantly higher yields than Aurora (Table 3). While it is possible for rainfall patterns to impact yields, weather data from the season suggests

Table 1:
Farm System, Soil Type and New York Corn Silage Yield Index

	Farm System	Manure History	Soil Type	Corn Yield Index
Aurora	Grain	No	Lima	18.5
Oakfield	Dairy	Yes	Dunkirk	18.5
Madrid	Dairy	Yes	Grenville	18.5

Table 2: Weather Data

	GDD (86/50)			Rainfall (inches)		
	Aurora	Oakfield	Madrid	Aurora	Oakfield	Madrid
May	262	259	285	2.27	1.86	3.76
June	440	445	455	7.34	1.49	3.37
July	660	672	643	3.93	6.09	5.75
August	511	528	514	4.17	3.25	4.73
September	397	403	417	2.32	2.08	2.18
May-August	1,873	1,904	1,896	17.71	12.69	17.61

Table 3: Key Characteristics, 2023 Forage and Soil

	Crop Yield <i>(ton/acre, 35% DM)</i>	N Balance <i>(lbs/acre)</i>	Crude Protein <i>(%)</i>	ACE Protein <i>(mg/g)</i>	CASH Score
Aurora	25.0	51	6.5	4.5 (L)	57 (M)
Oakfield	32.0	-39	8.3	8.6 (H)	72 (H)
Madrid	34.5	-70	7.0	9.0 (H)	70 (H)

that overall rainfall was not a limiting factor at Aurora (Table 2). Additionally, soil chemical analyses show that soil fertility and nutrient inputs were not limiting at the location, suggesting other factors were impacting overall yields.

Location to location differences in key forage nutritional parameters (starch content, fiber digestibility) were observed; however, there was no trend between these parameters and soil health scores. While the factors affecting the exact amount of Nitrogen (N) supplied by a soil remain elusive, qualities related to soil organic matter levels and manure inputs are associated with higher N supplies. Nitrogen balances (N available to the crop from all sources – N uptake by the crop) were calculated for each location in this project to understand the N supplying potential of the soil beyond measured N inputs (Table 3). The two locations (Oakfield and Madrid) located on fields with manure histories reported

the highest yields and forage crude protein contents while having negative N balances (Table 3). This indicates that the N taken up by the crop exceeded the calculated

amount supplied to the crop. However, the high yields and forage crude protein levels confirm that N was not limiting to the crop, indicating these soil's ability to supply



Early season corn silage plot progress



Post-harvest soil health sampling

N beyond the calculated inputs. In contrast, the Aurora location, which does not have a manure history, reported a positive N balance (more N was supplied than was used) while yield and forage crude protein levels were lower. While corn silage is not considered a significant source of diet, crude protein for dairy cows and fertilizing with additional N to increase forage crude protein is not an economically or environmentally effective practice for this crop, the trend towards higher forage crude protein values with improved soil health can be viewed as an auxiliary benefit in enhancing overall forage nutritional value. While more work is needed to validate this trend, the results observed in the CASH test related to soil protein offer a potential explanation for the trend observed. In the manured locations (Oakfield and Madrid), higher soil

protein was measured by the autoclaved citrate extractable (ACE) protein index analysis included in the CASH analysis (Table 3).

Soil protein content is well associated with overall soil health status as an indicator of biological and chemical soil health, particularly the quality of the soil organic matter. Sustained manure applications build soil protein content and thereby also build larger pools of slower release forms of N as manure is made up of compounds that are, 'relatively stable, rich in N, and microbially degradable (FS 1609)'. This could explain why these sites had negative N balances (higher nitrogen use efficiency) and were able to yield above and beyond the available nitrogen we calculate when doing traditional measures of available N inputs.

