

*The William H. Miner
Agricultural Research Institute*



2006 ANNUAL REPORT

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Cover photo by Anna Pape, Dairy Intern

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A Message from Dr. Richard J. Grant

As I look back over the accomplishments of the Institute staff and their programs during 2006, we continued to deliver programs that address critical agricultural and environmental issues relevant to northern New York and beyond.

RESEARCH

Our research group conducted nine full-scale studies on topics ranging from measuring forage fragility and chewing response to effects of copper sulfate on plant and soil characteristics. Student projects are a significant portion of our research and educational programs – providing them with a glimpse into the research process and simultaneously generating useful, practical knowledge.

Nine students conducted research projects ranging from the effects of stocking density on cow behavior (a MS thesis) to a cordless system for monitoring rumen pH to cooling systems for our free-stall barn to improving equine reproduction.

Version 3.0 of the CPM-Dairy nutrition model was released jointly by Miner Institute, Cornell University, and the University of Pennsylvania. The model is being widely used for ration formulation.

We invested considerable resources into our research program to upgrade our equipment and hire additional technical staff – we can now move to a new level of investigating how forage chemistry influences

digestibility and move the CPM-Dairy nutrition model forward.

EDUCATION

Our educational programs remain the essential reason that we exist. The Advanced Dairy Management program monopolizes our efforts during the spring semester with dairy management students spending an entire semester in residence at the Institute. These are primarily students who have spent two years at Vermont Technical College and have transferred to University of Vermont for their final two years. Our hope is that most of these students return to dairy farming when the program is completed.

During fall semester, the focus shifts to Agriculture and the Environment and students primarily from Plattsburgh State University with little or no agricultural background. The contrast in student backgrounds, experiences, and expectations between spring and fall semester is a significant part of what makes it stimulating to work here.

Our summer experience programs in crop/dairy, equine, agricultural research, and Heart's Delight History remain vibrant and highly competitive, attracting students from across the US and even occasionally internationally.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

OUTREACH

Industry outreach consumes substantial amounts of all staff time, and this reaches back to the Institute's core mission of application of the latest technological advances to solve problems confronting North Country agriculture (or, in fact, national and global issues). Nearly 1500 people attended over 20 workshops/seminars held on-campus in 2006. The audience at Dairy Day 2006, our premier event focused on the dairy industry, was comprised of farmers representing ~60% New York cows, ~35% Vermont cows, and ~5% Quebec cows.

The Farm Report continues to be, by far and away, our outreach effort with the single greatest impact. In the past two years The Stable Sheet has also delivered timely information to the equine industry. Increasingly, our web site is an important vehicle for delivering information. Over 2700 people per month visited the web site in 2006 with the Farm Report and Stable Sheet being most frequented.

DEMONSTRATION

The Institute's most visible demonstration program continues to be the dairy herd. The dairy staff brought the herd to new heights in 2006 – just a few pounds short of a 30,000-pound rolling herd average. A high level of dairy herd performance is necessary for our research results to be applicable to the modern dairy industry, for relevant educational programs, and for effective demonstration of the latest technology in a dairy-crop system.

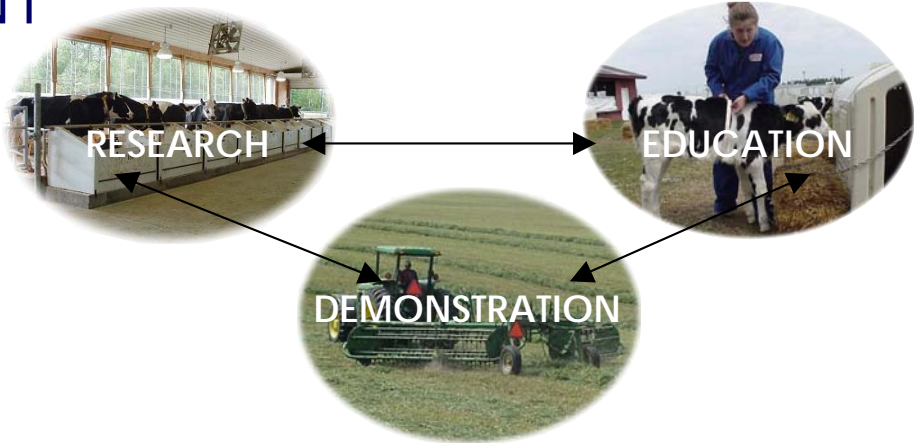
Obviously, I've skipped over many other significant accomplishments and programs, but I did want to provide a quick glimpse of the breadth and vigor of our research, educational, and demonstration programs. As I travel, I find that many folks have heard of Miner Institute, but usually their impression is one-dimensional. If this brief overview stimulates interest on your part in learning more about the range of Miner programs for any reason, feel free to contact us.

