



2016 Empire Farm Days: August 9-11
Rodman Lott and Son Farms, Seneca Falls, NY
Show Manager Melanie Wickham
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Left to right: The 2016 Empire Farm Days Soil Health Center Seminars presenters are Dr. Matthew Ryan, Cornell University: Cover Crop Interseeding into Corn and Soybean; Dr. Janice E. Thies, Cornell University: Soil Biology and Its Impact on Soil Health and Crop Production; and Joe Lawrence, Cornell PRO-DAIRY: Utilizing Winter Grain Cover Crops for Forage.

PRESS RELEASE: June 2016

Soil Health Center Seminars Set for 2016 Empire Farm Days

Seneca Falls, NY. The New York State Working Group for Improved Soil Health has set its Empire Farm Days Soil Health Center Seminars, demonstrations, and panel discussions for August 9, 10, and 11, 2016 at Rodman Lott and Son Farms in Seneca Falls, NY.

The program for Tuesday, August 9, 2016, is:

- 9:30 am: Cover Crop Interseeding into Corn and Soybean with Dr. Matthew Ryan, Agroecologist and Sustainable Cropping Systems Specialist, Cornell University Soil and Crop Sciences
- 10:30 am: Interseeder and cover crops field demonstration
- 11:30 am: Interseeding and Cover Crops Farmer Panel

Dr. Matthew Ryan, an Assistant Professor at Cornell University in the Soil and Crop Sciences Section, conducts research on sustainable cropping systems. He works with farmers, students and other scientists to evaluate cropping system performance in terms of crop yield, profitability, environmental impact, and resilience. His current focus is on expanding the utility of cover crops by overcoming obstacles that limit their adoption and developing management practices that maximize their benefits. He also works on

conservation agriculture, perennial grains, organic weed management, agroecology, and the role of crop diversity in adapting to extreme weather events.

The program for Wednesday, August 10, 2016, is:

- 9:30 am: Soil Biology and Its Impact on Soil Health and Crop Production with Dr. Janice E. Thies, Cornell University
- 10:30 am: Cover crops field demonstration
- 11:30 am: Managing Reduced Tillage and Cover Crops Farmer Panel

Dr. Janice E. Thies is an Associate Professor of Soil Biology and International Professor of Soil Ecology at Cornell University. She has led five international workshops on Soil Molecular Ecology and served as an expert consultant to the Food and Agriculture Organization, the National Institute for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, and the US EPA Scientific Advisory Panel. Her research program in soil ecology focuses on developing, testing, and implementing methods to assess soil biological quality, remediate degraded soils, and improve soil management practices to ensure the long-term sustainability of agricultural ecosystems.

The program for Thursday, August 11, 2016, is:

- 9:30 am: Utilizing Winter Grain Cover Crops for Forage with Joe Lawrence, Dairy Forage Systems Specialist, Cornell PRO-DAIRY
- 10:30 am: Cover crops field demonstration
- 11:30 am: Winter Grain Cover Crops for Forage Farmer Panel.

Joe Lawrence has recently joined the Cornell PRO-DAIRY team as Dairy Forage Systems Specialist with a focus on developing an extension program to assist dairy producers with the critical task of providing high quality forages to their dairy herds. After growing up on a dairy farm in northern New York, Joe received a degree in Agronomy from SUNY Cobleskill. While completing his Master's degree with the Nutrient Management Spear Program at Cornell University he studied the nitrogen needs of first-year corn and manure incorporation methods for nitrogen conservation. Joe takes a whole farm approach to his agronomic work with dairy farms and applies a broad background in dairy agronomic practices.

Lunch will follow each program for participants at 12:30pm at the Soil Health Center building, 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. Soil scientists at the Center will have tabletop demonstrations illustrating how different management practices, such as no-till, conventional and cover cropping, impact soil-water interaction.

The Soil Health Seminar Center is a cooperative effort of the New York State Working Group for Improved Soil Health 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, Northeast Soil Health Specialist, USDA-NRCS, 607-562-8404 ext 103, paul.salon@ny.usda.gov.

Experience Empire is the theme of the 2016 Empire Farm Days with 300 acres of exhibits, seminars, programs, demonstrations, live animals, and test driving opportunities. Show hours are 9 am to 5 pm on Tuesday, August 9 and Wednesday, August 10, 9 am to 4 pm on Thursday, August 11. Parking is \$10 per vehicle. Daily schedules and more information, visit empirefarmdays.com or call 877-697-7837.

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PHOTOS:



A program and field demonstration on Interseeding for Soil Health and Crop Success will open the Soil Health Center seminar series at the 2016 Empire Farm Days. Photo: Brian P. Whattam



Photo above: USDA NRCS Northeast Soil Health Specialist Paul Salon organizes the Soil Health Center Seminar Series at Empire Farm Days with speakers, cover crop field demonstrations and a farmer panel presentation each day plus tabletop exhibits. Find details at empirefarmdays.com. Photo: Empire Farm Days