

NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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Jim & Rebecca Goodman at the farmers' market in Madison, WI.

Northwood Farm: Wonewoc, Wisconsin

By Lisa McCrory, NODPA News Editor

Located about 80 miles Northwest of Madison, is Northwood Farm, an organic dairy and beef farm near the town of Wonewoc, Wisconsin. Owned and operated by Jim and Rebecca Goodman the farm consists of 450 acres of which 240 are owned and 210 are rented. Though organic milk is the primary income from the farm,

they also sell organically raised beef, replacement dairy stock, dairy bulls for breeding stock, and some organic forages and grains. The beef they raise (12-15 steer every year) is marketed at the famous Dane County Farmers Market in Madison, Wisconsin.

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Preventive Practices To Maintain Animal Health

An interview with Dr. Cynthia Lankenau

By Lisa McCrory, NODPA News Editor

NODPA is excited to have Dr. Cynthia Lankenau as part of our 2014 NODPA Field Days this year. An internationally recognized practitioner of Veterinary Acupuncture, Acupressure, and Chiropractics, Dr Lankenau has a Holistic veterinary practice, servicing large and small animals, in Colden, New York. She received her education from Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, graduating in 1981, has been practicing veterinary medicine for over 33 years and Holistic medicine for 21 years. Dr. Lankenau is a firm believer in preventive practices for maintaining healthy animals.

Lisa McCrory: Tell us about your Veterinary practice; what types of Holistic Medicine do you practice?

Cynthia Lankenau: My practice is small. I have a very small lab area, and no big equipment; I use only alternative modalities; acupuncture, chiropractic, Herbal Medicine, both Chinese and Western; homeopathy, homotoxicology* and Reiki**, with a bit of Shamanic practices.

LM: When did you get involved with alternative treatments and why?

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From the NODPA President

Summer seems to have flown by again! Regular rains throughout the summer in my area kept the pastures growing well, but made the hay harvest a bit tricky. Field crops were planted later than normal this year due to the wet spring, so many corn and soybean fields are lagging a bit behind. There is still so much left to do! Even so, I hope that you can spare the time away from the farm for the Annual NODPA Field Days in Keene, New Hampshire on September 25 and 26. Each year, we move the Field Days to a different location around the Northeast, so that as many producers as possible have the opportunity to attend.

I know that I always learn something new in the farm tours and the workshops, and leave with an idea or two to bounce around when I get home. But I have to admit that my favorite part is seeing many of you folks each year, my old friends and the new

friends I have yet to know. I look forward to seeing you there!

Liz Bawden, NODPA President

Hammond, NY | Phone: 315-324-6926

NODPA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance is to enable organic dairy family farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the wellbeing of the organic dairy industry as a whole.

Board Members & Representatives

PENNSYLVANIA

Arden Landis, State Rep
1850 Bowmansville Rd.
Mohnton, PA 19540-9427
c2graze@dejazzd.com
Phone: 717-484-0038

Dave Johnson, Vice President

1254 Black Creek Rd, Liberty, PA 16930
provident@epix.net
Phone: 570-324-2285

Roman Stoltzfus, 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
2773 Fadley Road
bridgewater, VA 22812-2711
rodney@lancasterag.com
Cell: 540-705-7834

NEW YORK

Liz Bawden, President, Newsletter

Contributor, Associate Editor
119 Factory Rd., Hammond, NY 13646
bawden@cit-tele.com
Phone: 315-324-6926

Siobhan Griffin, State Rep

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

Steve Kimball, Board Member

Kimvale Farm
3456 Dry Brook Rd, Falconer, NY 14733
716-267-9272
steve@kimvale.com

Robert Moore, State Rep

Moore Farms, 2083 Moore Hill Rd.
Nichols, NY 13812
Phone: 607-699-7968
cowpoke2@verizon.net

Bill Stine, State Rep

45540 Stine Road
Redwood, NY 13679-3160
Phone: (315) 482-2017
tstine2007@yahoo.com

John Stoltzfus, State Rep

1553 Hesselton Gully Rd.
Whitesville, NY 14897
jtscribe@yahoo.com
Phone: 607-356-3272

George Wright, Treasurer

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

Jeep Madison, State Rep

2806 Smith Street, Shoreham, VT 05770
Cell: 802-349-6262
email: jojoselixir@yahoo.com

Brian Wilson, State Rep

Morningside Farm, 101 Hemenway Hill Rd, Shoreham, VT 05770
Cell phone: 802-377-1786,
email: bpwilson@shoreham.net

Bonnie and Tom Boutin, State Rep

1184 Cross Road,
Newport Ctr, VT 05857
Phone: 802-334-2081
bonnieboutin@yahoo.com

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

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Cindy-Lou Amey, State Rep

Indian Stream Farm
81 Tabor Road, Pittsburg, NH 03592
Phone: (603) 538-7734
cindyloamey@gmail.com

MAINE

Steven Russell, Board Member

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

Steve Morrison, Secretary

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@tidemillorganicfarm.com
www.tidemillorganicfarm.com

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

Darlene Coehoorn, MODPA President,

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

Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer

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

Andrew Dykstra, WODPA President

ASDYKSTRA@aol.com

Henry Perkins, Past President,

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

Kathie Arnold, Policy Committee

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

NODPA STAFF

Ed Maltby, Executive Director

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
lmccrory@hughes.net
Phone: 802-234-5524

Nora Owens, Associate Editor &

Event Coordinator
30 Keets Rd., Deerfield, MA 01342
noraowens@comcast.net
Phone: 413-772-0444
Fax: 866-554-9483

Webmaster / Newsletter Layout

Chris Hill, Chris Hill Media
368 West Duval St., Phila., PA 19144
Phone: 215-843-5704
chris@chrishillmedia.com

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From The NODPA Desk September, 2014

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

The NODPA Field Days is around the corner and, thanks to the great work of our events coordinator, Nora Owens, it is going to be a great educational and networking opportunity. If you've got question about the National Organic Program, Miles McEvoy will be there; got questions on the National Organic Standards Board? The Chair of the Board, Jean Richardson will be there. Miss the dulcet tones and effervescent humor of long time organic dairy farmer and advocate Henry Perkins? He will be around to present some home truths, too. Two nationally renowned veterinarians will answer your questions; processors will explain the benefits of their programs; grazing and organic dairy business expert Sarah Flack will be there to explain the challenges of no-grain milk, and they will all be in one place for two days on September 25th and 26th at the Field Days. This promises to be a great event with an exceptional agenda so please make it a priority to attend if at all possible. We will also have the farmers-only meeting and will be talking about the inequities of the organic check-off; and will discuss what it will take to increase the pay price to a level that makes it worthwhile to make milk.

In this issue we have a letter sent by consumer cooperatives to the organic caucus in Congress (see page 24). The signatures to the letter are from both large and small coops across the country, representing many thousands of the most committed organic purchasers. These are the consumers that continued to purchase organic products during the economic downturn and can justifiably be called the backbone of the USDA organic brand. The first paragraph says it all: "We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to ask you to advocate reversal of USDA's unilateral changes to the organic program's Sunset Provision. We believe these changes violate the intent and the letter of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA)." NODPA welcomes and supports this initiative which is well written and clearly states the issues.

As producers, we know who we have to convince that organically certified products have integrity and that the NOP is protecting the uniqueness of its third party certification – consumers. Unfortunately, there are many influential businesses, trade organizations and the USDA that are telling Congress that consumer opinions do not matter. It's a baffling position that businesses are taking: telling their core customers that they do not matter, as the USDA makes changes to the structure of decision making that guarantees the brand its integrity while disregarding the feedback and reactions from the marketplace. Congress and the NOP should know

that farmers and ranchers and producers join with consumers and consumer organization to protest the changes mandated by the NOP.

Producers and businesses are receiving glossy flyers from the Organic Trade Association (OTA) regarding the organic check off program, to add to the unsolicited phone calls that have been made by OTA employees. Where is the OTA getting the \$\$ to pay for all this and why are they so aggressive? More than one producer has worried about the level of salaries that administrators and consultants will draw from an organic check-off, as evidenced by the salaries of three OTA employees of over \$200,000 each or rumored?.

As the details of OTA check-off proposal is published, there seems to be some discrepancies – are they talking about taxing gross organic sales (from their brochure) or net organic income after deductions for organic cost of goods (according to letters from OTA leaders)? There is no detail on how either of these criteria will be assessed – will it fall to certifiers or in the case of dairy – milk handlers, or for beef – auctions/slaughterhouses, etc.? If it is to be fair, how are companies going to be audited to ensure compliance – especially those companies that have multiple products under different brands with different cost of goods? This reminds me of those that say they give all profits to charity and pay the management in the millions of dollars so that they make little profit.

Exemption of all organic operations from their existing check-offs, which OTA lauded as the initial benefit of their Farm Bill proposal, is stalled, with USDA quoting how difficult it will be to produce the many different regulations necessary for all the different commodity check-offs.

At some point, OTA needs to come out with the details of their federally mandated check-off/tax proposal including how it will be assessed (even the public proponents don't seem to understand the details); how it will be collected (including on imports and retailers); how it will be audited to ensure fairness; who will be eligible to vote for the adoption of the check-off (usually those that are assessed vote for it but if the majority of producers are exempt then who?); and how it will not be a reverse tax on producers who may or may not be required to participate.

Needless to say, as soon as an OTA check-off is passed, producers will lose the ability to exempt themselves from the federal mandated tax that the check-off is.

Is it time for the organic producer community to go on the offensive against the organic check-off? At this time we do not have a clear proposal to constructively critique. As producers we know that no check-off has ever benefitted producers or their bottom line. What are your thoughts? See you at the NODPA Field Days where we'd love to hear from you! ♦

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

An Interview with Dr. Cynthia Lankenau

continued from page 1

CL: Since, Nixon opened China to the western world, I have been fascinated with acupuncture. I remember a Bill Moyers special, watching a woman - fully awake - being operated on for a brain tumor. I also worked on a Navajo reservation for half of my summer before my senior year at vet school and was fascinated when a Shaman cured an almost dead septic foal.

It was due to my frustration with the lack of curative effects from drug therapy that drove me to look at alternative modalities to help some of my "incurable" clients. I started my acupuncture certification class in 1990, and it just opened this huge door to all the other possibilities of treatment.

LM: Where did you receive your training for the various types of Holistic Medicine that you practice?

CL: My acupuncture training was with the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society (IVAS); My homeopathic training through Richard Pitcairn and certified through the Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy (AVH); Chinese Herbal training was through IVAS, the Chi Institute, and the College of Integrated Veterinary Therapy (CIVT); Western herbal classes with Rosemary Gladstar, Michael Tierra and CIVT; Rieki,

with a local master teacher; Shamanistic work with Sandra Ingerman with the Foundation for Shamanic Studies; Homotoxicology with their training organization; and Chiropractic with the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association (AVCA).

LM: How did you find the time for all of this extra learning amidst a busy life of work, farm and family?

CL: My basic training in acupuncture, chiropractic, homeopathy and herbal medicine was done before I was married and had my daughter. I was an associate veterinarian in a large mixed animal practice and although they did not pay for any of the classes, they gave me the time off to attend. Since 1993, I have been on my own with my alternative practice. With this type of practice, I was able to sort of schedule my life a bit, so when I married and had my daughter, I could make my life doable.

LM: Please describe the structure of your practice?

CL: Currently, I spend two days with small animals, three on the road with large animals, and weekends for catch up and emergencies.

LM: What animals have you worked with?

CL: I started with a 99% dairy practice, then I was in the Peace Corps where I worked mostly with goats, Zebu cows, some Zebu-Holstein



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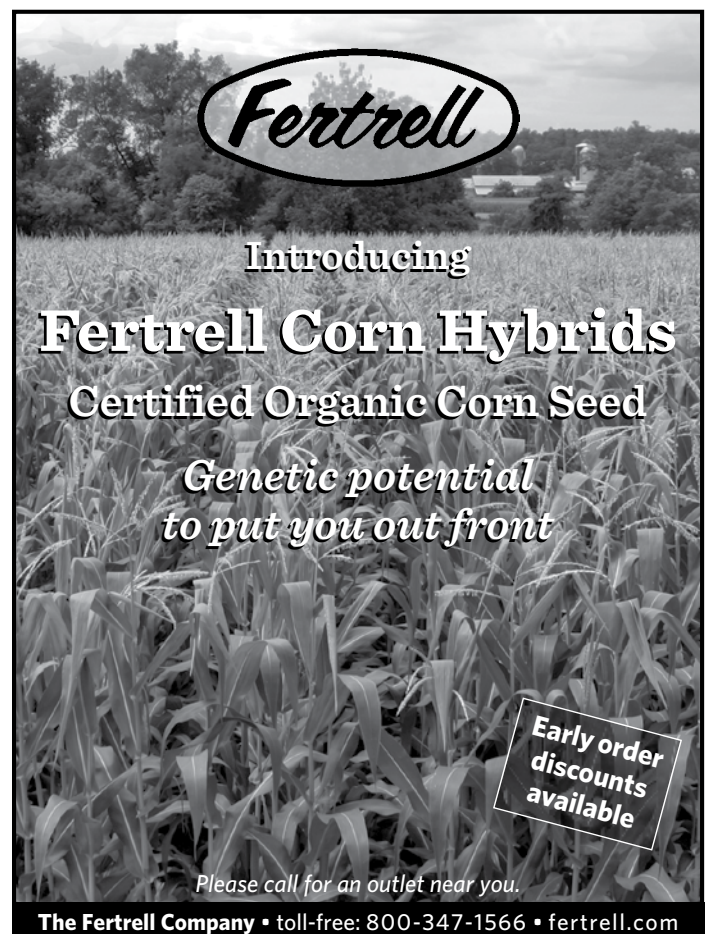
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Dr. Cynthia Lankenau

crosses (a Canadian project), pigs, and some dogs. I returned to a mixed animal practice, which was 40% cow, 40% horse, 20% small animal with increasing number of goats, llamas and pigs. Today my clients are 33% dog and cat, 33% horse, and the rest are cow, goat, sheep, pig, llama, alpaca, and one camel and one ostrich.

LM: Are you finding any growth in the number of organic dairy farms

that you serve?

CL: Yes, the largest growth I see are the number of 2-4 cow back yard herds that supply raw milk to "co-share" owners.

LM: What are your favorite modes of treatment and why?

CL: All are my favorite, but I think herbs "call" to me the most because you can feel the energy of the plant "helping". But acupuncture, herbal medicine, homeopathy, chiropractic, homotoxicology, and other energy modalities all are unique and truly wonderful healing techniques.

