

# NODPA News

## Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

July 2017 Volume 17, Issue 4 WWW.NODPA.COM

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A 24'x 8' homemade round feeder is used for feeding baleage in the Casey's 160' freestall barn.

## Casey Farms, Apulia Station, New York Bill and Joanne Casey

by Sonja Heyck-Merlin

**I**t is 1950, the year organic dairy farmer Bill Casey was born onto his small central New York Farm in the town of Apulia Station.

Imagine yourself with a love for flying, a knack for selling, and an entrepreneurial spirit. Central New York, Onondaga County, is peppered with hundreds of small farms. Wouldn't these farmers love to own a bird's

eye perspective of their farms, thought the pilot, Henry DeWolf?

Henry DeWolf, proprietor of Aerial Surveys, was actively photographing from 1927-1982. The majority of his early work was in New York, Pennsylvania, and New England, and his collection consists of over two million negatives. In 1950, the year of Bill's birth, a

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### SAVE THE DATE!

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

**L**ast year, much of the Northeast was locked in a crushing drought that pushed farmers to the limit and many folks connected it with climate change. This year, much of this same region is suffering from unending rain and

flooding. These unpredictable weather patterns present a challenge to all farmers and are likely going to continue. In addition, organic dairy farmers are challenged with a glut on the milk market, increased global

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Message from the NODPA President

### Climate, Milk Supply, Mergers, and Bees, Oh My!

Last year about this time, I was lamenting the lack of rainfall for the crops. Many of you were also in drought-afflicted areas, and prayed for rain as well. We looked skyward and watched the cloud formations, hoping for a quick thunderstorm. We hovered over our computers, watching the radar show the rain circling around us. The pastures turned dry and crunchy underfoot, and forage yields were sharply down. Around here, the “old guys” having coffee in town assured us that it was the driest summer anyone could ever remember.

Well, our prayers for rain were answered this year! Buckets, inches, torrents of rain! (Perhaps we should have just prayed for a nice balance of reasonable weather...) We figure on our farm that we are at least a month behind in our work, and some acres simply will not get planted this year. The wettest parts of the

corn field still sit there – just when it looks like it might be dry enough to get in there, the rains come again. On the “upside”, forage yields are good, although some of the fields are more mature than we would like; so farmers in our area worry about the overall quality. Again, those guys hoisting their coffee tell us it's the wettest season they remember.

Is it a crazy swing of the pendulum, from one extreme to the other; or a sign of things to come? We know that climate change is real because we interact with it every day. So how do we prepare our farms for erratic weather patterns and events? Can we build in some resilience on our farms? We chose resilience as the theme for this year's Field Days: “Embracing Change in Organic Dairy” to open a discussion on how we may use new tools, look at new techniques, and understand what the future may have in store. I am really looking forward to getting some first-hand knowledge on making our farms more resilient from Dr. David Wolfe, a professor of plant and soil science, and a specialist in developing new tools for climate change adaptation and mitigation on farms. Dr. Wolfe is involved with Cornell University's Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future and Institute for

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## From the NODPA Desk: May 2017

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

### *As Senate meets to discuss organic, nearly 300 businesses, farmers and organizations call on Congress to increase federal support for organic agriculture*

**O**n July 11th, in advance of the Senate Agriculture Committee hearing on market opportunities for organic food and farming in relation to the 2018 Farm Bill, 291 businesses, farmers, university research centers and organizations, representing a broad spectrum of perspectives about food and agriculture, sent a letter to Congressional leaders and Secretary of Agriculture Perdue urging support for organic agriculture. Signatories to the letter include leading national companies, farmer organizations and over 150 individual farmers.

Despite the success and growth of the organic industry, the U.S. organic sector faces significant challenges. Organic sales experience double-digit growth each year, representing a nearly \$50 billion industry. Yet, U.S. organic production is struggling to keep pace, resulting in an increased reliance on imports to meet demand.

“Continued and expanded support for the National Organic Program, along with related federal programs, is crucial to help more of our farmers transition to organic production and meet America’s skyrocketing demand for organic food,” said Kendra Klein, Staff Scientist at Friends of the Earth. “At a time when farmers and rural communities are struggling, our leaders need to invest in organic as a powerful rural development tool.”

Research shows that organic farms are 35 percent more profitable than the average farm and that regions with a high level of organic farming activity boost median household incomes by an average of \$2,000 and reduce poverty levels by an average of 1.3 percentage points. Organic farms, suppliers and handlers create jobs across the country. Domestically, the organic sector is home to nearly 24,000 certified organic family farms and other businesses.

“Consumer confidence in the integrity of the USDA organic seal has been a driving factor in the exponential growth in the organic sector,” said Abby Youngblood, Executive Director of the National Organic Coalition. “Funding for key organic programs and the National Organic Program must keep pace with the growth of the sector. Adequate funding and appropriate oversight are essential to ensure that the USDA National Organic Program enforces the standards in an effective and uniform manner for all organic operations.”

The following is the July 12, 2017 letter sent to USDA Secretary Sonny Purdue and endorsed by nearly 300 businesses, farmers and organizations that calls on Congress to increase federal support for organic agriculture.

*Dear Mr. Secretary:*

We are writing as farms, businesses, research centers and organizations representing a broad spectrum of perspectives about food and agriculture to express our strong, shared support for the USDA organic label and the federal marketing, research and data collection programs that support the label.

With the establishment of the National Organic Program in 2001, consistent national standards were created to govern the labeling of organic food and the use of the USDA organic seal. Consumer confidence in the integrity of the USDA organic seal has been a driving factor in the exponential growth in the organic sector. In 2000, organic sales of products labeled under various conflicting state and private organic labels totaled only \$6 billion. Today, as a result of the establishment of the consistent federal organic standards, total sales of organic food and beverages are nearly \$50 billion. Domestically, the organic sector is home to nearly 24,000 certified organic family farms and other businesses.

Organic farmers are required to use farming practices that preserve and enhance natural resources, and organic processors are required to use ingredients that have passed strict environmental and human health reviews. Consumers are willing to pay higher prices for products that meet these higher standards. As a result, organic farmers and processors enjoy a higher price to reward them for their extra costs and efforts. Organic regulations are voluntary, or opt-in, in the sense that farmers decide whether they want to participate in the National Organic Program. Similarly, consumers voluntarily decide whether to buy organic food. House Speaker Ryan has used the USDA organic standards as an example of a “better way” to approach federal regulations to foster a stronger U.S. economy using a voluntary approach to regulations.

The economic success of the organic sector also depends on strong enforcement by USDA and USDA- accredited organic certifier organizations domestically and internationally. It is the job of the certifiers to ensure that all organic operations meet the strict production, processing and handling standards established by USDA through an open and transparent public process. It is the job of USDA to use its accreditation and oversight functions to ensure that certifiers are enforcing the standards in an effective and uniform manner for all organic operations. Consumers depend on the integrity of the USDA organic seal, and expect uniform enforcement of the standards.

Despite the success and growth of the organic industry, the U.S. organic sector faces significant challenges. While organic sales are growing at a double-digit pace each year, domestic organic production is struggling to keep pace with that growth with an increased reliance on imports to meet the demand.

In the spirit of the public-private partnership that underlies the success of the organic sector, it is critical that your agency continue to support the work of the National Organic Program, as well as the research and data collection programs that will help ensure that U.S. organic farmers can meet growing consumer demand for their products. It is our firm belief that jobs associated with organic agriculture can and should be kept here in the United States, without having to rely on increased imports to meet demand for products we can produce here.

In that regard, we look forward to working with you to support the

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Message from the NODPA President

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Climate Smart Solutions. To get a sample of his work, go to [www.climatesmartfarming.org](http://www.climatesmartfarming.org). Their website discusses climate projections for the Northeast that include an increased frequency of days with extreme heat and increases in precipitation, especially in heavy precipitation events, meaning additional challenges in storing and managing livestock manures for many farms, not to mention challenges with growing crops. This will be just one of the featured speakers at the Field Days (September 28-29 in Truxton, NY). Lots more information on the schedule is available in this issue, on page 20, but mark your calendars now and line up the relief milkers!

The current state of oversupply is still with us, and for those with an industry crystal ball, they say it will be with us well into 2018. The lack of opportunities for growth have depressed the prices paid for organic replacements in my area as many of us have reduced our herd size to accommodate a quota or voluntary reduction in milk production. Perhaps the most hurtful

consequence is the young people who would like to start up an organic dairy on their own, but find the market is closed to them for now. I shake my head as I drive past the new freestall barns that are being built by large conventional farms in my area that continue to expand despite conventional milk's oversupply. And young farmers are not given an opportunity to start with modest herd sizes, but large farms may add hundreds of cows at a time. I shake my head again.

Last month, the Friends of the Earth and Center for Food Safety sponsored a "fly-in" to Washington DC, and invited farmers from across the country to speak to Congressional staffers about the potential merger of Monsanto and Bayer. Livestock and crop farmers, bee keepers, and consumer groups were represented, and divided into small groups that met with dozens of staff members from a country-wide selection of Senators and Representatives. The message we delivered was simply that this merger has the potential to be very bad for farmers. Now, it is true that as organic farmers, we don't use any of Monsanto's or Bayer's products (except maybe the aspirin...), since the genetically-modified seeds, herbicides, and toxic seed treatments are all absolutely prohibited in organic production. So why would

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we travel to Washington to talk about conventional seeds and herbicides? (That was my first question, too.) So, the biggest concerns in the organic sector are from the seed-breeders. According to the Organic Seed Alliance, these corporations own and enforce the patents they have over their seeds, and this does have an impact on the organic seed supply. Seed breeders and researchers need access to core genetics, and the availability of basic breeding stock is key to their success in developing new varieties that perform better under organic conditions, or in specific regions, or are more resilient to weather extremes. These huge companies own a great deal of these core varieties, and it is not necessarily in their best interest to license them out for research. The Alliance says that this access to genetics is a huge issue now; the merger would just make it worse.

Recently, Dow and DuPont have merged, and ChemChina merged with Syngenta. So if this Bayer/Monsanto merger goes through, it will leave only 4 companies (with BASF) that will control all the seed and agricultural chemicals. Some staggering statistics: If Bayer and Monsanto merge, they will be the world's largest vegetable seed company (with a virtual lock on carrots, broccoli, and onions), they will be the world's largest cotton seed company (70% of the cotton seed grown in the U.S), along with Dow/DuPont, they will control 77% of the

seed corn in the U.S. And, Bayer/Monsanto will be the world's largest manufacturer and seller of herbicides, and the world's largest owner of the patents for herbicide tolerance seed traits: 69% of all herbicide tolerance traits for alfalfa, canola, cotton, corn, soybeans, and wheat.

So, we stood with a wide cross-section of farmers and asked Congress to support the Department of Justice in their review of this merger. They have the power to disallow a merger, or to force a corporation to sell off parts so that some competition might remain.

And, I feel that I must tell you about a beekeeper from Georgia that I was fortunate enough to talk with while in Washington. I asked him about the Colony Collapse Disorder, and what beekeepers think is the main cause. He began by telling me about the research they did to determine if anything like this had happened before; and it turns out that just about 100 years ago, there was a bee population collapse across the country with the same symptoms. He asked me what everyone used for an insecticide back then (and I had no idea). "Black Leaf 40", a concentrated nicotine sulfate made from tobacco, was apparently recommended by every extension agent across the

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## Products for Your Organic Herd



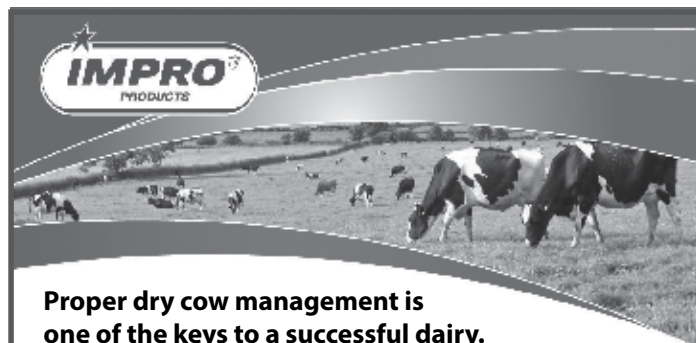
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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### **New York Grazing Coalition Pasture Soil Health Trailer: Cornell Cooperative Extension's Rolling Laboratory Plants Seeds of Soil Health\***

*By R.J. Anderson, Cornell Cooperative*

**C**ornell Cooperative Extension's (CCE) Fay Benson and his colleagues in the Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) can talk all day about why healthy properly managed soil is so vital to field and land sustainability. But recently, they've found it more effective to actually show people why soil health practices such as cover cropping and no till farming are so effective at preventing runoff, controlling erosion and locking in important nutrients to stimulate soil's important biological and chemical reactions.

During the summer of 2016 [and continuing in 2017], Benson, a member of CCE's South Central New York Dairy and Field Crops team, traveled throughout New York State hauling the New York Grazinglands Coalition Soil Health Trailer, a rolling laboratory equipped to provide demonstrations about the value of healthy soil while illustrating the dangers that can lurk both above and

beneath.

Accompanying Benson on a number of trips - which included farm visits as well as large scale farming and community events - were various members of the CALS Cornell Soil Health Team. "We presented at 25 events and reached over 1,000 participants," says Benson. "As events were held and articles appeared online and in local newspapers about the trailer, I began receiving request after request from all different types of sources. I knew interest in this topic would be pretty good, but I did not anticipate this response - the original grant only required taking the trailer to three events per year."

