NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

September 2021 Volume 21, Issue 5 WWW.NODPA.COM

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Organic Industry News

Organic Production

Net Update

Member Info

A special thanks to Wolfe's Neck Center for generously hosting the 21st Annual NODPA Field Days!

Cows grazing at Saddlers Run Farm

FEATURED FARM: SADDLERS RUN FARM, ALLENSVILLE, PA

Owned and operated by the Alvin and Marianne Peachy Family

Grass-fed Growth: Finding What Works

By Tamara Scully, NODPA News Contributing Writer

For Alvin Peachy, his wife Marianne, and their four children - who range in age from eight to a mere five months - life on their Saddlers Run Farm, in Allensville, Pennsylvania, revolves around the twice per day milking of the 75 cow milking herd, and the management of the 150 acres of owned pasture which keeps the 100 percent grass-fed dairy herd healthy and happy.

The farm's pasture acreage is exclusively used for grazing. The family owns no equipment

continued on page 23

Danone Drops 89 Organic Dairies and Exits New England and Upstate New York

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

The many rumors since Danone's purchase of White Wave, that they would be withdrawing from the procurement of organic milk in the Northeast, has happened. To many, this was no surprise. The bigger question is why they have taken this action now and with so many farms. Having heavily invested in new processing for plant, nut and cereal juices ('milks'), they have invested nothing in the infrastructure for organic milk. Why

continued on page 3

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Message from NODPA Co-President

After two years in the making, the NODPA Field Days at Wolfe's Neck are finally here! I remember the meeting when we were trying to figure out where the next field days would take place and the idea of Wolfe's Neck was proposed. My first thought was, we've waited this long to have this shindig on the coast, but it was an option all along! I mean, this way, even if we've all seen plenty of cows grazing before I'll bet not many of us have ever seen cows grazing with an ocean backdrop.

I'm hoping for a great turnout this year after having to postpone our in-person field days last year, and having been hunkered down for the most part the last year and a half, it will be great to get out and see everyone. Hopefully, the sense of community will help dispel some of the weariness of this new Covid era we're living in.

With the recent news of Danone pulling out of the Northeast, I feel the timing and placement of the Field Days could not have been any better. These events sure do make co-ops with a more guaranteed market look nice. It's very frustrating to me to see more and more of the processors being bought out by bigger and bigger companies, some of which are not domestically owned. It is also quite an irony (perhaps hypocrisy?) that when Danone North American was formed four years ago in 2017, it was formed as a public benefits corporation, touting on their website that "we are committed to redefining success in business as the largest Certified B Corp and public benefit corporation in the world." A Public Benefits Corporation enjoins working for social good along with the goal of profitability. Danone NA states that, "We vote for the world we want with every food and beverage choice we make today." Apparently, the world they want does not include the organic dairy farmers of New England and parts of northern New York.

For many areas, it has also been a very challenging year weather-wise, from drought to excessive rainfall and flooding, with three hurricanes moving through the Northeast in less than three weeks' time. Sure wish we could share the excess rain with the drought starved west.

There will be much to talk about in the producer meeting and I highly recommend farmers try and make it to that.!

Kirk Arnold, NODPA Co-President
Truxton, NY | Phone: 607-842-6631
Email: kickaha21@gmail.com

Board Members & Representatives

PENNSYLVANIA

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 Cheningo 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 Stoltzfus, State Rep
1553 Hesselton Gully Rd.
Whitesville, NY 14897
jtstribe@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

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Cindy-Lou Amey, State Rep
Indian Stream Farm
81 Tabor Road, Pittsburg, NH 03592
Phone: (603) 538-7734
cindylouamey@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
kathieyarnold@gmail.com
Phone: 607-842-6631
Fax: 607-842-6557

Cecelia Murray, Policy Committee
Bundy Creek Farm LLC
5229 Cheningo 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

From the NODPA Desk will return next issue. Both time and space have been dedicated to *Danone Drops 89 Organic Dairies and Exits New England and Upstate New York* as we recognize the priority of the issues it addresses. – *Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director*

Danone Exits the Northeast

continued from page 1

drop eighty nine farm families at once? Where are the standards that a B corporation is supposed to hold themselves to? *(Certified B Corporations are a new kind of business that balances purpose and profit. Serving a global community of people using businesses as a force for good. Honest. Communal. Responsible. Purpose-Driven. Sustainable. Ethical.)* As a self-declared leader in regenerative agriculture why does Danone take these farms out of production? Nicole Dehne, director of Vermont Organic Farmers, says it perfectly: [if these dairy farms are forced to shut down], *"the ripple effect[s] on the local economy would be notable. Producers employ breeders, vets and grain companies, for example. Organic farmers are also required to manage their farms so they're hospitable to the local ecosystem. They have to improve soil health on their farms. They have to plan and manage for biodiversity. So it's also kind of devastating to think that we might lose that acreage that's being managed in that way."*

The formal announcement came at the end of August with letters to producers in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and New York effectively ending their relationship with Danone in August 2022. Groupe Danone, multinational corporate owner of Horizon Organic, will have no organic dairy contracts in New England after August 2022. Their new Eastern Region is Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio and all the milk from this region will be taken to the Steuban Foods plant in Elma NY, which is near Buffalo.

Danone is offering a 180-day notice or farms can sign a one-year contract, with no contract option after the end of the year. Apparently, the farms that contract for the year can leave with 30 days' notice if they find another market. Danone did not immediately return request for comment from State agencies and concerned producers, both those that had received the letter and those that were worried about when they would receive one. The rumors on how many farms were affected spread like wild fire, as one would expect from such an announcement. Many farm families fell victims to the lack of information from Danone and estimates of 150 plus producers' contracts being cancelled spread quickly through the Northeast. Eventually, NODPA was able to obtain a response from Danone that we immediately shared on ODairy. The email response came from Danone North America, a corporate response that was days' late.

E-mail statement from Danone North America:

> *We greatly value our relationships with our farming partners and did not make this decision lightly. Growing transportation and operational challenges in the dairy industry, particularly in the northeast, led to this difficult decision.*
>
> *Eighty-nine producers across the northeast received this non-renewal notice. To help facilitate a smooth transition, we are offering each producer the opportunity to enter into a new agreement for us to purchase their milk until August 31, 2022 to provide additional time and support.*
>
> *We will be supporting new partners that better align with our manufacturing footprint. We are committed to continuing to support organic dairy in the east, and in the last 12 months alone, we have on boarded more than 50 producers new to Horizon Organic that better fit our manufacturing footprint. This decision will help us continue providing our consumers with the products they love.*

This report from the Portland Press Herald sums up producers' responses to the impersonal communication:

> *"Farmers may be forced to sell their herds or leave farming entirely", said Lauren Webber, 29, who along with her husband, Sam, operates the SamLaurEL Farm of about 50 milk cows on nearly 100 acres in Chesterville, Maine, northeast of Livermore Falls. Most perplexing, Webber said, was that Horizon had recently required that all of its Maine producers go through an extensive audit and documentation process for their operations, only to dump them a few weeks later. " There's not a lot of options," Webber said. "There's no money in feed, in vegetables. I think cows are going to go down the road (to auction) and you're going to have to learn to do something else. I think the farming industry is on the way out."*

Danone representatives have said that the only reason they are dropping these contracts is that the cost of trucking raw milk to the plant that they have chosen for processing the milk, Steuban

continued on page 5

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Danone Exits the Northeast

continued from page 3

Foods, is too high. Obviously, the expense of trucking milk from Maine to the western side of New York is prohibitive. Did they inquire about co-packing elsewhere, for example Byrne Dairy in Syracuse or the Hood plant in Oneida NY? This is no fault of the farm families. They have not been dropped for high bacteria counts, poor access, bad roads or winter conditions. It's purely a cost-saving measure to increase their profits. They have not said that they need less milk for their fluid market or that their sales have dropped for their yogurts. Did they ask producers to share some of the trucking costs or add a bulk tank or give incentives for different infrastructure that might solve the problem?

What does this mean to other producers when Danone decides to shift its processing of organic to its own plant in Minster, Ohio or to a plant in Iowa? The protocol for manufacturing milk at the plant in Minster, Ohio is that farms need to be within 100 miles of the plant.

Danone has said it is replacing the 89 farms with 50 new contracts with different farms that are closer to the Steuban plant. They say that these farms are the same size as the ones they are dropping. They say that they have on boarded these new-to-Danone farms in the last year. Quite a task to do to the tight specifications they have for trucking and pay price (all without exciting gossip and opinion). Some of these farms could have been from Maple Hill where a producer has reported that Maple Hill will probably shed 15 farms although Maple Hill is reporting a good year with its products, following the pandemic. Maple Hill's current base price is $34.25 (but coming up for review in the next few months) making it unlikely that Maple Hill producers would see a contract with Danone at a lower price as beneficial.

The math on how Danone spins its decision doesn't work. It maintains that the 'new' farms are the same size as those it is dumping. In that case, Danone would be short production from 39 farms. Where does the rest of the milk come from? Possibly by purchasing raw milk from larger farms at a cheaper price as we saw last year when Byrne Dairy purchased milk from Texas and the

continued on page 6

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Danone Exits the Northeast

continued from page 5

Midwest? Perhaps they will make up the difference with ultra-pasteurized packaged product from processors that source their milk from larger operations "that better fit our (Danone) manufacturing footprint"? On the Federal Milk Market Administrator's report, we see a lot of milk come into Federal Milk Marketing Order 1 (Northeast) from Texas and other states and much of that is organic.

Why dump these producers now when the milk market is very tight, and why so many routes at once? The move has almost certainly been planned for a few years and its implementation might have been tied to a change in leadership at Danone International and at Danone North America, a lack of growth in organic dairy, and a renewed commitment to the growth of other "milks." Emmanuel Faber was fired as Danone CEO in March 2021 for being too progressive and promoting stakeholder capitalism and centering core business units on Environmental, Social, Governance objectives. Shane Grant was appointed Executive Vice President & CEO, Danone North America and a member of the Danone Executive Committee in May 2020. He assumed the additional role of co-CEO, Danone International in March 2021. He will revert back to his role as CEO, Danone North America when the new Danone International CEO, Antoine de Saint-Affrique, takes over on September 15, 2021. In procurement, Greg Wolf became Director Producer Relation Management, Danone North America in August 2021, after previously serving 9 months as Senior Manager Producer Relations, and 10 years at Ecolab as Agri Corporate Account Manager.

