

NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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The Access to Pasture Final Rule is edging its way to publication on the Federal Register sometime in January 2010.

While there are no clear dates for publication, it is a priority for the USDA Secretary and Deputy Secretary. Although we do not know the content of the Final Rule, NODPA and FOOD Farmers welcomes the publication of a Final Rule that will define 'access to pasture' in such a way that it will be universally applied and rigorously enforced. NODPA and FOOD Farmers feel that the Pasture Rule needs to be implemented the day after its publication and enforced within the 2011 growing season, giving time for certifiers to update documents and educate inspectors and producers in what they require within a revised Organic System Plan.

On page 30 we have provided an example of what one certifier is already providing for Organic System Plan documentation. On the NODPA website we have additional record keeping forms that are currently being used by Vermont Organic Farmers, along with information that will help producers and resource individuals determine pasture needs and pasture consumption. For more, go to:

http://www.nodpa.com/pasture_rule.shtml

The clarification that this Final Rule will give to the requirement that dairy animals have access to pasture has been expected and discussed for nearly eight years. Anyone that is not prepared for change or ready to adapt their production and certification process to incorporate these changes is doing a disservice to themselves, their organization and the future of organic dairy. We hope that the universal interpretation and implementation of this and other rules will stop the practice of certifier-shopping that prolonged the Promiseland case and undermines the integrity of the organic systems.

NODPA has led the effort to build consensus on 'access to pasture' rulemaking; an effort that proved necessary when lawyers were not able to successfully litigate cases of non-compliance. We welcome the opportunity to move on to other issues such as the origin of livestock proposed rule, supply management and animal welfare. ♦

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From The NODPA President

In the last issue of the NODPA News I mentioned that I had a few things to say about the “natural” line of milk and dairy products that one of the major organic milk processors was coming out with. Not everyone is going to like what I’m about to say.

I have absolutely no problem with this processor’s parent company if it wants to offer a natural line of dairy products. As a matter of fact, one of the biggest handlers in my state, Oakhurst Dairy, has, for a number of years, been marketing their milk as “the natural goodness of Maine”. This is because their producers have pledged that they don’t use rBST.

This is all well and good but, to me, for a processor who has built its market identity on a product that has from the beginning been based solely on the adherence to the national organic standards,

standards that are certified by an independent third party, this is highly inappropriate.

Their name, and symbol, in part, has been built on the dedication and efforts of hundreds of certified organic family farmers who take pride in the fact that they supply milk to this handler. Now, for this handler to offer a product in a similar container, with the USDA organic seal removed and replaced with the word “natural” seems deceptive.

What is the definition of “natural”? Who decides what is or is not “natural”? Is it independently verified by a third party? As far as I’m concerned “natural means nothing”, and if anyone expects me to believe that this isn’t going to cut into the sales of organic dairy products, especially if it’s in a package that closely resembles the organic one, with only the USDA seal removed and priced cheaper, and possibly on the same shelf or section, they must be nuts.

*Henry Perkins, NODPA President
Albion, Maine*

Board Members & Representatives

- PENNSYLVANIA**
Arden Landis, State Rep
1850 Bowmansville Rd.
Mohnton, PA 19540-9427
c2graze@dejazzd.com
Phone: 717-484-0038
- Dave Johnson, Treasurer**
1254 Black Creek Rd
Liberty, PA 16930
provident@epix.net
Phone: 570-324-2285
- Roman Stoltzfoos, State Rep**
Spring Wood Organic Farm
1143 Gap Rd
Kinzers, PA, 17535
romans@epix.net
Phone: 610-593-2415
- VIRGINIA**
Rodney Martin, State Rep
Bridge View Dairy
570 Jerusalem Rd.
Churchville, VA 24421-2735
- NEW YORK**
Liz Bawden, Secretary
119 Factory Rd.
Hammond, NY 13646
bawden@cit-tele.com
Phone: 315-324-6926
- John Gould, State Rep**
HAR-GO Farms
10965 South St Rd
Pavilion, NY 14525
hargo@frontiernet.net
Phone: 585-584-3985 Cell: 585-739-2264
- Steve Kimball, State Rep**
Kimvale Farm
3456 Dry Brook Rd
Falconer, NY 14733
716-267-9272
steve@kimvale.com

Siobhan Griffin, State Rep
2518 Co. Hwy 35
Schnevus, NY 12155
raindance@baka.com
Phone: 607-286-9362

John Stoltzfus, State Rep
1553 Hesselton Gully Rd.
Whitesville, NY 14897
jstribey@yahoo.com
Phone: 607-356-3272

Dana Sgrecci, State Rep
4994 Halpin Rd.
Odessa, NY 14869
sgrecci@aol.com
Phone: 607-594-4169

George Wright, Board Member
821 Pyrites-Russell Rd.
Hermon, NY 14897
wrightdairy@yahoo.com
Phone: 315-347-4604

VERMONT
Craig Russell, Board Member
Brotherly Farm LLC
570 Lavender Road
Brookfield, VT 05036
brotherlyfarm@yahoo.com.
Phone: 802- 272-7726
http://www.brotherlyfarm.com

Beverly Rutter, State Rep
1450 Middle Rd.
Bridport, VT 05734
brutter@gmavt.net
Phone: 802-758-2615

CONNECTICUT
Rick Segalla, Board Member
96 Allyndale Rd.
Canaan, CT 06018
mocow@earthlink.net
Phone: 860-824-0241

MASSACHUSETTS
Morvan Allen, Board Member
Maple Shade Farm Inc.
229 Hewins St
Sheffield, MA 01257
morvenallen@live.com
Phone: 413-229-6018

MAINE
Henry Perkins, President
Box 156 Bog Rd.
Albion, ME 04910
bullridge@uninet.net
Phone: 207-437-9279

Steven Russell, Board Member
RR2 Box 5660
Winslow, ME 04901
jwinrussel@roadrunner.com
Phone: 207-872-6533

Steve Morrison, Board Member
Policy Committee Chair
159 Atkinson Rd
Charleston, ME 04422
smorrison@midmaine.com
Phone: 207-285-7085 Fax: 207-285-0128

Aaron Bell, State Rep
Tide Mill Organic Farm
91 Tide Mill Road,
Edmunds, Maine 04628
Phone: 207-733-2551
eatlocal@hughes.net
www.tidemillorganicfarm.com

LOUISIANA
Jerome Walker, State Rep
20036 Highway 450
Franklinton, LA 70438
ejwalker2@i-55.com
Phone: 985-515-9224

AT LARGE NODPA BOARD MEMBERS
Ed Zimba, MODPA Board Member
Zimba Dairy
7995 Mushroom Rd
DeFord, MI 48729
zimbadairy@tband.net
Phone & Fax: 989-872-2680

Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer
3253 150th Ave
Glenwood City, WI 54013
bdrinkman@hotmail.com
Phone: 715-265-4631

Tony Azevedo, WODPA President
22368 W. 2nd Ave
Stevinson CA 95374
doubletacs@earthlink.net
Phone: 209-634-0187 Fax: 209-632-1965

NODPA Policy Committee
Kathie Arnold
3175 NYS Rt. 13, Truxton, NY 13158
kathiearnold@gmail.com
Phone: 607-842-6631
Fax: 607-842-6557

NODPA STAFF

NODPA Executive Director
Ed Maltby
30 Keets Rd
Deerfield, MA 01342
ednodpa@comcast.net
Phone: 413-772-0444 Fax: 866-554-9483

Newsletter and Web Editor
Lisa McCrory
341 Macintosh Hill Rd.
Randolph, VT 05060
lmcrrory@hughes.net
Phone: 802-234-5524

Newsletter Editors
Liz Bawden
119 Factory Rd., Hammond, NY 13646
bawden@cit-tele.com
Phone: 315-324-6926

Darlene Coehoorn
Viewpoint Acres Farm
N5878 Hwy C, Rosendale, WI 54874
ddviewpoint@yahoo.com
Phone: 920-921-5541

Webmaster /Newsletter Layout
Chris Hill, Chris Hill Media
368 West Duval Street
Philadelphia, PA 19144
Phone: 215-843-5704
chris@chrishillmedia.com

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From The NODPA Desk

By NODPA Executive Director Ed Maltby

We welcome the start of a new decade in the 21st century with great experience of growing organic and plenty of opportunity to improve and change. Working with and for NODPA for the past 5 years has been a great experience in advocating for producers while maintaining a balance that represents the varied interests of NODPA members who sell their milk to many different companies with varying philosophies. I could not have done this without the support of many people and the hard work and advice of Lisa McCrory who has a long history with NODPA and a farmer’s work ethic. Our webmaster and newsletter designer has transformed our communication ability and stayed very patient as we improved our NODPA ODairy listserve and secured the archives within the organization for the future. The producers who serve on the NODPA Board and act as State Reps have worked tirelessly to ensure that NODPA is representing the needs of all producers. Their commitment to their responsibility as leaders and tackling the many different policy questions ensures that NODPA will always be grounded in the interests of producers rather than any one employee or group of activists.

At the recent elections for the NODPA Board, George Wright was elected to represent New York, when, after many years of great service, Jim Gardiner stepped down from that position and Craig Russell was re-elected to represent Vermont. I, and organic producers across the United States, thank all the Board members and State Reps for your work and being active participants in the future of organics.

Finally, NODPA is on the verge of seeing our long work on the Access to Pasture Rule reach the next stage with the publication of a final rule. Whatever it may contain, we all need to work to implement and enforce the conditions of the rule as quickly and efficiently as possible. The NOP needed a rule that could withstand legal challenges and NODPA has worked tirelessly to build consensus and provide guidance and comments to NOP for a rule that reflects what 90+% of producers are already doing without increasing the recordkeeping burden on them. In an ideal world, we would not need any clarification of this regulation but the reality of an expanding organic industry is that we do require more detail within the rule to ensure consistency and

fairness. NODPA will continue to work with FOOD Farmers and many others to have this rule implemented and enforced quickly, making headlines when we must but principally working with the NOP, certifiers and others to ensure long term consumer confidence and increased sales of organic dairy products.

NODPA’s Field Days will be held this fall, Thursday and Friday, October 7 and 8 at the MOFGA Fairgrounds in Unity, Maine.

We are giving you plenty of notice this time so you can plan to attend if at all possible. As usual, it will be a mixed program but centered on what is relevant to producers in this new decade and, as usual plenty of good food and conversation. There will be an

in-person meeting of the Board and State reps and any other interested producers before the Field Days to review the past year and to plan for 2011 and forward. If you have interest and concerns about NODPA’s future, please plan to attend this meeting and the producer meeting at Field Days.

2010 will bring many opportunities for organic producers as the NOP finishes the hiring process and increases its capacity to run this billion dollar program that is such an essential part of preserving our environment, health and agricultural economy. Organic dairy has occupied a high profile position in the media and in the rule making process which has caused many consumers to question the validity of the organic label. It’s time to take organic dairy off the front page and rebuild

the confidence of the consumer in the program. NOP is now adequately funded; has full support from the political appointees at USDA; and has enforceable regulations that we all worked hard to create. The USDA has submitted the NOP to independent auditing through the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which will help standardize inspections and interpretation of standards, increase transparency, and prevent certifier-shopping which happened with Promiseland’s flagrant abuse of the system.

Miles McEvoy has promised a “new age of enforcement” and stressed the need for clear, consistent rules. As producers, we need to be willing to cooperate in reporting areas of fraud or abuse of standards either directly to the producer, certifier, NOP or to NODPA. We hold the future of organic dairy in our hands and we need to ensure our success by being an active participant in the integrity of organic certification. Until we make it very clear that organic is the only third party certification that guarantees the integrity of the system that produces products which benefit the environment and consumer’s health, the natural label will continue to outpace the growth of organic. ♦

Congratulations to Ed Maltby who, along with two other organic producers Jim Goodman and Bob Wills, was recently appointed by Secretary Vilsack to the federal Dairy Industry Advisory Committee. More information about this appointment will be covered in the March NODPA News and will be posted on our web site.

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Summary of Concerns Regarding A1 and A2 Milk and Dairy Breed Rankings

By Meg Cattell, DVM, MS, and Arden J. Nelson, DVM

In a recent Weston A. Price Foundation (WAPF) "Nourishing Traditions All Thumbs Book Review" article describing "Devil in The Milk: Illness, Health and The Politics of A1-A2 Milk", a statement was made that has been repeated often and is still erroneous. The reviewer states that "old fashioned" cows ... (such as Jerseys, Asian and African cows) are called A2 cows and have the original beta-casein amino acid configuration. He also states that "more modern breeds like Holstein" are called A1 cows. Many WAPF farmers and raw milk consumers have used this statement as guidance in selecting cattle or milk supply sources.

Keith Woodford, Devil in the Milk author, correctly states that

all European cattle breeds are relatively recent and the dairy breeds originally all belonged to beta-casein group A2. The point mutations that resulted in subgroups A1, B, and C (not just A1) all include an alteration of proline to histidine at the 67th amino acid in the 209 amino acid chain that is bovine beta-casein. These cows are referred to in shorthand as A1 in the text. These subgroups, but not A2 or A3, would be classified as "bad" according to the theoretical ability to be cleaved and form beta-casomorphine-7, BCM7. Both A2 and A3 gene polymorphisms would then be considered "good" and are called A2.