As you read through this 2006 Annual Report, I am certain that you will be impressed with the breadth and quality of the programs conducted by Institute staff.



MISSION STATEMENT

Miner Institute offers quality *research*, *education*, and *demonstration* programs addressing critical agricultural and environmental issues relevant to Northern New York and beyond.



RESEARCH

Miner Institute conducts practical *research* on the dairy-crop interface, equine reproduction and management, and environmental conservation. Its research activities combine a global perspective with a regional application.

EDUCATION

Miner Institute offers a range of undergraduate, graduate, and continuing *education* programs in dairy and field crop science, equine management, and environmental conservation. The Institute provides meetings, workshops, and residential undergraduate and graduate programs in cooperation with a number of regional colleges and universities.

DEMONSTRATION

Miner Institute *demonstrates* the best practices in dairy farming, equine management, and environmental conservation through its dairy, crops, equine, and field and forestry operations and through outreach activities in the region.

VISION STATEMENT

The dedicated and talented staff of Miner Institute seeks to bring to residents of northern New York and surrounding regions the benefits of *research*, *education*, and *demonstration* involving dairy, equine, and environmental management.

VALUES STATEMENT

We value the Miner tradition of high quality agricultural programs serving northern New York needs, conducted by a skilled and diverse staff in a beautiful historical setting. We especially value combining the latest technological innovations with a cherished heritage.

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

The primary objectives of research conducted at Miner Institute are to be relevant, cutting edge and directly applied to today's agricultural community. While wide in scope, the information generated from this research is disseminated to dairy producers, nutritionists, veterinarians, agronomists, equine breeders, and other agricultural professionals through the Miner Institute Farm Report, Stable Sheet, website, meetings and seminars presented by Miner Institute staff.

At the 2006 annual meeting of the American Dairy Science Association and American Society of Animal Science in Minneapolis, MN, Heather Dann, Katie Ballard, Kurt Cotanch and Chris Hill presented five papers/posters:

1. Effect of partial replacement of forage NDF with byproduct NDF in close-up diets of dairy cattle on periparturient metabolism and performance
2. Economic and environmental impacts of corn silage maturity management
3. The effect of stocking rate, parity and lameness on the short-term behavior of dairy cattle
4. Changes in copper sulfate use on northern New York and Vermont farms between 2002 and 2005
5. Development of an on-farm system to determine pef value of as fed forages and TMR

One paper entitled, *Effects of glutamate on microbial efficiency and metabolism in continuous culture of ruminal contents and on performance of mid-lactation dairy cows* was published in *Animal Feed Science and Technology* journal in 2006.

The Miner Institute forage laboratory expanded its capabilities with the addition of a technical staff member with expertise operating chromatography equipment. A high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) system was purchased in 2006 and will be used to enhance the methodologies for assessing forage quality, fiber digestibility and carbohydrate fractions of forages.

For a couple of years, Miner Institute has been involved in developing a tool for assessing the physical effectiveness factor (pef) of fiber on forages and TMR at the farm without having to dry and sieve in the laboratory. In the spring of 2006, a study was conducted in our tie-stall facility to validate this tool based on chewing activity and ruminal fermentation of lactating dairy cows. This study was funded by Zen-Noh National Federation of Agricultural Co-operative Associations. This tool, the Z-Box, is currently being marketed by Miner Institute and funds generated from



RESEARCH

these sales will be used to support additional research in the area of forage quality assessment.

Student programs continue to play an exciting role in research activities at Miner Institute. Chris Hill successfully defended his masters thesis entitled, *The effects of stocking rate, parity, and lameness on the short-term behavior of dairy cattle*, this fall and has found employment as a feed consultant for Poulin Grain in Newport, VT. Peter Krawczel accepted a Miner Institute research assistantship during the summer of 2006. He has joined Sally Flis as a PhD candidate and will focus his research primarily in the area of dairy cattle behavior. Dr. Steve Mooney accepted a two-year, postdoctoral position with Miner Institute in the fall after completing his PhD program at Michigan State University. Steve hopes to contribute to our educational and outreach programs with his background in ruminant nutrition and hopes to gain

experiences in nutrient management, cow behavior, and the crop/cow interface.