LM: Are there any modes of treatment you think would work better with dairy cows than others?

CL: Most cows that I treat are all quite exhausted and energy deficient. In those, I love using herbal medicine as my primary modality since the herbs are giving energy and "Yin" substance to the cow reinforced with acupuncture to move Qi.

For trauma in a stronger cow, acupuncture, chiropractic, and usually homeopathic Arnica and Hypericum or Traumeel takes care of most everything. If there is a herd problem in a very low economic barn (not much money), I use homotoxicology as my primary treatment modality. So all have their place, depending on the individual situation and the farm's economic situation.

LM: Can you describe a couple interesting cases that you have had with some of your organic dairy clients?

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Dr. Cynthia Lankenau

continued from page 5

CL: I had an older cow with severe spinal arthritis. She could hardly walk. I used acupuncture, chiropractics, Zeel, and Du Huo, a Chinese herbal formula for spinal arthritis. After three treatments, she is now walking well and calved well. Another case was a cow with Staph aureus mastitis. I gave one acupuncture treatment and a chinese herbal formula, Si Miao San, and I am fairly certain there is no residual state.

LM: What are some conditions in dairy cows that you have treated successfully with alternative treatments?

CL: Mastitis, metabolic diseases, displaced abomasum, ketosis, pink eye, pneumonia, foot rot, aid in calving, metritis, arthritis, stiff back, and sore feet. I use alternative treatments in the prevention of milk fever, but still give Calcium if the cow is down. Hmm, I cannot think of a situation where I would not use an alternative type of treatment.

LM: When do you use homeopathic treatments on a farm and when do you turn to homotoxicology?

CL: Homeopathics are mostly needed for individual cases or herd treatment if there is an epidemic, but the farmer needs to know his cows well in order to select the proper remedy and there is no response if the wrong remedy is selected. Most of these big bankrupt places have huge cow numbers and have lost the ability to look at their cows and just know if they are feeling off. Homotoxicology does not require an indi-

vidualized approach, so a formula can be made to treat a whole herd.

LM: Are there colleagues of yours that also do dairy cows and alternative treatments? Who are they and where are they located?

CL: Hubert Karreman, in PA, Christopher Day in UK, C. Edgar Sheaffer, in PA, and Susan Beal in PA. There are not very many of us.

LM: What are some of the professional organizations out there that could be of help to organic dairy farmers?

CL: We are trying to increase the support available in the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association (AHVMA), Academy of Veterinary Homeopaths (very active in PA), and the Veterinary Botanical Medicine Association (VBMA) in addition to the organic farmers groups. ♦

Dr. Lankenau's practice, Holistic Center for Veterinary Care, is located in Colden, NY. She can be reached by phone or email: (716) 941-9477, cyndvm@gmail.com. Dr. Lankenau will be part of the 'Ask the Vet Q & A' and a practical, hands-on workshop, 'Alternative Cow Care', on Friday, 9/26, at the 2014 NODPA Field Days. Find the complete agenda on page 20.

Thanks to Dr. Karreman for providing some of the interview questions.

* Homotoxicology focuses not on symptoms of illness but on its cause, namely, the toxin that is disrupting the organism's normal functioning. Homotoxicological therapy approaches the patient as a whole. It attempts to detoxify the body, to correct derailed immunological processes through immunomodulation, and to support cells and organs.

** Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes healing. It is administered by "laying on hands" and is based on the idea that an unseen "life force energy" flows through us and is what causes us to be alive.

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION



Zero-grain cows at Rob and Pam Moore's farm. Photo by Sarah Flack.

What I've learned from farmers using zero-grain dairy rations

By Sarah Flack, Organic & Grass-Based Livestock Consultant

In the last few years, due to increased demand for 100% grass-fed milk, a number of dairy farms made a carefully planned transition to zero-grain rations. Other farms made the transition to zero-grain more rapidly, due to financial pressures caused by high grain costs and in some situations, due to unpaid grain bills. There are also a number of farms that transitioned to zero-grain 7 to 10 years ago, and continue to find it works well for them. Back in the 1990's, there was also interest in zero-grain dairy production. At that time, some farms found it worked for them but others found that their cows did not do well, and that milk production was too low to cover farm overhead costs.

This article puts together a couple of decades of ideas, suggestions and observations from farms that have tried zero-grain dairy rations. I'd like to thank NOFA Vermont for funding my visits to zero-grain farms in Vermont this summer, and also thank the many dairy farms I have visited in the last year in NY and VT. Farmers' generous sharing of the challenges and successes with their transitions to zero-grain systems will help other farmers be able to make informed decisions on how to make the transition successfully, or determine if zero-grain is a good match for their farm at all.

"You need high quality forages, and a lot more of them than you think!"

This was the most common comment from farmers I spoke with.

Many of them had either reduced the herd size, or added additional acreage of both pasture and harvested forages. In general, farms in VT and NY producing all their own stored forages had between 4 and 5 acres of cropland and pasture per cow. One farmer said he "had to add in more good quality crop land, not just more hilly pasture land"

The increased need for acreage was due to several factors including:

- The need for more acres of pasture per cow to increase pasture dry matter intake/cow.
- Lower first cut yields due to cutting earlier, when forage is less mature, more digestible and higher quality.
- The need for more stored forage per cow to replace dry matter the herd is no longer getting from grain.

Many farms said they feed some stored forage during the grazing season in addition to giving the herd larger paddocks and allowing them to waste some pasture in order to get as much pasture dry matter into the cows as possible. The extra pasture left behind was either trampled on farms using high stock density, or clipped after grazing on farms with lower stock density. Very few of the farms I spoke with or visited recently were feeding molasses. A few were growing some annual crops in addition to perennial pasture & hay crops.

"You need to make sure you have enough high quality forage to last the whole winter;, you can't switch to all first cut in March."

Most farms talked about the importance of feeding second and third cut hay during the winter months. Some farms were taking

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Pasture Production Preparations

By Neal Kinsey

Several things can be done during summer and early autumn to prepare for pasture improvements that can be made this fall to assure better pasture, hay and silage for 2015. When it comes to soil fertility management, the ultimate goal is to correct and raise overall soil fertility for improving and maintaining top quality and productivity.

Farmers tend to forget that once needed nutrients have been applied it takes three years to obtain the full response from lime and micro-nutrients on pastures. And the correct order to treat actual soil deficiencies is primary elements first, then secondary Ca & Mg, and then micros. Certain micronutrients may need to be applied for more than one year to reach the proper level and provide the maximum response.

Using a detailed soil analysis makes it possible to build a specific fertilizer program based on supplying the exact nutrients required. With such guidelines a plan can then be tailored to correctly maximize or fine-tune the land's various capabilities based on the unique requirements for each soil.

How soil samples are taken is extremely important, as the recommendations you receive from the analysis will only be as good as the samples you send for testing. Specifically following instructions provided by the company for testing your soil will assure that the samples you send are taken in the way that particular laboratory needs to perform the proper analysis. Requirements can vary from lab to lab and may not agree with how samples should be taken for the analysis we use.

Soil samples may be collected any time of the year, provided that the area is not suffering from prolonged drought, and provided that no nitrogen has been applied in the last 30 days and no sulfur has been used in the last six months. (If you must take samples under any of these conditions it should be duly noted as this will require the use of additional testing to assure the analysis is providing the correct nutrient content for that soil.) Late spring and early summer sampling avoids the rush periods, shows the soil's fertility at its best and gives time to plan a fertility program which can begin in time to help for the next growing season. However, if no samples have been taken within the last two years, the best time to sample is as soon as circumstances permit.

Prepare a map of the areas being tested. A good map helps make the sampling repeatable from year to year and can be very useful at the time of fertilization. Designate a number, or some other identification, even a name for each field.

Use permanent lines such as roads, ditches and fences for boundary lines. Divide the field into areas that have the same soil color, slope, texture, drainage, etc. Each area should have the same cropping history, fertilizer, lime and compost/manure treatments and the same cropping pattern. Assign each of the areas sampled a specific number or letter (or a combination of both) so you can correctly identify it.

It is recommended that sampled areas represent no more than 20 acres the first year the testing program is used, even if soils are uniform in texture and relief. Areas with taller or shorter plants, different weed or grass patterns, higher or lower yields, etc., should be avoided, or sampled separately. If large enough to fertilize separately, you may wish to consider combining very small areas that have all the same characteristics into one composite sample.

Use a new soil-sample container, plastic bag or plastic container. A new Zip-loc bag works well. But put Scotch tape over the writing or attach masking tape to write on because all types of marking ink (including indelible ink) can rub off the bag during shipment. Never write the sample information on a piece of paper and pack it inside the bag with the soil. Paper sacks from the grocery store, bread wrappers, or such items, should never be used as they can contaminate

samples. Avoid using a plastic bucket that has been used for other purposes (even repeated washings of a bucket used to mix salt and minerals for feed can still result in contamination of the sample). Sample bags are available from our office upon request at no charge.

Label the sample bags with your name, the farm or field name (if any), field number and sample area. Make sure the labeling on the bag matches the number of the field and area on your map. Labeling the bags to match the areas before taking the sample helps.

A Soil Probe is recommended for easiest and surest sampling results. Using a soil probe or shovel, sample down to a depth of 6½ -7 inches. For no-till crops, orchards, vineyards, pastures, hay meadows, lawns, etc., where soils will not be worked or tilled up in some way, the depth should be 4 inches. Sampling to the proper depth is extremely important if the tests are to provide each area with correct recommendations.

Using several probes from like areas to make up the sample, be sure all the soil goes into the sample bag. Do not take off any soil from the top of the sample. Removal of obvious debris (roots, leaves, etc.) is fine but it is routinely removed at the lab before it can adversely affect the sample. If you do remove thatch or debris from the sample, be careful to avoid that any amount of the actual soil is removed with it.

Probe the soil every 50 to 100 paces, always taking a minimum of 5 probes per composite sample for smaller areas, and one probe for every 1 (one) to 2 (two) acres from larger areas. Only a small amount of soil is necessary for analysis. A cupful of soil is more than enough. If only a portion of the soil will be sent for analysis mix the sample very thoroughly first. Remember the test will be done as a very detailed analysis, which will only be as accurate as the sample you send.

Pack the samples tightly. For larger packages consider UPS (United Parcel Service), Federal Express or another reputable shipper. Presently the US Postal Service has smaller pre-paid boxes which can be ordered from USPS.com, or the local Post Office. These can be packed full and sent for a set flat-rate charge. Always be sure to pack the samples tightly to avoid spillage or breaking open inside the package.

Be sure to include a worksheet with specific information on each sample sent. We will gladly supply worksheets designed to help get results back to you as quickly as possible.

Soils may be sent wet or dry (use a Zip-loc or plastic lined bag for wet samples).

Samples can be dried at home by spreading them on waxed paper and air-drying. **DO NOT DRY SOIL SAMPLES IN AN OVEN.** It is okay to leave samples to dry in the sun.

NOTE: Our "Hands-On Agronomy" DVD has a section on taking soil samples properly, and provides a visual look at how to sample. Should you be interested please see our 'Publications' page on www.kinseyag.com for ordering information.

VERY IMPORTANT: Because we emphasize accuracy, not 'quick turn around time' please contact us before sending samples for analysis to assure that we can meet any needed deadlines. We receive thousands of soil samples for analysis and recommendations and there are no "slow periods" of the year, but we want to help.

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

An Interview with Dr. Jean Richardson, Chair of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB)

By NODPA Staff

We are very fortunate to have Dr. Jean Richardson join us at the 2014 NODPA Field Days this year. Jean has a wealth of skills and experience that made her a perfect choice to join the National Organic Standards Board in January 2012 in the 'Public Interest' slot. The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) is a 15 member advisory board that helps set standards for the National Organic Program. In May, 2014, Jean was elected Chair of the NOSB. NODPA thought it would be nice for our readers to get to know Jean a little better. Read our interview with Jean and join us September 25th and 26th, at Stonewall Farm in Keene, NH, where you can meet her in person!

NODPA: Your appointment to the NOSB was widely applauded by those who know and appreciate your unique qualifications. What skills do you bring to the Board? Why do such a "thankless job"?

Jean Richardson: Actually it is a great honor to be able to serve the organic community. Like most of the 15 member volunteer board I donate 12-15 hours every week, reviewing materials, calling experts, and endless conference calls, because we want to ensure the integrity of the organic label. We get no reimbursement for time, but our direct expenses are covered when we attend the two national meetings a year. So the public gets a lot for its tax dollars! The work is a really interesting mix of science, agriculture, policy, law, politics and personalities! This fits well with my background: Small diverse family farm and electric fence franchise in northern Vermont, in the 1970's and 80's, building on ideas we had gathered while we worked in New Zealand; Professor at University of Vermont where I taught environmental studies and environmental law - I have a PhD in Biogeography, which is a lot of science, and extensive training in Law; At UVM I received generous funding (\$1.5 million dollars) from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for the Environmental Partnerships in Communities (EPIC) project which included work in the 1990's on pasture management, where grad students like Lisa McCrory and Sarah Flack did some of their research work. I also did some research with Sarah on the long distance transport of dioxins in air pollution and their contamination of dairy feed and milk. In 1994 President Clinton appointed me to the first Commission on Environmental Cooperation in NAFTA, so I am no stranger to Washington politics! Then over the last 14 years, following additional training, I have been an organic inspector, visiting farms and businesses and maple syrup producers primarily in Vermont where it has been amazing to watch organic grow and thrive.

N: With your recent election as Chair of the NOSB what are your goals for the Board?

JR: In April this year NOSB membership elected me chair because I have a pretty balanced view of organics, and the ability to listen to opposing views and work with all stakeholder groups. So my hope is



Dr. Jean Richardson

that I can help smooth the presently rough path we are treading in our relationship with the Washington, get some better press for organics, and do a great job reviewing all the synthetics.

N: The first day of an NOSB meeting is generally more interesting to those that aren't knowledgeable about the details of NOSB work. Do you have any suggestions or ideas that might encourage producers/farmers/ranchers to attend at least 1 day of an NOSB meeting when it is in their area?

JR: The NOSB meeting is a great opportunity to meet like-minded people from all over the nation and all branches of organic production. People gather the day before to attend the NOD meeting, and the first day of the NOSB meeting includes updates from the NOP. It can be empowering for everyone.

N: Most producers find it difficult to shorten their remarks to the 3 minutes allowed at NOSB meeting. In the past the chair of the Board used to extend a courtesy to those that are obviously not professional speakers to assist them to get their point over. Do you have any thoughts on this positive discrimination to try to level the playing field of public comment sessions?