Summary

The negative impact of growing season extremes on crop performance has increased in recent years with this trend expected to intensify. This is leading to increased volatility in corn production that impacts growers' economic sustainability and ability to reliably meet the forage needs of livestock. Soil health is recognized as an important factor to protect crop resiliency in the face of these growing challenges. While location-specific interactions affect year-to-year crop performance, the evidence continues to build that improved crop performance stability is associated with characteristics of soil health. The crop response will not always come in the form of higher yields, but more often is likely to be a mitigation of growing season events that prevent the crop from reaching its full potential.

This project added to the growing dataset pointing to the addition and management of organic inputs, namely manure, as a key practice for enhancing soil resiliency and provides growers with further confidence in the return on investing in these inputs. ■



Learn more about this study by scanning the QR code.

ELECTION RECAP

All summer, we have been anxiously waiting for the dust to settle from the 2024 election cycle. As a leading voice in the New York State agricultural space, we view elections as simply setting the political table for the coming year. Regardless of outcomes, the New York Corn and Soybean Growers Association (NYCSGA) works across the aisle with both parties to advocate on your behalf and drive policy results in effort to benefit growers. Let's take a look and recap where everything landed in the 2024 election cycle before we look ahead to the new year and the 2025 Legislative Session.

The presidential election stole most of the media attention over that last few months, and as you know, Donald Trump will return to the White House in January for his second term as president. While this will dictate much of the policy discussion at the federal level, down ballot races shape much of the work we do day-to-day here in Albany. In New York, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, every member of the U.S. House of Representatives, and the entire State Senate and Assembly were up for re-election.

Across the country, Republicans won the day at a national level. They were able to maintain control of the U.S. House, flip enough seats in the Senate and take the presidency, giving Republicans a full trifecta for the first time since 2017-2018. Despite a tough day nationally, Democrats fared well in New York State. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand was re-elected in the Senate and Democrats flipped three New York Congressional swing district seats.

At the state level, the election results were very anti-climactic. Assembly Democrats were able to retain their supermajority. Senate Democrats lost one seat in Brooklyn which led to the loss of their supermajority, but they will still have a very strong majority with over 40 seats in the upper chamber. On a more direct note, both Senate Agriculture Chair Michelle Hinchey and Assemblymember Donna Lupardo won their seats with comfortable margins of over 15 points each. NYCSGA was pleased to see both chairs

win as they have been tremendous advocates for growers in Albany. Also of note, both chairs of the Assembly and Senate Environmental Conservation Committees, Deborah Glick and Pete Harchkham, won their respective seats. We look forward to working with the chairs in the coming year. It is also important to flag that both Republican minority rankers for agriculture won their re-elections, Chris Tague in the Assembly and George Borello in the Senate.

With the 2024 elections behind us and the political table set, we are full steam ahead preparing for the 2025 Legislative Session which will include the Governor's executive budget proposal in January. The Association views 2025 as a crossroads year for policy makers to take decisive action. The State will be rolling out draft regulations for its New York Cap-and-Invest Program (NYCI). This regulation will have impacts to every inch of New York's economy and will re-shape the energy landscape. NYCSGA has advocated on concerns it has with the program's design, but also highlighted that, if done properly, NYCI could be a powerful source of funding for the agricultural and biofuels sector. We are looking forward to working with the state on a successful program that delivers real benefits back to growers.

As January approaches, the outcomes from the 2024 election cycle will cause the political dynamic in Albany to evolve. However, no matter what policy discussions take shape in 2025, NYCSGA is uniquely positioned to act swiftly and be a strong voice for growers across the state. ■



Jay Holland,
Senior Vice President,
Ostroff Associates



Casey Marvell,
Vice President,
Ostroff Associates

ASA CONGRATULATES ROLLINS ON SECRETARY OF AG NOMINATION

The American Soybean Association (ASA) congratulates former Trump Policy Advisor Brooke Rollins on being selected by President-Elect Donald Trump as nominee to serve as the next United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary.

Josh Gackle, ASA president and soy farmer from Kulm, ND, said, "We appreciate that Rollins holds a degree in agriculture development and grew up on a farm and that she will bring that perspective, along with her policy experience from the previous Trump administration, to the role. The mission carried out by USDA is vital to the continued success both domestically and abroad for U.S. soybean farmers. ASA welcomes the opportunity to share the importance of soy in the U.S. economy and work with the

department and this nominee upon her confirmation on issues critical to farmers."

