



## North Country Ag Updates

January 2017

The Coös County Ag Update is a periodic email to let you know about upcoming events, interesting stories, disease and pest alerts, etc. that are relevant to agricultural producers in the area.

Do you have comments, suggestions for future content? Send us an email, your Coös County Ag Updates team [steven.turaj@unh.edu](mailto:steven.turaj@unh.edu) or [carolyn.mcquiston@unh.edu](mailto:carolyn.mcquiston@unh.edu)



## We Could Use Your Help



### 2016 Ag Needs Assessment

Our State Extension Dairy, Forage Crops and Livestock Team is currently doing a periodic assessment of educational needs, in order to prioritize resources. We are currently approximately 4.25 people, with hopes to re-hire a person with a livestock focus to replace Daimon, now employed by USDA.

Please give this some thought and get it back to us early in the new year.

Return to: UNH Cooperative Extension, 629A Main St, Lancaster, NH 03584

Please complete and return this form

## Workshops & Events

### Meat & Poultry Producers Focus Group Meeting

The Environmental Mediation Center (EMC), which administers the NH Ag Mediation Program, invites all of NH's meat and poultry producers to take part



in one of the focus group meetings scheduled around the state in January 2017.

**Lancaster** - January 10, Tuesday  
North Country Resource Center

Newport - January 12, Thursday  
UNH Extension Office

Tamworth - January 25, Wednesday  
Remick Farm

Dover - January 26, Thursday  
William Grimes Justice Building

For more information and to participate,  
**Contact:** Cara Cargill, [carac@emcenter.org](mailto:carac@emcenter.org)  
1-800-511-2213

[Learn More About This Project](#)



## Vegetable Production School,

*Focus on Cucurbits!*

**Wednesday, January 11**

Audubon Center, 84 Silk Farm Road, Concord, NH

Want to fine-tune your cucurbit production? The goal of this workshop is to help growers fine-tune their management of cucurbit crops (pumpkins, squashes, melons, etc.). We will discuss common production challenges, new innovations, and hear tips and advice from experienced growers.

Presenters: Brent Loy & Janel Martin, University of New Hampshire and Alan Eaton, Cheryl Smith, Becky Sideman, UNH Cooperative Extension.

Questions? Contact Suzanne Hebert at 603-862-3200 or [suzanne.hebert@unh.edu](mailto:suzanne.hebert@unh.edu)

[More Information](#)

[Register Online](#)



## 2017 NH Family Farm Conference

Food Safety Modernization Act

**Thursday, January 19**

Holiday Inn, Concord, NH

[More Information  
&  
How to Register](#)



## 2017 Financial Management Workshop:

How To Develop A Balance Sheet and Income Statement So That You Can Measure and Achieve Farm Success

**Tuesdays, January 17 & 24**  
Littleton, NH

More Information  
&  
How to Register



## Discovering Your Best Markets For Sales

**Wednesdays, February 1 & 8**

Nackey S. Loeb School of Communications,  
Manchester, NH

As markets and customers change, it's important to understand who buys your products and why. Do the same facts hold if you expand and grow your business? Find out the answer to this question and more at this two-day course.

Learn More & Register Today!



## NH Farm & Forest Expo

**February 17 & 18**

Be sure to watch the website for workshop updates.

NH Farm & Forest Website

## In The News



## NHDA Mini-Grants

**Due February 15**

We are pleased to announce the 2017 Agricultural Mini-Grant Program! This is a matching grant program to provide funds for promotional efforts designed to increase the demand for New Hampshire agricultural products in existing markets, as well as to identify new markets and build product demand. Applications will be accepted from organizations or commodity groups engaged in production, marketing or promotion of New Hampshire agricultural products. Individual businesses are not eligible.

Please share this information with other interested groups. Thanks!

\*\*\*\*\*

Gail McWilliam Jellie, Director  
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[NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food](#)  
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[More Information](#)

[Application](#)

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## Conservation District Nursery Plants

### #1 Big Bluestem Grass



In this new year, I'll be including a sort of 'Plant-of-the-Month' section, those we will be adding to our Coös Conservation District's Native and Pollinator Plant Nursery in Columbia. As background: we have a one acre+ site we've started work on. To date it has had two years of cover crops, in 2016 an access road and water supply was put in, also lime applied. Funding was mostly through the NH Moose-Plate Grant. In 2017 deer fencing and plant establishments are on our agenda. The plan is to (eventually) make conservation plant materials more readily available to landowners for various useful purposes. From experience I have found a lot of these plants -not necessarily the type local nurseries might keep in stock- are rather difficult to start from seed. However, once they are growing, many can be successfully transplanted out, using rootstock material. Those are the types we will be primarily focusing upon.

For the sake of accuracy I will use both the Common and Latin Name (Genus/species) when describing these plants. There is a good reason for this. Many plants go by several common names, and quite different ones may have identical names. Using the Latin we are being more exact, also the Latin one usually adds a bit to the plant's description, often making it a little more interesting.

This first one Big Bluestem Grass a good example, the Latin is *Andropogon gerardii*. *Andropogon* translates to a man's beard which refers to the fuzzy appearance of its flower parts. Another common name is 'Turkey Foot Grass' because of its three long flower stalks that resemble turkey feet. The species name *gerardii* refers to the 1700s French botanist who first described the plant. One wonders whether he too wore a beard?