Funded by a grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the solar-powered trailer has a self-contained water supply and is equipped to conduct a number of demonstrations testing elements that impact and traits that comprise healthy and unhealthy soils. Highlighting the offerings is a six-foot-tall rain simulator that illustrates how rainfall impacts various types of soil, from bare medium to one that is sowed with cover crops. Beneath each soil section sits a pan that captures runoff, revealing how well or how poorly the soils retain rain water. Other tests look at the ability of different soil types to maintain structure and resist erosion.

"Through these exercises it becomes pretty evident pretty quickly that run-off and infiltration rates are much more favorable with a

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***“... helped us reduce SCC, less clinical mastitis, calmer heifers, better milkout.”***

— Chris and Katrina Sunderland



**SUNDERLAND FARM, ELLENBURG DEPOT, NEW YORK**

**Chris and Katrina Sunderland, 150 cows, Certified Organic, SCC 100-150,000**

“We have been using Udder Comfort™ for 4 to 5 years. We use it for clinical mastitis and any cow showing elevated SCC or an abnormal quarter, but where we see the biggest benefit is in using it on all fresh cows and springing heifers,” say Chris and Katrina Sunderland, milking 150 cows at Sunderland Farm, Ellenburg Depot, N.Y. They have received the New York State Super Milk Award for high quality milk since 2011.

“We start spraying udders 2x/day for a week before calving and continue 4 to 5 days after calving. We want to get the edema out as soon as we can, and Udder Comfort accomplishes that goal. This helped reduce our SCC from averaging 250,000 before to averaging now from 100 to 150,000,” says Chris.

“We certainly have less clinical mastitis, and the first-calf heifers are calmer, easier to train and milk out better. They are more comfortable with less soreness and no kicking! We have had good results with this product.

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**Fay Benson demonstrating features of the soil health trailer.**

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

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covered soil,” says Benson. “These birds-eye comparisons provide an important tool for revealing a soil’s water holding capacities and how sound soil management can improve a farmer’s bottom line.”

Showing the impacts of soil practices instead of just talking about them, Benson says, makes the educational content much more accessible. Whether demonstrating for a gathering of crop farmers or a group of 4-H sixth graders, the educational delivery system is neither too complex, nor too simple.

“I received a lot of post-event feedback commenting that farmers are familiar with terms like aggregate stability of soil, biological cycling and water infiltration, but that seeing those concepts in action adds a different level of learning,” Benson says. “As hands-on people, farmers tend to be more visual learners and they were completely engaged during our sessions.

“One workshop we did for the Hudson Valley Farm Hub was attended by a large number of Hispanic workers,” Benson continues. “Afterward, the Farm Hub manager e-mailed me saying he and his workers appreciated the way the information was presented since it was so straightforward and didn’t require much translation.”

Augmenting the visual demonstrations are the Cornell Soil

Health experts, who provided valuable expertise at the events. Soil Health Lab Manager Robert Schindelbeck and Aaron Ristow, the soil health program coordinator, attended a handful of on-farm workshops. “They followed along with the physical demonstrations and provided expert commentary on soil fundamentals and chemistry,” says Benson. “In addition, I had CCE folks who presented with me at least half of my events who were able to add real-world expertise to the discussions.”

With another year of funding left, Benson is excited about the future of the Soil Health Trailer. He’s pursuing more grants and is in the process of training other CCE educators to conduct the demonstrations. “My hope is that the trailer will become a resource that can be passed around and used by extension all over the state,” he says. “From what I’ve seen, there’s a definite need for this type of educational tool. Today’s farmers and landowners are sharp folks who want to learn more about soil health and what management practices they can pursue to protect their land and environment.”

*R.J. Anderson is a staff writer/communications specialist for Cornell Cooperative Extension. He can be reached at [rj.anderson@cornell.edu](mailto:rj.anderson@cornell.edu).*

***\*This article originally appeared in the Small Farm Quarterly, Cornell Small Farms Program, Winter, 2017, on January 9, 2017. The Small Farm Quarterly is a supplement to Country Folks. It is re-printed here with permission.***



## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Message from the NODPA President

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country. The bee die-off started in Kentucky (the state with the most acres of tobacco back then), and then appeared everywhere at once (since it was recommended by agents across the country for a wide variety of crops). We talked about the life cycle of insects—they live only for 30 to 45 days. In that time, they grow, eat, work at their job in the hive (if you are a bee), reproduce, and fly off from the hive to die (bees do not die at home). Then the next generation takes over; and this repeats all summer long right up until the last generation. This last generation must survive through the winter to emerge in the spring to start the cycle again. Some last generation insects burrow into the ground or into a log; some will migrate like the monarch butterflies that fly back to a valley in Mexico; and bees stay together in their hive to survive the winter. So why does that last generation not die in a month or so like its ancestors? Beekeepers believe they know the answer: these insects are kept

as juveniles, not allowed to reach adulthood through hormonal changes. And this is what they believe the nicotine affects—in large doses, nicotine sulfate is toxic to insects, but in small quantities, the nicotine disrupts the hormonal cycle of this last generation of bees. And instead of staying a juvenile and overwintering until spring, they become an adult, finish their life cycle, and go off to die. So a beekeeper opens a hive at the end of the season to find it empty except a queen and a few young bees trying to care for her.

So, sure there are mites, diseases, and other things that can get a grip when bees are stressed. But here is the most logical explanation (to me, anyway) about what is happening to bee populations and their connection to the seed treatments used on conventional seeds that contain neonicotinoids. One more reason to farm organically!

Wishing you sunny skies and healthy harvesting!

**Liz Bawden, NODPA President**

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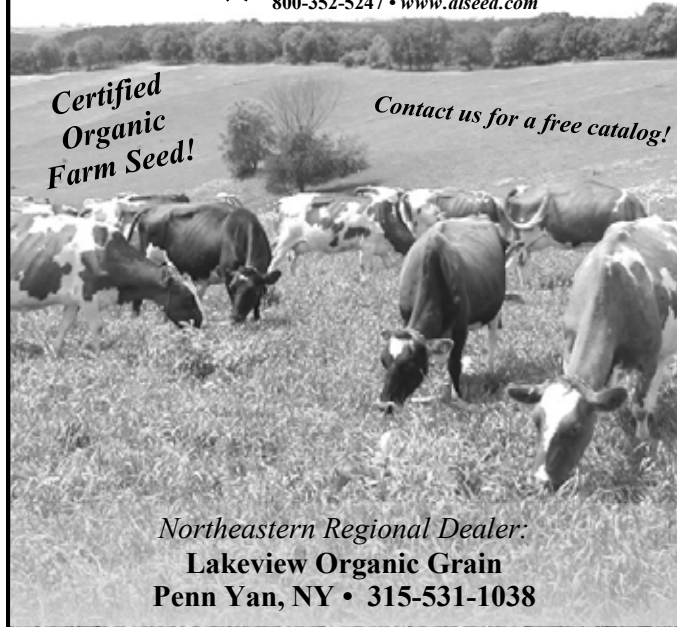


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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) Fall Meeting October 31, 2017

While most federal committees are set up to advise the leaders of different agencies, the NOSB is unique in so far as its role of making recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture is written into the regulation that established the National Organic Program (NOP), by the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA). Like other federal committees, its operation is governed by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). In the last few years, the NOSB's role and its importance in the process of rulemaking, has been challenged by the NOP. From comments made by Consumer Union at the last NOSB meeting: "The USDA Organic label communicates to consumers that the food was produced on a farm that adheres to a comprehensive set of government standards designed to support a system of sustainable agriculture. The integrity of the organic label is worth protecting and, where warranted, its standards should be improved. This is why the work of the National Organic Standards Board is so important." The National Organic Coalition (NOC), in which NODPA and the Consumers Union are members, has been a leader in pushing back against the NOP to preserve the integrity of OFPA. Along with many other organizations, they have challenged NOP administrative decisions on process and work-plan for the NOSB, plus have drawn attention to regulations that ignore NOSB recommendations.

The NOSB is designed to provide input and make recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture on a wide range of issues involving the production, handling, and processing of organic products. The NOSB also has special responsibilities related to the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances which identifies the synthetic substances that may be used and the non-synthetic (natural) substances that may not be used in organic crop and livestock production. It also identifies a limited number of non-organic substances that may be used in or on processed organic products. Changes to the National List are initiated through a petition to add or remove a substance, or through the sunset review process. The NOSB reviews petitions and makes formal recommendations to the USDA. If an NOSB proposal receives a decisive vote (2/3 majority) by Board members in favor of the proposed motion, it becomes a recommendation to the USDA, and is provided to the Secretary through the AMS NOP. The role of the NOSB is clearly stated in OFPA, section 6517(d) which says: (d) Procedure for establishing the National List (1) In general The National List established by the Secretary shall be based upon a proposed national list or proposed amendments to the National List developed by the National Organic Standards Board. The NOP has recently raised questions around the role of

the NOSB by ignoring the NOSB recommendations for removing substances from the National List. The NOSB recommended eleven materials for removal from the List at the 2015 NOSB meeting in Stowe, VT. With a recently published Final Rule, NOP has only removed eight of the materials, deciding to keep three on the National List. Many organizations did not submit comments on the Proposed Final Rule assuming that these decisions are made at the NOSB level through an NOSB process. The organic community has always assumed that NOP would honor the NOSB vote to exclude materials from the National List. The Organic Trade Association was one of seven comments recorded on the Proposed Final Rule and its recommendations were the ones that the NOP followed rather than the NOSB's recommendations.

The make-up of the NOSB is designed to reflect the different stakeholders that participate in and benefit from organic certification. NOSB members include: four that own or operate an organic farming operation; two that own or operate an organic handling operation; one that owns or operates a retail establishment with significant trade in organic products; three with expertise in areas of environmental protection and resource conservation; three that represent public interest or consumer interest groups; one with expertise in the fields of toxicology, ecology, or biochemistry; and one that is a USDA accredited certifying agent. One of the challenges of serving on the NOSB is that members do not receive any compensation for their work. In order to do the work of an NOSB member, and fulfill the duties of serving on various committees, the commitment of time is equal to at least a half time paid position. This time commitment limits those who are able to serve on the NOSB and, inevitably, members tend to have salaried positions and be supported by their employers. FACA prohibits payment for work performed on federal committees which makes it nearly impossible for independent owners of small to mid-size farm operations to be represented. In the past, producers and their families have made that commitment and have done a great job of bringing the perspective of working farms to the committee. We need to find another way to support the inclusion of working, full-time producers, who experience the effects of changes to regulation first hand, to serve on the NOSB to ensure the continuing integrity of the process for farmers and ranchers.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking nominations to fill an upcoming vacancy on the NOSB for individuals with expertise in areas of environmental protection and resource conservation. Written nominations, with cover letter, resume,

*continued on page 12*

## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## Using Compost – The Good, the bad and the Ugly: Part 3

By Neal Kinsey

**C**an you apply too much compost? Are there times when even the very best-made compost may not be best for the soil where you want to grow a crop?

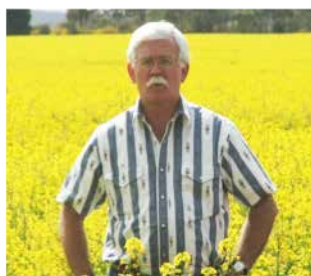
Many who advocate the use of compost adamantly refuse to accept that true compost is ever bad for the soil. However, in terms of building or maintaining soil fertility in order to grow nutrient-dense or nutrient rich, or the most nutritious food or feed crops, even the very best compost used in moderate amounts is not always good or even most useful as an application on any and every soil.

One big reason is that when the soil already contains high amounts of one or more nutrients contained in a given compost, adding more from the compost can be harmful. When adding compost causes an excess of any nutrient in the soil, it can adversely affect the availability of other needed nutrient elements in that soil. Furthermore, the lighter or sandier the soil, the sooner that can happen. Generally speaking, it will hurt the required fertility of the soil to accomplish growing the most nutritious crop long before it begins to cause yields to suffer.

Consequently, those who judge the need for compost based on yield results alone tend to be the last to detect the problems and it will then be the most costly for the grower to correct. The choice then becomes whether to continue using compost for as long as possible or to find and make corrections before the situation gets too far out of hand. Needless to say, if too much compost can do this (and from the experiences of seeing and correcting such problems many times, it both can and does cause such problems) so can the use of too much manure. Both materials can cause the problems being discussed here.

Seemingly the greatest problem with applying too much compost continues to be a total disregard and/or the unintended abuse of what is known as “the law of the maximum” in regard to soil fertility and needed plant nutrient levels. This law was well established as the potentially serious problem that it has become by Dr. Andre Voisin back in the last century. And though far too many ignore the consequences or deny it is a problem altogether until it is too late, it will (not may!!!) cause a problem when too much of any nutrient is applied that builds it up and causes it to become an excess in the soil.

As an example, Dr. Voisin studied the results of having too much potassium available in the soil and the negative effects that can cause. He demonstrated in his work that when potas-



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sium becomes too excessive in a soil it will tie up boron. Boron is necessary to help plants utilize nitrogen and take up calcium. In sufficient quantities it also helps control rust and fungus diseases and increases fruit and seed size.

While many soils have a problem with potassium deficiency, others are found to contain excessive amounts. Most often this latter problem is found on farms that have applied large amounts of manure or compost to the land. When plants grown on soils by use of compost or

manure that have adequate boron suddenly begin to show an unexplained boron deficiency in the crop, in such cases an excess of potassium from the use of too much compost or manure should be a prime suspect. When the Albrecht soil analysis includes measuring the percent of sodium plus other bases, in addition to calcium and magnesium saturation, if available potassium exceeds 7.5% of the soils cation exchange capacity, boron availability will be affected negatively.

