NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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Member Info

Julie Wolcott and neighbor visiting in the sugar house.

Green Wind Farm, Fairfield, VT

Owned & Operated By Julie Wolcott & Steve MacCausland

by Sonja Heyck-Merlin

"We came here in the spring of 1979 with two draft horses plus some goats," explained Vermont dairy farmer Julie Wolcott. The farm recently transitioned to organic after three decades of shipping conventional milk. Green Wind Farm is located in the town of Fairfield, 50 miles northeast of Burlington. Neither Julie nor her partner Steve MacCausland came to it with a farming background but each had a deep respect for the land.

They sought, Julie said, "a land-based lifestyle with a focus on food self-sufficiency." It's easy to imagine them lugging a crate full of books into their farm house--perhaps a copy of *Putting Food By, Living the Good Life* by Scott

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Embracing Change in Organic Dairy

17th Annual NODPA Field Days: September 28 & 29, 2017

Truxton Community Center, Truxton, NY

Resilience: perhaps the best word to describe farmers. These days, with so many unpredictable patterns, be it weather, global competition, new technology or milk supply, organic dairy farmers need to be more resilient than ever. The 17th Annual NODPA Field Days program will spotlight education and strategies so organic dairy farm families will be well positioned to embrace these challenges. Whether it's preparing for the health of your farm's soil, the infrastructure changes at the farm, or the diversification of your crops to manage unpredictable weather patterns, we will be addressing these topics and much more.

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Message from the NODPA President

Just when we thought the only thing to worry about was the current oversupply, the Washington Post splashes a scathing expose of Aurora Dairy across its front page. The Post visited Aurora's High Plains dairy complex in Colorado over eight days in August to October of last year, and of the 15,000 cows reported to reside there, not more than 10% were ever seen out on pasture. Aurora was in hot water a decade ago when the NOP ruled that they were in "willful violation" of the organic standards. Organic farmers fought hard back then to develop a pasture policy that (we thought) would spell out the details that would bring every farm into line on the pasture issue. But the elephant in the room has always been that some farms were not brought into line. Mostly large farms in the West, in Colorado, Texas, New Mexico, California; there were always aerial photos coming across the internet that showed these dry-lot dairies with nary a pasture visible. We left this with the NOP enforcement staff, assured that the "age of enforcement" had come with additional staff and an expanded budget.

This story will most certainly irritate Aurora Dairy and other similar operations, embarrass the NOP, and raise questions about high-level political pressures directed at the NOP enforcement. And it will certainly fan the flames of new lawsuits directed at these mega-dairies that refuse to pasture their cows, and those organizations that certify them.

But here we are, and a consumer reads "Why Your Organic Milk May Not Be Organic" on the front page. That might be the end consumer for the milk from my farm, or yours. And that person is sitting in front of a bowl of cornflakes wondering if she has been scammed all this time. Just a little doubt that the organic seal may not mean what she thought it meant. That is the real damage. And I want to tell my story to that consumer; I want to tell her about our pastures, and soil fertility ideas, and how we know each cow by name, and how we source organic seeds, feed, and herbal remedies. Because she needs to know that there is value and integrity in the organic product we provide. We all need to tell our story.

Liz Bawden, NODPA President
Hammond, NY | Phone: 315-324-6926

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From the NODPA Desk: May 2017

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue has been confirmed and is in the process of reorganizing the US Department of Agriculture. His proposals would create a new Trade Undersecretary; eliminate the Rural Development Mission Area, and demote Rural Development to "office" status. The proposed shift would also see changes to NRCS, FSA and RMA as these would fall under a single Mission Area. The USDA has delayed the implementation of the organic animal welfare standard until November and is seeking comment on whether to let it take effect at all. While the media is seriously questioning the integrity of the organic seal, and there are reports of increasing GMO contamination of organic poultry feed, letting this regulation lapse into obscurity and not publishing the Origin of Livestock Final Rule will do serious damage to the consumer's perception of organic product, with mega organic dairies and mega poultry units benefiting from the current lack of clarity.

Against this background of USDA NOP inaction to publish and enforce a clear regulation, the exploitation of the organic program by international traders and middle market investment groups is becoming public through a succession of stories in the Washington Post. These stories have spread through many media outlets and will directly affect consumer confidence in the organic seal, especially for organic grain and dairy that are sold on the wholesale markets. Aurora Dairy was, once again, exposed for their lack of grazing. Their commitment to organic dairy is restricted to a checklist of calculations inspected by a State certifier that they helped set up. Their long time employee, Sonja Tuitele, summed up their attitude with her statement to Brownfield Ag News, "Even if you just meet the minimum of 30% of dry matter intake from pasture and the rest of the cow's intake is from stored feed, you are still certified organic." They were inspected in the non-grazing season by the State certification program who accepted their paper calculations.

For years, Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing, Inc. (OFARM) has been advocating for the enforcement of organic standards for imported grain. They have appealed directly to the NOP and made presentations to the NOSB. We have published their articles and shared their frustrations as they find their markets undermined with the importation of product that does not have the same rigorous inspection, trace-back, and accountability. NOP has finally started implementing some measure to verify organic certification but, in the words of NOP Chief, Miles McEvoy, "Alleged violations in foreign countries can be complex and challenging to investigate and enforce." The Washington Post very accurately reported about the situation and its implications for the veracity of organic livestock feed.

For both of these egregious abuses of the organic certification process, the 'expose' by the national media was only a matter of time. That it has taken so long to "hit the streets' is remarkable and there are still a few more organic 'truths' to be exposed, for example, GMO contamination of livestock feed. While the Organic Trade Association, the USDA, and multinational conglomerates have been pushing equivalence agreements and recognition of government accreditation with an increasing number of individual countries and the European Union, they have failed to invest in systems to protect the integrity of the organic seal. Their boasts about the growth of organic sales from $13 billion in 2005 increasing to $43 billion in 2015 which includes $1.2 billion in imports, fail to take into account the inadequate increase in support staff to maintain the integrity of the seal. There are only ten employees within the NOP Compliance & Enforcement Division ensuring compliance from eighty-two certifiers, 61,682 certified entities and 43 billion dollars in organic sales. The NOP budget has been level funded since 2014 at $9 million, which is 0.021% of organic sales. Yet they are still expanding international equivalency agreements. This rookie business mistake of outgrowing your support infrastructure has been instrumental in undermining the US organic producers market and threatens the long-term consumer belief in the organic seal.

If not the NOP to police organic integrity, then who? Organic integrity relies on the honesty of the producer and the buyer, but the cynical consumer will rightly say that they both have a financial interest and will bend the rules when they need to, which some obviously do. Buyers are increasingly pressuring producers to be more efficient and accept that a fair pay price is not a 'God given right'; that to compete in the market, pay price has to be lowered – effectively encouraging producers to cut corners.

The trade organization does not want the job of policing their members. They haven't come out and condemned those members that obviously are breaking the rules. They didn't immediately send a committee to look at the organic records of Aurora, owned by AG Real Value Fund and managed by Teays River Investments, to show their commitment to organic integrity.

The certifier is the first line of defense but their capacity and interpretation of regulations vary dramatically in some cases. Following NOP approval, some certifiers allow porches for poultry others don't. Some certifiers allow hydroponics, others don't. Certifiers interpret the Origin of Livestock very differently which allows a continuous transition in the expansion of organic dairy herds. Do we need a scorecard of certifiers that the consumer can check and a requirement that the name of the certifier is on the label? Will the organizations for inspectors and certifiers bear a responsibility for policing their members – restricting entry to those that don't meet certain standards and giving seals of approval?

It has become increasingly obvious that the NOP is not up to the job of policing certifiers nationally and internationally which these egregious repeated mistakes by the State of Colorado and importers have shown. Do state certifiers have the capacity and political will to enforce standards in the face of political and economic pressure? Experience shows that is not the case.

NOP have repeatedly ignored fully implementing continuous oversight of their accreditation activities. The NOP have taken on the low hanging fruit in compliance but there is not the political will and long-term commitment within USDA to apply appropriate penalties to high profile and influential offenders. ◆

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

CowSignals: A Successful Approach to Putting the Focus in the Barn Design and Management on the Cow

By Jack Rodenburg, DairyLogix

As a dairy specialist working in extension in Ontario, Canada for 34 years (1974 to 2008), my focus for most of my career was on getting our predominantly tie stall industry to adopt freestall housing. The main driver for encouraging that conversion was the dramatic improvement in labor efficiency that freestall systems offer. Over the years, my interest in making best use of labor on family run dairies has also sparked a strong interest in new and novel automation and sensor technologies. In 1999 the first milking robots in North America were installed 20 miles from my office and that technology has become an important part of my advisory work.

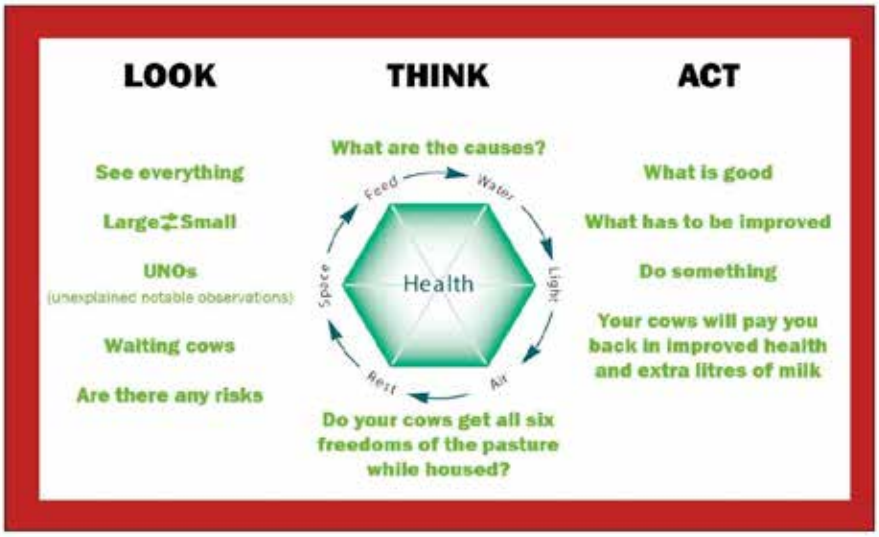
But while technology is important, especially in terms of my own little corner of the dairy world, it is not the most critical success factor in dairy production. Pedometers and other sensors can help us observe and monitor the cow and particularly since they can monitor a situation continuously, they can provide valuable information. But I have also learned that if these tools mean we stop looking at cows with our own eyes we are making a very big mistake. I work with a group of veterinarians in Holland that have gained an international reputation for teaching dairy farmers, herd workers, feed advisors, veterinarians and barn designers to be more sensitive to what our cows are telling us. They have branded their workshops, lectures and books as "CowSignals" and they are delivering these products in over 60 countries around the world in more than 15 languages. At the Western Canadian Dairy Seminar, in Alberta, this program was so well received that it was repeated 4 years in a row as a pre-conference workshop.

The concept was developed 17 years ago by Dr. Jan Hulsen and Dr. Joep Driessen, practicing dairy vets in the Netherlands, who

saw far too many dairy cows facing stressful situations on clients' farms. Many of these conditions, like hocks with no hair, and varying degrees of lameness were viewed as normal because they had become so commonplace. Twenty years ago, North American experts like Dr. Nigel Cook, and Dr. Neil Anderson were at the leading edge of improving cow comfort and in fact much of their advice has made it into CowSignals training. Today there are over 400 certified CowSignals trainers around the world, advocating for the dairy cow and encouraging farmers to observe their cows closely for clues about how they interact with the barn and its management. Yet, lame cows, sore hocks, and rumen acidosis are still the norm in many dairy barns today. While we all think we are better than that, when it comes to stress on cows, many of us remain "blind" to one or more aspects of the problem.

The CowSignals program teaches that low stress management of the dairy herd provides cows with the "six freedoms of the pasture". As illustrated in Fig. 1, the "CowSignals diamond" identifies these six freedoms as: unrestricted access to feed, water, light, air, rest and space. Every farmer trouble-shooting their own dairy facilities and management, and every advisor doing so for a client, brings their own set of biases to the situation. Applying the mantra of "feed, water, light, air, rest and space" to every assessment prevents tunnel vision and ensures every aspect of meeting the needs of the cow is given consideration. The CowSignals process also emphasizes a formal approach to problem solving that

Fig. 1 - The cow signals diamond and structured assessment process.



involves standing back and observing cows undisturbed, then getting in for a closer look and not making any conclusions until you have weighed your observations in relation to "feed, water, light, air, rest and space."

When assessing cow behaviour, it is useful to understand the "nature of the beast". By nature, the cow is a "herd animal" and when it comes to eating and resting, they show a clear preference for doing these things as a group at the same time. So having an eating space and a resting space for every cow in the herd is a priority in the world of CowSignals. Dairy cows are also "flight animals" that prefer to avoid conflict rather than face it. Although we have no predators in our dairy barns, conflict avoidance is also part of the strategy for less dominant animals in the herd in dealing with their herd mates. The CowSignals approach puts considerable emphasis on laying out barn space so animals have choices in terms of routes to feed and water, and access to milking in robot barns, etc. The concept also puts a lot of emphasis on identifying and addressing the "high risk" places and times when cows are most likely to suffer from stress. In that context, close up, calving and fresh cows, cows already lame or sick, and smaller animals low in the pecking order deserve special attention.

While conclusions about what to improve vary from farm to farm, creating a "stress free calving line" is often high on the list. The elements of a "stress free calving line" include a large bedding

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CowSignals

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pack for close up cows, perhaps with optional gates that can form a squeeze and a temporary calving pen, beside a pack area for milking cows which is right beside the parlor. Lots of manger space is also critical in this area. Farms that have this minimize stress by minimizing the changes in the cow's environment around calving time, and by offering maximum grip and comfort for resting and rising. Adequate manger space reduces competition for feed and quick turnaround through the parlor before other cows get in the way, means the fresh and lame cows in the pack get maximum time to rest.

What started as a single workshop format has grown to include more focussed workshop topics like Young Stock Signals, Hoof Signals, Robotic Milking Signals and several others. The original book "CowSignals" quotes no research studies but it is filled with practical illustrations and short, clear written suggestions, and it has been printed in 15 languages. There are now a dozen titles including books on hoof care, feeding, udder health, fertility, the dry period, dairy economics, barn design and robotic milking.

