

# NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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All photos are courtesy of Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture & the Environment.

## FEATURED FARM: WOLFE'S NECK FARM, FREEPORT, ME

### Regeneration

By Tamara Scully, NODPA News  
Contributing Writer

*Following the submission of this article,  
Brian Barber, Dairy Manager, left his  
position at the farm.*

**R**egenerative farming refers to practices which, instead of depleting the land or maintaining the status quo, work to enrich it. Carbon sequestration, building organic matter, enhancing soil microbial activity, protecting watersheds and promoting biodiversity are all a part of the goal,

*continued on page 24*

## COVID 19 Causes the Postponement of the 20th Annual NODPA Field Days

By Nora Owens, NODPA News Editor

**The September NODPA News  
will feature a  
Special NODPA Field Days  
Education Program  
Supplement Section**

**F**or the first time in the 20 years of hosting the NODPA Field Days, NODPA announces that the Annual NODPA Field Days will be postponed until September, 2021. Despite their unending optimism, the NODPA Board

*continued on page 18*

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Message from NODPA President

The first time I put a bandana over my face to enter my bank, it felt surreal. Now, most of us have adapted to the new normal in these days. We get it. We wear a mask in public, don't shake hands or hug our friends anymore. Maybe we don't visit our elderly relatives. We sanitize the doorknobs and dip stick in the milkhouse. We set boundaries and keep our distance. On small family-run farms like ours, it's easier to keep up the social distancing. These are decisions we make to keep the people in our lives safe; it's an act of kindness to protect others.

It's with some sadness that we have to announce in this newsletter that the 2020 NODPA Field Days will be postponed until September 2021. As with most conferences and face to face meetings that were scheduled during this year, the risk to all is just too great right now. We will be printing a special September edition of the NODPA News

with features from some of our plans for the Field Days, so you can look for that in the mail, and read more about it in this issue.

While the whole world seems to be in a tailspin, it seems that sales of organic products, including milk, have surged ahead. Even the conventional milk price has rallied, leaving many scratching their heads as to why this happened, and how long it can last. Neighbors in my area continue to sell out, both conventional and organic. Sometimes for retirement, but most often it is because the pay price has been lower than the cost of production for long enough to erode the farm's equity, leaving them no way to continue. All the organic brands have a supply management system of their own, so in these times when sales have been strong, this should be reflected in a strengthening of the pay price. As I stood in front of the milk display at the grocery store last week, half gallons of branded

### Board Members & Representatives

#### PENNSYLVANIA

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

**Roman Stoltzfoos, State Rep**  
Spring Wood Organic Farm  
1143 Gap Rd, Kinzers, PA, 17535  
romans@epix.net  
Phone: 610-593-2415

**Dwight Stoltzfoos, Board Secretary**  
Spring Wood Organic Farm  
1143 Gap Road  
Kinzers, PA 17535  
info@springwooddairy.com

#### NEW YORK

**Kirk Arnold, NODPA Co-president**  
3175 State Route 13  
Truxton, NY 13158-3107  
kickaha21@gmail.com  
P: 607-842-6631

**Liz Bawden, Co-president, Newsletter Contributor, Associate Editor**  
119 Factory Rd., Hammond, NY 13646  
bawden@cit-tele.com  
Phone: 315-324-6926

**Ryan Murray, Board Member**  
6000 Chenango Solon Pond Rd.  
Truxton NY 13158  
rcmdairy@gmail.com

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

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

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

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

#### VERMONT

**Brian Wilson, State Rep**  
Morningside Farm, 101 Hemenway Hill Rd, Shoreham, VT 05770  
Cell phone: 802-377-1786,  
bpwilson@shoreham.net

**Jeep Madison, State Rep**  
2806 Smith Street, Shoreham, VT 05770  
Cell: 802-349-6262  
jojoselixir@yahoo.com

**Bonnie and Tom Boutin, State Rep**  
1184 Cross Road, Newport Ctr, VT 05857  
Phone: 802-334-2081  
bonnieboutin@yahoo.com

#### CONNECTICUT

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

#### MASSACHUSETTS

**Morvan Allen, Board Member**  
Maple Shade Farm Inc.  
229 Hewins St, Sheffield, MA 01257  
morvenallen@live.com

Phone: 413-229-6018

#### NEW HAMPSHIRE

**Cindy-Lou Amey, State Rep**  
Indian Stream Farm  
81 Tabor Road, Pittsburg, NH 03592  
Phone: (603) 538-7734  
cindyloamey@gmail.com

#### MAINE

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

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

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

### AT LARGE NODPA BOARD MEMBERS

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

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

**Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer**  
N14264 490th Street  
Ridgeland, WI 54763  
bdrinkman@hotmail.com  
Phone: 715-265-4631  
**Sean Mallett, WODPA President**  
seanmallett@msn.com

**Henry Perkins, Past President,**  
Box 156 Bog Rd., Albion, ME 04910  
Phone: 207-437-9279  
henryperkins51@gmail.com

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

**Cecelia Murray, Policy Committee**  
Bundy Creek Farm LLC  
5229 Chenango Road  
Truxton, NY 13158-3118  
cecelmurr@aol.com

### NODPA STAFF

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

**Nora Owens, Editor & Event Coordinator/Webmaster**  
30 Keets Rd., Deerfield, MA 01342  
noraowens@comcast.net  
Phone: 413-772-0444  
Fax: 866-554-9483

**Newsletter Layout**  
Angie Holcomb  
Hayward, WI 54843

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

organic milk were selling for \$4.99 and up. It has been roughly the same price for a few years. But farmers shipping to those national brands are paid \$10 less per cwt. than a few years ago. And the milk costs the same. To every dairy person I know, I ask why? After all, isn't this what the market adjustment premiums were meant to do? They were to be used to fairly compensate farmers as the market changes. The answer I get boils down to fear.

Processors are afraid that market conditions will change dramatically because of the uncertainty of our new COVID economy. Producers are afraid to open the discussion with processors about their contracts for fear of being cast off, and left without a market at all.

A wise man once said that decisions strictly borne out of fear will usually be the wrong ones. One of the highlights of the annual Field Days is the early morning producer-only

meeting. It's where producers may speak their mind without fear of reprisal or judgement. I will miss that session because it has spawned some great conversations over the years. We can create great things when we speak our truths.

So, let's be fearless. Not crazy; but to live our lives where decisions are not made by fear. Let's speak our truth to consumers about why we farm organically. Let's speak our truth to our certifiers about the bad actors in organics. Let's speak our truth to our processors that this cannot be the new normal for our industry.

I hope that you, your family and community continue to stay healthy!

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

### From the NODPA Desk:

*By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director*

These last few months I have been on various conference/zoom/team calls with many folks in government, agricultural support agencies, and congressional professionals trying to measure the effect of the pandemic on farming and its infrastructure support systems. The word of the moment seems to be 'pivot' with many describing how they have adapted to a different world. Pivot is what we do every day when farming, especially on small to medium size operations. It's what small businesses do as a matter of everyday life but the changes right now are exposing the frailties of our supply infrastructure and an economy built on service industries. At last, we are seeing money become available to reinvest in infrastructure, which is usually not available to smaller operations because they lack the access to capital, the collateral for loans, and the ability to service even modest debt. As I write this, Congress is putting together another pandemic stimulus package which, hopefully, will include various proposals to support farm operations that want to reinvest in their marketing and supply infrastructure since diversifying will be key to the future of small and mid-size dairy operations. Even though writing proposals for grant money and accessing USDA handouts takes time, what is available now will not last so seize the opportunity.

Organic dairy supply has stabilized with demand growing slowly, but with a pay price that is stagnant and below the cost of production except for those large operations that have the economies of scale. They are the ones that will profit initially from

an expansion of the market. The future is not looking bright for the publication of a Final Rule for the Origin of Livestock (OOL) because it seems to be stuck in agency review at the USDA. We continue to work with all the different groups that are advocating for a decision and more clarity from the USDA. We hear a variety of different reasons for the delay, which will become clearer in the coming months, but the window of opportunity for the Rule is rapidly disappearing. I would have thought that over the last eighteen years of different meetings on proposed rules, interpretations, guidance documents, Inspector General Reports, and a 2015 Proposed Rule, that all the problems or difficulties of clarifying this one time exemption would have been worked out. Apparently not! Lobbying by powerful Washington DC based groups such as National Milk Producers Federation may have tipped the balance in USDA thinking, especially with the fear of a lawsuit.

We have always said that the OOL is not a silver bullet; however, for organic dairy to grow equally for all sizes of organic dairy operations, we need a Final Rule that will bring consistent enforcement of regulations for transitioning conventional animals and to provide a stable future. If there is no Final Rule that adequately safeguards the integrity of organic dairy, with a one-time per person provision, we should reconsider changing the Organic Food Production Act to exclude any exemption for organic dairy and revert back to the same status of all other organic livestock, last third of gestation. This proposal has consistently been supported by NODPA and Western Organic Dairy Producers over the last 4 years.

Watch out for your own NODPA Field Days edition coming to you by mail, email and the web in September 2020! ♦



## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## Managing Forage Legumes for Improved Productivity and Persistence

*Rich Smith and Nick Warren*

*University of New Hampshire, Department of Natural Resources and the Environment*

Legumes really are extraordinary plants. Consider the fact that their family contains well over 16,000 species, members of which can be found growing in nearly every habitat on earth and range in size from the tiny clovers you might find growing in your lawn to some of the tallest trees in a tropical rainforest. Even more impressive is the symbiosis that has developed between most legume species and the specialized soil bacteria, rhizobia. This mutualistic relationship involves the creation of nodules in the legume's root system that house, feed, and protect the bacteria. In exchange



**Rich Smith**



**Nick Warren**

the rhizobia living in the nodules convert the nitrogen gas in the air into a form that the legume can use—a process known as nitrogen fixation. Because of this mutually beneficial relationship with rhizobia, legumes are essentially able to “create” their own fertilizer. This means that most legumes can grow well in soils that are relatively poor in nitrogen. It also means that the roots, stems, leaves, and reproductive structures of legumes contain high quantities of nitrogen-rich compounds, such as protein, and over time, their growth can increase the amount of nitrogen in the soil that is available to other plants growing

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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

nearby. It is perhaps no surprise then that many of our most important agricultural crops are legumes. These run the gamut from food crops such as peanuts, beans, and peas; feed grains such as soybeans; and cover crops such as hairy vetch, whose primary purpose is to act as nitrogen-rich green manure. And of course, many of our most important forage crops are legumes.

Forage legumes can be critical to the success of organic dairy operations. Not only are they a palatable and nutritious component of most dairy diets, as explained in the recent NODPA article by Andre Brito and colleagues (Brito et al., 2020), forage legumes can also be key to maximizing overall forage yield in pastures and hayfields, optimizing forage quality and energy and protein levels to improve milk yield and milk fat and protein components, and to successfully implementing high-forage diets to capitalize on “grass-fed” and other specialty milk markets. Unfortunately, forage legumes can be difficult to establish and once established to keep around. This is particularly the case in pastures and hayfields with adequate soil nitrogen and when legumes are grown in mixtures with other competitive forage species such as grasses. In addition, pasture management can be considered a stress from a forage’s point of view, and frequent defoliation and grazing can reduce legume vigor and overwinter survival. And because forage legumes are often harvested or grazed before they can reseed, they tend not to regenerate naturally. Consequently, many dairy farmers in the Northeast and elsewhere report significant challenges in maintaining their desired proportions of legumes in their pastures or hayfield swards.

### Our UNH field study to investigate forage legume responses to harvest management

At the University of New Hampshire (UNH), we are conducting research to better understand how forage harvest practices influence the productivity and persistence of different forage legumes. This work is part of a USDA NIFA grant to evaluate the productivity and quality of grass-legume mixtures. While the complementary effects of pairing grasses and legumes has been well established—grass-legume mixtures often have higher total productivity and nutritional quality than monocultures of either grasses or legumes alone—we’re especially interested in learning how harvest management affects these mixtures over time. Specifically, we are interested in how the frequency and height of cutting influence the performance and persistence of the legume and grass components of the mixture. Currently, we are focusing on just four species of perennial forage legumes: alfalfa, white clover, red clover, and birdsfoot trefoil; however, we will likely be expanding that list soon to include additional species. Why? Because each species of forage legume will likely differ in their requirements for successful establishment; response to

harvesting; nutritional attributes; tolerance to local climate, soils, and pests; and competitive abilities. So, simply put, it’s good to have options when it comes to forages. Birdsfoot trefoil, for example, has several forage qualities that are complementary to alfalfa – low risk of bloat, higher tolerance to flooding, and production of condensed tannins. Some forage legumes may have advantages while others may have drawbacks; therefore, the more we know about the wide variety of forage legumes that are currently available, the more helpful we can be to dairy farmers looking to implement specific forage legumes into their dairy systems.

The results described below come from a field experiment that was established at the UNH Kingman Research Farm in the fall of 2018. The data come from the 2019 growing season. Interestingly, we had attempted to establish the same study at a different site the prior fall; however, by the subsequent spring it was clear that the legumes had failed to establish properly, likely due to the unfavorable weather we experienced during that period, illustrating just what a challenge establishment can

*continued on page 6*

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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

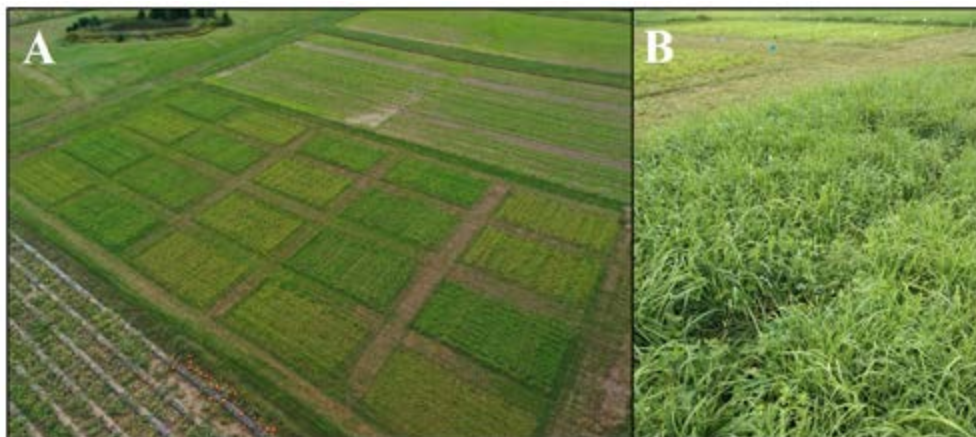
## Managing Forage Legumes for Improved Productivity and Persistence

*continued from page 5*

be sometimes. Nevertheless, we have our first full growing season of data to share with you. Keep in mind that a single season of data cannot tell us too much about persistence over time. We expect that the data we will continue to collect this season and the next will be very illuminating in that regard. That said, we think these preliminary data are quite interesting and suggestive of some general trends associated with harvest practices that might be useful for farmers to investigate in their own systems. Here is what we did and what we are seeing.