Furthermore, if so much potassium and sodium are present in a soil that both total 10% of the base saturation or higher, it will cause manganese uptake to be blocked. We see a large number of soils where this becomes a problem, especially in areas where the soil sodium content is already high. However, there are far more instances where levels are so close that the potassium and/or sodium content of a well-made and otherwise excellent compost will actually cause the problem or make it even worse when too much is applied to those soils.

*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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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

### NOSB Fall Meeting

*continued from page 10*

and an advisory committee background information form, must be postmarked or received on or before Aug. 7, 2017. The appointee will serve a 5-year term of office beginning January 24, 2018.

### Importance of Organic and the Role of the NOSB

*Reprinted from the comments of the National Organic Coalition at the April, 2017 public meeting:*

Before the passage of the federal law creating a single, uniform, federal standard for organic food, we had a multitude of state, local and private organic standards, each with its own slightly different variation of organic. Consumers were confused by the differing standards. In contrast, since 2001, the federal organic program allows farmers and processors to sell their products into the organic market, but only if they agree to go the extra mile to meet the uniform federal organic standards.

These uniform standards have been key to the success of the organic sector in the past decade, giving consumers confidence in the value of organic products. Prior to USDA regulation of organic, organic sales were \$3.6 billion in 1997, growing to \$43.3

billion in 2015. As a result, organic production and processing have become major economic engines of opportunity in many communities across our country.

We must invest in and continue to improve the regulatory framework if we want to sustain organic as one of the fastest growing sectors of the food economy.

The House GOP Blueprint document from last year, "A Better Way", argues that voluntary regulations are the preferred way of establishing regulations. And in that document, House Speaker Ryan argues that:

"The Department of Agriculture's National Organic Program provides a regulatory program for organic producers who choose to market their agricultural products under the USDA organic seal. The program is not mandatory for all agricultural products, but provides uniform standards, certification, and enforcement for the farmers and ranchers who choose to participate in the program."

Organic depends on the regulatory process. But it is important to remember that these regulations are opt-in – for both farmers and consumers. Only those farmers who choose to certify as organic are required to follow the regulations. If we want organic to continue to grow and succeed in the marketplace, regulators must have the ability to continually update these standards and ensure uniformity through the regulatory process.

Organic is an economic driver for our local economies. Demand for organic products far outstrips our ability to produce them

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domestically. This means that we are importing a lot of organic food that we could instead be growing here, and in the process creating more jobs here at home.

In addition, it is important to remember that organic is not a partisan issue: organic farmers and consumers come from all ends of the political spectrum.

NOC would like to thank the members, both past and present, who serve on the NOSB. Thank you for your help to create a strong organic label that we can all trust. The continued success of organic depends on a robust regulatory process and on having strong, consistent standards.

### Schedule for meetings and submittal of comments to the fall meeting of the NOSB

Meeting topics will encompass a wide range of issues, including: Substances petitioned for addition to or deletion from the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances (National List), substances on the National List that are under sunset review, and guidance on organic policies. The public meeting allows the NOSB to discuss and vote on proposed recommendations to the USDA, receive updates from the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) on issues pertaining to organic agriculture, and receive comments from the organic community.

### Fall 2017 Pre-NOSB Meeting: Monday, October 30 in Jacksonville, Florida

Fall 2017 NOSB Meeting: Tuesday, October 31 – Thursday, November 2 in Omni Jacksonville Hotel, 245 Water Street, Jacksonville, Florida 32202, (904) 355-6664

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/event/2017-national-organic-standards-board-nosb-meeting>

standards-board-nosb-meeting

**Docket Opened 5/30/17**, with comments due by 11:59 pm ET October 11, 2017:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/05/30/2017-10987/notice-of-meeting-of-the-national-organic-standards-board>

**Webinar Comments scheduled for October 24, 2017**, 1-4 pm eastern, 3 minutes each, and on October 26, from 1-4 pm eastern (only if needed); The Board will hear comments during a pre-meeting webinar on October 24, and during the face-to-face meeting on October 31. A second webinar will be added on October 26 only if demand for comments exceeds the maximum number of commenters (150) on October 24. Commenters may only sign up for one comment slot. Deadline to sign up: 11:59 p.m. October 11, 2017. Please note: **Registration will close either when the maximum number of commenters has been reached, or at 11:59 p.m. October 11, 2017.**

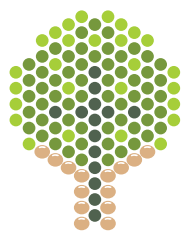
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/event/oct-2017-national-organic-standards-board-nosb-meeting-registration-webinar>

**Register by October 11** to give in person comments, 3 minutes each:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/event/oct-2017-national-organic-standards-board-nosb-meeting-registration-in-person>

**Written comments or request for more information** should go to: Ms. Michelle Arsenault, Advisory Committee Specialist, National Organic Standards Board, USDA-AMS-NOP, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Room 2642-S, Mail Stop 0268, Washington, DC 20250-0268; Phone: (202) 720-3252; Email: [nosb@ams.usda.gov](mailto:nosb@ams.usda.gov).

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## LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

## No Organic Checkoff Coalition

[www.noorganiccheckoff.com](http://www.noorganiccheckoff.com) • [info@noorganiccheckoff.com](mailto:info@noorganiccheckoff.com)

Dear Secretary Purdue,

We are writing this letter to you to express the lack of support that organically certified producers and businesses have for the Organic Research, Promotion, and Information Order (organic checkoff) under the Commodity Promotion, Research and Information Act of 1996 (the Act). Within the next few months the bond that was required from the Organic Trade Association (OTA) to fund the USDA staff time to process and develop this proposed new regulation from their proposal for an organic checkoff will end. We ask that you take this opportunity to determine that the proposed Order is not "in conformity with the terms, conditions, and requirements of this [the Act]" and not issue a final Order or proceed to a referendum.

To take the proposed Order to a referendum would do a disservice to the organic sector and organic consumers. It would divide rather than unite organic farmers and handlers, ignite a firestorm

of adverse media coverage and injure the organic brand in the process, defeating the purpose of an organic checkoff in the first place. A mandatory federal organic checkoff is not the right fit for the organic sector. Since the beginning of the modern organic movement, organic farmers have been creative and innovative in creating solutions for the organic market. Together, organic farmers 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 and would support the growth of organic farmers and farming in the U.S.

Since 2012, organic farmer organizations and independent organic farmers have been working to stop the proposed organic checkoff. With very little resources to fight this proposed regulation, that will affect every certified organic farmer and processor in the US, the No Organic Checkoff Coalition has garnered a large volume of opposition to the proposal by making sure that

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farmers and their member organizations understand what is contained within the 150-page proposed Order.

On April 19 2017 the No Organic Checkoff Coalition submitted to the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service:

- A list of 1,888 signatories to a petition urging the agency to reject a proposal to create a new “research and promotion” program, a checkoff.
- A letter opposing the checkoff signed by more than 60 organic organizations asking for the USDA to end the checkoff proposal.
- Petitions from two coalition partners with a total of 19,592 signatures to stop the checkoff.
- Unique letters from over 950 individuals to the USDA documenting why they oppose the checkoff.
- Detailed comments on the Proposed Order

The coalition opposes the proposal to create a new federal organic checkoff program because:

- The checkoff will serve as another tax on farmers, directly if they are subject to the Order or 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 which is marketed as a process-verified third party audited label, highlighting the difference between organic and other commodities.
- 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 proposed regulation would create an unworkable, unfair and inefficient program open to abuse due to the complexities of a multi-commodity program with many different production practices and measurements of profitability.



### Members of the No Organic Checkoff Coalition

We ask you not to issue a final Order or proceed to a referendum. We do not want this new regulation. We encourage the organic sector to explore other voluntary options that have the support of the majority of producers and handlers. We would welcome the opportunity to continue a discussion with you and AMS about possible ways to increase domestic organic production, stimulate organic research and increase the differentiation of organically certified product within the retail marketplace.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,  
The No Organic Checkoff Coalition

The No Organic Checkoff Coalition was organized specifically to SUPPORT the FAIR Act that exempts organic farmers from conventional checkoff programs and to OPPOSE the creation of a new federal organic checkoff program. Together this coalition represents 31 organizations and more than 6,000 organic farmers from the Western, Midwestern, and Eastern United States.



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

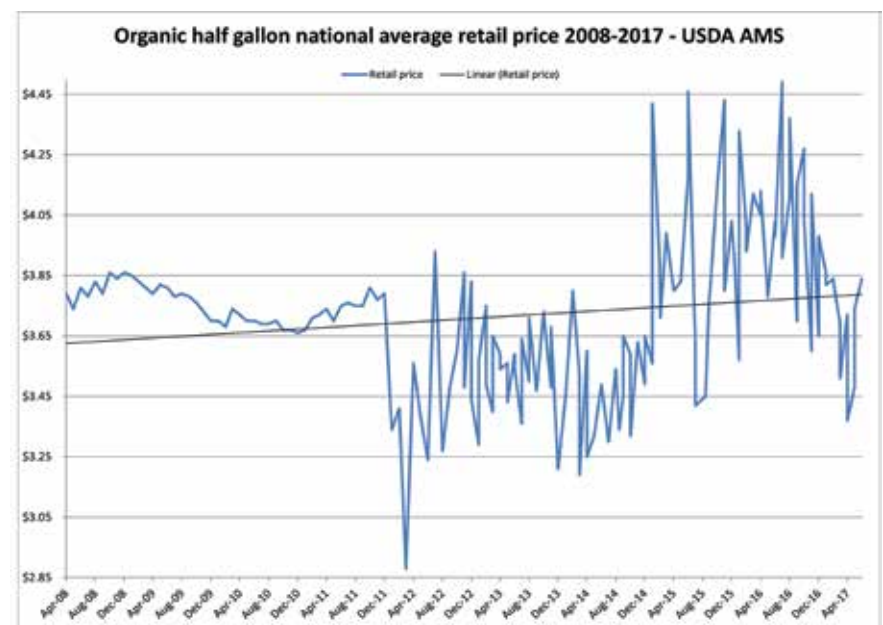
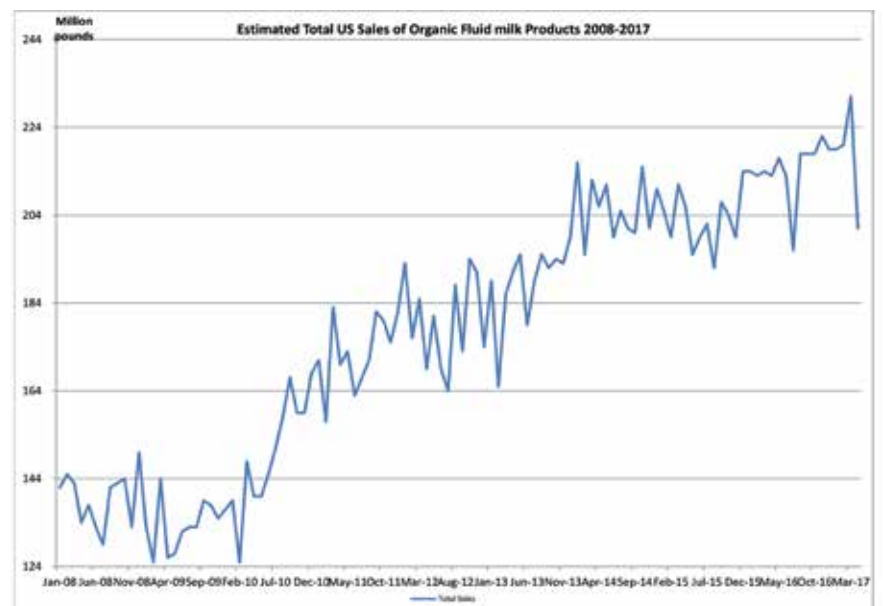
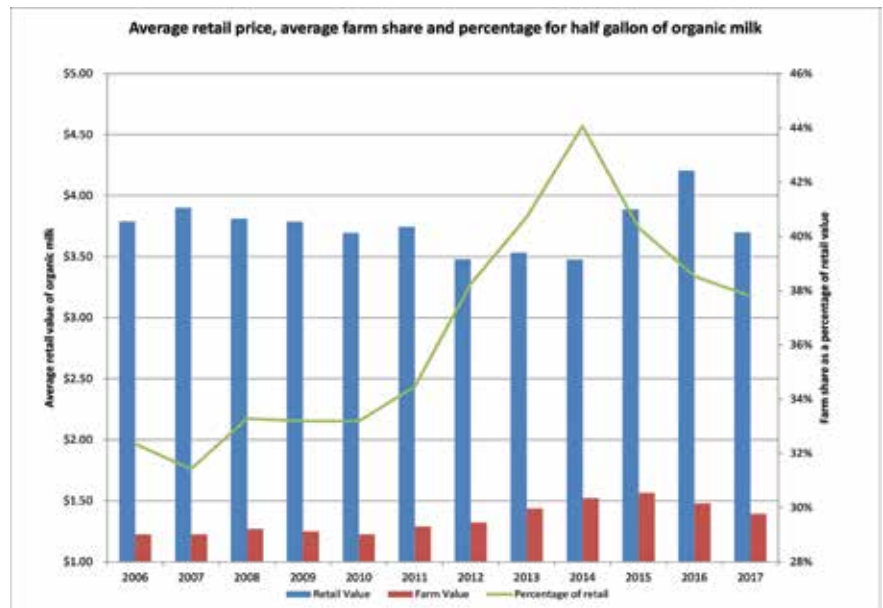
### Organic Milk Pay, Retail and Feed Prices for July 2017

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

**D**emand for organic fluid milk shows no signs of slowing down. The USDA AMS national data reports total organic milk products' sales for March 2017 were 231 million pounds, up 8% from the previous March 2016. Sales of organic fluid milk for April were 201 million pounds, down 5.6% from the previous April 2016. Overall, the January-April 2017 sales are up 0.6% over the previous January-April 2016. The more interesting data is that total organic whole milk products' sales for March were up 17% over March 2016, and April 2017 sales were up 1.4% over April 2016. This resulted in an 8.3% increase in sales of organic whole milk for the first four months of 2017, over sales in the same period of 2016.

