

# NODPA NEWS

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

## CONTENTS:

### Organic Industry News

What Makes A Cow O?	1
From the President	2
From the NODPA Desk	3
Policy and Production	4
NODPA Field Days	10
FOOD Farmers Protest	14
Class Action Lawsuit	15
Grass Wars	18
NOSB / WODPA	20
Grassfed Assoc. Position	21
Animal Well-Being	22
The Carrot Project	22
Stonyfield—All Organic	23
Organic Milk Sought	24

### Organic Production

Featured Farm	25
Wright Way Dairy	
Winter Feeding	27
Forage Field Day	29

### Research/Education

Grant Writing Time	31
--------------------	----

### Commentary

Am I Dreaming	32
---------------	----

### Net Update

ODAIRY/OMILK	33
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### Member Info

Calendar	34
Membership	35
Classifieds, hats, t-shirts	36

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## Organic Industry News

### What Makes a Cow Organic? A Tortured History

By Samuel Fromartz

The "pasture wars" in the organic dairy sector broke out in public this summer, when Aurora Organic Dairy agreed to amend its farming practices in a deal with the Department of Agriculture. The deal came after years of complaints about the nation's largest private-label organic dairy company. It followed a "Notice of Proposed Revocation" issued April 16, 2007 by the USDA's National Organic Program which alleged 14 "willful violations" of organic regulations by the Boulder, Colorado-based company.

In the less strongly worded agreement, the NOP said it found "inconsistencies" between the company's Organic System Plan and regulations. Significantly, the USDA affirmed the company's organic certificates, despite the "willful violations" it earlier found.

The USDA gave Aurora Organic a year to reform its practices, including ceasing to sell certain milk that it labeled organic. If it failed to do so, the NOP could ban Aurora from the organic market.

Although the agreement seemed like the end of a long-running battle between Aurora and its critics, it may actually mark the beginning. Within weeks, six class action lawsuits were filed against Aurora, claiming that consumers had been defrauded by buying milk that was not organic. Aurora responded by saying

the suits were baseless.

What is this battle about? It has been part of a long-running fight over the precise way to define, practice and regulate organic dairy farming in the United States. The organic dairy business is the second-largest sector of the U.S. organic industry after produce, with \$2.1 billion in sales and growing at a rate of 24 percent annually, according to a 2006 survey by the Organic Trade Association. Although the company was cited for many lapses, one main issue stood out: its admitted practice of keeping thousands of cows on feedlots, and limiting grazing on organic pasture. The company's stated aim was to lower the price of organic milk to make it more widely available to consumers. In doing so, Aurora essentially adapted the model of conventional dairy production to organic farming.

This approach seeks to maximize milk production by relying on calorie-dense feed rations rather than fresh grass, and keeping animals in close proximity to the milking plant. At its first facility in Platteville, Colorado, which had 5,200 animals at one point, it could simply not graze cows and also milk them at the same time. The distance between sufficient pasture and the milking facility would have been too great for thousands of animals to traverse. In any case, such pasture acreage did not exist at the facility.

Under the agreement, Aurora said it would cut the size of its herd in Platteville (from a reduced 2,200 cows to 1,250) and increase pasture to 400 acres.

(Continued on page 5)

## From the NODPA President

I'm Steve Morrison, a central Maine organic dairy producer, and current President of the NODPA Board. I have been involved in the organization since its inception in 2001 and have worked with the board and others to advance the mission of NODPA. Our mission, to promote discussion among producers within the region, is in part to support a sustainable floor price for wholesale organic milk produced on family farms. Recent discussion between producers states has focused on the need for a new look at pay price.

While the challenges we farmers face are many, none is more important than a sustainable net farm income. This fall some areas are reporting a 30% increase in grain and forage costs, a 15% increase in insurance and 13% increase in fuel costs. We all understand that the economics of farming vary from year to year, but these are direct costs that have been increasing steadily and show no indication of decreasing. After increasing costs of production have eroded farm profits to zero, they begin to cut into our ability to maintain equipment, buildings, soil fertility and then animal welfare.

At a recent NODPA Board meeting farmers agreed that we need to pursue an increase in base + Market

Adjustment Premium (MAP) of at least 20%. In our region the major processors are paying between \$26 and \$27/cwt as a base price, or as a base plus a MAP. An increase of 20% would raise our base price to about \$32/cwt.

We all want to be part of a sustainable and thriving organic dairy industry for years to come. To guarantee that we are, we need to insure that the foundation of the industry - the producers, can plan on a 20% increase in pay price this winter.

Thanks for your support in this matter.  
Steve Morrison, NODPA President ♦

**Are you interested in  
becoming a NODPA Rep.  
or volunteering as a  
Newsletter Co-editor?  
Contact Ed Maltby**

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## From The NODPA Desk

*By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director*

Believe it or not we are into the last two months of the year and we've only just had our first frost. The last few months have zipped by with plenty to keep those sitting in the hot seat at the NODPA desk busy. We had excellent weather for the NODPA annual Field Days and many thanks to our hosts Rick Segalla and Morvan Allen for opening up their farms to the critical eyes of fellow farmers. The workshops were excellent and Sam Fromartz gave an insightful talk about the future of organics which encouraged a healthy dialogue between the author and audience. The event of the day was the miniature golf tournament with Cindy Masterman, Dave Johnson, Kathy Soder and the Allen boys (Morvan and son Ian).

The organic dairy world never seems to stay quiet for long and the controversy over access to pasture has spilled over into class action lawsuits after the ill conceived consent agreement between the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) and Aurora Organic Dairy that Sam Fromartz chronicles so well on page 1 of this newsletter. Mark Kastel and Will Fantle have been doing some great investigative advocacy work with their Cornucopia Institute and they need to be congratulated on their perseverance and dedication in ensuring that any violations of the organic regulations are exposed and punished. The NODPA Board has been working with Midwest Organic Dairy Producers Association (MODPA) and Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) under the umbrella group Federation of Organic Dairy Farmers (FOOD Farmers) and many other partners, especially within the National Organic Coalition, to highlight the inadequacy of the consent agreement in addressing the results of the USDA investigation and the consequences for the future of organic certification. With many late night conference calls, FOOD Farmers been working together democratically to show their support for those seeking solutions to the many problems that this controversy has generated. FOOD Farmers sent a letter to the then acting USDA Secretary of Agriculture detailing the criticism of the consent agreement, a summary of which can be found on page --- of this newsletter and in the press release section of the NODPA website. FOOD Farmers also actively supports different initiatives by individuals and groups of consumers in their mission to ensure that products labeled as organic satisfy all the

regulations for organic production and that the certification system works from "farm to table."

The NODPA Board has been meeting regularly and heard from many farmers who have expressed their anger and frustration, plus their very real fear for the future economic sustainability of their family farms. Kathie Arnold, who continues to do some fantastic work for NODPA and organic dairy farmers everywhere, expresses the frustration and anger of many organic dairy farmers across the country in her commentary piece on page ---- of this newsletter. The Aurora Organic Dairy situation has caused a very public exposure of the weaknesses of the National Organic Program, still in its infancy, and is eclipsing many of the achievements made in this last year in building consensus within the organic dairy industry that NODPA led, regarding access to pasture and dairy herd replacements. The alleged violations by Aurora and the way it was dealt with by certifiers and the USDA raises very important questions that need to be answered, not just around access to pasture and dairy herd replacements, but about how the NOP functions as an accreditor. NODPA is working with its partners in the National Organic Coalition and others to address this question and develop a strategy that will achieve measurable change rather than "business as usual in DC." Although not an investigative, advocacy organization, NODPA is committed to pursuing change of the USDA NOP program that will maintain a high level of integrity and commercial marketability of the USDA organic regulations.

NODPA is on the MOOve!! The NODPA News will be published six times a year beginning January 2008 with a change in design and possibly a move to newsprint to make it less expensive to print and mail. After six years, the NODPA website will have a facelift to make it easier to navigate and allow us to post more information more regularly. We are also exploring different ways to make the information on ODAIRY more accessible on a message board perhaps.

The next National Organic Standards Board meeting is coming up at the end of November and has an interesting agenda and plenty of time for public comment. While there is justifiable frustration with how slowly the NOP program moves, the NOSB provides one of the main opportunities for farmers to voice their concerns about the program. The NODPA Board encourages everyone to comment in person, if you are able to travel to DC right after Thanksgiving, or by email or mail before then. By mail, comments should be sent to Valerie Frances, Executive Director, NOSB, USDA-AMS-TMP-NOP, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 4008-So., Ag Stop 0268, Washington, DC 20250

### NORTHEAST ORGANIC DAIRY PRODUCERS ALLIANCE

**MISSION STATEMENT:** To enable organic family dairy farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the well being of the organic dairy industry as a whole.

## Organic Dairy Policy and Production Trends

*By Kathie Arnold*

### Pasture Rule?

Every time another issue of NODPA News rolls around, I'd like to be able to report that progress has been made on the pasture regulations, but once again, the proposed rule has yet to be published. Additionally, no action has yet become visible on fixing the dairy replacement dilemma.

### NOSB Issues

The NOSB will be meeting November 28-30 in Washington, DC, with aquaculture being the main topic as the NOSB wrestles with writing organic standards for fish. Expert presentations on the topic of aquaculture will precede the NOSB meeting November 27th and is open to the public. The one topic related to dairy on the agenda is a presentation on "Animal Health and Welfare: Results from a Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Funded Study" by Kathleen A. Merrigan, PhD and Willie Lockeretz, PhD from Agriculture, Food and Environment Program at Tufts University.

Another issue on the NOSB agenda concerns Multi-Site Operation Certification. This idea came from what was initially a system for very small scale growers (mainly in less developed countries) to come together in associations when they are growing the same crops in the same way. The group must have an internal control system to ensure organic compliance, but each individual small grower, many who are often in very remote locations, is not required to be inspected every year by their certifier.

Now, the NOSB Compliance, Accreditation, and Certification Committee wants to expand the allowance to the whole supply chain, such that retailers, distributors, processors and other corporate entities who have multi-site facilities operating under one certification, with an internal control system in place, would not have to have all sites inspected annually. The recommendation of the committee (which was by no means unanimous) would require inspections of all sites for the initial certification, but not thereafter. No mention of minimum percentage of sites to be inspected is included in the recommendation so it seems conceivable that if a retailer had 100 sites, only one per year may be required to have an annual inspection if this recommendation is passed by the full NOSB.

**So far, most organic initiatives are receiving support [in the Farm Bill], such as certification cost share funding, organic transition assistance, organic research funding, and prioritizing classical plant and animal breeding.**

With these businesses having a myriad number of employees who may turn over frequently; dealing with large numbers of ever changing products including both organic and non-organic; given the chances for misla-

beling; with change a constant in the distribution, retail and processing sector, this is a faulty idea that should be nixed by the full NOSB. OFPA, the law governing the NOP, does require an "annual on-site inspection of each farm and handling operation" so it seems there is no basis for this change and the reasoning given, to lower costs, is another example of chopping away at the integrity of the system to promote 'affordability'. Most all certifiers, except QAI (who has an employee on the NOSB, chairing the

committee in question), are against the idea as they see the need for more inspections, not less.

### Farm Bill in Process

The Farm Bill continues its tortuous way through Congress. So far, most organic initiatives are receiving support, such as certification cost share funding, organic transition assistance, organic research funding, and prioritizing classical plant and animal breeding. Unfortunately, conservation continues to be the poor stepchild to commodity crops, and funding to expand the Conservation Security Program, which rewards farmers for conservation efforts on working farmland, is most doubtful. The Senate is currently hammering out their version of the Farm Bill and then it will be on to a Conference Committee to work out the differences between the House and Senate versions. Only then will we know the final outcome of the Farm Bill, which will set Federal Government farm policy and programs for the next five years.

*Kathie Arnold is the Policy Committee Chair for NODPA. She, her husband, and brother-in-law have been shipping organic milk from their Truxton, NY farm since 1998.♦*



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(Continued from *What Makes A Cow Organic?*, page 1)

It also agreed to graze all its lactating cows under prescribed grazing rates of up to 5 cows per acre – a figure many dairy farmers though was far too high. Finally, it agreed to stop using improperly transitioned animals on its farms and to rely instead on cows reared organically from the last-third of gestation.

## A Historical Perspective

Aurora, which sells store-labeled milk to supermarket and discount chains such as Wal-Mart, was not alone in this farming model. In fact, the organic Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) is nearly as old as the organic dairy industry in the United States. One of Aurora's founders had participated in Horizon Organic, founded in 1991. By 1994, seeking to increase its supply of organic milk, Horizon acquired and renovated a former conventional CAFO in arid Idaho that would house more than 4,000 organic cows, with limited pasture.