### Study methodology

This is a relatively large and complicated experiment to manage, with many plots, each featuring a specific perennial forage legume mixed with a perennial forage grass, with specific harvest schedules and harvest heights. This overhead photo shows the entire experimental area after a midsummer harvest (**Figure 1A**), while the close-up photo shows two individual plots side-by-side that are just about ready for harvest (**Figure 1B**). Plots received a compost application in the summer and then were seeded in early September of 2018. Each plot was planted with one of four legumes in combination with a grass. The proportion of seeds sown in each plot was 70% legume seed and 30% orchardgrass seed, and the specific cultivars of each legume were '406AP2' (alfalfa), 'Alice' (white clover), 'Freedom' (red clover), and 'Bruce' (birdsfoot trefoil). The orchardgrass cultivar 'Latar' was used as the companion grass in all plots. No other amendments, fertilizers, or pesticides were applied. There was good germination and overwinter survival despite region-wide issues with winterkill. We initiated the cutting frequency and height treatments in the spring of 2019 using a plot-scale forage harvester that could be set to variable cutting heights (**Figure 2**). The 3X frequency treatment involved harvesting each plot a total of 3 times over the growing season, beginning June 3 and ending October 15. In this treatment



**Figure 1. A)** Aerial photo of the experimental plots at the UNH Kingman Research Farm in Madbury, NH. Each large block is made up of six individual plots containing different legume-orchardgrass mixtures, each receiving a specific harvest frequency and cutting height treatment. Aerial photo courtesy of Alena Warren. **B)** Close-up photo of individual plots prior to a harvest. Note plots in the background are on a different harvest schedule and have recently been cut. (Photo credit: Nick Warren)



**Figure 2.** UNH's forage plot harvester used for harvest frequency and cutting height treatments.

there was a relatively long interval and recovery time between each harvest. In contrast, the 5X frequency treatment involved harvesting each plot a total of five times over the season, also beginning on June 3 and ending October 15, creating a shorter interval and recovery period (30 days) between cuts. In addition to harvest frequency, plots were also assigned to a cutting height treatment. At the time of harvest, plots were cut to a height of either 5 cm (2 inches) or 10 cm (4 inches). These two fundamental management decisions, cutting height and frequency, may be useful approaches to maintaining healthy

## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

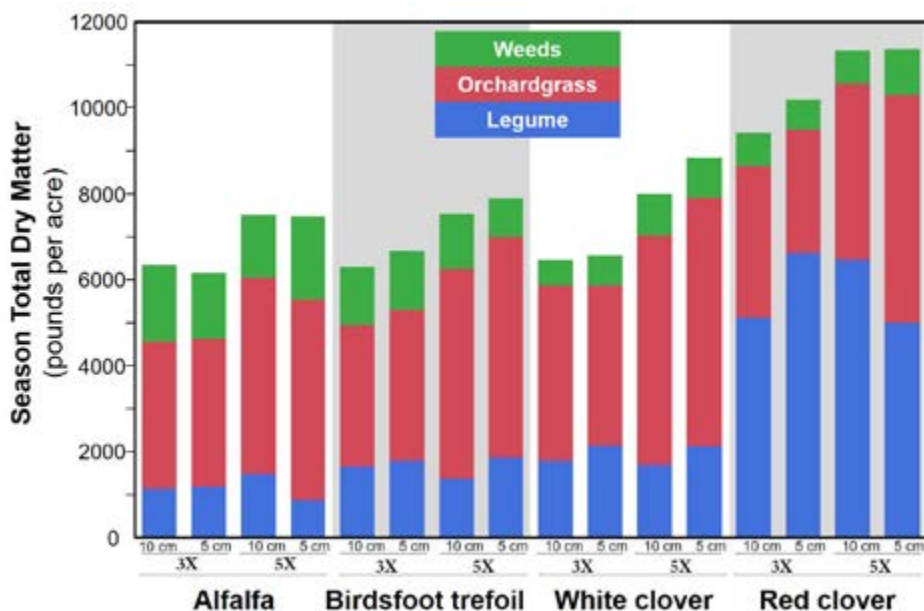
legume populations, but are likely to affect each species differently. The data below showing the response of each of the legumes and orchardgrass to the cutting frequency and height treatments are means of five replicate plots receiving that specific combination of treatments.

### Preliminary results and observations

So, what did we observe over the 2019 field season? First, overall, red clover was much more productive compared to white clover, birdsfoot trefoil, or alfalfa, which seemed to do particularly poorly (**Figure 3**). In fact, red clover often made up more than 50% of the total forage dry matter regardless of the cutting frequency or height treatment, while the proportion of the other legumes was always substantially less. Keep in mind, however, that we had a particularly hard winter in 2018/19 and reports across the region indicated that alfalfa stands were especially hard hit in some areas. Therefore, the low productivity of alfalfa in our study may be an anomaly. Similarly, we've had trouble establishing robust stands of birdsfoot trefoil in the past, so its growth in this study may not be indicative of its true potential elsewhere.

The second key takeaway from this first season of the study was that harvest frequency had a greater impact on total forage production (total amount of forage dry matter produced over the season) than did cutting height. Specifically, there was greater total forage yield in the 5X compared to the 3X treatment and this was apparent regardless of which legume was included in the mixture (**Figure 3**). Importantly, most of this difference in total dry matter production was due to the abundance of the orchardgrass component of the mixture, which was on average 40% greater in the 5X treatment. In other words, the orchardgrass was much more responsive to the cutting frequency than were any of the four legume species.

Finally, we observed that the proportion of legumes in each mixture varied over the course of the season



**Figure 3.** Season-total forage dry matter yields in 2019 by component (legume, orchardgrass, and weeds) for each of the four legumes. Harvest frequencies were three (3X) and five (5X) harvests per season. At each harvest, forages were cut to either 10 cm (2 inches) or 5 cm (4 inches). Note that winter annual weeds made up a substantial portion of the dry matter in the first harvest only. Subsequent harvests contained only minimal weeds.

# THIS MARK MATTERS.

DFA Northeast is pleased to provide continued support to NODPA and organic farms.

## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

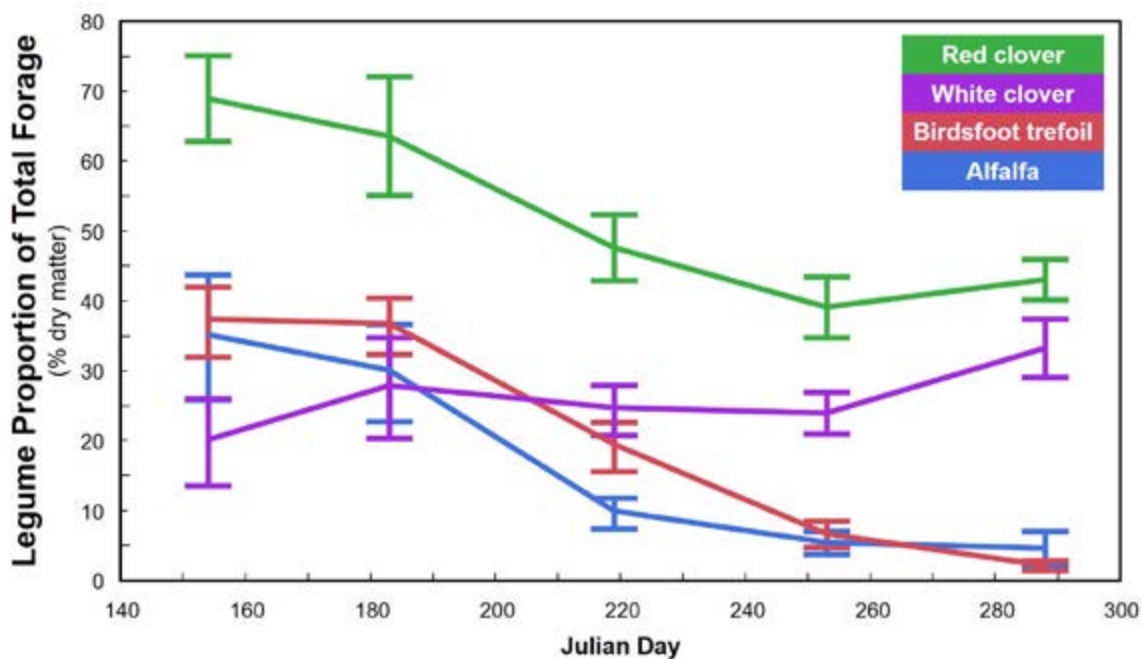
## Managing Forage Legumes for Improved Productivity and Persistence

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and the trends were species-specific. This was particularly apparent in the 5X cutting treatment (Figure 4). For example, the proportion of red clover was nearly 70% of the total dry matter at the first harvest, just over 40% at the fourth harvest, and a little higher than that at the fifth and final harvest of the season. In contrast, both alfalfa and birdsfoot trefoil made up just over 35% of the total dry matter at the first harvest but not more than 5% by the final harvest. White clover, on the other hand, exhibited an altogether different trend. White clover made up a meager 20% of the total dry matter at the first harvest; however, by the final harvest it had increased to well over 30%.

### Take home message

Many organic dairies rely on forage legumes for their success; however, legumes can be difficult to maintain in certain pasture and hayfield situations. Our preliminary data suggest that harvest intensity can be an important factor in managing legume populations. Keep in mind that these data come from a single year and a single site and therefore may not be reflective of patterns observed elsewhere. Also keep in mind that we utilized a single companion grass (orchard grass) and that for each of the legume species we investigated a single cultivar. Other legume cultivars or grass-legume mixtures may be expected to perform differently. We expect to learn much more over this coming growing season and into the future regarding how management intensity, cutting height,



**Figure 4.** Proportion of legumes in the harvested dry matter at each harvest in 2019 in the 5X treatments (means  $\pm$  SE). Note that data are averaged across the two cutting height treatments.

and other variables influence the dynamics and persistence of these and other perennial forage legume species. Stay tuned for future updates! ♦

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Brito, A.F., Lange, M.J., and Silva, L.H.P. 2020. The key role of forage legumes in organic dairy diets: effects on your bottom line. NODPA News. Available at <https://nodpa.com/n/945/The-Key-Role-of-Forage-Legumes-in-Organic-Dairy-Diets-Effects-on-Your-Bottom-Line>

Rich Smith, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Agricultural Ecology, Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824. He can be reached at: office phone (603) 862-2724; email: [richard.smith@unh.edu](mailto:richard.smith@unh.edu)

Nick Warren is a Research Scientist and Graduate Student, Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824. He can be reached via email at [nicholas.warren@unh.edu](mailto:nicholas.warren@unh.edu)



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— Myron Martin



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He operates the 80 cow dairy with his wife Janet and associates Michael and Angela Busselberg, with emphasis on producing high quality, organic, grass-fed A2 milk. They feed all grass and hay and maintain a 150,000 SCC average. Myron gives some of the credit for milk quality to Udder Comfort.

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## National Organic Program: Strengthening Organic Enforcement

*Compiled by Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director*

Speaking at The Packer's Global Organic Produce Expo on January 10, 2020, Jennifer Tucker, Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Organic Program, said, "The Proposed Rule Strengthening Organic Enforcement (SOE) is expected to be published soon, and will have a 60-day comment period." Tucker summed up the purpose of the Proposed Rule with the following, "The goal is to transform the organic regulations to meet marketing needs," Tucker said. "We want to do very targeted actions that impact high-risk areas to increase accountability and visibility." A big part of the rule, she said, will be to allow fewer exemptions, which will increase the number of handler certifications.

Six months later the National Organic Program released the Proposed Rule in a draft form. At the time of this newsletter's publication, the full Proposed Rule has not been published on the Federal Register.

The USDA National Organic Program released the SOE Proposed Rule in draft form on July 8, 2020 as the organic community awaits publication of the rule in the Federal Register. The draft can be accessed at <https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/SOEProposedRule.pdf> and **the page numbers below refer to this draft**. Once published, organic stakeholders will have 60 days to provide comments on the proposed rule.

The National Organic Coalition (NOC) has committed to studying this rule and analyzing its effects on the organic community and the integrity of the organic seal. Below is the first in a series of six blog posts that NOC will publish in the coming weeks to provide information about the Proposed Rule. (Future blog posts can be found at <https://www.nationalorganiccoalition.org/>)

### National Organic Coalition (NOC) Blog Post

The SOE proposed rule will update and modernize the organic regulations to strengthen oversight and enforcement and reduce fraud in the organic marketplace. Additionally, the SOE proposed rule will implement provisions from the 2018 Farm Bill, as well as multiple recommendations from the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). The regulation is needed as organic sales have risen to more than \$55 billion annually in the U.S. and as supply chains have become more complex, with many uncertified entities handling organic products, and thus increasing the potential for fraud due to lack of direct oversight from the USDA National Organic Program.