The "CowSignals" concept is not that well known in the USA but with a growing interest among consumers in where their food comes from and how it is produced combined with a growing interest among producers in cow comfort and preventative management, it is my hope that these trends "signal" a new and growing interest in what is best for the cow. . . . and there is no one that can tell us better what that is than the cow herself.

"Feed" is the First "Freedom" of the CowSignals Diamond*

Now, I would like to zero in on a few aspects of "unrestricted access to feed" that we have found valuable on dairy farms around the world. In the 60 countries we have collectively worked in, CowSignals advisors have learned a lot from top dairy farmers, but we have learned even more from cows, and cows always tell the truth!

A good place to start is to assess feed intake of individual cows. Look at the left flank of the cow, behind the last rib, below the short ribs. If you see a hollow triangle you know this cow did not eat enough today, and probably is sick already. Look for these cows with "danger triangles" every day, especially among fresh cows and close up cows. High feed intake every day is paramount to keeping cows healthy. Is she chewing 55 to 70 times on every cud? Less than 55, combined with poor rumen fill as described above, and loose manure, mean she is not getting enough forage. Giving cows like this the best possible care, perhaps in a straw pack with extra manger space, plenty of access to clean water and a great place to rest, may give them the opportunity to eat like they should.

You can also push into the rumen on the lower part of the triangle. Fluffy, and gassy is bad, dense is good. Score the "belly fill" while standing behind the cow. If the rounded hump of the rumen is not visible on the left side, the cow has likely not eaten enough in the last week. Body condition score can tell you how she has done in the last month. Pinch the skin between the tail head and the pin bone. If this is a deep hole and you feel only skin, she is too thin. Some fat under the skin is good but if there is a lot of fat, she is over conditioned and at risk of metabolic problems.

Good advice for getting high feed intake is usually quite simple. Dairy cows are "herd animals" and they are "flight animals" As herd animals they all like to eat at the same time, so provide the space for them to do that. Most Holstein cows need 27 inches when standing straight at the manger. Headlocks should be that width and total manger space should be at least that much per cow. When the depth of the eating area is too short or the top rail is too low or too close, or when 'floating neck rails" are used, cows stand sideways while eating. Then they use 5 feet of manger space. Look for these symptoms of poor manger design in your barn and fix them if you can. Hair rubbed off on the neck means cows are reaching for feed and not getting it. While moving the neck rail up and forward might help, it is really a symptom of not pushing up feed often enough. How often is enough? Simply said, cows should always be able to reach the feed. If you come to the barn and they can't reach it you waited too long.

Dairy cows are flight animals that avoid conflict when they can, so provide lots of space and escape routes. Having enough crossovers to the manger allows cows to choose from several routes and avoid the "big momma" that is guarding the nearest water trough. In a group of 60 to 80 cows, offer 3 crossovers that are at least 12 feet wide. In one recent workshop, the main milking herd was eating from both sides of a bunk with dead ends on each side. Timid cows had only one route to feed. Adding a cross over on the end of the bunk increased intake immediately and resulted in 4 extra pounds of milk.

Cows need to have the "wheels to get to the manger frequently, and the floor needs to carry them there securely. Lame cows don't eat enough because they eat 4 times per day instead of 12, and you can see their rumens are empty. Prevent lameness with comfortable stalls that permit 12 to 14 hours of resting, keeping alleys clean and dry, regular foot bathing and timely intervention when there is a problem. Every top dairyman we know has a trim chute in a handy spot and the basic skills to deal with a problem cow

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himself today rather than wait for the trimmer who is coming next month. A floor with good grip helps cows walk confidently to the manger.

A survey of Ontario freestall herds conducted in 2010 showed that half the herds were fed fresh feed once per day, and by far the largest percentage were fed right after morning milking. On average, they pushed up feed 4.2 times per day, and by far the longest interval between push ups was always between 11:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. One of the biggest lies farmers tell us and themselves is that there is always feed in front of their cows. We would be willing to bet that at 3 a.m. there is very little in the manger and what is there is too far for cows to reach. This is often the time of day when timid, stressed and disadvantaged cows have the opportunity to stand at the manger undisturbed, but to no avail if they can't reach the feed. We think herds that feed once a day should consider doing it after the evening milking, followed by one push up before bed time. Feed stays fresher during the cooler night time, and especially heat stressed cows will eat more in the cooler night time. The next day when there is less feed in the manger there is more opportunity to observe the bunk for sorting and manage push up. Don't wait to push up until the feed is out of reach. Cows eat faster and easier with less sorting when they eat out of a pile of feed then when they are down to concrete. Always push up feed for cows returning from the parlor. It improves cow flow, and promotes cows standing after milking while the teat ends close, thereby reducing mastitis. Twice a day fresh feed at milking time, especially in summer is an even better option. We often find stale hot feed in front of close up cows. This is really bad because high feed intake in these cows is critical to a good transition. Although we regularly talk to dairymen who are "limit feeding to intake," in our experience, the only way to be sure there is enough is to over feed. All the top production herds we know feed 5 to 10% more to the milking cows than what is normally consumed. They put the leftovers in the mixer and subtract the weight from the amount fed to monitor intake on the group.

While some sorting is unavoidable if there is enough manger space, all cows get an equal chance to look for the good stuff. But if managing particle size and adding water to a TMR can reduce sorting, it will be a plus to do what you can. Getting enough forage into every cow is critical to their health and production. Cows are not pigs and were never really meant to eat grain. Adequate physical fibre in the diet is a must to keep rumens and cows healthy. While labs and nutritionists are pretty good judges of fibre levels, the cow is the best judge of all.

When you have diarrhea, you are sick and more susceptible to other problems as well, and the cow is no different. When you "hear" fresh cows with diarrhea, offer them more high quality forage and less grain or add chopped straw to the ration. Adjusting the level of straw by 200 grams per cow per day for a week, and watching milk production, butterfat test, feed intake and manure scores is a great way to fine tune ration fibre levels.

Hair off the neck suggests infrequent feed push up. Standing diagonally and pushing on the top rail suggest poor top rail placement. Lack of rumen fill indicates the second cow has eaten very little today.

Of course the quality of the feed itself and balancing the ration are important as well, and labs and nutritionist have much good information to offer. But when it comes to feeding management, observing the cows and their environment can give you the CowSignals you need to keep them healthy and producing at their best.

Originally a two-part article, Jack Rodenburg, DairyLogix and Joep Driessen, CowSignals Training Company contributed to the section on Feed.

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

FIGHTING WORMS WITH FUNGUS

By Paul Biagiotti, DVM

Duddingtonia flagrans sounds like a character from the BBC television series Downton Abbey; or perhaps a variety of English tea rose. Instead, it is a species of soil fungus that shows promise in managing intestinal nematode ("worm") infestations on organic dairies. It's no secret that "effective organic dewormer" is an oxymoron; diatomaceous earth is famously ineffective in clinical trials, and the use of allowable synthetic dewormers such as Moxidectin and Fenbendazole come with age and gestation restrictions and bans the animal from ever being used for organic beef. Effective, economical, organic–compatible deworming options are desperately needed.

Danish scientists first reported on clinical applications of so-called nematophagous ("worm-eating") fungi in 1993. In particular, the fungus D. flagrans is found in nature in pasture manure pats. Reproducing through the spread of chlamydospores (inactive or "resting" spores), they form, as most fungi do, a vegetative mycelium or complex network of filaments that collect water and nutrients from the soil. Unlike other fungi, this species also creates trapping devices that snare and kill nematodes. By-products of decomposition of the worms are then used as a food source. The biology of nematophagous fungi has been studied in horses, goats and cattle. Experimentally, feeding or drenching the animal with spores for several days to weeks, results in a spillover or inoculation of manure pats.

Once defecated, the spores germinate and begin to form worm-trapping filaments. The spores do nothing while inside the animal; their parasiticidal work is all done outside, in the pasture. In theory and practice, continued feeding of the spores eventually reduces the number of infectious larvae in the environment. Over time, worm loads- including the harmful HOT complex (Hemonchus, Ostertagia, and Trichostrongyles) of worms- should decrease.

A 2017 scientific report in the journal Experimental Parasitology relates a trial in grazing eight to twelve month old Brown Swiss/zebu-cross calves conducted in tropical Mexico. Calves were drenched with a spore-containing solution every other day for thirty days. The treatment resulted in fewer nematode larvae in manure and a significant reduction in larvae in grass.

Commercial applications of this novel therapy will be most welcome; a pelleted form of D. flagrans chlamydospores with a long shelf-life is a practical vehicle that I can envision. Both organic and conventional graziers should benefit from this innovative form of biological control of medically-significant nematodes.

Paul Biagiotti is a native of Ridgefield, Connecticut, who spent some formative years on a dairy farm in Northern Italy. His family returned to Ridgefield to live at Mamanasco Farm. Biagiotti attended UConn, Storrs and Tufts University Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine. After practicing on dairy cattle throughout the Northeast, he moved to Idaho to specialize in large herd dairy practice. He is widely published in dairy industry magazines. In 2016 he published his first book, Practical Organic Dairy Farming (Hoard's Dairyman Books). He lives with his wife and two children on an irrigated farm in Jerome, Idaho. They milk four cows and raise dairy steers in a pasture-based, sustainable system.

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Anatomy of a Rare Drought

Insights from New York Farmers

By Shannan Sweet, Ph.D., and David Wolfe, Ph.D., Cornell University

Key Findings:

- The record-breaking 2016 drought affected farmers across New York State (NYS) with more severe effects in Western and Central NY than Eastern NY.
- Crop loss estimates from a late summer survey of over 200 farmers suggest that more than 70% of rainfed field crop and pasture acreage had losses greater than 30%, with some reporting over 90% crop failure.
- Most fruit and vegetable growers who irrigate lacked the irrigation capacity and water supplies to keep up with the drought, and estimated crop losses of up to 35% were reported.
- Common suggestions from farmers on help they could use in dealing with future drought included better longrange weather forecasts, financial assistance to expand irrigation capacity, and more information on drought resistant crops.

Background

An unusually low winter snow pack, followed by lower than average rainfall and higher than average temperatures during the 2016 growing season (NRCC) led to continuously worsening drought conditions throughout New York State, and record-breaking low stream flows in Western and Central NY by late July and August (Drough Monitor).

New York (NY) farmers have asked if they should expect more dry summers like the one we had in 2016 in the future with climate change. The answer to that is we don't entirely know. Climate scientists are fairly certain that the number of frost-free days will continue to increase and summers will be getting warmer, which will increase crop water demand (Horton et al. 2011; Walsh et al. 2014).

Climate models are less reliable for predicting rainfall and snow, but most projections suggest that total annual precipitation will remain relatively stable in New York, with small decreases in summer months and possible increases in winter. Also, the recent trend of the rainfall we do get coming in heavy rainfall events (e.g. more than 2 inches in 48 hours) is likely to continue. This would suggest both flooding and drought will continue to challenge New York farmers, and it is possible that more severe shortterm droughts in summer could increase in frequency.

Given these projected impacts, we surveyed NY farmers throughout August and September (Drought Survey), so as to better understand how farmers were affected by the 2016 drought and if they are able to cope with drought risk. The survey was distributed online and in paper format with the help of Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Farm Bureau, and 227 farmers responded from nearly every county (Fig. 1). Though a majority of responses came from field crop farmers, vegetable and fruit crop farmers were also well represented (Table 1).

Drought Impact

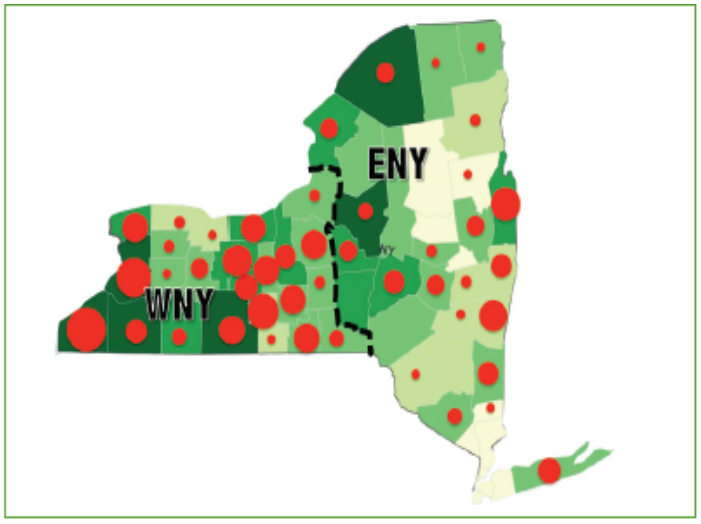

Fig. 1. Drought survey responses by county. Darker green colors indicate a greater number of farms (Source: 2012 USDA NASS, ESRI – 12-M249). Red dots designate counties that responded; larger dots indicate a greater number of respondents. The dotted line delineates Western (WNY) and Eastern (ENY) New York. Counties in WNY were those designated as "national disaster areas" due to the drought.

Across the state, farmer-estimated crop losses for rainfed field crops, pasture, fruit crops and vegetable crops were 31%, 42%, 47%, and 46%, respectively (Table 1).

Among fruit crops, rainfed grapes, known for relatively deep root systems, were markedly less affected by the drought than fruit trees (primarily apples) and berries (Table 1). Figure 2 illustrates that estimated crop losses of more than 30% were reported for rainfed field, pasture and vegetable crops, and some famers reported losses above 90%. Significant crop losses were reported

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Using Compost – The Problem of Overuse

By Neal Kinsey

A lack in general soil fertility is seldom the major problem we see in working with farm crops – even less so for fruit, vegetable and nut production. In regard to N-P-K, the levels are usually well covered, especially where better yields are being produced. But more and more growers are striving to use any available residues as materials to build and utilize as compost. Many growers are now making their own compost by combining manure with various types of organic materials. This can be an excellent move, with the potential for providing numerous benefits for the soils that receive it, so long as the use of such materials actually help to maintain adequate to excellent fertility levels and top quality production.

But every grower should also consider that overuse of even an excellent compost can result in a shortage of one or more needed nutrients for the crop, particularly when that nutrient is already high in a soil. The same is true of any soil amendment or fertilizer that will result in an inordinate amount of build-up for any element already high in that soil.

Specifically too much nitrogen can cause a copper deficiency. Though copper is only needed in "trace" amounts, along with potassium and manganese it helps increase stalk resilience and skin strength. Too much phosphate and/or potassium can also hurt crops instead of helping them.