Lumping these subgroups together, it is unclear that the Jersey, ranging from 50 to 57% "good", is superior to the Holstein, ranging from 35 to 57% "good" across 9 studies on 3 continents (see Graph 1). This is because Jerseys range from 33 to 36% B beta-casein and this number must be added to the A1 group to determine what percent have the mutation of concern.

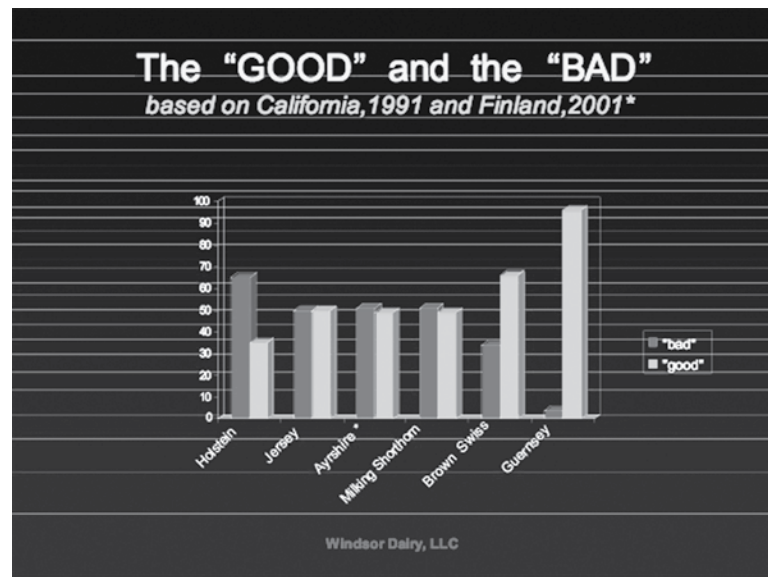
Ranking of European dairy breeds from "bad" to "good" based on a large California study directly comparing Ameri-

can cattle breeds, would be first Holstein, then Milking Shorthorn tied with Jersey, then Brown Swiss and finally Guernsey (see Graph 2). There is a mixture of types within each breed that is consistent across herds and studies. Because of this, Woodford in his book recommends testing of individual animals. If one were to bet on a breed with the "best" beta-casein type it would be the Guernsey with 96% "good" genotype.

Please see our complete "A1-A2: The Devil's in the Details" Powerpoint presentation, available in PDF format at

www.nodpa.com/a1_a2.pdf

Questions and opinions about A1-A2 milk



Q 1. Should A1 milk be a concern for me and my family?

If you and your family are healthy, and dairy is part of your complete diet, the concern level we suggest is very little concern.

But, if you have a family member that suffers from leaky gut syndrome, then we suggest that person avoids A1 milk, if possible.

Q2. What breeds of dairy cattle typically produce the lowest percentage of A1 milk?

Ranking of breeds based on published research shows that the ranking is as shown below for the six most common dairy breeds from least to most A1 genetics (from least to most for potential BCM7 production with digestion):

BEST

1. Guernsey
2. Brown Swiss
3. Ayrshire, Jersey, Milking Shorthorn (all equal)

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

WORST

4. Holstein

Q3. Can individual cows differ from the average for a particular dairy breed?

Yes, individual cows can vary from the average for a given breed. Cows can be genetically tested for beta-casein genetics so you can know more about the potential risks. Testing is costly, averaging about \$100-\$125 per cow.

Q4. Do species other than cows produce A1 milk?

Humans, goats, and most mammals produce only A2 type beta casein in their milk. All cows were of the A2 beta-casein genetics until the mutation occurred to give us both A1 and A2 types. WHEN???

Q5. Are there other possible digestion breakdown products from milk that are of concern?

There are 527 known biologically active amines that are the result of digestion of food proteins. Whether they are good or bad for us is largely unknown at this time. There

are other casomorphins that have been identified: BCM9, BCM 13, and BCM 21. (We have not investigated these in the literature yet.) Some casomorphins, as an example, have positive effects on the intestinal intraluminal immune system in our bodies.

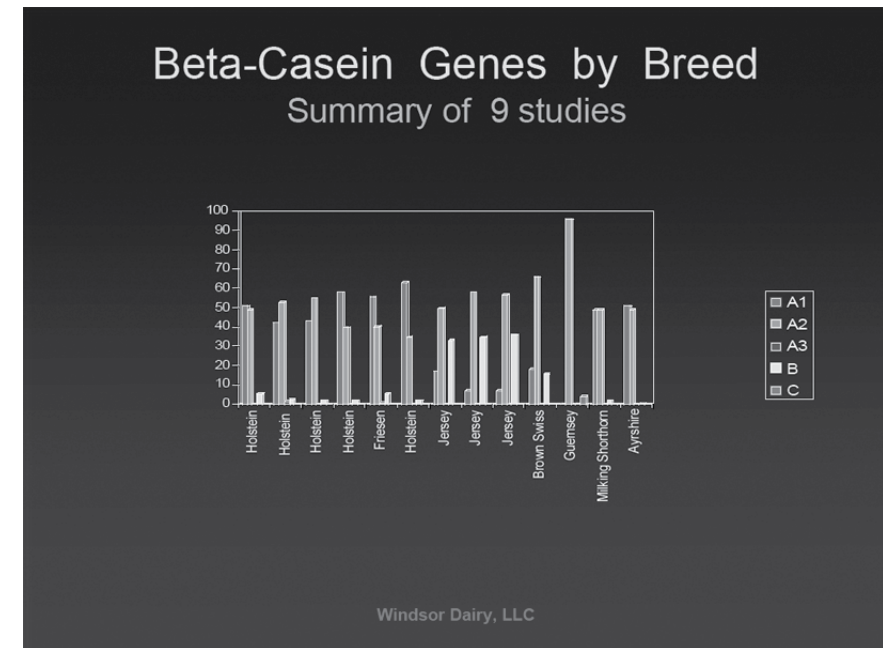
Q6. Have we tested the Windsor Dairy milk cows for A1 milk?

No, we have not tested our cows for A1 milk. Our herd is made up of almost every breed of dairy cattle available, but is predominately Brown Swiss in origin. Brown Swiss would rank second from the best dairy breeds for the most "A2" milk production genes.

Breeds in our mixed genetic (crossbred)

herd include: Holstein, Abundance, Tarentaise, Vosgiennes, Normandy, Jersey, Guernsey, Brown Swiss, Ayrshire, and Milking Shorthorn. ♦

Drs. Meg Cattell and Arden Nelson are Diplomates for ABVP – Dairy and owners of Windsor Dairy, LLC in Windsor, Colorado where they produce raw milk and raw milk cheese. Dr Cattell is also the Northern Colorado Chapter Leader for the Weston A Price Foundation (www.windsordairy.com).



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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Pay Price and the Organic Market in January 2010

By Ed Maltby

The full effect of the downturn in demand for organic dairy is being felt by all producers, with no one under the illusion that the situation will improve quickly. Consumer demand is still slightly negative, although there are regional and seasonal fluctuations in sales of fluid milk on a monthly basis; there are only two national buyers for wholesale organic milk; many producers are on short contracts; pay price has dropped; smaller independent handlers and cooperatives are making difficult decisions about their future; and the 300 + producers who shipped to HP Hood/Kemp/DMS to supply the milk for the Stonyfield fluid milk brand are in an uncertain position. Many well established organic dairies that have a good history of working with their processor will have a reasonable year financially but there will be many that have to make difficult personal and professional choices with limited options in 2010. The principal challenges for organic dairy are to manage supply, based on modest and reasonable growth and to balance production by growing a diverse number of organic dairy products rather than relying on the non-organic market to balance any surplus. Organic milk is now a commodity in search

of a secure market, with all the problems of a commodity that we know so well from the non-organic milk market.

Retail sales

The appointment of Eric Graf as the Organic Specialist for USDA-AMS Dairy Reporting has increased the availability of independent data and analysis on organic dairy, even if it is still limited. His latest report shows increased retail food store advertising of non-fluid organic dairy products indicating an increased investment in that sector, which reflects the opportunities of the current surplus to produce a greater variety of organic dairy products and a better future balancing of organic dairy. Sales of fluid organic dairy have dropped over the last year. The volume of sales of fluid whole milk has decreased by approximately 3% for the first ten months of 2009, compared with the first ten months of 2008, and organic fat reduced fluid by 4% over the same period. Sales of fluid milk bottomed out seasonally and are still lower than sales by the month for 2008.

The average retail price for organic fluid has also dropped to its lowest level in two years, averaging \$3.70 /half gallon (a drop of 15¢ since January 2009), and the gap between the organic and non-organic retail price for half gallons that peaked in September is now starting to decrease. Both of these indicators are encouraging for future sales.

The chart at bottom right of the next page shows USDA statistics *continued on page 7*

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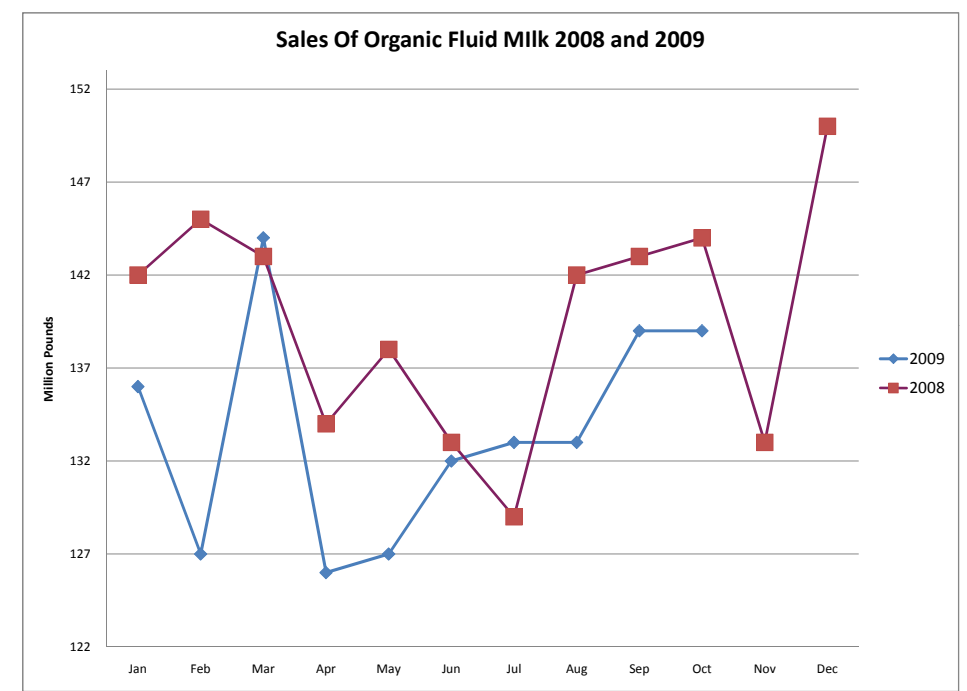


on the average gap in retail prices between organic and non-organic. The values are slightly distorted as there are no statistics available for half-gallons of non-organic milk, so the gallon price was halved to create these charts and graphs at right.

Pay Price

Beginning January 2010, HP Hood will no longer be procuring organic milk for the Stonyfield Farm fluid milk brand. OV/CROPP has assumed that responsibility and they are working directly with those producers who had contracts with HP Hood/Kemps and Dairy Marketing Services to market their milk within the Stonyfield Supply Group. This will continue to be a difficult and uncertain time for those Hood producers who are in the middle of this transition as they work with CROPP to determine their future relationship or look for other opportunities. This will be a challenging time for OV/CROPP to maintain the contracts for these producers as organic shippers in a competitive retail market, although the increase in the non-organic pay price may lessen the impact of the utilization clause in contracts. Producers are reporting that the base price for some former Hood producers in the Northeast is as low as \$20/cwt, while some report a \$25/cwt base, so contracts vary depending on circumstances.

In general, all producers accept the restrictions that the excess supply has placed on pay price and seasonal/market/regional payments. Producers who transitioned in the last few years are at the most risk as they are still developing the potential of the land and livestock under organic management, while *continued on page 27*



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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Homeopathy: The Mechanics and Its Application for the Dairy Farm, Part 1

By Glen Dupree, DVM

Of the therapeutic options available to the organic dairy, homeopathy stands alone in its elegance and simplicity. Of all the therapeutic options available for the organic dairy, none are more controversial than homeopathy.

I can make the first of these two statements because *homeopathy alone is governed by four simple rules*. Within these four rules is the ability to treat any set of symptoms in any species under any circumstances without having to make exemptions or without having to change the rules.

