

# NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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Photo by Donald McCrimmon

### Troyers haying

## FEATURED FARM: TROYER FAMILY FARM, FENNER, NY *Making the Transition to Grassfed Dairying*

By Adam Diamond, NODPA Contributing Writer

In 2009 the Troyer family made its way to the upstate New York community of Fenner in Madison County to start a farm, becoming part of what is now a cluster of 28 Amish families. The Troyers had been in Homes County, Ohio running

a tarp business that made hoop barn covers, and were looking for more affordable land that would allow them to start a farm to support their family of six; in Ohio they only had 7 acres, which was not enough land

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## Preparing for the Future of Organic Dairy: Strategies for Long-Term Sustainability

### The 19th Annual NODPA Field Days September 26 & 27, 2019

Theodore's Restaurant, 3231 Seneca Turnpike, Canastota, NY

By Nora Owens, NODPA Field Days Coordinator

The NODPA Field Days planning committee has long recognized that organic dairy producers continue to face the difficult challenges of low pay prices, unpredictable weather, and losses of contracts. They came

together to design an educational program that would help producers assess their long term sustainability and create strategies to increase it whenever possible by thinking outside the box. A talented and diverse line-up of presenters, all who are 'been

*continued on page 16*

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

For this issue only:

## Message from NODPA President

has been moved to  
page 3.

## The 19th Annual NODPA Field Days September 26 & 27, 2019

Theodore's Restaurant, 3231 Seneca Turnpike, Canastota, NY

### EARLY BIRD RATE

NODPA is offering an early-bird rate for those who register by Wednesday, September 18th. You can still pay in-person, if you prefer, but you must let us know that you are planning to attend (by phone, email or mail) by September 18th.

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS, PLEASE SEE THE  
REGISTRATION FORM ON PAGE 16.**

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Message from NODPA President

**I**t's been a difficult spring in our neck of the woods, and across much of the northeast. Heavy rains have come too frequently all spring and into the summer. Even well-drained fields were impassable for the timely harvest of first cutting forages, and the planting of corn and small grains has been seriously delayed. Some fields in my area are still left unplanted, just growing up to weeds. We have managed to tippy-toe around the higher parts of hayfields to get some first cutting baleage done, trying to limit scarring the fields with ruts.

Although we try to not let it get to us, we snap a little too much at each other in the barn. We are desperately frustrated to get machinery fixed because more rain is coming in a few short hours. The bills are piling up, since the milk check cannot cover spring expenses. And we lose our minds when the heifers are out ..... again. And then the mail comes.

Another price cut. The greatest damage to us will be the restructuring of the quality program. Reverting back to the program that was in place before 2007, this processor will tie the three counts (SPC, PI, and SCC) back together. We all remember how difficult it was to get any premiums in those days, and NODPA and others lobbied hard to have those tests stand separately. My son asked, "how bad will it be for us?" So I did the math. We have

good quality milk, and always receive a good premium; but the new cut offs will take back most of that -- maybe all of it in some months. On our small farm that will amount to around \$1,800 per month.

I have spent most of the last few months saying to everyone around me that it could be worse. We could be flooded out like the farms in the Midwest, or too dry like the farms in western Canada, or have no milk market at all like the farmers who got a letter cutting them off. We must count the blessings, and stay focused on the positive. But today I have no words.

There has always been a sign on the milkhouse from our organic milk processor. It has been a different sign over the years, as we shipped to a few different processors, but it has always been there. I guess we were proud to be an organic dairy; we felt we were part of something that was moving farmers ahead. We felt part of a movement towards better health for consumers, better care of the land, better care of the animals and a better livelihood for farmers. We felt like we were helping to make a difference. Today the sign came down. Not out of anger, but out of sadness. A giant corporation will not read this rant of mine; will not ever notice our milkhouse wall, and will not worry how we will cope with a smaller milk check and rising costs.

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

## From the NODPA Desk:

*By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director*

**L**iz Bawden's Message from the President column, above, is an articulate statement of the situation that all organic dairy producers face. She categorizes it as a rant but it is a clear account of fact rather than an exaggeration of her family's situation. Lactalis and Danone are clearly in a position to dominate the retail market and have a large effect on the supply side. Large-scale, vertically integrated dairies like Aurora have very clear cost benefit advantages when it comes to supplying store brand and private label milk which is number one in sales in retail. Currently, there is a question mark against how stable and economically sustainable CROPP Cooperative is and what role they will play on the supply side of the organic dairy market in the future.

The way forward for organic dairy producers is tapping into the self-reliance and entrepreneurship that characterizes dairy producers and most organic farmers. Looking at the bottom-line and assessing the potential for any diversification or introducing different production practices is different and is a more proactive strategy than just tightening your belt and doing more of the same. The

upcoming 19th Annual NODPA Field Days are a great opportunity to meet with other producers and learn from their experience while sharing your knowledge. It's a place to share frustration and be more educated about what to expect down the road. We can guarantee that you will not come away from the NODPA Field Days with a 'silver bullet' answer but you will learn from the very relevant presentations and farm tours. Grass Fed is not for everyone but there will be experienced producers who can prevent you from making some mistakes and leave you better prepared for others. After 15 years, we are making progress on the Origin of Livestock, unfortunately at the expense of producers. Much like putting up a traffic signal at a crossing, it does not happen until there are a few accidents and at Field Days we can point to the positives for the integrity of the enforcement of standards, plus how you can be a part of that future. Ultimately, the NODPA Field Days is a place that you can feel secure in complaining bitterly about what is happening and know that you will not just be dismissed as 'disgruntled dairy farmers' and where you can participate in looking at how to utilize our knowledge and power to grow and stay in business. The Field Days are for organic dairy producers, their friends and supporters -- hope to see you there. ♦



## Organic Production

### Sustainability in Organic Dairy: What Role does Grass-based Production Play?

*By Nathan Weaver, Grunen Aue Farm, Canastota, NY*

**T**he reality, for the time being, is that organic and grass-fed dairy milk prices are not going to return to the levels we enjoyed in recent years, between 2014-2017. In my mind, the small farm has two viable options to deal with this fact. One, we can take control of how our milk is priced by processing and marketing the milk produced on individual or small clusters of farms. This option involves multi-levels of skills beyond farm production, including processing and marketing skills. So far, this farm has just not been hungry enough (and knows its limitations) to find that adding processing and marketing an attractive option. That leaves us with option two. We need to lower our costs of



production to the point where we can survive and even thrive in the market climate we are in.

It seems that there are two paths being explored on how to achieve lower costs in organic dairy. One is to become large, fast and ready to adopt the latest cutting edge technologies and

production advantages. This includes doing the bare minimum of the organic standards and in some cases, not even meeting those in the hopes that the certifiers look the other way.

On the other hand, there is grazing based production that can provide an advantage to lower cost of production. This is the path that our farm is pursuing. Using grazed grasslands to lower cost of



**Nathan Weaver's cows**

## Organic Production

production has been used by many farmers throughout the world. This has held true from the earliest agricultural history and has carried on through the Industrial Revolution up to current dairy (and ruminant) production.

The lowest cost dairy products in the world today are not coming from industrial feedlot dairies in the American West. They come from pasture-based dairies where producers take advantage of favorable climates to produce perennial forages.

Critics of grazing will be quick to point out that profitable grazing is unique to farms fortunate to be in a maritime climate, such as Ireland and New Zealand. But surely there is some room for utilizing grazing between a New Zealand conventional cost of \$10.00 per cwt and a Northeastern US cost of \$35.00 per cwt for organic milk.


Let's face it, our collective agricultural history in the US does not carry a respect for good grazing. This has been evident to me in how passersby at our farm perceive our farming activities. I can be setting up a temporary fence in a perennial pasture and can expect, at best, a friendly little wave of the hand from the car on the road. However, when I am out there with a plow or a hay baler, it starts resonating with the people going by. They will roll down their windows, nearly falling out of their vehicles to wave at me. Perhaps they stop to watch or come out to the field for a chat. It is these reinforcements that put psychological barriers into place that keeps grazing from the forefront and keeping it as Franklin D. Roosevelt's Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace has put it, "Grass is the forgotten Cinderella of American Agriculture."

At Grunen Aue Farm, we have learned to trust grassland and what it can do to make the small farm viable even in today's marketplace. When that confidence was gained, we built the farm from the grass up.

We see the dairy cows as taking the grass and making it into a marketable form. Milk is really just a value added product from grass. The cow is a greatly respected catalyst for taking grass, which contributes little to the human diet, and making an excellent source of nutritious animal based fats and proteins.

Our personal experience, and what I see in many successful grass based dairies, is that unless there is a true appreciation for grass, there will be little effort and time spent in the pasture to nurture good production from them. Most of the farmer's attention is focused on the annual crops and hay fields, and the equipment needed to plant, weed, and harvest them.

*continued on page 6*



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## Organic Production

### Sustainability in Organic Dairy: What Role does Grass-based Production Play?

*continued from page 5*



When it comes to pasture management, there is still plenty of room to up our game on this farm and on yours. We have been doing managed grazing for close to 30 years now and I am still finding ways to maximize grass for better production. We find this journey of learning both challenging and exhilarating. We think there are still substantial gains to be made in our grazing skills.

No, America is not New Zealand or Ireland. Our climate will not allow us to match production found in these grazing panaceas. However, the Northeastern United States comes as close to it as any region, with the possibility of the Pacific Northwest. We have good natural rainfall; we have relatively cool summers; we have soils suited to grass production. As dairy farmers in the Northeast, let's collectively figure out grass based, organic production and dot the landscape with small, beautiful family farms.

*Come hear Nathan Weaver at the 19th Annual NODPA Field Days where he will present a workshop entitled **Meeting the Needs of the Current and Future Grass fed Milk Market: Production practices and trends to help farmers meet the demands of the grass fed milk market** on Thursday afternoon, September 26, 2019. For more details about the educational program and location of the meeting, please see page 17 in this NODPA News. ♦*





# ***“The more we use it, the more we love it!”***

— Bryan Landsverk

**LANDSVERK DAIRY, FOSSTON, MINNESOTA**  
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They have six robots milking 320 cows at Landsverk Dairy, founded by Bryan’s grandfather near Fosston, Minnesota, which is Certified Organic since 1997.

“We keep this in the robot rooms and spray the SCC cows exiting. We use it on fresh cows, fresh heifers especially.

“Udder edema and robots are not a good combination. Softening udders with Udder Comfort works so well for us. We are glad to have this product.”

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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

**Small and/or Retrofitted Parlors: Increasing Efficiency on Your Farm**

*By Steven Weaver, Meadowley Farm, Morrisville, NY*

**S**teven Weaver will be speaking at the 19th Annual NODPA Field Days. His workshop, **Small Retrofitted Milking Parlors: Planning for the Future and Increasing Efficiency on your Farm**, will be held on Thursday afternoon, September 26, 2019.