Excessive phosphate levels in the soil can result in zinc and/or sulfur deficiencies. Too much compost or manure [or even soft rock phosphate] can cause this to happen. Sulfur is needed for building protein content, nitrogen utilization and root growth. Zinc is necessary for moisture absorption by the plant - causing plants to require more rainfall or irrigation than would otherwise be needed to produce the same results. Thus too much phosphate in the soil can rob any crop of the ability to efficiently utilize needed nutrients and moisture.

Furthermore, excessive potassium levels will reduce boron availability, needed for nitrogen conversion and the transfer of starch from the leaves to the seed or fruit (sizing). Excessive potassium, or even sufficient K in combination with too much sodium, can block manganese uptake, a key nutrient for seed germination, quick emergence, plant height, fruit set and resistance to lodging.

Consider that too much of any essential nutrient can cause problems for growing plants, just as too little of any needed nutrient will be a detriment to the crop. When an excellent compost is adding to the problem, it is a problem. A proper relationship between all required nutrients is necessary in the soil to achieve the desired response for the crop being grown there.

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You cannot correctly manage fertility until you have the ability to properly measure it. It is possible to define, measure, and manage soil fertility in order to achieve higher quality in the field and the crop. We teach that system to clients using a program designed to help growers utilize soil testing and fertilization for maximum benefit. The Albrecht system of soil analysis is built upon more than 50 years of soil fertility work utilizing detailed measurements and specially formulated procedures, helping control both excesses and deficiencies in soils used for agricultural crop production.

By using soil chemistry to correct the mineral nutrients, this program provides the physical structure that in turn provides the proper environment for the optimum level of biological life in the topsoil. In this regard, the Albrecht Model, using the three different programs as a system for providing the exact fertility for each soil, helps build an environment to better encourage life in the soil, which translates to the crops as both quality and yield.

For those who would like more knowledge about using this program, public workshops and training programs are conducted at various times each year as shown on our web site, www.kinseyag.com.

For more information concerning our soil fertility programs using the Albrecht System, please contact us at Kinsey Agricultural Services, Inc., 315 State Hwy 77, Charleston, MO. 63834. Telephone: 573/683-3880. Fax: 573/683-6227. E-mail: neal@kinseyag.com.

Neal Kinsey, from Charleston, Missouri, USA, owns and operates Kinsey Agricultural Services, Inc., a company which specializes in soil fertility management. The program is based on the system of providing soil nutrients to correctly treat the soil and the plants that grow there, using soil chemistry to correct the soil's physical structure to build the "house" which enables the biology to flourish. Our business includes working with most major food and fiber crops throughout the world. Consulting includes soils received for analysis and recommendations from every state in the United States and from over 75 countries, principally from the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Great Britain, Germany, Austria and France. Detailed soil audits will determine specific fertilization programs based on each individual soil and its fertility requirements.

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Drought

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even for the irrigated acreage of fruit and vegetable crops (averaging 6 and 27%, respectively, Table 1). This reflects an inability to keep up with crop water demand on irrigated acres in 2016 in this severe and long-term drought. When asked what most limited their ability to maintain yields, 38% said limited water supply, 31% said inadequate irrigation equipment, and 18% said poor soil water holding capacity (data not shown).

Of the 16% who reported that other factors most limited their ability to maintain yields, several mentioned: lack of time, labor costs, water costs, the need to rotate irrigation equipment through crops, excessively hot temperatures, damaged and malfunctioning equipment, and being unprepared in every way for needing to irrigate.

Additional comments from farmers related to the effect of the drought included statements about: extra costs associated with buying hay; having to sell cattle due to an inability to keep them watered and fed; and concern about the effect of the drought on next year's crops (e.g. perennial fruit crops). Several farmers indicated factors that helped them get through the drought, including: cover cropping, no-till farming, increased soil health, and improved grazing management.

The drought impact was so severe in Western NY (WNY) that the USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA) declared most counties in this region "natural disaster areas" in 2016, and eligible for some financial relief in the form of lowcost loans (FSA). The more severely drought stricken farms in WNY reported higher crop loss for both rainfed and irrigated crops compared to Eastern NY (ENY) (Table 1). In WNY nearly 80% of farmers estimated the overall economic impact "moderate" to "severe", and less than 20% considered in "minor" or just a "nuisance" with almost no economic impact. Many farmers in ENY also felt a substantial economic blow, but only about half categorized the impacts as "moderate" to "severe", and the other half referred to it as "minor" or a "nuisance."

Adaptive Capacity

The majority of fruit farmers who irrigated reported using drip irrigation (data not shown). Most vegetable crop farmers who irrigated used moveable sprinkler pipes and big gun sprinklers. In this extreme year, several farmers who lacked irrigation equipment reported using anything from hoses and hand watering to sprayers and garden sprinklers. Sixty-five percent of farmers reported using well and pond water for irrigation, 15% used city water, and 14% used streams, lakes, or canals. Other water sources used for irrigation included hydrants, cisterns and springs. Most farmers said ponds (45%), wells (24%), and streams (22%) proved to be inadequate sources of water this year. The 6% who claimed that city water was inadequate said it was the cost that was prohibitive.

(a) CROP RAINFED	NO. OF FARMS		TOTAL ACRES		MEAN % LOSS	
	WNY	ENY	WNY	ENY	WNY	ENY
Field	**115**	**78**	**17,056**	**12,788**	**39**	**22**
corn	38	17	7,095	4,719	40	21
forages	59	46	7,540	5,665	48	35
soybeans	13	8	1,787	1,519	45	20
small grains	5	7	635	885	21	13
Pasture	**22**	**13**	**6,991**	**625**	**49**	**35**
Fruit	**50**	**12**	**4,005**	**196**	**52**	**41**
fruit trees	16	5	813	177	34	35
grapes	25	2	3179	15	26	13
berries	9	5	12	4	96	75
Vegetable	**49**	**30**	**1,834**	**1,102**	**53**	**39**
beans&peas	8	5	449	1,003	47	37
potatoes	6	3	612	4	52	33
sweet corn	9	4	138	39	42	36
other veg	26	18	635	56	70	49
Other	**7**	**5**	**226**	**10**	**44**	**19**

(b) CROP IRRIGATED	NO. OF FARMS		TOTAL ACRES		MEAN % LOSS	
	WNY	ENY	WNY	ENY	WNY	ENY
Fruit	**28**	**17**	**601**	**515**	**10**	**2**
fruit trees	10	11	519	407	9	1
grapes	6	2	52	90	4	0
berries	12	4	30	18	18	5
Vegetable	**55**	**31**	**2,517**	**166**	**27**	**26**
beans&peas	3	1	102	1	43	0
potatoes	5	4	387	45	21	38
sweet corn	9	4	1,362	49	18	23
other veg	38	22	667	71	25	44
Other	**6**	**6**	**94**	**6**	**22**	**12**

Table 1. The number of farms in Western (WNY) and Eastern (ENY) New York that responded to the 2016 drought survey, and the total acres and mean estimated percent crop yield loss for (a) rainfed and (b) irrigated crops. Note: because no field crop or pasture farms reported using irrigation there is no irrigated crop data for these.

When asked what criteria farmers used to prioritize which fields to irrigate 34% said crop value, 29% said crop sensitivity to stress, 21% said location to water source, and 8% said soil water holding

capacity. Other factors used to prioritize where to irrigate included: which crops had a better chance of survival (e.g. mulched or weed fabric covered crops, crops in hoop houses or high tunnels), the maximum amount they could irrigate, the ease of irrigation (e.g. planting in plasticulture), the amount of water remaining in their irrigation source (i.e. how low was the pond), age of perennial crops, or soil moisture sensor readings. When asked what criteria farmers used to prioritize when to irrigate 38% said crop sensitivity to stress, 25% said weather forecast, 22% said crop value, and 11% said soil water holding capacity. Other criteria used to decide when to irrigate included soil moisture sensors and online tools (e.g. CFS). Farmers' responses varied when asked what they might have done differently if they had known in advance how dry this summer would be (Fig. 3). A common response (22%) was expand irrigation capacity, but many (36%) selected the "other" category and wrote in options that included suggestions related to increasing water availability (e.g. more ponds or wells), building soil organic matter and water holding capacity (e.g. cover crops and no-till), and many others.

Insights for Extension Educators, Researchers and Policy Makers

When asked how organizations such as Cornell Cooperative Extension, university researchers or government and non-government agencies could help them cope with future drought risk, farmers expressed interest in knowing more about:

- Drought resistant crop varieties
- Irrigation development and planning, irrigation options for perennial fruit crops, and gravity-fed irrigation
- Improving soil quality and water retention, and water saving ideas
- When and how to irrigate specific crops, and how soil moisture affects nutrient uptake
- Pasture rotation, silvopasture, rotational grazing, and stockpiling forage
- How to minimize the effect of drought (e.g. weed control and mulching)
- What pests are more (or less) prevalent during a drought
- Dealing with mental stress related to drought and climate issues

In response to that same question, farmers said they wanted more:

- Development of online tools and better long-range forecasting
- On-farm courses and training, and educational materials about agriculture and drought
- Financial assistance to cover drought losses

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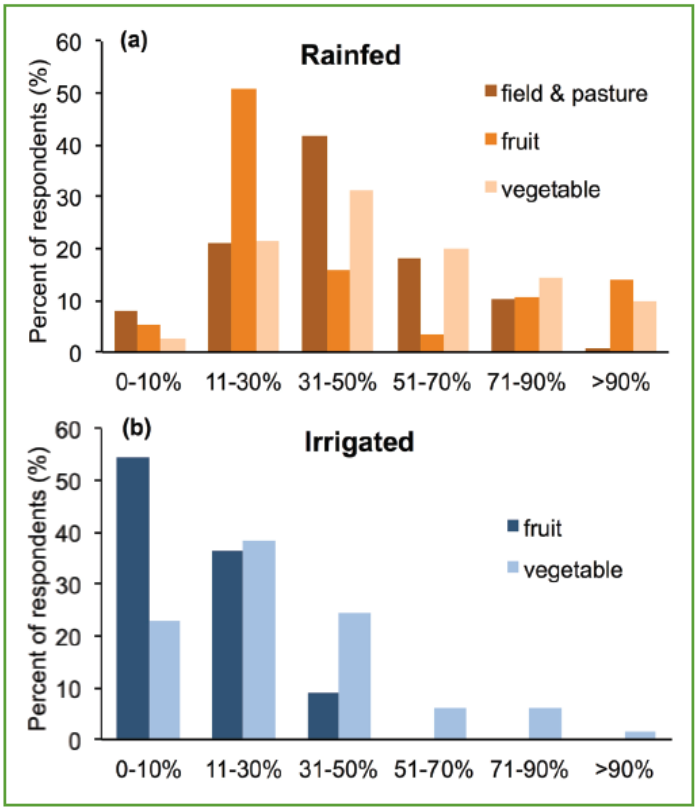

Fig. 2. Percent of respondents that estimated crop yield losses within certain percent ranges for (a) rainfed and (b) irrigated crops. Data averaged across New York State.

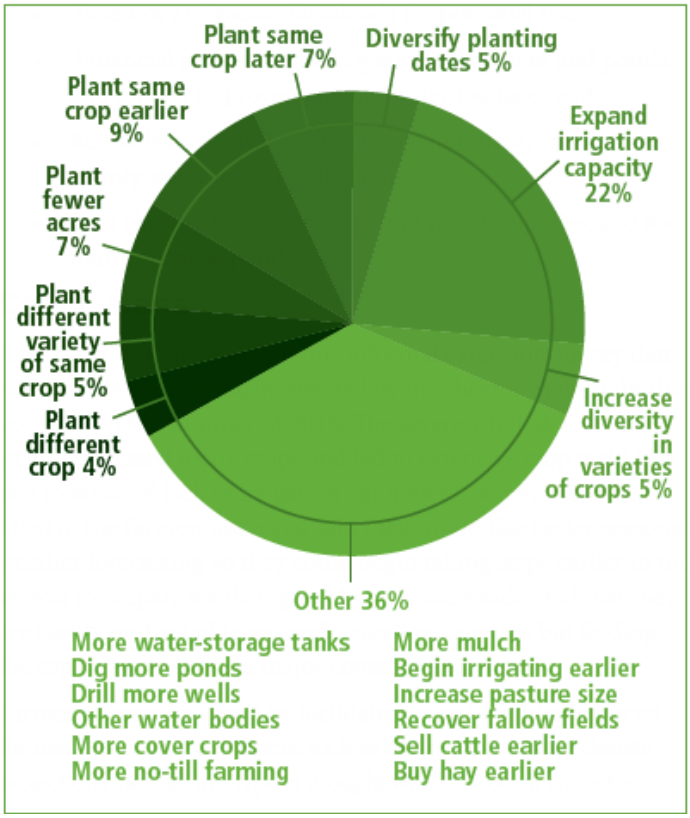

Fig. 3. Production change farmers would have made if the drought could have been anticipated.

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Drought

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- Inventory of vacant farmlands for potential use
- Financial assistance for irrigation equipment and ponds, and for soil improvement and water management
- Rentable and leasable irrigation equipment, and cheaper county water for agricultural use
- Cost sharing for: cover crops and no-till supplies, and for multi-purpose ponds.

Conclusions

It is clear from the results of this informal extension survey that NY farmers were seriously affected by the shortterm drought that occurred in the summer of 2016. The severely hot, dry, sunny weather stressed many crops and led to extensive crop yield loss due to farmers' lack of irrigation equipment, water, and time. Most of the farmers surveyed said they would like better seasonal weather forecasting so they could begin taking steps earlier in the season to prepare for drought. Many farmers indicated that they are highly motivated to expand irrigation capacity, but finding the capital to do this is a major constraint.

Farmer adaptation could be facilitated by policies that reduced the investment risk for farmers, such as lowcost loans. Since climate projections indicate this type of drought will likely occur more frequently in the Northeast in the future, it is important to understand how famers can adapt and better prepare for future drought risk, as well as to understand what organizations such as Cornell University and Cornell Cooperative Extension can do to provide the help farmers need to sustain both farm productivity and water resources across NY State.

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This project was funded by Cornell University's Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future and The Nature Conservancy and done in collaboration with the Cornell Institute for Climate Smart Solutions (CICSS) **For more information contact Shannan Sweet:** 126 Plant Science Bldg., Ithaca, NY 14853; 607-255-8641, sks289@cornell.edu.

