My Experiences with the TAg Program
In NWNY

Mike Stanyard
NWNY Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program
TAg in NWNY

1990
- IPM Specialist – Phil Sutton
- Jim Capron – Finger Lakes
- Nate Herendeen – WNY

2000
- TAg as a springboard – Entomologist
- Yates County – 35 Mennonite growers
Why did I do TAg?

- New kid on the block
- Work with County Ag. educator
- “Meet the people”
- Meshed well with my strengths
- Work closely with producers
TAg Teams in NWNY

- Corn and Alfalfa Tags ’01- ‘03
  - 9 Teams
  - 58 participants
  - 2 Teams with 11 members in ‘06

- Soybean Tags ’05 and ‘06
  - 3 Teams
  - 18 participants
TAg Team Design

- 5-7 producers
- County CCE Ag program leader
- Local Ag business representative
- Nancy Glazier – scout
- IPM specialists as needed
Tactical Agriculture (TAG) Teams

Mike Stanyard
- Extension Associate, Field Crops
Nancy Glazier
- Technician
Summer 2002
How do you Get Growers Involved?

- Target the right farms/area
- The right person – leader in the area
- Build rapport – sell yourself
- Find out what their specific needs are
- “I know your first priority is the farm”
Sell the Program

- Flexible meeting times
- Close by – reduced travel time
- Other producers who they know
- Sampling program/scout
- Notebook of references
- Invited outside speakers
- DEC credits
Building a Relationship

- Stay in contact – post cards/phone calls
- Handle concerns in person - farm visit
- Fun – upbeat - interactive
How has Tag Evolved?

- Teams are more focused/committed
- Research/Demonstration plots
- Impact oriented
- Different commodities
- Integrating other programs
Many growers began leafrolling checks late this week of May 22. (THHN) The majority of daily storms began Memorial Day week. Alfalfa weevil numbers have been high and widespread. As of May 24, we had to search to find weevils. However, at a neighboring farm, leaf rolling was very high and some parts of this field were over threshold (see photo).

Threshold is determined by randomly picking 20 stems and counting the number of short leaf rolling weevil feeding damage on the newest growth. If 44% or 20 stems show feeding damage you are at the threshold for possible treatment. This field will be cut very soon so no chemical treatment will be necessary. However, these leaves will have some growing to do (1' - 3') instead. The second cut regrowth will have to be watched carefully because 80% of the feeding damage is done by the 1st leaf instar. Treatment threshold is reached if 50% of the regrowth is showing injury and many of the leaves are still small and feeding.

As of May 26, there has been no report of anyone finding a potato weevil pest. (THHN) Alfalfa weevil populations are brought north early each year on storm fronts out of the south. In past years, I have found them as early as May 11 and as late as June 5. It won't be long!

Most of the earlier planted corn that will be harvested for silage will be harvested for silage. However, the recent spells of unfavorable weather have corn seeding growth on hold and many fields are early and yellow. The 60 degree temperatures and sunshine this holiday weekend should help the corn in the right direction.

I have not had any reports of below ground pest injury from seedcorn maggots, wireworm, or white grubs. However, I do have a report on May 25 regarding black cutworm injury. A farm in SE Wayne County reported cut stands on an early planted field on May 10. This area recently had problems with cutworms every season. Midwest states have been reporting cutworm injury from May 15. BCA moss corn does not prevent cutworms from moving to the silo and eating feed in the silo. Cutworms could have been there since May 1 and it is time to start scouting your silos for cutworm injury. Look for black, cutworms up close for cutworm injury. Stems dig around near the base of the plant and look for the dark, black cutworms feeding on the roots.

Soybeans

Soybeans are critical to Pesticide use. Soybeans are critical to Pesticide use. As of May 21, the risk of FHB infection is low, but may increase significantly with warm, humid conditions and the presence of a pathogen. A resistance to fungicides is the most important factor to consider when making a decision on fungicide application. The appropriate table (i.e., Section 6.6 of 7th & Section 240 for Proponents) must be used in the application process. Different applications may be necessary at the time of conduct application.