I can make the second of these statements because nowhere within our currently accepted confines of science are the explanations for the theory and actions of homeopathy. However, even without these explanations, the changes seen in the patient after the administration of the properly selected homeopathic remedy are irrefutable. The sick body responds to curative therapy, even if there is not a commonly accepted scientific model to allow for such action.

The beauty of homeopathy is that if you understand the mechanics and applications of the medicine you can be successful with homeopathy, even if you do not understand exactly how or why the medicine works. The how and why make the medicine more interesting and its use more compelling but the mechanics and application make it successful.

In selecting the indicated homeopathic remedy for the case (whether the patient is an individual suffering some specific malady, an individual who is just not doing right but without a

diagnosable disease, or a collective patient comprised of several individuals suffering from similar symptoms), *the first rule* of homeopathy is that you must select a remedy for the patient that is capable of causing similar symptoms. The medicine can cure symptoms (if given in very small quantities) because it can cause similar symptoms (if given in large quantities).

This sounds counterintuitive and self-defeating. Without delving into the philosophy and the theory as to why this is a necessary component of a curative medicine, we will simply say that by selecting a medicine based on its ability to cause similar symptoms in the patient, you are stimulating the body's ability to heal itself rather than relying on the external and artificial effects of the medicine itself.

If this is the first rule of homeopathy, then *the second rule* is necessary to allow for the application of the first rule. The second rule says that if we are to apply the medicine that is capable of causing symptoms similar to the symptoms of the patient, we must first know what symptoms the medicine is capable of producing.

Provings and How They are Documented

This information is gathered through a process called a proving. In a proving a group of healthy individuals are brought together and are given the medicinal substance in sufficient quantity and repetition that they begin to produce symptoms. Since provings are only done on human volunteers, we can get a very accurate and detailed description of all the symptoms on all levels that the medicine is capable of producing. And since a symptom is a symptom regardless of species producing it (a wet cough is a wet cough regardless

of the type of animal producing it, an itchy skin eruption is an itchy skin eruption regardless of the type of animal producing it, etc), we can extrapolate this human-derived information into any and every species. In order to keep track of this information, the provings are recorded in books called *Materia Medica*. These books are basically dictionaries of the remedies, telling the homeopath all the symptoms the remedy is capable of causing and therefore all the symptoms the remedy is capable of curing.

Materia medica run the gamut from the simplistic first aid and emergency manuals that are most useful in crisis situations to the most complete works like Hering's or Allen's 10 volume sets which list even the most subtle of symptoms, making them useful for treating the complexities of individual chronic disease.

Homeopathy Uses a Holistic Approach

Building on these first two rules is *the third rule* that speaks to the holistic approach of homeopathy. Since our patient is a functional totality according to the concepts of holism (the body is a complex unit made up of interdependent and interconnected parts that cannot be treated to the exclusion of the rest of the body since what affects the part affects the whole and what affects the whole affects each and every part), we must take into account the totality of symptoms produced by the patient as we match the proven remedy to the symptoms produced by our patient.

This rule keeps us focused on the fact that we are treating a living patient, not a static diagnosis. Since our patient is a functional totality, then every symptom produced is a clue to its state of ill-health and, therefore, of the remedy necessary to restore health.

If we are treating a crisis or an emergency situation, we must take into account all the symptoms of the event, exclusive of the latent and pre-existing symptoms of the patient. If we are treating the subtleties of individual chronic disease in an attempt to remove the patient's tendency to be sick, then we must take into account all the symptoms the patient is producing currently in all systems and in all levels as well as the historic symptoms that are a record of the previous state of health that has culminated in today's condition.

In either case we are treating a single totality, rather than multiple

diagnoses.

Use of the Repertory for Finding Potential Remedies for the Case

In order to simplify this process, there are books called repertories that are collections of symptoms along with the remedies capable of causing the symptoms. As with the *materia medica*, repertories range from the ultra-simplistic and diagnosis-driven first aid and emergency manuals to the much larger and complete repertories like Kent's or Synthesis or the Complete Repertory.

By using the repertory, a potential list of remedies for the patient is developed based on the symptoms produced by both the patient and the medicine. This is a process called repertorization or case analysis.

To begin the process of repertorization, the patient's or the crisis' symptoms are gathered and listed. The more detail involved in the description of the symptom, the more exact the choice of remedy will be.

From this list, the 3-5 symptoms that truly define the patient or the crisis are selected. These symptoms are selected based on consistency, recurrency, periodicity, degree, uniqueness, and defining modalities (external events that alter the presentation of the symptom such as weather, motion, eating or drinking, etc. A modality is a feature of the symptom that is unique to the patient or the event).

If properly selected these 3-5 symptoms define the case in all aspects and will lead to a list of remedies that contains the correct remedy for the patient. This correct remedy will include all of these symptoms plus all the symptoms displayed by the patient but not used in the case analysis. (The remedy should contain all the symptoms of the patient but the patient will not necessarily display all the symptoms of the remedy.)

The repertory is simply a short cut to the potential list of remedies and does not select the remedy for the patient. This list of remedies must be taken to the *materia medica* and studied until the exact fit for the patient is found. The remedy selection will be verified by the inclusion in the *materia medica* of all the symptoms of the patient including those used in the case analysis.

Use One Remedy at a Time

Finally we are at *the fourth rule* that says we need to use a single dose of a single remedy when it is time to treat. Since we are dealing with a single totality of symptoms there should be only one best remedy for that totality. And since we are depending on the healing properties of the body rather than the chemical manipulation of the medicine, we must give the dose sufficient time to work.

This does not mean that only one dose of one medicine is all the patient will ever need but that at each dosing only one dose

continued on page 26



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RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Upcoming Winter Conference Highlights

CONTROLLING YOUR DAIRY DESTINY PASA Announces Special Events Aimed at Helping Dairy Farmers

The Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) will hold its nineteenth annual conference February 4 – 6, 2010 in State College, PA. with the following theme: The Sustainable Challenge: Providing for a Livable Tomorrow.

Unique to this year, the conference will feature three dairy-specific pre-conference tracks on Thursday, February 4, each providing a full day of information, including ideas for innovation and opportunities for networking with other dairy farmers.

The Value-Added Dairy explores the nitty-gritty of turning excess fluid milk into cash flow for your dairy operation. Frank Kipe from MicroDairy Designs and Peter Dixon of Consider Bardwell Farm will be among the presenters offering down-to-earth advice about facility planning and equipment sourcing, as well as business planning, raw milk logistics and basic cheese making.

Intermediate Cheese Making: Experienced cheese makers will fine-tune their craft and gain knowledge of how to improve

their cheeses using information and experience gleaned in this workshop. After morning sessions on caves and cultures, artisan cheese experts Jenny Harris and Jill Erber will lead the afternoon's cheese tasting and conduct evaluations of participants' own cheeses.

Controlling Your Dairy Destiny will help producers think their way to a better long-term return for their efforts by illustrating the many avenues to success. Part of negotiating those paths involves understanding how the current state of affairs has come to be. John Bunting, a dairyman from NY who writes for Milkweed, and Michael Stumo, CEO of Coalition for a Prosperous America, will give the background behind pricing structures and explore antitrust law as it relates to the dairy industry. Sue Miller, Kim Seeley, Duane Hertzler and Francis Thicke will be sharing their stories of how they each gained control of their dairy's destiny and what they envision the future of dairy farming to be.

This year's emphasis on dairying also does not end on Thursday. Tucked among workshops on composting, small grain production and integrated pest management are Friday and Saturday workshops at which presenters will share their knowledge and

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Silver Valley Farm, New Sharon, Maine



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.

www.HorizonOrganic.com

©2009 Horizon Organic. Photo by Keri Pickett

experience about running a goat micro-dairy, changing raw milk regulations across the country and organic dairy production.

Information and registration for the Farming for the Future conference, including the pre-conference tracks on dairying and other topics, can be found online at www.pasafarming.org/conference2010 or by contacting the PASA office at 814-349-9856. Scholarship and work-share opportunities are available.

ADVANCED ORGANIC DAIRY WORKSHOPS NOFA Vermont's 28th Annual Winter Conference

The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont will host a full day of advanced workshops and roundtable discussions for organic dairy farmers during its 28th annual Winter Conference ("Celebrating the Heart of Organic") to be held February 13th and 14th on the campus of the University of Vermont in Burlington, VT.

Organized by NOFA Vermont's Dairy and Livestock Technical Assistance Program and a number of organic dairy farmers, the organic dairy workshops, *Getting Down To Business In A Down Economy: What is Working For Vermont's Organic Dairy Farmers*, will take place on Sunday, February 14th from 9am - 5 pm.

Workshops and roundtable discussions will be led by some of Vermont's most innovative organic dairy producers and experienced dairy professionals. Topics include:

- Improving the Bottom Line: What Works
- Milk Quality - Making money with SCC under 150,000
- Behavior-Based Grazing Management: Principles to Practices
- Treating and Preventing Common Herd Health Issues;
- Balancing Diversification
- Selling Raw Milk in Vermont -- Understanding the Regulations
- Buy Less Energy, Increase Farm Cash-flow: Strategies for Reducing Farm Energy In-Puts
- Transferring the Farm: Challenges of Farm Business and Farmland Transitions.

The Winter Conference's keynote speaker on Sunday will be Jack Lazor of Butterworks Farm in Westfield, Vermont.

For more information about the NOFA Vermont Winter Conference, including advanced organic dairy workshops, visit NOFA Vermont's webpage, www.nofavt.org, or contact NOFA Vermont at 802-434-4122, info@nofavt.org. If you have questions about the advanced organic dairy workshops or would like more information about them, contact Sam Fuller, Dairy and Livestock TA Program, sam@nofavt.org.

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Alfred State Picks Site for New Dairy

By Brian Baker, Director of the Center for Organic and Sustainable Agriculture at Alfred State

Alfred State College announced the site selected for its new facilities to teach dairy production. Near both Highway 244 and the Alfred village line, the location is convenient for students, services, and members of the public.

The new site is expected to use energy, materials, and land resources efficiently while teaching organic and conventional production. Original renderings show the structures in a shallow v-shaped configuration with organic and conventional dairy barns both joined to a common milking parlor. Both herds will have doors that allow for access to some of the richest pasture on the college farm. The cost of road building, potential erosion caused by new road cuts, and the ability for milk trucks to have access to the facility in all seasons were considered in the selection of the site. The proposed design

has a robotic milking system in the organic barn. The conventional parlor will have a double-eight herringbone parlor able to serve as a backup for the organic system if the robotic system is down for an extended period.

The barns in the first architectural renderings show a capacity for 60 lactating cows each with additional capacity for dry cows and a box stall for special needs. Separate structures will be built to house the calves and heifers. The lactating cows will be bedded in freestalls. Feed and milk will be stored in a way that does not compromise the integrity of the organic herd and production.

Currently under consideration is whether the bedding used for the freestalls will be sand or mattresses with organic matter, such as straw or sawdust. While sand has proven superior for cow comfort and lower mastitis, it has not yet been determined whether these advantages outweigh the additional costs for equipment, operation, maintenance, and manure management when compared with organic matter used as bedding. The planning committee is discussing ways to have the best of both systems. ♦

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Improving Pastureland on a Limited Fertilizer Budget

By Neal Kinsey

When keeping livestock, the cost of growing or purchasing the needed feed supply is always a factor to consider. Though the prices are coming down for fertilizer in comparison to last year, some still feel it is just too expensive to properly fertilize pastures. But to the extent possible, growing good quality feed for livestock as pasture and hay is always preferable to buying it elsewhere. Still far too many who have the land for growing hay and pasture dismiss such possibilities based on past crop performance.

Those who have the land to do so, but not a budget to do all that is necessary in the first year should consider perhaps trying another approach. It is still possible to build soil fertility, improve production and increase feed quality even on poorer pasture soils with a limited budget by wisely considering the application of fertilizer and soil amendments.

When soils are not performing at their best, several nutrients are usually lacking? And generally what is missing is not just nitrogen or the major nutrients that can be supplied by use of manure or a simple N-P-K fertilizer mix. Taking soil samples and having them properly analyzed by using the information from a detailed soil analysis can point out exactly what is required. But so often, these additional elements have been neglected for so long that it is costly to try and supply everything needed all at once. We specialize in advice for helping to rebuild soils on a limited budget to supply improved nutrition and yields.

As a trial take one even-growing pasture or hay meadow and split it. Take separate soil samples from both sides and send them for analysis and recommendations. Follow your normal program of fertility for that pasture or hay meadow on one side and use our recommendations on

the other side. Follow through to the extent the budget will allow. You may want to try this in one of two ways.

One way is by requesting the nutrients be prioritized according to their importance. (Properly following the instructions we provide for correctly taking and sending soil samples will enable us to most correctly establish the needed priority for required nutrients on each area.) This program can provide the proper sequence for spending the fertilizer budget to purchase the most needed nutrients for improving each soil's unique productivity requirements. Spend the money on the most important needs first. (Recommended fertilizers to supply nutrient needs for the intended crop are included in the cost of the soil analysis. Prioritizing nutrient needs are available upon request for an extra charge.)

