

Empire Farm Days: August 8-10, 2017  
Rodman Lott & Son Farms, Seneca Falls, NY  
Show Manager Melanie Wickham  
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Conservation biologist Dr. Carmen Greenwood of SUNY Cobleskill will present “The Living Soil” keynote presentation at the Empire Farm Days Soil Health Center on Wednesday, August 9, 2017.

#### **PRESS RELEASE: June 2017**

#### **Soil Health Center: Farmer Panels, Keynote & More at 2017 Empire Farm Days**

Seneca Falls, NY. The New York State Working Group for Improved Soil Health has announced a full schedule of activities for the Soil Health Center at the August 8, 9, and 10 Empire Farm Days at Rodman Lott and Son Farms in Seneca Falls, NY.

Activities include daily USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service presentations, farmer panel discussions, cover crop field plot tours, a Wednesday-only keynote presentation with conservation biologist and invertebrate ecologist Carmen Greenwood, lunch sponsored by King’s AgriSeeds, and daily raffles of soil health tests from Cornell Soil Health Lab and Dairy One and cover crop seed from Seedway.

The Tuesday, August 8 schedule includes:

9:30 am: Fertilizer, Manure and Nutrient Management, and Cycling in Cover Cropping and Reduced Tillage Systems with USDA NRCS Northeast Regional Soil Health Specialist Jim Hoorman, Findlay, OH

10:30 am: Empire Farm Days Cover Crops Field Demonstration Tour

11:30 am: Fertilizer and Nutrient Management in Cover Crops and Reduced Tillage Systems Farmer Panel:

Jim Hershey, Hershey Farms, Elizabethtown, Southeast PA  
Steve Cuddeback, Cuddeback Farms, Skaneateles, Central NY  
John Kemmeren, Angel Rose Dairy, Bainbridge, Central NY

Moderator: Cornell SCNY Dairy/Field Crops Team Leader Janice Degni.

Pennsylvania No-Till Alliance President Jim Hershey has practiced no-till for more than 25 years and uses a five-way cover crop mix on his 600-acre livestock and grain farm in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. . In 2016, Steve Cuddeback, an advocate for high calcium lime application with minimal tillage techniques to increase yields over time, harvested record yields of no-till soybeans and zone-tilled corn grain on his 800-acre cash crop farm. John Kemmeren has practiced no-till for 40 years, no-tilling 750 acres of corn, hay and pasture at his 750-acre dairy farm

The Wednesday, August 9 schedule includes:

9:30 am Preventing, Reducing and Mitigating compaction and Its Impact on Soil Health and Crop Production with USDA NRCS Northeast Regional Soil Health Specialist Jim Hoorman, Findlay, OH

10:30 am: Empire Farm Days Cover Crops Field Demonstration Tour

11:30 am: Avoiding or Reducing Compaction Using Cover Crops, Reduced Tillage Systems and Other Management Strategies Farmer Panel:

Janette Veazey-Post, Lamb Farms, Inc., Oakfield, Western NY

Joe Brightly, Brightly Farms, LLC, Hamlin, Western NY

Scott Potter, Dairy Support Services, Cortland, Central NY

Brad Macauley, Merrimac Farms Inc., Mount Morris, Western NY

Moderator: USDA-NRCS Regional Soil Health Specialist Paul Salon.

Janette Veazey-Post co-manages a 12,000-acre progressive dairy farm, growing mostly strip-tilled corn and alfalfa. WNY Soil Health Alliance board member Joe Brightly grows grains, fresh and processing vegetables, and apples using strip tillage, cover crops and cover crop mixes, plus an interseeder he built for 2017. Since 1994, Scott Potter has provided forage production and application services to CNY dairy farms: 120 million gallons of manure/year, planting 1,700 acres of corn, and harvesting 8,000 acres of corn and haylage. Brad Macauley uses minimum till, cover cropping and double cropping to feed dairy cows and grow vegetable crops.

2:00 pm: KEYNOTE Presentation/Demonstration: The Living Soil with Conservation Biologist Carmen Greenwood, SUNY Cobleskill.

Dr. Carmen Greenwood will show how live soil-dwelling invertebrates, primarily soil mites, serve in vital ecosystem roles, provide conservation benefits, and act as indicators of your soil health. Dr. Greenwood is an associate professor of entomology at SUNY Cobleskill and a member of the New York State Pollinator Task Force.

The Thursday, August 10 schedule includes:

9:30 am: Utilizing Soil Health Practices in Vegetable Cropping Systems with Dr. Thomas Bjorkman, Associate Horticulture Professor, Cornell University

10:30 am: Empire Farm Days Cover Crops Field Demonstration Tour

11:30 am: Utilizing Soil Health Practices in Vegetable Cropping Systems Farmer Panel:

Josh Jurs, Kreher's Farms, Clarence, Western NY

Dan Henry, W.D Henry & Sons Farms, Eden, Western NY

Kurt Forman, Clearview Farms, Palmyra, West-Central NY  
Moderator: Cornell Extension Vegetable Specialist Darcy Telenko.

Kreher's Farm crop manager Josh Jurs is currently updating his 3,000 organic acre cover crop program to incorporate different species to target a balance of soil health and biology, sustainability and soil health. Dan Henry's soil health practices at W. D. Henry & Sons' 400-acre fresh market vegetable farm include planned crop rotations and cover crops. Kurt Forman of certified organic Clearview Farm builds his wide variety of soils using cover crops, composted manure, and crop rotation, helping to control weeds and insect pests, and reducing the cost of nitrogen fertilizer.

Other features of the Soil Health Center at the 2017 Empire Farm Days include:

- Soil Health Work Group members with soil health literature, tabletop demonstrations and rainfall simulations illustrating how different management practices impact soil-water interaction;
- USDA NRCS soil scientists demonstrating the Web Soil Survey to print soil maps for producers;
- Demonstrations of the cell phone Soil Web App that allows you to view soils at your current location;
- USDA NRCS Conservation Client Gateway demonstrations for producers; and
- the New York Soil Health Trailer.

The Soil Health Center at Empire Farm Days is a cooperative effort of the New York State Soil Health Work Group comprised of USDA-NRCS, conservation districts, state government agencies, educational institutions, the Cornell University Soil Health program, cooperative extension, non-governmental organizations, farmers, private consultants, and agribusinesses working towards developing innovative solutions to improve soil health and raising awareness of soil health concepts by producers and ag service providers. For more information, contact Paul Salon, 607-562-8404 ext 103, [paul.salon@ny.usda.gov](mailto:paul.salon@ny.usda.gov).

The Soil Health Center at Empire Farm Days was established in 2015 as a permanent site for soil health programming at the annual event that is the largest outdoor agricultural trade show in the northeastern U.S.

Empire Farm Days show hours are Tuesday and Wednesday 9 am-5 pm, Thursday 9 am-4 pm. Parking is \$10 per vehicle. Visit [www.empirefarmdays.com](http://www.empirefarmdays.com) or call 877-697-7837 for more details.

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

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