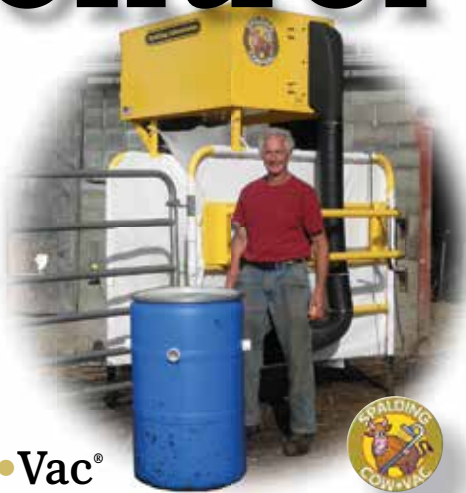
JR: The NOP chair always has the flexibility to extend time for a speaker. By stating a time limitation upfront it encourages people to think carefully about what is the most important point they want to make. One person can REALLY make a difference.

continued on page 12

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—John Haynes, Haynes Dairy, Organic Valley Producer
Claremont, NH (The barrel is Kevin's DIY Trap for house flies)



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—Mark Opitz Hidden Valley Farm, Belmont, WI



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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Dr. Jean Richardson*continued from page 10*

N: The USDA NOP has mandated a change in the relationship between the NOP and the Board, what is your opinion of this, and what steps will the Board be taking under your leadership to try to reclaim its independence and ensure the integrity of the Organic Seal?

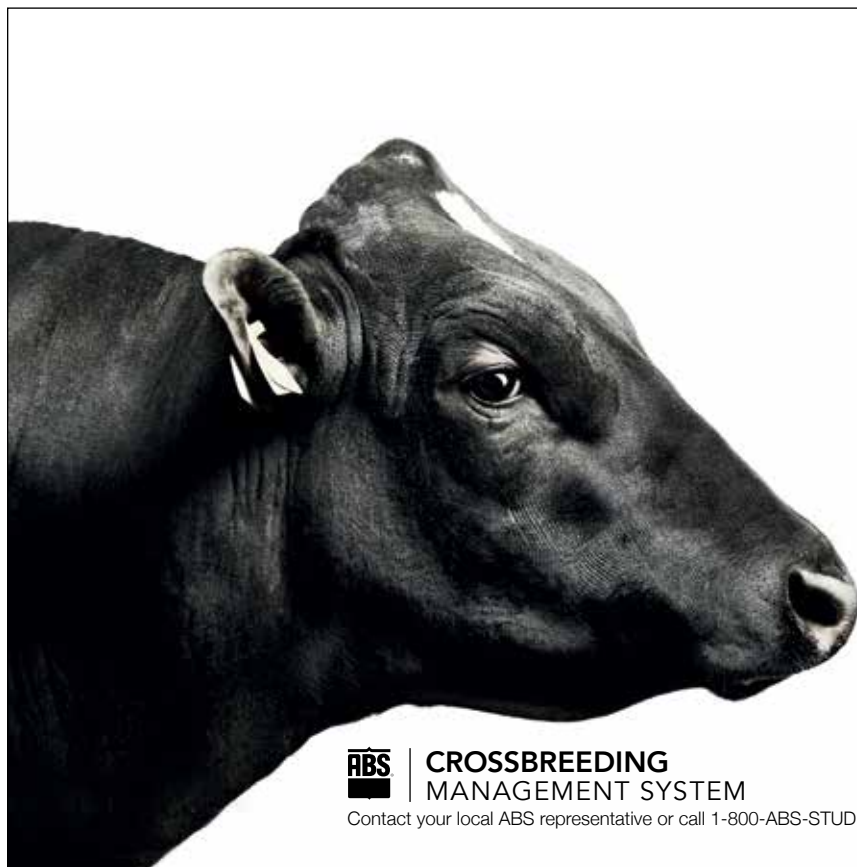
JR: Many will remember that one of the hard fought compromises in establishing the NOP was that the NOSB should be more than the typical Federal Advisory Committee (FACA), and have greater independence. There was concern that the government would take over organics and the role of public input, especially small farmers would be diminished or lost. So from 2002-2013 the NOSB had considerable independence, developed and took public comment on policies and procedures, wrote annotations for materials at Sunset, and put items on its Workplan. In 2013 and early 2014, that changed. The AMS determined that it would be more efficient and streamlined, given the cumbersome nature of Rule Making in Washington, to have a new Sunset Policy, and the NOSB should have the same scope of responsibility as all other FACA committees. Much of this change was probably pushed by the fast-growing big farms and food manufacturers who, understandably, need predictability to run their businesses. A volunteer board, like many aspects of democracy, is messy and time consuming and not always predictable. Please note here that some aspects of the new Sunset procedure are an excellent improvement over the previous Sunset procedure, requiring that the highly complex reviews start early, with increased opportunity for public input. How the final step

will work will be seen in October as we complete some of our first reviews under the new Sunset process. It is not a perfect procedure, but we will try to make it work well. As Chair I talk regularly with the Deputy Administrator, Miles McEvoy, and I have met with Senator Leahy and continue to interact with his staff. I am concerned that some of these changes have decreased the ability of the NOSB to carry out the mandate of the original OFPA. But I am hopeful that we will see an increase again in the collaboration between the NOP and the NOSB.

N: The NOSB and its two meetings a year is seen by many organic stakeholders as their only avenue for commenting on and influencing the future of organic certification. What potential do you see for ensuring that there is transparency and accountability in how the NOP operates, and what role does the NOSB play in this process?

JR: It is unfortunate that stakeholders perceive that the two meetings a year are the only way to get their opinions heard. This is really not the case. Anyone can contact board members or the NOP staff by phone or e-mail. The NOSB has recommended many times that we set up an ongoing Blog for comment but this keeps coming up with problems to set up and staff. I would encourage you to keep asking questions, and sending out your NODPA News publication, which is influential and read by the NOP staff. I would also encourage you to give regular feedback to your Washington Congressional Delegation.

N: Organic certification is the biggest growth area in agriculture and a billion dollar industry. What are your thoughts about the dynamic and inevitable conflict between the need for more synthetic materials to assist the growth of manufactured organic products while



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maintaining the integrity and uniqueness of organic certification?

JR: When it comes to the subject of synthetics, and the increase in demand for synthetics from companies proposing new organic products, I would ask everyone to have confidence in the NOSB's work on this issue. You will see quite a few synthetics being proposed by the NOSB to be removed from the National List this year, next year and 2017; we are working on all these right now. Every substance gets reviewed in minute detail, and certainly in far more depth than when many of them were placed on the National List in 1995. There will be rigorous debate and more transparency.

N: Under the leadership of Deputy Secretary, Kathleen Merrigan, the Board was encouraged to look at issues like animal welfare which is so important to producers and consumers alike. The new leadership at USDA AMS is more inclined towards marketing and expansion of organics as a brand.

JR: The USDA is a huge agency. The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) component is small, and the NOP is a tiny part of AMS. It is unfortunate in some ways that organics were placed in marketing, but that is what we have to work with, and yes the present message from AMS to NOP is marketing related and lobbied by big business. Organics is a 35 billion dollar industry and marketing is critically important for all of us, local and national, big and small. That is how US agriculture works. And we have a cheap food policy in the U.S., which reduces slim profit margins and increases competition. So if marketing is the present emphasis, we need to determine what we can do to get the most out of it for our farm businesses. We do need to boost consumer confidence, improve labels on products, reduce consumer confusion, and have clear signs at Farmers' markets. And I would

suggest you look at what AMS has to offer and take advantage of the opportunities to do better marketing for your products. Pick your battles!. Working together, building partnerships is the only way to go.

N: Would it not be a better use of NOP staff and resources to have all meetings in DC, perhaps have 3 meetings a year, so there could be more time for them to conduct business rather than to travel around the country? Perhaps the money saved could be put into a competitive grant program for producers to obtain travel grants to attend NOSB meetings?

JR: Actually, I think it is a good idea to move the national public meetings to different locations around the country. It helps the NOSB and NOP get a flavor of the geographic diversity of organics. Washington is a good location for politics and lobbying opportunities, but it is a much more expensive location to hold meetings. Even though NOP staff would not have to fly, there would be no cost savings in holding meetings in DC. Our NOSB budget is tiny. The annual total is only \$190,000, the ceiling set by USDA, based on total allowed funding across all USDA committees. This must cover staff salary and benefits, Board travel, and all meeting costs. Please note that we are hoping to hold the late October 2015 meeting in Stowe, Vermont and I encourage a huge turnout! Maybe I will still be chair!

Dr Jean Richardson will be on a panel on Thursday evening, talking about 'The Future of Organic Certification' and on Friday morning she will be participating in the panel 'What's happening in Washington?' See the full NODPA Field Days Agenda on page 20. Read an article written by Cheryl Cesario for our January 2012 NODPA News titled 'Get to Know Jean Richardson: New NOSB Member from Vermont': www.nodpa.com/in_nosb_new_appointment_013012.shtml. To reach Jean, you can email her at: jeanrichardson43@comcast.net.

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Zero Grain Dairy Farmers

continued from page 8

4 or 5 cuts per year to increase digestibility of the forages.

One of the most common problems that farmers said they had was when they ran out of high quality forage in the winter and had to either buy in lower quality hay, or switch to a first cut with lower digestibility. Without the availability of grain in those situations, cows made significantly less milk and lost condition.

“You need to factor in more soil fertility inputs since you aren’t importing all those nutrients in grain any more.”

Many of the farms using zero-grain systems are using more off farm fertility inputs to improve forage quality and yield. The most common off farm inputs in use were manure from other farms, and either wood ash or lime. Farms expressed enthusiasm

for the grassmilk premium, which will cover more soil fertility inputs and most said they plan to use more fertilizer and seeds to improve forage quality.

“You need to run a bull with the herd and make sure you are getting them bred back.”

Poor reproductive performance was reported to be an issue for some farms in the first year or two after elimination of grain. This resulted in gradual reduction in milk/cow as the whole herd shifted to being mostly in late lactation with a larger than ideal number of open cows. For a few farms, this created a serious cash flow issue while waiting for the cows to get bred back to have more fresh cows entering the herd making more milk. However, other farms said that although they now have longer calving intervals, they found that the cows are still making enough milk over a longer lactation, so they are not concerned that they take longer to breed back.

“Don’t forget the minerals.”

Since the cows aren’t getting their mineral needs met in their grain they will need a new source. Most farms were using a loose mineral mix instead of lick blocks to make sure the herd was able to get enough.

“You will be shipping less milk, possibly a lot less milk, so you need to make sure your farm can still pay farm overhead costs.”

Farms I spoke with said they were selling as little as 4800 lbs. per cow to as much as over 11000 lbs. of milk per cow. The majority said they were producing 7000 to 8000 per cow. The few farms that were producing over 10000 lbs. per cow were farms that had been using a zero-grain system for 7 or more years. During that time they had been making genetic selection decisions for cows that did well in the system. These higher producing farms all had a focus on high quality forage production and feeding.

Not all farms found that the lower milk production levels worked for them financially. Even with the elimination of the grain bill, there needs to be enough income left to cover the farm overhead costs. So some farms decided the system was not a good match for their individual situations. Many of the farms I spoke with emphasized the importance of each farm needing to make sure that a zero-grain system was going to work for their unique situation. Farms that lack enough land for pasture and hay, or who have high overhead costs, may not find that a zero-grain system will work for them.

There was discussion on some of the farms that the premiums for zero-grain may not be high enough, particularly when the organic base price is already seen by some to be too low.

Many farms I spoke with transitioned to zero-grain feeding systems long before any 100% grass-fed premium was available.

They said the benefits they see are sometimes less tangible than just cash flow. Farms spoke of the benefit of not facing a monthly grain

Summary of suggestions from zero-grain dairy farmers:



- Maximize dry matter intake of forages. This requires highly digestible high quality forages. Forage quality can be improved through improved species, earlier harvest and improved harvesting & storage methods, and improving soil fertility.
- Make or buy enough of these high quality forages. The cows will need to consume a lot more forage to replace the grain they are no longer eating.
- Make sure you have enough land for increased forage consumption.
- Monitor body condition to make sure the herd isn’t losing too much weight.
- Monitoring reproduction to make sure cows are breeding back on time and staying bred.
- Select for the right herd genetics.
- Make sure that the level of milk production you expect to make with no grain will bring in enough income to keep the farm financially sustainable.

bill. They discussed how good they feel about being totally self sufficient in feed even in an area where it is difficult to grow grain. So while all said that the economics are important, many said they would continue to use little or no grain even without the premiums.

Conclusions

The principal idea that emerged from all the farms visited is that success with zero-grain dairy rations requires managing to maximize forage dry matter intake. However, the approach that each farm is taking to do that varies greatly. So although there are some basic management practices such as good genetic selection and feeding a lot of high quality forage, there is no simple recipe as to why some farms find it works and others don't. Each farm will need to find their own "best" system, and some farms may find that it is that is a good match for them. ♦

Sarah Flack is a consultant specializing in grass based and organic livestock production systems. When home in Vermont, she works with farms through the NOFA VT technical assistance program. Contact Sarah at: www.sarahflackconsulting.com, by phone 802-309-3714 or email: sarahflackconsulting@gmail.com. If you are a dairy farm in Vermont interested in zero-grain production and would like a visit from a NOFA VT farm advisor, contact Sam Fuller at NOFA VT: sam@nofavt.org, or 802-434-4122.