There is yet another possibility on land that has at least 33% legumes or where no fertilizer is presently being applied. Take our recommendations to your fertilizer dealer and see what it would cost to do everything the test shows to be needed. If that is too much in terms of cost, determine what you can afford per acre and apply that percentage of everything on the test. If you do this, just be certain you apply that percentage of all the nutrients recommended that way. Some fertilizer reps will try to convince you that "all of this is just too expensive and not necessary" and are sure they are giving you absolutely correct advice. If the advice seems to make sense to you, use that program on one side and the one we recommend on the other. For the proper evaluation, do the testing and applications for three years before you decide which is most effective.

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RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Upcoming Winter Conference Highlights

continued from page 11

NOFA-NY'S 28TH ANNUAL ORGANIC FARMING AND GARDENING CONFERENCE

Join us at NOFA-NY's 28th Annual Organic Farming and Gardening Conference, taking place January 22-24, 2010 at the Saratoga Hilton Hotel & Conference Center in Saratoga Springs, NY where over 80 workshops, 3 keynote speeches, organic trade show, entertainment and local organic meals will be offered. Organic Dairy Highlights include Dr Richard J Holliday, DVM as the Guest Organic Dairy Speaker. Dr Holliday had a private mixed practice in northwest Missouri for 25 years, was employed as a Technical Services Veterinarian by Impro Products, Inc. for many years, and is currently the Senior Veterinary Consultant for Helfter Feeds. Dr. Holliday became certified as a Veterinary Acupuncturist in 1988 and has been actively involved in promoting organic agriculture and holistic veterinary medicine for over 40 years. His workshops include:

- Cow Health and Disease: Back to the Basics, Saturday Jan

23rd at 9:30am

- Applying the Basics to Improve Herd Health, Saturday Jan 23rd at 2:30pm, and
- How to Read a Cow; Simplified Veterinary Acupuncture for the Dairyman, Saturday Jan 23rd at 4:15

Other Dairy Workshops include:

Johnes Disease from a Farmers' Perspective, Saturday Jan 23rd at 8 am

Sally and Tom Brown are long time organic dairy farmers. In this workshop they will explore these questions about Johnes: Do you have it in your herd? Do you know what it is? What are the economic implications of not knowing the status of your herd? How do you follow organic guidelines for treatment?

Forage Production 201 Sunday Jan 24th at 8am

Producing forage and incorporating it into good rations should be based on solid information such as forage analysis. Join NRCS nutritionist and grazing expert Karen Hoffman and Jim Gardiner (Hidden Opportunities Farm) to learn about taking forage samples and why it is important for balancing your rations.

Cheesemaking: A Farmer's Perspective Sunday Jan 24th at 9:45 am

Thistle Hill Farm is a certified organic dairy farm located in

North Pomfret, VT, owned and operated by John and Janine Putnam and their four children. Join the Putnams as they discuss balancing milking, cow care, and field work with cheesemaking and marketing.

Questions? Contact Greg Swartz, Conference Coordinator conference@nofany.org (570) 224-8515, or Register online: <http://www.events.org/nofany-conference/cpage.aspx?e=21411>. Walk-in Registrations are accepted.

WISCONSIN IN FEBRUARY? Come to the MOSES Organic Farming Conference!

The MOSES Organic Farming Conference will take place Thursday, February 25 through Saturday February 27, 2010, with Organic University courses held from 10:00-5:30 on Thursday.

There will be much to interest organic dairy producers, or those thinking about transitioning their dairies to organic, at this year's MOSES Organic Farming Conference (OFC). The day-long Organic University course entitled "Quality Forages and Dairy Rations" will provide an encompassing look at how to grow diverse and high-quality forages, as well as how to develop a balanced dairy ration. Focus will be placed on using small grains in the ration; a good alternative for farmers looking to move away from strictly corn or beans. The feeding of molasses and proper mineral supplementation will also be discussed.

Dairy nutritionist and president of Crystal Creek, Dan Leiterman, will lead up two dynamic OFC workshops: "Creative Ways to Improve Profitability on the Organic Dairy Farm," which will explore many approaches producers can implement to increase their profitability in tough economic times, as well as "Parasite Control on Organic Livestock," which will address the options available for controlling parasites as part of an organic system.

Organic Valley staff veterinarian Guy Jodarski will share his extensive knowledge with two practical dairy workshops at the conference. The workshop "Winter Management of Dairy Cattle" will cover out-wintering and the nutritional and physical needs of dairy cattle under this kind of management. Guy's second workshop, "Dairy Young Stock Disease Prevention," will discuss holistic approaches including: disease prevention, grazing management, grouping strategies, facilities as well as best management practices for raising healthy calves on organic dairy farms.

There will also be numerous workshops of relevance to organic and sustainable farmers, including those on creating healthy soils, the use of cover crops, weed control, crop rotations, field crop management, marketing, business issues and more. For more detail on the conference and Organic University classes, including in depth workshop descriptions and online registration, go to the MOSES website at www.mosesorganic.org or call the MOSES office at 715-778-5775 to have a flyer mailed. ♦

For more event listings, go to page 32.



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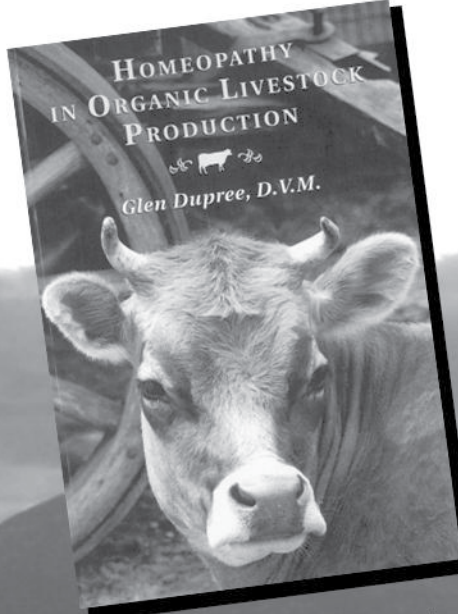
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RESEARCH & EDUCATION

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By Lisa McCrory

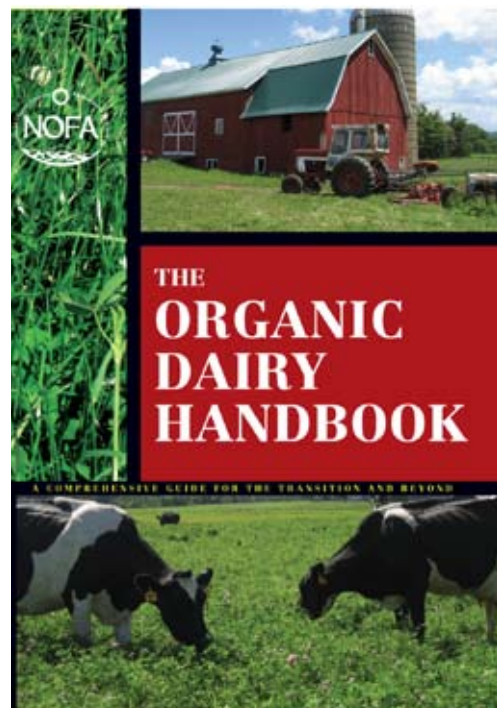
Whether you are transitioning to organic, have been certified organic for years, or are a consultant providing services to organic dairy/transitioning dairy clients, *The Organic Dairy Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to Transition and Beyond* is a wonderful resource for one and all.

This book, which hit the streets in October, covers a full spectrum of important topics from well-known and well respected authors. Topics include marketing, soil quality, pasture management, crop management, herd health, nutrition, record keeping and the ins and outs of a thoughtful organic transition. Within each chapter/subject you will find a thorough and thoughtful layout, complete with two or three farmer case studies, adding depth and dimension to the subject at hand.

At the end of the book you will find many appendices and resources helping you to find organic seed, soil amendments, soil/forage/manure testing services, animal health products, and more. There are body condition scoring charts, locomotion scoring and a handy 'cow assessment' form to help you identify key symptoms to health and early onset disease.

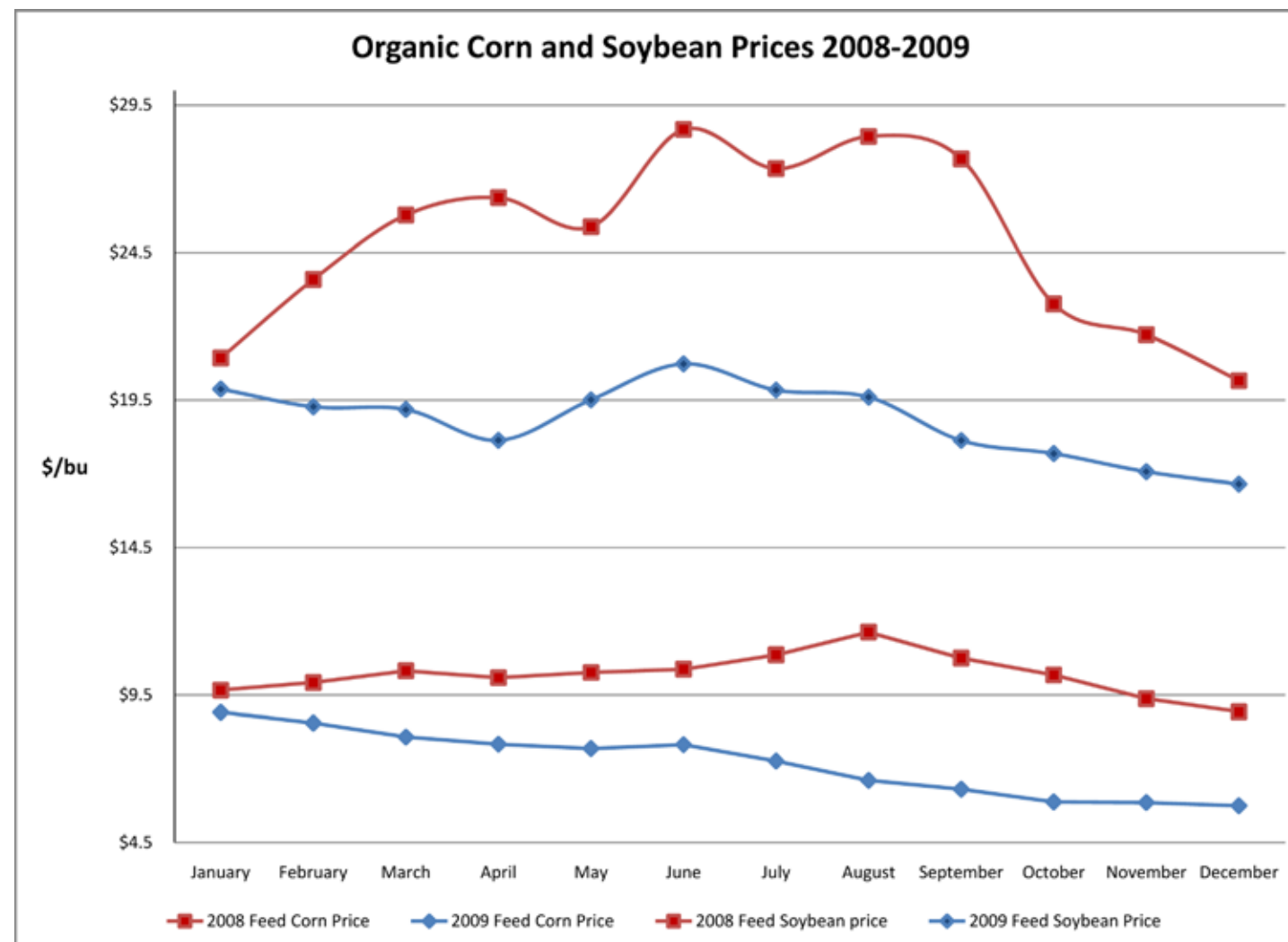
The book is bound in a nice metal spiral spine, for frequent use, and includes a handy index in the back so you can quickly look for places in the book where your topic of interest is being covered. If you are transitioning or considering it, then you may be interested in the *Transitioning to Organic Dairy Self-Assessment Workbook*, also published by NOFA New York.

To order your own book, you can contact Bethany Wallis, NOFA-NY Organic Dairy Project : (315) 806-1180 or email: Bethany.organicdairy@nofan.org. Individual copies are \$18 each and bulk rates are available. Thank you NOFA-NY for a very important and useful resource. ♦



ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Organic Corn and Soybean Prices 2008-2009



Feed Price Update, January, 2010

The weather has had a considerable effect on the harvesting as the Midwest has been subjected to wet weather followed by heavy snow storms. With prices at their lowest point in the last two years and very little grain and feedstuff being traded on the organic market, producers are waiting to see what the New Year brings.

Wheat trade is at a near standstill and there are confirmed cases of wheat affected with vomitoxin and sprouting in the eastern states. Corn has had some low test weights as the harvest has progressed.