Danone's emphasis is definitely on plant, nut and cereal-based beverages, with heavy investments in infrastructure, including a sixty million dollar investment in the largest plant-based yogurt, cheese and beverage-ingredient plant in the U.S. at Mount Crawford, Virginia in 2018 and 2019. In 2019, it made a multimillion dollar investment in its plant in DuBois, Pennsylvania. In January 2021, its So Delicious brand expanded into the plant-based cheese space. In February 2021, Danone acquired Follow Your Heart, a pioneer in dairy-free cheeses, spreads and

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

dressings. Danone will soon launch "dairy-like technology" under the Silk NextMilk and So Delicious Wondermilk brands. Danone's venture capital arm, Danone Manifesto Ventures, purchased a majority stake in Harmless Harvest a leader in organic coconut-based products including coconut water and dairy-free coconut yogurt alternatives. Earlier this year, Danone released a line of plant-based creamers called The Honest to Goodness range which uses almond milk and coconut oil to bring coffee drinkers the 'perfect supplement to traditional creamer.'

Low cost, ultra-pasteurized milk, which is easily transported and warehoused, has become a staple on the organic shelf, and the importance of branded product has diminished while private label and store brands have grown. Horizon hasn't been the brand leader in retail sales of organic package milk in the last few years. This move to consolidate its supply and maximize the economies of scale in organic dairy, which is produced 365 days of the year compared to non-bovine "milks" that can be produced to a manufacturing schedule, probably makes good bottom line business sense viewed from a narrow lens. If part of their plan was to drop 89 organic farm families at a time when there is little opportunity to find another buyer, they are ignoring their stated mission and the core requirements of a B Corp company. One of their mission areas is: "We will continue to invent pioneering ways to foster inclusive growth for vulnerable partners in our food chain across the world, including family farmers, street vendors and waste pickers."

In protecting their long term supply from low-cost operations, they must also be expecting a weak Origin of Livestock Rule to be published that will allow the massive loophole of being able to sell or transfer transitioned animals as certified organic. This will effectively allow the owners of large herds to respond to increases in demand quickly – not quite continuous transition but very close to it. Such a regulation, in combination with the continued failure to enforce rules requiring organic livestock to have access to pasture, makes it profitable to produce "organic" milk in industrial confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), where cows are fed cheap imported "organic" grain instead of pasture. This position of allowing transitioned animal to retain their organic certification for producing organic milk when they are transferred or sold is supported by all the processors, including Danone, and OTA, and opposed by the Organic Farmers Association, the National Organic Coalition and most producer groups.

What Can Be Done Immediately?

1. Advocate directly to your Congressional representatives to ensure that the Origin of Livestock Final Rule is quickly published and implemented. That it is a strong regulation that doesn't allow transitioned animals to retain their organic certification for milk when they are transferred or sold. While official comment has closed and USDA will not discuss these issues, Members of Congress can still influence the speed of the publication of the Rule and make USDA accountable for its content. Citing the loss of 89 organic dairy family farms because the USDA and certifiers created an un-level playing field with their failure to publish the regulation during the last decade and the inconsistent application of existing regulations will highlight the need for action.

2. Extend the date of the contract termination to 18 months (rather than the 12 months currently offered). As each individual farm family works on plans for their future they need more lead time to find other markets, seek debt relief or otherwise plan a transition that works for them.

3. Offer a contract severance package or contract retirement package bonus to the affected Northeast dairies in recognition of their long-time relationship with the company and their willingness to commit to the capital intensive production of high quality organic milk that established the reputation of Horizon Organic. Each organic farm will suffer loss of planned income and each will have expenses outside their normal personal and business budgets as a result of Danone's actions.

4. Continue to advocate for enforcement of standards for organic production. Even now some certifiers are still not interpreting or enforcing the access to pasture regulation in their definition of the grazing season.

5. As an individual consumer, boycott all Danone products informing the retailer in writing that your choice is dictated by Danone's exploitation of family farms and by using their monopolistic position in cancelling individual contracts and driving organic dairy farms out of business. Be prepared for a full, public boycott of Danone products if they continue to abuse organic family farms.

6. For those that have influence within CROPP Cooperative and Lactalis/Stonyfield, encourage them to enter into discussion with the Northeast organic dairy community about ways to move forward. A year is a very short time.

Alternatives:

To be blunt there are limited alternatives for those wanting to stay in organic dairy production:

continued on page 8

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Danone Exits the Northeast

continued from page 7

- CROPP has a moratorium on accepting new members (although they did take on two from Stonyfield, recently).
- Upstate Niagara is cutting back on volume and price – not replacing members that retire.
- Maple Hill is letting producers go and producers are anticipating a drop in pay price.
- It is reported that Byrne Dairy did take some Danone producers over the last winter but I have no reports on their position now.
- CROPP or other handlers (DFA, DMS, NFO) may be willing to build a pool of milk under a utilization contract but that will be a very challenging situation for pay price unless it can be utilized as Class 1 milk as well as some in organic.
- If trucking of organic milk is the issue and it always has been, ask the question about why each buyer must truck their milk separately. Organic milk is organic milk (or it should be) and if it is going to be ultra-pasteurized there will be little difference in taste or nutrient between different farming practices.
- If the choice of a plant that is so far away from most producers is because of its size and ability to balance supply, investigate the possibilities of some production going to other plants to be made into organic powder, cheese or ice cream mix.
- Conventional dairy has their insurance and base price, plus the FMMO protects producers from being exploited by abuse of individual contracts. Organic dairy has no safety nets that reflect organic dairy production costs or procurement practices.

There are long term answers and ways for small to mid-size organic dairy farms to survive. They do it in Europe and elsewhere with unique infrastructure investment for the specialized needs of small scale agriculture.

There are two issues that the organic community and their loyal consumers need to address. The first is the personal tragedy of those farm families that have had their future ripped away from them. We must give them as much practical assistance as possible. The decisions about their future will be made one farm at a time with the help of the many professional service providers that have come forward to assist with financial and marketing information plus help to analyze their alternative options based of family strengths and preferences. Decisions will be different for each farm.

The second is to look at the future for all small to mid-size organic dairies that must include the possibility of their buyer taking similar actions in their future plans. Certainly we must continue the fight for regulations that maintain organic integrity not undermine it for the benefit of large operations and milk handlers. We must have strong enforcement and certifiers that understand the regulations and a NOP that can ensure consistent enforcement at all levels of production. We must also look at infrastructure that is scale and market appropriate. If we have regulations that are strongly enforced, the processing, packaging and marketing infrastructure will have a secure base to build on. For organic dairy, that will mean having modern processing facilities that are designed to process and package smaller quantities of milk to meet the needs of the value-added products that have a strong market with discriminating consumers. When the next pandemic or weather crises happens will the food supply chain be more protected or more exposed with less processing capacity and a smaller rural population in the Northeast. ◆

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Protect Biodiversity and Native Ecosystems in the Organic Rules

By Harriet Behar, Sweet Springs Farm and Jo Ann Baumgartner, Wild Farm Alliance

Our organic regulations mandate that soil and other natural resources are protected and enhanced over time. Yet one aspect of the USDA organic rule that works against environmental stewardship and promotion of biodiversity is the requirement that land cannot be certified for organic production until it has been free of prohibited substances for three years. While this rule makes sense on land that has been farmed conventionally, it is problematic because it incentivizes the destruction of native ecosystems.

Destruction of native ecosystems in the Amazon rainforest.

When a farmer is looking to get into organic production, this three year wait time is a costly barrier, leading many to seek land that has been fallow and/or has otherwise not had the application of synthetic pesticides for three years. This chemical-free land gives immediate access to the certified organic marketplace. Unfortunately, this rule unintentionally hurts the integrity of the label in the eyes of the consumer who are paying extra for environmental protections, and it is unfair to those farmers who patiently waited three years for their land to transition to organic.

Native ecosystems are fewer in the developed world, including the U.S. Canada and Europe, and are under great pressure in the developing world. Native forests, grasslands, and wetlands offer refuge for many species, including those that are endangered, threatened and at-risk. Once extinct, plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, fungi and more are lost forever, and their place in the elegant balance of nature has been annihilated, forever degrading the interacting functions provided in our world. Many plant species in these biodiverse areas could harbor the next miracle drug to cure a variety of human and livestock diseases. We are in the midst of the sixth mass extinction on this planet. In the past 50 years, animal populations worldwide have declined by 70%, songbirds in North America have decreased by 3 billion, and untold numbers of insects have been lost.

Creating habitat for animal predators, such as owls, hawks and coyotes, can do wonders when field mice are eating a crop. Providing for insect parasitoids, such as beneficial wasps, can keep aphid and worm damage on crops to acceptable levels. Building a diverse and healthy soil food web teeming with soil biological life by growing diverse cover crop mixes or inter-seeding diverse species in cash crops, increases organic matter, and supports nitrogen fixation, carbon sequestration and the smothering of weeds. Planting diverse strips of native prairie plants into large row crop fields provides habitat and food for pollinators and beneficial insect and bird predators, as well as protects soil and water quality. Much of our understanding of how each of these systems work is based upon knowledge gained by researching native ecosystems that have not been destroyed by agriculture, development or other means.

Despite information being kept confidential on whether newly entered land into organic production was previously a native ecosystem, we have reports from organic inspectors who have seen them destroyed in order to grow organic crops. Through an informal survey, they shared many instances, including thousands of acres of short grass prairies in the Colorado Plains, of sagebrush steppe in Oregon and of oak woodlands in California being destroyed for organic production. Even though families may have enjoyed these areas for the wildlife and beauty they provide, when the land changes hands, new owners may only be seeking out a chance for high value crop

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

production. Often, this land had been left undisturbed because it is too hard to farm – there's no water to irrigate, the soils are too wet, too steep or too rocky.

Taking a closer look, native ecosystems are anything but wastelands. Instead, they are repositories of many beneficial organisms, from small pollinating insects to large predators, providing food and cover for them when they aren't on the farm. Reliance on nature's tools and mimicking the interaction and interdependency within native systems is a foundation of organic agriculture.