The only major supply of organic milk at that time was from Wisconsin (the CROPP cooperative, which now sells under the Organic Valley label). Horizon knew it could expand to consumer markets such as Los Angeles if it could secure a larger source of organic milk closer to the West Coast.

This farm was immediately controversial in organic circles, but in the early 1990s the organic dairy industry was just taking off. At the time, organic certification was overseen by a patchwork of organizations, each of which had slightly different requirements.

The founders of Horizon felt their model was organic. The cows were fed organic feed rations grown by organic farmers on thousands of organic acres. Horizon officials argued in debates beginning as early as 1993 that no organic dairy farm should be held to a strict national pasture standard, for that ignored regional variation in grazing rates, pasture quality and farming practices.

Other organic farmers took the opposing view, arguing that pasture was integral to the "natural behavior" of ruminants and should be mandated and specified in the regulations. Many of these farmers were from the Northeast and Upper Midwest, where pasture is plentiful.

Despite the fierce debate on the issue and a clear statement in the regulations that ruminants should be out on pasture, a bright-line measure of appropriate grazing was left undefined. As section 205.239 of the regulations state:

*(a) The producer of an organic livestock operation must establish and maintain livestock liv-*

*ing conditions which accommodate the health and natural behavior of animals, including:*

*(2) Access to pasture for ruminants;*

As I wrote in my book Organic Inc.:

But what constituted "access to pasture" and how long should it last? The rules didn't spell this out because the number of days a cow can graze differs from seasonal Vermont to arid Colorado. If too rigid, some farms would be knocked out of organic certification. But if they were too loose, their loopholes could be exploited by farms using a minimal-pasture, high-grain, high production model. Balancing restrictions with a recognition of regional and farm variation proved exceedingly tough. The result was vague language requiring "access."

Would "access" be fulfilled by rotating thousands of cows through a few hundred acres of pasture on arid land? Or would it mean grazing animals regularly, so that the animals received a significant portion of their nutrition from fresh grass during the growing season? The preamble to NOP organic regulations spelled out the principle for pasturing livestock:

*... livestock producers must manage their land to provide nutritional benefit to grazing animals while maintaining or improving the soil, water, and vegetative resources of the operation. The producer must establish and maintain forage species appropriate for the nutritional requirements of the species using the pasture. (Preamble page 80571)*

*A producer must provide livestock with a total feed ration composed of agricultural feed products, including pasture and forage that is organically produced. (Preamble page 80572)*

But in practice, the "access to pasture" language left a great deal of room for interpretation, which is how large-scale organic dairy CAFOs won certification under national organic regulations that took effect in October 2002.

## Brewing Complaints

The organic CAFO model was controversial from the start, because it was an oxymoron. Aside from the philosophical issues – were open air feedlots with thousands of cows truly compatible with organic methods? – there were economic issues, too.

Organic dairies that rely on grazing have lower levels of

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from *What Makes A Cow Organic?* page 5)

milk production. Fresh grass has a lower energy level than bunk feed and cows also burn off calories walking from the pasture to the milking parlor, dampening production. The upside is that grazing animals on grass is far cheaper than buying organic feed. The animals tend to be healthier because they are outside and exercising, and pasture-based cows tend to have far longer productive lives than confined animals. While the cow's output declines on grass, so do expenses, making the model viable. (Additionally, grass-fed cows have been shown to have nutritionally superior milk to grain-fed animals).

As large-scale competitors came on line, pasture based organic dairy farmers grew concerned. They feared that the CAFO models would undercut the market because the confined animals had more robust yields. They also worried the Organic CAFOs would undermine consumer trust, since it was at odds with the image (widely publicized on milk cartons!) of a cow munching on grass.

In addition, public interest groups stepped into the debate. The Cornucopia Institute, the grassroots, social justice NGO, was highly critical of the Organic CAFO model. It named names. It rated milk. It criticized lax certifiers and brought significant attention to the issue. As one example, in October 2006, *Business Week* magazine published a cover story titled "The Organic

Myth." The cover showed a milk carton with a cow grazing on pasture superimposed over an image of cows crowded into a feedlot.

### NOSB Takes Action

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), which advises the NOP on organic regulations, was acutely aware of the issue and sought to take action to tighten the pasture requirement. As early as June 2000, the NOSB recommended that:

*the allowance for temporary confinement should be restricted to short-term events such as birthing of newborn or finish feeding for slaughter stock and should specifically exclude lactating dairy animals.*

Then, in October 2001, the board passed a recommendation to tackle the vague language of "access to pasture." It stated:

*Ruminant livestock must have access to graze pasture during the months of the year when pasture can provide edible forage, and the grazed feed must provide a significant portion of the total feed requirements.*

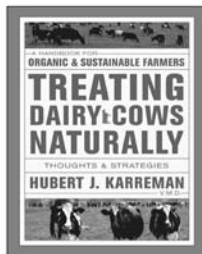
Both these recommendations were sent on to regulators at the NOP, but, like many other recommendations, they languished.

(Continued on page 7)

## TREATING DAIRY COWS NATURALLY THOUGHTS & STRATEGIES

— BY HUBERT J. KARREMAN, V.M.D. —

PRICELESS INFORMATION FOR ORGANIC DAIRIES & NATURAL VETS



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ments with life in the barn in a rational and easy to understand way. In describing treatments for common dairy cow diseases, he covers practical aspects of biologics, botanical medicines, homeopathic remedies, acupuncture and conventional medicine. This book will serve as a useful reference for years to come. *Revised, 2nd edition, hardcover, 432 pages.*

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(Continued from *What Makes A Cow Organic?*, page 6)

A March 2005 NOSB meeting in Washington, D.C., proved a turning point. Dozens of organic dairy farmers from around the nation traveled to the meeting and proceeded, in a public comment period, to ask the NOSB and NOP to take action. Thousands of other supporters had sent written comment proposing a change in the rule. At the conclusion of the meeting, the NOSB passed another recommendation and sent it on to the regulators at the NOP. It proposed that the requirement for "access to pasture for ruminants" be changed to a requirement for "ruminant animals grazing pasture during the growing season." It had exemptions for birthing, for dairy calves up to six months of age, and for finishing beef animals for no more than 120 days. It also barred organic livestock operations from denying pasture to dairy cows during lactation, which was exactly what Aurora had done.

The NOP, however, threw back this recommendation to the board because it lacked specificity – a bright line that would let organic certifiers know precisely when a producer failed to meet grazing requirements. Organic dairy producers around the country, working with the NOSB, discussed the issue in person and by email, arriving at a figure they felt all producers could meet. The NOSB then passed a recommendation with a specific figure:

*Ruminants shall graze pasture for at least 120*

*days per year...*

Since that 2005 recommendation, however, NODPA has led a coalition of organic dairy farmer groups in seeking an additional clause in the regulatory language that would add an even brighter line. This would require dairy producers to graze during the entire growing season but not less than 120 days a year. In addition, they proposed requiring animals to receive at least 30 percent of their nutrition from pasture. This would prevent operations from minimizing the nutritional role of pasture in the cow's diet, even if they met the 120 day hurdle. (Although the NOSB had recognized this issue, the board had only included the 30 percent figure in a non-legally binding "guidance document", not in regulatory language.)

The Federation of Organic Dairy Farmers (FOOD Farmers), formed in early 2007 from the three regional organic dairy farmer groups, has sought the following clarification in the regulation itself:

*Organic dairy livestock over 6 months of age must graze on pasture during the months of the year when pasture can provide edible forage. The grazed feed must provide significant intake, at a minimum an average of 30 percent of the dry matter intake during the growing season,*

(Continued on page 8)



**Thank you,**  
organic farmers,  
for all that you do.

From all the folks at  
**Stonyfield Farm**

**Stonyfield Farm**  
ORGANIC  
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(Continued from *What Makes A Cow Organic?*, page 7)

*for no less than 120 days per year. This provision must be for all cows, whether dry or lactating.*

The NOP has said the regulation is currently in review, though it is unclear what language it will adopt. It is also unclear when the proposed regulation will be released publicly. The process of establishing a new regulation (publishing a proposed rule, having a public comment period, then publishing a final rule) means that a new pasture regulation is unlikely to be enacted until 2008 and possibly even later.

In the meantime, dairy processors have taken stock of the climate and begun to modify practices. In December 2005, Horizon announced it was spending \$10 million to renovate its farm in Idaho and hired a grazing expert to advise the company on pasture. Even before the consent agreement, Aurora was downsizing the Platteville facility and opened a new High Plains dairy with more pasture. (Its actions were obviously insufficient to placate the NOP and Cornucopia has continued to criticize

the High Plains operation.)

All the major organic dairy processors have also backed the language for a minimum of 120 days of pasture and 30 percent dry matter intake as internal production protocols. Horizon has said it was meeting the hurdle of 120 days/30 percent on a second company-owned

farm in Maryland; it will do so in Idaho, once the renovation of the farm is complete. Aurora has said it is meeting the 120 day hurdle, though has made no firm commitments on reaching the 30 percent figure for nutrition from fresh grass.

Finally, nearly all processors have backed a policy requiring organic dairy calves to be

**Nearly all processors have backed a policy requiring organic dairy calves to be raised organically from the last third of gestation.**

raised organically from the last third of gestation. No longer would an organic dairy farm be allowed to expand its existing herd by acquiring cows that were conventional at birth and then transitioned to organic production over one year. For new cows to enter an organic dairy farm, their mothers must be organic from the last trimester of pregnancy. Under the agreement with the USDA, Aurora has pledged to do this on its Platteville farm; it says it will adopt the policy eventually on all its properties.

Although these pledges show how the market for organic dairying has shifted, it is premature to say the underlying issues have been resolved. Aside from monitoring operations at Aurora and Horizon, watchdogs are looking into other large-scale organic dairies that have come on line.

In this climate, FOOD Farmers believe that a clear pasture regulation is crucial to the future of this market. Whether that will happen, however, is up to the USDA.

*Samuel Fromartz is the author of Organic, Inc.: Natural Foods and How They Grew (Harcourt, 2006). His website is [www.fromartz.com](http://www.fromartz.com) and he blogs at [www.chewswise.com](http://www.chewswise.com). Thanks to Jim Riddle, former chairman of the NOSB, for historical background on the pasture regulations. ♦*



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Milky Way Organic Dairy, Ira, VT

Horizon Organic joins with the Federation of Organic Dairy Farmers in support of regulatory changes to require that all dairy cows be raised organically from the last third of gestation.

## 2007 NODPA Field Days

*By Lisa McCrory and Ed Maltby*

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual NODPA Field Days covered two Northeast states this year. Straddling Connecticut and Massachusetts, Organic Dairy producers Morvan Allan and Rick Segalla opened their farms to a large group of organic dairy producers and resource people for a wonderful two-day event. In addition to these two farms, the Freund's Farm and Market provided the central meeting location, supplying delicious local meals to the attendees, a venue for our producer meeting, member meetings, exhibitors and workshop sessions.

The event started with a field trip to Rick Segalla's farm where he gave everyone a tour of his grazing system, his feed storage and his cows. Discussions ranged from pre-clipping pastures and the estimated cost (fuel and time) in doing this as well as

when it may be beneficial, pasture density, running heifers behind cows (leader-follower) and plant species ideal for grazing. Kathy Soder also shared insights into animal behavior and grazing preferences depending upon what is being fed in the barn. One thing that everyone agreed was that Rick's pastures were beautiful,

with dense stands of leafy grasses, and legumes. There was a lot of grass-envy happening on this farm – especially since many were experiencing drought conditions on their farms.

A wonderful dinner was provided at the Freund's Farm and Market followed by a welcoming address by NODPA President, Steve Morrison. In previous years, this would have been followed by a closed producer-member meeting, but NODPA decided to try something more inclusive this year by continuing the

evening with an open forum for all to participate. This worked well as the wonderful discussion provided fod-



*Samuel Fromartz talking to attendees at NODPA Field Days.*

*(Continued on page 12)*

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(Continued from NODPA Field Days page 10)

der for the closed producer meeting that followed early on Saturday morning but also gave a context that all of us in the organic community need to work together for the benefit of each other. Discussions included broadening NODPA's coverage to include the Southeastern states which received strong support as NODPA has always been inclusive and the greater the number of farmers the more impact NODPA can have. There was some concern about the need to recognize regional differences to prevent a split but NODPA can provide resources for Southern farmers so they don't have the overhead costs of their own organizations. There were plenty of ideas around raising funds through increased subscriptions, more farmers signing on to the check-off program and applying to the Organic Valley Farmer Advocacy Fund. Building membership, being more visible at events and becoming better known to organic and conventional producers was seen as a priority as NODPA is the only organization that can represent the farmers views with authority and commitment. A summary of NODPA's recent activities were shared and there was agreement that NODPA needs to be even more aggressive at get-

**Consumers hear about factory farms, family farms and the pasture debate and they often get confused; mixing pasteurization with pasturing.**

ting the pasture and livestock replacement rules passed.