New England and the Northeast are organic milk deficient areas but reflect the national trend of increasing utilization of organic whole milk at the retail level. In New England, Federal Milk Market Order 1 reports utilization of organic whole milk for May 2017 as 15.8 million pounds, up from 14.7 million pounds one year earlier. The May 2017 butterfat content was 3.28 percent, down from 3.29 percent in 2016. Organic reduced-fat milk utilization for May this year, 21.9 million pounds, was down from 22.6 million pounds one year earlier. During May, pooled organic milk from Wisconsin, Ohio and Michigan (DMS- Indiana Organic; Formost Farms Organic IN; Michigan Milk Producers Organic) stopped entering the Order but a plant from Pennsylvania (Lancaster Organic Farmers Co-op – KY) and three other organic milk handlers, NFO Cropp; NFO Maple Hill and NFO WV, all started shipping into the Order.

As conventional mailbox pay price starts to rise out of their cyclical trough, organic appears to be holding steady at the lower 2017 pay price. Transitioned, transitioning and those producers looking

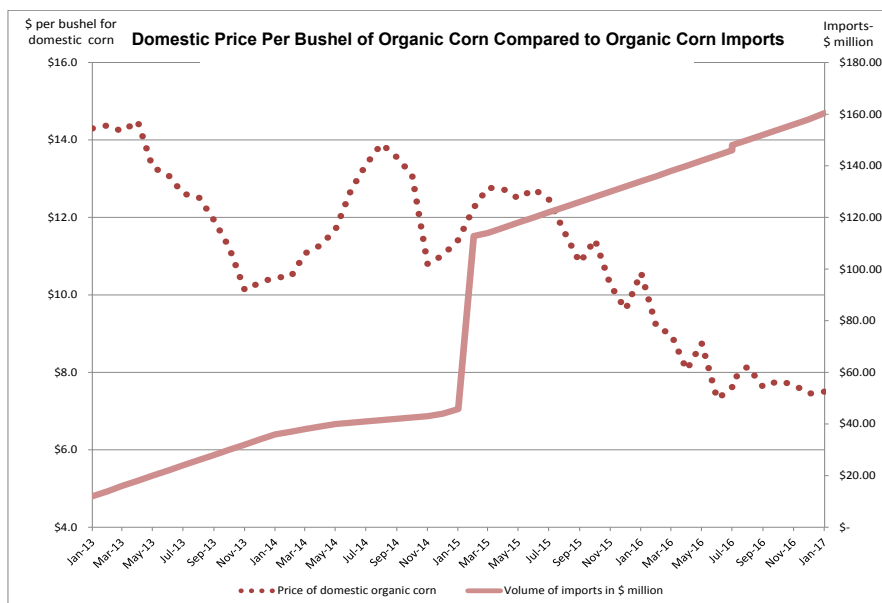
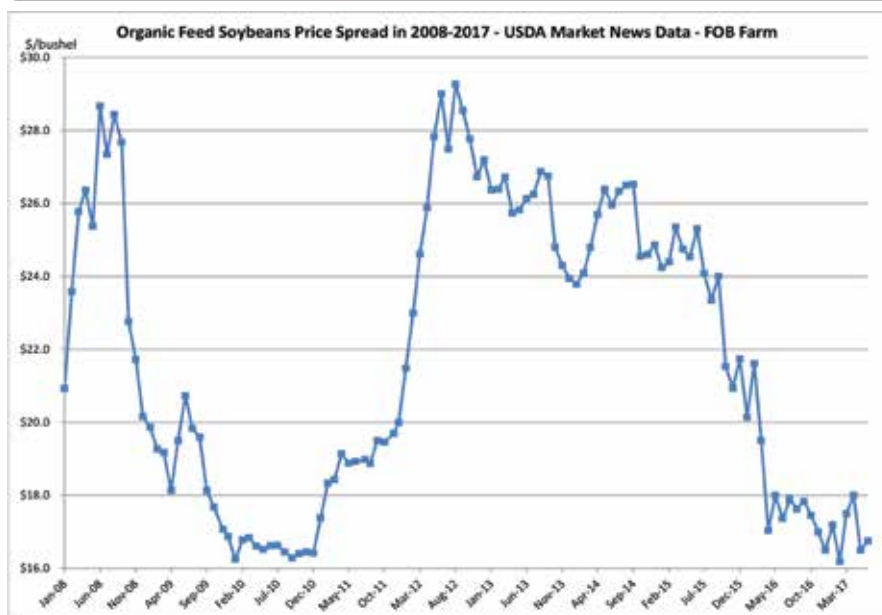
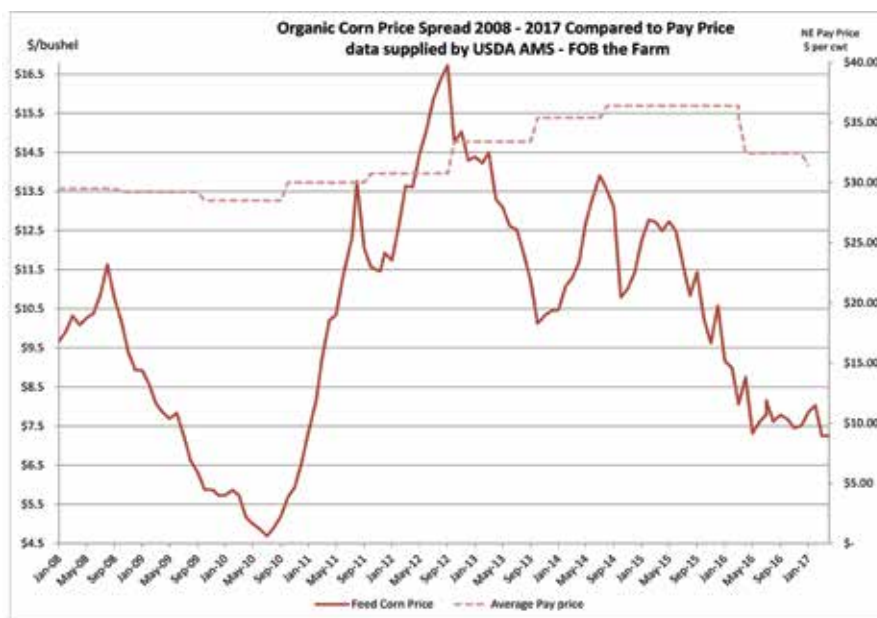


## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

for new buyers are the most affected by the current surplus, with all buyers not accepting new producers, although there are no reports of producers being dropped, even those on expensive pick-up routes. Buyers, like CROPP, are obviously taking the hit directly, with organic milk being diverted onto the conventional market with lower prices. 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.

Stonyfield upgrades its parent company to the largest dairy products group in the world. Danone will sell Stonyfield, based in Londonderry, N.H., for \$875 million to the French company Groupe Lactalis. There has been no announcement yet as to whether it will come under the Lactalis American Group, Inc., with its Corporate and Commercial Headquarters, in Buffalo, NY, or under a different division of the Groupe. The purchase price represents 20 times Stonyfield's earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, and amortization in 2016. Stonyfield had \$380 million in revenue for 2016. The Groupe Lactalis Company entered the US market in 1981, in Belmont, WI through an acquisition, reinforced six years later by the construction of a factory in California. Lactalis is a family-owned dairy group based in Laval (Mayenne), in the west of France. In 1933, André Besnier started up his cheese-making company. On the first day, he collected 17 litres of milk and produced 35 Camemberts: the Besnier Company was in business. Since then, the group, which adopted the more international name of Lactalis in 1999, has continued to expand rapidly. Its range of products has grown considerably (cheeses, milk, cream, butter, ultra-fresh, milk powder, etc.), as has the reputation of its products. The group now employs 75,000 people, and owns more than 230 industrial plants around the world,

*continued page 18*





## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### July 2017 Feed & Pay Price

*continued from page 17*

in 43 different countries. In 2015, the Groupe Lactalis reached a turnover of 17 billion euros.

Mile McEvoy, head of the NOP, confirmed that USDA is not moving forward with any significant rulemaking unless it is required by statute (e.g. GMO disclosure rule). For NOP that means they are not initiating any new significant rulemaking (proposed or final). This includes origin of livestock, apiculture, aquaculture, pet food. This will mean that those certifiers that allow continuous organic transition will enable larger organic operations to continue to flood the supply side of the organic market, further threatening the pay price.

The Agricultural Marketing Service announced on June 16, 2017 that it revoked the organic certification of Beyaz Agro, a grain and oilseed handler based in Turkey, after an investigation into a 16,250 metric ton shipment of soybeans revealed crops had been fraudulently sold as organic in the U.S. Investigators found that the soybeans had been fumigated with aluminum phosphide, a substance banned by the National Organic Program. A spike in the amount of organic grain imports from Turkey over the last

few years has raised red flags among the U.S. organic industry. Complaints of fraud have rolled in to NOP, which for nearly a year has been investigating organic corn and soybean imports from Turkey, a nation that is often a pass-through point for crops grown in Eastern European countries like Romania and Ukraine and in points in Central Asia, like Kazakhstan. Between 2014 and 2016, the amount of organic corn arriving from Turkey rose from 15,000 metric tons to more than 399,000 metric tons, while shipments of organic soybeans rose from 14,000 metric tons to 165,000, according to USDA data.

Feed corn is still trading at \$7-8 per bushel, about the same as in 2016, and soybeans are priced at \$16-18 per bushel as compared with \$20.50 in July, 2016. There is no reliable data yet as to what effect the continuing drought in western US and excessively rainy weather conditions east of the Mississippi will have on the year's harvest. Also, there are no reliable predictions about the fate of the organic animal welfare regulation that will force many large organic poultry operation to slow their growth and/or reduce their volume of birds. Any change in organic poultry production will have an effect on the supply and price of organic grains.

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. ♦

Peter Ruegamer Dairy Farm Blue River Corn Silage



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NODPA Field Days Farm Tour: Twin Oaks Dairy, Truxton, NY

### SAVE THE DATE!

## 2017 NODPA Field Days: September 28 & 29, 2017

Truxton Community Center, 6337 Academy Street, Truxton, NY 13158

*continued from page 1*

competition, and advances in technology that increasingly impact our farms. As a result of these, farmers are seeking strategies that will help their farms be resilient in the face of unpredictable farming, economic and changing technological conditions. The 17th Annual NODPA Field Days program, Embracing Change in Organic Dairy, Truxton Community Center, Truxton, NY, will feature education and strategies so that organic dairy farm families will be well positioned to embrace these challenges.

Nationally and internationally renowned speakers are joining the NODPA Field Days to address these timely topics. Neal Kinsey, an expert on soil fertility management will present practical strategies for ensuring soil fertility in light of unpredictable weather patterns; Jack Rodenburg, founder of Dairy Logix, Ontario, Canada, will focus on barn design and the integration of new technology to enhance cow comfort and labor efficiencies. As our Keynote Speaker and certified CowSignals trainer, Jack will lead a lively, interactive session on observing and analyzing cow behavior in order to improve cow management and housing. Dr. David Wolfe, Cornell University Professor of Plant and Soil Ecology and chair of the Climate Change Consortium, will share information on shifting weather patterns and offer strategies farmers can employ to be most resilient in the face of climate change. Sarah Flack will walk us through the process for decision making

when considering adopting new technology and/or management systems at your farm. Unfortunately we do need to announce that, due to unforeseen family commitments, Sina McCullough, who had been scheduled to discuss her new book, 'Hands Off My Food!' had to withdraw from the program. We hope she will be able to join us next year.

Fay Benson, Cornell Cooperative Extension's Small Dairy Extension Specialist will lead tours and answer questions about the NY 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 (for more information, see the article in this issue). In addition, Fay, the director of the NY Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program (DGA) will have updates and answer questions about it and we will hear from Kathie Arnold who has become a certified Master Dairy Grazier and is supervising an apprentice at her farm.

This year, there will be two farm tours. The first one-which is optional for early arrivals on Thursday morning, is at Casey Farms, Apulia Station, NY, and will spotlight their dairy and U-Pick berry operation. To learn more about Casey Farms, owned and operated by Bill and Joanne Casey, read their story in this issue's Featured Farm article. Kathie and Kirk Arnold will host the second

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## Thursday, September 28, 2017

**8:00 – Noon** Registration and Trade Show Truxton Community Center, 6337 Academy Street, Truxton, NY 13158

(REGISTRATION CONTINUES THROUGH LUNCH AND CAN BE DONE AFTER THE CASEY FARMS TOUR)

**9:00 – 11:30 Pre-Field Days Farm Tour of Casey Farms,** 1136 Berry Road, Apulia Station, NY 13020. Bill and Joanne Casey will give a tour of their organic dairy and Pick-Your-Own Berry enterprise. This is an optional tour. Participants can go directly to the farm and register after the tour.