Organic flax meal is reported being trade at \$585 to \$615 per ton, soybean meal at \$775 to \$800 per ton and roasted

soy meal at \$760 to \$770 per ton. Indications for new crop feed grade corn ranged from \$5.00 to \$7.10 per bushel for delivery in January-March. Feed grade soybeans ranged from \$15.50 to \$17.50 per bushel.

Alfalfa was reported at \$1.00-\$1.10 per RFV point (Premium Alfalfa priced at \$180 to \$200/ ton).

Organic hay is available and priced at non-organic prices in the west as dealers struggle to find a market. The quality of home produced forage varies greatly in the Northeast.

NODPA gives monthly updates of organic feed prices on its home page, go to www.nodpa.com

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_____ \$0.05 per hundredweight to support the work of NODPA (the amount that has been deducted in the past for national milk marketing but can now be 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 _____

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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 Coordinator, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342

Producer signature: _____ Date: _____

Producer number/ member no: _____ E-mail: _____

Number of milking cows: _____ Tel #: _____

Certifying Agency: _____

Farm Address: (please print) _____

Producers—please send this to NODPA, Attn Ed Maltby, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342, so we can track who has signed up and forward this form to the milk handler. Thank you.

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Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Date: _____ Are you a certified organic dairy producer? YES NO

Number of milking cows _____ Milk buyer _____

Are you transitioning to organic? YES NO If yes, anticipated date of certification: _____

Please mail this form with a check to: Ed Maltby, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342, or by fax: 866-554-9483 or by email to ed-nodpa@comcast.net. Please make your check payable to: NODPA

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“We were surprised by the results. We maintain our tank SCC down at 80-100,000 by spraying every fresh udder for 4 to 5 days.”

— Alan Mesman



MESMAN FARM, Mt. Vernon, Washington
 Alan and Vickie Mesman and son Ben and daughter Samantha
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The Mesman family (l-r) Alan, Ben, Vickie and Samantha.

“We were surprised by our results with Udder Comfort™. We used the new yellow spray, which has a natural coloring. Our SCC had been running 140-170,000, we could not believe how squirting this spray on the outside of the udder would cut our somatic cell count down by 70,000. But it worked. It softens the udder, which relaxes the cow. This helps with edema and irritation when they come fresh,” says Alan Mesman. He and his wife Vickie and son Ben and daughter Sammy milk 140 cows at their Certified Organic dairy near Mt. Vernon, Washington.

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Re-Building Civilization's Foundation

By Mark Krawczyk

The focus of modern sustainable agriculture is constantly evolving. In a world where dairy farmers have given way to 'grass farmers' and more recently 'carbon farmers' the needs and challenges of modern culture are coming full circle to the cycle of life and fertility that starts in the soil. As we look to the soil as a reservoir to moderate the effects of climate change as well as 'the foundation of civilization' (Thomas Jefferson), it becomes increasingly clear that the act of soil building is probably one of the most important legacies we can leave for future generations. Having recognized this critical need, we are seeing a modern resurgence in interest in the work of P.A. Yeomans and his Keyline Design and soil building systems.

Keyline is a term coined by Australian mining ecologist P.A. Yeomans to describe a regenerative land-use and design system informed by a thorough analysis of the ecological and topographical characteristics of a site. First described in print in 1954, Yeomans developed a holistic land care strategy that helped create resilient farmscapes and communities with deep fertile soils; secure year-round access to water; and an economical and ecological layout. Probably Yeomans' two best-known contributions to the world of agriculture include the development of interconnected networks of earthen dams which provide access to gravity fed flood irrigation, as well as the rapid development of topsoil using a subsoil plow and conscious, intensive land management. It is this dramatic potential to modify the character of the soil profile that is today gaining considerable



momentum in North America and beyond.

Having recognized that the crucial elements necessary to maintain a healthy, biologically resilient agriculture are in many ways as simple as air, water and sunlight, Yeomans developed a version of a rigid-tined subsoil plow that decompacted abused soils, dramatically enhanced water infiltration and oxygenated subsoils. In practice, when drawn through the soil, subsoil plow shanks (the deep ripping components of a subsoil plow) create minimal surface disturbance and mixing of soil layers while shattering compacted soils, thereby setting the stage for the development of a healthy biological soil community.

Helping further repair degraded landscapes, another crucial insight developed by Yeomans is what's known as keyline pattern cultivation. The term 'keyline' actually refers to a physical point in the landscape - the contour line that passes through the 'keypoint'. This is the place in a valley where the slope changes from being convex to concave in profile. Without attempting to describe this patterning verbally, essentially Yeomans found that by orienting the rips of the subsoiler parallel to the keyline, it is possible to more evenly distribute water throughout the landscape, effectively 'draining' the valleys and humidifying the ridges. Again, it is little more than the careful and conscious orientation of the subsoil rips that enables the farmer to develop a more even water regime, setting the stage for rapid topsoil development, especially in dryland ecologies.

To this point, we've simply discussed the mechanical, restorative components of keyline soil building techniques. Subsoil plowing is intended to serve as a rehabilitative strategy, typically carried out twice annually for a period of about three years. And again, it functions to generate the conditions needed to establish a healthy soil biology. The next step, and the most important, is the mineral and nutrient cycling that follow as a result of careful, con-

scious land management.

In his original work, Yeomans found that mowing pasture grasses just prior to seed head formation (boot stage), caused what he believed to be a corresponding root die back, freeing up abundant organic matter for soil biology. This organic matter is consumed by soil life, cycled through the soil food web, and ultimately converted into stable, mineral-rich humus. Today, several of the world's cutting-edge graziers and land managers instead find that livestock play a much more crucial role in this soil building process than what was found by Yeomans, and it's actually through holistic land management and intensive grazing systems (following keyline subsoil plowing) that the soil building process is kick started.

The regenerative land specialists of today are combining numerous management strategies and treatments to dramatically improve soil health. Following subsoil plowing with high density cattle grazing regimes, dairy farmer Abe Collins in Swanton, Vermont is actively initiating the conversion of heavy, compacted clay soils into several inches of living



topsoil each year.


Modern biological research attributes this humus development more to the symbiotic relationship between soil biology and plant roots than to the release of organic matter resulting from root dieback as originally theorized by Yeomans. Essentially, plants actively devote a significant portion of their energy reserves to their roots (about 60% in grasses), of which approximately 50% is released in the form of exudates - simple sugars,

proteins and carbohydrates. These exudates are what microbiologist Dr. Elaine Ingham refers to as the 'cakes and cookies' for soil biology. So very literally, plants are directly engaged in a cooperative relationship with beneficial soil biology in the root zone, which break down inorganic soil minerals and convert them into a plant available form - exactly where the plants need them! And as we enhance the growth cycle of pasture plants making even

better use of available solar energy, this biological activity is further enhanced, creating more humus and sequestering more carbon.

While numerous other soil enhancement strategies have considerable potential to integrate with keyline soil building, the application of aerobic compost tea (ACT) directly into subsoil rips is probably one of the most exciting means of making the most out of a tractor pass. ACT is essentially a compost-based brew of biological life, which can be applied as a soil drench or to the foliar surfaces of plants. Starting with a small quantity of healthy, biologically active compost, ACT is produced by

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION: FEATURED FARM

Triple D Acres: New Sharon, Maine

John and Marcia Donald, Jeff Donald and Frank Donald Jr.

Hard work and some basic principles to manage their farm efficiently and profitably have provided Triple D Acres with consistent high quality forages, superior milk, and Maine's 2009 Outstanding Farm of the Year by New England Green Pastures Program.

By Lisa McCrory

Triple D Acres is a family operation with John, his wife Marcia and nephews Jeff and Frank Donald Jr. operating the farm. The Donalds have a closed herd, milking around 70 Holsteins cows, and raising 90 calves and heifers. With a rolling herd average of 19,700 pounds, butter fat of 3.7%, protein of 3% and a Somatic Cell Count averaging just under 100,000 the family farm has received numerous awards for the high quality milk that they produce. They have also received the 2007 and 2009 Grand Champion award at the Maine Farm Days for the forages that

they grow. How do they do it? John admittedly stole a phrase from organic dairy farmer and NODPA President Henry Perkins (who has won many milk quality awards as well), which is: "Keep your milk cold, and your water hot", though John has added one additional piece that he feels is very important: "stay out of debt".

Dairy farming has been in John's family for 3 generations; his grandfather made a living from hand-milking just 10 cows! John and Marcia started their own herd in the 60's, starting on Marcia's grandfather's 50-acre farm in Wilton, Maine. There they milked 20-25 cows, which was not enough cows to support a family.



Three generations of the Donald family (and friends). John and Marcia are in the center, Frank Jr, Jeff and Kyle are the 1st, 3rd and 5th in the back row



During this time, John worked off the farm as a Foreman at the local paper mill. An opportunity to purchase their current farm came about in 1979; it was a bigger farm, with better land and more acreage, and it was an opportunity for John and Marcia to take on dairy farming as a full time occupation.

When the Donalds first bought their farm in 1979, it came with 220 acres and debt. Over time they were able to eliminate their debt and build up their land base. Today they own a total of 550 acres and have been debt-free for 15 years. Their land is mostly open and is used for pasture and hay.

Transition to Organic

Though they liked the idea of not using chemicals and sprays, the main motivation for being organic (and still is today) was mostly financial. Some of their land was certifiable already, and other pieces required a full 3-year transition. With Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) as their certifier, they had to follow MOFGA's transition requirements, as it was pre-NOP. Land transition requirements have not changed too much from 2002 to today, but the livestock transition was only 3 months (100% organic feed, housing, health care for the livestock). The cost to transition was significantly less than what someone would incur today, but it was still a lot of up-front money at a time when the market was still young, processors were not providing any transition payments, and sources for quality organic grains were limited. All in all, it was a good learning experience and the Donalds started shipping organic milk to Horizon Organic on August 1st, 2002.

Growing High Quality Forages

One of the keys to success on Triple D Acres is high quality forages; they put up all hay and balage on their farm – and they do it well, making sure to harvest their forages at their optimum nutritional value. First cut hay is harvested as close to May 20th as possible. John also makes sure to have an excellent line of equipment so that they can harvest their feed within their optimum windows of time. On hand, they have 2 round balers, 2 mowers, and 2 rakes. With good equipment and an exceptional work crew they "can get

moving and get it harvested in a short amount of time," says John. This year, for example, they started on first cut on the 24th of May and by the 7th of June they had harvested feed from over 240 acres. Forage tests on a couple of their hay crops are shown below:

1. Grand Champion at Main Farm Days: RFV = 155, ADF = 28.3, NDF = 40.1, P = 20.0, E = 68.8.
2. 4th cut: RFV = 147, ADF = 26.4, NDF = 31.0, P = 23.8, E = 63.7

Most of the hay land on the farm consists of timothy and clover and a dwindling amount of acreage is in alfalfa. Fields are rarely reseeded, though occasionally they may no-till seed where a field has had some winter kill. Some of their better hay fields are over 30 years old; in fact it is one of those fields that took the 2009 Forage Quality Award. The fertility program is simple; they put 8-10 tons of cow manure (semi-solid) on their hay fields in the spring and 4-6 tons of chicken manure in the fall. Some hay fields – usually those closer to the barn – will receive an additional coating of cow manure after each cutting. The permanent pastures receive 3-4 tons of chicken manure in the fall.

John credits the success of the farm to his excellent crew of 3 full time people: his nephews Jeff and Frank Jr and their full time employee Kyle Gammon. "They know how to work", says John. Even though they had a stressful year getting in feed, they had the best quality balage for the dairy herd. John has gone from worrying a lot about the breeding to worrying a lot about the feed. "Genetics are there for making a good cow, but the importance is in the feed," he says.

Their cows are milked in a 1960's stanchion barn with a pipeline. They can tie up to 75 milkers plus 25 young calves in this barn. Behind the dairy barn is a high ceiling barn where they store sawdust, horse hay and heifer hay. They often grow more hay than they actually need most years, which allows them to sell dry round bales to horse customers and some balage, providing some extra income in the good years and making sure that they have enough feed for themselves in the lean ones. In the last two years, they have

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION: FEATURED FARM

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they have installed new stanchions, grates and mats to increase cow comfort and maintain the high quality milk that they are recognized for.

Milk Quality

Triple D Acres has received numerous awards for milk quality. Their Somatic Cell Count (SCC) in 2007 averaged around 85,000, in 2008 it was around 116,000 and in 2009 it was just under 100,000. They almost always receive a \$1.50/cwt premium since their milk is always under 140,000 SCC and often times they earn an additional \$1.50/cwt for low PI, and low Bacteria counts. One of the tools that they use to keep Somatic Cell Count low is the quarter-milker as it can divert a bad quarter from the tank. For maintaining low PI and low bacteria counts, they work closely with their IBA dealer and make sure to replace hoses, inflations and gaskets as recommended. They also put in a plate cooler a few years ago which cools the milk down before it makes it to the tank. On top of all this, John and his crew are great at paying attention to detail. If a cow has a quarter that looks at all 'off', they act right away and apply the 'CCC' cream, give the cow some aspirin,



John and Marcia Donald

and continue to pay close attention to that cow until things look right again. All this work pays off; Triple D Acres usually earns an additional \$2.50 - \$3.00/cwt for their milk quality.