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Pay price, feed and retail price update for September 2014

By Ed Maltby NODPA Executive Director

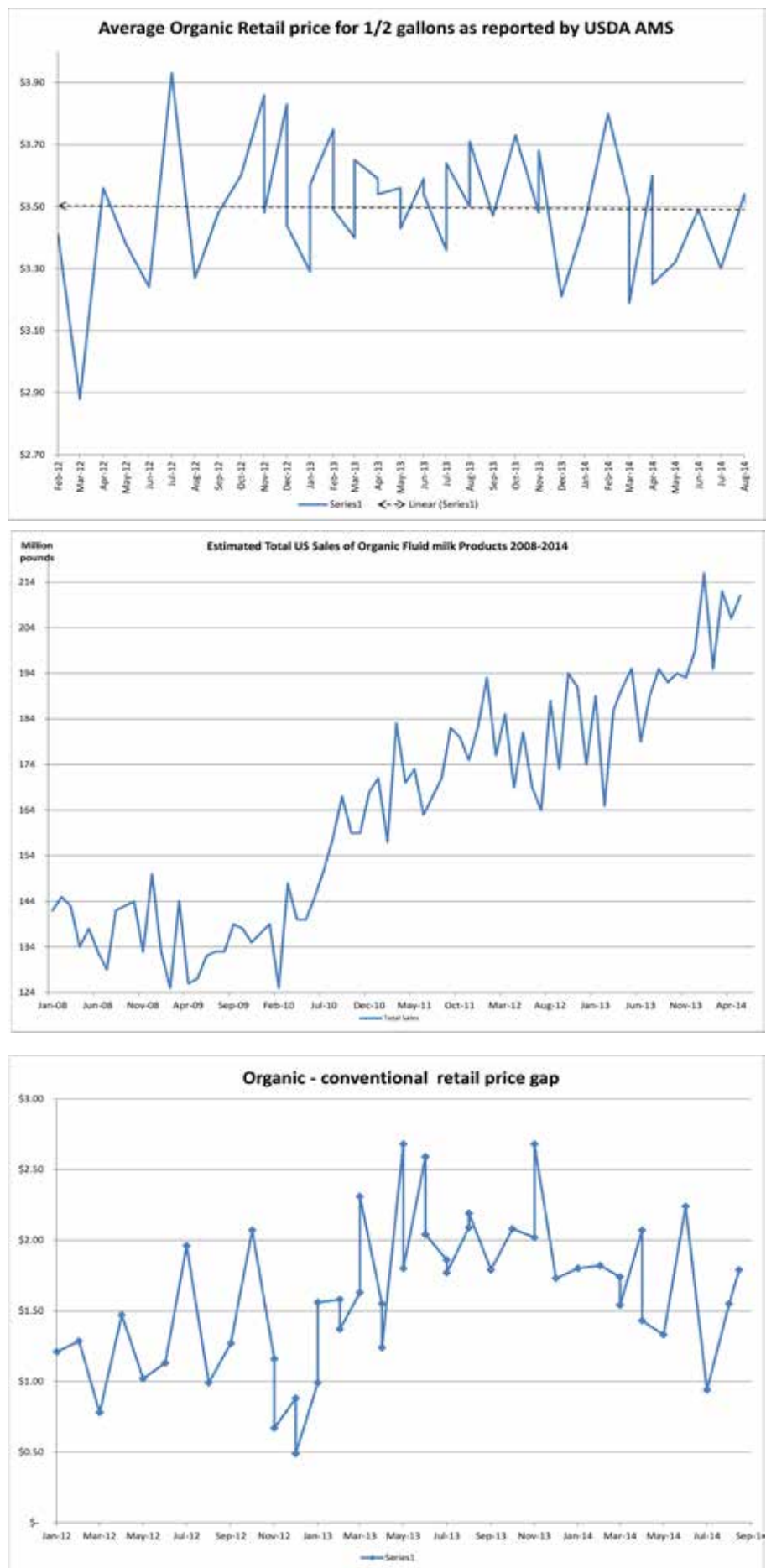
The headline is the same as the last few months 'Organic milk supply is tight, consumption of organic fluid milk is increasing, feed costs are starting to rise as supply tightens and purchased organic hay is expensive, if you can find any of good quality.'

In the Northeast, competition for milk supply is increasing with expansion plans by Up-state Niagara and Stonyfield, both looking for producers in certain geographic areas, and the national brands working to keep their producers by offering small incentives on pay price. Producers are in a stronger position to advocate for a higher pay price as they renew contracts or talk with their cooperative about the annual decisions around increase in member compensation. There is also an increase in demand for producers who qualify for the grass fed label as CROPP expands its available routes for producers.

The conventional pay price is still high, the beef cull price has shown no sign of dropping, and conventional feed is cheap so there is no economic incentive to transition unless there is the promise of a future higher pay price for organic. With an average growth rate of 7-8% a year in fluid sales and increasing demand for organic dairy in manufactured product, now would be the time for organic buyers to schedule higher pay prices for the next few years as, with higher profits for conventional producers, it makes it easier to transition to organic production as the cost of transition would be minimal.

USDA AMS reports that organic dairy production continues to expand in Texas and the Southwest, where some producers owning large herds are aggressively seeking to expand cow numbers. A number of smaller herds of organic producers transitioning out of organic production have been purchased in their entirety and added to existing large herds. The current high price of organic beef and organic feed contin

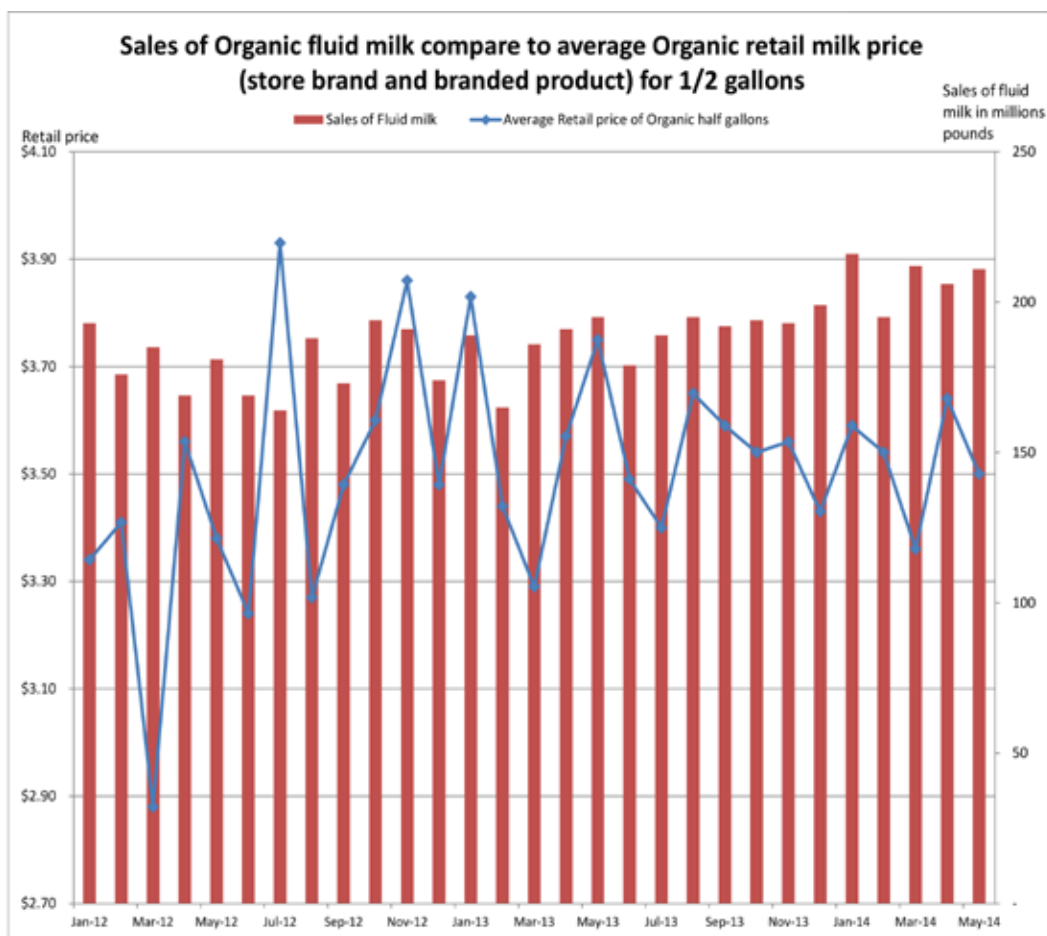
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ues encourage some organic producers to leave organic production. Some sales of organic cows are for slaughter, rather than to existing producers for herd expansion or transitioning into conventional production. At an auction in Oregon last week, organic cows sold for slaughter continued to bring a premium over conventional cows. The top ten organic cows auctioned brought an average price of \$1.7218 a pound, compared with a \$1.2963 average for the top ten conventional cows.

USDA AMS reports total organic milk products sales for May 2014, 211 million pounds, were up 8.1% from May last year and up 12.4% year to date compared with last year. The U.S. weighted average advertised price of organic milk half gallons in August 2014 is \$3.34; one year ago the national price was \$3.50. The lowest advertised price, \$2.99, is

continued on page 18



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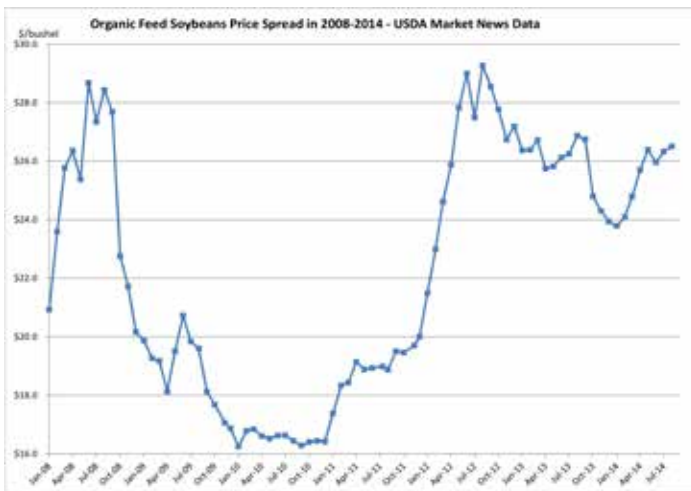
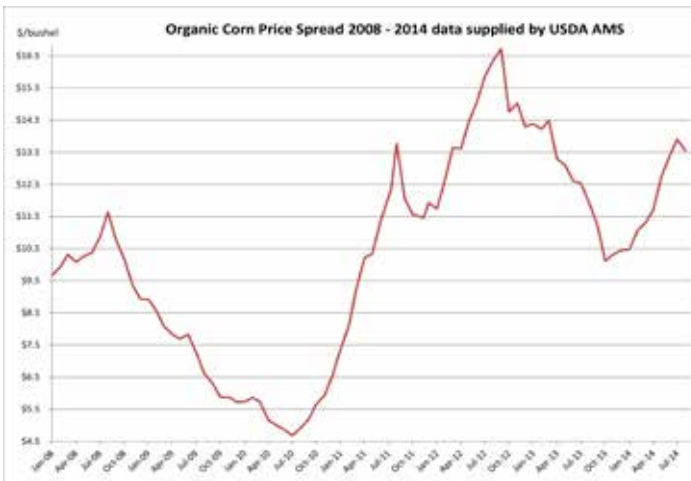
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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Pay & Feed Price

continued from page 17

advertised in the Southwest and the highest advertised price, \$4.99, is found in the Northeast.

Varied food retail and investment enterprises are showing increasing interest in the organic dairy sector. Consultants for national super-market chains are gathering historic data of organic milk and dairy product retail prices, noting regional and national factors, as they evaluate future organic dairy product strategies.

Market researchers for various investment funds and investment banks, not traditionally involved in the organic dairy sector, are looking at data describing performance of retail pricing and product emphasis, as decisions about future capital investments are made. ♦

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The 14th Annual NODPA Field Days and Annual Meeting September 25 & 26, 2014

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In just a few weeks, NODPA's 14th Annual Field Days and Annual Meeting will be taking place in southwest New Hampshire at Stonewall Farm, near Keene. If you haven't done so already, now is the time to sign up and make your travel plans. At this year's Field Days, Organic Dairy: Getting Down to Business, we are bringing together a rich array of national and regional leaders who will share their knowledge, ideas, business experience and herd health practices that are essential for running a successful organic dairy business. The full program can be found on page 20. In addition to a strong educational program, industry and resource representatives will be on hand to share new products, ideas, and industry trends at our trade show.

"We are very excited to have Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator of the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP), Jean Richardson, Chair of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) and Henry Perkins, President, Maine Organic Milk Producers and past NODPA president, share their thoughts on the future of organic dairy following our banquet and NODPA Annual Meeting," said Liz Bawden, NODPA Board President.

The NODPA Field Days will include a tour of Stonewall Farm and a day and a half of educational workshops. "This year's program is particularly strong, with a focus on ways to increase our incomes without dramatically

changing our current operations, and getting back to what this work is all about: the cows," said Dave Johnson, NODPA Vice President, "I always look forward to learning new information and having hand-on experience as we will do in Friday's workshop entitled Alternative Cow Care: Chiropractic, Acupuncture, Acupressure and more", especially because Stonewall Farm's dairy herd will be available to provide hands-on experiences for both veterinarians, Dr. Hubert Karreman, and Dr. Cindy Lankenau."

"In addition to a really interesting program, I look forward to re-connecting with farmers from throughout the Northeast. It's great to have the time to visit and catch up with everyone," said George Wright, NODPA Board Treasurer.

"We are grateful to our sponsors and supporters for their generous support for NODPA's Field Days, and because of it, we can again offer free registration for organic dairy farm families, and transitioning dairy farmers and their families also receive a free banquet dinner," said Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director. (For a full list of sponsors and supporters see below and on page 22.) If you have questions or want to register by phone, call Nora Owens, NODPA Field Days Coordinator, 413-772-0444 or email her at noraowens@comcast.net.

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NODPA FIELD DAYS 2014

Thursday, September 25, 2014

9 am – Noon Stonewall Farm, 242 Chesterfield Road, Keene, NH
(www.stonewallfarm.org)

Tour the farm and the diversified enterprises that sustain this 125-year old non-profit farm where, in addition to their organic milk, they produce cheese, yogurt and beef, and operate a CSA; maintain a full-scale education program; have established a beginning farmer education program; and have a micro-fodder system for sprouted grains.

Noon – 1:30 Registration and lunch, Stonewall Farm

1:30 – 3:00 Organic Family Farms Opportunities: Creating Sustainability through Diversity, and Planning for the Next Generation

Josh Cline, Stonewall Farm's Executive Director, will give an overview of the farm's mission and the diverse operations that fulfill it; and will discuss their beginning farmer program which equips new-entry farmers to become economically viable.

Kyle Thygesen, Stonyfield Farm Farmer Relationship Manager, will discuss their new program that provides opportunities for organic dairies.

Kathy Ruhf, Executive Director, Land for Good, will focus on the next generation of farmers, generational transfer and succession planning for farmers.

3:00 - 3:30 Milk Break

3:30 – 5:00 How to Sell More Than Milk from your Farm: maximizing the farm income without large scale capital investment or changing your production practices

Agriculture in the Northeast is changing and today's farmers need to be poised to take advantage of the emerging trends, such as small scale, low acreage, part-time farms, that have strong infrastructure needs. Participants will hear how producers have diversified their income streams by providing services and organic products to other farmers who are marketing their products and services directly to consumers.