USDA has offices in states and counties across the country and a purview that includes farm and nutrition programs, crop insurance, forestry, home and farm lending, food safety, rural development, agricultural research, trade, and more.

ASA looks forward to working with Rollins on priorities ranging from farm bill to biotechnology, biofuels support to agricultural trade, among other issues that impact soy growers and agriculture at large. ■



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By **Brooke S. Appleton**, Vice President of Public Policy,
National Corn Growers Association

NCGA FOCUSED ON ADVANCING GROWER PRIORITIES IN NEW LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE

The November 5 election provided a clearer picture of what the next couple of years will look like in Washington. With an overwhelming majority of the votes counted, we are preparing to swear in President-Elect Donald Trump and a new Republican-controlled Congress in January.

The changes in Washington will be top-down. We will have new leadership at all the federal agencies, including those that oversee important issues for farmers, like the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). While nominations for leadership roles are coming in quickly, at this writing, we do not know who will be nominated as secretary of the USDA.

With our growers facing tough economic headwinds, National Corn Growers (NCGA) and corn grower leaders are already working hard to shape the coming policy landscape.

Our short-term focus is to advance key priorities during the waning weeks of 2024, in which there are fewer than 20 joint legislative days left. Our goals include:

- **Passing disaster relief and economic assistance for farmers.** NCGA is supportive of efforts in Congress to provide relief to growers facing financial hardships,

ranging from economic difficulties to natural disasters. This funding is proposed in addition to and as a bridge to a strengthened farm safety net.

- **Pushing legislation to allow for year-round consumer access to E15.** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) already granted a request from eight Midwestern governors to allow the year-round sale of fuel with a 15% ethanol blend, or E15, in their states beginning in 2025. But there is legislation in Congress that would codify this agreement into law, allowing for year-round consumer access to E15 across the country. We are working to pass this legislation by year's end. Access to higher blends of ethanol is good for the environment, saves consumers money at the pump and helps expand demand for corn ethanol. Let's get this done!
- **A robust farm bill.** There is still a chance we will see a strengthened farm bill passed this year, but it's a big hill to climb in only a few short weeks of a lame-duck session. While we are disappointed that there has not been more public progress, we are prepared to continue our advocacy

until a bill that reflects corn grower priorities is signed into law.

Turning to the new year and beyond, our advocacy priorities include:

- **The Next Generation Fuels Act.** With farm income on a steady decline, the Next Generation Fuels Act – which would modernize the liquid fuels system – is the best path forward to capture more of the light-duty vehicle market and stimulate demand for corn. That's why it has been and will continue to be one of our top legislative priorities. The Next Generation Fuels Act enjoys support from bipartisan members of the House and Senate. But we need additional support from members of Congress. Transitioning the gasoline supply to lower carbon, high-octane fuel, something higher blends of ethanol can provide, reduces emissions and increases vehicle fuel efficiency. Advancing this legislation will be a priority in the year ahead.
- **New foreign markets for corn.** International trade is an important demand driver for U.S. corn, as roughly 15% of the U.S. corn crop is exported. NCGA continues to advocate for proactive trade negotiations that open new markets to U.S.

corn. This includes reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers that could impede access to foreign markets. We look forward to working with the new administration to pursue trade agreements or other initiatives that address market access. NCGA will continue to call on Congress to increase funding in the farm bill to open new markets for U.S. agriculture products.

- **Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) tax credits.** The Inflation Reduction Act,

passed in 2022, provided tax credits for biofuel producers looking to make inroads into the aviation sector. To access the tax credits, producers must meet certain emission reduction standards. Unfortunately, the Biden administration has released a set of practice standards that growers must use for corn to qualify as a feedstock for SAF. The bundling of these practices does not work for most of the country's 90 million acres of corn. We look forward to

working with the Trump administration to preserve this tax credit while making the requirements for accessing it more realistic.