The dairy industry has gone through major changes in the last few years. Labor costs have gone up substantially and margins are a lot tighter. A low cost parlor can help address some of these issues and we are thankful that we can provide this service.

We are Steven and Brenda Weaver. We and our three sons and two daughters that are still at home (we have one son and one daughter who are married) operate Meadowley Farm. We milk 65 cows, freshening seasonally in the spring. We ship our milk to Organic Valley. We also have a satellite farm where we do grass-finished beef.

In 1998, back in Ohio, when we were getting ready to start milking, we were a young married couple and were short on labor. I was intrigued by the New Zealand style milking parlors for their efficiency and low cost. So we decided to have one built on a smaller scale. We had a local welding shop make us a swing-six which we installed in our new parlor and milkhouse set-up. It is functioning well yet today, and has served its' purpose well. This is in use by the one who bought the farm from us when we moved to New York in 2006.

In New York, we built a similar parlor but this time we put it in an existing tie stall barn because that was the building that was available.

As time went on, we were blessed with seven healthy children and with time, our labor situation changed from not enough labor to boys needing something constructive





## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

to do, especially in the winter time. We started looking for an enterprise that would complement the dairy and also be a service to the greater community. We already had a welder and a few other metalworking tools for repairs on the farm, so it fit for us to start building parlors. We have acquired some more tools along the way to help increase efficiency. We make them out of mild steel welded together and then have them hot dipped galvanized. We also have the ability to make them out of stainless steel if cost is not an issue.

Another project we are working on is a compost turner attachment for a skid loader. It is still in the trial stage but seems to be working well at this point. We also do custom welding for gates, slant bars, and more. ♦



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

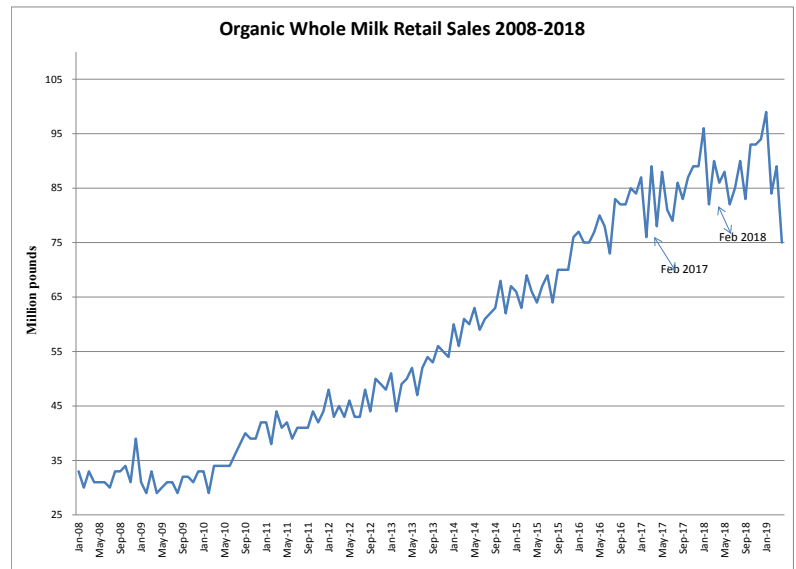
### Pay And Feed Prices July/August 2019

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

**A**pril 2019 was not a good month for organic dairy retail sales. They hit a low level not seen since September 2012, although at that time the sale of non-fat organic milk products was the stronger preference over whole milk products. Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) reports that total sales of organic milk products for April 2019, 176 million pounds, declined 16.5 percent from April 2018 and dwindled to 7.4 percent compared with the same January-April period last year. Total organic whole milk sales for April 2019, 75 million pounds was down 13.2 percent compared with April last year, and 1.6 percent lower, compared to year-to-date 2018.

No better news on the sale of organic cull cows. A June 13, 2019 organic slaughter cow report from a livestock auction yard in the Northwest noted organic cows traded abnormally lower than conventional cows. The average price paid for the top 10 organic cows auctioned was \$44.47 per cwt, compared to the average top 10 conventional cow price, \$67.27 per cwt.

To add to the stress of organic dairies, especially those small to mid-size operations that do not have any cash reserves and any small adjustment has a proportionally higher effect, Danone North America announced changes in the price they will pay for organic milk. The areas they are targeting are milk hauling, volume premiums, Quality Programs and Butterfat. With the good news first – butterfat is being raised by \$.10 per lb. to \$2.60/ lb. The rest is all bad news: the implementation of a shared Milk Hauling Fee of \$.25/cwt, the removal of all



volume premiums, and the updates to their quality program. The changes to the quality program are detailed and will affect producers very differently. One producer's quick calculation for the lost gross income for their own herd producing approximately 80,000 lb. of milk is that they will lose \$1,800 per month. The quest for milk with lower Somatic Cell Counts, lower PI Count and lower Standard Plate Counts is a goal for all producers and is tied to healthier cows and long shelf life for milk (although the ultra-pasteurization must take care of all issue of taste and character of the milk!). In the new program, bonuses are tied to the higher standards, rapidly disappearing into penalties for any operation that has lower tests or herd problems. The effects of these quality payments on producers' bottom lines will vary and will require that the milk quality bonuses be paid on the lowest of the requirements from monthly testing. For example: If SCC achievement is Tier 1, SPC achievement is Tier 2, and PI achievement is Tier 3, the quality bonus will be paid at the Tier 3 level, making it much more difficult to achieve the higher levels of bonus. See table below:

#### Danone NA Milk Quality Premium Program

	<b>Tier1 (\$2.50/cwt. Total)</b>	<b>Tier2 (\$1.50/cwt. Total)</b>	<b>Tier3 (\$0.50/cwt. Total)</b>
<b>Standard Plate Count (SPC)</b>	≤ 2,000/ ml	≤ 3,000/ ml	≤ 5,000/ ml
<b>PI Count (PI)</b>	≤ 10,000/ ml	≤15,000/ ml	≤ 25,000/ ml
<b>Somatic Cell Count (SCC)</b>	≤ 125,000/ ml	≤ 160,000/ ml	≤ 200,000/ ml

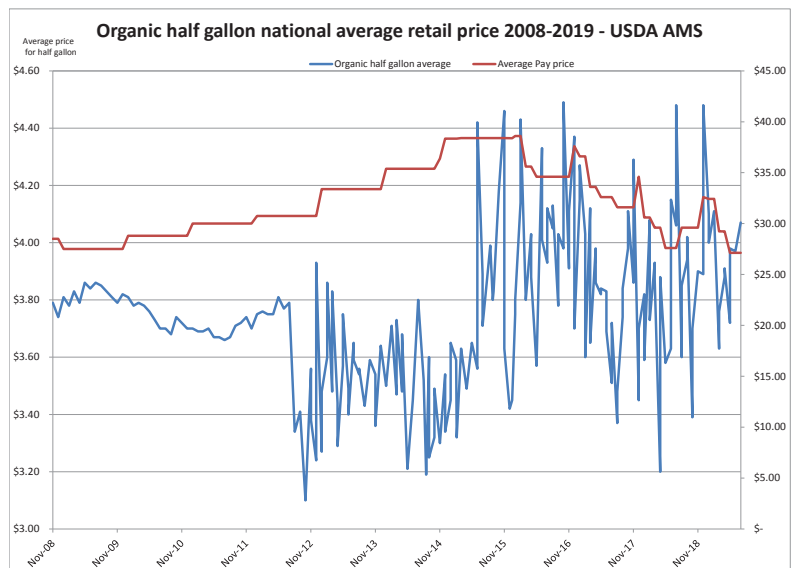
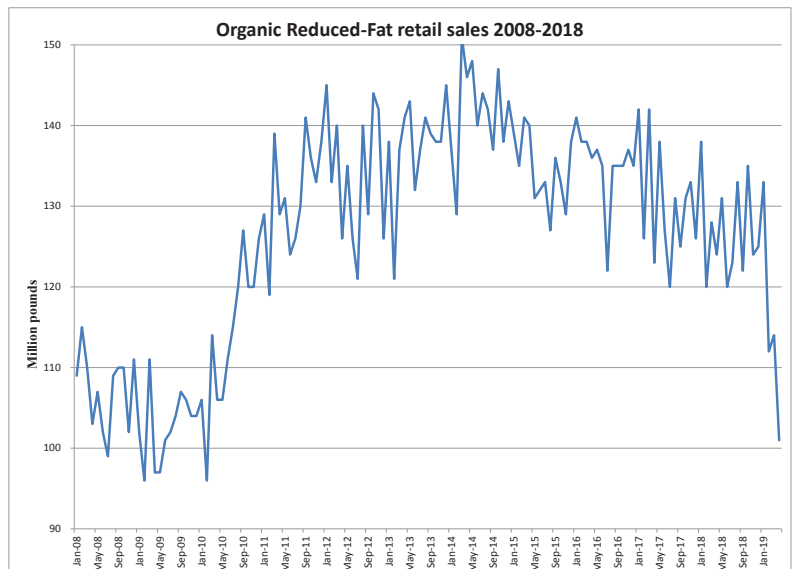
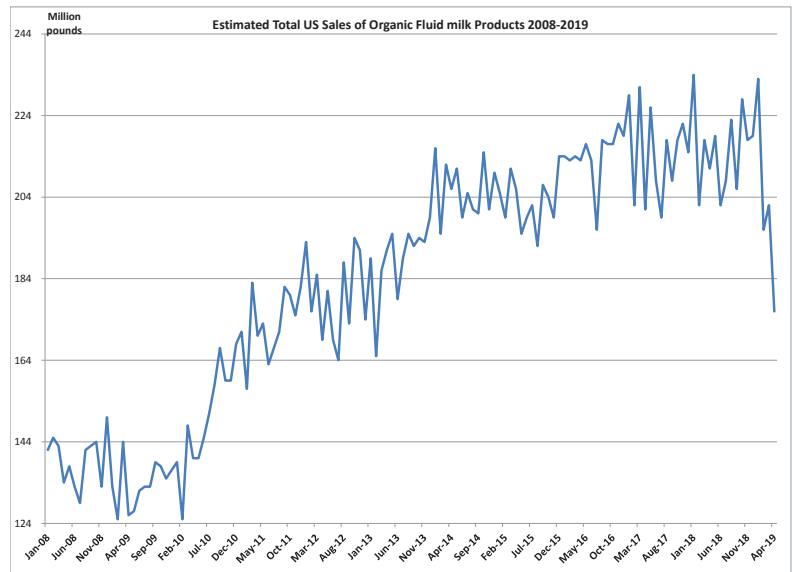


Along with the bonuses come deductions for poor testing on the monthly raw milk. See table below:

	Monthly average	Deduction /Calendar Month/cwt
<b>SPC</b>	>25,000/ml	- \$ 0.25/cwt
<b>PI</b>	>100,000/ml	- \$ 1.00/cwt
<b>SCC</b>	>400,000/ml	- \$ 1.00/ cwt

Although Danone may be striving to “pay a fair and competitive price to you, our farming partners, and we (Danone) work hard to balance the needs of our farmers, customers and consumers,” it seems they are failing their ‘partner’ with the least leverage at this time of supply surplus.