Margaret Christie, Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture, Deerfield MA, will present an overview of the growth in retail demand for organic, local, NON GMO products and the increase in limited acreage operations that have the market but lack the volume of product or the ability to produce feed, bedding, mulch products that dairies currently produce for themselves.

Liz Bawden, NODPA President, organic dairy producer and producer of heifer hay and bedding hay will describe their operation and route taken to diversify their income stream.

Black River Produce Representative, invited, will focus on the demand for organic meat and the opportunities and challenges for producers and processors. Other invited guests, TBD.

5:00 – 6:00 Trade Show and Social Hour

6:00 – 7:00 Banquet Dinner and NODPA Annual Meeting

Liz Bawden, NODPA President and Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

7:00 – 9:00 The Future of Organic Certification

Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator, National Organic Program, USDA-AMS, Dr. Jean Richardson, Chair, National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), and Henry Perkins, President, Maine Organic Milk Producers, past president, NODPA, and long-time certified organic farmer, will discuss the future of organic certification, followed by Q & A and audience discussion.

Friday, September 26, 2014

6:30 – 9:00 am Continental Breakfast and Trade Show

7:00 – 9:00 Producer-only Meeting

Henry Perkins, facilitator, Maine Organic Milk Producers President and past NODPA president

9:00 – 10:30 "I Knew this Milk when it was Grass": Trends and Opportunities for Grass Based Dairies in the Wholesale Organic Milk Market

Peter Miller, CROPP Cooperative, Joe Miller, Tricking Springs Creamery, Tim Joseph, Maple Hill Creamery, Max Winter, Dairy Buyer, Brattleboro Food Cooperative, and Sarah Flack, Organic Dairy Consultant, Sarah Flack Consulting

Learn directly from processors, producers and retailers about new marketing opportunities that will increase pay price by utilizing existing production practices.

10:30 – 11:00 What's Happening in Washington?

Q & A with Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator, National Organic Program, USDA-AMS, and Dr. Jean Richardson, Chair, NOSB

Updates on policy and activities that are impacting Organic Dairy including the proposed USDA Organic Check-off, Margin Insurance and other Farm Bill Implementation measures

11:00 – 12:30 pm Odairy Live! Ask the Vets: Q & A

Dr. Hubert Karremann, VMD and Rodale Institute Veterinarian and Dr. Cindy Lankenau, DVM, Certified Veterinary Acupuncturist, Holistic Center for Veterinary Care, Colden, NY

12:30 – 2:00 Lunch, Trade Show and NODPA Field Days Door Prize Drawing

2:00 – 4:00 Alternative Cow Care: Chiropractic, Acupuncture, Acupressure and more

Dr. Hubert Karremann, VMD and Rodale Institute Veterinarian, Dr. Cindy Lankenau, DVM, CVA, Holistic Center for Veterinary Care, Colden, NY

This workshop will provide participants with practical information, effective diagnostic tools and alternative treatment methods to keep cows healthy and to maximize their comfort. **Stonewall Farm organic dairy cows will be available for the hands-on experience.**

4:00 pm Meeting Ends

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Directions

*Stonewall Farm, 262 Chesterfield Road, Keene, NH 03431**

From South and West: Go East on Interstate 90, the New York Thruway/ Mass Pike, and take exit 4 onto Interstate 91 and go north to Vermont, exit 3 (near Brattleboro, VT) for Route 9 East toward Keene. Follow Route 9 East for approximately 11 miles, looking for a blue state sign for STONEWALL FARM, which will direct you to turn left onto Chesterfield Road. Follow Chesterfield Road for approximately one mile and turn right into the driveway at the bend in the road. Follow driveway to parking lot. The Sugarhouse and Learning Center will be in front of you.

From Maine: From ME, take 95S, to take I-93S to Route 9 west. Follow it around Keene, taking a right to stay on Route 9 West (toward Brattleboro, VT) at the light where it intersects with routes 101, 10 and 12. Continue 3 miles west. A blue state sign for STONEWALL FARM will alert you to turn right onto Chesterfield Rd. Follow Chesterfield Rd for approximately one mile and turn right into the driveway at the bend in the road. Follow driveway to parking lot. The Sugarhouse and Learning Center will be in front of you.

From Vermont: Take 91 South to Exit 3, (near Brattleboro, VT) for Route 9 East toward Keene. Follow Route 9 East for approximately 11 miles, looking for a blue state sign for STONEWALL FARM, which will direct you to turn left onto Chesterfield Road. Follow Chesterfield Road for approximately one mile and turn right into the driveway at the bend in the road. Follow driveway to parking lot. The Sugarhouse and Learning Center will be in front of you.

** Please Note: Some GPS devices indicate that our address (242 Chesterfield Road) is South/West of Route 9. The correct location is North/East of Route 9 on Chesterfield Road/Arch Street.*

If you have any questions along the way, please call (603) 357-7278.

Accommodations

This year, participants are strongly encouraged to make plans early for lodging. NODPA's Field Days is in the heart of 'leaf-peeping' season, so lodging options will fill up fast. There are moderately priced hotels, inns and B&B's are available in both Keene, NH and Brattleboro, VT. There is camping nearby at Swanzey Lake, www.swanzeylake.com/, and KOA Campsite in Brattleboro has cabins, trailer hook-ups and tent sites available; call 800-562-5905 or visit www.KOA.com for more information. And finally, visiting travel sights such as www.expedia.com or www.kayak.com will help you find good travel options in the Keene area.



REGISTRATION

NODPA's 14th ANNUAL FIELD DAYS & PRODUCER MEETING & DINNER

Cost		Qty.	Total
Registration: Thursday & Friday			
Free	Organic dairy & transitioning producers & families		
\$30	All who aren't organic dairy producers		
Meals			
\$10	Thursday lunch for Adults		
\$5	Thursday lunch (under 11)		
\$25	Thurs. dinner for Adults		
\$12.50	Thurs. dinner (under 11)		
Free	Transitioning farm member, Thursday evening dinner		
\$5	Friday breakfast (7:30-9 am)		
\$10	Friday lunch (under 11, half price)		
\$35	NODPA News Subscription (6 issues)		
	Donation to NODPA		
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YOU CAN ALSO REGISTER ONLINE AT:

www.nodpa.com/fielddays_registration_2014.shtml

NODPA FIELD DAYS 2014 | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

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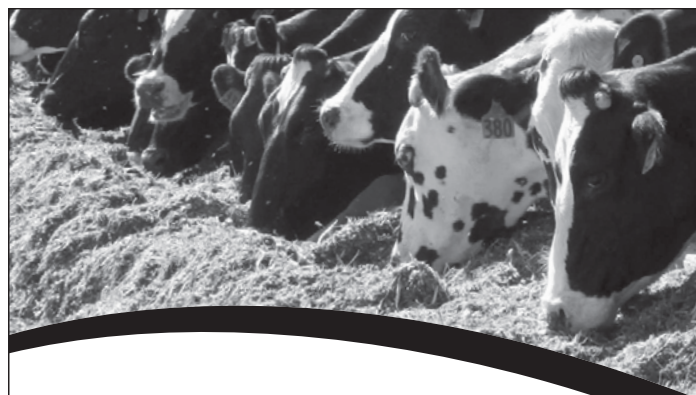
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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

With strong milk prices and a grant to get started, now is the time to form a dairy profit team.

New York Farm Viability Institute (NYFVI) encourages dairy farmers to apply now for \$2500 grants to form dairy profit teams for their farm.

Ron Robbins, owner of North Harbor Dairy in Sackets Harbor and a NYFVI board member said "Right now, with milk prices so good, is the time to think about improvements. You want to maximize your yields, while continuing to manage your costs. The right team of experts, all chosen by you, can help you see where the opportunities are. Lining up your money now, while it's available, is a smart move."

Robbins went on to say "I understand that taking that first step can be challenging. It's hard to step back from the daily priorities and share with others the big picture of your operations."

Profit teams are a well proven concept in New York. The

state's farmers have been using this approach, sometimes called advisory teams, successfully for the last ten years.

NYFVI, is honored to have been entrusted with a legislative appropriation through the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to help dairy farmers who haven't used profit teams get started.

NYFVI Managing Director David Grusenmeyer added "I hope more farms will enroll and utilize the funds available to them. Over the years I've seen such great results from this approach. In many cases the work from these teams has literally saved a business. The funds are directed solely by the farmer; some teams are improving herd health, others are focused on milk quantity. Some are even working with financial advisors to develop succession plans. It's all up to the farmer to decide."

The simple one page application for a Dairy Profit Team grant can be found at www.nyfvi.org.

Press Contact: Aileen Randolph (315) 453-3823 extension 102, arandolph@nyfvi.org

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Revoke Changes To Sunset Provision

To the Congressional Organic Caucus,

We the undersigned organizations are writing to ask you to advocate reversal of USDA's unilateral changes to the organic program's Sunset Provision. We believe these changes violate the intent and the letter of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA).

A high bar to allow and renew synthetics

We have re-read OFPA and the letters from Sen. Leahy and Rep. DeFazio to Sec. Vilsack, as well as the letter from three former chairs of the National Organic Standards Board, and we respectfully disagree with the Deputy Administrator's statement that the changes "shouldn't make it harder" to remove items from the National List.

NOP staff has admitted in various settings that materials up for Sunset from the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances were subject to being removed by a minority vote, and that materials some interests wanted to renew [leave on the list] weren't getting enough votes, so USDA changed the voting process. In other words, NOP staff has admitted publicly it changed the rules to make it easier to keep synthetics on the National List.

OFPA established the two-thirds supermajority requirement for "Decisive Votes" [Sec. 2119 (i)] intentionally to establish a very high hurdle for prohibited synthetics to be allowed, even temporarily, in organics. Within the context of the overarching principle in Sec. 2105 [7 USC 6504], that foods labeled organic must be "produced and handled without the use of synthetic chemicals ...," Congress certainly intended the Sunset Provision to emphasize the temporary nature of exemptions.

USDA's policy change makes relisting and renewal of synthetics much easier. Now, only six votes are needed for a synthetic to be allowed continued use, not the 10-vote supermajority mandated by OFPA. This assumes the full board even gets to vote on the relisting, since the murky nature of how these materials would be handled in subcommittees seems to preclude a full board vote if the subcommittee approves continued use.

Now, even if nine NOSB members oppose relisting, a six-vote minority favoring continued use would determine the "Decisive Vote" to enable continued use. This is contrary to Congressional intent for consensus in requiring a supermajority for Decisive Votes, through any plain reading of the law.

OFPA's framers meant clearly to establish a very high hurdle to add an exemption and to renew any exemptions — not a high hurdle to allow, and a low hurdle to renew.

Policy change without public comment

USDA's unilateral changes have been labeled a "power grab" with cause, since they were announced without the benefit of full notice and opportunity for public comment.

When asked where the changes originated, NOP staff has stated that "USDA did recently adjust how it works with the National Organic Standards Board to be more consistent with how other

federal advisory boards are managed [under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)]."

The unique powers and authority granted to NOSB by OFPA have rubbed some USDA officials the wrong way from inception. But attempting to redefine the NOSB "to be more consistent with how other federal advisory boards are managed" contravenes what Congress enacted into law. (Note that FACA Sec. 9 says: (b) Unless otherwise specifically provided by statute or Presidential directive, advisory committees shall be utilized solely for advisory functions.)

Congress knowingly and intentionally granted exceptional and unique powers and authority to the National Organic Standards Board — unlike most other federal advisory committees. In passing OFPA in 1990, Congress knowingly and intentionally superseded the provisions established by FACA in 1972. In other words, OFPA overrides FACA.

Subcommittee eliminated

We are very concerned by the NOP's elimination of the Board's Policy Development Subcommittee and control of the NOSB work plan and agenda. This unilateral, top-down action suggests that NOSB under the new rules would no longer be allowed to create a subcommittee to work on topics of its choosing, such as the GMO subcommittee or a subcommittee to study nanotechnology.

OFPA established the NOSB to advise the Secretary of Agriculture on the organic program. NOSB cannot advise the Secretary well if its authority to develop a work plan and agenda, or create committees and procedures, is diminished or denied.

Mandates ignored

There are two other OFPA provisions that appear to be contravened by USDA's management of the organic program.

Sec. 2119 (j) "Other Terms and Conditions" states "The Secretary shall authorize the Board [NOSB] to hire a staff director ..." To date, staff directors have been hired not by the Board as the law stipulates, but rather by the USDA. This must be rectified.

Also, Sec. 2119 (j) (3) "Technical Advisory Panels" says, "The Board [NOSB] shall convene technical advisory panels to provide scientific evaluation of the materials considered for inclusion in the National List ..." To date, TAPs have been convened by USDA unilaterally, not the Board, as stipulated by the law. Selection of TAP reviewers by USDA has become so shrouded in secrecy that NOSB members do not even know who the TAP reviewers are. This must be rectified.

We realize the pressure USDA, and you in particular, must be facing from industry. Manufacturers and processors barely mustered the votes to allow carrageenan (even with flawed TAP reviews).

They nearly lost DHA, and larger orchards did lose antibiotics for growing apples and pears.

Yet changing the rules and admitting they were intended to reverse the course of Sunset — to enable renewal of synthetics with just six of 15 votes — and to refashion NOSB under FACA, violates the intent of Congress and the letter of the law in OFPA. The drafters of OFPA required a two-thirds supermajority for Decisive

Votes, requiring a higher level of consensus across the full range of organic stakeholders, to ensure both credibility of the organic label and public support for organic products.

As significant stakeholders in the National Organic Program, we ask you to reverse these policies. We ask you, respectfully, to utilize the full notice and comment rulemaking procedures when there are changes NOP considers important. **August 25, 2014**

Sincerely,

PCC Natural Markets, Seattle, Washington

Central Co-op, Seattle, Washington

Marlene's Markets, Tacoma and Federal Way, Washington

The Markets, Bellingham, Washington

Skagit Valley Food Co-op, Mt. Vernon, Washington

Tonasket Food Coop, Tonasket, Washington

Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op, Sacramento, California

Ocean Beach People's Organic Food Coop, San Diego, California

Ashland Food Co-op, Ashland, Oregon

Outpost Natural Food Cooperative, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

One Degree Organic Foods, B.C., Canada

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Wheatsville Food Co-op, Austin, Texas

La Montanita Food Co-op, Albuquerque, New Mexico

People's Food Co-op of Kalamazoo, Michigan

Whole Foods Co-op, Duluth, Minnesota

Mississippi Market Natural Foods Co-op, St. Paul, Minnesota

The Merc Community Market & Deli, Lawrence, Kansas

New Leaf Market Co-op, Tallahassee, Florida

Los Alamos Cooperative Market, Los Alamos, New Mexico

Hanover Consumer Co-op, Hanover, New Hampshire

Wild Oats Market, Williamstown, Massachusetts

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continued from page 1

The Goodmans have a closed herd, of about 45 registered Holsteins. Annual milk production per cow is 15,400 lbs per cow, a more realistic production figure than the 1981 average production (22,000 lbs) when they were conventional and the top producers in their county.