Shannan Sweet is the NatureNet Science Postdoctoral Fellow at Cornell University, working with **David Wolfe,** a Professor in the Horticulture Section of the School of Integrative Plant Science at Cornell. Both are affiliated with the Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future and serve in an advisory capacity for the Cornell Institute for Climate Smart Solutions.

Figure Credits: Shannan Sweet

Cornell University Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future The Nature Conservancy

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

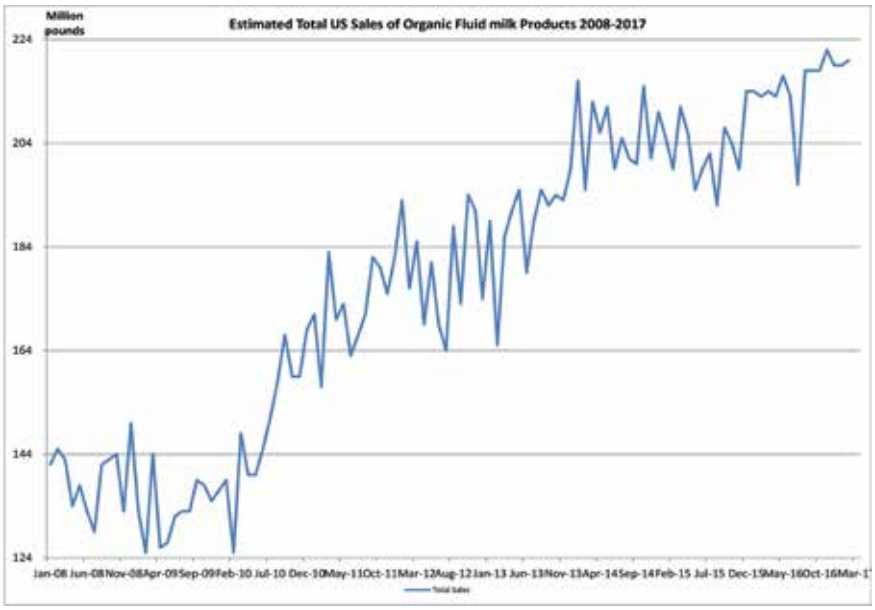
Organic Milk Pay, Retail and Feed Prices for May 2017

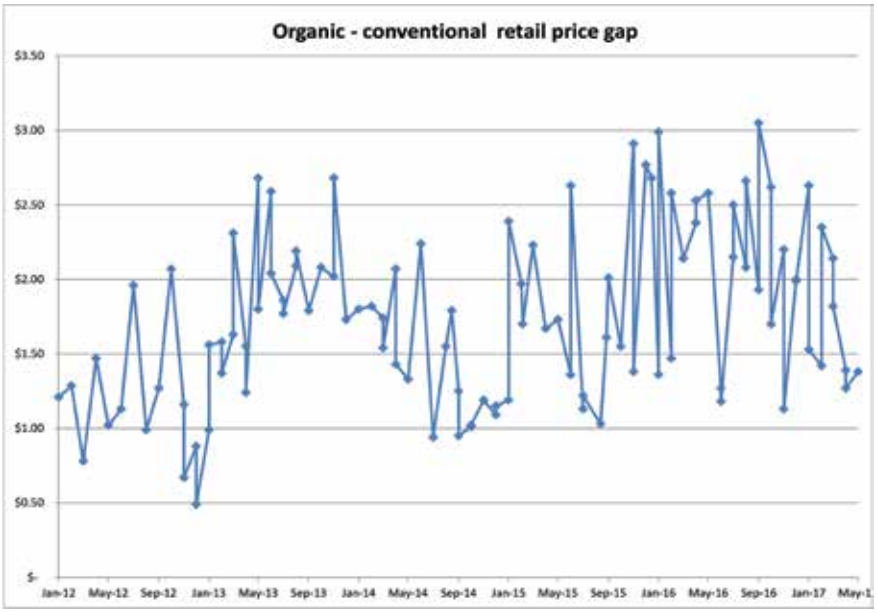
By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

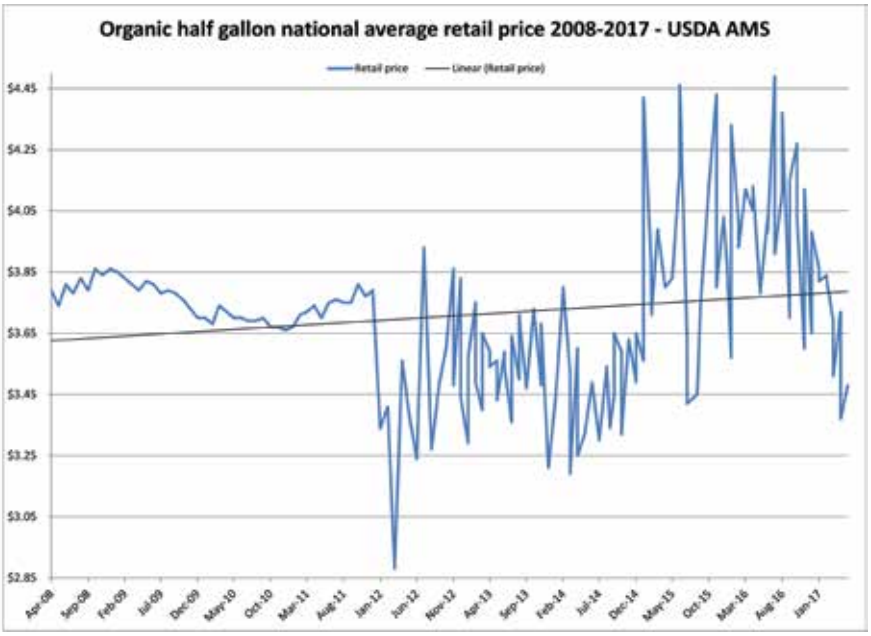
The latest USDA AMS national data reports total organic milk products sales for February 2017 were 203 million pounds, down 4.8% from the previous February. January-February 2017 sales are even with January-February 2016. Total organic whole milk products sales for February 2017, 76 million pounds, were up 1.7% compared with February last year and up 7.2%, January-February compared with the same period of 2016.

March 2017 has seen increases in organic milk sales in the Northeast. The Federal Milk Market Order 1 reports the volumes for the use of all types of fluid (retail sales) organic milk by pool plants. Unfortunately, they don't yet report the use for manufacturing milk and other components. During March 2017, organic whole milk utilization totaled 16.3 million pounds, up from 14.6 million one year earlier, an 11.6% increase. Organic reduced fat milk utilization for March 2017, 23.1 million pounds, was up from 21.8 million pounds in March 2016, a 6.2% increase. During February, pooled milk not previously entering the northeast began to ship into the order from Wisconsin and pooled milk previously shipping to the order from sources in West Virginia and Ohio was not.

Pay prices are tumbling and all transitioning dairies are being told to wait for a year before they can transition. Organic Valley announced further drops in price with their $1/cwt "inventory management deduction" that went into effect May 1st and will continue "until conditions warrant otherwise." This is on top of the $1 deduction for the spring flush milk surplus in May, June and July and the $2/cwt price reduction last year. The Organic Valley quota based on the active base, except for those producing less than 270,000 pounds, grassmilk producers and 'foundational loads', went into effect 3/1/17, with the $20 deduct for any milk over the quota volume. In addition, Organic Valley "strongly







ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

request(s)" that members voluntarily reduce production. Some OV producer owners are now reflecting back on Organic Valley's knowingly taking on another 400 new members a couple years ago despite record low conventional milk prices that were forecast to continue for the long term.

Other buyers in the northeast are dropping pay price including Upstate which has dropped its Market Adjustment Premium by $2 as of April 1st. Maple Hill has dropped its price by $2 for May & June milk. Maple Hill is giving financial incentives to its producers to reduce milk with payments to cull cows, raise calves on cows, and other production practices. DanoneWave (WhiteWave/Horizon) has asked for a volume reduction of 5% and has dropped its pay price. We saw this in 2009, and the same is happening again. The answer has always been more attention to supply management which producers have been requesting for the last ten years, rather than rapidly expanding gross sales. DanoneWave appears to have paid better attention to that than CROPP.

The Department of Justice announced on April 3rd 2017 that it requires Danone S.A. to divest Danone's Stonyfield Farms business in order for Danone to proceed with its $12.5 billion acquisition of WhiteWave Foods Company, Inc. "The proposed acquisition would have blunted competition between the top two purchasers of raw organic milk in the Northeast and the producers of the three leading brands of organic milk in the United States," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Brent Snyder of the Justice Department's Antitrust Division. "Today's proposed settlement will ensure competitive marketplaces for both farmers in the northeast that sell raw organic milk and consumers who purchase fluid organic milk in stores nationwide."

Danone and WhiteWave will now combine their activities in North America to operate as a Strategic Business Unit, named "DanoneWave".

In looking at the buyers for Stonyfield, Dean's name has obviously been mentioned as has Unili

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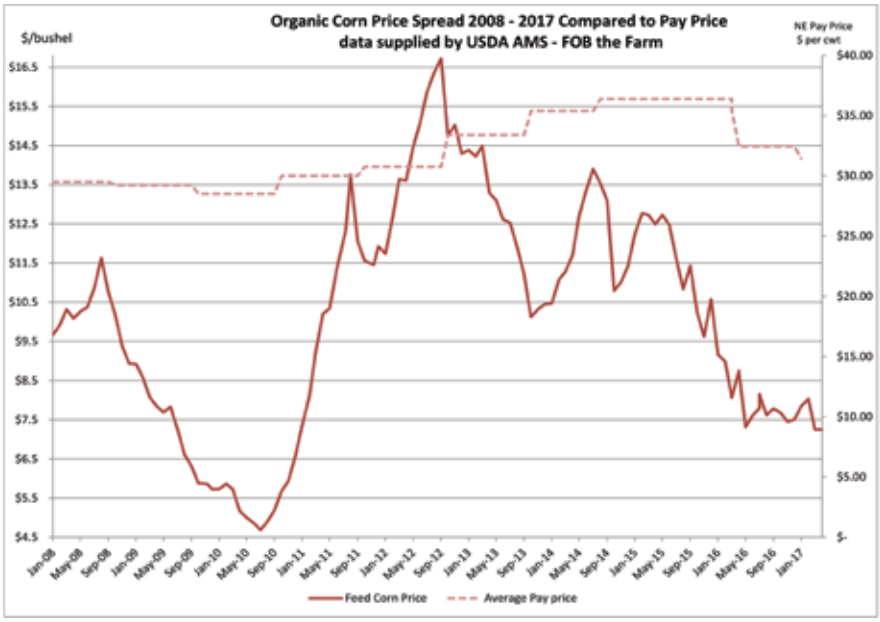

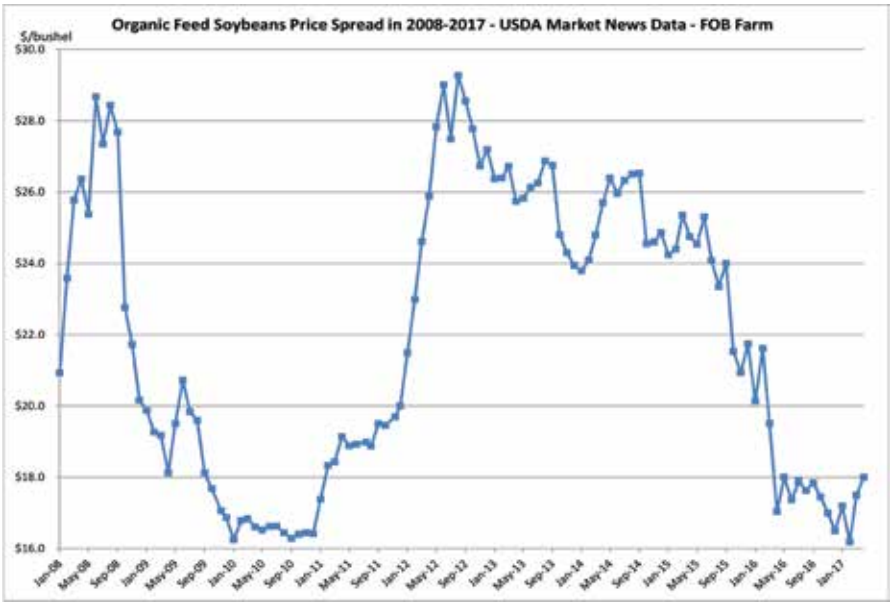

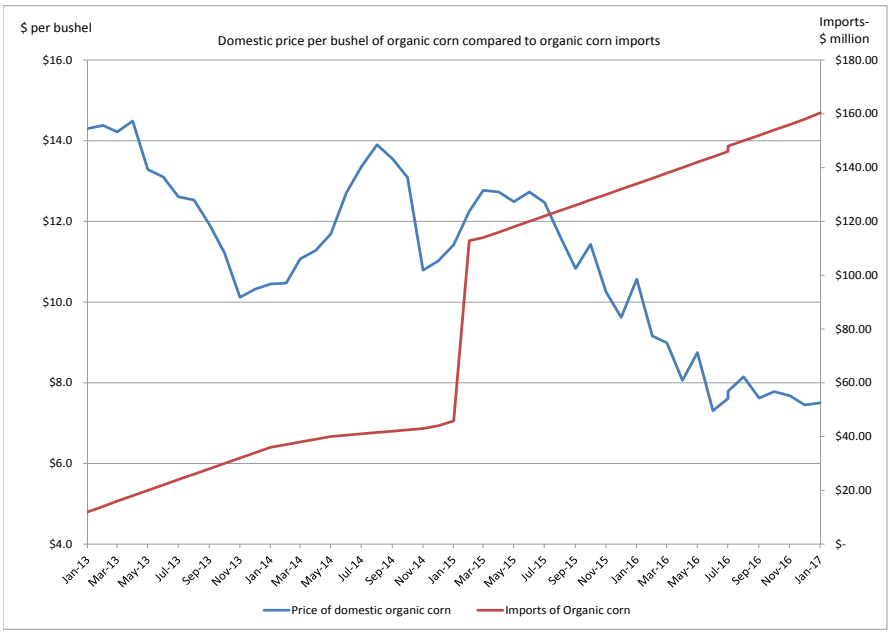

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Seeing the Pasture for the Trees

By Genevieve Slocum, Research and Marketing Support, King's AgriSeeds

Shaded pastures are among the more challenging conditions faced by anyone trying to establish a productive pasture. This scenario varies but often involves a grazier who wants to set up a very intentional form of silvopasture, managing both trees and forage to balance the productivity of both.