Industry interest in conducting research at Miner Institute continues to grow as the

reputation of quality work and expertise of Miner Institute's professional staff broadens. The value of research conducted at Miner Institute is the result of a capable research staff and the willing support of all

employees at the Institute from maintenance, dairy, crops, equine, custodial/cafeteria and office staff who contribute to each project in numerous ways.



Grant-funded research studies conducted during 2006.

Zen-Noh sponsored research

Development of dairy facilities reference manual

Evaluation of dairy management software programs

Development of method for measuring forage fragility

Evaluation of nutritional management strategies for cows with a short (40-day) dry period

Projects sponsored by other funding sources

Effect of SilagePro[®] on haycrop silage quality.
American Farm Products, Caledonia, NY

The effect of cutting height on yield and quality of alfalfa in northern New York.
Northern New York Ag Development Program (NNYADP)

The effect of rate of application of copper sulfate (CuSO₄) in dairy manure on plant growth and plant and soil concentrations of copper.
NNYADP

Alfalfa snout beetle survey.
NNYADP

The effect of manure application on yield and quality of alfalfa harvested at two cutting heights in northern New York.
NNYADP

*The William H. Miner
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ADVANCED DAIRY MANAGEMENT

In January we welcomed our seventh class of Advanced Dairy Management students from the University of Vermont. This 15 credit course includes instruction in Dairy Nutrition and Forage Quality, Research Project, Agricultural Seminar, Field Crops, and Dairy Management Practicum. During the semester the students were taught by our faculty and staff in addition to nineteen visiting faculty and other agricultural industry professionals. In addition to classroom time, students spend time working in our dairy barn in all areas including milking, feeding, calves and herd health. Students also visit several farms to learn from some of the best dairymen in the area and evaluate those operations by observation and measurement. Our annual field trip with the Advanced Dairy Management students was a trip to farms, a feed mill, and Hilmar Cheese in the central valley of California and the World Ag Expo in Tulare, California. The students were joined on this trip by a few farmers from Vermont and staff from Miner Institute.



UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Each spring semester, the Advanced Dairy Management students are involved in a 3-credit course in undergraduate research. The following projects were conducted and presented by the 2006 students with assistance from a Miner Institute research staff or graduate student advisor:

- *Determination of the effect of CuSO_4 on the growth and composition of corn* - Susan Greenbaum
- *Comparison of indices of cow comfort in a freestall housing system and effect of lameness and parity on cow behavior observed in freestall housing over a 24 hour period* - Brendan Fitzgerald
- *Assembly and evaluation of a cordless system for continuous measurement of ruminal pH in cannulated dairy cows at Miner Institute* - Matt Angell
- *Determination of the effect of CuSO_4 on the growth and composition of three cool season forage grasses* - Dan Pike
- *Effects of grinding method on particle size distribution and NDFd determinations of original sample and in situ residues* - Allison Moore
- *Can the content of nonesterified fatty acids and β -hydroxybutyrate in serum, body condition score, and body weight of transition cows be used to predict subsequent reproductive performance?* - Jeff Gingue

SUMMER EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

The Summer Experience in Agricultural Research was expanded in 2006 to two student researchers. This program was developed to provide on-the-job training for college undergraduates interested in careers in agricultural research. In addition to assisting with daily research activities, the students conducted, summarized and presented individual projects:

- *Biochemical parameters of fractionated stallion ejaculates and the subsequent motility and membrane integrity of spermatozoa after cooled storage* - Megan Richmond, University of Vermont
- *Evaluation of cooling systems in Miner Institute's dairy barn* - Kendra O'Connor, Iowa State University

SUMMER EXPERIENCE IN FARM MANAGEMENT

Our Farm Management students came to us from a wide geographic range from four different universities in the United States and the Netherlands. These students worked in all areas of the dairy farm and field crops in addition to completing an independent dairy management project. Work on the farm includes milking, calf care, herd health, feeding, and crops. Students come to the program with a broad range of experience ranging from very little previous hands-on experience to a desire to gain more expertise in a specific area. Students also worked with a group of heifers to train, groom and show at the Clinton County Fair.