Grazing System and Feed Rations

Heifers and cows are turned out on pasture from mid May to Mid October, providing new grass to the animals every 1-3 days. The animals start the grazing season on the permanent

pasture and pieces of hay land are added to the rotation as the season progresses. By Mid September, they start supplementing the animals with balage to complement the pasture. The cows are fed about 15 lbs of a 9% pelleted cornmeal, which contains their mineral needs as well. Salt is provided free choice.

In the winter, the cows are fed balage and 2nd cut dry hay three times a day. The forage quality is excellent, which has allowed them to continue feeding 15 lbs of the 9% protein grain to their cows (a significant savings in grain costs). The high quality forages also allows them to maintain a high producing herd average

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on a high forage diet. When they were conventional, their Rolling Herd Average was 21,000 lbs. Now, they feed more high quality forages and have cut back a little on the pounds of grain fed and enjoy a RHA of 19,700 lbs and a greater profit margin.

Livestock Health

Health issues are few and far between on Triple D Acres, and have become less of a problem since being certified organic. The cows are not pushed so hard for production and cow comfort, cleanliness, and good barn ventilation lead to fewer problems. When issues do arise, there are a few supplements and allowed treatments that they turn to such as aspirin for a retained placenta, and calcium drench for milk fever. If a cow comes down with mastitis they use aspirin, Excell, and CCC cream from Synergy plus they might milk the cow out a couple extra times during the day. For a twisted stomach, if it is on the left hand side they will roll the cow and if it is on the right side, they will ship her. If a cow comes down with a lot of problems or does not recover easily, she goes down the road and a heifer will take her place.

Cows on this farm last an average of 4 lactations, though there are a couple cows that are 10-11 years old. The Donalds sell surplus livestock every year which was normal when they were managing their cows conventionally as well. Their cull rate is usually 15-20% for beef culls and additional livestock are sold each year for dairy purposes. Since they are not growing their closed herd, they often find themselves moving older cows out (sold often as dairy) to

make room for first calf heifers. In 2008, they sold \$60,000 worth of dairy replacements and in 2009 they sold 10 animals for dairy purposes. More animals went for beef in 2009 since their processor requested that they cut back their milk volume.

The veterinarian is rarely needed, but they do have him come on occasion to do pregnancy checks as well as for the occasional emergency call and vaccinations. Cows and calves are vaccinated using the Triangle-nine vaccine.

Calf Rearing

The calves are raised on whole milk for 2.5 - 3 months of age and are offered hay and grain starting at 10 days of age. They feed their calves about 2 gallons of milk per day. The greatest challenge is calf scours when the calves are 6-10 days old. To address this, they work proactively and start the calves on a Crystal Creek's Calf Shield at about 5 days of age and will add it to the milk for a week or so.

Conclusion

When looking for support or information, Triple D Acres will depend upon their veterinarian, other farmers, articles in Country Folks Magazine and word of mouth. When asked where the organic dairy industry needs to focus its energy right now, John's response was that people within the USDA need to have a lot more back bone to make the pasture rule with some teeth in it. We need to keep the feedlot milk out of organic dairy. ♦

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Homeopathy

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of one medicine is given so that we can evaluate the patient's response and can make corrections if the response is less than curative.

The time involved in making this assessment depends on the dynamics and speed of the disease process. True life-threatening emergencies may be dosed and assessed every 1-2 minutes. Long standing, latent chronic disease may be dosed and assessed in days to weeks. In either case the response of the patient dictates the next actions of the homeopath.

Initially this process will seem foreign and time consuming. With experience comes speed and accuracy. But until you gain that experience, simply use the selected homeopathic remedy as an adjunct to your current treatment protocol for the condition. If you see improved results with the addition of the remedy, this will give you the courage to try the remedy first and use your previous protocol as an adjunct to the remedy. Then with experience, and because of the ease of administration and the economics of homeopathy, many, if not most, of your previous protocols may be abandoned.

For example if your farm probably has a particular herbal protocol of one or more herbal mixtures and maybe some vitamins or other supplements for diarrhea or pneumonia or some other malady. You can continue to use this protocol when you see the problem developing but you now repertorize the case and select the homeopathic remedy that best matches the symptoms. To your herbal protocol, you add appropriate doses of the homeopathic remedy.

As you assess the results of your treatment, if the cattle respond quicker, more dramatically, or more economically with the homeopathic remedy than when this protocol was used previously without the homeopathic remedy, this improved response can be

attributed to the remedy since this is the only variable introduced from the previous protocol.

If you see this repeatedly, then it will give you confidence in the homeopathic remedy's ability to treat your cattle. With this confidence, you may opt at the next occurrence to try the homeopathic remedy first and hold your herbs until later. You can always go back to the old procedures if the homeopathic remedy fails to meet your expectations.

Then with the correct remedy and with additional experience, you will begin to see that the correct homeopathic remedy is capable of addressing the issues with little or no secondary supports.

It is at this point that you will be able to appreciate the elegance and the economics of homeopathy on the farm.

Also with experience will come the knowledge that, because of the genetics, the production, the management, the uniqueness of your farm, there will only be a finite number of symptoms and symptoms complexes seen on your farm. With this limited grouping of symptoms, there will be only a limited number of remedies commonly indicated in your stock.

Once you determine the most common disease presentations and the most commonly indicated remedies for your farm, and once you learn these remedies inside and out, the entire process becomes very simple to use. And that is the beauty of homeopathy, whether you understand the theory behind the mechanics or not.

Stay tuned for Part II in the March issue of the NODPA News, where Dr. Dupree will cover the nuts and bolts of administering homeopathic remedies on the farm along with some case studies. ♦

Glen Dupree, DVM, CVH, has practiced veterinary Homeopathy for the past 10 years in Louisiana, Pennsylvania and New York. He received his initial training in Homeopathy from Richard Pitcairn, DVM. Further studies have been made with various human Homeopaths. Currently, Dr. Dupree's practice of veterinary Homeopathy is based in St. Francisville, Louisiana.

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Pay Price

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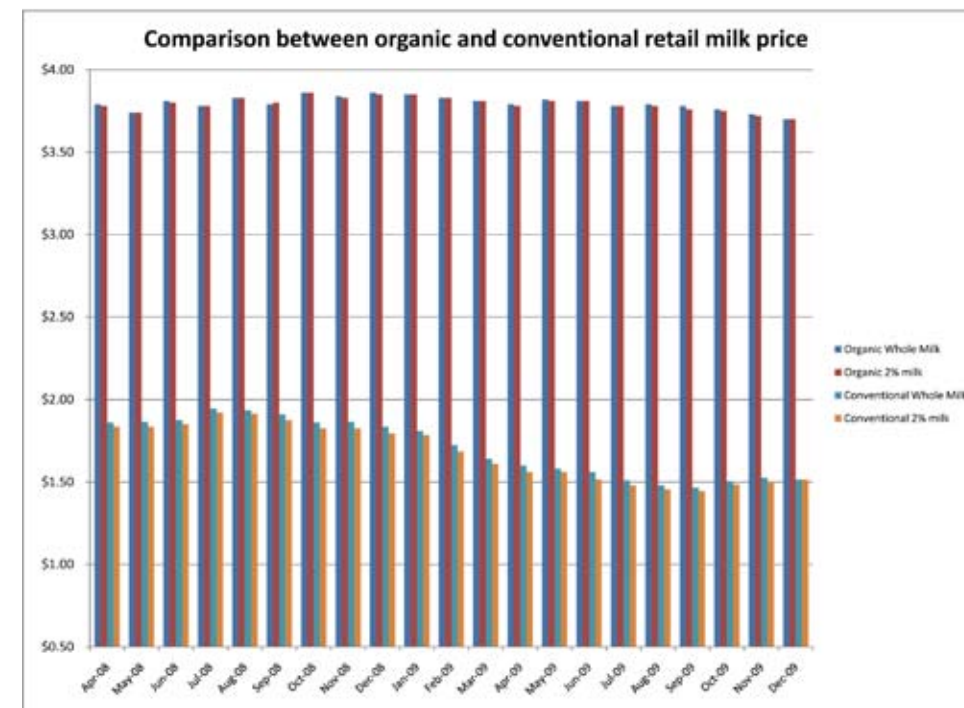
carrying debt from transition expense. Some producers report that there is still a lack of clarity over what, if any, milk can be sold/used by producers rather than sold to their milk company and are looking for more clarity.

There are now only two national organic procurement companies, some regional groups of up to 50 producers such as LOFCO and Upstate Niagara, smaller cooperatives/companies such as Organic Dairy Farmers Cooperative and Maine's Own Organic Milk Company (MOOMilk Co), as well as individual processors such as Butterworks Farm, Strafford Organic Creamery and Empire Organics and a few established dairies that are expanding into organics such as Foster Farms and Cloverland Dairy.

Horizon Organic

Horizon is in the middle of their producer meetings, a time when producers need to talk directly with management to explain their challenges. The new CEO for White-Wave, Blaine McPeak, has publicly committed to a long term future in the organic market. His knowledge from managing Horizon Organic is positive for Horizon's continued support of its producers. Horizon reports that many producers responded to their request for a 5% drop in production; that they are not terminating contracts and they are honoring contracts given to transitioning producers. Producer reports indicate that Horizon has maintained its pay price; a base of \$25, with a \$1 MAP and a \$3 premium in October, November, December and January, although there is some variation in contracted pay-price. The con-

tracts that Horizon is presenting to its producers have changed between 2008 and 2009. Some changes to contracts have been made to: 1) authorize Horizon representatives complete access to organic files at the certifier's office and elsewhere; 2) gives the company the ability to terminate or suspend the contract immediately if the company believes the producer's certifier "has questioned or is investigating" any part of the Organic Systems Plan for non-compliance; 3) allows Horizon to change the pay-price



for an individual producer with 30 days notice and they only need written agreement from the producer if the amount is over 25% of the new base price; 4) allows the company to terminate the contract if the producer can only supply 80% of the agreed volume and needs company approval for any increase over 20%; 5) Horizon retains the right to decrease the agreed base volume they will purchase by up to 20% with 90 days notice; 6) Horizon retains the right to charge for hauling; and 7) gives Horizon the ability to terminate for cause if the producer "engages in any activity which is not consistent with the principles underlying organic production" or if "that activity is subject to any publicity (including media or internet)." Horizon has retained the "Mutual Confidentiality" clause that allows the producer to consult only with professional advisors on contract conditions and restricts their right to share information with other producers. As Horizon renews contracts they will favor those producers who are well located near to processing plants, have consistently good quality milk tests and have a good relationship with the company. Producers report that they have no bargaining power at this time and most are thankful they have a market with a relatively stable pay-price. Horizon says it needs the changes in

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COMMENTARY

The Real Deal: Certified Organic Milk Is the Gold Standard in the Dairy Case

A recent marketing study published in the Journal of Applied Economics and Policy, found that consumers really don't know the difference between natural and organic, even though they have very different production requirements. Jeffery Anstein, author of the study, suggests that companies have been taking advantage of the confusion over the terms "natural" and "organic".

Today, more than ever, shoppers can visit the retail dairy case and find dairy products labeled with a variety of claims including: "certified organic", "all natural", "rBST-free", "grass fed", "naturally raised", and "animal welfare friendly." Consumers are inundated with labeling messages that are not backed by rigorous state and/or federal regulations.

Of all these labels in the dairy case, "Certified Organic" is the only label with 3rd party verification and federal enforcement.

"If a family wants to wisely spend their dollars on meaningful labels, they should buy certified organic," says Urvashi Ran-

gan, Senior Scientist & Policy Analyst at Consumers Union. Consumers who buy organic are assured that their dairy products are humanely produced without the use of hormones, pesticides, cloning or genetic manipulation. In addition, organic regulations require cattle to be grazed on organic pastures, and for farms to use environmentally friendly practices.

Consumers who choose not to purchase certified organic products could be buying products produced with the use of reproductive hormones, rBST, antibiotics, pesticides, cloning, and genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

Organic dairy farmers want all consumers to understand the meaning behind the labels. Look for the USDA organic seal and enjoy the real deal - certified organic milk. ♦

For more information contact:

Tony Azevedo, 209-634-0187 or

Ed Maltby, 413-772-0444 – emaltby@comcast.net

Federation of Organic Dairy Farmers (FOOD Farmers) is the umbrella organization of the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA), the Midwest Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (MODPA), and the Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA), which represents over two thirds of organic dairy farmers across the country.



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Access To Pasture Final Rule Needs To Be:

- ♦ Implemented the day after publication
- ♦ Part of the 2010 Organic System Plan
- ♦ All non-compliances enforced by the 2011 growing season
- ♦ Revocation of certification for non-compliances



For Resources & Links, Go To:

www.nodpa.com/pasture_rule.shtml



ORGANIC PRODUCTION: PASTURE WORKSHEET

Below is a page from VOF's Organic System Plan used for determining if the farm is feeding their animals 30% or more (on a dry matter basis) from pasture during the growing season. To view the complete worksheet and to see other resources that NODPA has compiled, go to the following web page on NODPA website: http://www.nodpa.com/pasture_rule.shtml.