### Provisions Included in the Proposed Rule

The proposed rule will strengthen enforcement of the USDA organic regulations through several actions mandated by the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (the '2018 Farm Bill'):

1. Reduce the types of uncertified entities in the organic supply chain that operate without USDA oversight—including importers, brokers, and traders of organic products. This will safeguard organic product integrity and improve traceability. See pgs. 13-22 of the draft proposed rule.
  2. Require the use of NOP Import Certificates, or equivalent data, for all organic products entering the United States. This proposed change will expand the use of NOP Import Certificates to all organic products imported into the United States, improving the oversight and traceability of imported organic products. See pgs. 22-28 of the draft proposed rule.
  3. Clarify the NOP's authority to oversee certification activities, including the authority to act against an agent or office of a certifying agent. Additionally, certifying agents must notify the NOP upon opening a new office, which will allow the NOP to provide more effective and consistent oversight of certifying agents and their activities. See pgs. 48-50 of the draft proposed rule.
- Additionally, this proposed rule includes several discretionary actions that work in alignment with the provisions above to further strengthen enforcement of the USDA organic regulations:
4. Clarify the labeling of nonretail containers used to ship or store organic products. Requiring additional information on nonretail containers will clearly identify organic products, reduce the mishandling of organic products, and support traceability. This is needed to maximize the linkage between operation certificates and import certificates and the organic product. See pgs. 28-30 of the draft proposed rule.
  5. Specify the minimum number of unannounced inspections of certified operations that must be conducted annually by accredited certifying agents, and require that supply chain audits be completed during on-site inspections. See pgs. 31-33 of the draft proposed rule.
  6. Require certifying agents to issue standardized certificates of organic operation generated from the USDA's Organic Integrity Database (INTEGRITY) and to keep accurate and current certified operation data in INTEGRITY. Standardization will simplify the verification of valid organic certificates and import certificates. It will also reduce reporting, by eliminating the

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

need to provide notices of approval or denial of certification and annual lists of certified operations to USDA. See pgs. 33-37 and pgs. 39-40 of the draft proposed rule.

7. Clarify that certified operations only need to submit changes to their organic system plan during annual updates, and clarify that certifying agents must conduct annual inspections of certified operations. This will reduce paperwork burden for organic operations and ensure that all organic operations are inspected at least once a year. See pgs. 37-38 of the draft proposed rule.

8. Establish specific qualification and training requirements for certifying agent personnel, including inspectors and certification reviewers. Requiring that personnel meet minimum education and experience qualifications and requiring continuing education will ensure quality and consistency of certification activities performed by certifying agents. See pgs. 40-48 of the draft proposed rule.

9. Clarify conditions for establishing, evaluating, and terminating equivalence determinations with foreign government organic programs, based on an evaluation of their organic foreign conformity systems. This will ensure the compliance of organic products imported from countries that have organic equivalence determinations with the United States. See pgs. 50-54 of the draft proposed rule.

10. Clarify requirements to strengthen and streamline enforcement processes, specifically noting that the NOP may initiate enforcement action against any violator of the OFPA, including responsible parties; defining the term "adverse action" to clarify what actions may be appealed and by whom; and clarifying NOP's appeal procedures and options for alternative dispute resolution. See pgs. 55-62 of the draft proposed rule.

11. Specify certification requirements for grower group operations, to provide consistent, enforceable standards and ensure compliance with the USDA organic regulations. Grower group certification would be restricted to crop production and handling only, and would require the use of an internal control

system to monitor compliance. See pgs. 63-72 of the draft proposed rule.

12. Clarify the method of calculating the percentage of organic ingredients in a multi-ingredient product to promote consistent interpretation and application of the regulation. See pgs. 54 and 72-73 of the draft proposed rule.

*continued on page 12*



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

# National Organic Program: Strengthening Organic Enforcement

*continued from page 11*

13. Require certified operations and certifying agents to develop improved record keeping, organic fraud prevention, and trace-back audit processes. Information sharing between certifying agents and documented organic fraud prevention procedures are also required. See pgs. 74-81 of the draft proposed rule.

The USDA National Organic Program provided 38 min informational webinar describing the provisions in the SOE proposed rule: Recording, Slides and Chat

NOC Members and Network Affiliates are invited to participate in a discussion and conversation about the proposed rule on Tuesday, September 1 from 2:30 to 4: 30 pm eastern. Register here: <https://www.nationalorganiccoalition.org/events>

### Information on Sending in Comments

You may send comments on this proposed rule to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov/>. You can access this proposed rule and instructions for submitting public comments by searching for document number, AMS-NOP-17-0065. Comments may also be sent to Jennifer Tucker, Deputy Administrator, National Organic Program, USDA-AMS-NOP, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Room 2642-So., Ag Stop 0268, Washington, DC 20250-0268; (202) 260-9151 (Fax).

Instructions: All comments received must include the docket number AMS-NOP-17-0065; NOP-17-02, and/or Regulatory Information Number (RIN) 0581-AD09 for this rulemaking. You should clearly indicate the topic and section number of this proposed rule to which your comment refers, state your position(s), offer any recommended language change(s), and include relevant information and data to support your position(s) (e.g., scientific, environmental, manufacturing, industry, or industry impact USDA-AMS-NOP2 information, etc.).

All comments and relevant background documents posted to <https://www.regulations.gov> will include any personal information provided. In addition to the questions following each topic in the Overview of Proposed Amendments section of this proposed rule, AMS is requesting comments on the following general topics:

1. The clarity of the proposed requirements. Can certified operations, handlers, and certifying agents readily determine how to comply with the proposed regulations?
2. The implementation timeframe. AMS is proposing that all requirements in this proposed rule be implemented within ten months of the effective date of the final rule (this is also one year after publication of the final rule).
3. The accuracy of the estimates in the Regulatory Impact Analysis and Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, which describe the expected costs of this proposed rule on all affected entities and on small businesses, respectively.
4. Are there alternatives to regulations, or less stringent requirements, that could achieve the same objectives as this proposed rule?
5. How will certifying agents cover the costs of additional actions required under this rule, such as the required unannounced inspections and the issuing of NOP Import Certificates? Will certifying agents charge fees that are consistent for expanded handlers, brokers, importers and exporters?

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Tucker, Ph.D., Deputy Administrator, National Organic Program. Telephone: 202-720-3252. Email: [Jennifer.Tucker@usda.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Tucker@usda.gov) ♦



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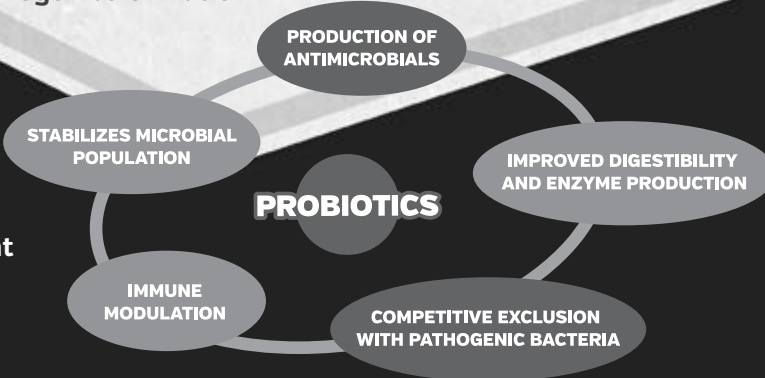
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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Pay And Feed Prices July/August 2020

By Ed Maltby,  
NODPA Executive  
Director

**T**here has been no recent

independent data from the USDA AMS on retail sales of organic milk, and no way of estimating the strength or weakness of the organic market at this critical time. The most recent figures published were for December 2019, which showed continued growth in Whole Milk (WM) sales at about 6.2% year-over-year, and a decrease in the Reduced Fat

Milk (RFM) category of 5.1% over 2018, but with 2% RFM increasing sales by 2.6% year over year compared with 2018. December 2019 data were more positive in comparison with December 2018 with a 9.9% and 9.6% increase in sales of WM and 2% RFM, respectively, and a 5.7% increase in total organic milk products. In the absence of national data on sales from USDA AMS, there is the Northeast Federal Milk Marketing Order 1 (FMMO) which publishes utilization of organic milk in that area. The Northeast FMO 1 has the largest utilization of Class 1 milk in the US, nearly double the second highest Marketing Order, so is a good indication of organic retail sales nationally. In June 2020, Whole Milk (WM) utilization was down 15% over June 2019 with Reduced Fat Milk (RFM) dropping by 4%. In February, WM was up 7% and RFM was down 13%. Total utilization of organic milk in June 2020 was down 9% compared with June 2019. Year to date utilization of organic milk in the

Estimated Total U.S. sales of organic fluid milk products -December 2019				
Product Name	Sales		Change from:	
	December	Year to Date	Previous Year (2018)	Year to Date (2019)
	<i>(million pounds)</i>		<i>(percent)</i>	
Organic Production Practice				
Whole Milk	103	1,127	9.9	6.2
Reduced Fat Milk (2%)	77	849	9.6	2.6
Low Fat Milk (1%)	26	324	-13.5	-13.5
Fat Free Milk (Skim)	18	190	-8.6	-16.8
Flavored Fat-Reduced Milk	9	90	41.5	-9.8
Other Fluid Milk products	0	1	-60.6	-36.2
Total Fat Reduced Milk	128	1,453	2.9	-5.1
Total Organic Milk Products	232	2,581	5.7	-0.5

### Dairy Margin Coverage Program 2020

Month	Corn (\$/bu)	Blended Alfalfa Hay (\$/ton)	Soybean Meal (\$/ton)	All Milk (\$/cwt)	Final Feed Costs for DMC(\$/cwt)	Milk Margin Above Feed Costs for DMC(\$/cwt)
January	3.79	190.5	300.11	19.6	8.88	10.72
February	3.78	190.5	295.28	18.9	8.84	10.06
March	3.68	190	312.38	18	8.85	9.15
April	3.29	195	295.39	14.4	8.37	6.03
May	3.2	195	288.56	13.6	8.23	5.37

Northeast is down 10%. The reasons behind these figures can only be conjecture as they represent two very different social and economic situations, but the bottom line is that less organic milk is being utilized in the Northeast at this time.

The conventional market continues its erratic pandemic course. In the 6 months from November 2019 to April 2020, the national average All Milk Price dropped \$6.60. There has been a rapidly rising price and a very large spread between Classes III and IV, and this will cause the largest negative Producer Price Differential (PPD) that we have ever seen under the Federal Orders, and which may stretch into the fall. A negative producer price differential reduces the mailbox milk price which could result in a loss to producers of up to \$5 per hundred pounds. Cow numbers are down with no increase in milk production. Block cheese prices hit a high of over \$3 and are now in the mid \$2.50 range. Those that



## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

invested in margin insurance will see payments with a margin in May 2020 of \$5.37.

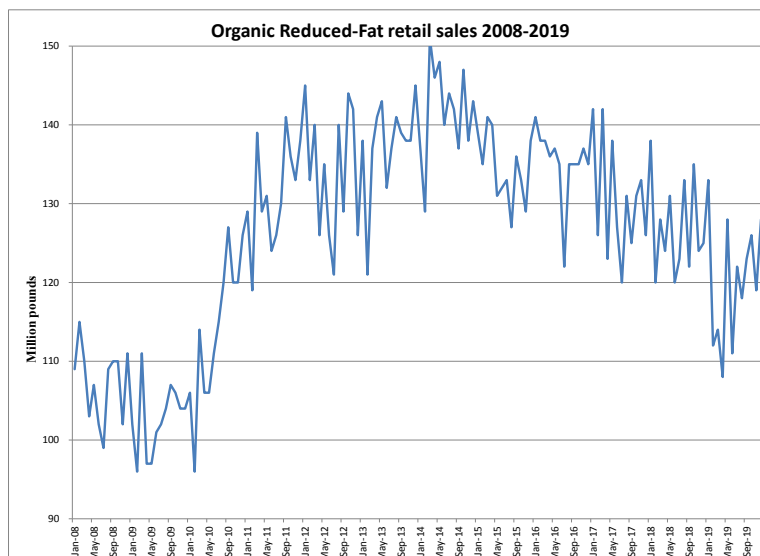
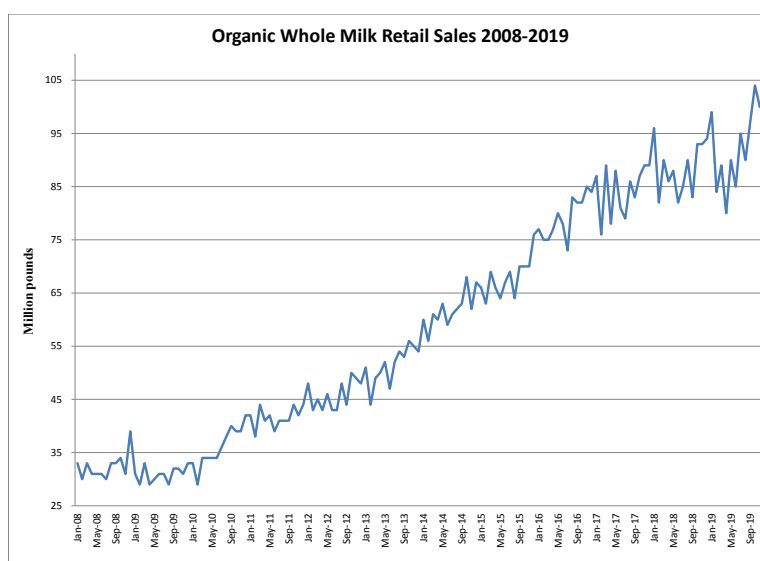
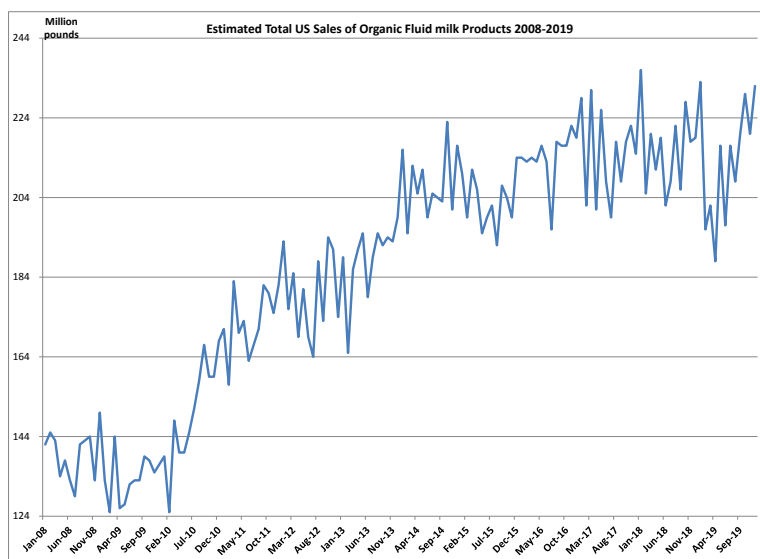
All in all, no one is happy in either the conventional or organic market, although the organic pay price has been static, stable and low. Most producers are surviving with a below cost pay price which, if it continues, will suck all of the equity out of the business. A handful of producers are heading to the grass fed market, hoping for a better outcome there but with fewer options and the complicated requirements of managing production and rations.

