

NODPA's 7th Annual Field Days Event and Annual Producers Meeting

August 17 & 18, 2007

**Freund's Farm Market, 324 Norfolk Road
East Canaan, Connecticut**

This year's NODPA Field Days will take you through two states and many different years of experience in organic dairying. The event will be hosted by Rick Segalla and Morven Allen who farm on either side of the Connecticut/Massachusetts border and will take place at the Freund family dairy farm market and greenhouse.

The event will start at 1:30pm on Friday, August 17th, with a Field Trip to Segalla Farm, led by Rick Segalla, Lisa McCrory, Sarah Flack and Kathy Soder (USDA ARS). Rick operates his family's 900-acre farm in Canaan CT, milking 115 cows and raising an equal number of young stock. The farm has been in the family since the early 1900's and today it is a corporation owned by Rick and his siblings. The farm consists of 300 acres wooded land, and the remaining tillable/open land is used for corn silage (65A), alfalfa (76A), grass hay (200A), and pasture (160A). Rick has raised soybeans in the past, but had some issues with flooding the last few years, which devastated the crop. This year, he would like to plant some flaxseed as a nurse crop hoping it will increase the omega-3 values of the forages grown. Along with the dairy cows, Rick has been raising some Hereford dairy crosses for a small, but growing organic beef market. Most of the dairy cows are Holsteins, though there are some Holstein/Jersey and

Holstein/Hereford crosses. Cows are housed in a freestall barn, bedded with sand, and milked in a double six herringbone parlor. At one time, he was milking 200 cows 3 times a day, but reduced his cow numbers to match the readily available pasture on the farm. Rick's basic philosophy to farming is to keep the operation simple and not push the cows for high production. Milk quality is excellent with somatic cell count running around 140,000. "You need healthy soils to produce healthy crops and pastures", says Rick. "Once you have that, you are sure to have healthy cows."

Following the farm tour, folks will gather at Freund's Farm, East Canaan, for socializing and visiting the Trade Show with cheese & crackers, vegetable platters and beverages. The organic beef barbeque will start at 5:30 with mashed potatoes plus gravy and fresh rolls, corn on the cob (fresh from the Freund's family farm) and organic butter; green salad with fresh local vegetables and dressings, plus baked beans with molasses and maple syrup and garlic bacon. There will be a vegetarian option. Dessert will be a choice of fruit pies and ice cream with plenty of iced tea, lemonade, coffee, tea, water and milk.

Steve Morrison, NODPA President, will welcome the Massachusetts Commissioner of Agricultural Resources (invited) and Connecticut Commissioner of Agriculture (invited) which will be followed by Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, with "NODPA Year in Review." There will be reports from other regions plus a report on the activities of FOOD Farmers. An "Open Forum on "Future Activities and Priorities for NODPA" facilitated by Ed Maltby, Lisa McCrory and Sarah Flack will follow. This conversation will be open to

WHERE TO STAY DURING FIELD DAYS

HOTELS

Lodging in this area is expensive at this time of year and fills up very fast. Hotels listed are around \$100 and are within 1/2 hour of the event

Super 8 Motel: 492 E. Main Street, Torrington, CT 06790 Tel: 860-496-0811

Quality Inn & Suites: 395 Winsted Road, Torrington, CT 06790 Tel: 860-496-8808

Sharon Motor Lodge: 1 Calkinstown Road, Sharon, CT 06069. Tel: 860-364-0036

Yankee Pedlar Inn: 93 Main Street, Torrington, CT. Tel: 860-489-9226

CAMPSITES

Lone Oaks Campsites: 360 Norfolk Road, E. Canaan, CT 06024. Tel: 860-824-7051

White Pines Campsite: 19 Platt Hill Road, Winsted, CT 06098. Tel: 860-379-0124

Other options: Visit www.litchfieldhills.com

Morven Allen and Rick Segalla have offered their land for informal (no services) camping: Tel: (Rick) 860-824-0241

everyone and some of the topics covered will be:

NODPA's scorecard—how well are we doing?