When considering climate change, there is no comparison between the superior capacity of perennials systems, such as forests and grasslands, to sequester carbon compared to annual cropping systems. When converted, these lands will lose 30 to 50 percent of their soils' carbon into the atmosphere over a 50-year period. We are all aware of our climate crisis and global warming in causing extreme weather events. Organic agriculture should not compound the problem by further adding carbon to the atmosphere through destruction of these native ecosystems.

We can protect native ecosystems through organic regulation. In May 2018, the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) sent a formal near-unanimous recommendation to the National Organic Program that would change the organic regulation and eliminate the incentive to convert native ecosystems to organic production. https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/CACSNativeEcosystems.pdf

This recommendation went through three NOSB public comment periods over 18 months with overwhelming support from farmers, ranchers, certifiers, retailers, processors, environmentalists and consumers—basically all stakeholders in the organic community. The recommendation defines a native ecosystem as follows:

Native ecosystems can be recognized in the field as retaining both dominant and characteristic plant species as described by established classifications of natural vegetation. These will

continued on page 12

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Protect Biodiversity and Native Ecosystems in the Organic Rules

continued from page 11

tend to be on lands that have not been previously cultivated, cleared, drained or otherwise irrevocably altered. However, they could include areas that have recovered expected plant species composition and structure.

The organic regulation was proposed to have this addition as well.

A site supporting a native ecosystem cannot be certified for organic production as provided for under this regulation for a period of 10 years from the date of conversion.

Numerous other organic certification bodies around the world have bans in place to keep recently destroyed native ecosystems from ever being able to grow and market certified organic crops from that area. The NOSB and the public felt the forever designation was too restrictive because, for example, a farmer may not have had control of their land when its ecosystem was destroyed, and they should be able to heal and improve it through the use of organic practices. A ten year waiting period was recommended as a strong disincentive. Allowing the converted land to eventually reap the benefit of organic certification in ten years was considered acceptable because it would not have to be conventionally managed forever.

Land that has been changed from a native ecosystem due to human use may or may not recover its biodiversity. In order for the native ecosystem to recover, it would depend on the severity of impact and if there are characteristic species nearby that could move into the disturbed area. Many ecosystems may never regain their original biodiversity, especially if the process of natural succession is hampered due to impacts to soil, water, or the availability of native species that could recolonize that area.

Some organic production could be allowed on lands with native ecosystems, as long as their dominant and characteristic plant species are kept intact and the lands are not irreparably damaged. Low-impact grazing, hay production late in the season, mushroom or maple syrup production, rubber tree tapping and the harvest of wild medicinal crops are all examples that could be compatible with the protection of native ecosystems, when done correctly. Forested areas cut to provide for more pasture in the Northeast, were typically areas of secondary growth, and did not have the same diversity and species found in areas that were native ecosystems.

Wild Farm Alliance, who is the lead nonprofit guiding the education and outreach on this issue, has published Organic Native Ecosystem Application and Verification Toolkit which lists the best online tools for determining if a native ecosystem is or was present, most with analog counterparts for those lacking internet access. The toolkit gives examples of how to use the tools in different types of operations around the country and world. Many provide easy-to-access aerial photos before and after the 10-year waiting period. Once this regulation is implemented by the National Organic Program, certifiers would review only the new areas being requested for organic certification, not all fields currently certified. This proposed rule would not be difficult to implement or enforce.

The National Organic Program told the public in April 2021, that this recommendation was not considered high priority and they would not make it part of the USDA organic regulations. We later heard they are willing to reconsider. Many stakeholders are pressing the NOP and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack in the fall of 2021, to make this important recommendation part of our organic requirements. The Organic Farmers Association and the Organic Trade Association along with many other organizations support this improvement to our organic rules. A short statement to the National Organic Standards Board supporting rulemaking on the disincentive to destroy native ecosystems would be helpful to this cause. Make your voice known here https://www.regulations.gov/document/AMS-NOP-21-0038-0001. For more information and to sign a petition, go to the Wild Farm Alliance. https://www.wildfarmalliance.org/native_ecosystems_petition ◆

Harriet Behar, Sweet Springs Farm, Gays Mills, WI, can be reached at harriet.organic@gmail.com, and Joann Baumbartner, Wild Farm Alliance, Watsonville, California, can be reached at joannb@wildfarmalliance.org

Wild Farm Alliance's mission is to promote a healthy, viable agriculture that protects and restores wild nature.

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

USDA Invests $700 million to Provide Relief to Small Producers, Processors, Distributors, Farmers Markets and Seafood Processing Vessels and Processors Impacted by COVID-19

WASHINGTON, Sept. 9, 2021 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced it will soon publish Requests for Applications (RFAs) for new grant programs - the Pandemic Response and Safety (PRS) Grant program and the Seafood Processors Pandemic Response and Safety Block Grant program - to support agricultural stakeholders who haven't yet received substantial federal financial assistance in responding to the COVID-19 crisis. These grant programs will provide assistance to small businesses in certain commodity areas, including small scale specialty crop producers and processors, shellfish, aquaculture and other select producers, meat and other processors, distributors, farmers markets, seafood facilities and processing vessels. Today USDA released grant forecasts for these new programs to help potential applicants determine their eligibility and to prepare to apply for funding. Approximately $650 million in funding is available for the PRS grants and $50 million is available for SPRS. All of these new programs are funded by the Pandemic Assistance provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

"As the economy continues to gain strength after the Biden Administration's historic vaccination and economic relief efforts, USDA is working with agricultural and food businesses to ensure they have the resources and tools to thrive in 2021 and beyond," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "The funding associated with USDA Pandemic Assistance is meant to serve as a bridge from disruptions associated with the pandemic to longer-term investments to help build back a better food system. Financial relief to these essential producers, distributors, processors and other small agricultural businesses is a critical to get our food system back on track."

For the PRS grants, eligible entities are detailed in the Pandemic Response and Safety Grant Program forecast, USDA-AMS-TM-PRS-G-21-0011. Eligible entities should visit the PRS grant portal at usda-prs.grantsolutions.gov for complete information on the program, including how to obtain a free of charge DUNS Number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) BEFORE applying for this program. On September 23, USDA will issue another announcement indicating that entities may submit their applications through the grant portal; entities will need their DUNS number to submit an application.

For the Seafood PRS grants, USDA will allocate block grant funding to U.S. states and territories based on a formula that considers economic activity as demonstrated through commercial fisheries landings. Eligible entities are state agencies as detailed in the Seafood Processors Pandemic Response and Safety Block Grant Program forecast, USDA-AMS-TM-SPRS-G-21-0012. The state agency will then provide funds to seafood processing facilities and processing vessels. Seafood processors and processing vessels should apply directly through their State agency; seafood processors and processing vessels should not apply through PRS and should instead contact their state agency for financial assistance once USDA awards funds to states. A listing of state contacts will be made available on the USDA website. Tribal government owned eligible entities may apply directly to USDA, details of which will be developed through tribal consultation in conjunction with Office of Tribal Relations.

Updated information regarding the PRS and Seafood PRS programs will be available on the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) website: www.ams.usda.gov.

Any grant application submitted after the due date will not be considered unless the applicant provides documentation of an extenuating circumstance that prevented their timely submission of the grant application. Read more in AMS Late and Non-Responsive Application Policy (PDF, 431 KB).

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov. ◆

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Alternatives for Disbudding of Dairy Calves

By Brad Heins, PhD and Hannah Phillips, PhD, West Central Research and Outreach Center, University of Minnesota

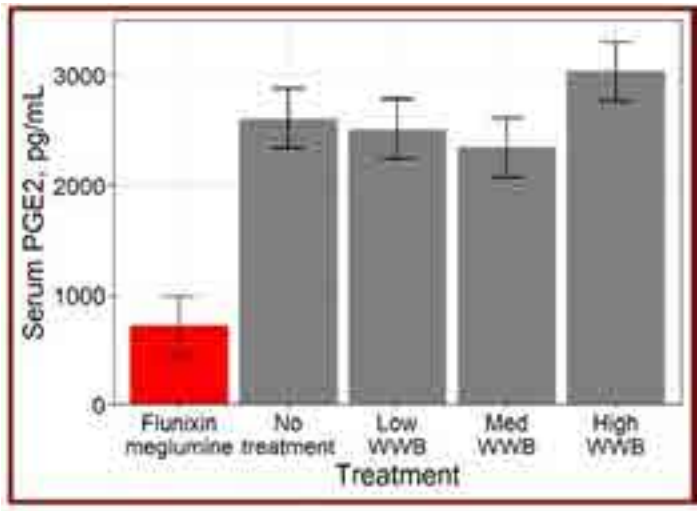
This article originally appeared online September 6, 2021, and is reprinted with permission

Dairy calves commonly experience painful disbudding procedures as a part of the standard of care. Approximately half (52%) of pre-weaned dairy calves are disbudded prior to 8 weeks of age, but only 28% of disbudded calves are given pain mitigation therapies for the procedure. Furthermore, a survey of 189 organic dairies in the US indicated that only 26% use a local analgesic, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug or sedation to relieve pain related to horn removal procedures. Organic-approved options for pain management are limited to substances approved by the USDA National Organic Program. However, even those permitted by the National Organic Program face barriers to common use, such as opposition by farmers, difficulty of administering and a lack of Food and Drug Administration approval for use in cattle. Despite this reluctance to implement pain alleviation methods, some organic farmers have expressed interest in or currently implement plant-based alternatives.

The most popular pain management method is lidocaine injected as a cornual nerve block. Although lidocaine reduces pain and stress, it may be an obstacle for some producers. Lidocaine must be injected into the cornual nerve, which is very close to the eye, the injection itself causes pain, and calves feel pain once the numbing effect dissipates. There has been recent consumer and producer interest in natural, noninvasive treatments, leading producers to consider using herbal medicine. However, there is little research on the effectiveness of herbal-based medicine.

White willow bark has shown to be a useful analgesia in humans, and its utility to alleviate pain in calves remains of interest, especially for organic dairy producers. Commonly, white willow bark is used in combination with other medicinal herbs and analgesics to alleviate inflammatory pain in disbudded calves under organic management, but there is no evidence on whether white willow bark has any effects on inflammation in calves. At the University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center dairy in Morris, MN we wanted to assess the effects of intravenous flunixin meglumine injection (Banamine®) and 3 oral doses of white willow bark on inflammation and salicylic acid concentrations in healthy calves.