To be clear, there is no forage crop you can grow well under full leaf canopy. Plants need some sunlight to perform photosynthesis, manufacture sugars, and grow. Although the ideal balance of needed conditions differs for each plant, there are also a set of basic requirements for any plant to thrive.

Depending on the available sunlight, a shady area can result in a thinner stand. The less robust growth will also be less resilient to outside impacts like traffic or overgrazing. Too much shading stunts the height of the forage species that have a naturally upright growth habit, and also leads to less tiller production. However, in shade tolerant species, leaf area and both shoot-to-root and leaf-to-stem ratios may be increased. With less active cell division and growth, sugars are also apt to concentrate in the plant.

Selecting Forage

Some cool season species are more tolerant, especially orchardgrass, ryegrass, tall fescue and meadow fescue. Clovers are another good choice, since many species of clover are lower-growing and used to inhabiting the understory of a stand.

Orchardgrass is best (think about the name – it's right at home under tree cover). Tall fescue can do well, but it has lower forage value, especially in the summer, and can be very competitive with other species. As a sidenote, clovers (especially crimson clover and red clover) and annual ryegrass are considered some of the best species for interseeding into corn at 5th leaf stage, since they can take the shade of the corn crop until harvest, then flourish as winter annuals.

A mix dominated by these species is the best bet, since you can't be sure which components will struggle at various points throughout the year.

The Role of the Trees

As trees go, bigger trees are more suited to silvopastures – they provide more shade for animals and offer thicker bark and more developed root systems to defend the tree against animal impact.

When you plant cool season perennials (or even cool season annuals like small grains or brassicas) in a shade-prone area, you're working in tandem with the trees' natural growth cycles. If you're working with deciduous trees, forage germination, emergence, and rapid growth periods likely coincide with the trees' off-season, when limbs are partially or completely leafless. Especially for species getting their start in the early spring, the open tree canopy helps them capitalize on this opportunity.

Perennial pasture species also minimize competition with the trees. They have different rooting depths, and their active growing seasons are often staggered with those of the trees.

Surprisingly, trees in turn work to the advantage of the forage. They create a cooler microclimate, with modulated air and soil temperatures, that allows us to bring cool season species further south successfully, buffering them from some of the effects of heat and drought.

Lower temperatures also help increase the digestibility of forage – summer heat causes in dip in forage quality for many cool season grasses.

Trees also deposit and mine valuable nutrients and organic matter – from dropping leaves to sending roots deep down into the soil. The most productive tree roots (and most soil nutrients) are in the top four inches of soil, however, so animals have to be rotated to avoid too much compaction impact.

A silvopasture can work not only to promote ecosystem health and biodiversity, but also to animals' advantage – shade protects them from heat stress and improves gain and milk production, and provides nutritional perks that they wouldn't find in open pastures, like acorns, walnuts, and hickory nuts.

The heat stress threat of treeless areas should be taken seriously and can reduce milk production by 20-30 percent, in addition to slashing pregnancy rates. Heat stressed animals drink more water, which also promotes overgrazing near the water source, undergrazing far from it, and spending more time in and around

streams.

Trees naturally cool the surrounding air with the release of moisture that evaporates from their leaves – another benefit to cattle.

Some silvopasture systems are designed for high-value timber production while providing short term cash flow from livestock.

Ideally, a silvopasture is limited to 200-300 trees per acre, with an ideal canopy cover of 20 percent. Trees are best placed evenly or strategically, whether in grids, single rows, multiple rows, or clusters. When evenly spaced, the shade isn't limited to one spot, so the animals won't wear out or overgraze the limited shady spots. A pasture with even or consistent shade distribution will have the most even grazing, with no heavy use areas or areas of heavy manure deposition or flies. Trees should be thinned to favor the best trees. Additionally, planting trees to the west side of pastures is a strategic way to give protection from the afternoon sun.

Pigs, the original foresters

Pigs are originally forest dwellers and feel right at home in the mixed species setting of the silvopasture. They like tearing up woody debris and gleaning the leaves. With their rooting behavior, pigs can disturb soil to help you renovate a wooded area. They can also take care of many invasive species you might not otherwise know how to handle. Invasive species are usually defined as non-native species that "infect" a hospitable area and quickly multiply and take over because of their lack of natural predators. They are quite difficult to eradicate, because without thorough removal (you might need full tillage or herbicides) they can keep coming back and spreading, choking out other species and destroying the local ecosystem. When people ask about how to handle invasive species in their pastures, they often mean any species that's spreading out of control for a variety of reasons, chief among them that the animals won't or can't eat it.

If you choose to broadcast your shade-tolerant forage, you might want to let the pigs out first to rough up the area and expose some soil, and then let them out on it after seeding to do their version of cultipacking – "hoofing" the seed in.

Pigs, goats, and even sheep can be left in an area to overgraze swaths of invasive species you want to get rid of. For example, Japanese stiltgrass is a very fast-growing, lush, and opportunistic species that cattle won't touch but pigs will root up and completely demolish.

You will have to monitor the area closely for animal impact, and avoid leaving the animals on so long that they destroy the intended species – including the trees! Building a successful silvopasture really means maintaining a multi-story ecosystem in such a way that no species is managed to the detriment of the others.

Genevieve Slocum, Research and Marketing Support, King's AgriSeeds, can be reached at (717) 687-6224 or genevieveslocum@kingsagriseeds.com.

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NODPA Field Days 2017

Embracing Change in Organic Dairy

17th Annual NODPA Field Days: September 28 & 29, 2017

Truxton Community Center, Truxton, NY

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Reflecting the urgency of the topics being explored in the program, we have an amazing line up of nationally and internationally recognized speakers who are coming to share their expertise. Here's a preview of the workshop topics and the excellent speaker line-up:

Neal Kinsey, renowned expert on soil fertility management and owner of the international consulting company, Kinsey Agricultural Services, will present practical strategies for ensuring that you keep your soil healthy and fertile, especially in light of unpredictable weather patterns.

Jack Rodenburg, founder of Dairy Logix, Ontario and our keynote speaker, will be sharing his expertise in two areas. He is a Canadian dairy advisor specializing in dairy systems design and will address critical elements to consider when designing or updating your dairy infrastructure. As our keynote speaker, Jack, a certified "CowSignals" trainer and coauthor of four CowSignals books, will engage the audience in a lively, interactive presentation on CowSignals, a program designed to teach farmers and others to really understand what their cows are communicating by 'reading' your cows signals, and strategies for utilizing this information to improve cow comfort, productivity and your farm's infrastructure.

Dr. David Wolfe, Professor of Plant and Soil Ecology, School of Integrative Plant Science and Faculty Fellow and Chair of the Climate Change Consortium, Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future, Cornell University, who's professional focus is on the impact of climate change on agriculture, will address recent shifts in weather patterns and climate change projections and then identify the opportunities and challenges for dairy and associated crop production.

Sarah Flack, a consultant and educator well-known to organic dairy farmers across the country, specializes in providing practical information on grass based and organic livestock production to farmers, organizations, institutions and individuals. She will offer strategies for making well-informed and financially sound decisions on major farm management changes, such as whether a robotic milking system fits into your farming and grazing system, and if your farm is suitable to convert to an all grass-based system.

Dr. Sina McCullough, a Ph.D. in Nutrition from the University of California at Davis, and author of *Hands Off My Food!: How Government and Industry Have Corrupted Our Food and Easy Ways to Fight Back* will walk us through the truth behind what's currently in our food and how it got there. She reveals who is ultimately responsible for the adulteration of our food and how each of us has the power to restore the integrity of the food we eat. She will offer strategies to do so and believes that it's easier than you might think. Her session will be followed by a Q&A session and book signing

In addition to a very timely, informative educational program, there will be two farm tours. This year we are adding a pre-confer-

Embracing Change In Organic Dairy

Kathie and Kirk Arnold's new barn at Twin Oaks Dairy, Truxton, NY

ence farm tour on Thursday morning at the Casey Farm, Apulia Station, NY, that is owned and operated by Joanne and Bill Casey. Casey Farm is an organic dairy that ships to Organic Valley and has diversified their income stream by adding a pick-your-own berry operation. The Field Days Farm Tour on Friday afternoon will be at Twin Oaks Dairy LLC, owned and operated by Kathie and Kirk Arnold. Attendees will have the opportunity to tour the Arnold's new dairy barn, and benefit from Dairy Logix founder Jack Rodenburg's expertise in barn design (Jack worked with Kathie and Kirk in their new barn's design) during the tour.

We are also excited to announce that Fay Benson, the Small Dairy Extension Specialist from Cornell Cooperative Extension South Central NY Dairy and Field Crops will provide information on how prescribed grazing impacts pasture productivity, conservation, and soil health as he shows meeting participants around the New York Grazing Coalition Pasture Soil Health Trailer, a self-contained, solar powered, mobile unit that contains a rainfall simulator, water infiltration demonstration equipment, a soil quality and water movement kit, and several other items.

The NODPA Field Days meeting will take place at the Truxton, NY Community Center and will include a full trade show, plenty of delicious local organic food, and time to connect with both old and new friends. We will of course have the producer only meeting on the Friday morning to commiserate over the dismal state of organic dairy, the deficiencies of the NOP and what the future may hold. We hope you will be able to join this very special NODPA Field Days.

If you are interested in sponsorship and trade show opportunities, please contact Nora Owens, NODPA Field Days Coordinator at noraowens@comcast.net or by phone, 413-772-0444. She will be able to send you information and answer all of your questions. More information and registration forms will be available online and in the July NODPA News. ◆

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Organic Farmers, Consumers Call for USDA to Reject Organic Checkoff with comments to USDA

By Ed Maltby, Executive Director, NODPA

The No Organic Checkoff Coalition submitted to the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA) a list of 1,888 signatories to a petition urging the agency to reject a proposal to create a new "research and promotion" program, also called an organic checkoff program. The Coalition also submitted a letter opposing the checkoff signed by more than 60 organic organizations asking for the USDA to end the checkoff proposal. Two Coalition partners submitted petitions with a total of 19,592 signatures to stop the checkoff. The coalition represents 31 organizations and more than 6,000 organic farmers from the Western, Midwestern, and Eastern United States.

NODPA submitted over 17 pages of comments in opposition to the proposed organic checkoff under the Commodity Promotion, Research and Information Act of 1996 (the Act) and many other organizations submitted detailed comments against the proposed rule. Over 2000 individuals have written unique individualized letters to the USDA documenting why they oppose the checkoff.

Since 2012, organic farmer organizations and independent organic farmers have been working to stop the proposed organic checkoff. With very few resources to fight this proposed regulation that will affect every certified organic farmer and processor in the U.S., the No Organic Checkoff has garnered a lot of opposition to the proposal by making sure that farmers and their member organizations understand what is contained within the 150-page proposed Order. The fact is that organic farmers do not want a mandatory federal organic checkoff program to solve the industry's growing pains. Since the beginning of the modern organic movement, organic farmers have been creative and innovative in finding solutions for the organic market. Organic farmers together can come up with the solutions to address the needs of the growing organic market---solutions that don't hurt the very farmers that built the movement as this proposed checkoff program would, plus support the growth of organic farming and increase the number of organic farmers in the U.S.

NODPA, the Coalition, and a majority of organic producers oppose the proposed rule to create a new federal organic checkoff program because:

- The checkoff will serve as another tax on farmers, both directly and indirectly when processors pass the cost down.
- The marketing language restrictions on USDA-administered checkoff programs mean the program could not

promote the benefits of Organic.

- Existing checkoff programs have a history of using funds inappropriately, with poor representation of farmer priorities in granting of research dollars.
- Promoting organic sales without addressing other challenges facing organic will not increase organic acreage in the US, but instead will increase lower-priced organic imports.
- The proposal would create an unworkable program due to the complexities of lumping all organic products into a program that treats them as a single commodity.

In their comments to the USDA AMS, NODPA and the Coalition stressed that the USDA should listen to the organic community and not move this flawed proposal to a Final Order followed by a referendum. There is clearly not enough support within the 'organic commodity' as defined by the 2014 Farm Bill –"(B) COVERED PERSON- The term `covered person' means a producer, handler, marketer, or importer of an organic agricultural commodity." With this volume of protest against an organic check off, especially from those producers that the Act was primarily designed to benefit, we asked that new Secretary of Agriculture Perdue not allow this proposed order to proceed.

What's next?

The USDA AMS is required to read all the comments. It may group some of the comments submitted that are obviously using a generic letter with no independent content, similar to what the Organic Trade Association encouraged folks to use, and count those comments as one. For those like NODPA, WODPA, OFARM and the Coalition they are required to read and analyze the comments in order to record a summary of them in any future proposal on the Federal Register.

The Secretary of Agriculture will then decide whether the comments received show enough support from 'covered persons' for the Proposed Order to move to the publication of a Final Order - SEC. 514. ISSUANCE OF ORDERS….. (4) PREPARATION OF FINAL ORDER. —After notice and opportunity for public comment under paragraph (2) regarding a proposed order, the Secretary shall take into consideration the comments received in preparing a final order. The Secretary shall ensure that the final order is in conformity with the terms, conditions, and requirements of this subtitle. The secretary has the option to publish another Proposed Order for comments, move to a Final Order, or decide that there is not enough support within the organic commodity to establish an organic checkoff.

If the Secretary decides that there is enough support for an organic checkoff, USDA will proceed to publish a Final Order and a Final Regulation for the rules governing a referendum. The Proposed Regulation for a referendum was confused and contra

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Feed & Pay Price for May

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ver (Ben & Jerry's), General Mills, Aurora Dairy Group, Yili Industrial Group Co, Chobani and PepsiCo, as it is a valuable entry point into organic dairy with an established market and a dedicated supply.

CROPP has also been named as a possible buyer. Any prospective buyer will need to identify what supply agreements they intend to enter into once they own Stonyfield. The supply agreement with CROPP has approximately three years to run and the assumption is that any buyer will continue to honor that agreement. In the best possible future scenario, Stonyfield will expand its own pool of milk and increase the number of buyers in the northeast to three major buyers rather than the two, which will be the best interpretation of the DOJ's ruling. Stonyfield also has the option of working with other smaller buyers and Dairy Marketing Services to source their long term supply. Whatever way it goes, the DOJ ruling is a good solution for organic dairy producers as it is an opportunity to expand competition for organic farmgate milk and deprive DanoneWave from any intimidation of CROPP by holding supply contracts as leverage for their cooperation on the supply side and in the organic consumer market.