Their milk is shipped to Cedar Grove (www.cedargrovecheese.com), a local cheese-maker in Plain, Wisconsin that purchases milk from over 30 Wisconsin farms, “all of whom have pledged not to treat their cows with synthetic growth hormones and some of whom are certified organic.” The company produces a variety of organic cheeses, artisan cheeses, and a line of cheeses coming from cows managed conventionally, but free of rBGH and GMO feeds.

From Confinement to Pasture to Organic Production

When Jim and Rebecca started managing the farm in 1979, it was a well run conventional farm, using many of the tools a farm like that would employ. It was a confinement dairy (no pasture). They used herbicides, pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, and reproductive

hormones. But at some point in the game, it became clear that things needed to change on their farm. Jim and Rebecca could no longer deny the fact that the years of conventional farming practices were having an impact on their health and the land. Tired of “using poisons as farming inputs”, the Goodmans decided to eliminate pesticides and herbicides from the farm. The cows went back on grass and they began the transition to organic production.

They started their transition in the early 90's and were certified organic in 1999. “Eliminating the use of chemical fertilizers and antibiotics was a bit frightening, but after the decision was made, it was easier than imagined”, says Rebecca. “We were very conventional, and good at it, so [our transition] was a 5 year+ process,” Their timing could not have been better. “When we got our milk on the organic truck, our price was \$18/cwt, and conventional milk was \$17/cwt”, explains Jim. “Within 4 months, conventional milk [had fallen to] \$9-10.”

Building a Farm Partnership

Jim was born on the farm where they live and has been farming this land for most of his life – not counting some early school years and college, and Rebecca was born on a grain farm in



Rebecca Goodman and her cows



Inside of the Goodman's tie stall barn - doing milking chores

Southwest Minnesota. Jim, Rebecca and Jim's brother Francis were the primary owners from 1979 to 2011 at which time Jim and Rebecca purchased Francis' share of the farm.

Their children, Jack and Sally, though they love the farm, have other productive lives and had to choose not to farm because of the allergies both have to animals, dust and pollen.

In 2011 they started a farming partnership with Ben and Corey Pahl and in 2013, after two years of running the farm together, the Goodmans and the Pahls created an LLC. Both families take a draw (or a salary) from the business and the rest of the money goes back into the farm. Over time the Pahls will gain more equity from the farm and in 10 years time they will be 50:50 owners (partners) with the option to buy Jim and Rebecca's half.

Today, the farm supports two households, plus a few part time workers. Jim is the livestock person, in charge of milking, AI, herd health checks, castrations, dehorning, and maintaining the livestock records (grazing, health and breeding records). Rebecca is in charge of the grazing system for the cows, feeding the outside animals, the bookkeeping, and paying the bills for the farm. Ben is in charge of the crops and machinery, and Corey is in charge of homeschooling and caring for their two children, Avery and Case, ages 8 and 4. Corey and the children help out with chores and haying; 'those boys are our future,' says Rebecca.

In building a successful farm partnership, Jim and Rebecca have learned that it is important to allow their farm partners to make decisions and give them opportunities to try new and different things, and to take on enterprises that belong to them alone. A couple things Ben and Corey might add to the farm include chicken, eggs, and (food grade) spelt and other grains.

Crops

On Northwood farm, they try to grow all the grains and forages that they need for their animals and if there is a surplus, they will sell it. Crops grown include 90 acres of corn, 60 acres of oats, 32 acres of barley, 27 acres of soybeans, 9 acres of rye and vetch cover crop, 30 acres of oats and field peas, and 196 acres in hay and pasture. They had never purchased feed before these last 2 years, due to the drought they had in 2012 and 2013. This year is a vast improvement from the last two seasons and "if we got 2 inches of rain right now [early August], it would be excellent" says Jim. Of the 90 acres of corn that they grow, 30 acres is chopped for silage, 40-50 acres is harvested as grain, and the rest is sold. They planted 30 acres of oats and peas for silage and the cows are now grazing the regrowth.

Housing and Husbandry

The dairy cows are housed in a tie stall barn in the winter and are milked twice a day. During the growing season, they are managed in an intensive rotational grazing system, moving to new feed after every milking. Older heifers and dry cows are in their own pasture, and at times the steers and heifers will follow the cows as a cleanup group in the pasture rotation. Young calves are started in individual pens, then move to group pens and finally are out doors with a loafing barn. For the first 12 weeks of life, they receive milk, ground oats, starter pellets and hay.

A typical summer ration for the milk cows would be 95% pasture, some dry hay, and about 4 lbs barley, hominy and wheat midds fed during milking. Heifers get 99% pasture and about a pound of ground oats per day. Minerals are provided free-choice. The winter ration for the milk cows consists of haylage (all you

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Northwood Farm partners Ben and Corey Pahl and their children Avery and Case

FEATURED FARM

continued from page 27

can eat), dry baled hay, some corn silage and ground high moisture snaplage. Heifers receive corn silage, dry baled hay (all you can eat), and oat/pea silage. Minerals are provided as a top-dress.

Livestock Genetics

The Goodmans have a closed herd of registered Holsteins - possibly the oldest registered herd in the state of Wisconsin (Since

1902). Jim likes registering his herd - he feels it is important to have a pool of purebred genetics in all breeds of cattle, and he is able to maintain excellent herd records, which are useful for their organic certification.

When they transitioned their cattle from confinement to a grazing system, Jim and Rebecca also changed some of the criteria that they look for when breeding their cows. They no longer look at milk production as an important breeding trait, but now breed for longevity, good udders, feet and legs, and components. Their cows today weigh about 1400 lbs, have shorter legs, and live an



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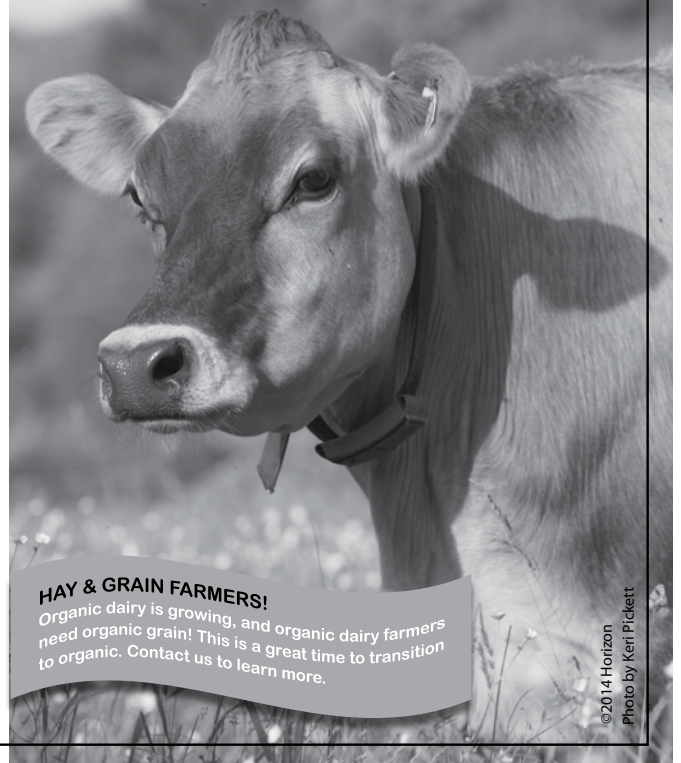
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Willow Creek Farm, Belmont, NY



FEATURED FARM

average of 9 years. The heifers are usually bred with their bulls, and the milking cows are bred using AI.

A few replacements get sold each year, but Jim and Rebecca have not found a strong market for them. There is not much demand for organic cattle in their area, and organic cattle seem to be discriminated against at the sale barn due to their lower milk production.

Livestock Health and Nutrition

"The best prevention is a good immune system, plenty of bedding, sunlight, fresh air and a lack of crowding," says Jim, who takes the lead role in tending to herd health and nutrition. When the dairy cows transitioned to organic, cow health improved, stress decreased and "the vet bills went almost to zero." A veterinarian is called upon for the occasional injuries or difficult calving, but this does not happen very often. Jim and Rebecca are grateful to have a veterinarian that is supportive of their way of farming and sees the benefits of organic production and management. They welcome the occasional visit, as it is always good to have a second set of eyes on the herd once in a while.

A nutritionist from Midwest Bio Ag works with the Goodmans 'from the soil up'. He will take soil and forage samples to determine the appropriate soil amendments for the fields, balance the

rations for the cattle, and put together the best mineral packages for the cows during the grazing season and during the months when they are consuming harvested feed.

A hoof trimmer comes to the farm in the spring before going out to pasture and again in the fall before coming back from pasture. Out of the 45 cows, he usually trims about half the cows at each visit. They have very few foot problems, aside from a couple stone bruises; the twice a year visit is an important 'routine maintenance program' for the farm.

The cows are vaccinated for Lepto and Pinkeye, and Jim turns to homeopathic remedies, garlic, Echinacea, and other herbs when an animal needs attention. For mastitis, he uses a linament rub and aspirin; for a retained placenta, he infuses with hydrogen peroxide and uses garlic extract, and homeopathy; he treats milk fever with a Calicum IV and homeopathic remedies for preventative measures; for pneumonia, he uses mullein leaf/cherry bark tea; and for calf scours he uses homeopathy and charcoal. They also have access to some nutritional boluses from Midwest Bio Ag that are effective for a number of situations. But all in all, the Goodmans feel that they have a very healthy, long-lived herd of cows.

Books Jim likes to turn to when caring for his cattle include: Dr. Hubert Karreman's book 'Treating Cows Naturally'; Dr. Detloff's book, 'Alternative Treatments for Ruminant Livestock'; and Dr.

continued on page 36

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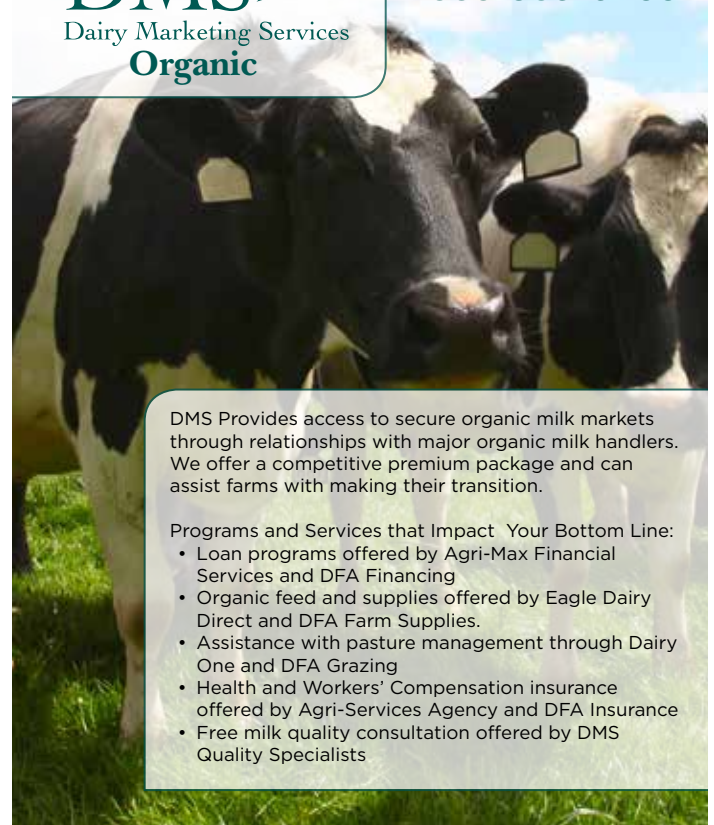


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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Tackling Farm Entry and Exit Challenges For Today's Organic Farmer

By Kathy Ruhf, Executive Director, Land For Good

These days there is a lot of talk about beginning farmers. USDA Secretary Vilsack has called for 100,000 new farmers, and articles are appearing in the New York Times and elsewhere about young people starting to farm. At the same time, there's concern about the aging of America's farmers, with twice as many farmers over 65 as under 35 years old. The vast majority of agricultural assets are held in the hands of these older farmers, and about 70% of US farmland is expected to change hands in the next two decades.

Farm entry and exit are flip sides of the same coin. We need to pay attention to both, and solutions for one side of the coin can offer solutions to the other.

Beginning farmers – especially those from non-farming backgrounds – face considerable challenges. They need access to education, training and technical assistance. They need access to markets, capital and credit. They need access to mentors, peers and supportive communities. They need access to land and associated housing for themselves and their workers. And despite new programs springing up to address these needs, more must be done to assure that farms—including especially, organic farms—stay in farming and farmland remains productive. Newer models such as group farming, working with farmland investors, agricultural conservation easements, and ground leases hold promise for farmers to get onto land.

Access to farmland is one of the top challenges for beginning and established farmers in New England. It's not a new issue, but contemporary conditions have made it harder for farmers to find and get onto land. It used to be that the eldest son inherited the farm. End of story. Now, there's no guarantee that that son will farm, or that the farm can feasibly and simply “be inherited.” Nowadays, new men and women farmers are more likely to acquire land from non-family members. In surveys conducted by the National Young Farmers Coalition and American Farm Bureau Federation, access to land and capital ranked as the top challenges for new farmers. Here, land for farming can cost up to ten times the national average. At least half of New England's 30,000 farms and nearly 50% of its land are in areas where land is most desirable for development. Competition for good farmland and insecure land tenure prevent many start-up and expanding farmers from meeting their farming goals and contributing to our region's food supply. In the case of dairies, the land and infrastructure requirements can be much more extensive. Thus, the entry can be much more daunting than

with other types of farming.

Despite these obstacles there is actually an increase in the number of farms in New England, where beginning farmers made up 25% of principal operators in the last ag census. We need to nurture this new generation of farmers to maintain and expand



our capacity to produce food and fiber. Without new farmers stewarding our region's working lands, agricultural property will be abandoned or converted to non-farm uses. Our farms, farmland and farming opportunities could be lost forever.