Danone continues to use a handler in Iowa, Kalona Farms, for their producer relations management. They continue to charge farmers for hauling at \$0.30 per hundred pounds, bundling the premiums together to make it more difficult to achieve (so you have to have all of them perfect to get ANY quality premium), and are charging back to the farms \$.30/cwt to cover the fees that the Coops charge them for inspections/testing. They are allowing a select number of producers to increase production.

Byrne Dairy is reported to be negotiating with groups of producers who are dissatisfied with their current pay price and conditions. Byrne Dairy is reported as charging producers \$1 per hundred for trucking but being easier on PI counts.

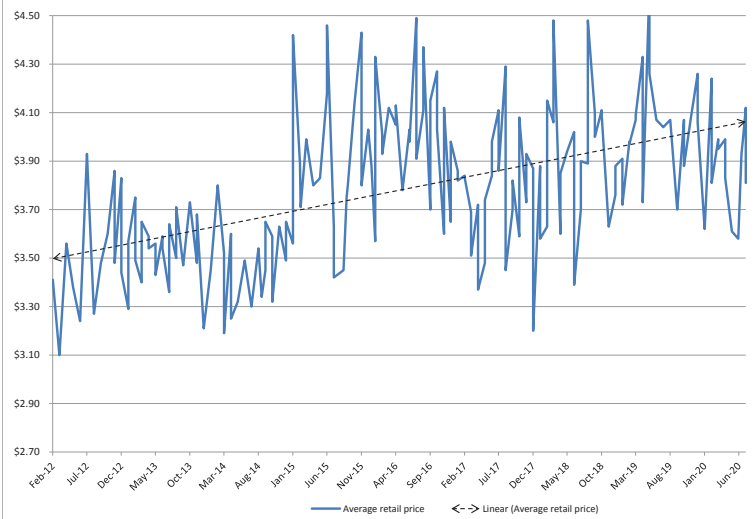
Many producers are reporting increasing confidence in the performance of CROPP Cooperative under the leadership of the new CEO, Bob Kirchoff. It is reported that leadership is making a bona fide effort at improving communications and transparency with the members, with a creative and skilled management team that reflects the need for a high level of business skills in an increasingly competitive market place. Reports are that the Coop has gotten a good “lift” from COVID driven demand, experiencing a profitable quarter for the first time in years. Among some changes on the supply side: CROPP has tentatively reduced the over-quota deduction to \$10/cwt from \$20/cwt, something that could revert back on very short notice. The CROPP Board now has the discretion to set the return on member investment between 4% and 8% annually,

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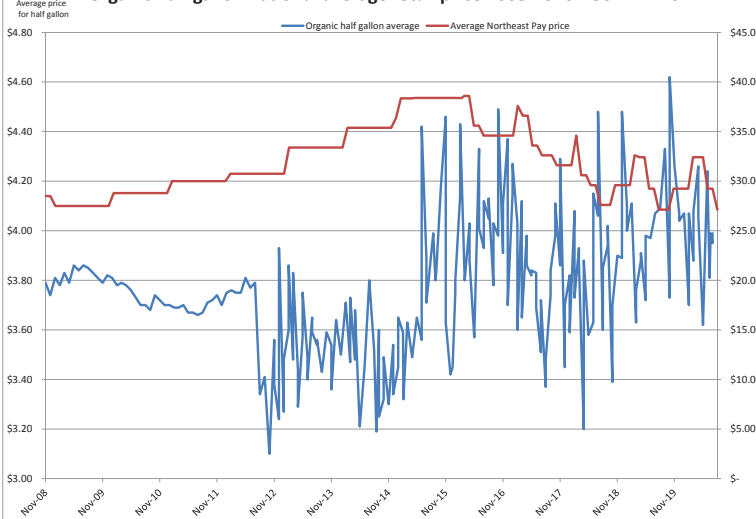


## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

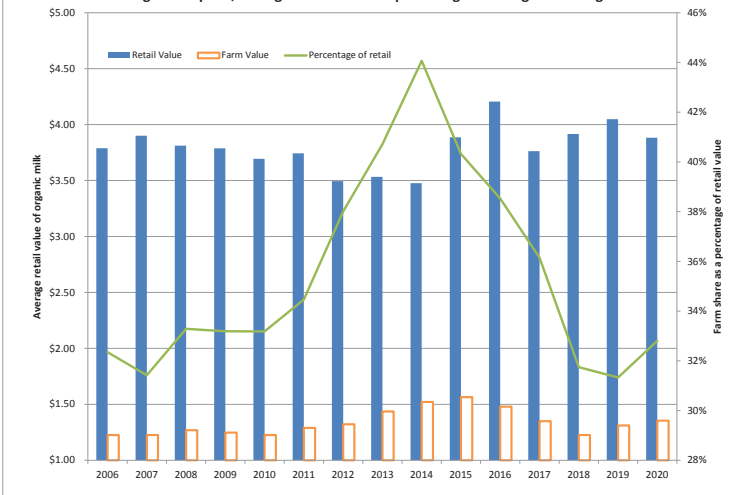
Average Organic Retail price for 1/2 gallons as reported by USDA AMS



Organic half gallon national average retail price 2008-2020 - USDA AMS



Average retail price, average farm share and percentage for half gallon of organic milk



## Pay And Feed Prices

*continued from page 15*

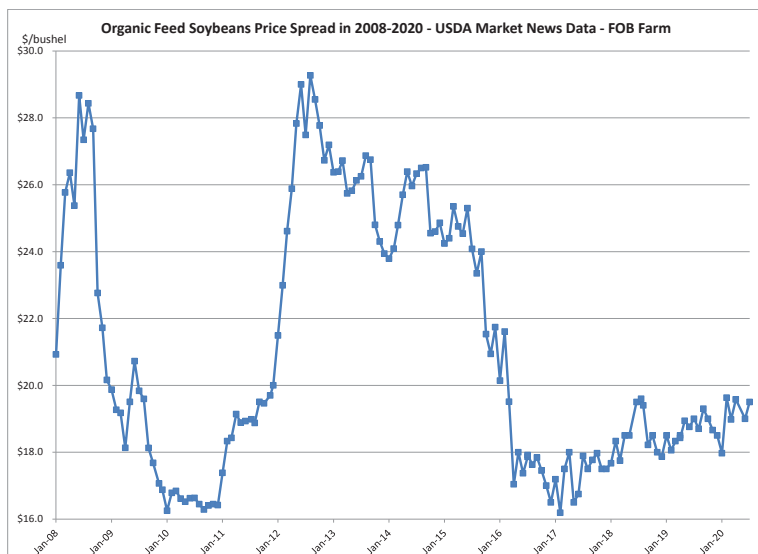
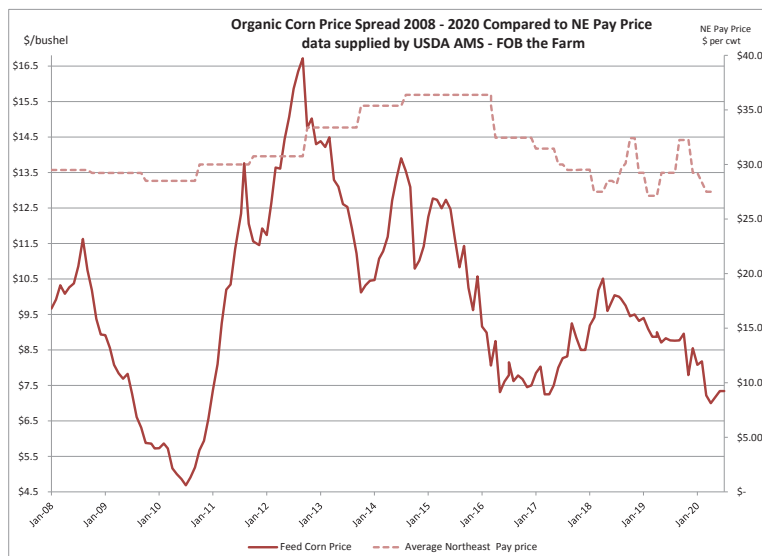
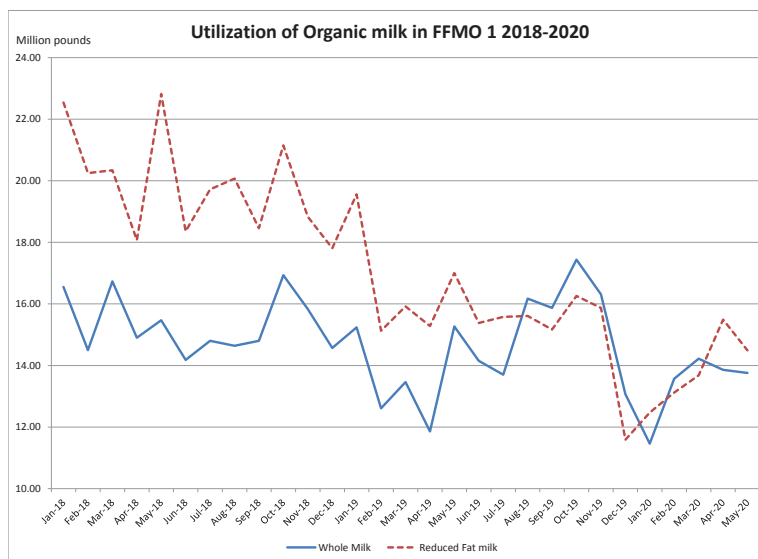
rather than the guaranteed 8% return that producer owners long enjoyed on that investment.

On May 19th, the USDA announced details of direct payments to producers under the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). USDA confirmed that beginning May 26, 2020, the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has been accepting applications from farmers whose commodity qualifies. USDA has decided that all of dairy as a commodity has had a 5 percent loss calculation and all dairy farmers, organic and conventional, qualify for the payment. There is no need to prove any personal loss. The cut-off date is August 28th 2020. A single payment will be made based on a producer's certification of milk production for the first quarter of calendar year 2020 multiplied by \$4.71 per hundred weight. The second part of the payment is based on a national adjustment to each producer's production in the first quarter multiplied by \$1.47 per hundred weight, for a total payment of \$6.18 per hundred pounds. The first payment will be 80% = \$4.94 per hundred pounds. As of June 3rd USDA has paid out \$545 million in payments via the Coronavirus Food Distribution Program (CFAP), far below the eventual \$16 billion in payments when totally completed. When the signup for payments started May 26th, USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue said payouts would likely be made to farmers within seven to 10 days of a producer's application acceptance. Of the payments, \$140.3 million have been made for non-specialty crops (corn, soybeans, etc.), \$8.4 million in specialty crops, \$267.8 million for livestock and \$128.6 million for dairy. The program is designed to cover as many areas of production as possible, but, despite advocacy efforts, there is no provision for seasonal dairies and spring calving herds who are at their lowest level of production in the first quarter of the year. Perhaps some of the future payments will take into account these producers and other farmers that have mixed cropping. The issues are definitely in front of the decision makers at USDA.

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

The devastating and sad story of Trickling Spring is coming to a close with Philip Riehl, an accountant and the majority owner of Trickling Springs Creamery, admitting he ran a long-running Ponzi scheme that preyed on hundreds of Amish and Mennonite investors. He pleaded guilty in February to securities and wire fraud and conspiracy, and was sentenced on 7/23/2020 to 10 years in federal prison. Chambersburg-based Trickling Springs Creamery opened in 2001 and produced milk, cream, butter, ice cream, yogurt and cheese. The dairy's products were sold up and down the East Coast. Court documents said Riehl lured investors to a fund that made most of its loans to Trickling Springs and paid off older investors with money from new investors. He and a co-conspirator also sold promissory notes in an effort to prop up the struggling creamery, lying to investors that it was profitable when in reality it was losing money, according to court documents. The business abruptly closed its doors last fall. Associated Press reported this written comment from U.S. Attorney William McSwain "The people who invested their money, sometimes their entire life's savings, with Philip Riehl believed implicitly that they could trust him because he was one of their own. Riehl preyed upon that trust, swindling them out of tens of millions of dollars in an effort to keep his creamery business from going under." A federal judge ordered Riehl to pay restitution, though authorities acknowledged that Riehl's victims won't be made whole.

Trade activity on organic corn and soybeans has been light as demand has slowed with the closure of meat packing plants. Slaughter of organic poultry and beef has been slowed down with the closure of the slaughter and packing plants, and demand for organic grain has been affected by retention of animals and lack of space to rear replacements. The consequences of the COVID 19 pandemic will also affect the level of imports. Prices have remained stable at \$7 per bushel for organic corn and \$19 per bushel for organic soybeans for feed. Soybean meal prices are also on the rise, moving north of the \$800 per ton level with transactions for the third quarter. ♦





## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## COVID 19 Causes the Postponement of the 20th Annual NODPA Field Days

*continued from page 1*

and Representatives have determined that it is not a safe time to bring together a geographically age-diverse group of farmers and farm families, trade show representatives, presenters, sponsors and supporters in order to hold the 20th Annual NODPA Field Days in Maine. “However, since we remain committed to delivering an educational program, we are working on a hybrid program that will be both in print, in a **special 20th Annual NODPA Field Days Supplement in the September NODPA News**, and on the NODPA website. While many organizations are opting for an online, virtual, and sometimes live, conference formats, we recognize that our members and Field Day participants are not all electronically connected, so this hybrid format will be accessible for everyone,” said Liz Bawden, NODPA Board Co-President.