What is NODPA's future role?

What services should NODPA supply for organic dairy farmers in the future?

How can we support each sector of the organic infrastructure to ensure the sustainability of organics in the Northeast?"

Saturday's activities from 7am-9am will start with a breakfast of juices, coffee, tea, milk, yogurts and smoothies, homemade quiches, local sausages, and a variety of Freund's Farm famously delicious pastries. NODPA will hold its annual meeting restricted to organic dairy farmers from 7am-8:30 am which will map out the priorities for NODPA activities for the next year.

At 9am, Steve Morrison will welcome **Sam Fromartz** author of Organic, Inc. and well-known journalist with a blog at www.chewswise.com. Sam's presentation will give his perspective on the future of organics with his interactive presentation called "Organics, now and in the future – what should we plan for?"

After a short milk break, **Kathy Soder** USDA- Agricultural Research Service will talk about how you can "**Think Like a Cow**"- **Understanding Grazing Behavior**. Cows eat what cows eat – because cows are cows. Right? Well, not quite... Cows learn how, what, when, and where to eat in many different ways. They learn from other cows, they learn through trial and error. In addition, our management practices can affect pasture diet selection and grazing time. Understanding why animals eat what they eat, why they forage the way they forage and why they act the way they act helps us better manage our forage and livestock. Kathy will teach you how to 'think like a cow' and how to better feed and manage your grazing herds.

Feeding grain is a hot topic for all dairy farmers in the northeast and Kathy's talk will be followed by a panel of northeast experts to offer their perspectives on the organic grain market and how to plan for the future. The panel of **Mary-Howell and Klaas Marten, Rick Kersbergen, Heather Darby and Rick Dutil** will share their knowledge on the topic of "**Organic grain –Where are we today, where do we need to be in 5 years and what will it take to get there?**" Having spent the morning thinking of how to feed cows, there will be a lunch buffet for humans (you can either watch or take part in this controlled experiment!) of kielbasa with pepper and onions; sweet and spicy nodine sausage with pepper and onions; meatballs with fresh tomato/marinara sauce; creamy cheese vegetable lasagna; variety of giant cookies; milk, iced tea, lemonade, water.

The last activity of Field Days will be a tour of Maple Shade Farm, Sheffield, MA hosted by Morven Allen and led by Sarah Flack, Lisa McCrory and Kathy Soder (USDA ARS). Morven has a grass based dairy that finished its transition in November of 2006. Morven will explain how he financed the purchase and start-up of this farm deep in the Berkshires where land is expensive and in high demand. The tour will cover his extensive, intensively managed pasture, some of which is in the flood plain that experienced extensive flooding this year. There is an article of Morven's farm in this issue.

This not to be missed event in yet another tumultuous year of organic dairy will leave you well fed with local and organic food and better ideas on how to feed your cows in the future. BUT please sign up early and book a hotel room quickly as this beautiful area has many visitors all year round. Go to www.nodpa.com for a full brochure or register using the form on page 39 of this issue of NODPA News. See you there! ♦

Thanks to all our sponsors and supporters who make the Field Days event possible

Sponsors

Lakeview Organic Grain

Horizon Organic

Organic Valley/CROPP
Cooperative

Stonyfield Farm Inc.

Supporters

Bay State Organics

HP Hood LLC

River Valley Fencing

PA Certified Organic

Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.

NOFA-VT

Acres USA

Dairy Marketing Services

Fertrell

NOFA/MA

Brookfield Agricultural Services

Kings Agri-Seeds

North American Kelp

Washington Homeopathic Products

Farming Magazine

CISA

NOFA-NY

Donations

Horizon Organic Dairy

Neptune's Harvest

Organic Valley

HP Hood LLC

Washington Homeopathic Products

Acres USA

Barts Homemade

Rick Segalla

Brookfield Agricultural Services

Lakeview Grain

Stonyfield Farm Inc.