Saturday morning started with a producer only meeting where there was a great exchange of information and ideas about how NODPA can provide a sustainable market with a pay price that recognizes the increasing costs of production.

**Samuel Fromartz**, author of "Organic, Inc" started the morning proceeding sharing his perspective on the future of organics. One of the strong messages from Samuel's talk was the importance of connecting consumers (or 'eaters', if you will) with producers; there is an expansive disconnect from how food is produced and how it gets to our plate. "People are seeing the connection between our own health and the nutritional value of our food", said Sam. He continued by talking about how the organic market is continuing to grow and milk is one of the entry points for consumers as they start to make organic food purchases; kids drink it and parents want the healthiest food product for their children. The catch is keeping our customers *adequately informed*. Consumers hear about factory farms, family farms and the pasture debate and they often get confused; mixing pasteurization with pasturing. Sam stressed that NODPA should be proactive in advocating for farmers as they are the only authentic "farmer voice" and should communicate directly to consumers.. The history around the use of pasture and how this issue has been dragged through the mud for years is covered well in Sam's article "What Makes A Cow Organic?" on page 1 of this issue. Through the implementation of a USDA National Organic Program, the word 'organic' is very clearly defined and sets a hurdle we need to jump over. Sam contended that the word 'local' is yet to have a solid definition – and we need one if we want the local initiative to move in the right direction. The rest of what Samuel talked about circled around the pasture standard (or lack thereof), the need for standards around humane treatment and management of our organic livestock and livestock replacements. Samuel has a blog, which can be found at [www.chewswise.com](http://www.chewswise.com) where he talks about books, ethanol, the Farm Bill, food safety, local, humane, organic and much more.

**Dr Kathy Soder** of the USDA Agricultural Research Station (ARS) followed, giving a presentation titled 'Think Like a Cow - Understanding Grazing Behavior'. Here she covered some very interesting discoveries about the types of forages that ruminants prefer and what times of day cows eat their largest meal.. Research findings have shown that ruminants eat the largest meal in the morning and, if they have a choice, they will pre-

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(Continued on page 13)



(Continued from NODPA Field Days, page 12)

fer clovers over grasses in the morning meal and switch to grasses over clovers for their second largest meal - which is at dusk. There are a lot of theories as to why these preferences seem to be the norm; maybe the grasses fill them up more for the long night fast, or maybe the forages taste better in the afternoon when their sugar content is at its highest.

Kathy also discussed the benefits of having a diverse pasture stand, using an older cow as a model to train your heifers to graze, plus identifying physical traits in a good grazing cow and breeding for those qualities.

Why do cows raised in confinement do poorly when put out on pasture? Some of this is learned behavior, of course, but another reason may be that the rumen capacity is not as great. Generational improvements can be made on a herd through genetic selection, providing good quality managed pasture, and making sure you are



*Morvan Allen's calves at NODPA Field Days*

training the cow and not the reverse. Many of the facts on grazing management, animal behavior, pasture plant diversity and more can be found at the following website:

[www.umaine.edu/grazingguide/Main%20Pages/Table%20of%20Contents.htm](http://www.umaine.edu/grazingguide/Main%20Pages/Table%20of%20Contents.htm)

The Organic Grain Panel, represented by Vermont Extension Agronomist **Heather Darby**, Maine Extension Dairy Nutritionist **Rick Kersbergen** and organic grain dealers Lakeview Organic Grain (**Klaas and Mary-Howell Martens**) and Green Mountain Feeds (**Rick Dutil**) was a wonderful, thoughtful

discussion on the future of organic grain and what we can do as farm managers to reduce our costs in purchased feeds while improving livestock health and longevity in the herd. It was very impressive to see the level of expertise, insight and consensus provided by this panel of experts. The panel took many questions about the availability of feed and what prices farmers should expect and how available feed would be. To-

(Continued on page 14)

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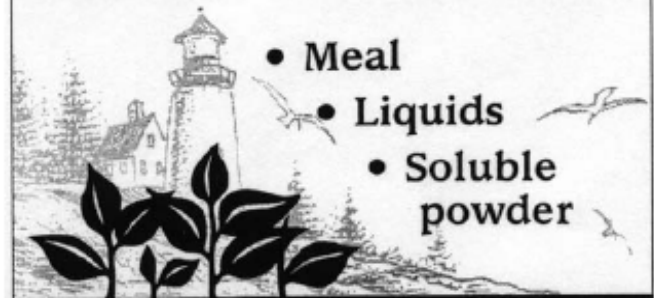
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(Continued from NODPA Field Days, page 13)

gether with the participants there was some great brainstorming around the benefits of annual forage and small grains and experiences in understanding new production practices. This was a very practical discussion that should have been recorded for many others to benefit from.

The NODPA Field Days concluded with a tour of Morvan Allen's Farm in Sheffield Massachusetts. Attendees were able to see how Morvan manages his pasture and hear a great story about why good fences make good neighbors. The additional information to this story is; when the fence isn't adequate, quickly mend the relationship by paying the \$5000 worth of damage your cow did to the swimming pool. Other aspects of the farm tour included a look at Morvan's calf rearing system, the fencing and water system, laneways and a recently finished manure handling system, cost-shared by NRCS.

*The updated website will display a Field Days page complete with photographs, speaker handouts and other resources shared. NODPA would like to thank all its sponsors as well as the host farms for making the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Field Days such a great success. ♦*



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## **FOOD Farmers Sends Letter to USDA Protesting Consent Agreement with Aurora**

*By Kathie Arnold*

The Federation of Organic Dairy Farmers (FOOD Farmers) sent a letter to the USDA Secretary of Agriculture on September 19 protesting the Consent Agreement between the USDA and Aurora Organic Dairy (AOD). FOOD Farmers is the umbrella organization for the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA), the Midwest Organic Dairy Producers Association (MODPA), and the Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA).

The letter:

► Thanked the National Organic Program (NOP) for having investigated the complaints regarding AOD and having publicly released the Notice of Proposed Revocation, Violations by Aurora Dairy, and the Consent Agreement.

► Expressed that FOOD Farmers are extremely disturbed by the Consent Agreement made between USDA and AOD for many reasons:

- It does not bring closure to this situation.
- It sets an unacceptable precedent for the USDA organic seal, that alleged major, multiple violations occurring over several years time and affecting multiple operations are not met with certification revocation but can be negotiated away without penalty.
- The Consent Agreement does not address all the alleged violations and inconsistencies raised in the Violation by Aurora Organic Dairy document nor does it fully and fairly remedy all the ones it does address. For example:

1. Cows at the Dublin, TX that were improperly transitioned are not required to be removed from the herd.
2. Requiring AOD to remove their 80/20 transitioned cows from their Platteville farm, rather than all the other subsequent livestock brought in that were not organic from last third of gestation as required, is the opposite of what should be required.
3. The 4 to 5 cows per acre pasture stocking rate allowed AOD goes against every recommendation of the National Organic Standards Board.

► Disagrees with USDA's claim that the Consent Agreement is in the best interest of the program.

► Notes no known legal justification in OFPA, the law

*(Continued on page 15)*

(Continued from Letter to USDA, page 14)

authorizing the NOP, or in the NOP regulation to support USDA's negotiation of the Consent Agreement.

► States that although this case shows that current NOP regulations do require pasture for ruminant animals and that there are standards for dairy replacement animals, it is more important than ever for USDA to swiftly move forward and publish rulemaking that will clarify the access to pasture rule and provide a technical correction to the rule governing organic dairy herd replacements.

► Noted the apparent conflict of interest between AOD and their certifiers, given the laudatory public statements of AOD made by their certifiers.

► Requested that AOD's certification by the Colorado Department of Agriculture be declared null and that AOD be immediately instructed to contract with a new certifier, other than CDA or QAI, to ensure ongoing certification by a certifier that understands the requirements that must be met by organic dairy farms.

► Calls on the USDA to continue to enforce the Consent Agreement with AOD with monthly surprise visits to the AOD operations by NOP investigators, paid for by AOD. Asked that if there is one indication that the terms of the Consent Agreement "are not being reasonably complied with," that USDA immediately follow through with the April 16th Proposed Revocation of Aurora Organic Dairy's production and handling certification under the NOP.

► Concludes with the following paragraph:

"The continued health and growth of organic farming, handling, processing, and retailing rests upon the credibility of the National Organic Program system. The Consent Agreement between USDA and Aurora Organic Dairy has no transparency and the "Q and A" posted on the NOP website compounds the confusion and lack of logic rather than explaining the reasons for reaching the agreement. The strength of the Organic seal and the financial sustainability of family farms rely on the ability of the NOP to enforce the organic standards universally and unequivocally. This Consent Agreement does not do that and leaves a situation that is open to many interpretations by producers and certifiers further aggravating controversy and disillusionment within the National Organic Program."

No response from USDA has been forthcoming. The USDA documents on AOD can be viewed at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/TodaysNews.html> under August 30, 2007 news. The full FOOD Farmers letter to USDA can be read at <http://www.nodpa.com/LetterToSecretaryConner92507.pdf> or go to [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com) and look under Press Releases. ♦

## Organic Dairy Farmers Support Consumers Right for Organic Dairy Products that Meet All of the Organic Regulations

The Federation Of Organic Farmers (FOOD Farmers) today announced their support for consumers who have filed a class action lawsuit against Aurora Organic Dairy that alleges the company misled them by selling milk under a USDA Organic Seal while not following the required farm practices. The lawsuit is based on the result of a two year investigation by the USDA that Aurora allegedly violated 14 provisions of the Organic Food Production Act. The validity of the violations was never legally confirmed as the USDA and Aurora Organic reached a consent agreement that directed Aurora to stop organic production at one facility and make numerous changes in its operations but allowed them to continue selling organically certified dairy products. FOOD Farmers shares the frustration of consumers that this issue was not satisfactorily resolved by the USDA and leaves a situation that is open to many interpretations by producers, consumers and certifiers, further aggravating controversy and disillusionment with the National Organic Program (NOP).

(Continued on page 16)




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(Continued from *FOOD Farmers* page 15)

"We need the USDA and their accredited certifiers to enforce the rules equally and consistently", said Darlene Coehoorn, Wisconsin farmer and President of MODPA. "The USDA should always act decisively to enforce the organic regulations and protect the many family farms and businesses that rely on the USDA Organic seal for their livelihood not leave it to consumers to file lawsuits."

The continued health and growth of organic farming, handling, processing, and retailing rests upon the credibility of the NOP system. The Consent Agreement between USDA and Aurora Organic Dairy has no transparency and the "Q and A" posted on the NOP website compounds the confusion and lack of logic rather than explaining the reasons for reaching the agreement. Consumer confidence in the Organic seal and the financial sustainability of family farms rely on the ability of the NOP to enforce the organic standards universally and unequivocally. The Consent Agreement does not do that.

While this case shows that the current NOP regulations do require pasture for ruminants and do have standards for dairy replacement animals, now, more than ever, it is important for the USDA to swiftly move forward and publish rulemaking that will clarify the access to pasture rule and provide a technical correction to the rule governing organic dairy herd replacements.

"The USDA has delayed too long in publishing a proposed rule to clarify what is meant by "access to pasture" and define one easily understood and enforced standard for organic dairy replacements. The minimum mandated standard should require that milking dairy cows graze pasture that provides an average 30% of dry matter for 120 days," said Steve Morrison, a Maine farmer and president of NODPA, "This position was reaffirmed at our annual conference in East Canaan, CT in August 2007."

California organic dairy producer and WODPA President Tony Azevedo echoed similar sentiments, "At our recent conference in Corvallis, Oregon, we unanimously passed resolutions supporting the FOOD Farmers position on access to pasture and dairy herd replacements. The rulemaking is long overdue, and producers and processors need the clarity in the rule to plan for the future and to continue ensuring the integrity of organic certification for the consumer."

***Federation Of Organic Dairy Producers (FOOD Farmers)***

*The Federation of Organic Dairy Producers is an umbrella group for the three regional organic dairy farmer organizations: Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA), Midwest Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (MODPA), and Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) and represents over 800 organic dairy farmers across the country. ♦*

(Continued from the NODPA Desk, page 3)

—0268. If you want to travel to DC and make a comment in person you should email or call Valerie Frances either at 202-205-7808 or [valerie.frances@usda.gov](mailto:valerie.frances@usda.gov). If you are comfortable using a computer and want to submit a comment ahead of time by email go to the NOP website, <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop>, and follow the instructions. If you are not good on computers, email or fax it to me and I'll put it on their new site for you. The NODPA Board suggests that you continue to ask about when the publication of the access to pasture regulations will happen. NODPA's other priority is to request that a speedy rulemaking process take place for the organic dairy replacements and any proposed rule follow the recommendation of NODPA, MODPA, WODPA and many of the processors. If you need any help with formulating a letter, just call or email.