SUMMER EXPERIENCE IN EQUINE MANAGEMENT

A career in the horse industry is the goal of each Equine Management student; we offer an intensive summer semester to prepare them for just that. In 2006, students came from all over the country and with very different backgrounds to continue their education in equine studies using the herd of Heart's Delight Morgan Horses and clients' horses in the 100 year old barn. Through one-on-one teaching by supervisors and simply learning by doing, students learned stallion and broodmare management, training techniques for young horses, and stable management skills.



AGRICULTURE and the ENVIRONMENT

This semester marked the 3rd iteration of the Agriculture and the Environment class, taught as a combination of Miner Institute staff, along with faculty from the University of Vermont, Cornell, and personnel from NRCS. Students visited a dairy biogas facility and a small-scale smoothie and local milk bottling operation as part of the course, as well as performing CAFO inspections on a local farm. The semester project was a debate on the pros and cons of conventional versus organically grown vegetables in the Northeast. This course enabled the students to combine their environmental skills with the basics to applied farming.

APPLIED ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE PROGRAM

The Applied Environmental Science Program (AESP) completed its 34th year at Miner Institute in the fall. The core of this ongoing program has been the immersion style environment coupled with full-day class formats. This semester students took a combination of five classes including: Introduction to Soil Science, Applied Environmental Hydrology, Forest Ecology and Management, Field Ecology, and Agriculture and the Environment.

A total of 26 students participated in the AESP 2006 program. The AESP integrates theory developed in lectures with hands-on experience in indoor and outdoor labs dealing with soil, water quality, agriculture and forestry. Students utilize the computer, chemical laboratory and barn facilities at the Institute, as well as the neighboring Adirondacks, to collect and analyze

samples, and integrate the information into polished reports. A key theme was the measurement of phosphorus and nitrogen levels in soils and various agricultural waste streams.

Five residential students were awarded James Fitzpatrick scholarships: Richard Hochuli, Carrienne Pershyn, Lisle Snyder and international students Shanawaz Khan and Keiko Takagi. Keiko, who hails from Japan, was excited to get a chance to interact with her fellow countrymen from Zen Noh.



UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

ADVANCED DAIRY MANAGEMENT

ADM students are enrolled at the University of Vermont

Matt Angell
Brendan Fitzgerald
Jeff Gingue
Susan Greenbaum
Allison Moore
Dan Pike

SUMMER EXPERIENCE

Farm Management

Genevieve Duncklee, Findlay College
Dominique Noome, Larenstein University
Joe Olsen, University of Minnesota
Lisa Van Iderstine, Virginia Tech

Equine Management

Ryan Brooks, Virginia Tech
Julie Fazio, Brigham Young University
Jerold Murrell, Austin College
Chelsea Rice, Utah State University

Agricultural Research

Kendra O'Connor, Iowa State University
Megan Richmond, University of Vermont

Heritage Exhibit Internship

Elana Katz-Mink, Plattsburgh State University

APPLIED ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE PROGRAM

AESP students are enrolled at Plattsburgh State University

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Megan Bucklin | John Lodge |
| Michael Caserias | Daniel Matias |
| Christopher Dexter | Gregory Mendez-Chicas |
| Theresa Flynn | Marc Morgenstern |
| Brian Glidden | Chadwick Novak |
| Meghan Greene | Jacob O'Conner |
| Robert Hinman | Katrina Park |
| Richard Hochuli | Carrienne Pershyn |
| Christopher Houtz | Lisle Snyder |
| Joseph Hutchins | Keiko Takagi |
| Sean Keenan | Jenna Volcko |
| William Kellogg | Andrew Wagner |
| Shanawaz Khan | |
| Justin King | |



DAIRY OPERATIONS

One of the Institute's most visible demonstration programs is the dairy herd. A high level of performance is necessary for research results to be applicable to the modern dairy industry, for relevant educational programs, and for effective demonstration of the latest technology in a dairy-crop system. Our herd is now within the top 10% of Holstein dairy herds in the US in the 300 to 599 herd-size category. In 2006, we shipped 8,767,918 pounds of milk from our herd of 300 Holstein cows. The year 2006 was a tough year for crop production and harvest due to remarkably wet weather. We produced 3775 tons of corn silage from 210 acres in addition to over 3200 tons of alfalfa and grass silage from our land and purchased from nearby farms.