**12:00 – 1:00 pm** Lunch and Registration

**1:00 – 3:00 Soil Fertility and Climate Change:** How building up soil fertility creates resilience on your farm when growing conditions are unstable. Neal Kinsey, owner, Kinsey Agricultural Services, will provide education and share his experience so you can create and maintain the most fertile soil for your pastures and crops.

**3:00 – 3:15 Milk Break**

**3:30 – 4:30 Shifting Weather Patterns:** Opportunities and Challenges for Dairy and Crop Production in the Age of Climate Change. Dr. David Wolfe, Professor of Plant and Soil Ecology and Chair of the Climate Change Consortium, Atkinson Center for a Sustainable Future, Cornell University, whose professional focus is on the impact of climate change on agriculture, will focus on recent shifts in weather patterns and offer practical strategies to help farmers adapt to them.

**4:30 – 5:30 Social Hour and Trade Show,** and NY Grazing Coalition Pasture Soil Health Trailer Tours. Fay Benson, Cornell Cooperative Extension's Small Dairy Extension Specialist will lead tours and answer questions about this educational resource.

**5:30 – 7:00 Banquet Dinner and NODPA Annual Meeting,** Liz Bawden, NODPA President, and Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director.

**7:00 – 9:00 Keynote Presentation: CowSignals,** Jack Rodenburg, Certified CowSignals Trainer and founder, Dairy Logix, Ontario, Canada, will lead an interactive event that will be fun and educational while providing you with the tools to help you improve cow management and housing by observing and analyzing cow behavior.

**9:00 pm** Meeting Ends

## Friday, September 29, 2017

**6:30 – 9:00 am Continental Breakfast,** Truxton Community Center

**7:00 – 9:00 Producer-Only Meeting** Facilitated by Henry Perkins, Maine Organic Milk Producers president and past NODPA president, with discussion on pay price, milk supply and much, much more.

**9:00 – 10:30 Adopting New Technology** and/or Management Systems on the Farm: How to make well informed and financially sound decisions about major farm management changes. Sarah Flack, consultant and educator, will walk everyone through the process for decision making around change. She will also address whether a robotic milking system is compatible with your grazing system, and how to assess whether your farm is suitable to convert to an all-grass based system.

**10:30 – 12:00 Functional Barn Design:** Strategies for Assessing Your Barn for Cow Comfort and Labor Efficiency, Jack Rodenburg, Dairy Logix, Ontario, Canada, international consultant on barn design and CowSignals Trainer, will address freestall barn design for cow comfort and labor efficiency; system design and management for robotic milking, and calf barn design incorporating the best in ventilation, and more.

**Twin Oaks Dairy Farm Tour Overview.** Kathie and Kirk Arnold will give an overview of their farm and new barn construction. Kathie and Jack Rodenburg worked together on designing the Arnold's new barn, and they will share their observations from that process. In addition, Kathie will discuss the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program (DGA) and her experience as a Master Dairy Grazier. Fay Benson, the NY DGA Program Director will be on hand to offer DGA program updates and answer questions.

**Noon – 1:15 pm Lunch**

**1:30 pm Twin Oaks Dairy Farm Tour,** 3185 NY-13, Truxton, NY 13158 Kathie and Kirk Arnold, owner-operators, will lead a tour of their farm and Jack Rodenburg will be on hand to show how the Arnold's designed their new barn with cow comfort and labor efficiencies clearly in mind.



**Organic Dairy  
Farmers Cooperative**



## Field Days Overview

*continued from page 19*



**NY Grazing Coalition Pasture  
Soil Health Trailer.**

**Read more about it on page 6**

farm tour on Friday afternoon. We will tour their new barn and hear from Jack Rodenburg who assisted the Arnolds in creating this state-of-the-art dairy facility.

The NODPA Field Days meeting which takes place at the Truxton, NY Community Center, located in central New York about 10 miles north of Cortland, will have a full trade show, plenty of delicious local organic food, and time to connect with both old and new friends. And of

course, we will have the Friday early morning Producer-Only meeting, facilitated by past NODPA president Henry Perkins, so producers can address the significant issues facing the organic dairy industry.

If you are interested in sponsorship and trade show opportunities, please contact Nora Owens, NODPA Field Days Coordinator, at [noraowens@comcast.net](mailto:noraowens@comcast.net) or by phone, 413-772-0444. She will be able to send you information and answer all of your questions.

Please plan to join us for the 17th Annual NODPA Field Days.

Registration and further information is available online at:

**[www.nodpa.com/fielddays\\_](http://www.nodpa.com/fielddays_registration_2017.shtml)  
[registration\\_2017.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/fielddays_registration_2017.shtml)**



### REGISTRATION

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Free	Organic dairy & transitioning producers & families		
\$30	All who aren't organic dairy producers		
<b>Meals</b>			
\$10	Thursday lunch for Adults		
\$5	Thursday lunch (under 11)		
\$25	Thurs. dinner for Adults		
\$12.50	Thurs. dinner (under 11)		
Free	Transitioning farm member. Thursday evening dinner		
\$5	Friday breakfast (7:30-9 am)		
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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

### Growing Top Quality, High-Yielding Crops

By Neal Kinsey, Kinsey Agricultural Services

**W**here is the place to begin if you want both high quality and high yielding crops? Some will even insist that it is simply impossible to accomplish both. For those who think that way, it will likely always be true. But for those who are looking for ways to improve and believe there is still room to do so, what should be considered first? And then, where do you go from that point to make the most possible difference?

To make top yields from vigorous, healthy plants, begin with the soil where they will be growing by performing the closest examination of all the most important factors needed to meet every possible requirement. What provides the most advantage to the crop from that soil? Some will feel the answer is a heavy fertilizer program for the crop. And sufficient fertilizer is extremely important, but to make top yielding, high quality crops, there is another requirement that is also essential to assure the greatest value from whatever fertilizer is applied.

For each soil to perform at its best requires a balance of water, air, minerals and organic matter. Specifically, if you want the soil to do its best it should contain a balance of 50% solids (ideally 45 % minerals and 5 % humus) and 50% pore space (composed of 50% water and 50 % air). This is the correct physical composition of soils that are extremely productive, high-performance soils. To be consistently efficient, it is a necessary requirement to develop the most effective biologically active environment to build the needed extensively developed root systems of high quality, high yielding crops.

But most soils are moderately to severely lacking when it comes to having the proper physical structure to provide the correct amount of water, air and minerals, let alone the needed humus. So if soils are lacking this basic foundational set of requirements, until these problems are solved, the efficiency for top yields and quality will not be achieved from the crops being grown on that soil! And thus the next question should be, "If you don't have the right physical structure in a soil, how do you solve that problem?"

#### If you don't have it, how do you get it?

You can only manage those things you can measure. And farmers or ranchers or other types of growers can manage physical structure, because in spite of what many so-called experts still insist cannot be done, the soil's physical structure can be measured and needed corrections determined by use of a detailed soil analysis. This requires sufficient planning beforehand in that each significant difference in the field that is to be corrected should be sampled and analyzed separately. For most fields this

will mean three to five areas or zones that will require a separate detailed analysis. As a rule, those who advocate the use of one soil test to develop a fertilizer plan to treat the whole field are selling their program of products to use, not the program needed for helping each farmer get the most from each different area of the field.

The physical structure of a good soil is determined by the measured influence of the same four elements that most influence the pH of soils where good crops are generally being grown. These four elements are calcium, magnesium, potassium and sodium. When soils have the proper combination of these four elements they will be most closely matched to the proper amount of water, air and minerals they should contain. For those soils that do not have the correct structure, the soil analysis can be used to determine what needed corrections should be required to achieve it and in what amounts.

Most of those involved in soil fertility and fertilization reject the methodology required to accomplish this program. They fail to grasp the need for a precise testing methodology and assume that all soil testing that reports the content of calcium, magnesium, potassium and sodium are essentially providing the same answer. Nothing could be further from the truth. All that is required to know better than that is to take samples of the same soil and send it to two different soil testing laboratories to see the difference.

And for those who doubt that would be enough, take a soil probe and prepare four sample bags. Mark them as numbers 1 through 4. Now choose a uniform area and take the first probe of soil and place it in sample bag #1. Take the next probe of soil down to the same depth from the immediate right or left of the first as close together as possible and place it in bag #2. Then for bag #3, drop down just below where sample 2 was pulled, still as close as possible without hitting the place where soil was removed for #1 or #2, and take a probe of soil for that sample bag. Then move over just below #1 and take the probe of soil to go into bag #4. If the uniform area is large enough, repeat this procedure at least four or five more times if possible. Now select two of these soils and send them to one of the labs and the other two to the other lab as if they are two different soils to be analyzed by both labs. Then compare the numbers when the tests come back.

As a rule, the numbers should be close to the same for the two samples each lab has analyzed, but quite different numbers should be expected when compared to the other soil lab's test results. Without some training to gain a thorough understanding in order to grasp the need for using the same laboratory every time and using field work based on what the numbers actually show from that specific lab even some who truly want to understand will not grasp these concepts. And those who do not want it to work under any circumstances will keep promoting this common false assumption about all the lab tests numbers meaning the same thing, as a smokescreen to make their claims and try to discourage the true use of the program.

Just keep in mind that in order to achieve the top yields, and still

maintain top quality, assuring the proper soil structure is the place to begin because only by doing this does it establish the proper environment for the biological life in the soil. This builds the house properly where they can reside. And without using a detailed soil analysis to measure whether the soil has this physical structure and make any needed corrections, only soils that are already perfect could ever be up to the task. But for those who have the vision to proceed with a measureable plan when conditions are not ideal, the possibilities are extremely good and in many cases rather easily within reach.

Use the chemistry of the soil to correct the physical structure which in turn builds the house for the biology. Roots, earthworms, soil microbes and all other life in the soil are all strongly affected by the environment that is created when good soil porosity is present. That porosity, which helps determine the correct amount of minerals, water and air, is only present when the correct nutrients are present in specifically determined amounts. Because most soils do not have the proper structure, without this key, these same soils will never achieve their top potential in terms of yield and quality.

### Fertility and Fertilization

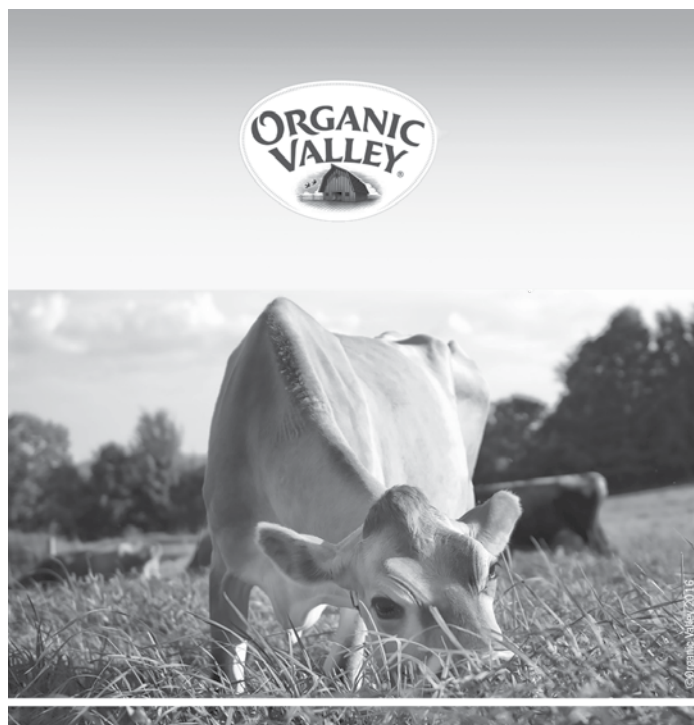
Once the proper structure of a soil has been addressed, then, to be most effective, supplying needed fertility levels with fertilizer and soil amendments is the next consideration. And again, for fertilization to be most effective in building high yields and qual-

ity, the importance of soil chemistry and its effects on physical structure must be correctly measured and properly considered. This is because the nutrient content of the soil actually determines how well all needed fertilizer that is applied can be taken up and utilized by the plants that are growing there. When the soil has too much of any element, that excess will result in the crop not getting enough of something else it needs for the best quality and/or yield.

The most efficient uptake and utilization of nutrients begins with the calcium content of the soil. As Dr. William Albrecht would say, "Calcium is like the doorman that opens the way for all other nutrients to enter into the plant." Without adequate calcium, it requires even larger amounts of all the other essential nutrients to produce the same yield.

And while considering the importance of calcium in the soil, beware of a trap that catches some growers who are striving for top quality and yields which prevents them from reaching such goals. This trap is trying to achieve a specific ratio for calcium to magnesium in the soil. With the system being advocated and utilized here for top yields and quality, such a program will not work. That is because the calcium to magnesium ratio will vary from 7:1 on heavy clay soils all the way down to 3:1 on very light sandy soils. In fact, there is no one ideal ratio of calcium to magnesium for soils because fertility must be measured in terms

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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

### Growing Top Quality Crops

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of how it affects available nutrients for the crop.