If you are an organic dairy farmer then we want to hear from you either directly to me, Ed Maltby or to your Board members or State Reps. There are many things happening as we move away from a surplus in organic milk supply but into rapidly rising prices for grain and other inputs. Lastly, if you value the work that NODPA does, especially our expansion in the New Year, we ask for any contributions that can help us continue the work we are doing to support the future sustainability of organic dairy farmers.

Ed Maltby, 413-772-0444 or [ednodpa@comcast.net](mailto:ednodpa@comcast.net) ♦



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## Organic Valley Farm Named New Hampshire's "Outstanding Dairy Farm of the Year"

### *Claremont's John Haynes Family Farm First Organic Farm to Receive Honor in State*

The Haynes Dairy in Claremont – a member of the Organic Valley cooperative of farmers – has been named New Hampshire's Outstanding Dairy Farm of the Year for 2007 by the Green Pastures Program. The award, which annually names one winner from each of the six New England states, evaluates farms on their achievement in business management, crop production, pasture quality, herd performance, environmental practices, and community leadership.

Certified as an organic dairy last May, the Haynes Farm represents the first organic dairy farm in New Hampshire to win this distinction. This year's judges cited the many farm innovations, clean cows and barn, quality pasture, and the overall dairy operation as the reasons for the Haynes' Farm win.

Haynes Dairy Farm has been a grass-based dairy operation since John Haynes' parents, David and Nellie, purchased it in 1961. John, who worked alongside his parents, took ownership with his wife, Beth, in 1993. It remains a grass-based dairy using grasses and legumes for the majority of its feed for its 98-head herd, from which 62 Holsteins are milked.

The New England Green Pastures Program began in 1948 after World War II by regional farm leaders worried that a post-war depression would hurt agriculture. They believed that if ways were found to help the region's dairymen respond to new research and adopt technologies, that they would remain cost-competitive and less vulnerable to economic downturns.

In recent years, the New England Green Pastures program has evolved from one of promoting pastures and forage management to its present objective of honoring an outstanding dairy family from each of the New England States for total management (both production and financial) of the operating farm and considering the farm family's contribution to the agricultural community.

"We're delighted that New England Green Pastures has for the first time selected an organic dairy for its annual New Hampshire award, and we're even more thrilled that it's one of the 1,100 members of our family farms," said George Siemon, chief executive officer of Organic Valley Family of Farms. "As an organic farmer who is a member of a co-operative, not only is Haynes providing nutritious dairy products for his region, his farm's revenues directly impact his community and state. That's a big difference from corporate farms, where profits are most often taken out of the community." ♦

## NODPA is on the MOOve

By Ed Maltby

As the number of organic dairy farmers increase, NODPA is expanding the services that it offers organically certified and transitioning dairy farmers, and the consumers of our wonderful products.

### What are the Changes?

**NODPA News will come out every other month starting in January 2008.** Recently we have had just too much information and news to fit into a quarterly newsletter. Rather than send you a 60 page magazine every quarter we will move to a re-designed, 36 page newsletter that is published every two months. We will continue to supply the high quality of information, news and opinion that has become the trademark of the NODPA News and has earned it respect throughout the organic dairy community. *See renewal form page 35.*

**The New Year will herald a redesigned web site will be easier to navigate and update.** After six years we decided that it was time for a facelift! We will streamline the layout and the links in order to serve you better. Watch out when you click [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com) in January!

(Continued on page 18)



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(Continued from NODPA on the MOOve, page 17)

Ever wondered what happens to all the wonderful information that is exchanged on ODAIRY? With the new web site we will have a message board that will store the catalogued information and make it easily accessible to everyone through the website.

What makes this expansion possible is Lisa McCrory as the editor of NODPA News and Elisa Clancy as our webmaster. Lisa brings a wealth of knowledge and relationship to her work with NODPA and without her an expansion of the publication of the NODPA News would be impossible. Elisa has updated and maintained the web site from the beginning and she has provided skill and leadership with the layout of the newsletter which ensures it meets our publication schedule.

All this, of course, costs more money and we thank all of our advertisers and our many subscribers for their support. NODPA operates on a duct tape and baler twine budget so it can provide the maximum services for its farmer members so, like farmers, we have little money to invest in our infrastructure. **Help us accomplish more** and continue providing high quality services to organic dairy farmers by **donating to NODPA** through a cash donation or through our check-off program *see page 35*. ♦

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## **Thought For the Day: Eat More Pasture– Do Less Work**

*By Ed Maltby*

Call it the “Grass Wars” or the “Access to pasture soap opera” there are still some leaders of the organic dairy industry that resist a NOP rule that requires lactating cows consume a quantifiable amount of pasture. They question that there can be a universally applied method of measurement that is size and location neutral. In order to answer that question, NODPA convened a committee to compile practical ideas on measuring dry matter intake that could be applied consistently across the country.

**The report clearly shows that no matter what the size of the farm, the number of cows ... consumption of pasture can be measured effectively as part of the annual farm inspection by a certifier.**

The committee was chaired by the newly appointed head of Organic Dairy Development & Research at the University of New Hampshire Organic Research Farm, Kevin Brussell and included Kathy Soder (USDA ARS), Kathie Arnold (NODPA Board member), Arden Nelson (WODPA Board member), Lisa McCrory (NOFA VT), Jim Gardiner (NODPA Board member) and Juan Velez (Aurora Organic Dairy).

The committee reached unanimous agreement on how to measure pasture consumption and published a short report and work sheet which is available on the NODPA website at <http://www.nodpa.com/FOODpastureMeasurement.pdf>. The report clearly shows that no matter what the size of the farm, the number of cows, the production practices (whether irrigated or not) or the geographic location, consumption of pasture can be measured effectively as part of the annual farm inspection by a certifier. The USDA NOP has thanked the committee for their work and valuable input and the report has also been welcomed by certifiers who agree that measurement and recording of consumption of feed is an integral part of their existing inspection protocols. Certifiers also mentioned that they had no difficulties in monitoring feed consumption under the 80/20 requirement for transitioning farms and the 30% dry matter worksheets are less complicated.

NODPA's position on access to pasture rule and dairy herd replacements:

(Continued on page 19)



(Continued from 30% Dry Matter Task Force, page 18)

### Clarification of the access to Pasture standards

1. Organic dairy livestock over 6 months of age must graze on pasture during the months of the year when pasture can provide edible forage.
2. The grazed feed must provide significant intake for all milking-age organic dairy cows. At a minimum, an average of 30% of the dry matter intake each year must come from grazed pasture during the region's growing season, which will be no less than 120 days per year.
3. Temporary exemption from pasture may be allowed because of: Conditions under which the health, safety, or well-being of the animal could be jeopardized, including to restore the health of an individual animal or to prevent the spread of disease from an infected animal to other animals. Short term inclement weather. Temporary conditions which pose a



*Cows Grazing at Rick Segalla's farm,  
2007 NODPA Field Days*

risk to soil and water quality.

In no case will temporary confinement and exemption from this pasture standard be allowed as a continuous production system.

The measurement of the consumption of dry matter from grazed pasture will be calculated based on the daily dry matter intake from grazing averaged over the total time period grazed per year.

### Organic Dairy Herd Replacements

Once an operation has been certified for organic dairy production, all dairy replacement animals, including all young stock whether subsequently born on or brought onto the operation, shall be under organic management from the last third of gestation prior to the animal's birth. ♦

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Photo by Karl Pickett ©2007 Horizon Organic

## National Organic Standards Board To Meet November 28—30

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) will meet Nov. 28-30 at the Holiday Inn National Airport Hotel, 2650 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Arlington, VA 22202. Sessions will run from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 28; 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 29; and 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 30, 2007. All sessions are open to the public.

NOSB committees will present recommendations to the full board for a vote concerning the use or prohibition of five petitioned substances and 11 sunseting substances due to expire in Nov. 2008 under review for the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances; revisions to the NOSB policy and procedures manual and the *Guide for New NOSB Members*; proposed organic standards for pet food; guidance on the certification of operations involved in crops research and guidance on temporary research variances; the standardization of certificates; guidance for accredited certifying agents regarding annual commercial availability determinations for ingredients listed on § 205.606 and organic seed sourcing by farmers under § 205.204; and on the certification of multi-site operations, including community grower groups. The NOSB will also receive an update from the National Organic Program (NOP) and will hear committee progress reports regarding work plans and discussion items.

*Preceding the NOSB Business Meeting on Nov. 27 from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., there will be expert presentations on the issues of fish feed and open cage net pens in organic aquaculture; these are also open to the public.*

Comments may be submitted in writing to Ms. Valerie Frances, Executive Director, NOSB, USDA-AMS-TMD-NOP, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Room 4008-S, Ag Stop 0268, Washington, DC 20250-0268, or via the internet at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) **only**. The comments should identify Docket Number AMS-TM-07-0118. All comments, whether submitted by mail or the internet, will be available for viewing on the [regulations.gov](http://regulations.gov) website.

Time for public input for Wednesday, Nov. 28, is from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 1:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; on Thursday, Nov. 29, from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; and Friday, Nov. 30, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. There will be separate sign-up sheets for each segment.

Requests to make an oral presentation at the meeting may be sent by mail to Ms. Valerie Frances, Executive Director, NOSB, NOP at the postal address above, by email to [valerie.frances@usda.gov](mailto:valerie.frances@usda.gov), by fax to (202) 205-7808, or by phone to (202) 720-3252, and must be received by close of business Nov. 9. If time is available, attendees may sign up for additional public input at the meeting. Web site: [www.ams.usda.gov/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop). ♦

## Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference in Corvallis, OR, September 25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007

*By Cindy Daley, Chico University*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual WODPA Conference was held on the Oregon State University Campus as a two day event, co-sponsored by the Oregon State University Cooperative Extension Service. Paul Staehley, of Oregon City, Oregon, served as Conference Chairman, assisted by WODPA Secretary Sharon Sinko, from Myrtle Point, Oregon.

President Tony Azevedo, from Stevinson, California, opened the conference with an update on the progress that has been made over the course of the last year as well as some of the issues that continue to be important to producers of organic milk. While there has been little movement toward a final NOP ruling on pasture requirements and heifer replacements in Washington DC, organic dairy producers have united nationally under the FOOD Farmers organization in an effort to clearly state their views. Collectively, the producers are for stricter, enforceable pasture regulations, with a minimum of 120 days on pasture per year with at least 30% dry matter intake for all classes of cattle.

The program included a grain processor panel to discuss the impact of grain shortages on price and availability, followed by a research update from OSU Cooperative Extension Service, Dr.'s Mike Gamroth, Troy Downing and Candace Croney, as featured speakers. Troy presented his work on sugar content in cool season grasses and Candace discussed consumer survey data on animal well being in agriculture.

Three resolutions were passed by the general session, to provide position statements for the Western region.

*(Continued on page 21)*



**Grain Processor Panel Discussion: Blake Alexandre, WODPA Vice President served as moderator. Participants included: Pro-Foods; Associated Feeds; Grange; Modesto Milling; Cargill; Dairyman's Co-op.**

(Continued from WODPA, page 20)

**In addition to affirming the stance on pasture requirements and heifer replacements, WODPA also passed a resolution to support the use and promotion of the "Certified Organic" label as the preeminent label for all dairy products in the retail case.**

In addition to affirming the stance on pasture requirements and heifer replacements, WODPA also passed a resolution to support the use and promotion of the "Certified Organic" label as the preeminent label for all dairy products in the retail case. WODPA feels that other "value-added" labeling confuses the consumer and detracts from the significance of the "Certified Organic" program. Consumers need to know that this label represents the highest standards of animal welfare and product quality control, as verified by a standardized 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification. All resolutions can be viewed at: [www.csuchico.edu/agr/wodpa](http://www.csuchico.edu/agr/wodpa).

The organization also enacted a "One Cent" program to fund future WODPA activities. Producers can divert a cent/cwt of their national milk marketing fees to WODPA by filling out the transfer form (available on-line), to fund future conferences, policy related travel and newsletters to educate and spread the word on important issues.

The conference concluded with a farm tour of Double J Jersey Dairy in Monmouth, Oregon. Jon Bansen served as host for the event.

If you would like to receive the WODPA newsletter, it is available on-line at [www.csuchico.edu/agr/wodpa](http://www.csuchico.edu/agr/wodpa) or can be delivered via US mail by contacting Sharon Sinko, WODPA secretary at 541-396-5077.