EQUINE PROGRAM

With 2006 being the 100th anniversary of the Heart's Delight Dairy Barn construction, it is fitting that a new century brings renewed life to the building. This barn, now known as the Horse Barn, it is home to the herd of approximately 24 Morgan Horses that are the keystone of the equine program at Miner Institute. While the program has offered stallion and mare station services in the past, the renovations have included many improvements to safety, efficiency, and aesthetics with the construction of a new breeding area only steps away from the laboratory.

Educational programs will reap the benefits of the face-lift to the barn. A classroom with bleacher seating

allows for improved demonstrations and lectures using a live horse at center stage. In November, Youth EquiDay brought over 60 horse enthusiasts to learn about horse health and training; the guest lecturing veterinarian was able to share with the participants the finer points of a wellness exam on a horse that was cross-tied in the center of the classroom.

Opportunities to promote Miner Institute and the Morgan Horse are a welcome part of the equine program. The historic site of the Almonzo Wilder Homestead in Burke, NY has made Miner Institute an honorary life member for our presentations of Morgan Horses at public events. The Wilder family's Morgans were highly sought after in their time.

A tour group from the European Union was brought to Miner in June as part of a buying trip organized by the Vermont Department of Agriculture. Students presented our sales prospects to the group and we were pleased that one filly, HD Essex, caught the eye of a buyer from the United Kingdom. The new owner chose a stallion from Vermont to have us breed her to and once she was safely in foal, the mare made the long overseas journey to her new farm. Rosita Hamar is thrilled with the addition to her Morgan breeding program, one of the oldest and most prominent in Europe.



HEART'S DELIGHT FARM HERITAGE EXHIBIT

The 2006 exhibit season concluded its third full season at the end of October. A total of approximately 1300 people visited the tour center this year. This number is based on guest book signatures, people counter software, and scheduled group tours. Group tours hosted included the Town of Plattsburgh, Adirondack Architectural Heritage, the Adirondack Hiking Club, and the Class of 2011 from Chazy Central Rural School.

The exhibit is open weekdays from May—October and Saturdays during June, July and August.

SUMMER INTERN PROGRAM

In only its second year, the program is becoming a valued complement to the exhibit. This year's intern, a history major from Plattsburgh State University, continued the implementation of the historical archives. Specific projects in 2006 were:

- Continuation of archiving letters from Heart's Delight Farm into a searchable database
- Conduct research on and organize land lease purchase into a searchable database
- Prepare historical pictures into an accessible database and proof file
- Conduct research on antique vehicles used on Heart's Delight Farm and prepare signage for inclusion in the antique vehicle building
- Open/close exhibit as needed during the week and work at the exhibit on Saturday
- Conduct group tours at the exhibit

VEHICLE BUILDING

The Vehicle Building, located behind the Heritage Exhibit, has been renovated and will become an extension of the exhibit. Vehicles from the early years will be on display. Information panels will accompany the vehicles so visitors will know how the vehicles were used on the farm. Plans are to have the building opened during the same days and hours as the exhibit.