Although I will admit to being initially skeptical about growing these "warm-season native grasses" there does appear to be a good argument for their use in specific circumstances. We first tried Big Bluestem in a farm field having excessively well-drained soil (an Adams type) pretty much pure sand, very droughty. We also wanted a grass that could be cut late in summer and still provide good feed value. That was to comply with a USDA cost-share practice that encouraged ground-nesting birds, which meant no mowing until August 1. A tough scenario as many farmers would agree. The Big Bluestem did well. The picture included dates from that time period and shows a one (1) square yard quadrat, used for yield measurements, it gives you some idea of plant height and density. While our typical cool-season grasses would be just headed out stems in late summer, the BBS remained

vegetative. Their extensive root system, once established also dominated the field, dandelions were not to be found. It proved quite drought resistant, providing quality feed in a dry summer.

Native to our region it is also one of the 'tall prairie grasses' of the Mid-Western states. Cold tolerant and adapted to a wide range of soil types, fertility conditions, it can provide late season forages for livestock when managed correctly. It's deep, extensive root system makes it a natural choice for erosion control projects. Besides the wildlife value noted, unmown stands, since they resist snow flattening, may also provide protective winter cover. A lot of biomass potential makes it a biofuel candidate as well.

This is one of the first I hope to divide up and move out from a planting I have maintained behind the Extension office. There may be some left if you're interested. Steve



## Rutabagas and Other Brassicas

Seeing how well the deer, and wild turkey I'm also told, are enjoying the *Tillage Radish* now being used on fields as a combination soil compaction reducer and cover crop.... it's worth looking at their potential feed value for livestock. Yes, they are good vegetable crops as well. Pictured is a mini-trial of a new, earlier rutabaga variety (Helenor) that I took a look at this summer. I did find it to provide uniform roots and tops well into our later Autumn weather. It seemed to also tolerate the close planting pictured, not a recommended practice, but had to try it.

A lot of research on these crops was done in the early 1900s and recognized their feed value, energy source for livestock. *Forage Crops in Denmark, H. Faber* - of particular consequence during WW1 and the loss of grain shipments from Western Europe.

With the higher labor requirements for these crops, farmers turned eventually to corn, which was a more easily mechanized crop. Today brassicas (turnips, rutabaga, kales) still offer possibilities for those wanting to extend their grazing season well into the Fall. What is their potential as a storage crop? particularly for smaller operations without large land tracts and expensive corn harvesting equipment?

I have a few varieties in mind I would like to try on small acreage sites this year, more in a future newsletter.

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NH Farm Bureau



**Federal News**

**AFBF PRESIDENT DUVAL TALKS SUSTAINABILITY**  
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**USDA OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH DROUGHT**  
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**State News**

**YOUNG FARMER AWARD NOMINEES**  
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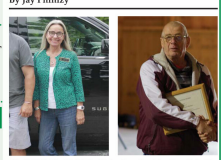
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**OP ED: OUR DAIRY FARMS ARE IN TROUBLE**  
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**NH PLANT GROWERS' ASSOCIATION NEWS**  
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New Hampshire Farm Bureau Federation  
295 Sheep Davis Road, Concord, NH 03301  
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**Ten Years of Strong Leadership**  
By Jay Phinizy



Steve Hall (left) and Bob Hasbun (right) have alternated serving as Chair of the NH House Environment and Agriculture Committee for the past 10 years. They have been successful supporters of agriculture in New Hampshire and New Hampshire Farm Bureau. Hall is pictured above writing a judge for his year's Young Farmer Achievement Award and Hasbun is pictured writing an award at Hillsborough County's Annual Meeting.

Ten years ago I was appointed Chair of the NH House Environment and Agriculture Committee. The two previous chairs whom I had the distinct pleasure of working with were George Musker from Barrington and Dave Babson from Ossipee. In 2006, both David Innes, my very competent vice chair and I had inherited a

**Ho Ho Wholesale**  
ABOVE PHOTO

Having spent some time working at a Christmas tree farm, this author knows how serious folks take the tradition of finding the perfect tree. Rarely would a customer pass off to one of Santa's little helpers the duties of locating their ideal tree, cutting it down, and logging it back to their vehicle. Traditions vary from person to person and family to family, however, and the option of selecting a pre-cut tree can save time and energy better used hanging tinsel and stripping egg nog. Michael Alena not only provides both options at Glow Hollow Farm in Plymouth, NH, but he has a substantial wholesale business to boot. With over 30,000 Christmas trees on 120 acres of land bordering the Pemigewasset River, preparing for the holiday season never stops.

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NFB Photo Contest Results - page 12



Facebook.com/nhfarmbureau

BRINGING NEWS TO N.H. FARM BUREAU FAMILIES

THE VOICE OF AGRICULTURE.  
The official newspaper of the New Hampshire Farm Bureau Federation



**Joint Winter Meeting**

UNH Extension, NH Landscape Association, NH Plant Growers Association

*Pesticide Credits & Professional Certification Credits Available.*

**Wednesday, January 18**  
**Marriott Grappone Cent**

Joint Winter Meeting  
More Information & Registration

NH Farm Bureau

In The News -  
NH Farm Bureau Blog

**Questions, The Education Center Can Help**



For answers to Homeowner questions, please check our Education Center website

**Coös Ag Newsletter Archives**



**If you missed a newsletter, they can be reviewed in our archive section.**

You can also subscribe here to other UNHCE news letters that may be of interest to you.

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Newsletter Archives

The UNH Cooperative Extension office in Coös County is located in the [North Country Resource Center](#)  
[629A Main Street](#)  
[Lancaster, NH 03584](#)



For more information on Coös County UNH Cooperative Extension [visit our website](#), [email us](#), or call 603-788-4961

### About UNH Cooperative Extension

Extension is at work in every New Hampshire county, making the state's key industries stronger, developing vibrant communities and municipal leaders, fostering healthy families and an informed and engaged citizenry, and keeping the state's natural resources healthy and productive.

The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. University of New Hampshire, US Department of Agriculture, and NH Counties cooperating.

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