At the same time, older farmers find it hard to plan for succession and arrange for a meaningful legacy. Many do not have identified farm successors, leaving the future of their farm in doubt.

Senior farmers transitioning out of farming and transferring their farms to the next generation in the family or a non-family successor is an essential part of a cycle that maintains working farms and farmland. Creating a secure exit from farming for older operators can also foster farming opportunity for new and scaling up farmers; a win-win solution for farmers, communities and the land. Farmers without identified successors (two-thirds of retiring Iowa farmers, according to one study) need special attention and help to find a transferee and execute a successful transfer.

According to a January 2014 New York Times article, the overriding concern of the two-dozen pioneer organic farmers who recently convened in California was, “How will they be able to retire and how will they pass their knowledge to the next generation?” The so-called “conundrum of retirement” that they pondered was framed in a larger context of our aging farmer

continued on next page

population, the high cost of land, the need to pass on farming knowledge, and the shortage of interested farm family successors.

Organic farming has a long, strong and rich heritage in New England. It is thriving in many ways. But there is troubling handwriting on the wall. According to the 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture, only 11% of New England's nearly 2,000 reporting organic farmers were under age 35, while 43% were 55 years and older. Nothing could be of more pressing concern to the organic industry than to make sure that organic farms stay in organic farming, that retiring organic farmers are assured a secure future, and that new organic farmers can step in.

Tackling farm entry and exit challenges requires a comprehensive approach that seeks creative solutions at multiple levels. Organizations like Land For Good (LFG) are stepping up with farm link, farmer training, and succession planning programs. At LFG, we specialize in farmland access, tenure and transfer. We work with new and established farmers, landowners and communities to help farmers get onto land, and transition from one generation or owner to another. We explore and promote innovative approaches to land access and transfer to assure the future of farming in our region.

Kathy Ruhf is executive director of Land For Good, where she has worked since 2004. Prior to that she directed the New England Small Farm Institute for 17 years. Kathy has written, consulted

and taught about farmland and beginning farmer issues for 25 years. She also served as the coordinator of the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group from 1992-2012, where she specialized in regional food systems and public policy. Kathy lives in Western Massachusetts.

Kathy Ruhf will be a speaker at the 2014 NODPA Field Days, talking about farmland access, tenure and transfer, and the exciting new tools and methods available to beginning and established farmers. You can reach Kathy Ruhf by email: kathy@landforgood.org. Visit Land For Good's Website to learn more about their services: www.landforgood.org.



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For Sale: Approximately 15 certified organic dairy cows (all are currently milking, including two or three first-calf heifers). We're milking a barn full right now, and with 12-15 due to calve within 30 days, we need to make some room for fall. We have Holsteins, Crosses, Dutch Belted, and Jerseys. Our herd average is under 200 SCC and I'm on DHIA test and PC Dart. Prefer to sell as group. Email for more info or call 802-782-8833. Our farm is located on 1344 Ballard Rd in Georgia, VT (just South of St. Albans and right off I89 exit 18 and Route 7).

Cheese maker looking for cows and goats. Just moved to new farm in Hudson valley. Need animals. Oberhasli goats, Guernsey, Dutch Belted, Milking Shorthorn dairy cows. A2 preferred. 23 years cheese making, cows/goats will have a good home. up to 50 goats, 5-8 cows. Contact: Brent Zimmerman Email: bz@priello.com; phone: 517-607-6254. Location: Cocksackie, NY

Wanted: 6 started heifer calves, prefer 1-3 months old and prefer crossbreds. Email is most convenient means of contact. John Amey, email: johnamey.isf@gmail.com; phone: 603-538-7734. Location: Pittsburg, NH

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available. Mainly Brown Swiss, plus two Jerseys and a Canadienne. Three cows (1 mid lactation and 2 freshening), four bred heifers, and two yearling heifers. Call or email for more information. Sarah Fournier-Scanlon, email: taprootcommons@gmail.com; phone: 413-634-5452. Location: Cummington, MA

Feed and Seed:

For Sale: NOFA-NY Certified Organic 2014 Crops. Dry Hay (Timothy/grass mix) and Bedding Hay. Both 4 1/2 X 4 Round bales. Also, first and second cut Baleage (Clover/grass mix, Alfalfa/grass mix, and Oatlage). Also have 2013 Clover and Timothy Seed still available. Contact Jeff @ Mitchell Farm, Avoca, NY - 607-566-8477 or email Mitchellorganics@Hotmail.com

Looking to buy: Certified organic large square bale dry hay, preferably located in MA, Eastern NY, Eastern PA, VT, NH, Conn. I need both dairy-quality and dry cow-quality hay. I can arrange trucking if you don't haul. Please e-mail or phone if you have anything available. Michael Barnes: email: michael@thegreybarnandfarm.com, or phone: 317-531-3405. Location: Chilmark, MA.

Farm Link & Real Estate

Experienced farm family seeking opportunity to work with retiring farmer and his wife. We would like to work towards possible ownership of the farm and cattle and machinery. Our



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goal right now is to have an opportunity to get back in farming because we love working with animals and the land. We also have some well used and maintained machinery that we would bring with us. Our family has grown up on farms and been around the farming industry all our lives. We currently reside in Newark Valley, New York, which is just west of Binghamton. We would like to stay in the Northeast but we are willing to go elsewhere if the appropriate opportunity was too good to resist. You can contact us: Frank, at 607-321-5062, Tom, at 607-321-5694, or Minelle, at 607-321-3684.

Dairy Farm for Lease in Londonderry - 200 acres with approximately 60 acres of pasture and cropland. Tie-stall barn, sheds, garage, 3 bdrm house. Vermont Land Trust seeks dairy farmers who will farm commercially and are interested in a long-term lease. Contact Joh Ramsay at (802) 533-7705 or jramsay@vlt.org.

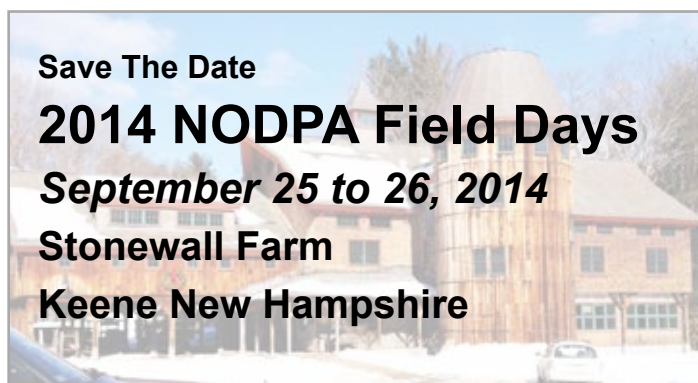
Small farm for sale in St. Johnsbury, VT. The land is very productive and fertile. The sale price is \$160,000, the appraised value of the farm subject to the conservation easement. More info and photos are available at www.vlt.org/pat-enaude. For more information, please contact Jon Ramsay, Vermont Land Trust, (802) 533-7705 or email him at jramsay@vlt.org.

November Is NODPA's Annual Fund Drive

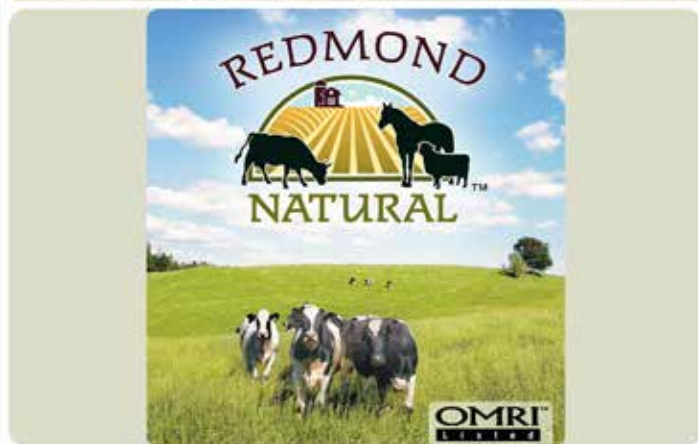
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NET UPDATE

Recent ODairy Discussions

*By Liz Bawden, Organic Dairy Farmer,
NODPA President*

Robust discussions about eye injuries, constipation and bloating, organic grain supply in the Northeast, a debate about 100% grassfed, and more.

An electric fence insulator (the kind made to screw into a wooden fence post) was caught in the eyelid of a cow. The farmer was concerned about damage to the animal's eye, and asked for suggestions. One of the veterinarians pointed out that often times foreign objects will just skirt the edge of the eyeball, as it tends to roll out of the way. She suggested irrigating the area with diluted calendula tincture to flush out any foreign debris, or to drop a pellet or two of homeopathic Aconite, Arnica, or Symphytum in water to make an eyewash.

A three-month old calf on pasture with his mother appeared bloated, constipated, and was breathing heavily. Homeopathic Nux vomica was suggested. Then, if the animal breaks with diarrhea, give homeopathic Colchicum or Colocynthus. Two ounces of olive oil, some activated charcoal, and herbal cascara sagrada were also suggested to get things moving along. If the bloat seems serious, you could pass a tube to relieve the gas; then the olive oil could be administered down the tube. The following advice was offered when tubing a calf: "Remember to pass the tube under the left nostril down the left side of the throat. The word swallow has two LL's in it: stay left of center (when you are standing the same direction as the calf)".

Some suggestions were offered to all in a discussion about the Northeast organic grain supply: "Make sure you test your barley, triticale, and wheat this year for vomatoxin - this is a high vomatoxin year due to wet weather during bloom. Become familiar with what vomatoxin does to cows; recognize the symptoms, and learn what you can do if you have it. Home-grown grain is a risk, no doubt about it. The damp weather that mattered for infection was back at bloom, about 4 to 6 weeks ago, but the current damp weather can make the infection worse. This is not a year to late harvest your grain. Also, much of the barley and triticale is coming out of the fields damp, and needs to go through the grain dryer. Please remember that heat-dried grain will not sprout, and therefore will not be suitable for fodder."

There was a long thread initiated by a farmer who took issue with the common practice of feeding molasses to cows shipping milk that will be labeled as "100% grassfed". It was pointed out that organic molasses is used as an energy supplement, and is allowed by organic certifiers. A researcher added that he has seen nothing

Website & E-Newsletter Advertising

NODPA is pleased to provide additional advertising opportunities for our organic dairy supporters and resource individuals through our Website and our monthly E-Newsletter.

Website Advertising

Three banner ads are located at the top of the home page and at least 10 other pages on NODPA's website. NODPA.com receives over 2500 visits each month navigating to an average of 3 pages per visit.

Ad Design: Display-ready ads should be 275 pixels wide by 100 pixels tall. Your ad can link to a page on your website.

Cost: Display-ready ads are \$150 per month.

E-Newsletter Advertising

Two banner ads are located at the top of each E-Newsletter, going out monthly to over 2,000 individuals through our E-Newsletter, the NODPA-ODairy discussion forum, and NODPA's Facebook page.

Ad Design: Display-ready ads should be 300 pixels wide by 125 pixels tall. Your ad can link to a page on your website.

Cost: Display-ready ads are \$125 per month.

Discounted rates for commitments of 6 months or more.

Interested in one or both of these opportunities? For more information, contact Lisa McCrory, NODPA News and Web Editor, at:

Email: Lmccrory@hughes.net

Phone: 802-234-5524

Go to the following web page for more information:

www.nodpa.com/web_ads.shtml

that indicates that feeding molasses would change the fatty acid profile in the milk, and he feels that, with all the other challenges in the dairy world, this is not an "A" list issue. Others farmers pointed out that organic molasses is already in tight supply, and that it is expected to get worse. Another producer suggested going back to feeding root crops such as carrots to supplement energy (but then, that's not strictly "grassfed" either...). ♦

Liz farms with her husband and son in Hammond, NY. You can reach Liz by phone or email: 315-324-6926, bawden@cit-tele.com.

Calendar

September 13, 2014

Late Season Grazing School

Bread and Butter Farm, Shelburne, VT

Organized in partnership with UVM Extension and NOFA Vermont. Pre-registration encouraged. Contact NOFA Vermont: 802-434-4122 or email Sam Fuller: sam@nofavt.org.

September 16, 2014

Direct Marketing Meats

Online

During this webinar, brought to you by the Women in Ag Learning Network, presented in collaboration with the Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network, participants will hear from a meat processor and a farmer about how to increase profitability from your direct market meat sales. Presenters will talk about how to fill out a cut sheet, marketing tips for selling the whole animal and what works (and what doesn't!) in direct marketing meats. For more info: <https://learn.extension.org/events/1694>

September 19, 2014

Sustainability for Massachusetts dairies: Grazing, raw milk, and organic certification

Sidehill Farm, Hawley, MA

This on-farm workshop will include a pasture walk, tour of the farm's dairy and yogurt-processing plant, and conversations with a range of experts in the field, including: Host farmers Amy Klippenstein and Paul Lacinski, Grazer Ridge Shinn (www.ridgeshinn.com), NRCS Agronomist Tom Akin, Winton Pitcoff, NOFA Mass Raw Milk Network, and Don Persons of Baystate Organics, who will be on hand to discuss the process of organic transition and certification. For more info: email Winton at winton@nofa-mass.org or

www.nofamass.org/programs/raw-milk-network#.U8BBdajWEXw

September 19, 2014

Maintaining Pasture Systems to Meet Your Farm Goals

Wild Geese Farm, Rushford, NY

Join Lynn Bliven of Wild Geese Farm for a tour of her integrated livestock production system. Learn about benefits of co-grazing and leader-follower systems. Aaron Santangelo, Field Crop Community Educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Allegany County, will lead discussion on identifying and controlling invasive and poisonous plants livestock owners should be aware of. We will discuss economics for pasture management and how to create a balanced system. Contact Stephanie, NOFA NY, at 585-271-1979 ext. 509.