As the clay decreases in a soil and as the silt and/or sand increases the less magnesium by weight will be needed to provide what the plants need to grow best. It is the amount of negatively charged clay and humus particles in the soil that determine the amount of calcium and magnesium that are needed there. The amount needed is expressed as the percent of the total nutrient-holding capacity of each individual soil. In the case of calcium the required level would be 60-70% and for magnesium 10-20% of the soil's total exchange capacity. The soil test then needs to show how many pounds of that nutrient are needed to supply the proper amount for that soil to grow the best crops possible. Apply the proper tonnages of material to correct any deficiencies and at the same time this begins to provide for achieving the correct percentage of each nutrient required to grow the best yield and quality on that land.

You may be able to grow a good crop without the addition of more fertilizer, but you cannot achieve the land's true potential without the proper amount of fertility. Calcium and magnesium provides for the long range goals in terms of soil fertility needed

to reach the best in regard to yield and quality. Without the proper amount of both of these needed nutrients the soil's true potential will never be met.

Next consider that to produce the crop you need to grow this year, any nitrogen, phosphate, potassium or sulfur deficiency would generally take precedence over calcium and magnesium. This rule is especially true for crops other than legumes. Once these four nutrients are present in adequate amounts just be sure you use a soil test that can measure this in order not to continue to apply them at the expense of other needed materials.

For example, using an excessive amount of nitrogen will tie up copper. Plants need sufficient copper to provide stalk strength and resilience. In terms of nutritional value, copper is required for protein utilization in livestock. So then too much nitrogen can contribute to stalk lodging and diminish the effective use of protein in the crop.

Phosphorous in excess is antagonistic to sulfur availability, ties up zinc and when excessive enough also copper. Sulfur is needed for root development and to increase the protein content. Zinc is needed for moisture absorption into the plant. So even though adequate to good P levels can positively influence root growth, too much can actually hinder proper root development because of its effect on S availability and, due to zinc tie-up, can be responsible for the failure to take up moisture even when it is present in the soil in adequate amounts.



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Too much potassium can be a problem too. Once above 7.5% saturation it ties up boron. And in combination with sodium together totaling 10% or higher, manganese uptake will begin to be blocked. Boron is necessary for nitrogen utilization in the plant throughout the growing season. It also takes the starch out of the leaf to build fruit and grain size. Manganese is needed for seed germination, faster and taller growth, bloom and seed set, and stalk strength. When the soil has too much potassium it will contribute to these problems.

Sulfur in excess is also a problem. When too much is present, it ties up nitrate nitrogen and inhibits phosphate availability. Too much sulfur can also reduce molybdenum availability. As long as it is utilized properly to feed the crops and reduce excesses of calcium, magnesium, potassium or sodium, sulfur is of extreme benefit, but once those needs are met applying more than the crop requires will begin to cause problems.

After assuring adequate N-P-K-S for the soil and crop and once the needed calcium and magnesium have been applied, then micronutrients that are deficient can become the nutrients that are limiting yield.

Boron, like sulfur and nitrogen can be leached from the soil, especially in years where there is more than enough rain during the fruiting stage of the crop. Most soils are lacking the recommended minimum of 0.80 ppm and several good rains can make that even worse. When you do not get good grain fill with adequate P

levels already in the soil, check the boron.

Iron can be a problem, especially where calcium or phosphate is in excess in the soil. But before more is added it is best to check its availability in the subsoil. And so long as the subsoil is higher in iron than manganese, if the roots can get down to it, there should generally be no problem.

Manganese tends to be deficient more often in cool wet soils. All soils need at least 40 ppm based on the type of testing we use. Woody plants do even better at 125 ppm+. Growing rice or use of ammonium sulfate tends to increase manganese availability in soils. But if there is a serious deficiency, do not wait for such a long term solution, as such methods are slow enough that they should only be considered once there is enough manganese there in order to assure that will continue to be the case.

Copper should be at least 2 ppm on our tests. Above this level, and in combination with adequate boron, it is the key to the control of rust and fungus diseases. And because it helps in protein conversion in livestock, the first obviously positive outward sign is a slick shiny hair coat on the animals. Copper is also the third key to stalk strength behind potassium and then manganese.

Zinc is perhaps the best known and most often applied of the trace minerals. So long as there is enough potassium, zinc is the next key to proper water uptake by the plants. Minimum for our

*continued on page 32*

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## NET UPDATE

### Recent ODairy Discussions

By Liz Bawden, Organic Dairy Farmer, NODPA President

A farmer was concerned about a calf who was off-feed, coughing and panting, and had the scours. It was suggested that, for a young calf, fighting off two conditions at the same time may be difficult. If the temperature is above 102.5, then it is likely pneumonia. If the calf is very young, it could also be a "Salmonella dublin" infection, which presents itself as pneumonia. One vet suggested the seriousness of the condition: "Pneumonia is a particularly distressing and dangerous disease. Quatracon 2X, Banamine and Amplimmune are all indicated. Get a vet involved." Another vet offered advice on herbal solutions: if the temperature is sub-normal to slightly elevated, give Thyme and Eucalyptus leaves; if the temperature is very high, give Andrographis; give Horehound and Elecampane to help with combined digestive and respiratory issues.

Asking the group for ideas on how to limit the growth of bacteria and algae in stock tanks, a producer received many responses. Here are some of the suggestions: Put some barley straw in old pantyhose, and put it in the tank. Oxygenate the water to discourage algae growth with hydrogen peroxide or hypochlorite, or have the input valve higher to splash down into the tank. Clean out the tanks and cycle the water more often. Add a few pennies or a run of copper in the water line; the copper helps keep the water clean. In larger tanks, some producers suggested the use of fish like goldfish, catfish, or trout; and it was suggested to limit sources of phosphorus running into a pond or large tank.

Sorghum-sudan, pearl millet, and buckwheat. That was the mixture of warm-season annuals that one producer wanted to plant, and he asked about the seeding proportions. Another farmer said he had used a mixture of 35 lbs sorghum-sudan, 25 lbs buckwheat, and 5 lbs red clover for several years with good success. Another farmer had very positive experiences mixing sorghum-sudan with millet.

Despite feeding free-choice kelp for its prevention, several animals still showed symptoms of pinkeye. Suggestions for treatment included: spray eye with a homeopathic Hypericum spray, and give Hypericum orally as well; mix honey with raw milk, and squirt on the eye twice a day; homeopathic Conium is used as an eye wash twice a day; and the eye flap suture procedure done by your vet.

There was an in-depth discussion about stray voltage on dairy farms, and how to keep electric fences and their ground rods from

## Website & E-Newsletter Advertising

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

### Website Advertising

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

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

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

### E-Newsletter Advertising

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

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[www.nodpa.com/list\\_serv.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml)



setting up a charge on your water lines and barn equipment. To summarize, one farmer said that removing these electric charges comes down to 3 things: sizing the fence charger for your operation, adequate grounding, and understanding the magnetic field.

On sizing the charger, he said, "It pays to use the smallest charger that will get the job done for you. On my 250 acre grass farm in southern PA I used a 15 Joule charger and had constant "stray voltage" problems, including shock pulses on various surfaces in the dairy as well as "ticking" on the phone line. Today, I would use no more than a 6 - 8 Joule charger for that application. Keeping fences clean on organic farms is a challenge, but controlling fence charger currents can pay big dividends in production, reproduction, and general health of the animals." He also mentioned that he had seen stray voltage on farms with solar fencers as well as AC fencers.

"Adequate grounding on the fence charger will greatly help to control unwanted spikes in all the wrong places.... Inadequate grounding will cause the spikes to "stray" elsewhere. A good rule of thumb is that even the smaller pasture chargers should have at least three 8-foot ground rods. One ground rod per joule is my recommendation. Use 8-foot ground rods spaced at 8-10 foot intervals and connected to the charger using a continuous #6 cop-

per wire looped through the ground clamp on each rod and up to the charger." A simple way to test how well your fencer is grounded is to create a "dead short" in the fencing system; lay a steel post across the fence. Then, touch the ground wire between the charger and the first ground rod to see if you feel anything. You should feel NOTHING on the ground wire. If you feel even the slightest "tickle", it indicates that you have just become another "ground rod" in the system and you need to install additional ground rods until this "tickle" disappears.

Whenever a fence charger generates a pulse, there is an electromagnetic field that surrounds both the charger and the "hot" wire leaving the charger. This magnetic field can easily be measured outward from the "hot" wire 10 feet or more, sometimes much more depending on circumstances. This field will induce "stray" currents onto surrounding conductive surfaces...on steel, concrete, earth, animals, etc. So a few helpful hints: Never mount a fence charger on or near a conductive building (hoop building, steel siding). Do not place a charger in a livestock building where animals are confined nearby. Keep "hot" wires out of animal facilities, and stop those wires at least 8 feet from any conductive surface (steel, concrete, water troughs, etc). Non-conductive materials, like wood, should be used in those areas. ♦



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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION: FEATURED FARM

## Casey Farms, Apulia Station, New York: The Rural Landscape From Above

*continued from page 1*

photo of the 282-acre Casey Farm was captured by either DeWolf or Mason Bros (which offered a similar service as DeWolf). A neighbor recently gave Bill and his wife Joanne a copy of this photograph.

Again in 1957, a farm image was captured by Aerial Surveys, revealing the 1915 vintage 60-cow tie-stall barn, two upright silos, and a second farm house on the opposite side of the road. Also, visible from above are cows grazing.

Bill was seven when the 1957 second image was taken. He was well accustomed to farm life; imprinted to the sweet smell of second crop dry hay, the slime of a new calf, and the beat of a pulsator. Perhaps he's too small to toss squares bales but he can probably feed a calf. It's astounding what a seven-year old dairy kid is capable of. Even capable of knowing that this is what he loves and this is how he plans to spend his life.

"I grew up on the farm that my wife Joanne and I are on," said Bill. "Through high school, I was counseled by both my parents and teachers that dairy farming was not for the future. They told me to go to college and learn something else and don't expect to be a farmer." In 1968, around the same time Bill was processing this career advice, a third aerial photograph was taken. His parents presented it to Bill when he left for college, reluctantly having chosen to follow the counsel of his parents and teachers.

Bill graduated from college in 1972 with an environmental engineering degree, and spent six years in the industry. In 1974, he married Joanne and two years later they were back on the farm,

prompted by his father's imminent retirement.

He returned from college to a landscape in flux; small farms selling their cows and the land quickly being developed for residential use or purchased by large confinement operations. "Our region is mainly saturated with two large commercial farms and just a few other small farms," Bill said. "In general, you will never see a cow at either location." He added, "They have gobbled up all the land around us. There are acres of corn and many manure trucks on the road."

Bill and Joanne operated the farm much as his father did for the next 20 years until the late 1990's, when they sold the cows and Bill took a job as an Extension grazing specialist. "We were disappointed with conventional milk prices and their unpredictability," Bill explained. They retained their heifers and used the funds from the sale of the milk cows to upgrade their haying equipment. The intention was to continue to use the infrastructure to raise replacement heifers and certified organic crops, as their land was in the final stages of organic transition.

During his two years as an Extension agent, Bill had the opportunity to study many farming operations along with the numerous Dairy Farm Business Summaries. "I was able to see a few organic farms and I liked what I saw," Bill explained. These experiences helped to draw him back into dairy and because they had retained their heifers, Bill said, "it was an easy transition to organic production."

"Leaving Extension was not difficult. It was a good feeling to walk across the street in the morning and go to the barn instead of



**Baleage and pasture are supplemented with two pounds of grain per milk cow per day.**

**Casey Farm 1950****Casey Farm 1957: Photo by Aerial Surveys**

drive to Ithaca, New York,” Bill said. Even during his two-year stint at Extension, they milked a few cows for personal use and Bill has not missed a milking in 41 years. About his remarkable attendance record Bill said, “Maybe it isn’t something that I should brag about but I believe milking is the most important part of the day. Even when I had hernia surgery I made sure I could make it home to milk that night.”

With a renewed sense of purpose, Bill and Joanne slowly built their milking herd back up to its current size of 61 cows (this includes dry cows.) They briefly shipped into the conventional milk pool until they secured a spot on a newly established Organic Valley route. Ohio-based Global Organic Alliance is their current certifier.

A fourth aerial photograph taken in 2007 reveals several changes to the farm: a freestall barn, a  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre plot of pick-your-own raspberries, a 2.2-acre plot of blueberries, a 33.6 kW solar system,

and a two-acre strip of land utilized for making compost. This photo was not taken by Henry DeWolf but by one of his salesmen, Mark Parker’s American Aerial Surveys, who started his own business in 1978.

What would Henry have made of these changes to the landscape? From above, the farm seems radically altered compared with the 1957 and 1968 photos. But juxtaposed with the dwindling amounts of small farms and the immense growth of the larger ones, the changes do not seem so vast. The farm has incorporated new technologies but has retained its essential character. It’s still the same small piece of earth that Bill scraped his knees on, drove his first tractor, and waved good-bye to his parents who had helped convince him that small dairy farms were untenable.

“We added the freestall because of the ease of feeding,” Bill said. “It has also given us a more spreadable manure. When we housed

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**Casey Farm 1968: Photo By Aerial Surveys**

## FEATURE FARM

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the cows in the tie-stalls we had a tremendous amount of manure in the bedding which made harvesting clean hay difficult. Not picking up so much manure has improved our forage quality.”

The 160-foot long freestall has 65 stalls lined with mattresses and bedded with sawdust. 40 feet of the freestall is a dedicated feeding area with two home-made round bale feeders- one is 24’X8’ and the other is 16’X7’. A bale grabber is used to drop baleage into the feeders. A winter ration is typically three 1400 pound bales of baleage and one 300-pound bale of second-cut dry hay purchased from a nearby farm.