We used 25 crossbred bull calves for the study and seven days prior to the study, calves were acclimated to handling and restraint before disbudding. During each of 2 treatment periods, calves were assigned to receive either 57.6 mg/kg oral white willow bark (LOW), 115.1 mg/kg oral white willow bark (MED), 230.3 mg/kg oral white willow bark (HIGH), 2.2 mg/kg i.v. flunixin meglumine (FM) or no treatment (NT). Flunixin meglumine lowered inflammation



Flunixin reduced inflammation compared to white willow bark in dairy bull calves

(see Figure), while the white willow bark was ineffective at reducing inflammation and achieving a minimum plasma salicylic acid concentration necessary for analgesia in calves.

The estimated amount of salicin needed to achieve analgesia in calves is quite large considering that white willow bark has a minute amount of salicin. Even if a standardized white willow bark extract, such as a 15% salicin product was used, it would have to be given at a total dose of approximately 6,933 to 9,707 mg/kg (equivalent to 1,040 to 1,456 mg/kg of salicin). This dose could potentially be given over 1 to 3 days in drinking water or milk as demonstrated with aspirin in other studies. However, this method may be impracticable considering time and financial constraints. Furthermore, there is currently no evidentiary support on whether white willow bark at high doses given over several days has any effect on inflammation in calves. Results of this study indicate that the white willow bark doses used in this experiment are unsuitable for producing analgesia in calves. Flunixin meglumine lowered inflammation, while the white willow bark was ineffective at reducing inflammation. In the future, this research project will look at additional alternative methods for disbudding and pain management and provide scientific evidence to producers. ◆

Brad Heins, Associate Professor, Dairy, West Central Research and Outreach Center, 46352 State Hwy 329, Morris, MN 56267, can be reached at hein0106@umn.edu, 320-589-1711 ext. 2118. Hannah Phillips, PhD candidate in Animal Science with a Doctoral Minor in Statistics at the University of Minnesota (graduated May 2021)

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Pay And Feed Prices September/October 2021

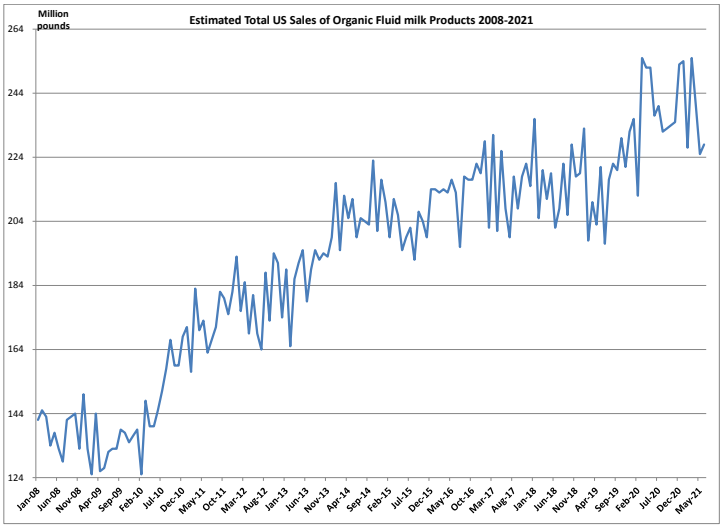
By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

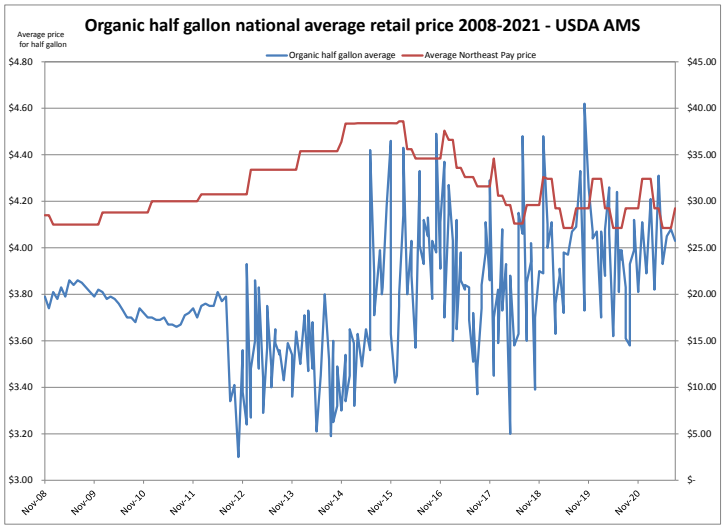
Retail sales of organic milk are still going through a pandemic curve, not following any of the usual patterns of organic milk sales so we cannot draw any long-term conclusions from this data. In June 2021, 3.4 billion pounds of packaged fluid milk products were shipped by milk handlers as reported by USDA AMS. This was 6.7 percent lower than a year earlier. Estimated sales of total conventional fluid milk products decreased 6.9 percent from June 2020, and estimated sales of total organic fluid milk products decreased 3.7 percent from a year earlier. Sales of organic milk fluid products has decreased slightly year to date by just less than 1 percent. There are no reports on how much organic milk was used in manufacturing.

The USDA AMS reported that 104 million pounds of Organic Whole Milk at retail was sold in June 2021, an increase of 2.1% over the amount sold in June 2020. The total of all Organic Fat Reduced Milk at retail for June 2021 was 124 million pounds which is 8.1% less than June 2020. In total, there was a drop of 3.7% in sales of retail organic milk in June 2021 as compared with June 2020.

Federal Milk Market Order 1(FMMO-1), in New England, reports utilization of types of organic milk and cream by pool plants. In July 2021, Class 1 utilization of organic whole milk totaled 11.6 million pounds, declining from 13.3 million pounds the previous year. The utilization of organic reduced fat milk in July this year, 14.0 million pounds, increased from 13.4 million pounds a year earlier. Year-to-date, there has been an increase of 17.4 million pounds of organic milk utilized as retail packaged product in the FMMO-1 from January to July 2021 as compared to January to July 2020.

The August 2021 USDA AMS in-store retail surveys of selected supermarkets in twenty-nine U.S. cities show the retail prices of organic whole milk, half gallon containers. Prices range from $3.15 in Indianapolis, IN, to $5.99 in Pittsburgh, PA. The simple average price for August 2021 is $4.15, up 3 cents from last month. The difference between the half gallon conventional milk price, $2.64, and the half gallon organic milk price, $4.17, is an organic premium of $1.53. The price spread between organic and conventional milk, half gallon package, declined $0.45 from the last retail survey.

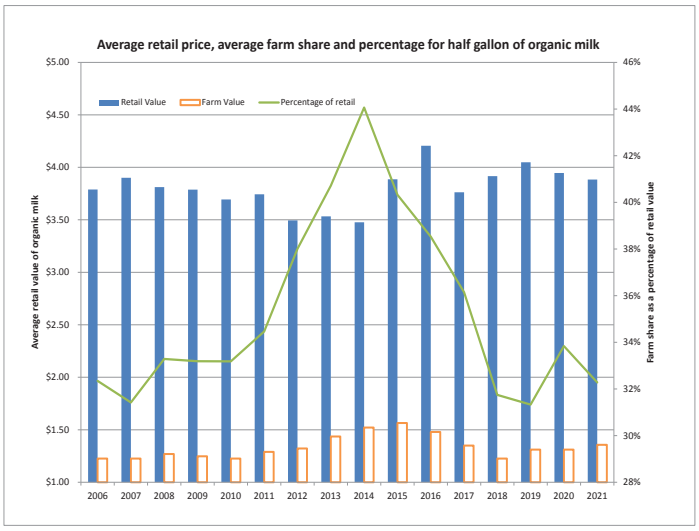


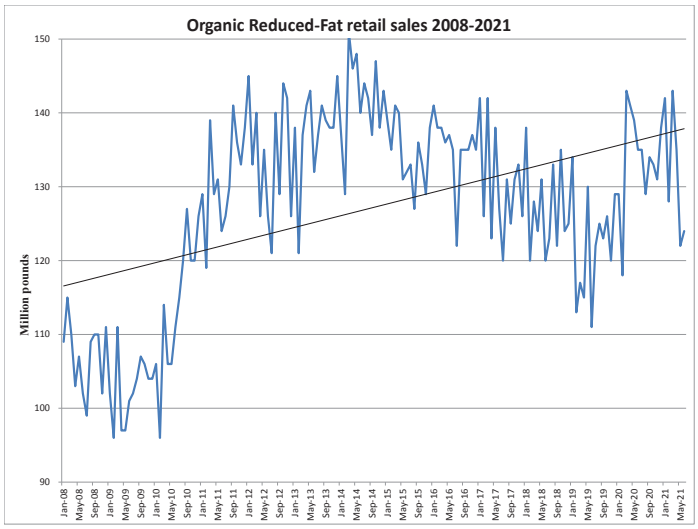


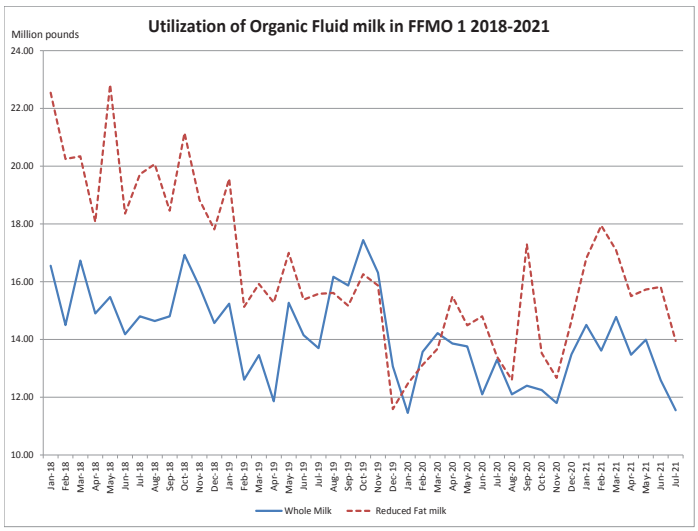
October 2021 will see the annual meetings for Maple Hill producers and hopefully will confirm the pay price moving forward. Producers believe their pay price will be cut by as much as $2 per hundred pounds. Producers are expecting some clarity about how many dairies will lose their contracts at the end of the year as there are reports that sales have increased in 2021.