Subscribing to ODairy:

ODairy is a FREE, 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:

www.nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml

September 19-21, 2014

Common Ground Country Fair

Maine Organic Farmers and Growers Association (MOFGA), Unity, Maine

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September 21, 2014

Washington FarmLink Networking Event

Enumclaw, Washington

Pease join Washington FarmLink to meet other farmland owners and farmland seekers, and to join in conversation about farmland access and what it might take to lease your land or to find land to lease or purchase in the Enumclaw area. For more information: (206) 632-0606 or mary@cascadeharvest.org

September 25-26, 2014

14th Annual NODPA Field Days

Stonewall Farm, Keene, NH

See pages 19-21 for details on the NODPA Field Days. For information, please contact NODPA event coordinator Nora Owens: noraowens@comcast.net, phone: 413-772-0444, or visit our website: www.nodpa.com/fielddays_2014_overview.shtml

September 26, 2014

Stewardship at Seven W Farm, Paullina, Iowa

The day will begin with a farm tour and discussion of Biological Monitoring, an aspect of Holistic Management that helps farmers evaluate their land and determine whether different management is necessary. Following lunch, discussion will center around the farm's small grain production and how this alternative to corn and soybeans fits into the farm model. For more info: email: info@practicalfarmers.org, phone: (515)232-5661

October 3, 2014, Cover Cropping and Tillage

Provident Farm, 1254 Blacks Creek Road, Liberty, PA

Presented by Penn State Extension and PCO, this event will take place Friday, October 3 from 10am to noon at Dave and Caleb Johnson's Provident Farm. For more information, contact Dave Hartman, Penn State Extension at (570) 784-6660 ext. 12 or dwh2@psu.edu. To register, call (800) 851-9710 or send an email to bat12@psu.edu.

October 8, 2013 - 11:00am - 2:00pm

Strategic Forage Planning for the Organic Dairy Farm Franklin Farm, Guilford, VT

This same workshop will be held in two other locations that week: October 9: De La Bruere Farm, Derby, VT, and October 10, Pineville Farm, Randolph, VT. Sponsored by NOFA Vermont. Pre-registration encouraged. Contact NOFA Vermont: 802-434-4122 or email Sam Fuller: sam@nofavt.org or visit <http://nofavt.org/events/strategic-forage-planning-organic-dairy-farm-franklin-farm>

October 14-15, 2014

Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance Conference

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Sonoma County Wine Country, Rohnert Park, California www.wodpa.org; wodpa@outlook.com; (707) 696-5154

October 31 - November 1, 2014

Restoration Agriculture and Mob Grazing Workshop, Clark, Mo.

Join Green Pastures Farm as they install a permaculture swale system with

continued on page 40

FEATURED FARM

Northwood Farm

continued from page 29

George Macleod's book, 'The Treatment of Cattle by Homeopathy'.

Activist Farmers

With partners on the farm, Jim and Rebecca have more time to get involved in ways they feel can have a positive impact on the organic food system and the agricultural landscape. Rebecca is on the Wisconsin Organic Advisory Council. Set up by the Governor, this group meets 4-5 times a year. She is also a board member for the Dane County Farmers Market, a vibrant producer only market, in its 42nd year, located on 8 blocks around the Capitol in Madison, Wisconsin. Jim and Rebecca are both Advisory Board members for the Organic Consumers Association, on the Advisory Board of the Center for Food Safety, Board Members for the Family Farm Defenders. Jim is the chair of the Administrative Council for North Central SARE a Board Member for their Rural Electric Cooperative, a Board Member for the Midwest Environmental Advocates (a pro-bono environmental law firm) and an Advisory Board member for the USDA NAREEEAB (National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board).

Through their involvement, they hope to be an active voice in support of local food and local community. They hope to see a

heightened awareness and support for a healthy food system with more land in organic production provided strict organic standards are maintained - especially when it comes to the pasture standards. "Cattle need to meet pasture requirements," says Jim. "If they can't do it in the arid West of Southwest, then I guess that is a place where organic dairy will not work."

Both Jim and Rebecca feel strongly that the general public needs to learn what organic really means and see how organic food has clearly been taken over by food companies interested more in profit than principal. "And the 'Natural' label for food should be banned," says Jim. "Pay attention and get involved," says Rebecca. "...get involved so that you have some say in what's happening. It is quiet complacency that allows the powerful to take control. Farmers need to know, we need to educate ourselves about who's in control, and how to get some of that control back."

Farm life keeps Jim and Rebecca very busy, but what seems to beckon them a little more these days are the ways in which they can be effective as educators, advisors, and activists. Bringing some new blood to their farm in the form of a budding partnership is giving them some added freedom and time to agitate and advocate for a healthy, vibrant agricultural economy with the knowledge that their farm will continue after they have retired. ♦

Contact information for Jim and Rebecca, plus website address: email, r.j.goodman@mwt.net; phone, 608-489-2291; website, www.northwoodorganicfarm.com/wordpress/

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Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance Producer Milk Check Assignment Form

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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 _____

_____ \$0.07 per hundredweight (the \$.05 marketing check-off plus \$0.02)

as an assignment from my milk check starting the first day of _____, 201____. The total sum will be paid monthly to NODPA. This agreement may be ended at any time by the producer by sending a written request to their milk buyer with a copy to NODPA.

Milk handlers please send payments to:

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA), Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342

Producer signature: _____ Date: _____

Producer 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, Executive Director, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342, so we can track who has signed up and forward this form to the milk handler. Thank you.

Subscribe to the NODPA News and support NODPA!

By becoming a subscriber you will receive 6 copies of the NODPA News and help support the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance. NODPA depends on your contributions and donations. If you enjoy the bi-monthly NODPA News; subscribe to the Odairy Listserv (http://nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml); visit our web page (www.nodpa.com) or benefit from farmer representation with the NOP and processors that NODPA provides, please show your support by making a generous contribution to our efforts.

Note that if you sign up for the NODPA Voluntary Organic Milk Check-Off, you will be automatically signed up as a NODPA News subscriber.

_____ \$35 to cover an annual subscription to NODPA news

_____ \$300 to \$500 to become a Friend

_____ \$50 to become an Associate member (open to all)

_____ \$500 to \$1,000 to become a Patron

_____ \$100 to become a supporter of NODPA

_____ \$1,000+ to become a Benefactor

_____ \$150 to become a Business Member

Name: _____

Farm Name: _____

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, NODPA Executive Director, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342, or by fax: 866-554-9483 or by email to ednodpa@comcast.net. Please make your check payable to: NODPA

Credit card: Master Card Visa Card #: _____

Name on Card: _____ Expiration Date: ____ 201__ Security Code on Card: _____

Organic Milk Sought

CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley

CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley is the nation's largest farmer-owned organic cooperative. With members throughout New England, the Northeast and Southeast, we offer a stable, competitive organic milk pay price to members. We are forecasting solid growth in these regions and welcome the opportunity to talk with producers about joining our Cooperative.

We offer veterinary support, quality services, organic food, the Organic Trader buy/sell newsletter and inclusive communications from a farmer-owned cooperative with over 25 years of organic farming and marketing experience. Our Feed Department sources organic feed purchases for our member operations. Please contact our Regional Managers or Farmer Relations for further details.

- In New England, contact John Cleary at (612) 803-9087 or john.cleary@organicvalley.coop or Steve Getz at (608) 632-3790 or steve.getz@organicvalley.coop.
- In New York, contact David Hardy at (608) 479-1200 or david.hardy@organicvalley.coop.
- In the Southeast, contact Gerry Cohn at (919) 605-5619 or gerry.cohn@organicvalley.coop.
- Central to Western PA, contact Solomon Meyer at (814) 515-6827 or solomon.meyer@organicvalley.coop.
- In Southeast Pennsylvania and Maryland, contact Terry Ingram at (717) 413-3765 or terry.ingram@organicvalley.coop.

Farmer Relations is available from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern Monday through Friday at (888) 809-9297 or farmerhotline@organicvalley.coop and online at www.farmers.coop.

Upstate Niagara

Upstate Niagara is a member owned dairy cooperative dedicated to high quality dairy products. We are currently seeking new organic member milk. Upstate Niagara offers a highly competitive organic pay program with additional premiums for milk quality and volume. For producers interested in transitioning to organic production, we also have programs to assist you in the transition process.

If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact Mike Davis at 1-800-724-MILK, ext 6441. www.upstateniagara.com

Natural by Nature

Looking for an organic milk market? Natural Dairy Products Corporation (NDP) was founded in 1995 as a family owned and operated organization producing organic dairy products under the Natural By Nature brand name. Natural By Nature

organic dairy products are produced with great care and distributed nationwide.

We are actively seeking organic, grass-based dairy producers in the southeastern PA, northern MD and DE areas. NDP pays all hauling and lab costs, and we are currently offering a signing bonus, so this is the time to call! We'd be happy to answer your questions ... please call 302-455-1261 x221 for more information.

Maple Hill Creamery

Seeking 100% Grass Dairy Farmers! Maple Hill Creamery, located in Stuyvesant, NY is a small manufacturer of 100% grass-fed organic yogurt. We are growing rapidly and are looking for more 100% grass-fed farms in the NY state area to join us.

We offer:

- Six month winter premium
- Grass fed premium paid OVER organic milk price
- Grass fed dairy technical assistance / mineral program
- Organic transition payments possible
- Requirements:
- No grain, no corn silage
- Just pasture, dry hay and baleage
- Certified Organic

Please CALL US with questions! Phone: 518-759-7777

Dairy Marketing Services Organic

More milk is needed by Northeast organic customers! Dairy Marketing Services can help you facilitate the transition from conventional to organic production. Count on DMS Organic specialists for organics, transition stabilizers, pasture requirements, pasture supplies and more. Call David Eyster at DMS: 1-888-589-6455, ext. 5409 for more information today!

Stonyfield Farm, Inc.

Stonyfield Farm, Inc is looking for producers to support their comprehensive line of organic yogurt and diversified portfolio of organic dairy products. We offer a stable price platform with competitive premiums for components, quality and volume. In addition, we offer a comprehensive technical assistance program designed with producers to help them achieve their unique business goals. We are actively seeking producers looking to grow their business today and for the future.

Please contact our Farmer Relationship Manager, Kyle Thygesen for further details at kthygesen@stonyfield.com or (802) 369-0267.

To be listed, free, in future Organic Milk Sought columns, contact Lisa McCrory at 802-234-5524, lmccrory@hughes.net.

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From the MODPA Treasurer

What a year this is turning out to be. With a winter that didn't want to end in my area, spring rains that didn't stop till the 4th of July, and little change in how farmers are being paid. Some things just seem to be constant. Small grain harvest has been under way in my area with yields all over the board. Most appear to be average or under mostly due to the wet start we had. Most of the corn and beans in my area look like they will follow that trend. Hopefully there will be enough yield to keep the grain guys in business. I don't think we will see much change in the cost of grain. I recently sold some feed grade corn for what I feel was a very good price. That being said it was not a good price for a dairyman to purchase it to produce milk. If you have to lose money to go to work why go? Hopefully, we can see some increase in price to cover our expenses and have something left over to live on.

Talk of a check-off continues with little opportunity for the farmer to really have his say in the matter. I for one am opposed to this additional fee being forced on me. I have paid into these in the past and have not seen any real return. If we are expected to pay, then we will need to be able to bill it back to our processors and the consumers. I don't see the auto

makers and the like being forced to pay into a situation like this; why should the farmer? Please let your MODPA representatives know how you feel about this and whatever else may be on your mind. We are only a phone call or email away.

If you get the chance take in a field day or two this fall. This can be a great way to get a break in the action and get some fresh perspective on things. As always, I hope for a safe and bountiful harvest season for all.

Be Safe and Good to Yourselves,

Bruce Drinkman
MODPA Treasurer

Why Not Advertise With Us?

You'll reach a motivated, qualified audience with information about your products and services ... at an affordable price.

Go to our website to learn more:

www.nodpa.com/nl_print_advertising.shtml

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

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." To ensure a fair and sustainable farm gate price.

1. Keep family farms viable for future generations.
2. Promote ethical, ecological and humane farming practices.
3. Networking among producers of all organic commodities.
4. Promote public policy, research and education in support of organic ag.

MODPA Board

Wisconsin
Darlene Coehoorn, President
Viewpoint Acres Farm
N5878 Hwy C, Rosendale, WI 54974
ddviewpoint@yahoo.com
Phone: 920-921-5541

Jim Greenberg, Vice-President
EP 3961 Drake Avenue
Stratford, WI 54484
greenbfrms@tznnet.com
Phone: 715-687-8147

Bruce Drinkman, Treasurer
3253 150th Avenue
Glenwood City, WI 54013
bdrinkman@hotmail.com
Phone: 715-265-4431

John Kiefer, Director
S10698 Troy Rd, Sauk City, WI 53583
taofarmer@direcway.com
Phone: 608-544-3702

Jim Small, Director
26548 Locust Ave.
Wilton, WI 54670
Tel: 608-435-6700

Iowa
Andy Schaefer, Director
25037 Lake Rd
Garnaville, IA 52049
Tel: 563-964-2758

Michigan
Ed Zimba, Zimba Dairy
7995 Mushroom Rd
DeFord, MI 48729
zimbadairy@tband.net
Phone: 989-872-2680

Ohio
Ernest Martin, Director
1720 Crum Rd
Shiloh, OH 44878
Phone and Fax: 419-895-1182

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

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

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Northampton, MA**

CALENDAR

continued from page 35

Mark Shepard. This 3-day, hands-on educational workshop will cover how to design, install, and incorporate a swale system into any grazing system. Cost is \$550 per person/ \$1000 per couple. Learn more and register by Oct. 1 – only 40 spots available. for more info contact: Joe Mantoan 262-573-1887, email: jpmantoan@gmail.com

November 1-3, 2014

MOFGA's Farmer to Farmer Conference

Point Lookout Resort, Northport, ME

Based on the idea that farmers learn best from their peers and other practitioners, this event is known for its intimacy, in-depth treatment of topics, and amazing discussions. To Register or for more information, contact MOFGA: www.mofga.org, Phone: 207-568-4142, email: mofga@mofga.org

November 13-16, 2014, Biodynamic Conference: Farming for Health

Hyatt Regency | Louisville, Ky.

The biennial Biodynamic Conference, hosted by the Biodynamic As-

sociation, is the foremost opportunity in North America to learn about biodynamics, along with innovations from organic, permaculture, and ecological agriculture. Events include over 60 workshops, on-farm field days, pre-conference workshops and more. For more info: phone: (262) 649-9212, email: info@biodynamics.com

November 21-23, 2014

Restoring Ecosystems to Reverse Global Warming

Tufts University, Medford, MA

Organized by Biodiversity for a Livable Climate, in collaboration with the Institute of the Environment and the Center for International Environment and Resource Policy at Tufts University.

For more information and registration: www.bio4climate.org/conference-2014, or email: climate2014@bioclimate.org.

December 4-6, 2014

2014 Acres U.S.A. Conference & Trade Show: The Conference on Ecological Farming

Hyatt Regency Hotel, Columbus, Ohio

For more info: www.acresusa.com , email: info@acresusa.com, phone: 800-355-5313.