“There are a few drawbacks with this feeding system,” noted Bill. “If there is feed refusal we have to clean the feeders out by hand. Also, only 40 cows can access the feed at a time and we have found that our Jersey crosses can’t compete with the Holsteins.” Because of this, they are breeding the Jersey genetics out of the herd.

A maternity area with a large bedded-pack, water fountain, and separate feeder connects the tie-stall with the freestall. Ten years ago, they installed wireless cameras which are connected to the television in their house. Since the house and barn are 500’ apart, the technology allows for more frequent and effortless monitor-

ing.

Bill and Joanne did not make the switch to a milking parlor when they added the freestall. The entire milk herd, including dry cows, is brought into the tie-stall twice-a-day for milking and Bill said, “I just like to have all the cows in front of me twice a day to make sure everyone is eating. My knees are doing fine.” In the evening, two pounds of grain is fed to the milk cows and one pound to the dry cows along with five pounds (as fed) of high-quality baleage per cow. “The baleage is what lures the cows into their stalls,” said Bill.

With a cull rate of 10% a year, the Casey’s replacement program is small with only six or seven heifers being retained a year. “The lower producing half of our herd including our heifers are bred to Angus so we are never tempted to keep their calves,” Bill explained.

The work is loosely divided between Bill and Joanne, with Bill doing all of the milking. Joanne has a saying that has never actually been quoted by Bill, but it goes like this: “You can mess with my wife but DON’T touch my cows!” Joanne does the tie-stall feeding, feeds the calves, cleans the beds and bedded areas of the freestall. They work together cleaning the other barns before milking. A part-time employee scrapes the feed section of the freestall, feeds up, and hauls manure. “He is invaluable; working long and late hours when necessary,” Bill said.

They have deliberated transitioning the herd to comply with OV’s



**Casey Farm 2009: Photo By Aerial Surveys**

all-grass standards, since there is a grass milk route in the area, but for now he prefers to give them a little grain to ensure they are getting their minerals. Daily average production can range from 46-60 pounds, with butter fat at 4.2, protein at 3.2, and a somatic cell count that ranges from 100,000-200,000. Total annual production is nearly 1 million pounds.

Had Henry DeWolf been around to take the 2007 photograph, he may have been perplexed by the solar array on the shop roof. The 33.6 kW system was installed in 2011, taking advantage of federal and state tax credits. "It has reduced our electric bill from \$600/month to \$17/month; the charge to read the meter," said Bill. All of the power enters the grid and is monitored by a net meter. Once a year, they are paid 1.1 cents per kWh for anything extra that is produced.

Had Henry DeWolf been flying in 2007 to have taken the last aerial photo, he would have noticed that there were cows outside on green grass. Would he have been perceptive enough to observe that the cows seem to be moving around 75-acres of well-tended pasture? These small details probably are not apparent to the photographer but they demonstrate a significant shift in pasture management as we travel through time from 1950 to the present.

"When we first started grazing in the 1970's, we didn't understand that we had to use our very best land," Bill said. "We had been trained to think that pasture was anything that couldn't be plowed and planted to corn." Unimpressed with the results of

grazing, they invested in tunnel ventilation for the barn and went into a period of confinement.

"Eventually we broke down and put our best land in grazing," Bill explained. The Casey's 75-acres of pasture is divided into 14 paddocks in total. Most are ½ mile long by 75' feet wide. Using break fences and moving the milk cows and dry cows together every 12 hours, it takes roughly five days to cover one paddock. The heifers are rotated through a separate 16-acre system. The cows have access to the free stall at all times and are currently grazing 66% of their dry matter intake. "The freestall offers a shady retreat from the hot sun or hard-driving rainstorms," said Bill, "but the cows still prefer going to pasture."

"We have also gone out of our way to improve our laneways so the cows don't hurt their feet," said Bill. "Last year we black-topped some laneways in high erosion areas. We were advised that it would be slippery but the cows have performed beautifully. It costs about the same as three coatings of stone dust and compacting with a roller." They plan to install another 1,000 feet this summer. Black top costs about \$1/sq. foot.

From the cockpit at an altitude of 4,000 feet, it would also be difficult to perceive the subtleties of color caused by the different stage of pasture re-growth. It would be hard to see the dense mat of second crop dominated by clover. More obvious, however, are

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## FEATURE FARM

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the four long windrows of compost that are the main source of the farm's fertility program.

Bill said, "We call it aged manure because we aren't monitoring for carbon/nitrogen ratio and temperature as is required by the organic standard. Also, the moisture content is high so it rarely gets up to temperature." Two or three times a season, a custom compost turner comes to turn the piles. "The turning is merely a mechanical break-down as opposed to aeration, but in six months there is a good growth of worms."

"We compost all of the manure that is produced from March through October," Bill said, and the goal is to spread 12-15 tons of manure or compost per acre. He continued, "The compost is twice as concentrated as manure in terms of NPK so we often use it the fields that are farther away or along the one creek on the farm."

Bill said they run their hay tedder over both pastures and hay fields in the early spring which helps to minimize any clumps of compost and/or raw manure, since all fields are covered each year.

67 years have passed since the 1950 aerial photograph. Imagine

how many calves have been born, how many square bales and round bales produced, the number of times the driveway has been plowed, the loads of manure spread, the amount of electricity and fuel consumed to power the vacuum pump, the tractors, and the barn lights.

These are the details an aerial photographer such as DeWolf would miss from the cockpit- the small movements and activities that shape each day on the farm. It's possible the pilot wouldn't even notice the disappearance of the Casey farm, replaced by a sea of corn, five or six new houses, or a horse farm. The pick-your-own berry customers would notice though, as would Organic Valley, the Case service desk, and the people who deliver the bale wrap, sawdust, and milking supplies.

Each organic farm is its own unique organism, whether viewed from the macro or micro perspective. Assume these organisms are vital to human health as well as the health of our climate and communities. From above or on the ground, what do we want our rural landscape to look like in the future? If it is to include these unique small farms, then how best do we go about safeguarding their continuation?

*Bill and Joanne Casey can be reached at: Casey Farms, 1136 Berry Road, PO Box 36, Apulia Station, NY 13020. Phone: 315.683.5674 and email: bill5308@aol.com. Bill Casey has been working to organize and digitize Henry DeWolf's collection of over 2 million negatives. If you have interest in the collection, please contact him.*

## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

### Growing Top Quality Crops

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testing is 6 ppm, but as the P level increases, so does the need for zinc. When zinc is applied, expect that only half of the potential increase will be in the first twelve months, then the other half in the next twelve months. And just as an extreme excess of phosphate ties up zinc, an extreme amount of zinc can also tie up P availability.

So in every instance when it comes to nutrient needs of the crop, it is possible to use so much that it will cause a problem with the availability of one or more of the other needed nutrients. Consider again, you cannot manage what you cannot measure. Actual needs for all of these nutrients can be properly measured and evaluated and once it has been done and the problems solved, only then can the greatest possibilities for yield and quality be determined.

Testing the soil and understanding how to interpret what those tests show in terms of actual nutrient needs are the beginning requirements for producing nutrient dense foods and feeds. ♦



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# Classified Ads

## ANIMALS

**Normande heifers** - 1 fresh and 6 due summer/fall. NOFA-NY certified.

Name: Scott & Traci Laing. Email: Tracilaing@aol.com. Phone: 315-261-2212

Location: Potsdam, NY

**18 Certified Organic Milking cows**, 9 Holstein and 9 Cross bred, 55+,\$1800 OBO, Call Eric!

Name: Eric Evans. Email: eecowman@yahoo.com. Phone: 801.430.2738

Location: Lancaster, PA

**FOR SALE: 56 Milking Cows**, 14 Pregnant Dry Cows, 36 Heifer Calves (Avg Age 6 Months), 12 Bull Calves (Avg Age 8 months). Mainly Jersey/Holstein Crosses. All certified organic and 100% grass fed. Jonny de Jong, (334)726-3204, jonny@workingcows-dairy.com

Location: Slocumb, Alabama

**FOR SALE: Livestock**, Jako Farm, Hutchinson, KS, one of the oldest only-grass seasonal dairies in the

country has animals for sale: bred dairy cows, yearling heifers, mature bulls, and hair sheep available. Animals are acclimated to year-round foraging, no hormones/antibiotics. Cows will calve in April. Daniel King, daniel@jakoinc.com, phone, 620-727-6811, www.JakoFarm.com.

Location: Hutchinson, KS

**FOR SALE:** Polled Registered Holstein bull calf, weeks old. Dam, 1st lactation, est. 58 days, 13,678 M 659bf (5.9%), 398p (3.1%). Grand dam, 3rd lactation 305 days 23,104 M, 816bf (4.2%), 544P (3.0%)

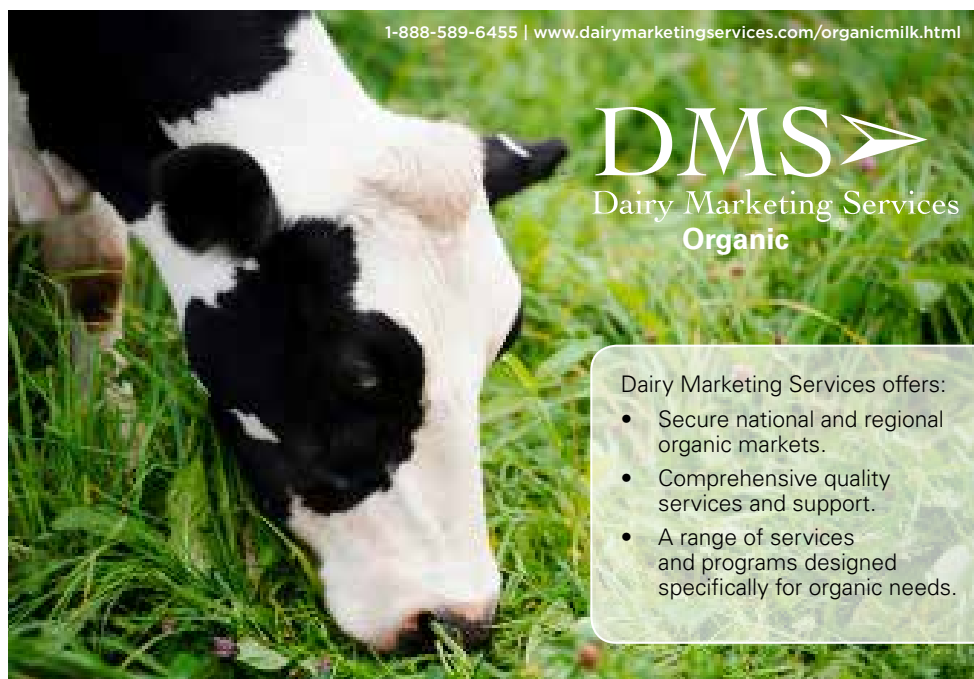
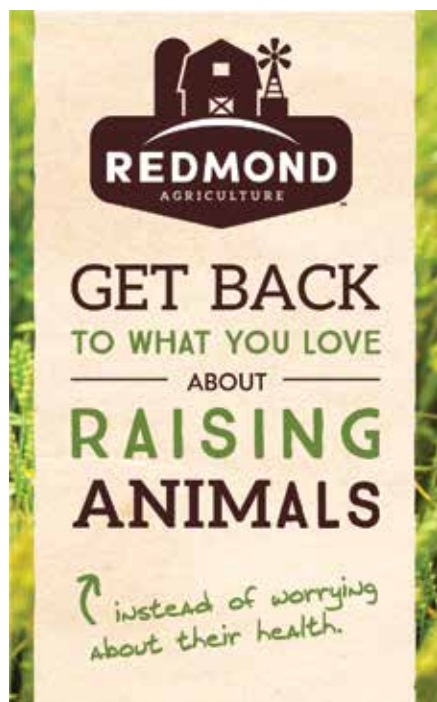
Sire 566H1228. Let's Deal, International Protein Sires, I would keep him for myself, but have used two bulls from the Grand Dam and need to out-cross. \$450.00. Jim Goodman, r.j.goodman@mwt.net or 608-489-2291

Location: SW Wisconsin near Hillsboro

## FORAGES, BEDDING & GRAINS

**2017 4 x 4 wrapped hay bales**, certified organic. \$40.00 per bale, will load. Call 802-254-6982, leave a message. Name: Phillip Cutting. Email: nerost75@comcast.net. Location: Guilford, Vermont

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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](mailto:john.cleary@organicvalley.coop) or Steve Getz at 207-465-6927 or [steve.getz@organicvalley.coop](mailto:steve.getz@organicvalley.coop).
- In New York, Contact East Regional Pool Manager Anne Phillips at (607)-222-3265 or [Anne.phillips@organicvalley.coop](mailto:Anne.phillips@organicvalley.coop)
- In New York: West Regional Pool Manager Eric Beller at mobile: (315)-359-7382 or [eric.beiler@organicvalley.coop](mailto:eric.beiler@organicvalley.coop)
- In the Southeast, contact Gerry Cohn at (919) 605-5619 or [gerry.cohn@organicvalley.coop](mailto: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](mailto:Georgia.klischer@organicvalley.coop)
- In Southeast Pennsylvania and Maryland, contact Terry Ingram at (717) 413-3765 or [terry.ingram@organicvalley.coop](mailto:terry.ingram@organicvalley.coop).
- Peter Miller, East Regional Division Pool Manager, (612) 801-3506 or [peter.miller@organicvalley.coop](mailto: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](mailto:farmerhotline@organicvalley.coop) and online at [www.farmers.coop](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:noraowens@comcast.net).