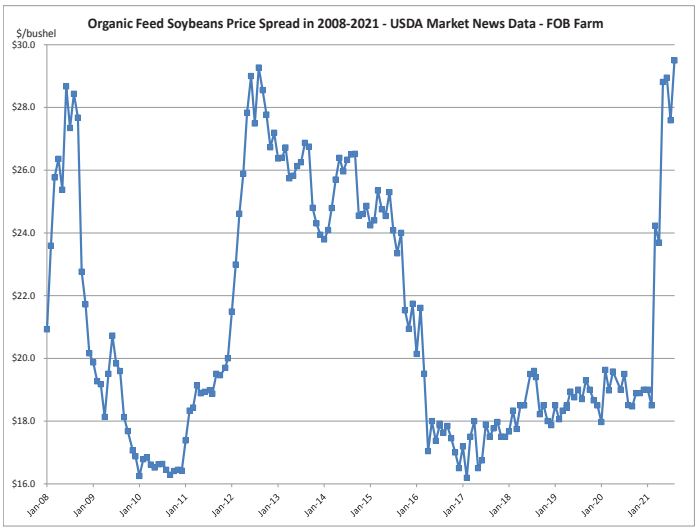
CROPP Cooperative reports that their Grass Fed sales are increasing which holds out some hope that they may be able to take on some of the Maple Hill producers. CROPP Cooperative remains committed to working with all the dairies that lost their contract with Danone but cannot provide any guarantee that they will be able to join the cooperative. CROPP producers are still in a situation of a supply management quota and any actions to support non-members will have to take into account the effect on other cooperative member-owners. ◆

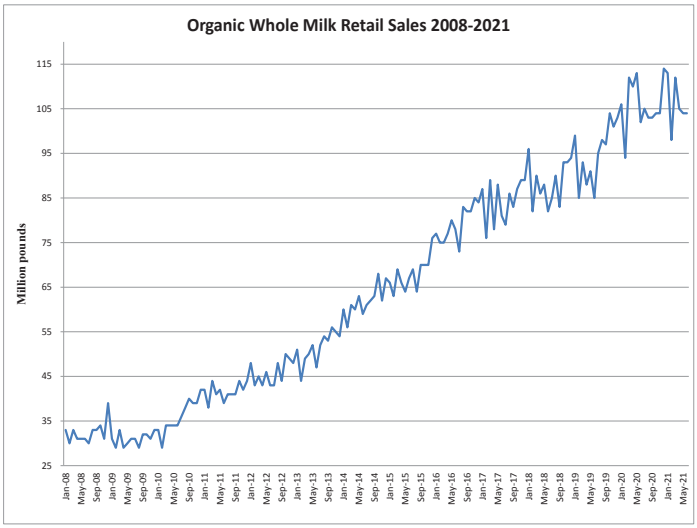
ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

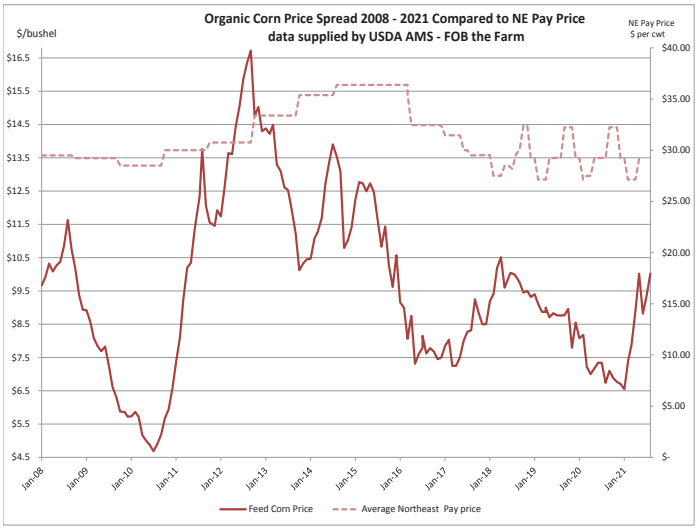












The 21st Annual

NODPA Field Days

Lead Sponsors

WOLFE'S NECK CENTER FOR AGRICULTURE & THE ENVIRONMENT

FARM CREDIT EAST

LAKEVIEW ORGANIC GRAIN

MORRISON'S CUSTOM FEEDS

Sponsors

Celebrating 40 Years of Growing Strong AGRI•DYNAMICS

NOFA-NY NORTHEAST ORGANIC FARMING ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK

ORGANIC VALLEY

Stonyfield ORGANIC

PASTURE WALK – WNC

Pasture walk begins at the Mallet Barn on Thursday morning, September 26, 2019, 8:30 – noon, Leah Puro will highlight research initiatives ranging from healthy soils research to dairy cow methane emissions to a global agricultural technology collaborative effort that puts the best agricultural knowledge into farmers' hands. Emerging soil health and soil carbon measurement technologies and tools will be showcased.

FARM TOUR

– WNC Organic Dairy and Farm

Friday afternoon's farm tour, led by Ben Gotschall and Andre Brito, will include a tour of the WNC Organic Dairy and Farm, research sites, and will feature a discussion of how the WNC mission is being carried out on the farm.

Supporters

BUFFALO MOLASSES

DANONE

DFA Dairy Farmers of America

KEMIN

MAINE ORGANIC FARMERS AND GARDENERS

The 21st Annual

NODPA Field Days

SCHEDULE: Thursday, September 30, 2021

Due to COVID-19, for everyone's safety please get vaccinated at least 2 weeks prior to attending Field Days. Non-vaccinated attendees will be required to wear a mask at all times indoors. We will follow all of WNC's and the state of Maine's safety protocols. One set of barn doors will remain open at all times, allowing healthy air flow, so please dress accordingly for all weather conditions.

8:30 – 11:30 am **PASTURE WALK:** Leah Puro, WNC Agricultural Research Coordinator will lead a pasture walk to spotlight the research projects taking place at WNC.
Please meet at the Mallet Barn for the pasture walk.

Noon-1:00 pm **REGISTRATION AND LUNCH**
The Mallet Barn, WNC,
625 Wolfe's Neck Road, Freeport, ME

1: 00 – 2:30 **The Forever Chemicals:** What the heck are perfluoroalkyl substances, aka PFAS, and why should we be concerned about them on our organic dairy farms?
Dr. Andrew Smith, Maine State Toxicologist
Tom Simones, Maine State Toxicologist
Jacki Perkins, MOFGA Dairy Specialist

2:30 – 3:00 **MILK BREAK**

3:00 – 4:30 **Ask the Vets Q & A:** A Roundtable Discussion.
Dr. Meghan Flanagan, DVM
and Dr. Simon Alexander, DVM

4:30 – 5:30 **TRADE SHOW AND SOCIAL HOUR**

5:30 – 7:00 **NODPA ANNUAL MEETING AND BANQUET:**
Liz Bawden & Kirk Arnold,
NODPA Board Co-Presidents,
and Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

7:00 – 9:00 **KEYNOTE PRESENTATION WITH DR. SIMON ALEXANDER, DVM**

9:00 pm **MEETING ADJOURNS**

Friday, October 1, 2021

6:30 – 9:00 am **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**
The Mallet Barn, WNC

7:00 – 9:00 **PRODUCER-ONLY MEETING:** A meeting in which producers can speak freely about all things related to the organic dairy industry.
Facilitated by Henry Perkins, Albion, ME, Past president, NODPA Board

9:00 – 10:30 PANEL DISCUSSION: **Invest In Your Forages like Your Dairy Depends on it–Because it Does!**
Panel members will describe the importance of investing in your forage system and the strategies they've integrated into their management systems. (For an in-depth description of this session, please read Sara Ziegler's session description in the July 2021 NODPA News, Field Days article, on page 16.)
Sara Ziegler, Soils and Crops Coordinator, University of VT Extension
Mike Brown, Meadowbrook Farm, China, ME, and Patrick Harrison, Harrison's Homegrown Organic Dairy Farm, Addison, VT.

10:30 – 11:00 **INDUSTRY AND POLICY NEWS: Updates on the issues that are critical to all organic dairy farmers.**
Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

11:00 – Noon **FARM TOUR PREVIEW: Introduction to Wolfe's Neck Farm.** In preparation for the farm tour, Ben Gotschall and staff at WNC will discuss their mission, infrastructure and educational programs, including the Dairy Grazing Apprentice Program and other farmer training programs, and Andre Brito will describe their current research on feeding seaweed to cows to manage methane emissions.
Ben Gotschall, Dairy Farm Manager, WNC and Andre Brito, DVM, PhD., Associate Professor, Agriculture, Nutrition, and Food Science, University of NH

Noon – 1:15 pm **LUNCH**

1:15 **FARM TOUR: WNC Organic Dairy and Farm**
We will board the WNC wagons for a guided tour of the farm, research sites and grounds of WNC.

Supporters

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Can Seaweed Cut Methane Emissions on Dairy Farms?

Expert Sees Dramatic Reduction When Cows Consume Seaweed Supplement

By Diane Nelson

This article was originally published on the University of California, Davis website and is reprinted with permission. To view a short video of this research, visit the UC Davis website: https://www.ucdavis.edu/news/can-seaweed-cut-methane-emissions-dairy-farms

Seaweed may be the super food dairy cattle need to reduce the amount of methane they burp into the atmosphere. Early results from research at the University of California, Davis, indicate that just a touch of the ocean algae in cattle feed could dramatically cut greenhouse gas emissions from California's 1.8 million dairy cows.

Professor Ermias Kebreab with the UC Davis Department of Animal Science is conducting research with dairy cows to find out if seaweed will reduce methane emissions from cattle. Results are promising, but not final. (Gregory Urquiaga/UC Davis)

"This is a very surprising and promising development," said animal science professor and Sesnon Endowed Chair Ermias Kebreab inside the UC Davis dairy barn where he is testing seaweed efficacy with 12 Holstein cows. "Results are not final, but so far we are seeing substantial emission reductions. This could help California's dairy farmers meet new methane-emission standards and sustainably produce the dairy products we need to feed the world."