CROPP Cooperative is continuing to go through changes and it is reported that they have laid off 39 of their employees. The La Farge-based organic cooperative eliminated the office positions over the past 60 days, said Elizabeth McMullen, Organic Valley spokesperson. These positions made up about 5% of their general and administrative positions, McMullen said. There are still about 950 employees at CROPP Cooperative. CROPP’s joint venture with Dean Foods is at risk as well. On 6/25/2019, Dean Foods Co. shares closed at less than \$1 for the first time since they started trading more than two decades ago. Dean’s value has gone from a peak of \$6.2 billion in 2007 to about \$90 million now. Dean’s commitment to supply store brand milk, plus stores like Walmart, that is now building its own processing plant(s), has caused the slide in value. While Dean is looking to sell assets, much of the interest is in possible debt restructuring. Its bonds have been trading at distressed levels, and that’s led its equity to trade at “nuisance” levels, said Hoai Ngo, senior credit analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence. In other words, the way bonds are trading,



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

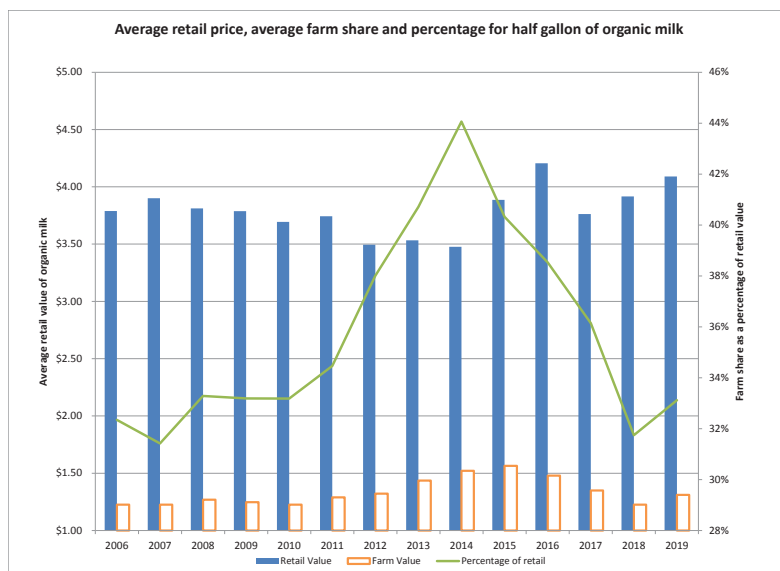
## Pay And Feed Prices

*continued from page 11*

there wouldn't be enough value left in a bankruptcy proceeding to pay equity shareholders.

The question is where does this leave CROPP? What will be the effect of any restructuring on processing plants used by CROPP, especially for Grass Fed branded milk? Will the joint venture continue with a different partner or will CROPP have to buy out Dean or will it end and any CROPP investment will be lost?

Lactalis, owners of Stonyfield are slowly increasing their footprint in the US. The world's biggest dairy company, which purchased Stonyfield Yogurt in 2017, now owns Commonwealth Dairy, a yogurt maker with facilities in Brattleboro, VT and Casa Grande, Ariz. This is the fourth Lactalis purchase in the United States in the past two years. With the addition of Commonwealth Dairy, Lactalis now has eight factories and more than 2,400 employees in the U.S.



## Crop Planting Update:

Both conventional and organic planting has been hammered by the excessive rainfall. According to the June 24, 2019 release of the NASS Crop Progress report, 96 percent of the corn has been planted in the 18 states, 4 percent less than the average.

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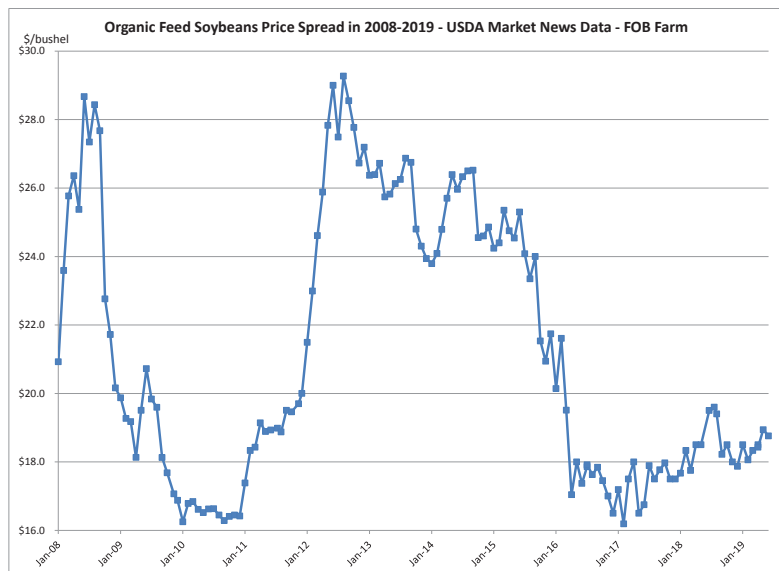
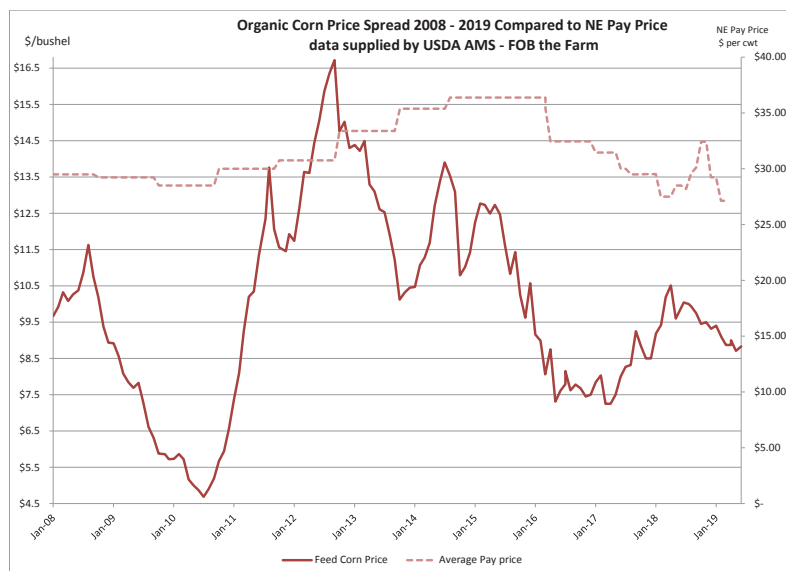
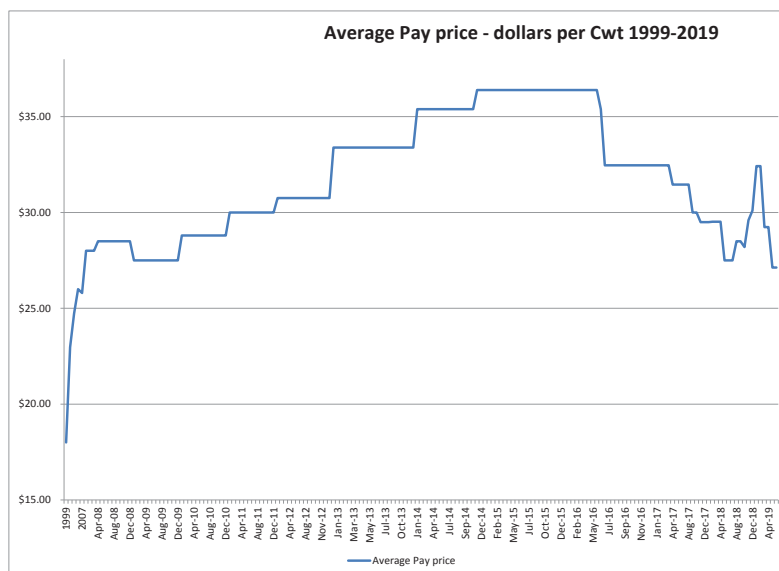
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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Also, only 89 percent of new crop has emerged, when compared to the previous 5 year average of 99 percent. Soybean planted acres are at 85 percent, below the five-year average of 97 percent. Soybean crops emerged is 71 percent, below the 91 percent, 5-year average. Organic corn and soybean prices remain stable, but it's difficult to know how the weather and ground conditions have affected both yield and quality. The domestic price for organic corn and soybeans is partly determined by the volume of imports. The integrity of these imports is determined by the actions of the NOP. In a recent article in the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Betsy Rakola, organic compliance director at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is quoted as saying "Overseeing a global supply chain with 40 people is no joke," and organic certification "is a public-private process-based system, and that traceability means anything that comes in with an organic certification can be sold as organic." John Bobbe, previously Executive Director of OFARM, has been leading the fight to ensure that NOP is using all of the means at the disposal of a Federal program to ensure organic compliance. He accurately states that if the NOP is continuing down the same old path, simply inspecting farms in other countries like they do in the U.S., it will not get at the corruption in the supply chain. If the NOP does not have the resources to inspect every ship, they need to work with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection who are on every ship and could get the paperwork. It appears that more questionable organic grain has been rejected from entering the country because it comes from a nation from which whole corn is prohibited because of fear of pest contamination. If USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection work together on stopping illegal grain imports, then where is the cooperative agreement with USDA NOP to look at all the paperwork on incoming organic imports?

Organic farming is no joke – protecting the integrity of the organic seal is what USDA signed up for and they need to use all of the tools at their disposal to protect it. ♦



## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

**What's In Your Milk?****Choose organic for the cleanest milk, says new study**

***Non-organic milk tests positive for illegal antibiotics, high levels of growth hormones and controversial pesticide contaminants***

*The Organic Center, June 26, 2019*

**M**ilk is an important part of the human diet. It provides protein, fat, calcium and vitamin D, and for the youngest members of our population, it is especially critical as a main source of many nutrients. But not all milk is created equal.

For nearly 15 years, studies have repeatedly shown that organic milk has a healthier nutritional profile. Organic milk contains more of the good omega 3 fatty acids, more antioxidants and a higher nutrient mineral content than conventional milk. Dairy cows under organic management eat more grass than those under conventional management and that difference in their diet results in more nutrient-rich milk.

Now a study conducted by researchers at Emory University, in collaboration with The Organic Center, found that a majority of samples of conventional retail milk tested positive for residues of antibiotics – two of which are banned from dairy production — and currently used controversial pesticides. **Organic milk showed no such contaminants.** Residues of growth hormones in conventional milk were 20 times higher than in organic. The results of this important study were published online on

June 24 by the peer-reviewed public health journal Public Health Nutrition.