We certainly have our work cut out for us over the coming weeks, months, and years. But I am confident that we will move the needle for growers. To hear my analysis of the election and its aftermath, listen to the latest episode of NCGA's Cobcast.

Here's to November. Here's to democracy. Here's to a new legislative landscape! ■

Farmers Helping Farmers

Thanks to the soybean checkoff, farmers can take advantage of new technology and markets like high-oleic soybeans. More than 100,000 acres of high-oleic beans were planted in New York in 2024 – but we're just getting started. It's estimated that New York's dairy farmers have demand for 800,000 acres of high-oleic soybeans!



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If you buy high-oleic soybeans, be sure to register with the New York Corn & Soybean Association (NYCSGA) checkoff remittance tool – Checkoff Pro. This simple software will outline federal soybean checkoff requirements and help with quarterly remittances.

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Corn Stunt: A New Disease and a New Insect Vector for New York State

By Gary C. Bergstrom, School of Integrative Plant Science, Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology Section, Cornell University

The presence of the corn stunt spiroplasma was confirmed in corn fields in four non-contiguous New York counties (Erie, Jefferson, Monroe, and Yates) in October 2024.

The causal agent of corn stunt, *Spiroplasma kunkelii*, belongs to a specialized class of bacteria known as mollicutes which also includes phytoplasmas. Spiroplasma cells lack walls, and they have a short, spiral shape. They live an obligate lifestyle; i.e., they survive and reproduce only in living leafhopper hosts and in the phloem sieve elements of specific plant hosts.

The pathogen that causes corn stunt is transmitted by the corn leafhopper, *Dalbulus maidis*, also not documented previously in New York (Figure 1). That status changed this October as individuals of *D. maidis* were caught on a yellow sticky trap in Jefferson County. One captured leafhopper was confirmed by molecular tests to be infected by *S. kunkelii*. This is the first documentation of the corn leafhopper and of *S. kunkelii* in both corn leaves and corn leafhoppers in New York.

How is the spiroplasma transmitted and spread?

The corn leafhopper can acquire spiroplasma through its probing mouthparts in less than an hour of feeding in phloem tissues of infected corn plants, but it can take up to two weeks of spiroplasma replication in the leafhopper's body before the insect can then transmit the spiroplasma into the phloem of healthy corn

plants. Symptoms don't generally appear until about a month after plants have been infected. The most severe symptoms are the result of infection at early corn growth stages (from VE to V8). An infected leafhopper can transmit spiroplasma to many nearby plants and can also be blown by air currents and deposited into distant corn fields.

Where did the leafhopper and spiroplasma in New York come from?

Corn stunt is a disease complex first described nearly 80 years ago in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Spiroplasma kunkelii is the principal pathogen causing corn stunt. However, other pathogens, either alone or in combination, also can cause corn stunt; these pathogens include the maize bushy stunt phytoplasma, the maize rayado fino virus, and the maize striate mosaic virus. Leaf samples from New York have been archived for later testing for these additional

pathogens. Over past decades, there have been observations of corn stunt symptoms in several southern and eastern states but epidemics of corn stunt with well documented isolation of *S. kunkelii* have been primarily in Texas, Florida, and California. In recent years,

corn stunt has occurred as a yield-reducing disease primarily in Mexico, Central and South America, particularly in Argentina and Brazil. The principal vector, the corn leafhopper, can be transported long distances by air currents and



Figure 1: Corn leafhopper, *Dalbulus maidis*, the insect vector of corn stunt spiroplasma, is characterized by two prominent dark dots between its eyes and a deeply imbedded V-pattern on its upper thorax. Photo courtesy of Dr. Ashleigh Faris.

carries the pathogen within it. While there is no direct proof, it is very likely that long-distance atmospheric transport of the corn leafhopper into the Midwest and Northeast in 2024 was aided by storm systems that moved north from southern states.

What are the symptoms of corn stunt?