Kebreab's project is the first to test seaweed on live dairy cattle anywhere in the world.

His team will publish preliminary findings in late June and begin further tests with additional cattle later this summer.

A Question of Digestion

Cows and other "ruminant" animals like goats and sheep burp continuously throughout the day as they digest food in their rumen, the first of four sections of their stomachs. The rumen is home to millions of microbes that help ferment and break down high-fiber food like grass and hay. This fermentation produces gases that combine to form methane, an especially potent heat-trapping gas.

So, as cattle perpetually burp and exhale, they emit methane. Cows also pass methane gas from the other end, but to a much lesser degree. Manure, too, is a source of methane emissions.

In an effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, California legislators recently adopted regulations requiring dairy farmers and other producers to cut methane emissions 40 percent by 2030.

"Since much of a dairy's methane emissions come from the animal itself, nutrition can play a big role in finding solutions," said Kebreab.

Molasses, Please

Testing supplements in cattle feed is not new. Kebreab and his colleagues at UC Davis and beyond are finding varying degrees of success with a wide range of feed additives. Some compounds work in the lab with simulated cattle digestive systems, but not with live animals. Researchers in England, for example, found success with curry supplements until they tested it with live cattle.

"The cows didn't like the curry," Kebreab said.

During lab tests last year, researchers in Australia found that just 2 percent seaweed in cattle feed could reduce methane emissions

A small amount of macro red algae, a type of seaweed pictured here, is mixed with molasses and cattle feed in a research project by UC Davis Professor Ermias Kebreab. (Gregory Urquiaga/UC Davis)

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

by 99 percent. The seaweed apparently inhibits an enzyme that contributes to methane production.

Judging from the reaction of the UC Davis cows, the seaweed is so far, so good — especially when cut with a bit of molasses.

"The molasses masks the smell," Kebreab said, smiling as two Holsteins nudged a gate that opens when it's time for their next meal. "They enjoy their feed."

To test seaweed efficacy, Kebreab and animal nutrition graduate student Breanne Roque have separated 12 cows into three groups. Two groups are fed with different doses of seaweed, and one group's feed has no seaweed at all. They rotate through the two-week feeding regimens with a weeklong seaweed fast in between.

Four times a day, cows get a snack from an open-air contraption that measures the methane in their breath as they eat the treat.

An open-air device measures the methane in the cows' breath as they eat a treat. (Gregory Urquiaga/UC Davis)

"The numbers we're seeing are amazing — well beyond the target that farmers will need to reach," Kebreab said.

Throughout the seaweed diet, the cows' milk is tested for qualities like yield, flavor and nutritional content.

A Love of Milk

Sustainable dairy production is not just an academic endeavor for Kebreab. He has loved milk since he was a young boy growing up in Eritrea, a country in the Horn of Africa.

"I was always amazed at how an animal that eats grass can produce such a high-quality food," Kebreab said. "And I loved the taste. We didn't get that much — maybe once or twice a

continued on page 22

NODPA Thanks all of our Sponsors, Supporters and Trade Show participants for supporting the 21st Annual NODPA Field Days

LEAD SPONSORS

- Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture and the Environment^
- Morrison's Feeds^
- Lakeview Organic Grain^
- Farm Credit East

SPONSORS

- Agri-Dynamics^
- NOFA-New York^
- Organic Valley/CROPP^ * **
- Stonyfield Organic^ **

SUPPORTERS

- Buffalo Molasses
- Dairy Farmers of America (DFA)
- Danone**
- Kemin Animal Nutrition^
- MOFGA^
- NOFA-Vermont^
- North American Kelp^
- Redmond Minerals^
- Thorvin*
- Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.

^ Trade Show * Product Donation ** Food Donation

September 30 & October 1, 2021
Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture and the Environment
The Mallet Barn, 625 Wolfe's Neck Road, Freeport, Maine 04032

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Can Seaweed Cut Methane Emissions on Dairy Farms?

continued from page 21

week. I wondered, can we find a way to produce enough milk for everyone?"

Kebreab is trying. Among his many projects, Kebreab recently received a $500,000 grant to help improve sustainable livestock production in Ethiopia and Burkina Faso, where dairy cattle produce 5 to 10 liters of milk per day compared to the 45 liters that cows in California can produce. He is working with researchers and funding from the University of Florida with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

"By improving the quality and quantity of dairy production in developing countries, we help families rise from poverty and malnutrition, and also reduce the carbon footprint of cattle worldwide," Kebreab said.

If seaweed proves to be a climate-smart supplement, producing it could be environmentally friendly, too. As Kebreab notes, "Growing seaweed doesn't require land, fresh water or fertilizer."

But there is still a lot to learn before farmers should consider feeding cattle seaweed.

"We have much more research to do to determine if seaweed supplements could provide a viable, long-term solution," Kebreab said. "But we are very encouraged by these early results." ◆

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

In March, 2021, an article was published with the results of ongoing research by the same research team. The following is an excerpt from that article, cited below: "Over the course of five months last summer (2020), Kebreab and Roque added scant amounts of seaweed to the diet of 21 beef cattle and tracked their weight gain and methane emissions. Cattle that consumed doses of about 80 grams (3 ounces) of seaweed gained as much weight as their herd mates while burping out 82 percent less methane into the atmosphere." (Excerpt from Feeding Cattle Seaweed Reduces Their Greenhouse Gas Emissions 82 Percent: New Long-Term Study Could Mean More Sustainable Burgers, by Diane Nelson, March 17, 2021) ◆

Author Dr. Diane Nelson, UC Davis College of Agricultural and Environment, is retired. Professor Ermias Kebreab, PhD, Professor of Sustainable Agriculture and Sesnon Endowed Chair, Department of Animal Science, University of California, Davis, can be reached at ekebreab@ucdavis.edu. Breanna MIchell Roque, Ph.D. graduate student, UC Davis, can be reached at bmroque@ucdavis.edu.

FEATURED FARM

SADDLERS RUN FARM, ALLENSVILLE, PA

continued from page 1

for harvesting feed. They've perfected a system in which they purchase all of their supplemental feed, which consists solely of high-quality, certified organic baleage. The decision to focus on grazing and herd management, and leave the growing of hay to someone else, was one of many which was made to enhance the economics of the dairy farm as it has evolved since its establishment in 2010.

Growing to Grassfed

Alvin has been milking cows since he was eight years old, and at age twenty purchased his own dairy farm. The Peachy's dairy was certified organic by PCO since the first day they shipped milk. But through his consulting work with other dairy farmers, he came to see that sustainable agriculture wasn't enough: he wanted to farm in a regenerative system which entailed excellent pasture management, with the goal of expediently building soil health.

The dairy began with 15 cows, milking in a tie-stall barn. In 2016, they added 30 heifers to the herd. Their per-cow production averaged 16,000 lbs. per year. Through the years, they began reducing the amount of grain being fed, and by 2018 were feeding no grain at all to their herd and continued to add cows - it is not a closed herd - to reach today's numbers of 75 milking head, five nurse cows, and a dozen dry cows, which is approximately the capacity for the land with the cows now being 100 percent grassfed, and all of the pasture acres utilized for grazing. This year is the first where they won't need all of their replacement heifers.

Per cow milk production has dropped to 11,000 lbs. on 100 percent grass, but the overall milk production has increased and is 30 percent higher than when the herd was half the size. The butterfat is about 4.2 percent on average, with the protein averaging 3.5 and other solids at about 5.6.

When the dairy completely went to no-grain feeding, they simultaneously increased the herd size to keep the milk production and total income steady, and to maximize the grass tonnage on the pasture. The more they have been able to add cow numbers on the same acres - enough to trample residue - the earthworms have become more prevalent and can now reduce that residue to just a layer of thatch by the time the 35 day minimum rest period is over. The earthworms till the fields, and help to maximize the available tonnage produced in those fields, Alvin said.

Worms in alfalfa ground.

The expense of maintaining horses - the family is Amish – required in order to produce their own feed was prohibitive. Instead, they opted to reduce the horsepower needed, converting to 100 percent grass-fed, and outsource their stored feed production. Even for producers utilizing heavy equipment and not horses, Alvin believes this simplified approach to meeting the cows' feed requirements has real benefits.

"We lowered our overhead by doing that, and by milking more cows in the grazing season," Alvin said. "That lowered our cost of operating on the dairy farm," while the increased focus on grazing management led to maximizing the number of cows the farm could support, and it optimized the time available for cow and herd management.

It also decreased their overall financial risk. In seasons where the weather is poor, they no longer have to cope with lower-quality feeds. The ability to purchase high-quality feed year-round as needed has increased the herd health and productivity.

"High-quality feed is really important to me. High-quality forages and well-fed animals" is the basis for herd health, Alvin said.

continued on page 24

FEATURED FARM

SADDLERS RUN FARM, ALLENSVILLE, PA

continued from page 23

The herd is primarily a three-breed cross of 25 percent Jersey, 25 percent Holstein and 50 percent Swedish Red genetics. Two years ago, Montbéliarde genetics were added, with Fleckvieh genetics added more recently. Breeding is done completely with bulls, some which are their own kept bull calves, and others which are rented or purchased.

"We breed for a more muscular animal," Alvin said, adding that they are seeking a good body condition score on 100 percent grass diets.

Grazing System

While the animals are provided with purchased high-quality supplemental feed, Alvin's focus on growing high-quality pasture forages which provide nutritionally sound, unlimited grazing during the early April - late December grazing season is crucial to the farm's success.

Alvin has concentrated on having diverse forages on the farm, and keeping their nutrient levels high by practicing astute grazing management. He does not practice mob grazing, or simple rotational grazing. His is a Management-Intensive Grazing system (MIG), which focuses on optimizing soil life - particularly earthworms - through grazing practices. His system is designed with the premise that 50 percent of the forage should be left in the paddock before the herd is removed and not returned to that paddock for a period of 35-45 days. Allowing that 35-40 day recovery period, particularly in the Northeast, is key to pasture health.

The region's dairy farmers often are "understocking and overgrazing" because they are not understanding how much grass there really is per acre.

"Good grazing management. Your farming success is going to depend on it," Alvin said.