Highlights of the findings:

- Antibiotic residues were detected in 60% of conventional milk samples and none of the organic samples. Significantly, 37 percent of the conventional samples tested positive for sulfamethazine, and 26 percent for sulfathiazole, both of which have long been outlawed in lactating dairy cows. Furthermore, one of the conventional samples contained residue levels of amoxicillin that exceeded the federally-allowed limit.
- Bovine growth hormone (bGH) residue levels were found to be 20 times higher in conventional milk than organic.
- Pesticide residues of chlorpyrifos, atrazine, permethrin and more were found in 26 to 60 percent of conventional samples and none of the organic samples. Residues of the controversial and restricted-use pesticide chlorpyrifos showed up in 59 percent of the conventional samples.

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

“This study is especially exciting because the researchers developed methods that are more sensitive than past analyses, including testing methods that have been used by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), also the study measured levels of chemicals that were previously unreported. These new methods give us a true picture of the presence or absence of residues in milk. The methodology was proven and solid, and put systems in place to control for results that would inaccurately indicate the presence or absence of the residues [false positives and false negatives]. The statistical significance was so clear and decisive that it gives us confidence that what we found in the study would also be the results of a larger sampling,” said Dr. Jessica Shade, Director of Science Programs for The Organic Center.

“Milk is a great source of protein and important vitamins and minerals, and we want our children and our families to drink milk. But not all milk is created equal, as this study demonstrates. This study finds that the presence of antibiotics and pesticides in conventional milk is much more prevalent and pervasive than previously thought – and that organic milk doesn’t contain any of these contaminants. We hope this study will let people know that the choice is out there for good clean organic,” said Shade.

### A nationwide sample of the milk we’re drinking

To conduct the study, researchers out of Emory University tested for residues of currently used pesticides and antibiotics in U.S. milk purchased directly from store shelves, comparing conventional milk (35 samples across 18 brands) to organic milk (34 samples across 10 brands).

The milk samples were collected in August 2015 from each of nine regions: California, Great Lakes, Midwest, New England, New York, Northwest, Rocky Mountain, Southeast and Southwest. In each region, eight half-gallon milk cartons were purchased from one or more retail stores. These included six cartons of 2% milk, the type most commonly drank by American children, three of which were labeled as different USDA-certified organic brands and three labeled as different conventional brands. Two samples of whole milk, one certified organic and one conventional, were also obtained. Flavored and specialty milks were excluded. A total of 69 samples were collected.

The study’s findings detected residues of antibiotics and pesticides – in one case above the federally allowed limit for antibiotics — in the conventional samples of milk, and no such residues in organic milk. Residues of growth hormones in conventional milk were found to be 20 times higher than in organic.

### Antibiotics results

Because the overuse of antibiotics can increase resistance to those antibiotics and make them less effective for both humans

and animals, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has set limits on detectable levels of antibiotics in food. In this study, antibiotics were not found in organic samples, but were detected in 60% of conventional milk samples. Specifically, residues of amoxicillin, oxytetracycline, sulfamethazine, sulfadimethoxine, and sulfathiazole were all detected in conventional milk.

Importantly, residues of sulfamethazine were found in 37 percent of the conventional samples, and sulfathiazole in 26 percent. The use of both of these antibiotics for dairy cows has long been banned by the FDA due to concerns about the impact of sulfa drugs on human health. When cows are treated with sulfa drugs, residues of the drug show up in milk, and exposure to them can lead to health problems in humans. The biggest health concern is a life-threatening allergic reaction (acute hypersensitivity). About 2 percent of the general population is severely allergic to sulfa drugs. Outside of allergic reactions, there are many adverse side effects connected to the sulfonamide class of antibiotics.

One of the conventional samples had residue levels of amoxicillin over the FDA limit.

*continued on page 28*

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## The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual NODPA Field Days

### Preparing for the Future of Organic Dairy: Strategies for Long-Term Sustainability

*continued from page 1*

there, done that' organic dairy producers, will come together on September 26th and 27th at Theodore's Restaurant in Canastota, NY to share their experiences and strategies to help producers remain in organic dairy farming.

The 19th Annual NODPA Field Days will be located in central New York, between Syracuse and Utica, just south of the NY Thruway/Interstate 90, and east of Interstate 81, in Canastota, NY. This region is home to a large Amish population, and we will have the opportunity to visit two grass-based organic dairy farms, both with unique features. The Thursday morning tour will be at the Troyer Family Farm, in Fenner, a part of Madison County. If you'd like to learn more, the Troyers Family Farm is this issue's featured farm, beginning on page one. The second farm tour will take place on Friday afternoon at Nathan and Kristine Weaver's Grunen Aue Farm in Canastota, NY, where Nathan will expand on his Thursday workshop, and will spotlight the keys to managing a successful 100% grass based operation.

On Thursday evening, we bring together a panel of organic dairy farmers that represent a wide variety of farming philosophies, practices, ages, cultural perspectives and geographic locations, all that have an abiding commitment to the integrity of the organic seal. They will share their thoughts on the new realities of the current and future Organic Dairy Industry. Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director will set the stage by reviewing how the organic dairy industry arrived at its current situation, and will facilitate a discussion that will embrace the voices of all organic dairy farm families during this evening session.

We will spotlight all of the panelists in the September NODPA News ahead of the NODPA Field Days.


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## REGISTRATION FORM

### The 19th Annual NODPA Field Days and Producer Meeting and Dinner



	COST		QTY	TOTAL
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REGISTRATION: Thursday & Friday				
Organic dairy & transitioning dairy producers	FREE			\$0
All who aren't organic dairy producers	\$30	\$45		\$
MEALS: Thursday & Friday				
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Thursday lunch (under 11)	\$5	\$10		\$
Thursday dinner for Adults	\$25	\$35		\$
Thursday dinner (under 11)	\$12.50	\$15		\$
Transitioning farm member. Thursday evening dinner	Free			\$0
Friday breakfast (7:30-9am)	\$5	\$10		\$
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# The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual NODPA Field Days Schedule

## Thursday, September 26, 2019

8:30 – Noon	<b>Morning Farm Tour:</b> Troyer Family Dairy Farm 5537 Nelson Rd., Canastota, NY.
Noon-1:00 pm	Registration and Lunch
1: 00 – 2:30	<b>Meeting the Needs of the Current and Future Grass fed Milk Market:</b> Production practices and trends to help farmers meet the demands of the grass fed milk market. Nathan Weaver, Grunen Aue Farm, Canastota, NY
2:30 – 3:00	Milk Break
3:00 – 4:00	<b>Small Retrofitted Milking Parlors: planning for the future and increasing efficiency on your farm.</b> A workshop on the benefits of converting, plus the nuts and bolts of the retrofitting process Steven Weaver, Meadowley Farm, Morrisville, NY
4:00 – 4:30	<b>Industry and Policy News: updates on the issues that are critical to all organic dairy farmers</b> Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director
4:30 – 5:30	<b>Trade Show and Social Hour</b>
5:30 – 7:00	<b>NODPA Annual Meeting and Banquet:</b> Liz Bawden, NODPA Board President, and Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director
7:00 – 9:00	<b>Keynote Presentation and Panel Discussion Adapting to the New Realities of Organic Dairy: Where do we go from here?</b> Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, facilitates a panel of organic dairy farmers from diverse backgrounds that discuss ‘where to go from here’ based on their ages, farming practices, geographic location, and more. <b>Panel:</b> Annie and Ryan Murray, Hidden Meadows Dairy, Cincinnatus, NY, Jim and Anne Phillips, Triple 3 Livestock, Marathon, NY, , Forrest Stricker, Spring Creek Farms, Wernersville, PA, Roman or Dwight Stoltzfoos, Spring Wood Dairy, Kinzers, PA, and Vaughn Sherman, Jerry Dell Farm, Dryden, NY
9:00 pm	Meeting adjourns.

## Friday, September 27, 2019

6:30 – 9:00 am	Continental Breakfast
7:00 – 9:00	<b>Producer-Only Meeting: A meeting in which producers can speak freely about all things related to the organic dairy industry.</b> Facilitated by Henry Perkins, past president, NODPA Board
9:00 – 10:30	<b>Positioning Your Farm for the Future of the Organic Dairy Industry: Strategies for diversifying into a mixed organic operation and how to best utilize organic acreage in response to the current organic dairy market.</b> Roman Stoltzfoos will highlight current food trend opportunities for farmers to consider as well as providing strategies for reducing costs and increasing marketable production during his ‘think outside the box’ presentation. Klaas Martens’ presentation will focus on using annual and biennial forages plus traditional pastures to maximize milk production per acre, by matching the growth of forage to the needs of the cow. Roman Stoltzfoos, Spring Wood Organic Dairy, Kinzers, PA and Klaas Martens, Lakeview Organic Grain, Penn Yan, NY
10:30 – 11:30	<b>Cow Care: Creative, effective treatments to increase your herd’s health without breaking the bank.</b> A roundtable of organic dairy farmers shares a wide variety of successful approaches that include botanicals, homeopathy, and off-the-shelf treatment strategies. Liz Bawden, Bawden Family Farm, Hammond, NY, Kathie Arnold, Twin Oaks Dairy, Truxton, NY, and Jacki Perkins, Organic Dairy Specialist, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA), Unity ME
11:30 – 12:00pm	<b>Farm Tour Preview: Grunen Aue Farm.</b> Nathan Weaver will orient us to the farm ahead of the on-site tour
Noon – 1:30pm	Lunch and travel to the Weaver’s farm
1:30	<b>Farm Tour, Grunen Aue Farm.</b> Nathan and Kristine Weaver’s Family Farm, Canastota, NY



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The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual  
**NODPA Field Days**

**Preparing for the Future of Organic Dairy:  
*Strategies for Long-Term Sustainability***

**September 26 & 27, 2019**

Theodore's Restaurant, 3231 Seneca Turnpike, Canastota, NY 13032

## Speaker Spotlight

### **MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE CURRENT AND FUTURE GRASS FED MILK MARKET:**

**Production practices and trends to help farmers meet the demands of the grass fed milk market**

**Nathan Weaver, Grunen Aue Farm, Canastota, NY**

Nathan and Kristine Weaver, along with their children, milk 60 cows on their organic 100% grass fed farm, Grunen Aue Farm in Canastota, NY. Nathan is well known as a speaker and writer about grazing practices and grass-based dairy production. He will describe production practices and trends so farmers can be prepared to meet the needs of the current and future grass fed milk market.



### **SMALL RETROFITTED MILKING PARLORS:**

**Planning for the future and increasing efficiency on your farm**

**Steven Weaver, Meadowley Farm, Morrisville, NY**

Steven and Brenda Weaver, along with their three sons and two daughters that are still at home operate Meadowley Farm, Morrisville, NY (they have one son and one daughter who are married). They milk 65 cows, freshening seasonally in the spring, and ship their milk to Organic Valley. They also have a satellite farm where we do grass-finished beef. Steven works with area farmers to retrofit their barns with small parlors.