When the September NODPA News arrives in your mailbox, you will find the NODPA Field Days Supplement which will be ‘almost’ as good as attending in person because there will be educational sessions that can be read or watched online. Although we are still working out the technological details, these are the educational workshops that are coming together:

- *Dairy Forage Mixtures, The Effects on Your Bottom Line*

Dr. Andre Brito, Associate Professor of Dairy Cattle Nutrition & Management at the University of New Hampshire, is running a USDA-NIFA-ORG funded project focused on forage mixtures in collaboration with University of Vermont. He will share research results of different legume-grass mixtures in terms of yield and forage quality, as well as the impact of mixtures harvested as baleage on milk production, milk composition, and methane emissions in organic dairy cows during the winter season. Dr. Brito will also focus on the importance of legumes in pastures and hayfields to improve animal productivity. Please join Dr. Brito and Rick Kersbergen to learn more about how these research results can be best implemented to improve your organic dairy nutrition management.



**Andre Brito**

- *Organic Dairy Farming and Family Life: Starting a family and an organic dairy farm during challenging times for the industry*

Panel discussion with Caitlin Frame and Andy Smith, The Milkhouse, Monmouth, ME, Katia and Brendan Holmes, Misty Brook Farm, Albion, ME, and Conor and Alexis McDonald, Bo Lait Farm, Washington, ME (invited)



**Milkhouse Farm, Maine**



**Misty Brook Farm, Maine**



**Bo Lait Farm, Maine**

At a time when many are choosing to leave organic dairy farming, these three young families will share about their farms and families, and will discuss the benefits and challenges of growing their businesses when prices are low. They will describe how they are creatively meeting the challenges and raising young families.

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

- *Farmer to Farmer: Practical Solutions for Managing the Organic Herd*



**Kathie Arnold**



**Liz Bawden**

Kathie Arnold,  
Twin Oaks Dairy, Truxton, NY,

Liz Bawden,  
Bawden Farms, Hammond, NY,

Jacki Perkins,  
MOFGA Dairy Specialist, Unity,  
ME and more invited

This wildly popular session from the 19th Annual NODPA Field Days, which went over its time slot by almost an hour, returns with new information, tips and recommendations on improving cow and calf care at your farm. In addition to sharing a wealth of information, Kathie, Jacki, and Liz, and other invited presenters will anticipate questions that you may want to ask.



**Jacki Perkins**

- *Keynote Presentation: What are the long term ramifications of the Coronavirus Pandemic on US agriculture?*



**Simon Alexander**

Simon Alexander, DVM, Exeter Veterinary Services, Exeter, Maine, will share his scientific knowledge and insights into this pandemic, and how the future may look.

- *What's happening in Washington?*

Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, will provide updates on the USDA, policy and politics in Washington DC.

- *Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture and the Environment: OpenTEAM, or Open Technology Ecosystem for Agricultural Management, is a farmer-driven, interoperable platform to provide farmers around the world with the best possible knowledge to improve soil health.*



**Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture and the Environment**

Dave Herring, WNC Executive Director, will spotlight the OpenTEAM collaboration that is headquartered at Wolfe's Neck Center. OpenTEAM is a collaborative community of farmers, scientists and researchers, engineers, farm service providers, and food companies that are committed to improving soil health and advancing agriculture's ability to become a solution to climate change.



**Dave Herring**

- *COVID Check-in: How are we all doing?*

We will check in with a variety of members in the organic dairy industry to learn how their lives and businesses have changed due to the pandemic. Farmers and their families, service providers-Vets, processors, milk truck drivers, feed dealers, Cooperative Extension and more, will share their stories of how life has changed, or not, as a result of the pandemic that touches all of our lives.

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## COVID 19 Causes the Postponement of the 20th Annual NODPA Field Days

*continued from page 19*

We've heard from many producers that the one meeting that they will really miss is the early morning Producer-Only session which is open only to producers and offers everyone the opportunity to speak their minds


without any worries or fears of retaliation. While we can't meet in person, we are planning a **Producer-Only Conference Call in early October**, and we will provide all of the details for a secure call in the September NODPA Field Days Supplement, so please keep an eye out for it!

The NODPA Field Days will be different this year, no doubt about it, but we hope that it will be educational and help





**Producers meeting**

everyone feel a bit more connected to each other when the September NODPA News, with the Field Days Supplement, arrives. Sponsors and Supporters are invited to advertise in this section. For more information, email or call Nora Owens, Field Days Coordinator, at [noraowens@comcast.net](mailto:noraowens@comcast.net), or 413-772-0444. Your support for NODPA and this special edition will be greatly appreciated. ♦



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See page 31 for details.



**NODPA News**

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance



## NET UPDATE

## Recent ODairy Discussions

By Liz Bawden, Organic Dairy Farmer, NODPA President

A producer wanted to test his recently harvested baleage and asked how long to leave it before testing. Most producers responded that it was best to leave the wrapped bales to “pickle” for at least 30 days before taking samples. It was recommended to take the samples early in the week, bag the sample in a small plastic bag and freeze immediately, and get them off to the lab quickly so they arrive to be tested in the same week. Two labs that were recommended were Dairy One and Agri-analysis. A producer recommended the Delhurst moisture meter if you are unsure of the moisture before baling and wrapping.

Having an issue with ringworm in heifers, one farmer asked the group about effective treatments. Several farmers noted that this fungal disease is an opportunist, waiting for a time when young stock are more vulnerable. Ringworm tends to show up “when there are other things depressing the immune system or at the end of winter after months of little sun and being fed the lesser quality hay.” It was suggested that the farmer look at his mineral package to make sure they are getting enough, especially Vitamins A,D,E, and Selenium. Other farmers added that they recognized the situation will resolve itself as the spring moves on and these young cattle are outside with plenty of sunshine and pasture. Some farmers reported treating it by wiping on apple cider vinegar. One farmer treated herself with it when she had a spot of ringworm contracted from a cow. She said “it hurt like the dickens, but it did clear up pretty fast”. Another reported using tea tree oil or an iodine paste. To prevent ringworm and lice, another farmer feeds kelp along with a chelated trace mineral product.

A few days after a normal calving, a Jersey cow flared up with mastitis. There was no improvement after “three days of Dr. Pauls treatment of colostrum whey, CEG and aloe C, which all have worked in the past. Have done two treatments of an ABC

tube in the udder as well.” The affected quarter was still rock hard. One vet laid out his general treatment for a cow with any infection. Administer all by IV: 250ml Bovi-Sera, 250ml Vitamin C, 500ml dextrose with 60-90ml GetWell (you can also add 1cc/100lb flunixin, but there is an 8 day withholding). Follow up with 15-20ml Get Well orally 2 to 3 times a day. The IV combination may be repeated in 24 hours if needed. Another producer suggested that culturing the quarter would be the next step, so he would know what pathogen he was dealing with. It was reported that “many times infections around freshening occur either as a new infection when the natural or artificial plug dissolves within the last two weeks prior to freshening (and depending on environment the cow is lying in) or if there is a simmering former infection (shown by higher than normal SCC at dry off) which comes to a head while the fresh cow’s immune system is suppressed due to normal birthing activity.” Phyto-Mast was recommended to use at dry-off, and Amplimmune was recommended to boost immune function. IMPRO colostrum whey products (given by IV) were also recommended. Another farmer added, “I found aspirin, garlic tincture orally, and stripping out the quarter at least four times a day helps any mastitis but is especially important for environmental mastitis because as the bacteria cells die as the cows immune system attacks they secrete toxins. I didn’t use udder infusions for fear of introducing more bacteria into the udder but instead focused on getting the bad stuff out. We also had good luck with some homeopathic remedies if we matched up the symptoms with the remedy well enough.” ♦

### Subscribing to ODairy:

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

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Making Money in the Shade

By Brad Heins, Kirsten Sharpe, Eric Buchanan, and Mike Reese  
Originally appeared in *Hoard's Dairyman*, and reprinted with permission.

The agricultural industry relies on fossil-fuel in the production of food, feed, fiber, and energy. Electricity cools milk; fuel is burned in combines and tractors in grain fields; trucks bring goods to market; and nitrogen fertilizer nourishes plants. That makes agriculture captive to large and constant supplies of a wide range of fossil energy. Agriculture's dependence and thirst for fossil-fuel carries significant economic, environmental, and social risks for the nation and world.

### Utilizing the Sun

Agrivoltaics is one way producers might be able to become less dependent on fossil fuels. These dual-use solar installations could lower production costs, enhance land efficiency, improve forages and crops for use by dairy cattle, and bolster milk production and health in dairy cows. Using a groundmounted photovoltaic (PV) system in a dairy setting could give shade to dairy cows during extreme heat events and provide farmers with an alternative means of income.

The University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC) in Morris, Minn., has a dairy operation that



milks 275 cows twice daily and is representative of a mid-sized Minnesota dairy farm. The cows are split almost evenly between a conventional and a certified organic grazing herd. Through past investments and institutional experience in renewable energy and dairy production research, our team has a globally unique opportunity to lead a new green revolution — a revolution that creates energy currently consumed within the agricultural industry.

No previous research investigated the use of a ground-mounted solar system to provide shade for dairy cows and to determine the effects on dairy cows. Therefore, our team wanted to investigate the effects of shade from solar photovoltaic panels on the production, health, and behavior of pastured dairy cows.

During the summer of 2018, a 30-kilowatt ground-mounted solar system was installed in a pasture at the WCROC (see photo). The panels were mounted at 35 degrees south and 8 to 10 feet from the ground so that cows could not reach the panels.

The solar panels were Heliene panels using Solar Edge inverters and optimizers. They were installed by Zenergy. The extra cost for mounting the panels above the cows was minimal, and the total expense was about \$90,000.

The pastured dairy cow study was conducted from June 2019 through September 2019. Twenty-four crossbred dairy cows were assigned to one of two treatments: shade from solar PV or no shade. The no-shade cows did not have access to any shade on pasture.

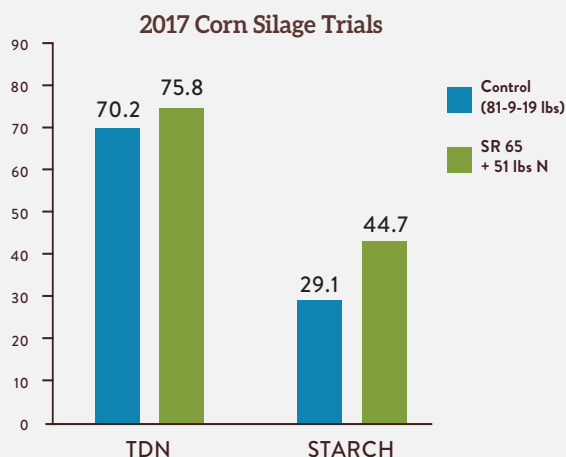
All cows had a CowManager ear tag sensor to record ruminating, eating, not active, and active behaviors for all cows. Also, a SmaXtec bolus was placed in the reticulum of the cow to record internal body temperature, as well as activity and drinking bouts of the cows. Daytime ambient high temperatures during the study ranged from 81°F to 93°F.

### Keeping Cows Cooler

The shade and no-shade cows were similar for behavioral measurements, and fly numbers on cows were also similar. The shaded cows had less overall high activity than did no-shade



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

cows because they were standing underneath the solar panels during the hot hours of the day. Daily drinking bouts were similar for all cows. Respiration rates for shade and no-shade cows were consistent during the morning hours, but in the afternoon, shaded cows had lower respiration rates (66 breaths per minute) than no-shade cows (78 breaths per minute).

Surprisingly, milk, fat, and protein production were not different for cows whether they had shade or no shade. Quite possibly, no difference was observed for production because cows were only under the shade for 28 days of the 175 days the cows grazed during the summer. Long-term effects of milk production may have been observed had cows been under the shade for the entire summer.

Hourly body temperature results show that no-shade cows had greater internal body temperatures (more than 1°F) than shade cows from 1 p.m. to 12 a.m. (see figure) Between milking times (10 a.m. to 8 p.m.), the shade cows had lower internal body temperatures than no-shade cows. All cows had similar body temperatures during the nighttime hours.

Based on the results of this study, cows may have sacrificed grazing time to stand in the protection of the shade. Future research with our solar panel will investigate the reproductive performance of the cows, plus long-term effects on milk, fat, and protein production, body weight, body condition, and animal health and well-being.

### A Smaller Footprint

Our study indicates that agrivoltaics may provide an acceptable method of heat abatement to pastured dairy cows, as well as generating electrical energy for farmers. This would reduce the carbon footprint of the dairy operation.

In the future, we will explore tracking systems for solar power on livestock farms, using solar panels as windbreaks for cattle, and evaluating crops and forages that will grow best under solar systems. Economic impacts of the agrivoltaic system and land productivity from solar farms will drive the adoption of solar photovoltaic systems on farm. ♦

*Brad Heins, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Dairy, Department of Animal Science, West Central Research and Outreach Center 46352 State Hwy 329 | Morris, MN 56267, [hein0106@umn.edu](mailto:hein0106@umn.edu), 320-589-1711 ext. 2118; Eric Buchanan, Scientist, Renewable Energy, West Central Research and Outreach Center, 46352 State Hwy 329, Morris, MN 56267; Michael Reese, Director, Renewable Energy, West Central Research and Outreach Center, 46352 State Hwy 329, Morris, MN 56267, [reesem@umn.edu](mailto:reesem@umn.edu)*



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## FEATURED FARM

### WOLFE'S NECK FARM, FREEPORT, ME

*continued from page 1*

and are as important as growing the actual crop and making a profitable living.

At Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture and the Environment, a 600 acre, certified organic and preserved coastal farm in Freeport, Maine, regenerative farming is literally their mission. This bustling non-profit educational farm continues the legacy of the Smith family, whose vision of farming began in 1950, when they established a beef operation to demonstrate how agriculture, ecology, community, historic preservation, land conservation and education could all play a part in sustainable farming.