Cindy Daley is the Organic Dairy Faculty Supervisor at CSU Chico University Farm, member of the WODPA advisory board and the editor of the WODPA newsletter ♦



**Jon Bansen, Monmouth, Oregon – Double J Jersey's Dairy served as host for the farm tour .**

## **American Grassfed Association Position Statement on the Newly Released USDA Grass Fed Claim**

The Board of Directors of the *American Grassfed Association* appreciates the effort made by the *Agricultural Marketing Service* of the *USDA* to establish a *Grass Fed Claim for Ruminant Livestock*. That said, we are disappointed with the content of the Standard that *AMS-USDA* finalized today. We believe that this Standard, as published, fails to adequately address the following basic facets, tenets and integrity of Grass Fed animal husbandry:

The grass fed label claim can continue to be used by anyone in the marketplace since participation in this *AMS* verification process is voluntary.

The unrestricted supplementation of energy is allowed, as long as the feedings are recorded. This standard does not set any restriction on amount, frequency or type of non-forage feedstuffs.

Long-term confinement practices are allowed under this standard since "access" to pasture and frost dates are easily manipulated.

The use of artificial hormones is allowed under this standard.

The use of therapeutic and sub-therapeutic antibiotics is allowed under this standard.

Artificial milk replacers are allowed under this standard including milk replacers made from bovine blood meal.

The Board of Directors of the *American Grassfed Association* feels that the spirit of the claim is negated by these allowances. Further, we are certain that the confusion on the part of the consumer will increase as the consumer's expectations of grass fed products do not appear to be served by this labeling standard.

For additional information contact Dr. Patricia Whisnant, President, *American Grassfed Association* at 573-225-7078, [pwhisnant@americangrassfedbeef.com](mailto:pwhisnant@americangrassfedbeef.com) or Carrie Balkcom, Executive Director, *American Grassfed Association* 877-774- 7277 or 303 243 4300 [aga@americangrassfed.org](mailto:aga@americangrassfed.org)

## Protecting Consumer Trust and Confidence in the Dairy Industry

The National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative is a producer-led coalition that includes members from every sector of the dairy industry. On October 4, 2007 at World Dairy Expo, the coalition introduced the first draft of proposed principles and guidelines intended to provide a uniform umbrella of assurance that the industry is meeting its ethical obligation for dairy animal well-being. Our goal is to protect consumer trust and confidence in the dairy industry by demonstrating dairy producers' commitment to animal well-being.

Over the next nine months, dairy producers will have an opportunity to review the draft principles and guidelines and provide their input via their co-op or industry association. Once the input is received, the coalition will finalize the principles and guidelines.

Go to the following web page:  
[www.dairywellbeing.org](http://www.dairywellbeing.org) to learn more about the National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative and to download the draft principles and guidelines.

*You are encouraged to forward your comments to your co-op or producer organization, enabling them to compile all comments from their members which may then be forwarded to the Principles and Guidelines committee by submitting them to Jamie Jonker at: then have the link to his email and his mailing address: Jamie Jonker, Ph.D. Director, Regulatory Affairs National Milk Producers Federation 2101 Wilson Blvd, Suite 400 Arlington, VA 22201 Email: [jjonker@nmpf.org](mailto:jjonker@nmpf.org) ♦*

## Better Financing for Dairy Farmers

Are you thinking about getting financing for your farm? Have you obtained financing in the past? Have you been denied financing? If you answer 'yes' to any of these questions you can help The Carrot Project better understand – and meet -- the financing needs of farmers by participating in an on-line survey.

The Carrot Project is working to make loans and guarantees available to small and mid-sized farms and exploring equity solutions. Your response to the survey will help us address financing gaps for beginning farmers, farmers transitioning to more ecologically friendly practices, farmers looking to expand their businesses, and farmers working to maintain the viability of their farms. Check it out at [www.thecarrotproject.org](http://www.thecarrotproject.org) and click on "Farmer Survey."

Why are we doing a farmer survey? Unfortunately, there is scant research on the roles of debt and financing gaps as they affect smaller farms. In order to design the best financing services, focus resources, and attract the desired investment, TCP needs better information. It needs information that will lead to an understanding of the funding gaps that farmers face and how those gaps affect farm operators' abilities to meet business goals and improve productivity.

If you have any questions or would like to receive a hard copy of the survey, please contact [dsuput@thecarrotproject.org](mailto:dsuput@thecarrotproject.org) or 617-666-9637x2. We look forward to hearing from you. ♦



2007 NODPA Field Days

## **Stonyfield Farm - All Organic, at Long Last**

Almost 25 years after its founding, the world's leading organic yogurt company achieves a longstanding goal. Call it an early birthday present – to itself.

Enjoying the largest organic milk supply ever, Stonyfield Farm this month converts the remainder of its dairy product line to organic.

“This is the culmination of 25 years of work and passion, and just in time for our 25<sup>th</sup> birthday,” says Stonyfield Farm President and CE-Yo Gary Hirshberg. The official company ‘birth date’ was April 9, 1983.

The final step toward total conversion was making Stonyfield's fat-free 6-ounce line organic. Those production changes are scheduled for October. Earlier this year, the company converted its 32-ounce fat-free quarts and smoothies to organic.

Stonyfield Farm will now offer an all-organic line of 32-ounce and six-ounce yogurts, drinkable yogurt smoothies, YoBaby yogurts for babies and toddlers, YoKids squeezers and yogurts, frozen yogurt and ice cream, Oikos Greek-style yogurt, and milk.

“This is a goal that often seemed out-of-reach, due to the scarcity of organic milk and other ingredients, but our strong supplier relationships – primarily with Organic Valley/CROPP – and their steadfast support of this company and our consumers made this monumental achievement possible,” says Hirshberg.

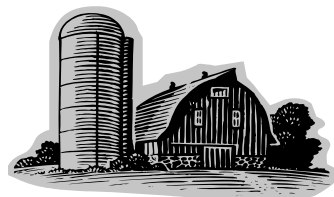
The increase in organic milk supply is due to the growing number of conventional farmers completing their conversion to organic, a regulated process requiring that grazing land and feed are not treated with chemical fertilizers or persistent toxic pesticides for three years.

Stonyfield Farm and Organic Valley/CROPP have worked together in recent years to further encourage organic conversion. In addition to establishing a transition fund to provide monetary support for farmers during the conversion process and providing more staff to work directly with farmers, the companies scheduled hundreds of procurement and membership retention events, and sponsored organic workshops and conferences for farmers. Stonyfield CE-Yo Gary Hirshberg and his wife, Meg, also contributed \$100,000 to a loan fund to supply needed support to organic farm families, and Stonyfield Farm was the lead sponsor, with a gift of \$450,000, of the nation's first land grant-based organic dairy farm, at the University of New Hampshire.

### **About Stonyfield Farm**

Stonyfield Farm advocates that healthy food can only come from a healthy planet. It was the nation's first dairy processor to pay farmers not to treat cows with the synthetic bovine growth hormone rBST. Stonyfield donates 10 percent of its profits to environmental causes; was America's first manufacturer to offset 100 percent of its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from its facility energy use; and recently installed the largest solar array in New Hampshire to help power its production plant -- all efforts to reduce global warming.

For more information about Stonyfield Farm, its products and initiatives, visit [www.stonyfield.com](http://www.stonyfield.com) or call 1-800-PRO-COWS. ♦



### **Heat Recovery From Aerated Compost Systems**

AgriLab, Inc. of Windsor, ON, Canada has established a new office in Vermont, USA to promote and provide technical service for their heat recovery from aerated compost systems.

The technology utilizes a patent protected "ISOBAR" technology which moves heated vapor across closed loop, gas charged tubes to collect and capture the heat which averages 130-150 F produced by the composting process. This energy can then be used for various purposes.

The technology has been successfully installed on a 1,000 heifer raising facility in Vermont where the captured heat is used to heat a 250 calf barn, using radiant loop heat coils embedded in concrete flooring. The heat is also utilized for all hot water needs required for sanitization, washing and feed preparation needs.

The heat capture system has averaged an output in excess of 5 million BTU's per day, reducing significantly the need for grid derived electricity.

The aerobic process produces a high value compost ideal for all farm, field, gardening and landscaping applications, providing great cost savings to farms operating organically, and creating positive cash flow from excess Compost.

The system is ideal for any farm (all livestock & equine facilities), or greenhouse operations generating or able to collect compostable materials, for conversion to compost, then utilize the resulting heat for building and hot water applications.

Installation of the technology generally qualifies for Federal and State "cost sharing" under most NRCS "Innovative Practices" programs managed through the EQUIP Program. Other State programs may be applicable as well.

Josh Nelson, AgriLab Inc., Compost to Energy Technology, POB 8, Pawlet, VT 05761 (802)325-2203 [www.agrilab.ca](http://www.agrilab.ca) email: [riwigglar@aol.com](mailto:riwigglar@aol.com)



## Horizon Organic Hope Award Winner

In a ceremony at the annual Farm Aid® benefit event on September 9, Horizon Organic® honored one of the company's family farmer partners, Jim and Toni Young of Antwerp, N.Y., with the second annual HOPE Award. The award was established by Horizon Organic to pay tribute to and congratulate their family farmers who have not only navigated the challenges of transitioning to organic but who have also served as a model for other organic farmers. Horizon Organic is proud to support Farm Aid's mission to keep family farmers on their land and producing food in a way that is sustainable for their livelihood, the animals they care for and the planet.

Jim is a very humble man who gives all of the credit to his family. His children are very involved in all aspects of the farm. Adam, age 15, and Zach, age 10, along with Jim's assistance, make the management decisions for the crops they harvest to feed their cows. Morgan, age 13, is

in charge of the cattle genetics and helps make breeding decisions for the herd.

The Youngs began thinking about making the switch to organic in 1997, but it wasn't until 2000 when they formally began the transition. When Jim attended a meeting in the spring of 2000, he came to the realization his farm could remain a family farm through becoming organic. The benefits far outweighed the challenges associated with organic transition. The switch, along with higher organic pay prices, allowed the Youngs to invest in equipment they needed to become self sufficient. This meant they no longer had to purchase feed, but could grow it on their own land, harvest it, and process it themselves. The Youngs believe this is one of the reasons their herd health has improved over the last few years.

The Youngs milk just over 40 cows and raise their own youngstock, which helps the Youngs ensure the quality of their milk in the future. The Youngs manage 170 owned and 60 leased acres of organic pasture and cropland. ♦

## More Organic Milk Sought in Northeast

*Farms should be sure to have a market secured before beginning the 12 month herd transition.*

**CROPP Cooperative~Organic Valley Family of Farms**, the nation's largest farmer owned organic marketing cooperative continues to grow its dairy producers base now and into the future in New York, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and all of the New England States. Current market conditions underscore the need for our founding principles of supply management. Near term, we have ample milk supply and we are now directing producers interested transitioning to organic dairy production to begin their 12 month transition no sooner than the Fall of 2007. We offer a stable, competitive organic milk pay price once certified organic and a complete year of Transitional Funding for new farmers during herd's transitional year as well as Staff Veterinarians, Farmers Relations staff support, the Organic Trader, and inclusive communications. In addition, our Farm Resource department can help refer, source and finance feed purchases for your operation. In New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia contact Peter Miller, Northeast Region Dairy Pool Coordinator, at (888) 444-6455, x3407 to leave a voice message, or mobile at (612) 801-3506, peter.miller@organicvalley.coop. In New England States contact John Cleary, New England Dairy Pool Coordinator, at (888) -444-6544 x3330 to leave voice mail, or mobile at (612)-803-9087, or email at john.cleary@organcivalley.coop

**HP Hood** continues to look for high quality farms for our organic milk supply. We are eager to talk to farms that are ready to begin their herd transition in the fall of 2007. Our routes encompass a number of Northern Tier States (ME, NH, VT, NY, PA, OH, MI, WI, MN, IA) and we would like to hear from you. Our support of sustainable agriculture, a signing bonus and transition assistance have helped many already. Please call Karen Cole, HP Hood Milk Procurement, karen.cole@hphood.com or at 1-866-383-1026.

**Upstate Niagara Cooperative** is a dairy farmer owned, full service cooperative headquartered in Buffalo, NY who own and operate 4 milk plants in Buffalo, Niagara Falls and Rochester. Our members

are interested in producing organic milk and processing organic dairy products. We currently process & package fresh, not ultra-pasteurized organic milk in our Rochester Milk Plant. If you are interested in learning more about Upstate Niagara Coop, please visit our website [www.upstateniagara.com](http://www.upstateniagara.com) or give me a call or email me. Talk to you soon.....Bill Young at 800-724-6455 x 6225 or by-[young@upstatefarms.com](mailto:young@upstatefarms.com).

**LOFCO** continues to look for milk in PA/MD, particularly southeast PA. The market is strong. Please contact Levi Miller at 717/661-8682 or Jerry McCleary at 717/577-8809.