VISITING FACULTY and PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE

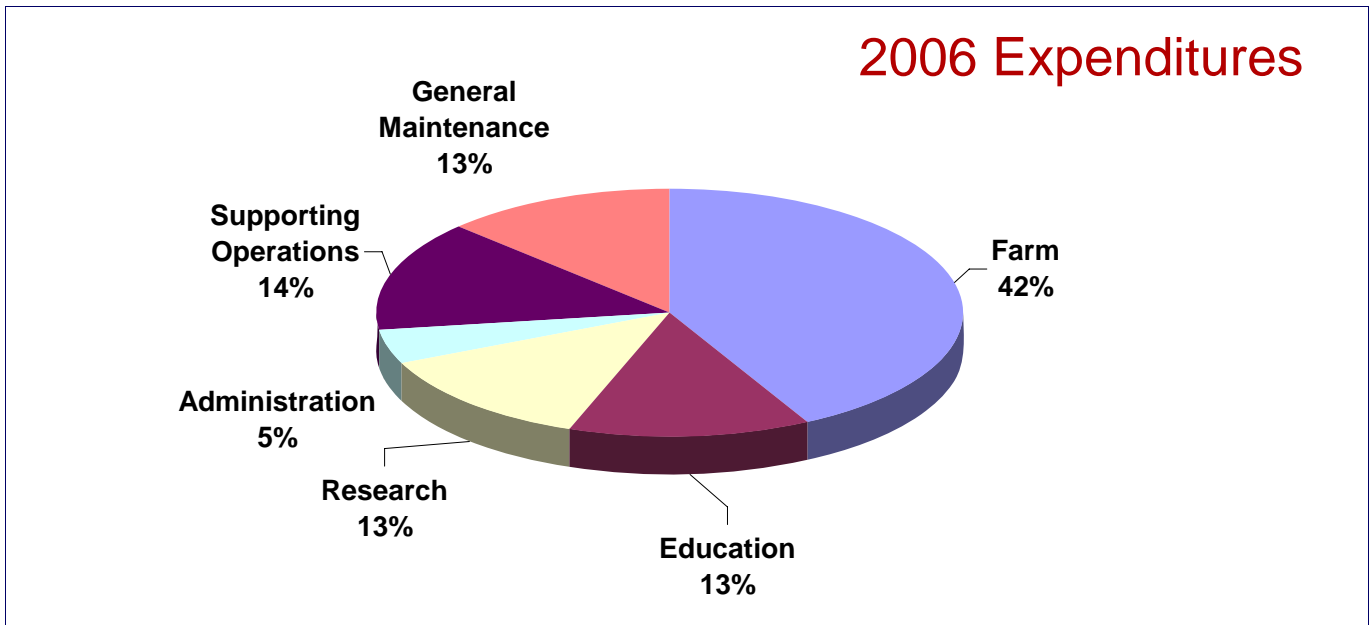
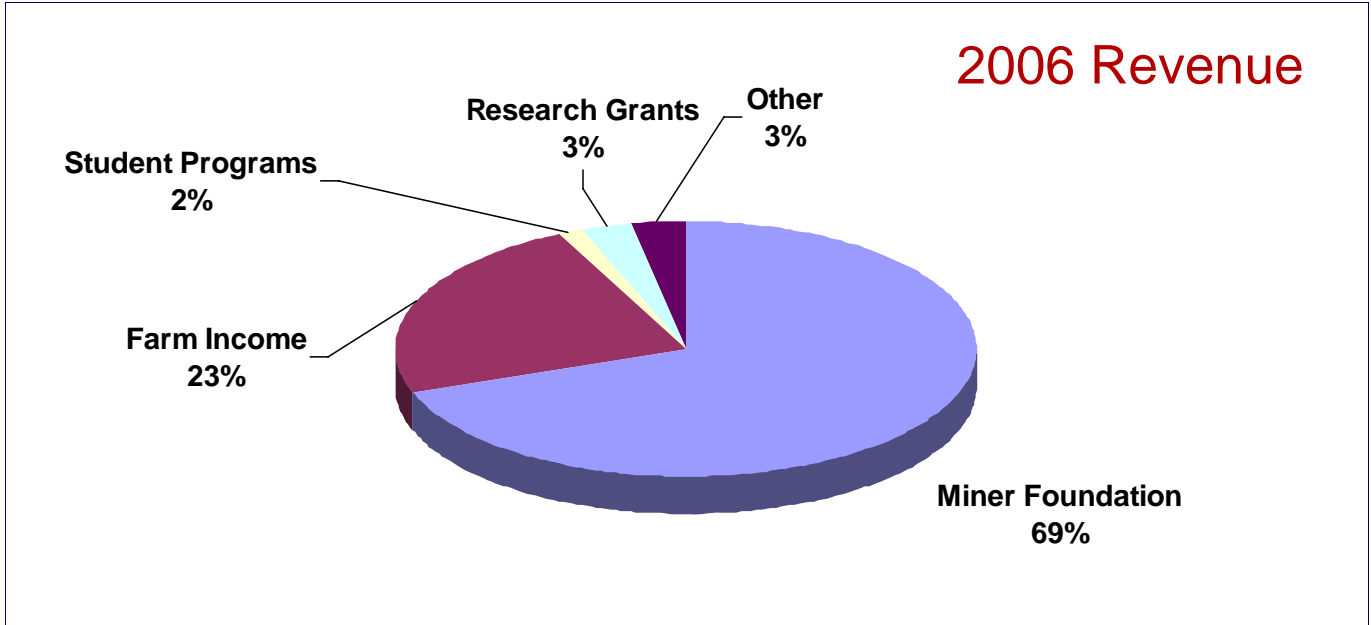
Ken Adams, Plattsburgh State University
Aaron Alexander, Syngenta Seeds
Terry Batchelder, Cargill Animal Nutrition
Sid Bosworth, University of Vermont
Herb Boyce, Northwoods Forest Improvements
Robert Brower, NYSSECC-Lake Champlain
Jay Byrne, v-Fluence Interactive Public Relations, Inc.
Tim Camisa, VT Organics Reclamation
Karl Czymmek, Cornell University
Josie Davis, University of Vermont
Mike Davis, Cornell University
Steve Davis, UVM Morgan Horse Farm
Ronald DeBeer, Moira, NY
Erik Eaglefeather, DVM
Jessica Ebert, Esq., Burlington, VT
Jerry Emerich, Select Sire Power
Mike Farmer, Yankee Farm Credit
David Franzi, Plattsburgh State University
Robert Fuller, Plattsburgh State University
Leon Graves, DMS
Betsy Greene, University of Vermont
Marie Guay, Yankee Farm Credit
Russell Hahn, Cornell University
Stephen Hazen, Milton, VT
Kent Henderson, DVM, Northwest Veterinary Associates
Charlie Hesseltine, Jr., Malone, NY
Kevin Hollister, Mooers, NY
Miles Huffaker, Monsanto
Ivor Jones, Select Sire Power
Jeff Morse, Green Meads Farm
Tom Overton, Cornell University
Katie Racine, DMS
Kurt Ruppel, Cargill Animal Nutrition
Randy Shaver, University of Wisconsin
Julie Smith, DVM, University of Vermont
Joe Stewart, Stewart Farms, Inc.
Lee Telega, Cornell University