### **POSITIONING YOUR FARM FOR THE FUTURE OF THE ORGANIC DAIRY INDUSTRY:**

**Strategies for diversifying into a mixed organic operation and how best to utilize organic acreage in response to the current organic dairy market**

**Klaas Martens, Lakeview Organic Grain, Penn Yan, NY**

Few farmers know how much it costs to produce a cwt of milk and how each of the different feeds influences their cost of production. Klaas will talk about using annual and biennial forages plus traditional pastures to maximize milk per acre and match the growth of the forage to the needs of the cows. He will tie this back to the cost per cwt of producing milk and to the cost of stored forages.



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## The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual NODPA Field Days

# Speaker Spotlight

### Roman Stoltzfoos, Spring Wood Organic Dairy, Kinzers, PA

While niche markets are not for everyone, it's important that everyone know what is hot in the marketplace. Roman Stoltzfoos, Spring Wood Organic Dairy, Kinzers, PA, a keen observer of the marketplace, will describe current food trends that positively increase demand for dairy products and meat (for example, the Keto Diet) and how these and other trends present opportunities for farmers. He will also discuss strategies for reducing costs and increasing marketable production. Roman thinks farmers need to get their noses off the grindstone sometimes and think outside of the box, and he hopes to provide strategies to do just that.



### COW CARE:

#### Creative, effective treatments to increase your herd's health without breaking the bank

### Kathie Arnold, Twin Oaks Dairy, Truxton, NY

As the main health care provider at Twin Oaks Dairy LLC in Truxton, NY during 21 years of organic dairying, Kathie Arnold will share what processes, products, and management and preventative measures have been effective on their 300 head of cows and youngstock, including discussion of various healthcare challenges that have arisen over the years.



### Liz Bawden, Bawden Family Farm, Hammond, NY

Liz Bawden describes her presentation as, "Back when we transitioned to organic farming in 1999-2000, there weren't many choices in herd health remedies. I still remember the day when we had to send two good cows to slaughter simply because I didn't know how to get rid of a post-calving infection due to a retained placenta. That's when I decided I had to learn to make botanical remedies that worked. So, over the next few years, I made and used tinctures made with garlic, calendula, echinacea, and a few other common plants. Tinctures are cheap to make, effective to use, and expensive to buy. And since I had all that plant material lying around, I began experimenting with making oils that would be made into salves for treating wounds, sunburns, and chapped teats. I will show you how you can make these useful remedies that have really worked on our farm."



### Jacki Perkins, MOFGA, Unity, ME

As MOFGA's Organic Dairy and Livestock Specialist, Jacki Perkins routinely deals with healthcare questions. Having grown up on an 80 cow organic dairy, and the daughter of a Certified Homeopathic Veterinarian (CHV), she has seen, and assisted with, many different management and healthcare challenges. This allows her to listen to where a producer is struggling, evaluate their financial and time management situation, and tailor plans for individual farms. Jacki has extensive knowledge of homeopathy, and continues to build a working knowledge of simple herbal solutions. She will share her experiences and some of her most successful homeopathic remedies.



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

**William Michael Murphy, 1941-2019**

*In Memoriam by Fred Magdoff, Emeritus Professor of Plant and Soil Sciences,  
University of Vermont*

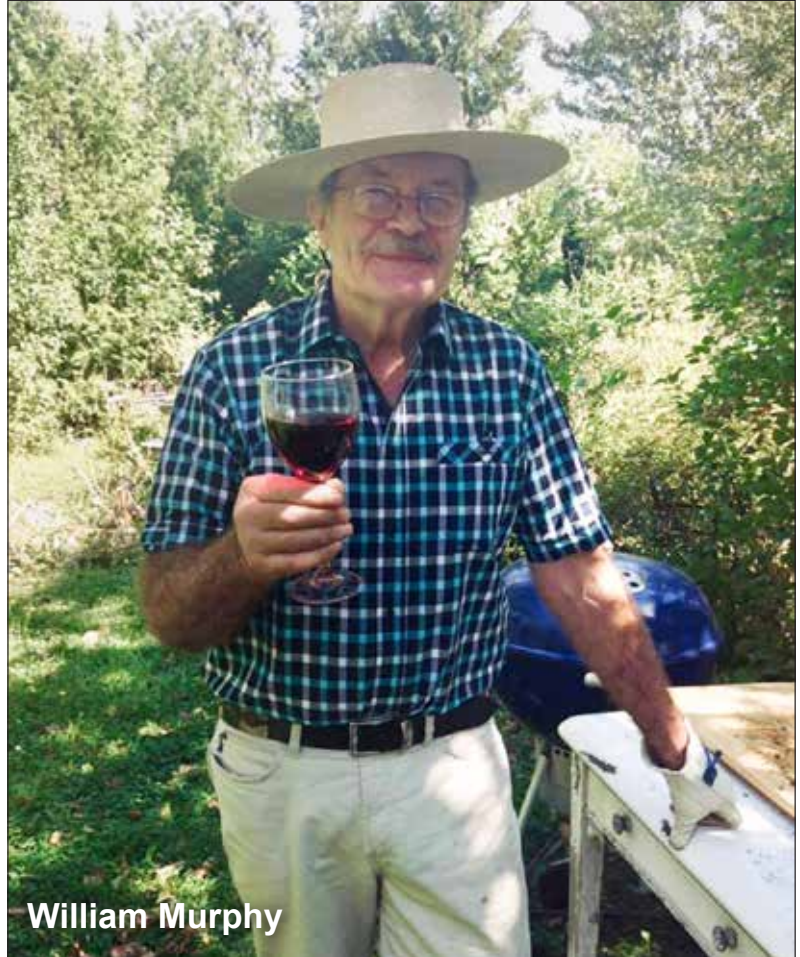
**E**meritus Professor William Murphy, who taught and conducted research and outreach in Plant and Soil Science at UVM from 1979 to 2003, died on June 29, 2019.

I am writing this to let you know how important he was to our department as well as to farmers in Vermont and many other parts of the U.S. His contributions were greatly underappreciated by many in his own department, in the College of Agriculture, and in the University.

At a time when animals, especially dairy cows, were being raised and maintained in confinement, Bill studied and introduced the United States to the art and science of intensive rotational grazing management. This is a practice that has multiple benefits for farmers, lowering costs of production while reducing time spent and machinery used for harvesting and feeding cows during the growing season. At the same time well-managed pastures resulted in less stressed and healthier animals, treated more humanely and allowed to walk in fields and to graze as they had throughout their evolutionary history.

Bill was the first person in the US, along with his graduate students, to scientifically study grazing, beginning with single animals in small paddocks and working eventually with whole herds. Through research, his book *Greener Pastures on Your Side of the Fence* (a bible for farmers beginning grazing), and outreach efforts in Vermont and in other states, he was able to help farmers with details of grazing—how many paddocks were needed, when to bring the animals in, how to know when to move them, how to handle excess forage in the early season, and how to deal with low productivity either because of drought or natural declines in growth rates late in the season. Rules of thumb and guidelines were developed for estimating the mass of consumable forage in a pasture.

Bill's work has underpinned Vermont's organic dairy industry since organic dairy farming would not have been



**William Murphy**

possible without the knowledge of how to best manage pasture resources. Bill struggled against existing paradigms. One influential person maintained that his work was not needed—it was said, “We tried pastures decades ago [through Vermont’s Green Pasture program] and they didn’t work.” But what had been previously tried was in reality primitive and inadequate, although it probably promoted the best practices known at the time. And a departmental chair once stopped Bill from teaching what would have been the first organic agriculture course at UVM. Organic agriculture was viewed as cult-like and without scientific background. Many of the claims of organic farmers—for example, that they had fewer pest problems than conventional farmers (something we now know to be true)—were dismissed as nonsense. It is important to remember that there were people early on who were concerned about the effects of pesticides on the



## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

biosphere and who knew that there were more ecological ways to grow food.

Bill did many other things in his life, including participation in the Peace Corps and conducting research in other areas of agronomy. But his leadership in research and education about pastures may have had the greatest impact. His influence lives on through the efforts of former students here and abroad and in the lives and practices of literally hundreds of farmers who have discovered the benefits of intensively managed rotational grazing.

He leaves behind his beloved wife Lita, his two daughters Michelle and Nicole, and three grandchildren. Bill will also be missed by many friends and acquaintances who appreciated his passion, dedication, and humor.

Donations in Bill's memory can be made to the American Cancer Society or by sending a check in Bill's name payable to the Vermont Grass Farmers Association, 327 U.S. Route 302, Suite 1, Berlin, VT 05641. ♦



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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## USDA Undersecretary Greg Ibach: USDA will release new origin of organic livestock rule this year

By Liz Crampton, PoliticoProm July 17, 2019

**T**he Agriculture Department aims to release a rule governing the origin of organic livestock later this year, USDA's regulatory lead told lawmakers Wednesday.

Delays in the rulemaking process have frustrated the organic dairy industry, which argues existing regulations create a loophole that has the potential to undermine consumer confidence in organic dairy products.

Against that backdrop, Greg Ibach, USDA's undersecretary for marketing and regulatory programs, was sharply questioned by several lawmakers at a House Agriculture subcommittee hearing Wednesday, July 17th, about why the department hasn't promptly released a rule to establish new guidelines for how livestock producers transition to organic. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue previously scrapped a rule\* that had nearly been completed under the Obama administration and had drawn wide support from the organic industry.

Ibach tried to assure members of the House Agriculture Biotechnology and Horticulture Subcommittee that USDA wants to move forward with new guidelines "as quickly and legally as possible." "We share the interest in completing the rulemaking process and we're exploring best options to get that done," he said. "We hope to have a rule drafted for interagency review yet this year."

Current National Organic Program regulations require that dairy cows receive a certification to confirm that they were both raised and also treated organically since their last period

of gestation in order for their milk to be marketed as certified organic. However, the organic dairy industry contends that some dairy operations have been taking advantage of a provision in the rule that allows for a one-time transition of a cow or an entire herd into the National Organic Program if the animal or herd is treated under organic standards for a year.

Organic producers, fearful that the provision could hurt consumer confidence in organic dairy products, have pressed (Origin of Livestock letter to Sonny Perdue)\*\* USDA to quickly release new guidelines to address what they see as a loophole in the organic certification process. They argue the provision allows operations to rotate herds into the organic program that weren't raised organic, and that the result cheats producers that follow the organic rules from calf to cow.

Rep. Kim Schrier (D-Wash.) said the department's delay in releasing a rule has led to varying interpretations of the existing guidelines and created an inequitable system that has disadvantaged small dairy farmers. "The failure to move forward promptly on rulemaking will mean the failure of these businesses," she said, adding that some dairy farmers in her state have told her they will need to close their operations within two years if guidelines that level the playing field are not finalized soon.

Ibach said in response that because the former proposal had been advancing through the rulemaking process before Perdue chose to go in a different direction, the comment period for the new rule may be shorter. The Obama-era rule was first drafted in 2015 and more than 1,500 public comments were submitted, most in favor of the proposal. Perdue removed the proposed rule from the department's regulatory agenda in 2017.