(Taken from VOF Dairy Supplement of OSP)

4. Please provide your feed ration information. List the pounds of feed given to animals on an average daily basis in the summer (grazing) months and the winter (non grazing) months.

You may attach a copy of your dairy nutritionists ration for your milkers, dry cows and heifers (6 months and older) or provide the information in the space below.

If you do not know the exact dry matter percentages for your feed you may use the following assumptions:

- Dry Hay = 90% dry
- Haylage/Baleage = 40-60% dry
- Corn Silage = 30-35%
- Grain = 89% dry

(C) Milker Dry Matter Intake

Non-Grazing Season Feed Ration	LBS. (AS FED)	% DRY	LBS. DRY MATTER
Average lbs of Hay consumed	_____	x _____ % Dry Matter	= _____ lbs Dry Matter
Average lbs of Haylage/Baleage consumed	_____	x _____ % Dry Matter	= _____ lbs Dry Matter
Average lbs of Corn Silage consumed	_____	x _____ % Dry Matter	= _____ lbs Dry Matter
Average lbs of Grain consumed	_____	x _____ % Dry Matter	= _____ lbs Dry Matter
TOTAL LBS DRY MATTER			_____ (A)

Grazing Season Feed Ration	LBS. (AS FED)	% DRY	LBS. DRY MATTER
Average lbs of Hay consumed	_____	x _____ % Dry Matter	= _____ lbs Dry Matter
Average lbs of Haylage/Baleage consumed	_____	x _____ % Dry Matter	= _____ lbs Dry Matter
Average lbs of Corn Silage consumed	_____	x _____ % Dry Matter	= _____ lbs Dry Matter
Average lbs of Grain consumed	_____	x _____ % Dry Matter	= _____ lbs Dry Matter
TOTAL LBS DRY MATTER			_____ (B)

Calculations (you may fill this out, or we can calculate in the office):

Non-Grazing Feed Ration (A) – Grazing Feed Ration (B) = Estimated Dry Matter Intake From Pasture (C)

(A) – (B) = _____ (C)

Estimated Pasture Dry Matter Intake ÷ Total Lbs Dry Matter (Non-Grazing) = Dry Matter Intake from Pasture x 100

© ÷ (A) x 100 = _____ % Dry Matter from Pasture

NET UPDATE

Recent ODAIRY Discussions

By Liz Bawden

Drought-breaking rains this fall brought on sudden lush pasture growth on a farm located in the Pacific Northwest. The farmer noticed that one of his steers was suffering from sore feet. He suspected acidosis induced laminitis, and asked the group for their insights. Most respondents agreed that the lush quality of the pasture, and relatively low fiber certainly could lead to laminitis; most felt that feeding a low-protein grass hay would be the best treatment. One veterinarian suggested that he pay attention to the possibility of grass tetany in these conditions. It was also suggested that he provide free choice mineral, loose white salt, sodium bicarbonate, and perhaps magnesium (to address the potential for low mag in the lush grass). Another farmer suggested the root cause might be from sole ulcers due to the wet, muddy conditions.

There was a thought-provoking discussion on the withholding of milk or meat after the use of certain treatments. Some drugs have the "organic" withdrawal times determined in the NOP regulations, as is the case with Ivermectin, flunixin, and other allowed substances. These have been assigned an arbitrary level of acceptable Maximum Residue Limit (MRLs). Other routinely used treatments like garlic, aloe, and other botanicals have been regarded as having no withdrawals. Several questions were raised on how to approach this -- the research is certainly lacking as to what compounds are being passed along in the milk of treated animals. And the next question would be where to draw lines... should a cow who has been treated with anything be kept out of the tank? Are any of these compounds a cause for concern? The "on farm" consequences for dumping milk from cows treated with botanical substances would be substantial. And we would be potentially wasting a great deal of good milk. So there were far more questions than answers!

A farmer asked about effective de-wormers for dairy cows. Both farmers who responded suggested Crystal Creek's product known as Pivot (formerly known as Para-Tek). Another producer shared her experience with a homemade wormer used on some 8 to 10 month calves. She used Black Walnut hulls in vodka to make a tincture, then mixed it with molasses and grain to make it palatable. It seems to work well on the heifers, but a vet offered his advice that Black Walnut should never be used on horses, as it can cause founder.

The concept of "milk per cow" is a well-known method of measuring a farm's level of production, but a few farmers were introducing the concept of "milk per acre" as a better tool for measuring the performance of grazing dairies. One farmer put it this way, "I think milk production per cow is pretty much useless as a measure of efficiency. I think milk and meat per acre with an adjustment for the amount of purchased feed and other outside inputs might be a much better way to measure it."

A farmer shared his success in rescuing a hypothermic calf. The

Web Sponsorship Advertising Now Available on NODPA.COM

Support NODPA's Work On Behalf Of Organic Dairy Farmers. Take Advantage Of This Opportunity NOW!

At the request of advertisers, NODPA is now exploring the placement of web sponsorship advertising on selected pages of the NODPA web site.

The ads will be displayed on the 10 pages of the web site which receive the most traffic. There are around 3,000 visits to the NODPA site each month, and there are between 2.5 and 3 pages per visit.

Each ad will link to another page on the web site where a longer message of up to 200 words can be displayed.

The cost of our sponsorship ads: \$125 per month for display-ready ads. Those without display-ready ads will be charged an additional \$50.

Be one of the first to take advantage of this opportunity to reach a committed farming membership while supporting an organization that courageously advocates for organic farmers.

Go to the following web page for more information:

http://www.nodpa.com/web_ads.shtml

Subscribing to ODairy:

ODairy is a vibrant listserv for organic dairy farmers, educators and industry representatives who actively participate with questions, advice, shared stories, and discussions of issues critical to the organic dairy industry.

To sign up for the Odairy listserv, go to:

http://www.nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml

near-death newborn was found in the morning after it had fallen into a gully with shallow water. Here is his technique: Lay the calf on a bed of clean bedding or blankets, then fill about five 1-gallon jugs with warm water (110 to 115 degrees) and place them around and against the calf, then cover the calf and bottles with bedding or blankets. The calf will warm up gradually; and he reported that his calf was standing up in an hour or two, and back to normal the next day. Another farmer reported his success using the Poly Dome calf warmer -- they look like an enclosed calf hutch, but have a heater in the bottom. He reported that they are large enough to hold 2 to 3 Jersey calves at one time.

Not many things send chills of panic through the barn as quickly as

continued on page 33

Calendar

January 16, 2010 NOFA Mass Annual Winter Conference Worcester Technical High School, Worcester, Ma

Joel Salatin to present keynote and all day seminar! Other workshops on crops, gardening, farm management, sustainable life-styles, organic land care, livestock, renewable energy and more!

For more information www.nofamass.org/conferences/winter or contact Winter Conference Coordinator, Jassy Bratko, jassy.bratko@nofamass.org 978-928-5646

Jan 20-22, 2010 12th Annual Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference & the 4th Annual Wisconsin Local Food Summit, Eau Claire, WI

36 breakout sessions in 6 themed tracks, 3 exciting keynote addresses, a tradeshow, a World Cafe round table forum, plenty of time for networking and delicious local food served throughout! New this year, before the Conference/Summit, attend the all new Value Added Agriculture College' on January 20th - includes half and full day workshops.

<http://www.rivercountryrca.org/valad.html> (715) 834-9672

January 20-21 Northeast Pasture Consortium Annual Meeting Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, VT CONTACT: www.umaine.edu/grazingguide

January 22 - 23, 2010 14th Annual Vermont Grazing Conference **New Location** Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, VT

Theme: Farming for the Modern Market. Pre-conference workshops Friday, including a weed management intensive with national animal behaviorist Kathy Voth. Full conference Saturday starting with keynote by Brian Moyer, former PA farmer and now Director of Rural Vermont. Over 30 workshops, kids'conference, local foods and overnight accommodations available.

CONTACT: Jenn Colby, UVM Center for Sustainable, email: jcolby@uvm.edu, Phone: 802-656-0858.

January 22-24, 2010 Circles of Caring NOFA-NY's 28th Annual Organic Farming and Gardening Conference, Saratoga Springs, NY

Join us for more than 80 workshops, 3 keynote speakers, organic trade show, entertainment, and local organic meals. Information about Registration, Sponsorships, and Trade Show is available online at www.nofany.org. Questions? Contact Greg Swartz (570) 224-8515 conference@nofany.org

Contact: Greg Swartz, Phone: (570) 224-8515, email: conference@nofany.org, Website: www.nofany.org

January 29-30, 2010 11th Annual Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference: 'Changing Realities in Farming and Food', Grayling, MI

Workshop Topics will include Hydroponics; GAP, Laws and Regulation updates; Poultry Production; Building Your CSA; Grass Based Dairy; Season Extension; Farm to School; SARE Funding and on-farm research; Permaculture: Integrating Animals into Your Farm; Hops production; Saskatoon Production; Farm Sized Wind Energy, and more. Friday evening keynote by Melinda Hemmelgarn, "Feast or Famine: A Fork in the Road and the Critical Farmer-Consumer Connection". Saturday keynote by Gary Zimmer, "Value Added: For You, For the Environment and For the Consumer". Youth keynote Daniel Salatin, "Growing Up Joel's Son: The Real Story". Registration forms available early in December. For more information call 231-533-8818 or go to www.msue.msu.edu/antrim.

February 4-6, 2010 PASA's 19th Annual Farming For the Future Conference, State College, PA

For more information, contact PASA at: 814-349-9856 or www.pasafarming.org

February 5-6, 2010 NSAS Annual Healthy Farms/Rural Advantage Conference, Lincoln, NE

Network with experts, university faculty, and fellow agricultural colleagues. Includes commercial and educational exhibits, silent support auction, live auction and an "All Nebraska Dinner." The keynote will be Congressman Jeff Fortenberry, on the House Agriculture Committee and serves as the Ranking Minority Member on the Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition, and Forestry. Email healthyfarms@gmail.com, or <http://www.nebsusag.org/>

February 5-6, 2010 Missouri Organic Association Conference: "Forging Relationships: Preserving Local, Organic and Sustainable Farmers", Columbia, MO.

Friday's workshop theme - How to Start? Networking to Obtain the Financing to Start Your Operation. Saturday's workshop theme - Making it Happen. Organic Production and Marketing, contact Sue Baird, SueBaird Organics, LLC, gbaird@iland.net, www.suebairdorganics.com.

February 9-11, 2010 Northern Plains Sustainable Ag. Winter Conference, Watertown, SD Keynote speakers Tom Stearns, founder of High Mowing Organic Seeds, Wolcott, Vermont and Dr. Paul Dettloff, DVM, Arcadia, Wisconsin, staff veterinarian for Organic Valley, plus workshops, and a variety of exhibitors. For more information call 701-883-4304, e-mail npsas@rtel.net or go to www.npsas.org.

February 13-15, 2010 NOFA Vermont Winter Conference University of Vermont, Burlington, VT For more information, contact NOFA Vermont: info@nofavt.org, 802-434-4122

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Advertise With Us!

**NODPA News is Published Bi-Monthly
January, March, May, July, Sept. & Nov.**

**WE ARE NOW TAKING ADVERTISING COMMITMENTS
For The 2010 Calendar Year: Commit to advertising in the
NODPA News for the remaining 5 issues and receive a
5% discount on your advertising costs.** Join as a Business Member and receive an additional 5% on all advertising. To learn more about Business memberships and the Web Business Directory, go to www.nodpa.com/directory.shtml or contact Lisa McCrory.

Ad rates and sizes listed below;
deadline for advertising in the
March, 2010 issue is February 16, 2010.

Full Page Ad (7.5" W x 10.25" H) = \$450
1/2 Page Ad (7.5" W x 4.5" H) = \$230
1/4 Page Ad (3.5" W x 4.75" H) = \$130
1/8 Page Ad/Business Card:
(3.5" W x 2.25" H) = \$60

Classified Ads: Free to Northeast organic farmers. All others \$10 for the first 30 words; \$.10 per word over 30

For advertising information call Lisa McCrory:
802-234-5524 or email Lmccrory@hughes.net

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Pay Price

continued from page 27

contracts to be able to compete against other companies in the cost of buying raw milk. Many producers are concerned that the contracts are now more restrictive and give the company more powers to alter their agreements as market conditions change.