That rotation period is crucial of the grazing plan. Alvin grazes by the concept of "taking the best and leaving the rest." Grazing tall - by letting the cows graze approximately 50 percent of the

The Saddler Run Farm dairy herd is primarily a three-breed cross of Jersey, Holstein and Swedish Red genetics.

plant, which can vary slightly depending on the crop and the season- and leaving the remainder to be trampled and honoring the recovery period are the practices he relies upon. Aggressively grazing the available pastures, and using animal numbers to control the growth and recovery time to allow the regrowth of the forages, is his focus.

By increasing the animals on the pasture, and increasing the pasture recovery time, grass is optimized. By taking 50 percent of the grass out, from consumption and trampling, the soil is left covered. This residue cools the soil and retains moisture, which the earthworm population needs to survive. The organic matter feeds the earthworms, who then till the earth, increasing the amount of CO2 released from the soil to be recaptured by the grass via photosynthesis. "The soil's oxygen levels increase, too, feeding the soil microbes. The pasture is able to produce more tonnage, and the forages are of higher-quality when this type of grazing management is practiced," he said.

Even though he works for Keystone Bio-Ag, Alvin believes that 80 percent of soil health comes from grazing management, with fertility regimes - feeding the soil biology - making up half of the remainder. The rest is weather-related. Alvin utilizes soil amendments such as gypsum, boron and Gro Pro Plus and also biological stimulants - particularly Advancing Eco-Agriculture products - to add fertility by feeding soil biology.

"I probably care more about the earthworms than I do about the cows," he said, only partially in jest. The soil health is just that important, and without it, the cows won't have the high-quality pasture forages to graze, and won't be as healthy or produce as much milk as they do.

Grazing Management

The milking herd has 82 dedicated acres for grazing. The herd changes pastures every 12 hours, following each milking. Alvin uses one-strand polywire electric fencing and reels with step-in fence posts to adjust the size of the paddocks quickly, based on pasture conditions.

The remaining cow groups - dry cows, heifers, calves and bulls - have a separate 68 dedicated pasture acres separate from the milking herd. The dry cows are on the same farm parcel as the milking herd, but they don't normally share pastures. The dry cows may - if the grass becomes too mature in a milking herd pasture, due to a greater than 45 day rotation - be moved into the pasture to eat the over-mature forages and trample the residue.

continued on page 26

Alvin Peachy believes that 80 percent of soil health comes from grazing management.

FEATURED FARM

SADDLERS RUN FARM, ALLENSVILLE, PA

continued from page 25

Calves and heifers are housed on acreage 35 miles south of the main farm from May 1st to early December, This land is a part of the overall 150 acres, and the animals are moved once per week to new pastures during the grazing season. They have access to water and shelter in all of the paddocks.

Alvin focuses on having a diversity of high-quality forages, and does so by planting different fields to varying species. He finds it easier to have diversity across paddocks, rather than relying on one very diverse pasture mix across all of the acreage. Having separate pastures in various forages greatly reduces the overall risk of not having enough pasture due to weather conditions.

Fifty percent of the farm is planted to perennial pastures - orchard grasses, meadow fescue, clovers, and native grasses. Five to eight percent of the acreage is in a dominant tall fescue pasture, which serves as the first to graze in the spring and last in the fall, and can serve a purpose similar to a sacrifice paddock during rainy periods, as the tall fescue can withstand those conditions. Pure alfalfa fields cover about 12 percent of his acreage, providing a hedge against drought. A mixture of orchard grass and alfalfa are found on the remaining acres.

Freestyle barn

The varying forage in the paddocks also work to take advantage of the spring flush over a longer period of time, as the forages mature at different rates.

To avoid bloat, the cows are not turned out into alfalfa during a drought once rain does occur. Really dry weather causes the alfalfa to store the nitrogen it has fixed in its roots. But once rain comes, a flush of nitrates is released into the plant, causing bloat, Alvin said. He grazes alfalfa at 10 percent bloom - just before it goes into reproductive mode - when it has maximized protein, and also has the most digestible fibers.

To insure enough energy, he focuses solely on forage quality, feeding no molasses or other supplements. Digestibility of forages and very high sugar content are the keys to making milk, Alvin said. Crude protein at 18-20 percent is his goal, year-round. The fat levels in the forages he grows run about four percent, which is indicative of healthy plants.

If the cows need more forage before the pastures have had enough time to rest, he switches to feeding supplemental baleage. His intake from pasture grazing remains well above the organic standards during the grazing season with a goal of 50 percent DMI from pasture grazing in-season. From mid-April to the end of July, the cows generally are on 100 percent pasture. They are fed the first baleage by early August, when they receive roughly 30 percent DMI from baleage, which

FEATURED FARM

continues through Thanksgiving, when they are on 100 percent stored feed.

During the winter, the cows are provided with free choice baleage - he does not feed any dry hay. The baleage is high-quality, with a good portion of it being "hay-in-a-day." This technique enhances the forage sugar content, as the cut grass is baled when it has retained the most captured sugars from photosynthesis, rather than allowed to remain overnight, when that captured sugar is lost.

"It's a higher sugar content feed. Cows prefer this," Alvin said. And the hay-in-a-day baleage costs the same as standard baleage, so there is more nutrition without added cost.

Winter baleage is fed primarily on the outdoor concrete pad, with only a small amount available in the 54 foot by 140 foot, freestall barn with 87 stalls. This barn, build in 2015, is a hoop structure. The animals have an outdoors walk of a 100' to the milking parlor. The liquid manure from the barn is stored in a pit until it is exported off of the farm.

The dry cows and heifers are housed in a bedded pack pole barn during the non-grazing season, with free access to the outdoors. The bedded pack is spread, along with gypsum and biological stimulants, on one-third of the farm's pastures each year.

Calf Care and Herd Health

Calving is year-round, although they do prefer to calve in the spring and ideally, in the fall. Nurse cows are used, with two or three calves being nursed per cow, at a time. The nurse cows are kept with the milking herd, and the calves are housed in a group pen, with four to eight calves per pen, in an open-sided, well ventilated pole barn.

The calves do not exhibit cross-sucking behaviors. By keeping the nurse cows in the pen for a longer period of time, the calves are allowed to suck as much as they want, and undesired sucking doesn't occur once the nurse cows leave the pen.

continued on page 28

Saddlers Run Farm

FEATURED FARM

The herd changes pastures every 12 hours following milking.

SADDLERS RUN FARM, ALLENSVILLE, PA

continued from page 27

The calves have access to fresh water at all times, as well as to free-choice hay beginning at one week of age.

"Feed them from the best hay you have," Alvin said, providing them optimal nutrition for growth.

The calves are weaned at five or six months of age and the process is a bit different depending on when the calves were born. "Weaned animals tend to be the most neglected on many farms, and that is a mistake, Alvin said. These animals are going to be the replacement milking herd, and need to have proper nutrition and excellent baseline health."

Weaned calves are grouped with the smallest heifers and rotationally graze with them. Spring-weaned calves would graze throughout the summer. Ideally, however, Alvin would prefer the majority of the calves to be spring-born, and to remain in the barn over the winter, and be turned out to graze at eight or nine months old.

"The older they are, the less susceptible to parasites" when they do get onto pasture, he said.

The calves do not receive any routine vaccinations, nor does the rest of the herd. If diarrhea is a problem, they will vaccinate a few calves as needed. There really aren't any calf health problems - or any herd health problems - on the farm, Alvin said

The medicine cabinet contents include calcium, and three different kinds of boluses for cows, plus one for calves. They do not use tinctures or supplements other than free choice Redmond SR50 sea salt and conditioner mix, offered year-round to the entire herd. Agri-Dynamic Winter-mune supplement, which supplies vitamins A, D, and E and is available free-choice to the milking herd in the non-grazing season.

Balancing the all-grass ration requires paying attention to body condition; MUNs, which Alvin uses as a very good indicator of protein the cow is actually consuming; rumen fill; and observing cow patties. He does not use a nutritionist to regularly balance the ration. If there are any questions regarding balancing the forage nutrition, Alvin calls Organic Valley's ruminant nutritionist, Dr. Silvia Abel-Caines for assistance.

FEATURED FARM

Cow grazing alfalfa.

They use a veterinarian only for pregnancy checks, or any rare calving issues.

The farm didn't have any herd health issues prior to going to 100% grass, and they do not have any now. When they went grassfed, they did see an increase in reproduction rates and animal longevity. Alvin believes that a reduction of stress when going completely grassfed was the contributing factor to gains in animal health.

A current issue is the somatic cell count, which is normally between 120,000 and 160,000. The SCC has been much higher the past two months, which Alvin thinks is due to the extreme wet weather, and the cows lying down on wet pastures.

Formula for Success

While Marianne helps with the milking, Alvin works as a crop consultant and Keystone Bio-Ag dealer. And the Peachy's actually operate two separate farm businesses- a hay crop farming operation, and the dairy.

"We also own our own business (Triple TTT Farms) which produces forage on 550 acres, selling hay and baleage to surrounding communities, and which the dairy is buying from at the market price," Alvin explained.

While that approach may not be common, Alvin knows that his farm has become more profitable, and can remain so, because they've focused on producing more milk with less overhead by optimizing the pasture, purchasing very high-quality supplemental feed, and enhancing the overall efficiency on the farm.

"I do a lot of consulting, and I see what some of the biggest struggles are," Alvin said. "Think out of the box if you want to be profitable in farming."

Even in a drought year, while simultaneously having deductions taken from their milk check for producing more than their quota, and shipping grassmilk to Organic Valley's standard organic pool - which they did for several years before finally being accepted into the grassmilk pool in January 2021 - Alvin's focus on dairy economics kept the farm profitable.

His bottom line: "understand your finances." That is exactly what he's done, implementing changes which have led the dairy to thrive, even as the market fluctuates, the weather is extreme, and the farm has grown.

continued on page 30

FEATURED FARM

SADDLERS RUN FARM, ALLENSVILLE, PA

continued from page 29

While purchasing baleage comes with a cost, it also adds minerals to the farm, and allows the farm to operate without the equipment, repairs, fuel or feed costs for horses, and more. It allows him to farm in a lean, low-input manner, and has maximized the dairy's net income. Their net income is greater than 50 percent of their gross, so cash flow is not a problem. On a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis in 2020, with the worst drought in 80 years in their region, plus $17,000 of quota deductions and selling grassmilk to the regular organic pool, they were able to make $50.00/hour on a FTE basis.