# Classified Ads

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## **CERTIFIED ORGANIC HAY and FORAGES**

Are you planning for your 2017 hay needs? Order your 2nd/3rd cutting now ... Marz Farm is offering the following products:

- Small square bales: 1st cutting \$4.00 per bale or \$220 ton; 2nd/3rd cutting \$5.00 bale or \$275 ton
- Large square bales (3' x 3' x 7'): 1st cutting \$60.00 bale or \$180 ton; 2nd/3rd cutting \$80 bale or \$250 ton
- Bedding or mulch hay large: at \$35 bale or small at \$2.50 bale
- Balage bales: 1st or 2nd cutting at \$50 a bale
- Dry round bales: Custom orders only

All square bale hay is stored indoors. Forage tests will be available. Quantity discounts. We ship throughout the country and have multiple delivery quantities available or pickup at the farm. Free samples. Contact Tony Marzolino: 607-657-8534-farm, 315-378-5180-cell, or tmarzolino@yahoo.com

Located in NY Southern Tier between Binghamton and Ithaca, Tioga County.

**NOFA-NY Certified Organic SEED** - OATS and CLOVER. Cleaned and bagged on farm. \$10/bushel for Oats, \$3.25/# for Clover. Call Jeff @ 607-566-8477 or email at Mitchellorganics@hotmail.com.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **NOFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC in Binghamton NY is Hiring**

NOFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC is a non-profit, USDA-accredited organic certification agency, whose primary purpose is to provide high integrity organic certification to over 1000 organic farmers and processors throughout New York State and surrounding areas.

We have an immediate opening for a full-time Dairy Certification Coordinator Assistant working in our Binghamton, NY office. Annual salary up to \$30,000 depending on experience along with annual pay increases.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Associate's degree in a related field, or 1-3 years' experience ideally in organic farming and certification.
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail. Good writing and communication skills.
- Good computer skills including a working understanding of data base programs, word processing, and email systems.
- Able to respond decisively, accurately, confidently, and courteously to client inquiries.
- Ability to take direction and ensure follow through.
- Show initiative in providing support.
- Knowledge of organic farming or certification, and familiarity with production systems, including livestock (dairy production) is desirable.
- Willing to work occasional irregular hours and travel as needed.

Benefits include healthcare, dental and 403(b) as well as generous paid holidays/vacation time. Be a part of a growing company working with a dedicated team that supports local organic food and farming. For information regarding our organization, please visit [www.nofany.org](http://www.nofany.org). Interested and qualified candidates are invited to email a resume and letter of interest to: [Lori@nofany.org](mailto:Lori@nofany.org)

**Seeking proficient equipment operator** for plowing, harrowing, mowing, raking, tedding, baling. Salary commensurate with experience. Call 802-497-4290. Tanya Nuzzo, [tanyaworkman@icloud.com](mailto:tanyaworkman@icloud.com)

Location: Jeffersonville, VT



# Calendar

**Saturday, August 5, 2017 at 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm**

**Celebrating Common Ground: Discovering Weeds, Soil Health, and Diversity, Groundswell Incubator Farm, 100 Rachel Carson Way, Ithaca, NY 14850 (Tompkins County)**

Groundswell Incubator Farm hosts a fascinating cultural exchange of soil and science, weeds, and words at this field day. Learn from Cornell Research Technician Sandra Wayman and Fay Benson, Cornell Cooperative Extension Small Farms Program with their Soil Health Mobile Trailer and incubator farmers. This day provides a unique opportunity for hands-on learning about breaking through cultural and language barriers. This event is produced by NOFA-NY and Groundswell with support from the USDA-Risk Management Agency. Groundswell is located at 100 Rachel Carson Way, Ithaca, NY 14850 (Tompkins County).

**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 Up) on biological systems in soil and humans alike.

**Aug 15, 2017 10:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**Philo Ridge Pasture Walk & Field Day with Jim Gerrish  
Philo Ridge Farm, Charlotte, VT**

**COST: \$30 for VGFA members, \$40 for non-members (includes lunch)**

We will share grazing research (cover crops for soil health and animal performance; forage production and quality of semi-shaded forages, heat stress and animal behavior) and there will be a soil health demonstration (Cornell Coop Extension educator Fay Benson will bring the "soil health trailer" and other nice tools to demonstrate soil health, water infiltration and runoff of different crops, included well-managed pastures), and there will be a pasture walk with Jim Gerrish. Registration is at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/field-day-pasture-walk-at-philo-ridge-farm-tickets-35457651791>, or contact Juan Alvez at [jalvez@uvm.edu](mailto:jalvez@uvm.edu) with any questions.

**Tuesday, August 15, 2017 and Thursday, August 17, 2017  
Youth Veterinarian Camp at Erie County Fair, 5600 McKinley Pkwy, Hamburg, NY 14075**

This summer, youth will have the opportunity to work first hand with veterinarians and animals during the Erie County Fair's

## Advertise With Us!

**NODPA News is Published Bi-Monthly  
January, March, May, July, September & November**

Join as a **Business Member** and receive an additional 5% off all advertising. To learn more about Business memberships and the Web Business Directory, go to [www.nodpa.com/directory.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/directory.shtml) or contact Nora Owens.

**2017 Ad rates and sizes listed below.**

**Deadline for advertising in the  
September, 2017 issue is August 15, 2017.**

**Full Page Ad (7.5" W x 10.25" H) = \$630**

**1/2 Page Ad (7.5" W x 4.5" H) = \$320**

**1/4 Page Ad (3.5" W x 4.75" H) = \$176**

**1/8 Page Ad/Business Card:**

**(3.5" W x 2.25" H) = \$95**

**Commit to a full year of print advertising and get 10 percent discount: Full: \$567, Half: \$288, Quarter: \$159, Eighth: \$85.**

**Classified Ads:** Free to organic dairy farmers and business members. All others \$20 for the first 30 words; \$.20 per word over 30

For advertising information call Nora Owens:  
413-772-0444 or email [noraowens@comcast.net](mailto:noraowens@comcast.net).

Please send a check with your ad (made payable to NODPA).  
30 Keets Rd., Deerfield, MA 01342

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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](http://nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml)); visit our web page ([www.nodpa.com](http://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

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_ \$100 to become a supporter of NODPA

\_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000+ to become a Benefactor

\_\_\_\_\_ \$150 to become a Business Member

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Farm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a certified organic dairy producer? YES NO

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

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

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

Please mail this form with a check to: Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342, or by fax: 866-554-9483 or by email to [ednodpa@comcast.net](mailto: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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inaugural Vet Camp. The half-day agricultural experience will be geared for children 11-14 years of age and will focus on three specific areas of learning: Pet Wellness & First Aid, Farm Animal Health, and Equine Handling. The program is limited to two sessions that will accommodate 30 children each. Registration is now open and will be available on a first come first serve basis. The cost for participation is \$10 per child. Each participant will receive a Vet Camp t-shirt, lunch and will take home a vet supplies goodie bag. Questions may be directed to the Fair's Agriculture Education Office at (716)649-3900 ext. 6499 or by emailing Education Coordinator Amber Klein at [aklein@ecfair.org](mailto:aklein@ecfair.org).

**Thursday, August 17, 2017 at 6:00pm to 8:30pm**  
**Starting with Heifers: Growing into an Organic Dairy**  
**Vision-Hope Dairy, 46 Springbrook Road, Pulaski, NY 13142**  
**(Oswego County)**

Many farmers are looking at alternative ways to transition in organic dairying. Tom Bonofski of Vision-Hope Dairy is planning to return to dairy production by transitioning heifers and rebuilding milking facilities to be strategically placed when the organic market opens back up in the future. Participants in this field day will join a farm tour, hear alternative ideas from season inspector and Dairy Transitions Project leader Robert Perry, and learn about Tom's strategy based on a slow systems approach, without expecting transition incentives. This event is produced by NOFA-NY with support from the New York Farm Viability Institute. Contact NOFA-NY, (585) 271-1979, [info@nofany.org](mailto:info@nofany.org) for more information.

**Monday, August 21, 2017 at 1:00pm to 4:00pm**  
**Building an Organic Dairy from the Soil Up**  
**955 Parker St., Marathon, NY 13803 (Cortland County).**

In this FREE field day, participants will learn about assessing soil health, developing a farm design and building their own dairy. Jim and Anne Phillips of Triple 3 Livestock will share their farm story and provide a tour of their new facilities. Mark Kopecky, Organic Valley Agronomist, will discuss soil health as it pertains to crop production and pasture management. Fay Benson, Cornell University SCNY Regional Team, will bring the Soil Health Trailer to demonstrate variations in soil types and management

systems. Fay will also share his knowledge of crop insurance options available in New York State. This event is produced by NOFA-NY with support from Organic Valley Cropp Cooperative and the USDA-Risk Management Agency. For more information, contact Fay Benson, 607-745-3807, or [afb3@cornell.edu](mailto:afb3@cornell.edu).

**Tuesday, August 29, 2017 at 1:00pm to 4:00pm**  
**Rotational Dairy Grazing**  
**Echo-Valley Farm, 492 Marshville Road, Canajoharie, NY**  
**13317 (Montgomery County)**

Organic Valley and NOFA-NY join together to invite participants to learn about the multi-species rotational grazing system. In this FREE field day, Echo-Valley Farm's Aaron Fisher shares his knowledge on balancing forages for both his milk cow herd and his sheep. He will share his experiences in intensive grazing on his 30-cow dairy. Organic Valley Agronomist Mark Kopecky will speak on balancing soils in a grazing rotation. Also discussed will be soil health as it pertains to both field crop production and pasture management. This event is produced by NOFA-NY with support from Organic Valley Cropp Cooperative. Contact NOFA-NY, (585) 271-1979, [info@nofany.org](mailto:info@nofany.org) for more information.

**September 6, 2017, 5 p.m.**  
**Diverse Dairy, A MOFGA Farm Training Project workshop**  
**Toddy Pond Farm, 174 Carver Rd, Monroe, ME 04951**

In recent decades, many small dairy farms have had to 'get big or get out' as the rising cost of operating a small scale, pasture based dairy has grown beyond economic sustainability. In order to become profitable, many producers have gotten creative—by diversification, value-added production, and innovative marketing strategies. Toddy Pond Farm is a small, diversified, family-run dairy operation of grass-fed Jersey and Guernsey cows in Monroe. Come see how farmers Greg and Heidi Purinton-Brown have designed the business model of the farm to ensure long term economic sustainability. They produce yogurt, kefir, cheese, and ice cream, along with honey, sheep, guinea hogs, meat chickens and eggs. Learn about their marketing strategies for this diversified operation and how the different aspects of the farm complement each other. Potluck to follow. For more information, call 207-249-3344 or 207-249-8481.

**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

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### From the MODPA Treasurer

**G**reetings! This seems to be another year with the same old questions. Will the rain stop long enough to get the work done? Will I be in the right spot when it does stop? Will the cows hold their production? Will there be a tomorrow for organic milk?

Weather has definitely been one of the bigger newsmakers in my area. We have had plenty of moisture so far this year. Most corn planting in my area was delayed. Those who got it in early had to replant much of it. It appears to be coming along nicely now but we won't know the final cost until fall. Hay making has been tough. There has been some nice hay made but there was plenty that was late and or rained on. I don't think there will be a lot of overproduction for the coming winter from this feed.

Pasture conditions, overall, have been good. The recent round of heat in the area has put the brakes on production. Most producers I have talked with say that production has fallen off. I expect this trend to continue into fall as the dog days of summer are here and it is unlikely to see much change till we see a change in the seasons.

There continues to be turbulence in the processing end. Nobody feels too secure right now. Personally, I think the worst is past for now but we must be diligently working to prevent this from happening again. We need to keep as many on the farm as we can. Losing one farmer is too many to lose.

As we move toward the fall harvest season, please have a safe, successful one. Make sure to put safety first. And, remember to stop and smell the clover!

**Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer**  
Glenwood City, WI, 715-781-4856

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### From The NODPA Desk

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key marketing, research and data collection programs, as well as the strong standards enforcement procedures that are critical to the U.S. organic sector.

Thank you for your attention to this issue.

**CC:**

*Mitch McConnell, Senate Majority Leader | Chuck Schumer, Senate Minority Leader | Kevin McCarthy, House Majority Leader | Nancy Pelosi, House Minority Leader | Pat Roberts, Chairman, Senate Agriculture Committee | Debbie Stabenow, Ranking Member, Senate Agriculture Committee | K. Michael Conaway, Chairman, House Agriculture Committee | Glenn "GT" Thompson, Vice Chairman, House Agriculture Committee Collin C. Peterson, Ranking Member, House Agriculture Committee Thad Cochran, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee | Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee | Rodney Frelinghuysen, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee | Nita Lowey, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee*

### Become a Member of MODPA!

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Certified Organic Dairy? Yes No # of cows: \_\_\_\_\_

Transitioning: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to support MODPA (check whatever applies):

\_\_\_ By becoming a state rep or director.

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

\_\_\_ By providing a donation to support the work of

MODPA. \$\_\_\_\_\_ enclosed.

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

### About MODPA

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

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

### MODPA Board

#### Wisconsin

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ddviewpoint@yahoo.com  
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zimbadairy@tband.net  
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**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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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](mailto:volunteers@mofga.org). Visit [www.mofga.org](http://www.mofga.org) for more information.

**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](mailto:noraowens@comcast.net), or call 413-772-0444. More Field Days information can be found online at [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com) and in the upcoming July NODPA News.