Jennifer Tucker, deputy administrator of the National Organic Program, testified during Wednesday's hearing that "there was a lot of support for the 2015 proposed rule," which gives USDA "a strong starting point" as it works to release a new proposal.

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-Maine) told the USDA officials that she finds it "completely unacceptable" that the department may release a proposed rule instead of a final one, given that a

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*continued on page 27*



## NET UPDATE

### Recent ODairy Discussions

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

A number of producers were recently puzzled by the unusually low MUN (milk urea nitrogen) levels in their milk. Farmers often have the testing done to give them information to help decide when to adjust the protein in dairy rations. Even the experts disagree what level is the healthiest for dairy cows, but it is usually accepted that 8 to 14 mg/dl is a healthy range. Typically, MUNs can run quite high in the early pasture season, so when a grazer saw levels of 2 to 4, he wondered why. Other farmers shared that they were seeing similar numbers in their milk this spring. Most producers blamed the unusual wet and cool weather for the change in the pasture forages. According to some soil experts on the list, the excessively wet conditions set the stage for denitrification, where the roots are unable to take up enough nitrogen to supply the plants needs to make proteins. "Excessively wet soil combine with warm spring temperatures leads to a much higher rate of denitrification than in a drier spring. Also the higher the pH the faster the rate of denitrification. N losses can commonly be 20-40% or even higher if all of the conditions for optimum denitrification occur." One specialist suggested the addition of a nitrogen source such as Chilean nitrate in early spring would help, but another cautioned that too much applied could lead to nitrate poisoning.

After recently renting some new pasture land, the farmer realized it has a lot of burdock in it. He asked the list if it was safe to graze. Several producers replied that cattle like to graze burdock when it is young, but tend to avoid it when it gets mature. One producer recommended that when grazing any "weed", it is important that you not force animals to eat them, so arrange paddocks in a way that animals are also offered other quality forages. A wise producer also reminded us that it is critical to mow the burdock before it goes to seed and sets

up those pesky burs. "We tend to get burdock in "sacrifice" areas where we've put cows during winter or extremely muddy pasture conditions. Common Burdock has a deep tap root, so is good for cycling minerals from the subsoil and busting through hard pan. According to Agri-Dynamics, the relative feed value of burdock is higher than alfalfa." Another farmer reminded us that burdock tincture is a common remedy for fatty liver/ketosis.

A farmer asked the group their experiences using washable cloths instead of disposable paper towels. None of the respondents indicated that there was an increase in mastitis or SCC when they gave up the paper towels. Most farmers said they preferred microfiber towels since they cleaned the cows so much better, especially when conditions were muddy. Farmers recommended a few sources of the microfiber towels: Maxim Mart Textile Products (online), Menards (in the Midwest), and IBA. ♦



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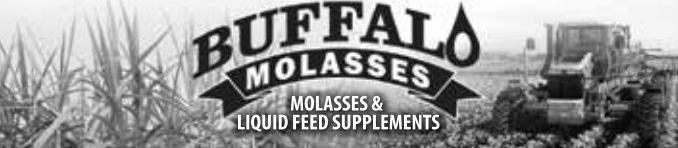
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## FEATURED FARM

## THE TROYER FAMILY FARM, FENNER, NY

*continued from page 1*

to subsist on farming alone. Ohio has the largest Amish community in the world, and escalating land values have led some Amish families to leave the area so they can buy land and operate farms, as living an agrarian lifestyle is the preferred way to live for the Amish. John Troyer grew up on a farm, as do many Amish, and wanted to be able to raise his family on a farm, but this meant leaving Ohio. In the last couple of years, due to health problems, John has stepped back from his involvement on the Troyer's 65 cow organic grass-fed dairy, but still is quite busy running the farm store on the property, doing the farm's books, and sometimes helping out with haying. John has given over responsibility for daily farm operations to his sons Michael (22) and Leroy (24).

The Troyers are rather unique in the organic dairy world in being organic from the start, never having operated a conventional dairy operation. When they first bought the 240 acre farm in Madison County they started a livestock operation with beef, chickens, and pigs on what had been the crop land of a conventional dairy farm. The family came to realize they needed to add something else to their farm to bring in enough income to support the family, and through a combination of good timing and geographic circumstances they decided to go into the grass-fed organic dairy business.

As Michael described it, "we needed more employment in the farm, and Tim Joseph, founder of Maple Hill Creamery, was here at a local discussion, and we became believers in this grass-fed organic thing, we saw it being a good thing for us." The Troyers have largely avoided planting crops or forages on their land because "we have a lot of rocks here, so tillage is not a good option here," said Michael. The previous farm had grown crops for its cows, but there was a lot of erosion and the Troyers saw that it made more sense to go to an exclusively pasture based system with no tillage. They wanted to reduce the erosion and didn't want to be picking rocks out of the ground all the time. And "grass-fed is a lot simpler, there's one less thing to do." While the quality of pastures is acceptable, Michael said that they are looking to improve the soil. They are experimenting with compost, foliar organic gem (fish fertilizer) and humus extract. "At this point we're just playing with it. We're trying to see what bang we get for



Photo by Donald McCrimmon

John Troyer at the wrapping machine

the buck. For the most part organic matter levels are not so low, but the soil is extremely high in calcium, which might be tying up some other nutrients. We want less calcium. The goal is to get the biology functioning...biology takes care of a lot of that stuff. "

**FARMING IN A GRASS-FED CLUSTER**

Maple Hill Creamery, based in Kinderhook in the Hudson River Valley 2.5 hours to the east, only processes and sells grass-fed milk, (see March 2019 issue of NODPA NEWS for a story on the new 3rd party certified grass-fed label Maple Hill helped to create) and this rocky farmland was a great place to recruit farmers to raise organic cows using grass only. There are now 14 grass-fed organic dairies within ten miles of the Troyer farmstead, one of which is his sister's farm. Organic Valley also operates a grass-fed organic dairy route in the area; it was started after Maple Hill established its grass-fed route. There are only three grain-fed organic dairies in the same ten mile radius. This cluster of organic grass-dairies is an important source of support; local organic graziers periodically host pasture walks to discuss their experiences with their peers in the area.

The land the Troyers bought did not include a barn or a milking parlor, which gave the Troyers the opportunity to design and build a barn and parlor that was most suitable to their needs. They built a 44' x 150' barn that uses a bedded pack for the milking cows. The feeding area is 44' x 50', and the rest of the barn is bedded pack loose housing. In the

## FEATURED FARM



Troyer Farm

winter the heifers are kept in a portable hoop barn that is 24' x 36'; it is moved around the farm and chickens are kept in it in the summer. Heifers are outside all the time in the summer, but always have the option of going inside in the winter, not so much because of the cold, but more to get out of the mud. Dry cows are sometimes kept outside in the winter, and sometimes kept in the big barn with the milkers. Michael and Leroy would like to build another dry cow building so they can all be inside at the same time. In addition to the barn, the Troyers built a new swing eight parlor. As to why they chose this parlor, Michael explained—"It's what a lot of other people around here are using. I guess I wouldn't go with anything else. It's really efficient labor-wise. 60 cows can be milked in just about an hour."

### BREEDING AND FEEDING REGIMEN

When they started, the Troyers brought in a lot of cross bred cows, primarily Jersey/Holstein crosses, but only use Jersey bulls now for breeding. Michael and Leroy are breeding for A2A2 genetics because they feel there might be a special market for A2A2 market in the future, given that there already are some A2A2 non-organic brands. While they usually have extra calves to sell, they did buy some cows last

winter. Each year about 11 replacement heifers are kept in the herd. The rest, along with the bull calves are sold at the local sale barn. They are not getting a premium for either grass-fed or organic on their animal sales.

Their production is on the lower side at 8,500-9,000 lbs. per cow, but it is important to keep in mind they feed absolutely no grain to their cows. Michael believes production should go up with improved genetics and also improved forage quality over time from building up the soil. He indicated 10,000 lbs. per cow is a feasible target for the near future. During the grazing season, their cows and heifers are out on grass basically all the time. Cows are moved every twelve hours between paddocks that are ½ to 3 acres in size depending on the time of year and how much grass there is. It usually takes 25-35 days for the herd to rotate back to the same paddock. Michael relayed that they might feed

*continued on page 28*



Troyer Country Store



Mervin Troyer working at the Country Store

## FEATURED FARM

**THE TROYER FAMILY FARM, FENNER, NY***continued from page 27*

only a few bales of hay to the cows for the whole grazing season. While on pasture, the animals have free choice access to minerals. In the winter the cows are fed mostly baleage composed of a mixture of grass and legumes. They will sometimes buy some hay to supplement what they cut from the pastures. The best quality hay is fed to the milking cows and calves; they try to reserve the lower quality hay for the bred heifers and dry cows. While the Troyer farm is doing well with an all grass and forage diet for its cows, Michael expressed that he and other grass-fed organic dairies in the area could do a better job of getting the most out of their pastures. According to Sarah Flack the average ratio in the area is five and a half acres of pasture and hay land per cow, which Michael feels should go down, with three acres being a very reasonable target, with some already at this ratio. Being more efficient with resources in this manner would make the farms more competitive.

**COW HEALTH AND ANIMAL CARE**

The Troyers have done a remarkable job of building up a very healthy herd in a short amount of time. They do not vaccinate at all; their cow health maintenance program relies primarily on keeping the cows on good grass and providing free choice access to minerals. Michael reports they have one or two cases of milk fever a year. When they first brought cows from several different farms to start the dairy operation they had some pink eye and foot rot; these problems have largely cleared up. They had vaccinated initially for pink eye but decided to stop after they failed to see much difference between the vaccinated and the non-vaccinated cows. Scours have never been a problem, which Michael attributes in part to keeping the calves on their moms for 4-5 months. There's a cost to doing this as it means the calves drink a lot of milk. Michael said he would consider having a nurse cow with 2-3 calves on one cow to save some milk, but does not want to go back to using a barrel feeder because it takes more work. Since it's basically just Michael and his brother Leroy, they need a highly labor-efficient feeding system; in their system the cows do the work. Another benefit of having calves nurse mom is their body condition is better.



**Country Store worker reading by the wood stove**

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*“Organic megadairies and fraud are ruining consumer confidence. Big 5,000 cow dairies are simply in it for the money, they’re not trying to produce a superior product... what organic should really be--- a quality product that’s good for the environment...” ~ Michael Troyer*

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Michael and Leroy only call in a veterinarian once a year, primarily to do a herd pregnancy check in the late fall or early winter when most of the herd has been bred and should be pregnant. Michael explained— “We do our own vet work for the most part, whatever needs to be done. With grass-fed organic you have so many fewer issues. Herd health has improved



## FEATURED FARM



Pasture at Troyer's farm



Rita Mast working at the store

steadily over the years as cows that are raised from birth up on grass have acclimated well.”