Today, the Smith family legacy continues as the non-profit Wolfe's Neck Farm Foundation oversees the land and the farm enterprises. Through a host of on-site activities from public access hiking trails and grounds which are open daily; camping sites to farm camps; educational farm tours and workshops; and year-round vegetable growing to dairy farmer training: Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture and the Environment is promoting regenerative farming practices while engaging the public and staying true to the roots of the Smith family's goals.

It's not only about education for the general public. Training farmers in regenerative practices is another important part of the mission of Wolfe's Neck Center. Through on-farm research - including ongoing projects involving feeding seaweed to reduce methane emissions in cows, crop diversity for pasture-based livestock and the Open Technology Ecosystem for Agricultural Management (OpenTEAM) soil health digital platform and database - Wolfe's Neck Center is geared towards empowering farmers with the tools and knowledge to advance the practice of regenerative farming.

### Organic Dairy Farm

The Organic Dairy Research and Farmer Training Program at Wolfe's Neck Center has a special connection to the Smith Family. Farm Operations Manager Matthew DeGrandpre - who oversees the program in conjunction with Dairy Manager Brian Barber - has a family connection. His grandfather was the farm manager for the Smith family, and he grew up on the farm.

Wolfe's Neck Center's Organic Dairy Farmer Training Program is a member of the nationwide Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship (DGA). Both Brian and Matt are Master Dairy Graziers, allowing for four apprentices to train simultaneously. The program here - which is the first of its kind in the nation - is a two-year, residential apprenticeship. Under the DGA guidelines,



**Aerial photo of cows  
grazing at Wolfe's Neck  
Center for Agriculture  
and the Environment**



## FEATURED FARM



**Apprentices operate and maintain equipment**

apprentices receive almost 300 hours of online learning and instruction, combined with another 3,700 of employment and mentoring with a Master Dairy Grazier.

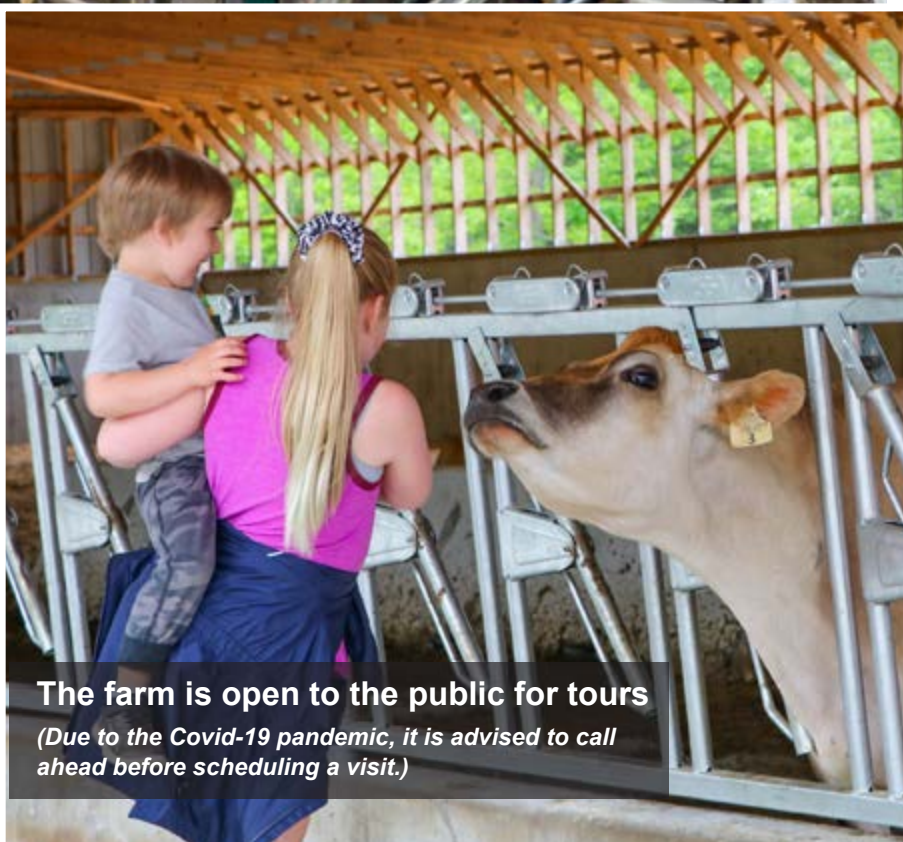
The purpose of the DGA program is to train new organic dairy farmers in all aspect of farm management. Crops, nutrition, breeding, milking, animal husbandry, natural resource conservation, business planning and profitability all figure into the equation. Although a non-profit organization oversees the dairy, it still needs to be a profitable venture, and apprentices need to learn the financial aspects of successful farming.

“You still need to make a profit,” Brian said. “We need to make sure we are operating in a way that is responsible as far as the finances go.”

The dairy has no employees other than Matt and Brian, plus the four apprentices who actually run the show. As Barber explains it, his job is to train the apprentices to do his job. Not only do they work with the crops and livestock, they also learn to operate and maintain equipment, balance the budget and work with the public. Currently, they are down to one apprentice, until a bit later in the season when they’ll be joined by three more trainees.

The idea is “for them to really run the farm, and Matt and I just assist them with running the farm. (They) gain the knowledge and they need to be able to demonstrate that,” he said.

Because the dairy is on an educational farm, which is open to the



**The farm is open to the public for tours**

*(Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is advised to call ahead before scheduling a visit.)*

public daily for tours and viewing, and also hosts a farm camp, farm workshops and other learning events, dairy farming here means interacting with the public on a daily basis. There is a viewing area in the milking parlor, and the grazing pastures can even be seen from many of the campsites. The dairy staff lends a hand as needed with the various workshops and activities, too. Agritourism and agri-education are definitely on tap here.

*continued on page 26*



## FEATURED FARM

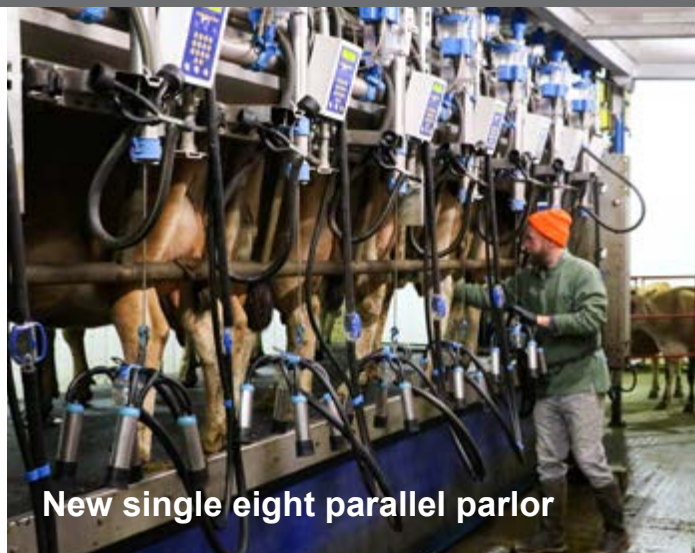
**WOLFE'S NECK FARM, FREEPORT, ME***continued from page 25***Herd Management**

The 60 head milking herd is primarily Holstein, with a few Jerseys and a few crossbred cows. They will continue to cross breed, but the goal is to maintain purebred animals - and to introduce more breeds - to educate the public that dairy cows come in many shapes and sizes. They've purchased some sexed Jersey semen to help increase the milk component levels.

The dairy apprenticeship program at Wolfe's Neck is run in partnership with Stonyfield, and has been since the dairy training program's inception 2015. All of their milk goes to Stonyfield, where it is made into yogurt. Protein runs about 3.2 percent, while fat percentage logs in at 4.0. The summer slump sees a bit of a drop-off, at which point they will readjust the fed ration as energy levels in the forages drop.

An Agri-King nutritionist works with the farm and regularly samples the ration to adjust it to the nutrition coming off of the ever-changing pasture forages. They purchase 100 percent of the grain fed, growing only hay. The pelleted grain ration is primarily ground corn, with some roasted soybeans or wheat. Top performing cows are supplemented with an additional increased concentration of grain to meet their nutritional needs and reduce stress. Free choice bicarb and salt are fed. They have used kelp free choice in the past and may do so again in the future - eliminating the free choice salt - but can't do so when kelp feeding trials are being conducted, so as to not interfere with researcher's data.

Brian, a third generation Wisconsin dairy farmer who is just starting out at Wolfe's Neck this season, is proud of the fact that

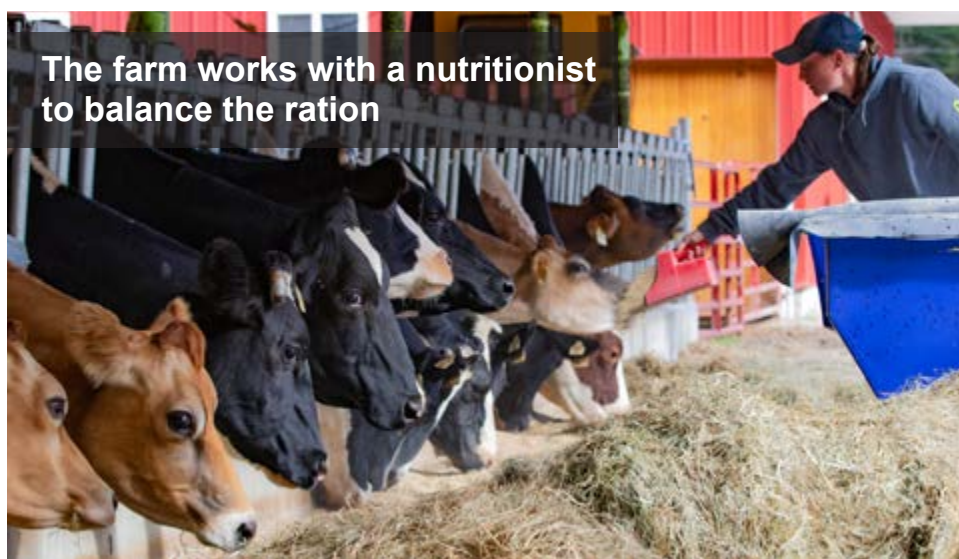
**New single eight parallel parlor**

the dairy has earned a quantity bonus from Stonyfield for the past two months. The dairy's goal for the season is to produce 100,000 pounds of milk per month - or a rolling herd average of about 67lbs per cow, per day.

But it's not only quantity that counts: It's quality, too. The somatic cell count averages 100,000. They keep it low through a routine of double pre-dipping the teats: pre-dip, strip, pre-dip, wipe and then attach the milking unit. They use an iodine-based post-dip, too. They also use an individual microfiber cloth on each cow, and wash the cloth after every use.

"We kind of go the extra mile," Brian said. "We're very adamant about our prep procedure."

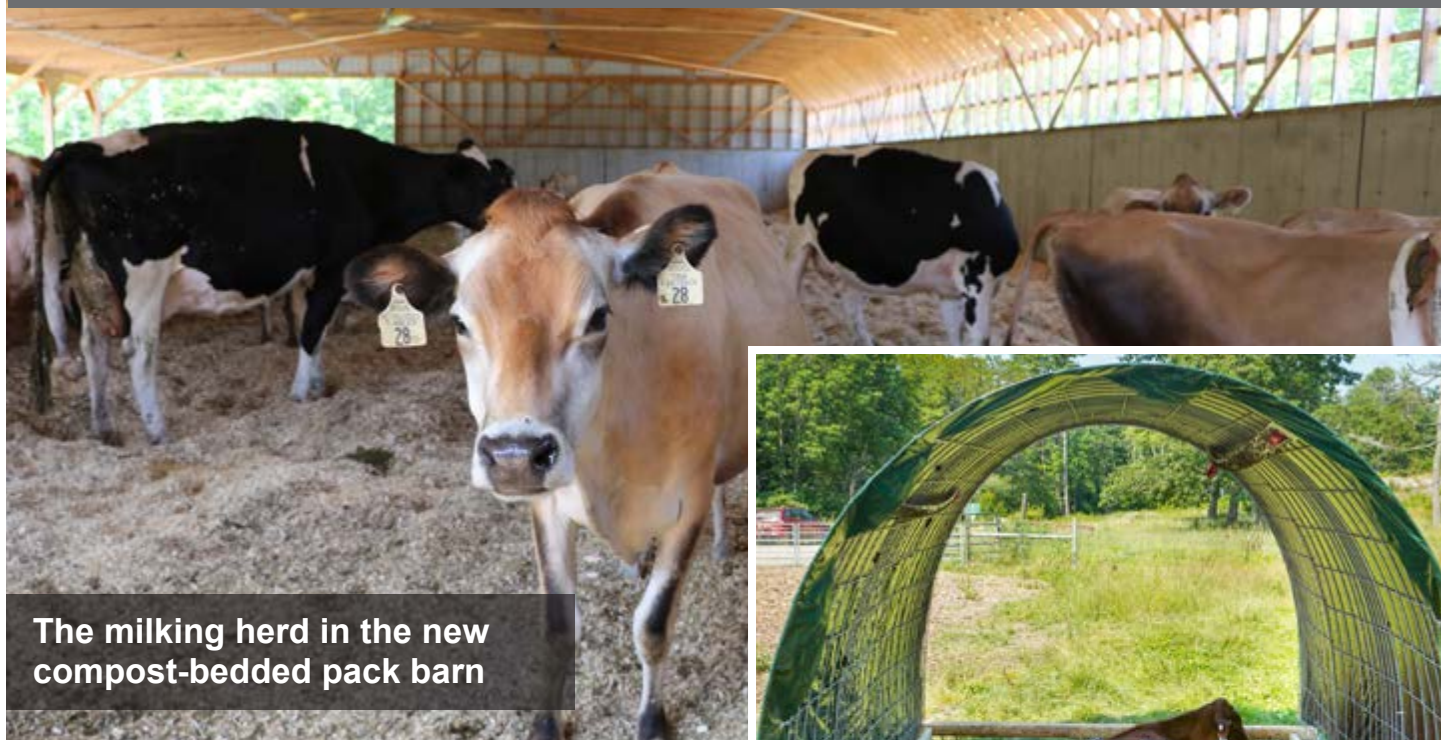
He reports few issues with mastitis or other herd health concerns, crediting the attention to cleanliness as well as the culling guidelines implemented on the farm.