Aurora Dairy has broken ground for its new plant and farming operations in Columbia, Missouri. Aurora officials are saying they will be adding 30,000 cows worth of organic production in Missouri and the manufacturing plant they will be building will be much larger than their present facility in Platteville, Colorado. Aurora, owned by AG Real Value Fund and managed by Teays River Investments, obviously sees expanding their operations and sales in the store brand/private label market as profitable. CROPP and other smaller cooperatives will have difficulty competing for store brand sales against this vertically integrated, well financed, low-cost and, some say, fraudulent company. The CROPP/Dean joint venture that was launched ahead of schedule may well be able to slowly build a larger consumer base for its HTST milk but that will take years rather than months and is in no way certain, especially as the store door delivery that Dean offers encompasses many non-traditional retail outlets for organic product, for example package stores which offer low priced milk rather than value added products.

Feed corn is still trading at $7-8 per bushel, about $1 lower than February, 2016, and soybeans are priced at $16-18 per bushel as compared with $21.50 in February, 2016. Organic hay costs are within the same range as last year, with hay being offered at $50 per round

bale or $150-200 a ton FOB with a good supply. Cheap foreign feed still dominates the market and undercuts domestic producers. U.S. organic producers undergo the highest-integrity organic inspections and certification processes in the world. While the USDA NOP strives to maintain this integrity across the globe, we know, realistically, that it is impossible to conduct the same type of rigorous organic inspection and traceability in countries at war, like Turkey and Ukraine, where most of our current organic corn imports are coming from. The recent increased demand for organic products, from $29,023 million in 2012 to $39,754 million, has increased the importation of organic commodities which are cheaper than domestic product. USDA ERS data currently shows that 60-70 percent of U.S. soybeans are imported with some knowledgeable industry people putting that figure at up to 90%, and 40% of U.S. organic corn supplies are imported. According to federal trade statistics, the value of U.S. organic corn imports soared in 2016 to $160.4 million, a 42 percent increase compared to 2015, and up 350 percent compared to 2014. The domestic price for organic corn as recorded by USDA AMS in 2013 averaged $12.5 per bushel; in 2016 the average price was $8.65. The average cost of production for domestic corn is $10 per bushel. Over the past year, bulk ship loads of imported organic grain caused the pay price offered to U.S. organic farmers to drop under this foreign competition. ◆

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Organic Checkoff Update

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dictory on many levels as to the process for who would receive ballots and how voting rights would be verified with no existing data base of 'gross organic income.' It is clear that the majority of organic dairy producers would fall into the current criteria for assessment and the right to vote on a referendum.

All organic producers need to recognize that as soon as an organic checkoff is established, we will lose the ability to be exempt from paying into checkoffs. The choice would be either paying into an organic checkoff or a conventional one.

The timeline for any decision by USDA on what happens with the organic checkoff is unpredictable. The only prediction is that a decision to move forward or not will take the USDA many months, perhaps over a year to complete the process

We will keep everyone updated on the process and subsequent actions and in the interim, folks can find more information at www.noorganiccheckoff.com.

NET UPDATE

Recent ODairy Discussions

By Liz Bawden, Organic Dairy Farmer, NODPA President

A few farmers discussed the practice of spreading milk on pastures as a fertilizer since some thought that this was a good method to use surplus milk while improving soil biology. A farmer pointed out that there is conflicting research – a study in Vermont did not show a measureable benefit, another study in Nebraska showed increases in yields and soil porosity using as little as 2 gallons per acre. One producer used 5 gallons of milk per acre and felt he received "reasonable" results.

There was a discussion about ketosis; one producer wondered if apple cider vinegar (ACV) would help with her mildly ketotic cow. Agri-Dynamics' product "Ketonic" was recommended, and it does contain ACV. Other recommendations for ketosis were: dextrose given by IV (250 to 500cc once or twice daily), vitamin B12, homemade drench using brown sugar and beer, and Milk Thistle (1 to 3 tablespoons fed twice a day). Most felt that the ACV, although healthy for a lot of reasons, was not a remedy for ketosis.

Newborn calves were afflicted by yellow scours with red splotches. A farmer suggested that if this occurs in the first week of life, then you need to look at colostrum consumption, quality, and timing. Within 12 hours post-partum, and ideally within 3 hours, each calf needs to receive 2 to 3 quarts (depending on size and breed) of good quality colostrum. This farmer suggested purchasing a colostrometer (not an expensive item) to help in evaluating quality. A vet reminded us that the age of the calf can give us clues about the organism responsible in calf scours – "bacterial infections such as Salmonella and E. coli can appear within hours of birth (usually a few days), Crypto within just a few days (usually a week or more), viruses later. Get a manure sample to your vet, who can help you make a definitive diagnosis." It was suggested that the calves' guts may be irritated if they are fed grain. Grassy dry hay should be available instead. Other suggestions were: giving electrolytes, garlic tincture, use First Defense bolus at first colostrum feeding, and remember to dip navels.

A young cow calved with twins, and after two weeks was still feeling rocky. She is thin, has developed mastitis, retained part of her placenta, and struggles to stand although she eats well. Other producers suggested a bottle of Calcium gluconate given by IV and offer free choice hi-calcium mineral for likely milk fever, give

continued on next page

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

Ketonic (from Agri-Dynamics) for energy and the supplemental vitamins it contains, get the vet to check the uterus and infuse with 1 part 7% Iodine mixed with 10 parts dextrose making a volume of 60 to 120cc (depending on the size of the uterus) to clean up the uterine infection. If she doesn't respond to the calcium, it was suggested that she may require a dose of CMPK for magnesium and potassium. Another farmer suggested feeding the best quality hay you have with 16-18 ounces of High Energy Blend (from Lancaster Ag), "anything to encourage greater feed intake, along with energy-dense feed supply will help to build her up over time."

Another fresh cow displayed signs of a pinched nerve even though she had calved a week ago; now she has difficulty in rising and exhibits that classic bent hoof. A vet explained that he had seen cases of a "delayed" pinched nerve in cows that had low grade milk fever, so recommended addressing that problem first with an IV of Calcium gluconate. To address the inflammation that is pressing on the nerve, homeopathic Arnica and Hypericum were suggested, as well as aspirin or Flunixin (Banamine). Remember to double the milk withholding if using Flunixin. "Then, when standing, have her tied to something and do physical therapy: use one hand to pull the hock forward while at the same time use your other hand to push the knuckled ankle back into normal position. They usually resist a bit but this will help keep the contracting tendons flexible. Do this a few times a day."

Other farmers said they had seen several cows like this, but they turned out to be deficient in phosphorous and selenium. The phosphorous in CMPK is not biologically available; it is the trisodium phosphate in a Fleet enema that these animals need. It can be administered either orally or IV (if given IV, dilute in a bottle of saline or dextrose). A few farmers mentioned that they give Epsom salts, for the magnesium, mixed with water orally when giving a Fleet enema IV. Sel-Plex was recommended as a bio-available source of selenium, and is added to the feed. Mu-Se injections given at 2 weeks before calving will abate both cow and calf deficiencies. It was noted by a pasture and grazing consultant that the most common deficiencies she sees on grass-fed dairies are selenium and phosphorous. It is difficult to get supplemental minerals into cows without using grain as a mixer, and these deficiencies are often hard to diagnose. "In those cases it has been really helpful to have a good vet to work with to do some testing to know what the actual mineral that is lacking is so the balance of minerals can be adjusted precisely. Some farms are also changing the mineral feeding system so we are sure that all the cows (including the submissive ones

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION: FEATURED FARM

Green Wind Farm:

6,000 Small Squares, 2,000 Gallons of Maple Syrup, and a Somatic Cell Count of 52,000

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and Helen Nearing, or Eric Sloan's *A Reverence for Wood*.

"Our farm is limited by its soil types and pitch," Julie explained about the farm which has grown from its original eighty eight acres to its current three hundred. 84 of the 300 acres are pasture and 47 are for hay. The balance is in woods which are managed for their maple syrup operation. The farm is at an elevation of 800 feet and is extremely rocky. "There is no prime agricultural soil on this farm," Julie said.

Despite the lack of soil on most of these iconic hillside Vermont farms, small dairies remain at the core of Vermont's culture, heritage, and economy. Of Vermont's roughly 1,000 dairy farms, 82% are milking less than 200 cows. 5% of the milk in Vermont is certified organic according to the Vermont Dairy Promotion Council.

Although their property was a former dairy, Steve and Julie's primary vision was to develop and manage the acreage as a maple syrup operation. Historically, the maple business has grossed about twice what the dairy has. In 2017, their 4,000 taps produced over 2,000 gallons of syrup. The sugarhouse burns about 30 cords of wood a season which they harvest from their woods. (The farm house burns another 10.) They also maintain extensive gardens, have a home-scale orchard, and raise pigs, layers, and broilers for personal use.

"We migrated towards the dairy business because the property had a structurally sound post and beam barn," Julie said. "We thought we might as well board some heifers and then ended up trading a few in exchange for raising them." Jerseys became the foundation of their herd.

"Dairy and maple syrup seem to complement each other well in terms of seasonal work," commented Julie on Vermont's long standing maple and dairy traditions. "It's farmers taking advantage of what is in their backyards and managing the resource well." Julie handles the primary responsibilities of the dairy and Steve focuses on forest management and sugaring.

In the early 80's, there was a large group of registered Jersey herds in this corner of northwest Vermont. While they were busy raising heifers and a young family and sugaring, Julie and Steve also began buying day old heifers. When they eventually had 12 in milk, they began shipping. (Currently they have 25 milkers.) Some of their original heifers came from the well-known Gates Farm and with them the farmer gave a subscription to the Jersey Journal. "It started us on a registered path which we still maintain," Julie said.

A square bale farm, Green Wind averages 6,000 bales per year.

The 300 acre Vermont farm is located 50 miles northeast of Burlington.

The herd has been closed for 15 years, relying exclusively on AI for breeding. They have always used Genex and Julie said they have "tried to improve deficiencies of the dam through AI by selecting for udder traits above all, and then protein and fat."

Green Wind Farm shipped its first load of organic milk to Stonyfield on January 22, 2017. The land base has been managed organically for 25 years which enabled them to transition the herd in 12 months. In terms of organic land management, Julie said that they have always been there philosophically, but they "resisted transitioning the herd earlier because we felt we wanted all the tools we could have to keep our animals healthy." This was especially a concern because through the 1980's and 90's they depended on selling registered stock that had high production records. If a vet said that a cow needed a prohibited treatment, they were not willing to forgo it and be faced with culling a valuable dairy cow.

On the decision to transition to organic, Julie said, "We needed a change for the next generation. Things had become a bit stagnant. We wanted to maximize the financial potential of the dairy and see what type of income an organic dairy of this size could generate."

The 12-month transition has been straightforward but has required some management changes that primarily affected their young stock. Young stock needed outdoor winter access and they also had to begin grazing at a younger age. Julie had eliminated the use of antibiotics many years prior to the transition, but she said the one conventional tool she misses is Lutalyse for treating cystic cows. Julie also commented that the initial certification paperwork was a bit cumbersome but she expects it will be much easier going forward.

"It is not clear," Julie responded about the future of the dairy. "No one is fully embracing it at this point." Julie hopes that the boost in pay price to $42/cwt. will allow the farm to hire a full-time milker and make the dairy more attractive to their children. "Our goal," she said, "is to keep the herd and the land healthy so that it is in great shape for whatever the future of the farm is."

Steve and Julie have four children between the ages of 28 and 37. Their daughter and son-in-law, Naomi Wolcott-MacCausland and Sebastian Castro-Tanzi, live on the farm and manage five milkings a week. (Steve stopped milking six years ago.) Their son Seth and his family live in Burlington but spend a significant amount of time at the farm helping with haying, fencing, and sugaring. Seth markets 90% of Green Wind's organic maple syrup along with several other Vermont-made food products through his distribution network named Pumpkin Village Foods.

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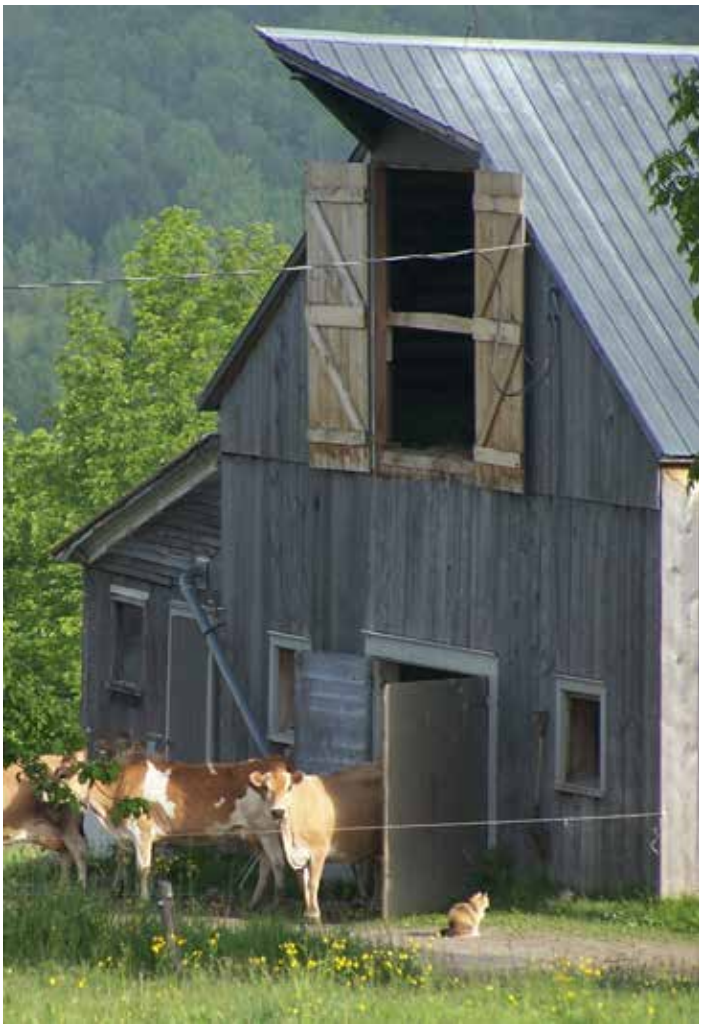

FEATURE FARM

The future of the dairy may be unclear, but due to a commitment to record keeping, the past is not. Green Wind has nearly 30 years of DHIA records and can track generations of cow and calf families. The rolling herd average is 14,802 pounds with butterfat at 5.2, protein at 3.7, and a noteworthy somatic cell count of 52,000.