The Troyer farm is an excellent example of how a well-run organic grass-fed dairy farm contributes to improved soil health, herd health, high labor efficiency, and overall a profitable dairy operation with low input costs. However, Michael expressed that the biggest threat he sees to dairies like his is the lack of enforcement in the organic dairy industry. “Organic megadairies and fraud are ruining consumer confidence. Big 5,000 cow dairies are simply in it for the money,

they’re not trying to produce a superior product... what organic should really be--- a quality product that’s good for the environment....[but] as long as the money is flowing to the fake organic it’s going to continue. The love of money is the root of all evil.... If nobody would buy their milk that would take care of it. It’s not that I’m opposed to efficiencies of scale.

You can cheat with 5 cows or 5000 cows, but you’re going to have a hard time grazing with 5,000 dairy cows.” For Michael managing grass-fed dairy cows is a livelihood, but it’s also a way of life that he strongly identifies with. “For me....I never really had another job. I don’t have any desire to have another job. A lot of the advantages I take for granted...For me...it’s just what I do.”

*The Troyer’s farm address is 5537 Nelson Road, Canastota, NY 13035 and they can be reached at 315-655-0346. ♦*

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## USDA Undersecretary Greg Ibach: USDA will release new origin of organic livestock rule this year

*continued from page 22*

rulemaking process had already been undertaken. Ibach did not say whether USDA will release a proposed rule or a final one.

Rep. Rodney Davis (R-Ill.) also expressed alarm that USDA has not implemented recommendations from the National Organic Standards Board, including the origin of organic livestock rule.

“It’s unacceptable,” Pingree said. “It needs to happen.” ♦

\* Rule link: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2015/04/28/2015-09851/national-organic-program-origin-of-livestock>

\*\* Origin of Livestock Letter to Sonny Perdue: <http://organicfarmersassociation.org/news/589/>

*Liz Crampton is an agriculture and food policy reporter for POLITICO Pro. Her coverage focuses on conservation, pesticides and agribusiness.*

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

**What's In Your Milk?****Choose organic for the cleanest milk, says new study***continued from page 15*

The published study noted that testing for amoxicillin was not done as part of an FDA study done in 2015, and that the findings of this study indicate that the oversight of the safety of our milk supply needs to be bolstered.

“While the results of the previous FDA study demonstrated that, with a few exceptions, antibiotic residue levels were within federal safety limits, our finding that multiple samples exceeded them suggests that further strengthening of the monitoring system is needed to ensure the continued safety of the milk supply,” said the published study.

**Growth hormone results**

While there is no federal limit set for cow-derived hormones in milk, this study found levels of the bovine growth hormone (bGH) to be 20 times higher in conventional milk than organic. The study said that since growth hormones are produced naturally by dairy cattle, some level of bGH can be expected

in all milk samples. The dramatically higher residues found in conventional milk “suggests that the difference reflects the use of synthetic growth hormones” in conventional dairy, according to the study. Low level hormones identified in organic milk fall in line with a bovine’s natural biological cycle when lactating.

**Pesticide results**

The results found no residues of current-use pesticides in any of the organic milk samples, but residues in up to 60 percent of the conventional samples.

The researchers tested for a wide variety of pesticides currently used in conventional dairy production. All of the organic samples tested zero for residues of pesticides in current use. However, conventional milk showed residues of different pesticides in 26 percent to 60 percent of the samples. Those pesticides included atrazine (26 percent), chlorpyrifos (59 percent), cypermethrin (49 percent), diazinon (60 percent), and permethrin (46 percent). \*

“While none of the organic milk samples had detectable levels of current-use pesticides, most of the conventional samples did,” said the study.

Of note is that conventional milk tested positive for residues of the dangerous neurotoxin chlorpyrifos in 59 percent of the samples. Chlorpyrifos is associated with developmental issues in babies and children. Restrictions were imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency on the use of chlorpyrifos in residential settings in 2000. The pesticide was ordered by a federal court to be banned in agriculture in 2018, but this ban has been appealed by the current administration.

California recently announced plans to ban the pesticide, and several other states have started to take action to crack down on the use of chlorpyrifos due to health concerns. With an estimated 6 million pounds of the chemical used annually on 10 million acres, chlorpyrifos has been referred to as the most commonly used conventional insecticide in the country.

“These results demonstrate that residues of some antibiotics and current-use pesticides were prevalent in the conventionally produced but not the organically produced milk samples ... Our findings also demonstrated significantly higher levels of growth hormone levels in the conventional samples,” said the authors of the study in the conclusion.

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### The importance of organic dairy

People enjoy dairy in all places and in all situations, whether it's a bowl of cereal and milk or yogurt and fruit at our breakfast table, cream with our coffee at the local coffee shop, or cheese on our pizza at our favorite restaurant. Organic dairy is the number-two selling category in the U.S. organic industry, with products such as organic cheese, organic butter, organic sour cream all seeing greater sales as consumers seek out high quality dairy products. And providing for all that organic dairy are more than 2,500 organic dairy farms across the nation.

What does organic dairy mean? Organic dairy farmers are required to adhere to the federal organic standards that ensure organic dairy is produced sustainably, with the health of the cows and the health of the consumers in mind. While there are a number of important distinctions between organic and conventional dairy, the main differences are related to what the cows eat, where they spend their time, and how they are treated if/when they get sick.

Organic dairy means no use of antibiotics, synthetic growth hormones, GMO's or conventional pesticides. In organic dairy the health and natural behavior of cows are prioritized with holistic and preventative care practices as a primary management strategy. Organic cows are pasture-raised and grazed throughout the grazing season, and all livestock are fed an organic diet.

The significant findings of this study break new ground, and could be a guide to consumers wanting to choose the healthiest and cleanest milk for their families.

"There needs to be more research conducted to expand this important study and to test more samples across the U.S.," said The Organic Center's Shade. "But in the meantime, in order to get the important nutrients from dairy, the best choice is organic dairy."

"To our knowledge, the present study is the first study to compare levels of pesticide in the U.S. milk supply by production method (conventional vs organic). It is also the first in a decade to measure antibiotic and hormone levels and compare them by milk production type," noted the published study.

The study concluded: "Residues of current-use pesticides and antibiotics appear to be common in conventional but not organic milk sold through retail stores across the USA... Similarly, growth hormone and IGF-1 [insulin-like growth factor 1] levels were several times higher in conventional milk, which suggests that the difference reflects the use of synthetic growth hormones... the present study's findings suggest that choosing to consume milk produced organically would minimize exposure [to antibiotics, growth hormones and pesticides] and any possible associated risks."

For more information on the study, and on The Organic Center and the science behind organic, visit [www.organic-center.org](http://www.organic-center.org).

\*Legacy pesticides are those that have been banned because of their known harmful consequences, yet remain persistent, at very low background levels in the environment. The legacy pesticides tested in this study were hexachlorobenzene, ppDDT, and a breakdown component of DDT, the metabolite ppDDE. All were detected in nearly all of the milk samples, both conventional and organic. However, levels were significantly greater in conventional samples with approximately 4 times more hexachlorobenzene and 1.5 times more of ppDDE, the DDT metabolite.

"Traces of these legacy pesticides persistently show up in any test for residues, so we were not surprised that they were detectable in both organic and conventional milk," said Shade. "Unfortunately there is no true safe harbor from these contaminants, but it was encouraging to see them at such low levels, and interesting to find that organic practices even reduced the residual levels of these banned pesticides in milk."

*The Organic Center's mission is to convene credible, evidence-based science on the health and environmental benefits of organic food and farming and to communicate the findings to the public. The Center is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) research and education organization operating under the administrative auspices of the Organic Trade Association*

*The Organic Center is committed to communicating and conducting evidence-based, impartial research that safeguards public trust in our work. We promote objectivity in research by ensuring that the design, implementation, and reporting of research is free of bias. These study results were developed by Emory University independently from organic interests, and the samples were analyzed blindly, without the lab team knowing the source or nature of the milk samples. To learn more, visit [www.organic-center.org](http://www.organic-center.org). ♦*

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# Calendar

**July 19, 2019, 8:30AM-3:30PM**

**RODALE INSTITUTE'S ORGANIC FIELD DAY**  
**611 Siegfriedale Rd., Kutztown, PA 19530**

Rodale Institute's Organic Field Day is your best opportunity to explore all our research firsthand. At this all-day event, join Rodale Institute's researchers and staff to learn the latest results of our research projects and visit demonstration stations on the farm. The day is "go at your own pace," meaning you can spend as much time as you'd like at any station learning from experts. You'll have the opportunity to interact one-on-one with experts and learn about a wide variety of research and demonstration projects, including: Industrial Hemp, Pastured Pork Production, Treatment-Free Beekeeping, Composting, Organic No-Till, Organic Orchard Management, Organic Pest Management, Soil And Plant Health, and Water Quality.

For more information, please contact Maria Pop, at [Maria.Pop@RodaleInstitute.org](mailto:Maria.Pop@RodaleInstitute.org) or 610-683-1481.

**July 23, 2019, 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm**

**GRAZING FIELD DAY AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL**  
**Plew Farm, 1966 Healdville Rd, Mt. Holly, VT 05758**

Join us at the Plew Farm, a diversified livestock farm owned and operated by Kevin and Patti Plew, for a pasture walk and ice cream social. The Plew's will share with us how they manage all of their livestock—beef, pigs, and poultry—on pasture and are utilizing rotational grazing principles. Some of the products produced by the Plew Farm include: grass-fed beef, pasture-raised pork, broiler chickens, eggs, and turkeys. Come learn how they manage multiple species in a pasture-based system. We will also discuss this year's weather challenges and share strategies to preserve pasture quality. There is no charge for this event. Please RSVP to: [Cheryl.cesario@uvm.edu](mailto:Cheryl.cesario@uvm.edu) or 802-388-4969 x 346.

**July 25 to 27, 2019**

**GRASSTRAVAGANZA 2019: HEALTH AND RESILIENCY FROM SOIL TO TABLE**  
**SUNY Cobleskill, NY**

Cobleskill (Schoharie County) - SUNY Cobleskill, in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the New York Grazing Coalition, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Cornell University Cooperative Extension, is hosting the 2019 Grasstravaganza. The conference will cover the importance of grazing livestock with a Soil to Table perspective and includes both regional and national speakers to include, Dr. Elaine Ingham, microbiologist and soil biology researcher and founder of Soil Foodweb Inc. as well as workshops, hands-on learning at the college farm, and local farm tours. Other speakers include one at the meats lab looking at carcass quality with Mike Lapi, Victor Shelton on the nuts and bolts of grazing management and a keynote on improving soil pasture health, and animal handling and safety for cattle and small ruminants with Mike Baker and Dirk Schubert. Registration and the full agenda is now available at <https://cobleskill.edu/grasstravaganza>.