**The farm works with a nutritionist to balance the ration**

They routinely cull about 25 percent of their herd, using a three strikes approach. The factors they consider include staphylococcus aureus infection, which they are working on eliminating from the herd. Any cow that tests positive is milked last, in a separate group of cows. Cows only milking with three quarters, those with breeding issues, or any foot or leg issues are among the first to be culled. Cows are also selected for longevity, grazing potential and udders. The rule of thumb is to keep the cow until it accumulates three strikes, then to cull it. Bull calves are sold to neighboring farms, and all breeding is done via AI.



## FEATURED FARM



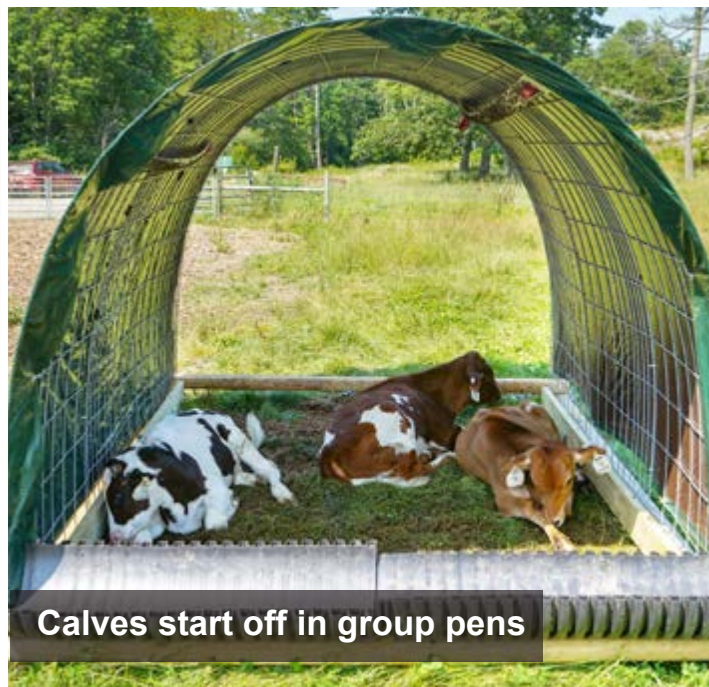
**The milking herd in the new compost-bedded pack barn**

The herd is milked twice per day in a new single eight parallel parlor. The rapid exit parlor is unique, in that the cows are only milked along one side, as the other side remains open to the viewing window, where the public is invited to watch.

The milking herd is housed in a new compost-bedded pack barn. The barn is closed at the ends, with an open side near the head locks. The barn was designed for curtains, but they've yet to use any. Several large fans provide adequate air flow to keep the bedded pack relatively dry and maintain comfortable conditions for the cows all year. The herd has year-round outdoor access to a concrete area between the parlor and barn. This area is grooved and maintained free of snow and ice in the winter and serves as an outdoor exercise area when the pastures are inaccessible due to snow or extremely wet conditions.

The composted bedded pack provides fertility for the pastures and the hay grounds. About once per year, the composted bedding is removed, one-quarter at a time, into a covered outdoor staging area. By removing 25 percent of the pack at a time, they are able to clean out one section of the barn each week, resulting in a totally fresh pack in the barn over the course of a month. They are in the process of this clean out now, in late spring to early summer. They may do another thorough clean out before heading back into the barn in October.

On a daily basis, the pack is turned with a rotavator twice per day in the off-season, and once per day during the grazing season. In the off-season, a deep tilling is done every three days, decreasing to once per week when the cows are on pasture. The bedded pack is made from wood shavings, and the pack is maintained daily



**Calves start off in group pens**

by taking the top off, and adding a fresh layer of bedding. This controls the moisture level and allows the composting process to occur, preventing pathogen growth. High traffic, wetter areas of the barn are given additional attention, requiring more frequent cleaning and replenishment of the wood shavings.

"We still have to figure out the management style that would be the best fit for us," Brian said of the composted bedded pack barn.

The old barn has been converted into calf and heifer housing. These cows are also on a bedded pack, in an open ventilated barn, with one side fully open to the outdoors. The calves start off in group pens of three to five animals. They are fed whole milk - from designated cows and from fresh cows - which is diverted from the bulk tank and fed at the rate of up to two gallons per calf, per day. Milk is fed using a milk bar system, where the milk is poured into the feeder, which has five nipples along a multi-feeder bar.

The calves are next moved to a larger weaning group, and at six months begin having pasture access. Group housing for the calves provides "that herd mentality" right from the start, Barber said.

*continued on page 28*



## FEATURED FARM

### WOLFE'S NECK FARM, FREEPORT, ME

*continued from page 27*

Respiratory illness is not an issue, due to the open ventilation, the clean bedded pack environment, and the nutrition the calves receive. Routine vaccinations - First Defense® for scours and a respiratory vaccination - are also given to the calves as a preventive measure.

"They're getting a lot of nutrients. They're immune system is really strong. They're getting colostrum," Brian said, so health concerns are mostly minor.

#### Grazing Dairy

Last year was so wet, the cows barely made the 120 day season required for certified organic dairy herds. The season typically begins the first week of May, and the animals are off pasture again by the first of October. The snows come hard and fast here. Each year the season "varies because we are so far north," Brian said.

It's not only the legacy of the Smith family, or the organic dairy farmer training program that are unique about the dairy at Wolfe's Neck Farm. The soils here - along the Atlantic Coastline, with ocean and Casco Bay frontage - are unique, too. Saltwater farming here involves some heavy, silt loams and heavy clay soils. In wet weather, the soils are often too wet for grazing - as they were last season. So far this year, the dry weather this spring has been a boon for grazing.

There are 100 acres of pasture fenced for grazing. The milking herd grazes pastures separate from the remaining 40 head. A river runs through the farm, and lactating animals have the pastures on one side, while the non-lactating animals are pastured in two groups on the other side of the river, which the animals cannot cross.

The milking herd's pastures are also separated by a road. So after each twice daily milking, they are moved to the opposite side of the road for grazing. They then rotate back to the alternate side - either continuing in the paddock they had been in or entering into a new paddock depending on whether there is still enough residual to graze.

Paddock sizes and forage composition vary, so the guiding principle is to leave no less than 30 percent residual growth in the paddock prior to rotating. In some instances, the herd may return to the same paddock for up to 36 hours total grazing hours before that paddock needs to be rested. In other cases, one 12 hour period of grazing does the job.

Broiler chickens are pastured in the same fields as the cows, adding fertility and decreasing insect problems. The broilers normally follow the cows, but the broilers are on a slower rotation schedule, so a few paddocks may be taken out of rotation for the cows while the broilers finish their rounds, as the two are not pastured together simultaneously.

The goal is to obtain between 60 and 70 percent DMI from forages year-round. Pasture grazing early in the spring typically provides



**Cows grazing part of the 100 acres fenced for pasture at Wolfe's Neck Farm.**

## FEATURED FARM

about 30 percent DMI, building up to 60 percent during the peak grazing period.

Primary forage species are reed canary grass, meadow fescue, meadow foxtail and some bluegrass. There are clovers, vetch and a few legumes, but the grasses comprise about 75 percent of the forage species. A no till drill is used to interseed and increase diversity in the paddocks when needed, and a new goal is to increase the footprint of the legumes. The difficulty is in the aggressive nature of the reed canary grass, which readily out-competes other species. Birdsfoot trefoil may be a good option. Clovers tend to die out after a season, while vetches do compete well here. One thing they cannot grow in these soils is alfalfa, Brian said.

The paddocks all respond differently to grazing pressures, making any set pattern of rotation impossible. The reed canary grass is a good cool season forage, but doesn't hold its quality. Bluegrass, fescues and clovers hold onto that quality much longer. Depending on the soils and the forage composition, each paddock has to be treated individually regarding when to graze, how long to leave the cows there prior to rotating them to fresh ground, and when to regaze that area. With so many different soil types supporting a varying mix of forages, paddocks are taken out of rotation for anywhere between 14 - 30 days before being recovered enough to regaze.

While Brian had been clipping some pastures, with dry weather the soil was being exposed to too much sunlight, decreasing the microbial activity, so he discontinued that practice. In a wet year, clipping may be needed. Building organic matter is a priority, and soil testing is done regularly to check progress and guide the decision-making process.

Because the clay-based soils tend to hold onto moisture, and the moisture denitrifies the soil, "we're always utilizing our homegrown fertility to be able to top dress the pastures," Brian said. "We're a regenerative farm so we like to be building our organic matter and capturing the carbon."

The farm has 120 dedicated hay acres, and some pastures are additionally harvested for hay each season. Those pastures are then saved for late season grazing, giving the forages time to rejuvenate.

They don't winter graze, bale graze, or stockpile forages. With heavy snow pack the norm, the animals don't make it out onto the pastures during the off season, so outdoor access is in the concrete barnyard area in the winter.

The herd has access to water either by returning to the barn between short grazing periods early in the season, or via black plastic piping. Water is sourced from a dedicated well.

Other livestock raised on the farm include pigs and sheep. The dairy staff manages the livestock production, so the apprentices gain experience managing other livestock. Pork, lamb and beef



from cull cows are sold to the public, and used at the farm's café. While they are working on building a pastured pork production program in the future, today they raise about 30 pigs per year for meat. The small flock of sheep is primarily for educational purposes. Egg layers as well as the broiler chickens are raised, too.

### Full Circle

The organic dairy farm at Wolfe's Neck Center is just one part of the overall farm operation. Certified organic farming here includes a small orchard, four acres of vegetables, perennials, and a year-round high-tunnel for vegetable crops.

The vegetable program is also a training program, with interns learning both to run a small scale farm operation and teach workshops to visitors. Charitable giving is also a part of Wolfe Neck Center's initiative, and a minimum of 6,000 lbs. of produce is supplied to food pantries each year from the farm's production. A commercial kitchen allows these interns to produce and sell value-added products from the farm's produce as well. A farm café completes the farm-to-fork cycle, allowing campers and other visitors to support the Wolfe's Neck Center mission by purchasing food prepared from the farm's bounty.

The mission of Wolfe's Neck Organic Dairy Research and Farmer Training Program "is to be a demonstration farm, to be able to be involved in research, especially with carbon sequestration," and be a model of regenerative agriculture, Brian emphasized. By training and mentoring dairy apprentices, Wolfe's Neck Organic and Research Dairy is educating the next generation of dairy farmers to "be able to make those judgment calls" which keep the herd, the land and the dairy farm sustainable. ♦

*Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture and the Environment*  
184 Burnett Road, Freeport, Maine 04032, (207) 865-4469  
<https://www.wolfesneck.org/learn/dairy-program/>



# Calendar

## HARVESTING OVER-WINTER COVER CROPS

Friday, August 28, 12:15 pm until 1:00 pm

WEBINAR WITH SAM CORCORAN OF  
UMASS EXTENSION

This webinar will discuss how you can harvest your overwintering cover crops as forage by grazing in the fall and grazing or harvesting in the spring. This includes fall planting dates, species-specific information, and other management considerations. Our speaker is Sam Corcoran, agronomy researcher, of UMass Extension. This is the fifth webinar in a six-part webinar series that will cover several strategies for grazing season extension and alternative forage production. If you are following along, you will notice that it looks like we have skipped the fourth webinar! If you are receiving this message, it just means we have not yet scheduled our fourth webinar. The fourth webinar focuses on stockpiling and will be offered in early to mid-August (date TBD). Stay tuned! The series is a collaboration among UMass Extension, UVM Extension, & UMaine Extension, and is supported in part by a Northeast SARE Research and Education Grant with organization and administration supported by the Livestock Institute of Southern New England with the support of the Cedar Tree Foundation. For any questions about the series, please contact Sam Corcoran at [sglazecorcor@umass.edu](mailto:sglazecorcor@umass.edu) PS The sixth webinar, which addresses animal health and quality when feeding or grazing annuals, will also be announced at a later date. We anticipate a September presentation.

REGISTER:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5751966844713341200>

The series is a collaboration among UMass Extension, UVM Extension, & UMaine Extension, and is supported in part by a Northeast SARE Research and Education Grant with organization and administration supported by the Livestock Institute of Southern New England via the New England Grazing Network with the support of the Cedar Tree Foundation

## HOLISTIC LAND PLANNING: GRAZING INFRASTRUCTURE & STRATEGIES

Tuesday, September 8, 7:30 pm until 9:00 pm

Repeats Tuesdays until September 28, 2021,  
7:30 pm until 9:00 pm

WEBINAR

Live 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm (also recorded for later viewing) - Learn farm/ranch infrastructure planning principles and practices to move the vision of your property into reality. Come away with a plan that suits your lifestyle and accommodates changes and challenges. This comprehensive approach will help you explore key infrastructure options, the timing and sequence of your infrastructure build out, and result in a step-by-step

### WEBINARS:

#### STOCKPILING WITH TROY BISHOPP: 60 DAYS FROM YOUR FALL FEEDING PLAN Tuesday, August 11, 7:00 pm until 8:00 pm

WEBINAR WITH TROY BISHOPP

Are you ready to feed grass this fall? This webinar will discuss the realities of stockpiling perennial pastures for the 2020 fall and winter grazing season. It's a practical venture into the decision-making and pasture management strategies to get more grazing days and offset feeding costs without sacrificing animal performance. Will the plan match reality? Only 60 days to find out. Our speaker is Troy Bishopp, aka, The Grass Whisperer, who is a proactive grazer of 35 years and a grazing professional at the Madison County Soil & Water Conservation District in NY.

This is the fourth webinar in a six-part webinar series that will cover several strategies for grazing season extension and alternative forage production. The series is a collaboration among UMass Extension, UVM Extension, & UMaine Extension, and is supported in part by a Northeast SARE Research and Education Grant with organization and administration supported by the Livestock Institute of Southern New England with the support of the Cedar Tree Foundation.