"I work very hard at maintaining a low somatic cell count," Julie said. "Whenever a cow comes back with a SCC of over 100,000, I do a CMT test and figure out which quarter is high. If the CMT tests shows a super high count, we quarter milk it until it gets back in line."

Julie explained that seven years ago, 1/3 of the herd tested positive for Staph Aureus. Because of this, she always cultures individual quarters which test positive on the CMT paddle. Staph Aureus continues to present itself in the herd but Julie finds that it is generally only in one quarter. These cows are milked as three-titters. If a cow tests positive for Staph Aureus in more than one quarter, she is culled from the herd.

The milkers are diligent about prepping the udder prior to milking and she feels this also contributes to her low SCC. They use a 1% iodine-based pre-dip. Cows are dipped, fore stripped, dipped again, and then wiped. They post-dip with a barrier dip. High-count cows are milked last.

All of the animals at Green Wind are under the same roof of the iconic late-1880's Vermont barn. Steve is a wood worker and both he and Julie hold a reverence for their piece of architectural simplicity and durability. Julie and Steve made a deliberate decision early in their dairy career to remain small and Julie said, "Our barn is a big part of what originally attracted us to this property, and the size of the barn naturally limited the size of the herd."

The barn has been improved over time. Headlocks were replaced by comfort stalls. In the late 1980's a barn chain was added, and a pipeline in the late 1990's. Three years ago, they began installing Pro-Mats in the milk cow stalls and last year added them to their heifer stalls. In order to accommodate NOP regulations, they recently added a turn-out area to the barn to provide outdoor access to their young stock during the winter. It is managed as a bedded pack.

Their appreciation for tradition is also represented in their forage program. For their first four years, Julie and Steve used horse


Julie walking their draft horses.

power to put up loose hay for the heifers they were boarding, but as they transitioned to wholesale milk production they invested in a line of equipment. The farm still relies on dry square bales. 6,000 square bales are stacked in their overhead hay mow each year- roughly 2/3rd is first cut and 1/3rd is second cut.

On the continued use of square bales Julia said, "We like having our feed in one place. We don't want to have to start up a tractor every day in the winter. Winter time is really pleasant in the barn if you don't have to struggle with the weather." The first and second crop dry hay is supplemented with a custom blend grain ration of 10-26 pounds depending on production. Grain is fed separately five times a day- before and after each milking and an afternoon feeding.

Influenced early in their career by Andre Voison and Bill Murphy (author of Greener Pastures on Your Side of the Fence), the farm is long accustomed to grazing. Early on, they began building lanes and setting up a water system so that now, "the cows have really good access to most of our pastures," Julie said. The milk cows get a new piece of ground every 24 hours. Some paddocks are two-day pieces but with an NRCS grant, they plan to add some more permanent lanes which will allow them to break up the multi-day paddocks.

In 2016, the farm began grazing their young stock six months and up. The NOP grazing standard calls for 30% dry matter intake from pasture beginning at six months. "It was the first that I ever had animals that young on pasture," Julie said. "I kept them on their own rotation. They had a new paddock every two or three days." Supplementing the pasture with 2 pounds of grain per heifer each day, she said, "kept these heifers interested in me and made moving them a lot easier." Julie was concerned with how this group of young cows would adapt to the pasture program, but ultimately, she said she was very pleased with their growth.

Green Wind used a leader/follower system for many years, but Julie felt that the heifers were being short-changed. Three years ago, they instituted a separate rotation for their heifers. "We have a few remote pastures that are difficult to access," Julie said. "It seemed like the only time our heifers gained weight is when they had these pastures to themselves." This group of animals is not fed any grain during the grazing season but gets a small amount during the winter, mostly as a medium for administering minerals.

Always eager to further her grazing knowledge, Julie said she was one of the first people to sign-up for On-Pasture, the web-based grazing publication created by Kathy Voth and Rachel Gilker. In 2004, Kathy created a method for training cows to eat weeds, and has trialed her weed eating program at Green Wind.

"Using Kathy's advice, I introduced a variety of textures and tastes to some heifers over a period of two weeks," Julia said.

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NET UPDATE

ODAIRY HIGHLIGHTS

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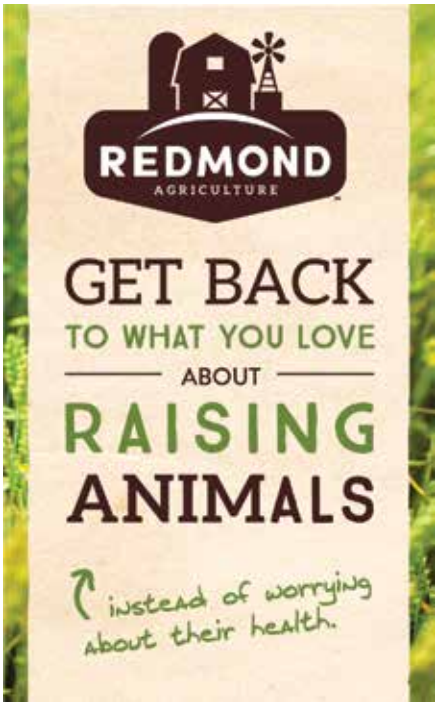
that don't get as much time at the feeder, sometimes) are getting enough."

Another farmer posted a fascinating study where a neighbor wanted to raise the selenium content of his forages by applying selenium directly to his pastures. Background research revealed that plants won't take in additional selenium unless they have enough sulphur. So he "fertilized some of his pastures with sodium selenite plus sulphur two years ago and tested his forage from those fields afterward. He found that the fertilized pastures were substantially higher in Se than those he hadn't fertilized with it." It is important to note that soil tests need to be done to determine the deficiencies and rates of application. This farmer recommended working with someone who understands that soils are more than "N-P-K". Both Jeff Mattocks at Fertrell and Neil Kinsey at Kinsey Ag Services were recommended.

As tick season is underway, a producer asked if cattle can contract Lyme disease. According to one vet on the list, healthy cattle do not generally get Lyme disease. "The spirochete has a hard time reproducing in a body temperature over 101 degrees F, so horses and dogs are more commonly seen than cattle or cats, but if immune suppressed, with a sub-normal body temperature, they certainly can be a host."

After a couple of dry cows flaring up with mastitis, this farmer asked the group about their protocols at dry-off. He received a variety of recommendations: one farmer uses only Cinnatube, another uses Phyto-Mast at dry-off, another CMT's each cow at dry-off and treat any quarters that gel with 15cc Clearacel (Synergy Animal Products) and keep post-dipping for I to 2 weeks. ◆



FEATURE FARM

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"They were fed eight different grains during that time period- anything from cornmeal to alfalfa pellets. We did it at the same time every day."

At the end of the period, Julie introduced this group of heifers to burdock, knapweed, thistle, and yellow dock. All are problematic weeds at Green Wind. The cows, now conditioned to a wide array of tastes and textures, began to eat the weeds. "It was incredible," Julie exclaimed. Thistle and knap weed populations have diminished, but Julie acknowledged she lacks the critical mass of trained cows which might help further eliminate the weeds. Julie encouraged farmers to resource Voth's book Cows Eat Weeds as well as web-based On Pasture.

Julie is grateful for the vast amount of resources available on-line and through books but she also expressed the great appreciation she has for her local community. "This is a vibrant agricultural community of large and small farms, conventional and organic. I think this area even has the highest concentration of organic farms in Vermont."

"We have an incredible community in this part of Vermont," Julie went on. "There is support for our farms across all sectors of the population. I don't think there could be a better place to have a farm. The fact that there is so much appreciation makes a huge difference in the desire to keep going." ◆

Julie Wolcott and Steve MacCausland can be reached at gwfarm@vtlink.net, 802-933-4592 and the farm's address is Green Wind Farm, 1345 Northrop Road, Enosburg Falls, Vermont 05450.

Classified Ads

ANIMALS

- **Certified organic Holstein heifer,** due in June, asking $1600; Certified organic Jersey heifer, due in June, asking $$1500. Both friendly, stanchioned trained. 802-254-6982. Phillip Cutting, email: neros75@comcast.net, phone: 802-254-6982
  Location: Guilford, Vermont
- **I have six GOA certified organic heifers for sale.** Holstein, Holstein x Jersey & Jersey. Bagging up now. Fed corn silage, haylage & hay. All ai sired & bred to jersey service bull. Shipped to Horizon and sold cows. Prices vary depending upon how many taken; can arrange trucking. Jim Ball, home # 315.497.3740, cell # 315.237.1358
  Location: Cortland NY area
- **Certified organic Jersey Cow,** 4 yrs old. due in May with 3rd calf. Easy breeder and nice udder. Also 4 Jersey/Holstein cross 2 yr olds to freshen this summer, 3 well grown Holstein yearlings, 5 well grown Jersey/Holstein cross yearlings. 1 march Holstein heifer calf. Name: Ila Terry, email: terviewfarm@gmail.com, phone: 315-324-6904
  Location: Hammond, NY
- **34 PCO Certified Organic Heifers,** Dam raised on pasture, Jersey and Cross, Fall Calving
  Name: Terry Ingram, phone: 540-270-8355
  Location: Brandy Station, VA

EMPLOYMENT

- **Organic Dairy Farm Manager sought** for startup grass only dairy operation in Livingston, NY. 40+ cow herd, growing up to 140 milking. Competitive salary, benefits and profit-share on milking operation. Application review begins 6/1. Applications taken until filled. Flexible start date late summer or fall 2017. www.dirtpartners.com
- **General Livestock Assistant**

  Brookford Farm is a large, diversified operation nestled along the banks of the Merrimack River in central New Hampshire, a short drive north of Concord. We grow about 40 acres of certified organic vegetables, raise pastured layers, broilers, and hogs, and rotationally graze our dairy and beef animals. Our milk is all bottled raw or turned into various cultured products right here on the farm, and moved through our 300 member year-round CSA, farmers markets, and local groceries and restaurants.

  The General Livestock Assistant would be expected to milk 6 shifts per week, feed out bales and bed down barns through the winter, monitor herd and calf health, set up and move temporary fencing during the grazing season, and assist with construction projects. There will also be a fair amount of work with the chickens: moving them on pasture, feeding and collecting eggs. Those with tractor experience (preferred) may expect to help with mucking out, turning compost, cropping, and haying. Once settled in, the candidate will be expected to anticipate and execute tasks on their own or with the livestock team.

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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 207-465-6927 or steve.getz@organicvalley.coop.
- In New York, Contact East Regional Pool Manager Anne Phillips at (607)-222-3265 or Anne.phillips@organicvalley.coop
- In New York: West Regional Pool Manager Eric Beller at mobile: (315)-359-7382 or eric.beiler@organicvalley.coop
- In the Southeast, contact Gerry Cohn at (919) 605-5619 or gerry.cohn@organicvalley.coop.
- Central to Western PA, contact Georgia Klischer, Pennsylvania MID Regional Pool Manager at mobile: (570)-336-2354 or Georgia.klischer@organicvalley.coop
- In Southeast Pennsylvania and Maryland, contact Terry Ingram at (717) 413-3765 or terry.ingram@organicvalley.coop.
- Peter Miller, East Regional Division Pool Manager, (612) 801-3506 or peter.miller@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: 518-758-7777

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, 10 Burton Drive, Londonderry, NH 03053
802.369.0267 - Cell

603.437.4040 - Main Office

To be listed, free, in future Organic Milk Sought columns, contact Nora Owens at 413-772--0444, noraowens@comcast.net.

Classified Ads

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- Previous animal husbandry experience is required, and dairy experience is preferred, but not absolutely necessary. We are looking for patient individuals who are committed to low-stress livestock handling. The ideal candidate would be observant and organized, possess strong communication skills and a positive attitude, and be proactive and hardworking. Must be capable of lifting 50lb bags multiple times a day and working through inclement weather.

  Compensation based on experience. Please send a resume, two references, and a brief letter of interest. If you are interested in a different type of position on the farm, or have a partner who would also be looking for employment, contact for availability.

  Contact: Luke Mahoney, Brookford Farm, email: brookfordfarm@gmail.com. Location: Canterbury, NH

- **Dairy Worker Wanted:** Position on 65 cow certified 100% grassfed organic dairy in central NY. Duties include milking in swing parlor, grazing and feeding. Housing may be available. Applicants must have driver's license, reliable transportation, dairy experience and be able to lift 50 lbs. Pay based upon experience, ability and availability. Contact: cowpoke2@verizon.net or (607) 699-7968.

- **Manager of Farm Operations, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH**

  A comprehensive land-, sea-, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public university and is ideally located in the rural town of Durham, with ready access to the Maine and New Hampshire seacoasts, Boston, and the White Mountains. UNH has just under 13,000 undergraduate students and 2,200 graduate students. Under the general direction of the Dean for the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (COLSA)/Director of the NH Agricultural Experiment Station (NHAES), the Manager of Farm Operations is responsible for coordinating efforts of all the NHAES/COLSA research and teaching farms, the Farm Services unit and their service providers in order to provide high quality and efficient research and teaching resources for NHAES/COLSA, UNH and stakeholders across the state and region. Minimum Qualifications: Bachelor's degree. Acceptable minimum years of experience: 5-7 years. Other Minimum Qualifications: Bachelor of Science degree in an appropriate field, with a minimum of 5 years farm management experience, and 3 to 5 years of supervisory experience. Good communication and personnel skills are required. This person must be able to translate COLSA/NHAES administrative goals and directives for the research and teaching facilities into effective actions and outcomes, and to build and work in a collaborative team environment. Additional Preferred Qualifications: Ability and experience in operating farm machinery; valid CDL license, and more than 5 years directly-related farm managerial and supervisory experience. To apply, visit http://jobs.usnh.edu/postings/25418.

- **NY Dairy Grazing Apprentice Program Wants Aspiring Farmers, Master Grazier**

  Cornell Small Dairy Support Specialist Fay Benson is recruiting participants for the New York edition of the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program, the groundbreaking, nationally-recognized apprenticeship program for the agricultural industry

  Modeled after apprenticeship programs such as those for developing a highly skilled level of experience for new plumbers and electricians, the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship, or DGA, is recognized by the federal Department of Labor.