Mike VanAmburg, Cornell University
Philip van Harreveld, DVM, Vermont Large Animal Clinic
Katy Watts, Rock Mtn. Consulting
Jeremy Youngman, CV-Tech

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Exodus Breeding Supply
Alden Harwood
Gail James
Lady Slipper Morgan Farm
Microflex
Millipore Foundation
Mycogen Seeds
Northern N.Y. Agricultural Development Program
Valeri Reynolds
Silo Stop, Ltd.
South Bay Morgan Farm
Syngenta, Inc.
UVM Morgan Horse Farm
Patricia Waring

FINANCIALS



EMPLOYEES/YEARS of SERVICE

Faculty/Research

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Everett Thomas, M.S. | 25 |
| Catherine Ballard, M.S. | 19 |
| Wanda Emerich, M.Ext.Ed. | 19 |
| Stephen Kramer, M.S. | 12 |
| Karen Lassell | 11 |
| Marguerite Carter | 10 |
| Heather Wolford | 5 |
| Kurt Cotanch, M.S. | 5 |
| Jeff Darrah | 4 |
| Richard Grant, Ph.D. | 4 |
| Heather Dann, Ph.D. | 2 |
| Amy Bedard, M.L.S. | < 1 |
| Robert Fievisohn | < 1 |
| Steve Mooney, Ph.D. | < 1 |

Administration

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| Laurie Miller | 23 |
| Mary Lou Gadway | 19 |
| Kirk Beattie | 6 |
| Debra LaPorte | 2 |

Physical Plant

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Brian Bechard | 25 |
| Steve Fessette | 25 |
| David Boulерice | 18 |
| Kelly Snide | 12 |
| Ryan Dumont | 10 |
| Timothy LaForest | 9 |
| Daniel Belrose | 4 |

Agriculture

| | |
|-----------------|-----|
| Henry Meseck | 23 |
| Stephen Ero | 11 |
| Jake Ashline | 8 |
| Mark Gonyo | 6 |
| Bethann Basto | 3 |
| Ralph LaBombard | 2 |
| Neil LaCount | 2 |
| Travis Stokes | 2 |
| Shawn Bechard | 1 |
| Steve Couture | 1 |
| Chad Hebert | 1 |
| David Johnson | 1 |
| Jonathan Juneau | < 1 |

Food Service/Housekeeping

| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Priscilla Hackett | 19 |
| Donna Matott | 17 |
| Hope LaForest | 8 |

Graduate Students

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Sally Flis | 1 |
| Peter Krawczel | < 1 |

Interns

Anna Pape, Dairy Management
Lynn Commaille, Equine Management



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Melvin Irwin
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Dr. Tom Overton, Cornell University
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William L. Owens, Stafford, Trombley, Owens & Curtin
Member

Everett D. Thomas, Miner Institute
Vice President, Agricultural Programs

Dr. Ann M. Willey, Wadsworth Center Lab
Trustee

Dr. Frederick Woodward
Member

Geoffrey C. Yates, Yankee Farm Credit
Trustee



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Established October 22, 1951