Contact: For any questions about the series, please contact Sam Corcoran [atsglazecorcor@umass.edu](mailto:atsglazecorcor@umass.edu)

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#### A VIRTUAL FIELD WORKSHOP: SILVOPASTURING AT UMASS

Tuesday, August 18, 9:00 am until 11:00 am

WEBINAR

Join UMass for a tour of the silvopasture work at the UMass Agricultural Learning Center in Amherst, MA. With Nikki Burton of UMass Extension, we will have an online tour of their silvopasture, which includes sheep within a chestnut grove, and follow that with questions and discussion.

REGISTER: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd5IkTjdHvGjQvMzqXPOjIXa5LA2UV6vOPmSU98z6r4Md1sw/viewform>

plan to achieve your property vision. Participants will evaluate management and infrastructure considerations and alternatives with the guidance and support of HMI Professional Certified Educator Larry Dyer. A core element of land planning involves working backwards from your land vision to identify the path there from what you have now. How you travel that journey will depend on your unique situation of current infrastructure, future management, time and capital resources, anticipated livestock choices, water requirements, and the unexpected (risk). Using your personal preferences and considerations, you will be guided through infrastructure design options and explore how the long-term vision can be built out systematically from "return on investment" and end goal considerations. Scholarship deadline: September 1st. Registration deadline: September 7th. Visit <https://holisticmanagement.org/training/> for more information.

### INTEGRATING ALTERNATIVE FORAGE INTO YOUR FEED PLAN

Friday, September 18, 12:15 pm until 1:15 pm

WEBINAR WITH KATHY SODER, USDA-ARS  
Learning how to grow and graze with alternative forage

methods is just one piece of the forage puzzle. How these forage production methods affect animal performance and product quality is arguably even more important. Dr. Kathy Soder, an animal scientist with USDA-ARS, will complete our series by discussing how to integrate these forages into your ration plan. She will discuss what changes you can expect compared to feeding traditional hay or pasture, possible pitfalls, and ways to succeed. This is the topic that we receive the most questions about, so be sure to register and submit your questions for Kathy on the registration form so we can make sure she gets them.

This is the sixth and final webinar in a six-part series that will cover several strategies for grazing season extension and alternative forage production. The series is a collaboration among UMass Extension, UVM Extension, & UMaine Extension, and is supported in part by a Northeast SARE Research and Education Grant with organization and administration supported by the Livestock Institute of Southern New England with the support of the Cedar Tree Foundation.

CONTACT: For any questions about the series, please contact Sam Corcoran at [sglazeccorcor@umass.edu](mailto:sglazeccorcor@umass.edu)

REGISTER:

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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

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

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

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

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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

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Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_ 201\_\_ Security Code on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

# Classified Ads

## ANIMALS

**ANIMAL WANTED:** Looking to get a grain-free family cow again after a few dry years without. We loved our Shorthorns the best, but breed is less important than personality. We also value cream and A2 over volume. The closer to Northern VT, the better! Call Jen, 802-586-2401, updated email address: [lathefarm@gmail.com](mailto:lathefarm@gmail.com).


**Location:** Craftsbury, VT

**FOR SALE: 20 springing fresh or dry shorthorn jersey crosses milking shorthorns and brown swiss.** Group is very young and a real nice group. Brian Wilson, [bpwilson@shoreham.net](mailto:bpwilson@shoreham.net), 802-948-2675.

**Location:** Vermont

**FOR SALE: Organic Dairy Herd.** 32 milking cows and 8 dry, \$60,000 for all cows. Mostly Holstein & Holstein crosses. Contact David Miller, email [elm22hm@gmail.com](mailto:elm22hm@gmail.com), call 570-247-2596.

**Location:** Rome, PA



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**Location:** Springwater, NY

**FOR SALE: REPLACEMENT HEIFERS.** We sold our OG dairy herd a month ago and now have replacement heifers to sell. Our animals are all crosses (Norwegian Red/Jersey/Holstein). We have 11 confirmed heifers (Due Nov-Feb) asking \$1500 OBO, 20 breeding age/short bred heifers (12-15 months) asking \$1,000 OBO, and 11 9-12 month old heifers \$700 OBO. Our animals are friendly! I also have some calves that will be weaned soon. Call me, Greg, or text if you want pictures, more information, etc. 920-988-7541. If you're at all interested please don't hesitate to make an offer. :) Thank you for your interest!

**LOCATION:** Watertown, WI

**FOR SALE: 15-20 springing bred heifers** starting calving in September to late fall. Sold herd in August 2019 and these heifers are the offspring from that herd. July 2019 herd average was 19,951 776 lbs. of fat, 3.9 % fat. Breeding program selected for A2 AI sires. Heifers bred to a Murray Grey bull. Group is mixed breeds with some Dutch Belts, Linebacks, Jersey Holstein cross and Red and White Holsteins, \$1,400 each. Contact Richard Corey, [richardcorey207@gmail.com](mailto:richardcorey207@gmail.com), 207-577-4952

**Location:** East Wilton, Maine

**FOR SALE: 6 OPT 100% grassfed organic certified dairy cattle** due in June/July. Cows bred to Friesian include: MRY/Ayshire cross, MRY/Normande cross, Norwegian Red cross, Holstein, Jersey/Holstein cross. Jersey cross heifer bred to Jersey. Rob Moore, 607-699-7968

**Location:** Nichols NY

**WANTED: COWS** Looking for 3-4 Holsteins, springing or fresh, contact [warren@shawfarm.com](mailto:warren@shawfarm.com)

**Location:** Eastern MA

**WANTED: Jersey cow** for home milking. This person, working through MOFGA's Dairy Specialist, Jacki Perkins, hopes that someone has a nice little Jersey cow to sell. They weren't comfortable sharing their name or location on such a wide forum, so if you'd like to contact them, their email is [emcrute@live.com](mailto:emcrute@live.com)

**Location:** Maine



**WANTED: Organic holstein milkers.** We are expanding our milking herd and looking to add on 30-50 young quality milk cows with low SCC. Contact us at [icbranon@gmail.com](mailto:icbranon@gmail.com), 802-393-0380. Nestle Nook Farm

**Location:** *Fairfield, VT*

## FEED, GRAIN, HAY FOR SALE/WANT TO BUY

**FOR SALE: NOFA-NY Certified Organic BALEAGE** - 4 x 4 Round. Also DRY HAY and BEDDING HAY. All 4 1/2 x 4 Round. Contact Jeff @ 607-566-8477 or [Mitchellorganics@hotmail.com](mailto:Mitchellorganics@hotmail.com).

**Location:** *Avoca, NY - Steuben County.*

**FOR SALE: NOFA-NY certified organic rye straw.** Large solid small square bales. \$7.50 a bale. Tammy Thomas, 518-727-1712, [disneytam89@gmail.com](mailto:disneytam89@gmail.com).

**Location:** *Greenwich NY*

**HAY FOR SALE: Certified organic 1st cut 4x5 round bales** in Westport NY call Joseph at 717-385-0015

**Location:** *Westport, NY*

## SERVICES

**MRY Dual Purpose Genetics from CRV Genetics:** New Zealand Jersey & Ayrshire, Dutch Holstein, Fleckvieh, MRY Dual Purpose Genetics from CRV Genetics, see my CRV Genetics listing in the NODPA Business Member Directory and contact Brian Stone Sr., [stonesr.b@icloud.com](mailto:stonesr.b@icloud.com), 508-983-4219.

**Certified organic grassland available for rotational grazing.** Joseph Beiler, [beilerjoseph@yahoo.com](mailto:beilerjoseph@yahoo.com), call for more info. 717-385-0015.

**Location:** *Westport, NY*

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**DAIRY GRAZING APPRENTICE WANTED.** We are currently accepting applications for a highly motivated and hardworking individual who is interested in pursuing a career in regenerative farming, with a focus on dairy herd and grazing management. We are filling a full time position that is designed to be able

to expand into a management role. This spring Sarah was vetted as a Master Grazier by the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program (DGA). DGA has designed a 2 year apprenticeship, that includes classroom training and field days in addition to on the job training. For the right person, there will be potential to advance into farm management roles as well as entrepreneurial ventures on our farm.

**THE FARM:** Chaseholm Farm is a third generation family dairy located in New York's Hudson Valley. We are certified Organic and 100% Grass-Fed. Our passion is growing the highest quality food and providing the highest quality of care for our herd, while enhancing the ecological function of our land base. We milk between 30-40 cows, mostly Holstein and Jersey crosses. The milk is sold raw and pasteurized, as yogurt, and made into cheese at Chaseholm Creamery. To learn more about the farm and our farming practices, please check out [www.chaseholmfarm.com](http://www.chaseholmfarm.com).

**QUALIFICATIONS:** Qualified applicants must be hard workers with excellent communication skills, and love and compassion for animals. Preference will be given to those with farming experience and those who have an interest in regenerative agriculture and livestock management as a profession. There is the opportunity to advance into a herd manager role on the farm once the apprenticeship program is completed.

The successful apprentice will have a strong desire to be here every day, to be interested in learning about everything we do, be able to work independently and as part of a team, able to do repetitive tasks, with a willingness to be taught and accept constructive criticism. We are looking for an individual that has the work ethic, motivation, curiosity, intelligence, and problem solving skills to successfully manage a dairy farm in the future.

You must be able to lift at least 50 lbs to shoulder height (feed bags, bale of hay, bucket of milk etc.), and be available to work at all times of the day. We are also primarily working outdoors and so applicants must be willing to work in all weather.

**JOB DESCRIPTION:** The apprenticeship will include all aspects of managing a small grass-fed dairy, including milking, rotationally grazing our herds and putting up feed in the summertime, and feeding it out in the

*continued on page 34*

# Classified Ads

*continued from page 33*

wintertime. Calf and heifer care are also a high priority, as they are our investment into the future. Most of our milk is made into cheese but we also direct-market meat and dairy products, so the position will include experience in marketing and customer interactions. Dairy farming is year round, 365 days a year. Some days start early, and some days run long. That being said, we also strive to manage our farm holistically and try to maintain a pleasant work/life balance.

As part of your apprenticeship you will learn about:

**Livestock:** Our livestock are to be respected and well-cared for at all times. It is essential to always be attentive to their needs and health issues. Apprentices will be taught how to handle and work with the livestock and expected to follow and remember instructions. Working with animals demands the development of

intuitive observation skills. You will also be taught and expected to assist with record keeping and breeding protocols.

**Milkhouse management:** We are a NYS licensed raw milk dairy and so proper milkhouse management and maintenance ensures the quality and safety of our products. In addition to equipment management you will also learn how to interact with NYS Ag and Markets and our federal milk inspector.

**Farm equipment, machinery, tools, tractors, vehicles:** You will be taught how to safely operate farm tools, machinery and equipment and are expected to follow the instructions and handle the equipment safely and responsibly. We make most of our own winter feed as baleage and dry hay and you will have the opportunity to assist in this work.

**Pasture management:** Adaptive rotational grazing is one of our primary tools for meeting the animals' nutritional needs and improving the health of our pastures. You will be taught how to manage a grazing plan, assess pastures, and the ins and outs of electric fencing.

**Direct marketing:** As a very small dairy, much of our product is direct-marketed. We believe that a revitalization of regional food systems is integral in supporting human and ecological health. You will be exposed to the unique challenges producers face in these efforts.

**Regenerative agriculture:** We are on a journey to restore vitality to our soils in a belief that healthy soils lead not just to nutrient dense foods, but can also address the severe environmental effects that agriculture has historically caused on the planet. Our path is not always clear, and often consists of trial and

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error in an effort to come to a closer understanding of biological systems and how to more fully support soil life. As an apprentice you will have the opportunity to join the conversation as we think about how to proceed on this journey.

**COMPENSATION/HOURS:** This is a salaried position, starting at \$28,000 per year plus farm store credit of \$200/month (or more depending on your family's food needs). During the growing season (May – October) the workdays will average 10-12 hours – 6 days per week. During the winter the workweek averages 35-40 hours with 1-2 days off per week. We do not have on-farm housing available at this time but we would be happy to help you find a rental nearby as a long commute can add to a long farm day.

If you'd like to apply for this position, please send a detailed letter of interest describing your background, education, work history, farming interests, and why you would be the best fit for this role to [chaseholmfarm@gmail.com](mailto:chaseholmfarm@gmail.com). Please include three references as well, including their phone numbers and email addresses. We look forward to hearing from you.

### Dairy Farm Manager

Stonewall Farm an organic dairy farm and non-profit educational center in Keene, NH is looking for an experienced dairy farm manager. Stonewall Farm is also a HUB with the Savory Institute using holistic planned grazing. The ideal candidate will have significant organic dairy experience, AI, grazing and fencing, herd health, knowledge of maple sugaring and teamster experience a plus! Send cover letter, salary requirements and resume to [jdavenson@stonewallfarm.org](mailto:jdavenson@stonewallfarm.org).

### EQUIPMENT

**FOR SALE:** Hesston BP25 TUB GRINDER, JD 30' Hay/Grain ELEVATOR, 18.4-38 DUALS, Clamp On, Gehl HiThrow BLOWER. Contact Jeff @ 607- 566-8477 or [Mitchellorganics@hotmail.com](mailto:Mitchellorganics@hotmail.com).

**Location:** Avoca, NY - Steuben County.

## NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

### Website & E-Newsletter Advertising

#### Website Advertising

NODPA.com receives over 2500 visits each month navigating to an average of 3 pages/visit.

#### E-Newsletter Advertising

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

#### Discounted rates for commitments of 6 months or more.

Interested in one or both of these opportunities? For more information, contact Nora Owens at:

Email: [noraowens@comcast.net](mailto:noraowens@comcast.net)

Phone: 413-772-0444

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

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

**2020 Ad rates and sizes listed below.**

**Deadline for advertising in the September 2020 issue is August 15, 2020.**

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

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

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which you will also find on the **NODPA website: [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com)**

See page 1 for complete details.