  The two-year DGA requires 4,000 hours of instruction, including 277 hours of online classes, and on-the-job training on farms approved for good agricultural practices and safety measures. The federally-registered apprentices are paid on an established wage scale to work on an existing grazing dairy farm while they gain knowledge, skills, and early experience. The wage increases over time as skill level grows. Those interested in becoming an apprentice or serving as a Dairy Master Grazier may apply online at www.dga-national.org; for assistance, contact Abbie Teeter at ajt248@cornell.edu, 607-391-2660 ext 412. Once registered, the apprentices and Dairy Master Graziers can search the entries across the 9-state region to initiate discussion of a possible apprenticeship opportunity.

  To learn more about the New York Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship, contact Fay Benson at 607-391-2660, afb3@cornell.edu.

FORAGES, BEDDING & GRAINS

- **For Sale: NOFA-NY Certified Organic Feed** -- BALEAGE (1st clover, Oatlage, 2nd grass mix, grass/alfalfa mix), Heifer HAY, and BEDDING. NOFA-NY Certified Organic SEED - OATS and CLOVER. Cleaned and bagged on farm. $10/bushel for Oats, $3.25/# for Clover. Also for sale: Hesston BP25 TUB GRINDER, NI 40' Hay ELEVATOR, JD 494A & 1240 CORN PLANTERS. Call Jeff (Mitchell Farm - Avoca, NY - Steuben County) @ 607-566-8477 or email Mitchellorganics@hotmail.com.

- **For Sale: 2nd crop 4x4 wrapped bales** @ $55 loaded at the farm. We also have plenty of 1st crop later cut dry bales, they have been selling @ $65 loaded at the farm for 1 or 2 bales, can work with you on price for larger quantities. Contact me at llcorse6@gmail.com or leave message at 802-368-7192.
  Location: Southern Vermont

Calendar

May 17, 2017, 11am-2pm
Fertility and Forage in the Grazing Dairy, Farmer-to-Farmer Exchange Event
Kauffman Organic Dairy Farm, 149 Dairy Lane, Ulster, PA 18880

Join PASA and organic dairy farmer Richard Kauffman at his farm in Ulster, PA, on Wednesday, May 17, for a pasture walk focusing on managing pasture and crop fields to create quality forage and healthy cows. Richard has been grazing intensively for over 20 years, combining his herd's grass diet with organic small grain and corn that he also grows. As part of the event, Richard will talk about his paddock layout and lane design, and how he works with wet ground in a grazing system. Joining Richard on the walk will be his son, Josiah, who is stepping into a managerial role on the dairy this year. Richard's herd has always been registered Holsteins, but Josiah brings with him a herd with mostly Jersey genetics. Talk about transition, and the view ahead for the farm, will occur. The event will begin with the walk and conclude with lunch at the barn. Cost: Free to Members and Non-members. This event is presented in partnership with PAGLC. For more information, visit the PASA website: https://www.pasafarming.org/events/pasa-events/pasa-education-event-fertility-and-forage-in-the-grazing-dairy or call PASA, 814-349-9856.

May 22-24, 2017
3rd National Farm Viability Conference
Albany Capital Center, 55 Eagle St, Albany, NY 12207

Registration is now open for the National Farm Viability Conference, featuring three days of workshops, discussions and tours for professionals in farm and food business planning, financial planning, agricultural financing, farmland conservation, agricultural market development, and food hub management. It offers attendees the opportunity to network and learn from peers and industry leaders, develop new knowledge and skills and tours will include visits to nearby farms and value-added processing facilities. See the updated list of workshops and register at www.farmviabilityconference.com

June 5-6, 2017 Agroforestry Design Intensive, a Farmer-to-Farmer Exchange Event
Lundale Farm, 2501 Pottstown Pike, Pottstown, PA 19465
Monday, June 5, 10am-4pm and Tuesday, June 6, 9am-3pm

Agroforestry, the intentional planting or management of perennial tree and shrub species within an agricultural system, can provide a multi-functional approach for enhancing land stewardship, meeting conservation goals and increasing and diversifying income potential. Well informed placement and management of these long term systems is paramount for achieving success and maximizing returns on investment. Join us on June 5th – 6th for a two day, hands-on design intensive where we introduce concepts of agroforestry systems and walk attendees through the process of accessing the landscape for opportunities for incorporating perennial agricultural systems into an already actively managed farm. This training is intended to mix landowner/operators with professional service providers to encourage a dynamic group learning process through experience sharing, reality checking and innovative idea generating conversations.

This event will take place on Lundale Farm, a 520-acre preserved landscape of woodlands, pastures, crop fields and riparian areas, bordered by French Creek and Beaver Run. Currently, there are six agricultural operations on Lundale property, producing a wide range of products, from pastured poultry to microgreens, to vegetables and beef. The diversity of the landscape and farming operations on Lundale's property make it an ideal location for hosting this workshop intended on helping land stewards realize the greatest regenerative, productive potential of their managed landscapes. Cost: $60, Members; $75 Non-members. Lunch both days is included. For more information, visit:

https://www.pasafarming.org/events/pasa-events/pasa-education-event-agroforestry-design-intensive or call PASA, 814-349-9856.

June 13-14, 2017
The 2017 Midwest Farm Energy Conference
West Central Research and Outreach Center, 46352 State Highway 329, Morris, MN, 56267

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Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance Producer Milk Check Assignment Form

I, _____ (please print name on your milk check)

request that _____ (name of company that sends your milk check)

deduct the sum of :

_____ $0.02 per hundredweight to support the work of NODPA

_____ $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.)

_____ $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 handler/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 form AND YOUR EXEMPT FORM 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. **If you need assistance in applying for the exemption, check here _____. 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.

_____ $40 to cover an annual subscription to NODPA news

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

_____ $100 to become a supporter of NODPA

_____ $150 to become a Business Member

_____ $300 to $500 to become a Friend

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

_____ $1,000+ to become a Benefactor

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: _____

Calendar

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The 2017 Midwest Farm Energy Conference is scheduled for June 13-14, 2017. The conference will highlight energy efficient systems for Midwest dairies (on June 13th), as well as for swine production systems (on June 14th).

Conference will include: Practical information for agricultural producers regarding energy technologies for Midwest farms; energy optimized systems for dairy production; energy conservation and generation in swine facilities; opportunity to network with energy experts and professionals; keynote speakers, and Renewable Energy tours.

Several registration packages are available for the Midwest Farm Energy Conference including full conference, single day option, student pricing, and the option to attend the keynote dinner only. Want to know more? Check out our Registration page for pricing options and to register online, https://wcroc.cfans.umn.edu/events-education/2017-midwest-farm-energy-conference.

June 13-14, 2017
Capture Free Energy with Management and Energy is Money & Money is Energy
Misty Brook Farm 156 Bog Rd Albion, ME 04910

Join us to learn from world-renowned grazing expert Ian Mitchell-Innes. This two-day intensive will cover: Livestock, Soil Life, & Energy, Animal Performance & High Density Grazing, Land as Solar Panel & Planned Grazing, Infrastructure & Profits, Infrastructure & Profits and Planning the Biological Calendar with Nature to save Money.

Ian Mitchell-Innes is a native of South Africa where he has spent decades managing his ranch and cattle. Through trial and error, he eventually settled on Holistic Management and Mob Grazing. He is here to help us recognize week links, take advantage of solar energy, and make our farms more profitable. Ian has a power point presentation and asked that participants bring colored pens. We will spend some time in a classroom setting and some time out in the pastures. Bring your questions!

Misty Brook Farm is a diversified organic family farm producing milk, cream, eggs, pork, beef, veal, lamb, & grains. The cost is $275 per farm family; please mail a check to register. We are just like everyone else holding things together with bale twine, so this just covers paying Ian. If you can afford more, consider sponsoring another farm! We will provide the main meat and salad for lunch. If there is anything else you would like to share, bring it along! Contact us, Katia & Brendan Holmes, 207-437-4719, mistybrook-organicfarm@yahoo.com with your questions.

Sunday, July 23rd, 2017, 9:00 am - 4:30 pm EDT
Conservation Biological Control: Short Course
MOFGA Common Ground Education Center, 294 Crosby Brook Road, Unity, ME

Learn a science-based strategy that seeks to integrate beneficial insects for natural pest control! Conservation biological control is a science-based pest management strategy that seeks to integrate beneficial insects back into cropping systems for natural pest control, ultimately reducing and in some cases eliminating the need for insecticides. This strategy is based upon ongoing research that continues to demonstrate a link between the conservation of natural habitat and reduced pest problems on farms, orchards, and gardens.

In response to growing interest in promoting beneficial insects for their pest control services on farms, the Xerces Society has authored the book Farming With Native Beneficial Insects and developed the Conservation Biological Control Short Course to educate farmers, agriculture employees, natural resource specialists, land managers, and conservation organization staff. Participants will receive the Xerces Society's Conservation Biological Control Toolkit which includes habitat installation guidelines and other relevant publications, and the Xerces' book, Farming with Native Beneficial Insects. The cost is $45.00/person. Bring a bag lunch. Visit this website for the workshop program and additional information: http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07edzb8amm94651937&llr=tnjebhdab

August 11-13, 2017
Cultivating the Organic Grassroots Movement: the 2017 NOFA Summer Conference,Hampshire College, Amherst, MA

The Northeast Organic Farming Association's Summer Conference is the community learning hub of the NOFA universe. We learn, we play, and we enjoy a weekend of skill building, inspiration and entertainment. It is our opportunity to get together and inspire one another during a family friendly weekend with people living the same lifestyle, holding the same vision and working respectively in many ways toward the same goals.

Friday's Keynote Michael Phillips is an Organic Orchardist known across the country for helping people grow healthy fruit. The "community orchard movement" that he helped found provides a full immersion into the holistic approach to orcharding. His Lost Nation Orchard is part of a medicinal herb farm in northern New Hampshire.

Saturday's Keynote Speaker is Dr. Don Huber, Professor Emeritus of Plant Pathology at Purdue University, who for 55 years has focused on the epidemiology and control of soil borne plant pathogens with emphasis on microbial ecology, cultural and biological controls, nutrient-disease interactions, pesticide-disease interactions, physiology of host-parasite relationships and techniques for rapid microbial identification. He has focused his work on the effects of Glyphosate (the main ingredient in Monsanto's Round

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From the MODPA Treasurer

It looks as though spring may finally be here; the pastures have come to life. The cows went out on pasture officially on Saturday. They let themselves out 3 times last week but those don't count. The spring planting is in full swing in the area. Many of the conventional farmers think they are late but it is just the normal time if they would look back beyond the last few years.

There has been a lot of news in organics recently. Some of it may blow over soon, some may not. There were several issues raised at the NOSB meeting, but many of them do not directly affect dairy. Hydroponics seems to be getting a lot of attention. I do hope that they make some decisions at the next meeting instead of more time to mull it over. I personally believe that we need to keep the soil in organic but that is just my personal opinion.

The Washington Post story on Aurora Dairy has ruffled a lot of feathers and has people talking about our precious product. I have never visited their dairy but my travels do make it seem difficult to pasture that many cattle in that area. I think it is hard to effectively pasture when you get beyond 100 or so cows in any area. I know of a couple in my area that are up around 500 head of cows. They manage to do it but it takes a lot of time and effort to do it. Not impossible but challenging, to say the least.

The dreaded checkoff continues to be a discussion point that does not seem to want to go away. I don't think we need to be paying another tax for something that does not benefit us. Adding more fuel to this is the price cuts and quotas that have come into play. Some producers have lost their market. I am going to stick my neck in the noose here and say that it is up to us as farmers to control our production. We really need to have a change of mindset on dealing with this overproduction. I think some of this may be on paper but nevertheless the damage is done. We dealt with a similar situation in 2008-2009. It was catastrophic for some. I know it cost us dearly in the long run. I know we all have bills to pay but we cannot follow down the same path as the conventional guys have. Producing more product for less money only makes the problem worse; much worse. If we look outside of production Ag, (I hate that term), we don't see other industries operating like agriculture. We don't see Deere or Case NH producing more tractors to sell if the market is already flooded. We don't see GM, Ford, or Chrysler producing more cars if they aren't selling the ones they have. We have to do the same with our milk: produce what the market will bear. We as farmers know better. We just need to do a better job of staying on top of our market. We often know better than our processors what life is really like out here. After all we live here, most of them don't. I know this seems extreme but there is no other way that this will sustain us for the long term. And going back to Deere, GM, etc., they don't have a checkoff to support them. If they can do without a checkoff, our processors should be business savvy enough to do it, too. If they can't, they need new management.

Wishing all a safe and productive summer. Blessings,

Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer
Glenwood City, WI, 715-781-485

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

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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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Calendar

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Up) on biological systems in soil and humans alike.

September 22-24, 2017 - COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR. MOFGA's Common Ground Education Center, Unity, ME

The Fair is MOFGA's premier event celebrating rural living. It is three full days of educational talks and demonstrations, entertainment, delicious Maine-grown organic food and products from local artisans. Want to volunteer? FMI volunteers@mofga.org . Visit www.mofga.org for more information.

September 27- 29, 2017 the 2017 Grassfed Exchange, The Desmond Hotel, Albany, NY

This year's event will feature a line-up of renowned keynote speakers, live cooking demonstrations, interactive farm tours, and two full days of seminars with exhibitors, and outdoor livestock display pens. We invite you to come network and learn from some of the industry's most innovative producers, thought leaders, top chefs, and bloggers that have their finger on the pulse of what is driving the fastest growing segment in the beef industry. Now more than ever, as grassfed and regenerative agriculture continues to rapidly evolve, it will be crucial to stay in-tune to the latest changes and advancements that will continue to shape the future of our industry. Keynote speakers include Ray Archuleta of USDA-NRCS's Soil Health Division, David Montgomery, author of the newly released book "Growing a Revolution: Bringing Our Soil Back to Life", Jeremy Stanton, operator of Fire Roasted Catering, and more. Registration and more information about all the speakers is now available at http://grassfedexchange.com

September 28 & 29, 2017 Embracing Change in Organic Dairy 17th Annual NODPA Field Days, Truxton Community Center, Truxton, NY

The 17th Annual NODPA Field Days program will spotlight education and strategies so organic dairy farm families will be well positioned to embrace the challenges that are related to unpredictable patterns of weather, global competition, new technology and milk supply. Please see the article in this issue to read about the terrific line up of speakers and two farm tours that are planned. Sponsorship and trade show information is now available. If you haven't received it or if you have questions about the NODPA Field Days, please contact Nora Owens, noraowens@comcast.net, or call 413-772-0444. More Field Days information can be found online at www.nodpa.com and in the upcoming July NODPA News.