**Dairy Marketing Services (DMS)** continues to market more than 50 percent of organic milk in the Northeast. DMS was established to deliver efficiency in services and enhance returns from the market directly back to producers at a minimal cost. It offers a wide range of services to producers such as health insurance and workers compensation through Agri-Services Agency, leases and loans from Agri-Max Financial, farm inputs and supplies through Eagle Dairy Direct, and herd management software from Dairy One. For more information, please contact Dave Eyster at 1-888-589-6455, ext. 5409 or [david.eyster@dairymarketingservices.com](mailto:david.eyster@dairymarketingservices.com).

**Horizon Organic** continues to grow its producer partner network in the East and Midwest. Horizon Organic offers competitive pay, transitional funds during the 12 months transition of the herd and long-term contracts. Producers in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Michigan, Virginia and Kentucky contact Cindy Masterman 888-648-8377; New York, Maryland, Ohio and Pennsylvania contact Peter Slaunwhite 800-381-0980; Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana contact Mike Bandstra 877-620-8259.

**United Ag Services** in Seneca Falls, NY is looking for organic milk in NY and northern PA. Please call 800-326-4251.

*Any buyers looking for organic milk who would like to be listed in this column for the January 2008 issue, please email the desired text to Ed at [ednodpa@comcast.net](mailto:ednodpa@comcast.net) or call 413-772-0444 by December 15<sup>th</sup> 2007.*

# Organic Production

## Feature Farm

### Wright Way Dairy George and Linda Wright Russell, NY

by *Liz Bawden, NODPA*  
*Co-Editor and State Representative*

Just 30 miles from the Canadian border, George and Linda Wright have been shipping milk from their farm in Russell, New York since 1996. Originally from Vermont, George had left his family dairy farm to pursue other career paths and Linda worked in the manufacturing of medical equipment. Linda had never milked a cow until their purchased cows began to arrive in 1996!

The Wrights own 690 acres; 290 tillable, 100 pasture, and 300 wooded. They also lease 115 tillable acres and 12 acres of pasture. They are Horizon Organic independent shippers and like it that way. George says, "We are still looking for a co-op that really wants to work for farmers". George and Linda work the farm together, having some hired help "when they can get it".

Certified by NOFA-NY in 2000, their farm was already certifiable. Their biggest challenge at that time was the availability of organic grain. George remembers, "at that time, if you could find organic grain, it was poor quality and the choices were slim". Transitioning to organic had been originally a financial decision. Tired of "working for nothing" and losing equity with conventional milk, the Wrights were ready to make a change. And they never looked back. "When we went full organic, it all changed. We are now enjoying our farm more than we

thought was possible."

The Wrights milk an average of 50 cows, housed in a stanchion barn. Average production runs 15,000 to 17,000 pounds depending on the grazing season and crop quality. "We do not believe in feeding more grain to make up for poor quality feed".

The pasturing season usually begins in early May when the cows are turned out onto 30 acres of pasture. As first cut hay is harvested from the fields, the cows are fenced off, and the pasture rotation begins. This provides 120 acres of grazing for 50 cows. Eventually the home farm is completely pastured. At this point, George and Linda let the cows "rotate themselves" over

the farm. Cows are on pasture day and night from May to November. They graze 100% of their forage from about May 15 to about Oct 1. Before and after that time, cows are fed baleage to supplement the pasture. A custom grain mix is fed at both milkings; the amount is determined by production and body condition.

In the winter, they process baleage in a vertical mixer. Salt, bicarb. and minerals are added to the mix. Grain is top-dressed at 8 to 20 lbs per day, depending on milk production and body condition. They do their own ration balancing, and feel that they have improved overall cow health by not pushing for production.

George and Linda have a strong vaccination program. They use a 10-way vaccine on the milking herd and bred heifers in spring and fall. Open heifers and calves are vaccinated with Titanium 5. Cows

are vaccinated with a E. coli-calf scour vaccine at dry-off to prevent later problems with calf scours. They use a foot rot vaccine in the spring with a booster in August. And they are pleased with the results of some

*(Continued on page 26)*



*George and Linda Wright, Wright Way Dairy (above)  
Their grazing cows (below)*



(Continued from Feature Farm, page 25)

mastitis vaccines; they feel it has helped them to have relatively few cases of mastitis per year, and maintain their SCC level at 150,000 to 250,000 for the last 5 years. Endovac-Bovi is used to control E. coli mastitis and salmonella; Lysigan controls staph mastitis. Both are administered every 6 months, but at staggered times, at least 10 days apart from each other or any other vaccinations. George stresses the need to use a new, clean needle for every injection every time to avoid spreading disease. Although they feel that animal health improved greatly after changing to organic production, they still feel they rely heavily on their veterinarian for diagnosis of health problems that arise. "If you don't know exactly what you are treating you can't know for sure how to treat it. We try to have our vet in at least every 6 or 8 weeks for pregnancy checks so he doesn't forget where we are because otherwise we wouldn't see him too often". The Wrights feel fortunate to have a vet that is supportive of organics, and works with them in ways that are compatible with organic standards.

While they only have a couple of mastitis cases each year, at the first sign of a hard quarter, they administer 3 aspirin twice a day. "We've found that if we do this at the first sign, it rarely develops into mastitis." If it does develop into mastitis, they strip the quarter several times a day, give aspirin, and rub liniment (they use a Crystal Creek product called Linirub) on the quarter. If all else fails, the quarter is dried off. The Wrights cull problem cows, and keep a (mostly) young herd.

Calf health is good at Wright Way Dairy too. Grain and hay are offered at 2 to 3 days of age. Calves are weaned from the 3 to 4 quarts of milk at each feeding at about 3 months. Calves are vaccinated at weaning and given a booster the following month. Fresh air and fresh water are key to good calf health.

The herd is closed except for the introduction of a service bull now and then. Usually, they prefer to buy a bull calf from a good herd and raise them for breeding.

When asked about the future of the organic dairy industry, George is outspoken, and he pulls no punches. He is adamant that the USDA must enforce the organic rules. And those rules must be clarified; they need to put the pasture policy in place as well as the "last third" rule governing dairy replacements. "It's appalling that they let Aurora Dairy get away with 14 "willful" violations with no significant penalties or loss of certification! This is a slap in the face to every organic dairy farmer in the country that is following the rules." George identifies the need for a level playing field for all certified organic producers, regardless of size and political clout. He also sees that organic certifiers need

to be monitored more closely, since Aurora's certifying agency, the Colorado Dept of Agriculture, allowed these violations.

George is also the founder of the e-mail group called OMILK, an internet list serve for organic dairy farmers only. For information on joining the list serve, contact George Wright at [wrightwaydairy@yahoo.com](mailto:wrightwaydairy@yahoo.com) or go to [OMILK@yahoogroups.com](mailto:OMILK@yahoogroups.com) and sign up. ♦

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**Deadline for the next issue is December 14, 2007**

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**Note:** Ads requiring typesetting, size changes or design work will be charged additional fees, according to the service (minimum charge \$30.00). **Please send a check with your ad.** (made payable to NODPA)

## Thoughts on Winter Feeding

*By Karen Hoffman Sullivan  
Resource Conservationist – Animal Science  
USDA-NRCS, Norwich, NY*

Even though fall has barely felt like fall this year, it is time to begin thinking about winter feeding. Soon the pastures will stop growing, and stored forage will need to be fed to cows for a few months. A concern that some organic dairy farmers have expressed is the high cost of organic grain right now. What can you do that will help keep the cost as low as possible?

Forage testing is one place to start, for a couple of reasons. First, it will help you determine how much forage your cows can eat, based on the fiber levels. If your cows can eat a higher forage diet, you can feed a lower rate of grain. Second, it will give you an idea of how much protein is in your forage, and from there you can determine how much protein you want or need to buy. Last, it will give you an estimate of how much energy you might need to supplement. Unfortunately, forage analysis is one of those tasks that either isn't on the priority list, or is done infrequently on many farms. However, it has the potential to bring better returns than you would expect.

The cost to have your forages tested should be less

**The most important forages to sample are those that will be fed to your milking cows**

than \$20 per sample, unless you decide to have additional nutrients analyzed that are not part of a "standard" analysis package. The most important forages to sample are those that will be fed to your milking cows, and those should be the forages you think will be the highest in quality. This may mean conducting an inventory of everything you have stored on the farm first, and then identifying where your sampling will pay back the most.

When you sample your forages, make sure it is a representative sample. This means sampling from more than one round bale, bale of baleage, or small square bale if you are having these types of forages tested, and then mixing and subsampling. Likewise, if you use an upright or bunker silo for fermented feeds, you should take a bigger sample as it is being fed out, and then mix and subsample to obtain a representative sample.

Since many organic dairies don't utilize the services of a nutritionist, the information from the forage tests can help you to formulate a basic ration based on a few key nutrients. Although it is still a good idea to make sure your ration is balanced for many other nutrients, you can be generally correct by running through the following types of calculations. It can also be helpful for planning and pricing anything you may need to consider buying.

Once you have the results back, the first two nutrients

*(Continued on page 28)*



### USDA Organic Certification for Dairy Producers in PA and Adjoining States

New "Focus on Organic Dairy" program provides a specialist to help you transition to organic with:

- \* Technical assistance and on-farm support
- \* Organic dairy bulletins
- \* Business planning
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- \* Experienced organic farmer-advisors

Contact us for a free info pack or to speak to one of our certification specialists.

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**\*\* From Northeast organic farmers to Northeast organic farmers \*\***

(Continued from *Thoughts on Winter Feeding*, page 27)

you should look at are NDF (neutral detergent fiber) and protein. NDF is a measurement of fiber in the forage, and less NDF is better than more. Lactating dairy cows can eat approximately 1.1% of their body weight in NDF, although with higher quality, more digestible forages like pasture they can eat 1.3 to 1.4% of body weight. Thus, if you are going to feed mostly baleage to your 1200 lb cows and it tests 50% NDF, they should be able to eat 13.2 lbs of NDF ( $1200 \times 1.1\%$ ), or 26.4 lbs of baleage ( $13.2 \text{ lbs}/50\%$ ) on a dry matter basis. However, if the baleage tests 45% NDF, the cows could eat 29.3 lbs of baleage ( $13.2 \text{ lbs}/45\%$ ), or 2.9 lbs more. That extra 2.9 lbs of forage intake means you could feed 2.9 lbs less grain to meet their total intake requirements.

On the protein side, milking cows need between 16 and 18% protein in their diet, depending upon milk and component production. The 16 to 18% protein is approximately equivalent to 7 to 9 lbs of protein. If we assume the baleage above that is 45% NDF is also 14% protein, we need higher protein coming from grain to meet their needs. The 29 lbs of baleage they could eat (based on NDF) would provide 4 lbs of protein ( $29 \times 14\%$ ). The remaining 3 to 5 lbs of protein would need to come from grain or another, higher protein forage. A grain mix of 18% protein, fed at a rate of 17 lbs per cow would provide 3 lbs of protein. Higher quality forage would mean less protein in the grain mix, and less total grain that would need to be fed to meet their requirements.

Energy supplementation is usually the least expensive nutrient to purchase, but this year it is more expensive due to a number of factors. The forage test will also give you an estimate of the energy content of your forages, which can help you determine how much high-energy grain you might need to feed. On the forage test, energy is expressed as Net Energy for lactation, maintenance, and growth ( $NE_L$ ,  $NE_M$ , and  $NE_G$ ). For milking cows, the only value you need to work with is  $NE_L$ , as it includes the maintenance needs. The  $NE_L$  values are not measured directly in the forage analysis, but it is predicted from other components of the forage such as NDF, NFC's, protein, and fat. A low fiber, high NFC, high protein forage will generally have more energy. Since cows will eat more of these types of forages as well, there is less need for energy supplementation with them.


Milking cows need a ration that is approximately .72 to .78 Mcals/lb of  $NE_L$ , again depending on milk production, breed, stage of lactation, and so forth. This equates to between 20 and 35 Mcals/day, with lower

producing cows having the lower requirement. Using the same baleage above, and assuming it is .52 Mcals/lb  $NE_L$ , the cows would get 15 Mcals/day from the baleage ( $29 \text{ lbs} \times .52$ ). If they are lower producing cows, the remaining 5 to 10 Mcals needed could be supplied by 5.5 to 10.5 pounds of corn meal (.95 Mcals/lb). Higher producing cows would need to be fed 10.5 to 21 pounds of corn meal to meet their needs with this quality of baleage. Other options for providing energy from forages include annuals such as corn silage or small grain silages, and other grain options include the small grains or molasses.