With the increased nitrogen costs this year, knowing your corn needs additional N or not is making a good business sense. View all the applying PSIStest kits available. The PSIStest lab is performing the PSIStest kits and the cost of PSIStest is $45.00 per sample and only milliliters of PSIStest will be reported. Their goal is to provide the PSIStest results within 24 hours of proper testing and this will take 2 days by mail.

Soybean crops can be submitted to a field testing service for seedcorn maggot, wireworm, or white grubs. However, I do not have a report on May 25 regarding black cutworm injury. A farm in SE Wayne County reported cut stands on an early planted field on May 10. This area recently had problems with cutworms every season. Midwest states have been reporting cutworm injury from May 15. BCA moss corn does not prevent cutworms from moving to the silo and eating feed in the silo. Cutworms could have been there since May 1 and it is time to start scouting your silos for cutworm injury. Look for black, cutworms up close for cutworm injury. Stems dig around near the base of the plant and look for the dark, black cutworms feeding on the roots.
What Impact has TAg had on my Extension Program?

- Most effective in initiating a change
- Most impactful to the producer
- Gets back to the CCE Executive Director
- Presentations to County BOD’s, and Supervisors and @ annual meetings
- Producers ask if a TAg will be close by
- Teams want to do it 2 years in a row!
NWNY Dairy, Livestock & Field Crops Team

IMACT STATEMENT
Soybean TAg Team:
in Western New York

Title:
Soybean acreage continues to increase in NY. In 2004, NY's Ag and Markets estimated that 475,000 acres were planted in NY, 32% of which is grown in the counties the NWNY Team covers. With the advent of these new pests such as the soybean aphid and soybean rust, soybeans have become a crop which requires more management than economic yields are to be maintained. More education on pest identification, biology, sampling techniques, and management will be required to keep soybean acreage increasing and profitable for NY producers.

TACTIC Agriculture Teams (TAg) have proven effective for teaching farmers and agribusiness representatives the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and improved crop cultural practices. TAg Teams provide growers with a hands-on learning environment within a small group of growers who are usually their neighbors.

The Team was set up to cooperate with the NYS IPM Program on a grant funded through the Northeast Regional Soybean Board. Applying the TAg Team concept to soybean production economics and pest management an IPM project was designed and two teams were commissioned in NY in 2011. The NWNY Team established one of these Soybean TAg Teams in Orleans County which was made up of small farms, producers and two local ag-business representatives. Collectively, these producers grew over 20,000 acres of soybeans.

Meetings began in early May and the team met once a month through September with each participant hosting a TAg-meeting at their farm. All meetings were viewed as open discussions and pest management and crop cultural practices were viewed and discussed in the field. Participants were given handouts and reference materials which complimented the topic being covered each month. Even though there was a heavy emphasis on IPM, particularly soybean aphids, corn rootworm, soybean rust, other topics included plant populations, pruning teff, soybean growth stages, weeds and insect and disease groups, pest and crop monitoring, scouting, and research.

Each farm picked one soybean field that we started once a week throughout the summer. When weeds, diseases or insects were found to be over thresholds, growers were contacted and we worked with them on a one-on-one basis.

The Results:
Throughout the growing season, the team met five times and certified pesticide applications received NYS-102C credits. Participants learned how to assess pest populations and their potential for crop damage, including insects, weeds and disease.

The scouting service was very attractive to TAg team members since most of these farms did not scout their own crops. Three weekly visits encouraged growers to begin their own scouting programs and key restrictions were developed to assess insect, disease, and weeds. The team was set up to continue and management decisions. Many commented that the one practice they would change next year based on the information they learned from the Soybean TAg program would be scouting earlier and more often.

For and post-evaluation given at the first and last meetings of the year to measure any impact our TAg program may have had on the knowledge of our team members. Collectively, these members increased their general knowledge of integrated pest and crop management by 39%. Test averages increased from 44% for the pre-test to 39% for the post-test. In a final survey, one greater than 50% of the respondents said this very good program that has been very helpful to me this year and years to come.

I would recommend this to anyone. Many suggested that they go through the program again next year.
What do I Get Out of It?

- Get out in new areas of the region
- Meet new producers
- Get on farm
- Keep my finger on the pulse
- Find out what are the needs
- Extremely rewarding!