**August 9, 2019, 6:00 pm to 8:00pm**

**SEEDSTOCK BEEF PRODUCTION**  
**Trowbridge Farms, 1192 County Route 22**  
**Ghent (Columbia County)**

Well known nationwide for their high quality animals, join Phil Trowbridge and family to learn the ins and outs of selling elite genetics, which include heifer calves, cows, bulls, embryo packages, and more. We will also be joined by the staff from New York State Agriculture and Markets to discuss the new regulations on tagging and identification of cattle. Pre- registration \$10, by August 7, 2019, at <http://ccext.net/CAAHP/civcrm/event/info?reset=1&id=41>



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**August 21, 2019, Wednesday, 5 p.m.**

**MOFGA FARM TRAINING PROJECT WORKSHOP  
Toddy Pond Farm, Monroe, ME**

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. See how farmers Greg and Heide 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, fermented vegetables, sausages, sheep, Gloucestershire Old Spots, meat chickens and eggs. They recently added a new cheese cave to make cave aged cheese and salami. 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 207-568-4142 or email [mofga@mofga.org](mailto:mofga@mofga.org).

**August 21 – 22, 2019**

**ACRES USA  
UC Davis Conference Center  
550 Alumni Ln, Davis, CA 95616**

The 2019 Acres U.S.A. Healthy Soil Summit will gather growers for intensive learning on strategies to create over-all farm resilience, starting from the soil up. Expert speakers with expert advice on proven methods for creating healthy, productive soil will include John Kempf, Pam Marrone, Glen Rabenberg and Gary Zimmer to name a few. Healthy Soil Summit Registration - \$335 includes one and a half days (Wednesday afternoon and all day Thursday) of premium content on successful farm strategies from real farm experts, evening reception and keynote, lunch on second day and breaks for networking. Does not include tour. For more information, call 970-392-4464, or email: [info@acresusa.com](mailto:info@acresusa.com).

**August 28, 2019 – Wednesday, 5 p.m.**

**LAND TENURE  
MOFGA FARM TRAINING PROJECT WORKSHOP  
Dickey Hill Farm, Monroe**

Finding a place to farm can be a huge challenge. Whether you're working as a farm hand, manager or apprentice it is never too soon to consider your options. Join Noami and James of Dickey Hill Farm and Abby Sadauckas, Field Agent for Land For Good to get a better idea of how to start thinking about your future farm, the land base you'll need and the variety of ways to achieve your

farm dream. For more information, call 207-568-4142 or [email mofga@mofga.org](mailto:mofga@mofga.org).

**September 4, 2019 – Wednesday, 5 pm**

**NEXT STEPS: APPRENTICE TO JOURNEYPERSON  
MOFGA FARM TRAINING PROJECT WORKSHOP  
Apple Creek Farm, Bowdoinham, ME**

MOFGA estimates that Maine needs about 150 new farmers each year just to maintain the infrastructure required to support our local food system – so every new farm operation in Maine is a reason to celebrate! But getting started in farming is becoming increasingly difficult in many ways. Join Abby and Jake of Apple Creek Farm as they share their insights and enthusiasm about how they market their livestock products year-round and utilize a mix of owned and leased acreage to support their growing farm business. Abby is the Maine Field Agent for Land for Good and will introduce several key agricultural service providers to explain how their programs can help. If you're considering farming for a living, please come and contribute to this important conversation. Potluck to follow. For more information, call 207-568-4142 or email [mofga@mofga.org](mailto:mofga@mofga.org).

*continued on page 33*

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# Calendar

*continued from page 31*

**September 12, 2019, 6:00-8:00pm**

## **COW CALF PRODUCTION AND THE FREEZER TRADE**

**Tilldale Farms, 22 Tilley Lane, Hoosick Falls, NY 12090**

The Tilley family has transitioned from a dairy to multi-species livestock farm, selling meat directly to consumers at farmer's markets and retail shops. The farm focuses on grass-fed Red Devon Cattle, as well as poultry and pork production. We will also be joined by Steve Hadcock, Beginning Farmer and Market Development Educator to discuss how to draw more customers to your display, farmers market stall, or farm. Also, staff from New York State Agriculture and Markets to discuss the New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program. Pre-registration, \$10 by September 10, 2019, \$15 thereafter.

At <http://tinyurl.com/CowCalfProductionFreezerTrade>

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

**Thursday, September 19, 2019, 10:00 am - 3:00 pm**

## **PASA'S REGENERATIVE GRAZING FROM THE GROUND UP**

**Spring Creek Farm**

**3880 N. Church Street, Wernersville, PA 19565**

Forrest and Greg Stricker from Spring Creek Farms—a 287-acre dairy and poultry farm that has been certified organic for two decades—will share how they optimize soil health through their pasture management practices as they strive to improve their forage productivity, quality, and longevity. The Stricker family has been farming Spring Creek Farm for five generations. Currently, Greg Stricker and his father, Forrest, farm together at Spring Creek.

The farm's herd of Jersey, Holstein, and Ayrshire cows is 100-percent grass-fed, and graze perennial pasture in a management intensive, rotational system. The farm ships its organic, grass-fed milk, and offers on-farm raw milk sales.

This event includes lunch. This event qualifies for two SmartStart credits through AgChoice Farm Credit. SmartStart allows young and beginning farmers to earn credits toward a reduced interest rate on a new AgChoice loan by attending educational events. Questions? Please contact this event's coordinator, Aaron de Long, by email at [aaron@pasafarming.org](mailto:aaron@pasafarming.org) or by phone at (814) 349-9856 x709.

**September 20-22, 2019**

## **COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR MOFGA's Common Ground Education Center Unity, Maine**

MOFGA's premier event celebrating rural living. Three full days of educational talks and demonstrations, entertainment, delicious Maine-grown organic food and products from local artisans. Want to volunteer? Contact [volunteers@mofga.org](mailto:volunteers@mofga.org). For more information, call 207-568-4142 or email [mofga@mofga.org](mailto:mofga@mofga.org).

**September 26 & 27, 2019**

## **19TH ANNUAL NODPA FIELD DAYS PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE OF ORGANIC DAIRY: STRATEGIES FOR LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY Theodore's Restaurant 3231 Seneca Turnpike, Canastota, NY 13032**

For full information, schedule and to register, please see page 1 of this issue, the July 2019 NODPA News.



# Classified Ads

## ANIMALS

**100 % GRASS MILK, ORGANIC HERD:** Mostly Holstein with a few Jerseys and crossbreeds. 50 milkers, 20 bred heifers, approximately 40 young heifers and calves. Nice looking herd. Come and see.

Paul de le Bruere, 802-370-6268, [pfcml73183@gmail.com](mailto:pfcml73183@gmail.com).

**Location:** *Essex, VT*

**ORGANIC HOLSTEIN HERD FOR SALE:** 115 milking now plus 25 springing heifers. Young herd, including 28 first calf heifers, 25 second calf. Complete cow list available. Closed herd for over 30 years, with good breeding. Herd has been preg checked, vaccinated and tagged, so they are ready to move. Low SCC, negative Johnes, monthly herd checks. Quality awards since 1995. Breeding age heifers and yearlings also available. Prefer to move the milking herd as a group. SCC 110-140k. Butterfat= 4.2 Protein= 3.1. Contact Jon Branon, Fairfield, VT, [jcbranon@gmail.com](mailto:jcbranon@gmail.com), 802-827-3673

**Location:** *Northern VT*

## HAY

**LATE JUNE CUT NOFA-NY CERTIFIED ORGANIC 4X5 DRY**

**GRASS HAY FOR SALE:** Never rained on and stored under cover, net wrapped. Nice solid bales, pick up only, happy to load for you. \$55 a bale, we want to have room to store some second cut dry hay. Located in Eastern NY, Tammy Thomas [disneytam89@gmail.com](mailto:disneytam89@gmail.com), 518-727-1712 please leave message.

**Location:** *Greenwich, NY*

## EQUIPMENT

**DUMP WAGON FOR SALE:** McConnell 771-97 dump wagon in very good condition. No welds on the body or frame and the dump box is also in great shape. With all those wet fields chopping hay and corn this year is going to be a challenge and a dump wagon might very well come in handy! We no longer grow corn and we do all baleage now so no need for a dump wagon, \$7,500. Located in Eastern NY, Tammy Thomas [disneytam89@gmail.com](mailto:disneytam89@gmail.com), 518-727-1712 please leave message.

**Location:** *Greenwich, NY*

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### POLICY DIRECTOR POSITION

The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) is seeking a passionate, experienced, strategic and collaborative policy leader who will build upon the Coalition's accomplishments over the past 30 years and help lead the charge to even bigger victories in the future. The Policy Director must be deeply committed to serving the sustainable agriculture movement and its federal policy work and to becoming an integral part of our high-performing, passionate, and diverse team. The Policy Director is a full-time, salaried position and is based in Washington, DC. For a complete job description, visit: <http://sustainableagriculture.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/NSAC-PD-Job-Announcement-072019.pdf>

**Location:** *Washington, DC*



**NODPA News**

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

**Subscribe Today!**  
See page 34 for details.

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### From the MODPA Treasurer

Greetings from a soggy and backwards growing Upper Midwest. Weather continues to be the biggest newsmaker. As I write this, some people are still trying to plant corn. The old adage is knee high by the 4th of July. It is the 24th of June. Very little corn in the area will make it to knee high. We have a serious lack of growing degree days right now. Crop and pasture conditions have been poor so far this growing season. Stress levels are off the charts for all farmers in the area, and from the sounds of it, most across the country. Hay may be an even bigger issue. The winterkill in my area is the worst that I have ever seen. Most will be relying on grass to feed the cows for the coming winter. If you need to purchase any feed for the coming winter I strongly advise getting your commitments early. With the cool, wet weather we have been having, the pastures have not been as productive as they normally would be either. Seems like doom and gloom at every corner we come around. The good news is that nobody is alone in this situation.

There doesn't seem to be a lot of movement in dairy pricing right now. Many are in a wait-and-see mood. My guess is that the supply will tighten some. The question is how much fake organic milk from the CAFOs in the Colorado and Texas area will be pushed into the market. We all need to keep the pressure on the NOP to do their job. There is a reason that we have rules in organic and they need to be applied to all.

We continue to push for the origination of livestock rule to be put in place. If we can get it in effect this should help, but it will not solve everything. It is going to take several pieces to complete the puzzle. We must all do our part and keep the pressure on our processors and the NOP to get this done; after all, our futures depend on it.

As we enter the downhill slide of summer I wish for a better season and a bountiful harvest for all. May it be a safe one. As always make sure you take time for yourselves and your family. We only get one shot at that.

Remember to stop and smell the clover!

Till next time,

**Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer**

**3253 150th Avenue, Glenwood City, WI 54013**

**715-977-1314**

### 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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zimbadaury@tband.net  
Phone: 989-872-2680

#### Ohio

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



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

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

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The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual  
**NODPA Field Days**

**Preparing for the Future of Organic Dairy:  
Strategies for Long-Term Sustainability**

Theodore's Restaurant, 3231 Seneca Turnpike, Canastota, NY 13032

**September 26 & 27, 2019**



Registration Form on Page 16.

**Early Bird Discount available until September 18th.**

See page 2 for complete details.