The bottom line to all this thinking and calculating is that if you want to minimize your grain costs this winter, you should sample your forages now to

determine what you have to work with. From there, you can work through how much forage they are capable of eating, and how much protein that would provide. You may discover that you need to purchase some higher quality forage, or that you really don't need to spend much on grain this winter. With costs being what they are, simply shooting in the dark with no information is probably not the most profitable strategy. ♦

**The bottom line to all this thinking and calculating is that if you want to minimize your grain costs this winter, you should sample your forages now to determine what you have to work with.**



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## Forage Field Day at Stoltzfus Farm

By Lisa McCrory

John and Tammy Stoltzfus of Whitesville, NY opened their farm to a Forage Field Day event in late September and were pleasantly surprised to have 70 people in attendance. Why the interest? The Stoltzfus planted four different varieties of forage turnips with two different varieties of forage oats to determine the best planting rates and variety combinations for their farm. With the assistance and sponsorship of Lakeview Organic Grain, Bejo Seeds, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Allegany County Graziers and Organic Valley, they planted 18 acres of hayland to 25 plots of various seed/crop combinations.

This is not the first year that John and Tammy have tried using forage turnips; they have planted some turnips and oats on their farm for the past two years to extend their grazing season and to provide a high quality forage as part of their winter feeding plan. Planting the oats and forage turnips *together* was the new venture



*Forage Turnip September 27, 2007*

this year and tying this together with some sponsors allowed them the means to share the results to a broad audience of farmers and resource individuals.

### The Plots

An 18-acre field was split in half and two different varieties of forage oats were planted; Evergreen Forage Oats was on one half, and an 'unnamed forage oats' variety supplied by Lakeview Organic Grain was planted on the other half. The Unnamed forage oats was seeded down at three different seeding rates: 1 bushel/acre, 2 bushels/acre and 3 bushels/acre. The nine acres of Evergreen Forage Oats was planted at a rate of 3 bushels/acre.

Four 1-acre plots of forage turnips was planted crossways in each 9-acre plot. The varieties planted were: 1) Pasja, 2) Purple Top Turnip, 3) Fodder Kale, and 4) \_\_\_\_\_.

The oats and turnips were planted on August 16<sup>th</sup> on an old sod field that had been plowed down. Oats were planted first and then the turnips were planted using a hand seeder at a rate of 1 lb per acre. Once all the crops were planted, they ran a cultimulcher over the seeding.

*(Continued on page 30)*

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(Continued from Forage Field Day page 29)

Conditions were dry at the time of seeding, but the next day they got half an inch of rain and 3 weeks later they got another 4-5 inches of rain at which point the seeding really took off.

The fields were forage tested one week before the field days event in late September and they found that the forages were running about 30% crude protein and 75-80 Net Energy Lactation (NEL).

John and Tammy plan to harvest their oats and turnips the end of October after the frost as forage turnips are much sweeter following a frost. "Forage turnips can handle 4 nights of 20-degree weather before they actually stop growing", says John. Normally John would set some of the crop aside to graze, but this year there is such a shortage on forage that they need to harvest all of the crop for winter feeding.

Additional forage testing will take place right before they harvest. They will store the feed as round bale silage and will take another forage sample after the bage has fermented for one month. They are curious to find out how much feed value is lost with fermentation.

They also plan to leave a small strip standing to see how long the stand stays green and to see how it stands up in snow. Next year John wants to plant 50 acres of oats and turnips in a location where he can graze 20 of those acres in Nov/Dec 2008 and harvest the rest.

John and Tammy know that next year they will plant ½ lb per acre of turnips with 3 bushels per acre of oats because the density of the turnips in this years crop (at 1 lb per acre) is a little too much. Turnips tend to be pretty stalky which could put some stress on the mower. Based upon what they have learned, John recommends seeding no later than the first week of August (their farm is at 2200 feet).

### Feed Quality and Estimated Yields

Forage turnips are mostly a broad leaf (see picture) and the height of the leaf grows nicely with the oats allowing for a healthy stand of both. The feed quality is excellent, allowing John and Tammy to reduce the grain



*John posing with his crops on October 26th, the day of harvest.*

in their winter feeding ration. Right now the cows get an average of 10# grain a day and with the oat/turnip bage will probably go down to 5-8 # grain (oats & cornmeal), 20# oat/turnip bage and the rest of the ration will be a poorer quality bage and some dry hay.

Estimated yield per acre estimated is 11.8 tons of as-fed forage and probably 2.8 tons of dry matter. John feels that the volume of feed doubled between end of Sept and the time of harvest (end of October).

Stay tuned for the next issue to find out actual yield per acre, and feed value of the various forage plots at harvest and after fermentation. ♦



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# Research and Education

## It's Grant-Writing Time!

Are there any new livestock health/management strategies that you would like to try on your farm? Do you want to perform some forage variety trials? Have an innovative grazing management strategy that you would like to implement? Below are three funding opportunities sponsored by the Organic Farming Research Foundation and the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program with deadlines for submission from late November to mid-December, 2007.

### 1) Organic Farming Research Foundation Research Grants Program

This request for proposals is open to any agricultural production, social, economic, or policy-related topic of concern to organic farmers and/or ranchers. The sponsor supports research that is relevant to and takes place in certified organic systems. Additionally, the sponsor has identified the following as areas of particular interest: Organic livestock systems; Economic constraints and opportunities relevant to the viability of small- and medium-scale organic farms and ranches; Projects that investigate the interactions between components of organic systems and that take a systems-management (rather than an input-substitution) approach to solving production problems. Proposals must involve farmers or ranchers in project design and implementation and take place on working organic farms or ranches whenever possible. Additionally, proposals should articulate how the proposed research project will foster the improvement or adoption of organic farming systems.

#### Eligibility

This program is open to all applicants residing in Canada, Mexico and the United States. OFRF particularly encourages farmers, ranchers, researchers, and extension personnel to consider applying for funding.

#### Funding

The average grant awarded in the last full year of grantmaking was \$12,860. The sponsor will not fund a project for more than \$15,000 per year. Matching funds from other sources and/or in-kind contributions from cooperators are encouraged but not required. The sponsor will consider funding multi-year projects, but can only commit to funding one year of a multi-year project at a time.

Deadline is December 17, 2007, Contact Jane Sooby, P.O. Box 440, Santa Cruz, CA 95061 [jane@ofrf.org](mailto:jane@ofrf.org), [www.ofrf.org/grants/apply\\_research.pdf](http://www.ofrf.org/grants/apply_research.pdf), 831-426-6606

### 2) Northeast Sustainable Research and Education (NESARE) grants:

#### a) Sustainable Community Grant Applications

This grant program is for rural development organizations working with farmers to achieve appropriate growth, improved farm profits, a cleaner environment, a better quality of life and improved farm stewardship.

Postmark deadline for proposals is November 27, 2007 for awards in the spring

#### b) Partnership Grant Applications

This grant program is for agricultural service providers who are exploring new approaches to sustainability in collaboration with one or more farmers. Postmark deadline for proposals is December 4, 2007 for awards in the spring. For more information on the NESARE grants go to [www.uvm.edu/~nesare](http://www.uvm.edu/~nesare) or call 802-656-0471. ♦



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# Commentary

*'Commentary' is an open forum for sharing thoughts, opinions, concerns, and whatever else inspires you. Please send your submissions, up to 1,000 words, to the Editor (see page 2 for contact information). The views expressed below are those of the author(s) and in no way represent the official views of NODPA or any of its representatives.*

## Am I Dreaming?

I could hardly believe my eyes at 6:15 AM on August 30<sup>th</sup>. I had just turned on the computer for the day and was scanning the overnight emails. Was I still asleep and dreaming when I read the news release from USDA, issued the evening of 8/29 (after normal government work hours!), announcing that they had sent a Notice of Proposed Revocation to Aurora Organic Dairy (AOD)? Could justice have come to pass after all?

Unfortunately, no, it did not. I was awake and was actually reading that such a Notice had been issued to AOD. But instead of following the noncompliance procedures detailed in the National Organic Program (NOP) Regulations and as stipulated in the 4/16 Notice of Proposed Revocation, giving Aurora 30 days from receipt of the Notice in which to appeal, Aurora entered into negotiations with NOP / USDA—a process for which there is **NO** basis in the Regulations. Aurora secured the assistance of Washington, DC attorney, Jay Friedman, the same attorney who often represents the five member organic dairy processor group (Horizon, Organic Valley, Stonyfield, Humboldt, and Aurora), the Organic Trade Association, and other big players in the organic market.

The outcome of the negotiations was a Consent Agreement signed on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, about 135 days after AOD was in receipt of the Notice of Proposed Revocation. Did AOD ever enter an appeal within 30 days as the Notice required? The Consent Agreement said that is supercedes all other communication regarding the Notice so apparently either AOD didn't file an appeal or the appeal process was scuttled in favor of the special treatment afforded AOD.

Why would a company, whose leaders Marc Peperzak and Mark Retzliff, who “assisted in the creation of the original national organic program in 1990 and helped to draft the standards for organic livestock” (quoted from the AOD website), circumvent the NOP regulations on noncompliance? “We are guided in all of our relationships by the highest standard of integrity and a company code of ethical conduct”, reads number 7 of AOD's company guidelines listed on their website. Does this guideline not apply when following the rules would mean that part of their multi-operation business could be

de-certified with a resulting loss of investment and profit?

After a lengthy and seemingly thorough investigation of AOD by NOP Compliance staff, after NOP's findings of fact resulted in a listing of 14 “willful violations”, and after a Notice of Proposed Revocation was issued, what transpired at USDA to allow AOD to circumvent the process laid out in the Regulations and stipulated in the Notice? Was political or monetary influence brought to bear?

When smaller operations are decertified for 2 to 4 willful violations, why is a large scale operation with 14 listed willful violations allowed to negotiate a favorable agreement that lets them continue to ship organic milk, receive no penalty, and not even have to fix all the alleged violations? Does USDA not believe in scale neutral enforcement?

Since most of the numerous alleged violations occurred at AOD's Platteville operation which has been certified by the Colorado Department of Agriculture since AOD began their 80/20 transition in 2003, is NOP's system of accrediting and oversight of certifiers thorough and adequate?

The list of questions brought up by this case is long and begs for both answers and satisfactory resolution of the deficiencies. If this is the status quo of how USDA operates, then more of the same can be expected. Unless something is done to fix these deficiencies at USDA, the integrity of the organic seal and the organic market is in for a continued battering and down-hill slide.

Woe unto us unless the farmers and consumers soon take up the gauntlet and push for answers and changes that will result in a USDA that enforces the organic standards consistently and fairly across the board and cannot be influenced by power, of whatever shape or form, to give special, outside-of-the-regulation, treatment to those with money and influence. Without the NOP Regulations being wholly enforced, the proper development of a true organic raw milk supply cannot happen.

If the decision stands, and no changes are made in the USDA's enforcement practices, the USDA organic label may well become next to meaningless.

While no active campaign is in place for farmer and producer comments, such may be around the corner. Stay tuned, and in the meantime, talk to NODPA state reps and Board members (their contact information is on page 2) about how you feel about this situation and other issues in the organic dairy world.

Kathie Arnold  
Truxton, NY



## Summary of the 2007 Northeast Animal Power Field Days

*Tunbridge Fairgrounds, Tunbridge, VT*

Much thanks goes out to all our sponsors, volunteers and speakers who made the Northeast Animal Power Field Days such a great success. Attendance for the two days was 1200 people and the weather could not have been better. Thank you NODPA for your support in making this event happen. Quite a few organic dairy producers were present at this event including VT, MA, NY and ME confirming our belief that animal power has a legitimate role in the organic dairy world.

The Northeast Animal-Power Field Days was a two-day gathering dedicated to the use of horses, mules, and oxen, and promoting stewardship of forests and farmland. It featured exhibit space for equipment, resources, and services supporting sustainable farming and forestry, and animal-powered enterprises. There were incredible field demonstrations of equipment, plus workshops and panel presentations by notable experts and supporters of small-scale diversified farming and logging.



A really important piece of feed-back that we received from many of our attendees was about the strong feeling of community, with shared interests and experiences. We are very pleased, and proud, that this part of our gathering really came through, because it is one of the primary motivators that encouraged us to put this event together.

### Save the Date!

We have reserved the Tunbridge Fairgrounds for Friday – Sunday, **September 26-28, 2008**. We are reasonably certain that a three day schedule will give us a better opportunity to meet people's interests in more demonstrations of field and forestry equipment in real working conditions, a more relaxed arrangement for workshops and presentations, and a more significant networking component, as well as a larger auction swap/meet.