Corn stunt symptoms present similarly to other stresses in corn, including drought, soil compaction, and phosphorous deficiency. Leaf blades and sheaths can show white or yellow stripes (loss of chlorophyll) or red or purple streaks (anthocyanin pigments) and plants may show premature senescence (but without stalk rot) (Figure 2). Corn stunt varies from several common stressors in that plants can show significant stunting and ear abnormalities such as poorly filled ears, no ears or multiple ears at the same node. Symptoms may appear in patches within a field or across larger portions of a field.



Figure 2: Corn plants testing positive for corn stunt spiroplasma showed stunting, leaf reddening, and abnormal ears in (A) Erie County and (B) Jefferson County, New York near the end of the 2024 growing season.

How was corn stunt detected in New York?

From conference calls with my field crop pathology counterparts in southern and corn belt states this summer, I became aware that, in association with stunted and discolored corn plants, corn stunt and corn leafhopper were being observed further north of their usual ranges in 2024. Yet, I thought that New York was at a sufficiently northern latitude to avoid these problems. I credit a very observant agronomy specialist, Rafaela Aguiar with Kreher Family Farms, for noticing unusual symptoms in field corn in Erie County in late summer. Rafaela, a

native of Brazil and with previous agronomic experience in South America, thought the symptoms resembled corn stunt which she had seen in South America. Though I was skeptical, it turned out that Rafaela was correct. We initially collected samples of symptomatic plants (Figure 2A) from three Erie County fields and sent them to the Diagnostic Lab at Oklahoma State University. Two of the three fields came back as strongly positive for the corn stunt spiroplasma. In a race against corn harvest and frost, samples were then collected from corn in other counties where similar symptoms had been reported. Samples from Jefferson, Monroe, and Yates Counties were also positive (Figure 2B). I suggest that, given more time for scouting in October, corn stunt may have been diagnosed in many more corn fields in New York this year.

What does this mean for future corn production in New York?

Documentation of the pathogen and its insect vector in New York in 2024 demonstrated that corn stunt could occur in New York in future growing seasons. And if spiroplasma-infected corn leafhoppers arrive at earlier corn growth stages, significant yield losses could result. Then again, the atmospheric pathways that carried corn leafhoppers to New York in 2024 might not be repeated for several years. Many presume that the corn leafhopper will not overwinter as far north as New York, but, with climate change, that may be proven incorrect. There is much that we don't know. Cornell University, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the New York State Integrated Pest Management Program have committed to participate in a Corn Stunt Working Group of plant pathologists and entomologists in states affected by corn stunt and corn leafhopper. One aim of the group is to deploy a common protocol to monitor the corn leafhopper during the 2025 growing season. Also, the Cornell Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic is gearing up to offer a molecular test for corn stunt spiroplasma in 2025. ■



Read this article in full on the Cornell University "What's Cropping Up?" Blog or scan the QR code.



NEW YORK CORN & SOYBEAN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

PO Box 133
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NYCSGA would like to thank our

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As agriculture continues to evolve, the need to build strong relationships is increasingly important to every organization. The New York Corn & Soybean Growers Association's (NYCSGA) Empire Alliance Partners program aims to support strategic relationships between New York's corn and soybean farmers and organizations who wish to support our advocacy efforts.

Over the last few years, the voice of the New York corn and soybean farmer has grown louder in Albany. We have engaged the expertise of Ostroff Associates, a leading government relations firm, to help amplify our voice and have gained the respect and understanding of many legislators and key stakeholders in the process.

Whether we are fighting for our crop protection tools or championing healthy soil initiatives we do so strategically and with INTEGRITY. The financial support provided by our Empire Alliance Partners and contributors is critical for us to continue to lend the authentic voice of the New York farmer to important legislative issues now and into the future. We believe in the future of agriculture in New York, and it's important that we have a seat at the table.

If you are interested in becoming an Empire Alliance Partner, contact the organization at cklein@nycornsoy.com or (315) 313-7080 to discuss the opportunities for participation.

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