Organic Valley

Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative (CROPP) has maintained its pay price for its full members since it introduced its quota program in July 2009. Producers have been told that they will receive a \$2/cwt seasonal incentive for milk produced in December 2009, January and February 2010 and have \$1 as a Market Adjustment deducted in May, June, and July. In December 2010 the Fall Incentive will increase to \$3 with the proposal to continue the \$3 in January and February 2011. Members who had money deducted from their monthly checks for over production but remained under their total quota for the first six months (July-December 2009) will be receiving reimbursement checks by Feb 15. CROPP's hauling fee was increased from \$900/year to \$2,160/year earlier in 2009 and remains at that level. Producers have been told that the quota system will extend through July with a goal of going back to the Active Base, or to stair step down from the proposed 7% quota over a period of months. Some producers report hardship as a result of the implementation of the quota system, others have cut back on paid help and health insurance to remain in business. ♦

NET UPDATE

ODAIRY Update

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a cow going down with anaphylactic shock after a routine vitamin injection. Veterinarians on the list reported cases with injections of Vitamins A and D, E and Selenium, and Vitamin B. It was suggested that it is often a "carrier" that causes the reaction, not the actual vitamin. It was strongly suggested that these events be reported to the Center for Veterinary Medicine at the FDA. It was reported that the "fat soluble" vitamins are most likely to cause a reaction, and one veterinarian suggested giving these injections subcutaneous (SQ) instead of intramuscular (IM) as this route avoids blood vessels and can give you more time if a reaction does occur.

Several producers are working to improve their herds from within through linebreeding. This breeding strategy strives to produce more consistent offspring in your desired traits. A type of "inbreeding" breeds a selected bull to a herd of females, then the same bull to the daughters. Any negative recessive traits should show up at

this point. It is an interesting strategy for farmers frustrated with too much genetic variation using crossbreeding, and those who are frustrated with AI bull proofs that don't consider a grazing or low grain farm system.

A farmer was looking for others who had experience with an unroller for round bales. One producer used a 3-point hitch unroller, and it does unroll the hay for the cows, but it's not without problems. The spear the bale rotates on can't penetrate a very tight bale, and it can throw around the rear of the tractor if the bale is not round. One farmer has been using a Case 8610 bale processor and does not recommend it. Another farmer uses a Teale bale chopper for this function, and it does a good job.

This is a good time of year to talk about calf blankets, and one farmer asked if anyone had used the Woolover blankets. Two producers did not like the Woolovers; they seemed stiff, and didn't last well. The quilted calf blankets from CRI were used by several other producers. They stood up to repeated washings and have lasted for years on these farms. Except for the farmer with a dryer - we learned that the velcro closures cease to work if you put them through the dryer. So wash them and hang them up to dry! ♦

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Keyline Soil Building

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suspending a mesh bag of compost in pure water and vigorously oxygenating for 24 hours (or more depending on batch size). The bubbles produced by the aerators literally tear soil biota from the surfaces of the compost, suspending them in solution. After brewing, ACT must be applied to soils or leaf surfaces within one day (the sooner the better) so as to inoculate the surfaces with beneficial aerobic biology. A gallon of this highly concentrated solution is enough to cover an acre. Because the soil building process is largely reliant on the action and life cycles of the soil biology present, the coupling of keyline plowing with ACT application is an obvious match.

Healthy food, healthy agriculture, healthy communities and healthy economies all begin with healthy soil. Very few of our agricultural landscapes today are in a state we might call 'healthy', but as we work to repair the damage that has been done by generations of destructive land use, the amazing potential to heal these landscapes and cultivate thriving biological, mineral and water cycles and agricultural systems becomes increasingly clear.

Mark Krawczyk is a permaculture educator and designer, agroforestry and tree crop enthusiast and is passionate about working to build topsoil and heal landscapes. He owns and operates Keyline Vermont - an ecological design, consulting and installation company that also provides contract keyline subsoil plowing services. He can be found on-line at www.keylinevermont.com and can be reached at keylinevermont@gmail.com or 802-999-2768. ♦

Classified Ads

Certified Organic Feed:

NOFA-NY BALEAGE (clover/timothy & alfalfa/grass) - RFV = 117 = \$33/bale, RFV = 102 = \$29/bale, OATS - \$250/T, TRITI-CAL - \$250/T, HAY(Timothy/clover) - 4x4 ~450#/bale = \$20-23/bale, small squares \$2.75/bale, STRAW(Triticale) - small squares - \$2.25/bale, MULCH HAY/BEDDING - 4x4 ~450#/bale = \$18/bale Contact - Jeff @ Mitchell Farms Avoca, NY (607-566-8477 or Mitchellorganics@Hotmail.com)

Certified Organic Hay & Baleage For Sale

4x4 Bales Dry 2nd Cut - \$50 each
 4x4 Bales 1st Cut Baleage - \$35 each
 4x4.5 Bales "Cow Candy" Baleage - \$45 each
 NY-PA Border. Rob Moore (607)699-7968

Organic Corn ear snaplage. About 30% moisture. Masters Choice Corn. Trucking available. \$215/ton 315-543-9361 or 315-534-5568. Added November 30, 2009.

Contact: John Laskowski
 Email: jblorganic@aol.com
 Location: Clayville, NY

Marz Farm, 1st cutting certified organic via the USDA small square bale hay, \$3.25 per bale or \$162.50 ton. All hay is stored in doors and the facility is state of the art (see website for pics <http://www.marzfarm.com/pictures.html>). All forages are tested and the results are available at the website or by mail/fax. We ship throughout the northeast or pick up at the farm. Samples are available. Average bale weight is 40-45 lbs. Located in Berkshire NY 13736 (between Binghamton and Ithaca) Tioga County. Added November 30, 2009.

Contact: Tony Marzolino
 Email: tmarzolino@yahoo.com
 Phone: 607-657-8534

Organic Livestock

Three certified organic Holstein heifers due in January- \$1500. each. Also newborn organic Holstein heifer calves available. Barn is too full!

Loyal Martin, Philadelphia, NY, 315-783-0223

Three large holstein heifers due in the next month.

Asking 1700.00 each
 George Oliver, Maine, 207-445-2353

Twelve bred heifers for sale. Crossbreds of Milking Short-horn, Normande, with some mixes of Jersey and Holstein. Set to freshen in March, April, or May. Call 608-489-3960 for more info or reply by email. Patty Laskowski-Morren, Hillsboro, WI.

We have a few nice Jersey milkers for sale, out of our seasonal window. Closed herd, level 4 Johnes free. Call or write for more info; priced reasonably. Contact: Annie Claghorn & Catlin Fox, Taconic End Farm

Email: foxclag@gmavt.net, Phone: 802-247-3979, Location: Leicester,VT

Organic Dairy Farm concentrating on milking cows, selling all calves, heifers and bulls. HolsteinXJersey cross. Contact: Rinske de Jong, Email: workingcowsdairy@hotmail.com, Phone: 334 886 3839 Location: Slocomb, AI

Employment

We are seeking an organic farm family with interest in creating a value added opportunity in the Northeast. As part of a line extension of our brand, we have interest in developing and marketing a line of organic puddings. Please pass this on to anyone who may have some desire to add a value added option on their farm. Please Contact:

Dean Sparks, Empire Organics
 Greene, NY (607) 656-4142
 dean@getnymilk.com www.getnymilk.com

Real Estate

ORGANIC DAIRY FOR SALE: Well established, profitable, 200 cow certified organic dairy located in Vermont. Sale of the complete business includes, livestock, land, feed and optional equipment. The sale also includes a guaranteed market for the milk. Serious inquiries only. For information call 802-349-2878 or email vtorgdairy@gmail.com

Name: Steve Getz
 Email: vtorgdairy@gmail.com
 Phone: 802-349-2878
 Location: Bridport, Vermont

Equipment

Wanted: Used dairy parlor prefer 6 to 8 units with CIP wash system and ATO. All styles and layouts considered. Will remove with skilled technician. Willing to travel to pick up. Bulk tank not necessary but will consider.

Name: Peter Scherf
 Email: farm@scherffarms.com
 Phone: 219-872-4581
 Location: Michigan City, Indiana

Looking for a pull type combine that runs.

Name: Brendan Holmes
 Email: mistybrookorganicfarm@yahoo.com
 Phone: 413-477-8234
 Location: Barre, MA

For Sale: New WADENA Outdoor Forced Air Wood Furnace, 5 Year Warranty, Indoor Thermostat, Capable of heating 2400 Sq. Ft. Model#LLS 1000 GT; comes with ash rake and wood hook, \$2995. Questions contact me Scott Toll Free 866-878-4922 or 419-965-8999.

Email: Biigd@watchtv.net
 Phone: 866-878-4922
 Location: Middle Point, Ohio ♦

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

From the MODPA President

As I was finishing up chores this morning still struggling for what to write and well past my deadline, and not finding anything really good to say, I decided to write and let you be the judge.

Is Stonyfield brand milk (and the farmers who supply that brand) taken over by OV a good thing?

Is farmers continuing to receive a bit of a premium for their organic milk, a good thing? Is a pay price dependant on utilization or guess utilization for which they have no control a good thing?

If the reduction in competition for organic milk softens the farm gate price even further for all organic milk, is that good?

If more farmers are feeling forced to sign with the only game in town, is that good?

If it results in higher deduct for those under quota and possibly

a longer time with production limits, is that good?

If it motivates more farmers to become active in marketing their production with or without a processor involved, is that good?

If some farmers increase production and herd sizes as they struggle to meet financial needs with less cash flow, is that good?

If it causes more small farmers to exit farming either by choice or by edict of their banker as their profit margin does not justify continued effort, is that good?

If it causes farmers to push for stronger organic standards and immediate implementation of such standards, is that good?

If it negatively impacts consumer confidence in organics, is that good?

The questions and answers are endless depending on who you are talking to. You choose your answers.

If you don't like your answers, become involved and attempt to change the outcome before we have only one or no market.

All of us involved with the MODPA, WODPA, and NODPA would welcome your thoughts and involvement in the future. ♦

Darlene Coehoorn, Rosendale, Wisconsin

About MODPA

The Midwest Organic Dairy Producer Alliance (MODPA) represents organic dairy producers in WI, MN, ND, SD, IA, NE, KS, MO, IL, IN, OH, & MI with the mission "to promote communication and networking for the betterment of all Midwest organic dairy producers and enhance a sustainable farmgate price." Objectives are:

1. To ensure a fair and sustainable farm gate price.
2. Keep family farms viable for future generations.
3. Promote ethical, ecological and humane farming practices.
4. Networking among producers of all organic commodities.
5. Promote public policy, research and education in support of organic agriculture.

MODPA Board

Wisconsin Darlene Coehoorn, President Viewpoint Acres Farm N5878 Hwy C Rosendale, WI 54974 ddviewpoint@yahoo.com Phone: 920-921-5541	Sauk City, WI 53583 taofarmer@direcway.com Phone: 608- 544-3702
Jim Greenberg, Vice-President EP 3961 Drake Avenue Stratford, WI 54484 greenbfrms@tzn.net.com Phone: 715-687-8147	Jim Small, Director 26548 Locust Ave. Wilton, WI 54670 Tel: 608-435-6700
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John Kiefer, Director S10698 Troy Rd	Ohio Ernest Martin, Director 1720 Crum Rd Shiloh, OH 44878 Phone and Fax: 419-895-1182

Become a Member of MODPA!

Member dues are \$35 per year, for which you receive our newsletter and become part of our team working for the best interests of all organic dairies.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Certified Organic Dairy? Yes No # of cows: _____

Transitioning: _____

I wish to support MODPA (check whatever applies):

___ By becoming a state rep or director.

___ By supporting MODPA with a %/cwt check-off.

___ By providing a donation to support the work of

MODPA. \$_____ enclosed.

Please send this form to: Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer, 3253 150th Ave, Glenwood City, WI 54013

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA)

c/o Ed Maltby
30 Keets Road
Deerfield, MA 01342

Prsrt Std
US Postage Paid
Permit 183
Greenfield, MA

CALENDAR

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February 18-20, 2010

18th Annual Wisconsin Grazing Conference: Pastures, People, Planet, Profits, Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Topics range from "mob grazing" to pastured poultry to the health benefits of grass-fed meat, eggs and dairy products. <http://www.grassworks.org/> or contact Heather Flashinski at 715-289-4896 or grassheather@hotmail.com.

February 25, 2010

State of Organic Seed Symposium, La Crosse, WI

Organic Seed Alliance in partnership with MOSES, National Organic Coalition, and OFRF will be hosting a one-day working State of Organic Seed Symposium at the 2010 Organic Farming Conference. Learn more at <http://www.seedalliance.org/Advocacy/> or email matthew@seedalliance.org.

February 25-27, 2010

21st Annual Organic Farming Conference and Organic University La Crosse, WI

The largest organic farming conference in the country, organized annually by MOSES! <http://www.mosesorganic.org/conference.html> or 715-778-5775.

March 6, 2010

4th NH Grazing Conference - Grazing Greener Pastures

Gregg Judy, author of "No Risk Ranching" and "Comeback Farm", will discuss his success with holistic high density grazing, multi-species and custom grazing on leased land, while Doug Gunnick, author of "Sustainable Farming Guide Book", will guide folks through the fundamentals of growing grass with animal nutrition and health in mind. For a brochure listing the day's events, go to: <http://extension.unh.edu/Counties/Merrimack/Docs/4thNHGrazingConference10.pdf> or call Mary West at 603-796-2151.



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