*For more information about our 2008 event, please visit our website: [www.animalpowerfielddays.org](http://www.animalpowerfielddays.org) or call us and get on our mailing list. Lisa McCrory and Carl Russell, Earthwise Farm and Forest, 802-234-5524. ♦*

## Net Update



### Discussions from the ODAIRY Group

*By Liz Bawden*

There has been a lot of activity lately on ODAIRY, NODPA's email list serve for folks in the organic dairy industry. Not surprisingly, much of the discussions centered on certification and integrity issues since the USDA's investigation of Aurora Dairy. Their subsequent ruling of 14 "willful" violations leading to a consent agreement which allows Aurora to continue shipping milk did not sit well with farmers voicing their opinion. Perhaps the most disturbing post was a press release from Aurora itself where they described the charges that led to the investigation as "dismissed" by the USDA.

Other discussion centered around "bottom-line" economics on the farm. Dramatically rising costs have many people asking if organic dairy can continue to be sustainable at the current pay price. Some farmers single out the grain costs, and view "no grain" herds to be more profitable in the end. Other suggestions include breeding for a more compact, easier kept cow through crossbreeding, going to a high forage diet (if you're not feeding one already), accepting lower production and putting on more cows, and lowering the amount of grain fed by supplementing corn silage, high quality forage, small grain balage, or molasses.

*To subscribe to ODAIRY, follow the instructions on our Website, [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com) or email: [Odairy-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Odairy-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)*

### OMILK

FARMERS ONLY—join the OMILK email discussion, send a letter of introduction to: [wrightwaydairy@yahoo.com](mailto:wrightwaydairy@yahoo.com).

### NODPA Web Site

**[www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com)** is the NODPA website. The website is a resource for organic dairy farmers, organic milk producers and consumers interested in organic dairy farming and products. If you want to learn about the dairy side of the National Organic Program; find a certifier, or get some advice on transitioning; check out the NODPA web site. If you missed an article in past NODPA News, all the back issues are there and downloadable, along with numerous articles on different aspects of organic dairy production. The site has current national news on organic dairies; an organic dairy business directory; a calendar of events; numerous links to processors and other groups, plus information on how to join NODPA and subscribe to ODAIRY. ♦



# Calendar

## **November 27-29, 2007**

### **NOSB Meeting, Washington, DC**

The National Organic Standards Board Meeting will be preceded by an organic aquaculture symposium. For more information see page 20 of this issue [www.ams.usda.gov/nosb](http://www.ams.usda.gov/nosb).

## **November 27, December 9**

### **December 11, 1:00 to 4:30 p.m.**

#### **Maine Feeds Maine**

Maine food producers and consumers, rural development specialists will discuss local/regional food networks. The objectives are to learn more about who is doing what, identify common objectives, and explore ways to meet those objectives as cooperatively as possible. The sessions are geared toward: Maine food producers; locally-owned food distribution and retailers; farm and food policy advocates; sustainable agriculture groups; local economic development advisors; food security groups; nutrition and health professionals; 'buy local', 'Slow Food', etc. groups; Pre-registration is required. Contact Jane Livingston, [jane\\_livingston@verizon.net](mailto:jane_livingston@verizon.net) [www.cdi.coop](http://www.cdi.coop).

## **December 4-6, 2007**

### **ACRES USA Conference,**

*Louisville, KY*

The annual Acres USA Conference is where you find farmers and consultants from every side of eco-farming who come together to share their experience and expertise. Event will include keynote speakers Sally Fallon, John Ikerd and a special evening with Wendell Berry. Contact 800-355-5313, [www.acresusa.com](http://www.acresusa.com).

## **January 12, 2008**

### **NOFA-VT's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Direct Marketing Conference**

*VT Law School in S. Royalton, VT*

Direct marketing, whether through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA's), farmers' markets, farmstands or on-farm events, can provide the best return for farmers. NOFA-VT offers this conference for farmers and organizers to share successful marketing ideas and build stronger marketing opportunities in Vermont. Contact: Meg Klepack, NOFA-VT, [info@nofavt.org](mailto:info@nofavt.org), 802-434-4122

## **January 19, 2008**

### **2008 Annual VT Grazing Conference** *Vermont Technical College,*

*Randolph Center, VT*

12th Annual Vermont Grazing Conference, titled **From Forgotten Fields to Farm Fresh Food** will feature Missouri grazer Greg Judy as keynote speaker. Themed tracks for dairy, meat, poultry, diversified, animal management, soil and forages, consumer interests, and grazing partnerships. Plans are in motion for a kids' mini conference, and an intensive afternoon session focused on meat processing. Contact Jenn Colby, VT Pasture Network, (802) 656-0858, [jcolby@uvm.edu](mailto:jcolby@uvm.edu), [www.uvm.edu/~pasture](http://www.uvm.edu/~pasture).

## **January 19, 2008**

### **21st NOFA/Mass Annual Winter Conference**

*Bancroft School, Worcester, MA.*

45 workshops scheduled throughout the day on organic farming, gardening, landscaping, homesteading and sustainable lifestyles. An exhibit area, a potluck lunch and a children's program. Elizabeth Henderson, author of "Sharing the Harvest: A Guide to Community Supported Agriculture" will be delivering the keynote. Contact Jassy Bratko, Winter Conference Coordinator at [jassyhighmeadow@yahoo.com](mailto:jassyhighmeadow@yahoo.com), 978-928-5646, [www.nofamass.org](http://www.nofamass.org).

## **January 25 - 27, 2008**

### **NOFA-NY 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Farming & Gardening Conference ~ Organic Solutions! How Farmers, Gardeners and Communities Nurture our Environment.**

*Saratoga Springs, NY*

Organic livestock/dairy speakers include: Dr Ann Wells talking about 'Healthy Pastures, Healthy Animals' and 'Integrated Parasite Management for Organic Livestock' and 'Developing Sustainable Animal Wellness Plans'; Dr Karen Sullivan discusses livestock nutrition; Klaas and Mary-Howell Martens in a moderated discussion on establishing fair organic grain prices and Dr Terry Wollen, director of Animal Well-Being and Staff Veterinarian with Heifer International delivers Friday evening Keynote Contact 607-652-6632, [office@nofany.org](mailto:office@nofany.org)

## **February 5, 6 & 7, 2008**

### **Neal Kinsey's Advanced Soil Fertility Course**

*State College, PA*

Organized in conjunction with PASA's 17th annual Farming for the Future conference. Following the Albrecht Methods for soil testing and soil nutrient use, this advanced course is appropriate for those who have completed Kinsey's introductory soil fertility course or have a strong working knowledge

of the terminology and principles set forth in *Hands-On Agronomy*. Contact [www.pasafarming.org](http://www.pasafarming.org) (814) 349-9856.

## **Nutrient Management Planning**

**Feb 7, 14, 21, 28, and March 6,**

*Rutland, VT and*

**Feb 12, 19, 26, March 4, 11, Berlin, VT**

Consists of 5 3-hour sessions. Each session will cover specific aspects of the nutrient management plans to help you improve your farm management, crop production, and farm sustainability. NRCS and Conservation District staff will provide assistance with running calculations for soil loss and making maps. Participant will complete a nutrient management plan (NMP) that can meet state and federal requirements. Contact Jennifer Durham, SVNMP 802-287-2250 or 802-558-6470 or Sylvia Harris, Conservation District, 802.254-5323 x105 for Rutland and Jason Fleury, [Jason.fleury@vt.nacdnet.net](mailto:Jason.fleury@vt.nacdnet.net), for the Berlin.

## **February 7-9, 2008**

### **PASA's 17th Annual Farming for the Future Conference**

*Penn State Conference Center, State College, PA.*

Contact [www.pasafarming.org](http://www.pasafarming.org), (814) 349-9856.

## **February 16-17, 2008**

### **26<sup>th</sup> Annual NOFA-VT Winter Conference**

*Vermont Technical College, Randolph Center, VT*

NOFA-VT holds an annual winter conference and children's conference in February, celebrating organic gardening, farming, and sustainable living. Contact Meg Klepack, [info@nofavt.org](mailto:info@nofavt.org), 802-434-4122

## **March 28th and 29th, 2008**

### **Northeast Grasstravaganza 2008**

*Holiday Inn Arena, Binghamton, NY*

Save the dates for this HUGE grazing conference featuring a symposium on grazing behavior research and practical application with Kathy Voth, Darrell Emmick, and NY farmers who have learned how to use grazing behavior to their advantage! Also a keynote by Dan Barber, chef and co-owner of Blue Hill Restaurant who has written for the New York Times about the importance of local food. Contact Karen Sullivan, [karen.sullivan@ny.usda.gov](mailto:karen.sullivan@ny.usda.gov). ♦

## Become a Subscribing Member!

By becoming a subscribing member you will receive NODPA News and help support the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance. NODPA depends on your membership contributions and donations. If you enjoy this newsletter, visit our web page, and benefit from the education and farmer representation that NODPA has been providing, please show your support by making a generous contribution to our efforts.

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 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a certified organic dairy producer? Yes No

Number of milking cows: \_\_\_\_\_

Milk buyer: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you transitioning to organic? Yes No

If Yes – proposed date of certification \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with a check payable to NODPA to: Ed Maltby, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342. Thank you.

## NODPA Check-Off Producer Milk Check Assignment Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (please print name on your milk check)  
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 deduct the sum of: (choose one below)

☐ \$0.02/cwt to support the work of NODPA

☐ \$0.05/cwt to support the work of NODPA (the amount that has been deducted in the past for national milk marketing but has now been returned to you as an organic producer if you have applied for the exemption.) If you need assistance in applying for the exemption, check here \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$0.07/cwt (the \$.05 marketing check-off plus \$0.02)

as an assignment from my milk check starting the first day of \_\_\_\_\_, 200\_\_\_\_. The total sum will be paid monthly to NODPA. This agreement may be ended at any time by the producer by sending a written request to their milk buyer with a copy to NODPA. Milk handlers please send payments to: **Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA), Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342.**

Producer signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Producer #/member #: \_\_\_\_\_ # of milking cows: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Certifying Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Producers—please send this to NODPA. Thank you.

# The Natural Farmer

## the journal of organic agriculture

### Keep up with what's happening at the root hairs!

**The Natural Farmer is where organic farmers throughout the Northeast talk to each other.**

Each quarterly issue features:

- a special supplement - designed to be saved - on a single topic
- how-to-do-it articles on organic techniques
- interviews with successful organic farmers and their families
- updates on certification standards for new products
- research results, legislative reports, news notes
- listings of available jobs, equipment, land, and services
- letters, editorials, ads for organic products and much more!

**The Natural Farmer, 411 Sheldon Rd., Barre, MA 01005**

Yes, I'm interested in The Natural Farmer.

- ☐ Please send me the next 4 issues  
 - I enclose \$10 (\$18 outside US)  
☐ Please send me a sample issue  
 - I enclose \$3 (\$5 outside US)

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**Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance  
(NODPA)**

c/o Ed Maltby  
30 Keets Rd.  
Deerfield, MA 01342

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Turners Falls, MA**

# Classified Ads

## **DISTRIBUTION**

Looking for a Market for Certified Organic Ground Beef, and Certified Organic Turkey Breast, and Legs. All meat is USDA inspected, and vacuum packed. Call for pricing and availability. Brookfield, VT, Craig Russell, crussell@bishca.state.vt.us, 802-276-9904

## **ANIMALS**

15 organic cows for sale. 14 J/H cross, 1 Holstein. All bred for March calving. Want to only milk Jerseys next year. \$30000 for group, Ron Holter, ronholter@comcast.net, 240-529-4000, Jefferson, Maryland

## **GRAZING**

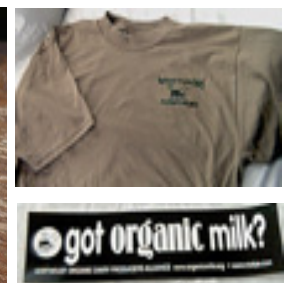
Organic custom grazing for 20 heifers for the 2008 grazing season. Certified organic pastures. Rocky Ridge, Maryland, Call Scott 240-446-8556, scott@expandingheartcenter.com

## **BEDDING**

Organic rye straw for sale, square bales cut this spring, \$5.00/bale you pick up, Salt Pointy, NY, Kate, 845.266.3547, kmzfree@yahoo.com

## **EMPLOYMENT**

Central NY Certified organic, 100% grass fed dairy seeks experienced herdsmen/woman/couple. 9 unit swing parlor. 100 cow Jersey/JerseyX herd. Rotational grazing April-November and composted bedded pack housing in winter. Farm set up for maximum efficiency and quality of life. Responsibilities include milking, herd health, feeding, grazing management, breeding management, repairs—you run the farm. Email resume to tim.joseph@stonecreekfarm.us



## **Get Your NODPA Gear Today!**

**Hat** = \$15.50    **T-shirt** = \$13.50  
**Bumper Sticker** = \$1.25 each (or)  
25 for \$19.75

Shipping Included

Make check payable to: NODPA.

Send to: NODPA, c/o Ed Maltby  
30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342