That, Alvin said, is how a dairy farm can insure they are profitable, and able to thrive.

The dairy's net income - after all expenses - has increased due to the changes that have been made on the farm since its inception. Feeding no-grain; converting a tie stall barn to a freestall in 2015; adding a swing 8 pit parlor in 2018; and opting to purchase in all stored feed: all were intrinsic to the dairy's success.

Alvin has his own proprietary "Peachy Dairy Log," which is done on paper copy and is available in a software system that tracks milk production, components, feed costs and more, enabling him to accurately measure the cost of production. (COP). The software is being used by 30-50 other dairy farmers, too. Alvin's COP recently has been about $16.42/cwt, which would be closer to $13.00/cwt if there had not been a drought.

Alvin's advice to other organic and grassfed dairy farmers is to "believe in what we do. Believe in regenerative agriculture" And, of course, "understand finances."

"In Regenerative agriculture, you need to make decisions based on numbers and not the neighbors,' he said. ◆

To find out more details on Alvin's methods of dairy farming success, listen to this recent Regenerative Agriculture Podcast, with host John Kempf, who interviewed Alvin in April 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glzZFrzdhuI. He was also recently featured on Penn State's "Bovine Banter," available here: https://extension.psu.edu/bovine-banter

Alvin and Marianne Peachy can be reached at Saddlers Run Farm 12337 Metztown Rd. Allensville Pa 17002, 717-935-2413.

NET UPDATE

Recent ODairy Discussions

By Liz Bawden,
Organic Dairy Farmer, NODPA Co-President

A producer was building a new milking parlor and asked the group for recommendations for a pump to go in the pit's floor drain. One farmer used a Zoeller #98 cast iron sump pump, but care must be taken to avoid putting solids down the drain which will eventually have to be cleared from the impellers. Another producer recommended a ¾ hp septic pump from Home Depot –"doing quite fine and is rather inexpensive". A third producer recommended a 1 hp septic pump; he knows that a ½ hp would be too small to handle the solids.

A farmer asked for information about getting her cows tested for A2 genetics. Two farmers shared that Neogen (tests are about $15) in Nebraska was the quickest and cheapest; two others used the Veterinary Genetics Lab at the University of California at Davis (tests are about $25).

A 16 year-old cow in fine health became suddenly listless and off-feed. She ran a fever and had mastitis. One vet suggested that she be checked for hardware; another suggested an IV mixture of dextrose, flunixin (1 ml/100 lbs.), 250 ml of Vitamin C, and a 500 ml bottle of CMPK. If it is decided to use antibiotics to save the cow, then it was suggested that 60-100ml LA-200 (oxytetracycline 200mg/ml) be added to the mix. Then call your certifier and make a plan to remove the animal from the herd when she returns to health.

Farmers expressed surprise, anger, and fear over the recent news that Danone/Horizon will pull out of New England and the northern counties in New York by August of 2022. They expressed empathy for those affected and offered some early suggestions on where we may go from here. ◆

Subscribing to ODairy:

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

To sign up for the ODairy listserv, go to:
www.nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml

Calendar

September 22 from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

MEET YOUR FARMER: TWIN OAKS DAIRY @ TWIN OAKS DAIRY, 3185 NY-13, TRUXTON, NY 13158

Join farmers Kathie and Kirk Arnold on a tour of Twin Oaks Dairy LLC, which has been shipping certified organic milk since 1998. Rotational grazing is a foundational principle of the farm that keeps soils covered and sequestering carbon. They recently started planting trees in some of their pastures in a foray into silvopasture. This is their second year in making compost using the Elaine Ingham Bio Complete composting recipe and process.

A new 136 stall freestall barn for the milking herd was built in 2016. It features a double 12 rapid exit parallel parlor, automatic sort gate, alley scrapers, automatic side curtains, insulated cathedral ceiling, ventilation chimneys, waterbeds, activity system, and a feed pusher robot. Calves are group raised on milk for three months using mob feeders. Once weaned, calves are on pasture for the grazing season as are all other heifers and dry cows.

The field days in this series are open farm days intended to strengthen the connection between farmers and their surrounding communities. Meet Your Farmer events uplift how NOFA-NY farms prioritize the health of people and planet through ecologically sound innovations, and show the impact of purchasing directly from farmers. Registration is required. Space is limited. For more information and to register, visit the NOFA-NY webpage: https://nofany.org/education/field-days/.

Friday, October 1st – 10:00 am to 2:30 pm

LAYING OUT A GRAZING SYSTEM: A PROGRAM FOR VETERANS –– GREAT NORTHERN FARM, 1716 FISK ROAD, EATON (MADISON COUNTY)

The Cornell Small Farms Veterans Farm-Ops Program, and the Canandaigua VA, in collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chenango County and assistance from the Chobani Foundation will be offering this program on how to set up a grazing and fencing program for livestock. Any Active-Duty Military and Veterans residing in NY State are eligible to attend: non-veterans will be allowed on a space available basis and registration will be capped at 20 attendees. Great Northern Farm is owned and operated by Army Veteran and longtime farmer and CCE Grazing, Forestry, and Animal Science Educator Rich Taber and his wife Wendy. The Tabers have been raising beef cattle, sheep, and dairy heifers on the farm for years. Rich has completely redesigned the grazing system during the 2021 grazing season. On the 165-acre farm there are 30 acres of improved rotational grazing, twelve acres of unimproved grazing, and a five-acre winter sacrifice/feeding lot. Rich will explain how he reclaims old fields using brush hogs, native seedbanks, a few fertility inputs, and animals, using the principles of regenerative agriculture, and as inexpensively as possible. This year he subdivided the 30 acres of grazing into seven paddocks, using electrified rope for the divisions. After lunch a walk around the farm will be used to show how the theories of grazing have been applied to this cold, high elevation property. Cost of attending will be free, with a limit of 20 attendees, preference being given to Veterans. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. All attendees will be provided (at no cost to the attendees) with a copy of Sarah Flack's excellent book "The Art and Science of Grazing", which retails for $30.00. Pre-registration is required and can be done by phone; leave a message at 607-334-5841 ext. 1121 or email rbt44@cornell.edu not later than Wednesday, September 28, 2021. Please leave your name, Veteran status, phone number, and a good email contact so we can contact you. Further questions can be directed to Rich Taber at email rbt44@cornell.edu or phone 607-334-5841, ext. 1121.

October 13, 2021, 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm

INTRO TO ORGANIC COVER CROPS (CO-HOSTED BY CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF SUFFOLK COUNTY) @ RESTORATION FARM, 140 BETHPAGE-SWEET HOLLOW RD, OLD BETHPAGE, NY 11804

Join us for a tour of Restoration Farm and learn about the many benefits organic cover crops, including soil health, weed control, tillage reduction, erosion prevention, forage for chickens, and pollinator habitat for bees. Hosted by CCE Soil Scientist, Debbie Aller, and Caroline Fanning and Dan Holmes of Restoration Farm. Registration is required. Space is limited. For more information and to register, visit the NOFA-NY webpage: https://nofany.org/education/field-days/.

October 26, 2021, 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm

INTRO TO SOIL HEALTH AND SOIL CARBON PROXY TESTING (CO-HOSTED BY CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF SUFFOLK COUNTY) @ EARLY GIRL FARM, 279 SOUTH COUNTRY RD, BROOKHAVEN, NY 11719

Join us for an on-farm demonstration of the NOFA/Mass soil carbon proxy protocols. Learn how soils support life and store carbon, and hear about one farmer's journey to rehabilitate depleted soils. Hosted by Long Island Organic Transition Educator, Whitney Beaman, CCE Soil Scientist, Debbie Aller,

and Patty Gentry of Early Girl Farm. Registration is required. Space is limited. For more information and to register, visit the NOFA-NY webpage: https://nofany.org/education/field-days/.

December 6 – 9, 2021

8TH NATIONAL GRAZING LANDS CONFERENCE, NATIONAL GRAZING LANDS COALITION

EMBASSY SUITES KINGSTON PLANTATION, MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA

This conference promotes grazing land sustainability by bringing together hundreds of land managers from across the nation for education and technological advancements. The 8NGLC will provide those attending an opportunity to gain the latest information in scientific and applied research, and practical, workable applications for building partnerships. The conference is being planned as an in-person event, but registration may be limited to the first 300 registrants. To learn more and register, visit the conference website: https://web.cvent.com/event/ae591bd7-9a77-47e5-86c1-531aefef3656/summary

Classified Ads

ANIMALS

FOR SALE: Cows

Certified organic, certified 100% grass-fed, high butterfat, low SCC. Mostly purebred Jersey cows. Herd of 36 cows and bred heifers, asking $60,000.

Willing to part out in the following 2 groups, or smaller groups if necessary:

- Group 1 is A2A2 confirmed. 20 animals, asking $36,000:11 cows due Dec-March; 4 heifers due Dec-January; 3 short bred heifers; 2 3-titters, due Jan-Feb.
- Group 2 is A1A2. 16 animals, asking $25,000: 7 cows due Dec-March; 3 bred heifers, 2 due in Dec and 1 in April; 6 short bred cows.

Email doneganfamilyfarm@gmail.com for herd stats and photos of each group, or call Joe at (802) 777-9529 with questions.

Location: Northern Vermont

FOR SALE: Certified Organic and Grassfed Cows and Heifers A2A2 and A1A2 are available; 13 cows and 10+ Heifers, mostly Jersey crosses. Call Henry Stoltzfus, 607-869-4847

Location: Ovid, NY

FOR SALE: 2 beautiful breeding age organic dairy heifers. We hope to keep one on our farm and will keep the one that does not get purchased. They are very well behaved, easy to handle and one is already bred - though not confirmed pregnant. We are determining their A2A2 status right now. These heifers have been raised on 100% pasture and dry hay and are certified organic by VOF. For more information or to arrange seeing them, please contact Lisa, at Lmccrory560@gmail.com.

Location: Bethel, VT

FOR SALE: Registered Jersey Cattle. Pregnant heifers plus a few young milk cows. Mostly A1/A2, some A2/A2 heifers, one polled. Heifers due to freshen from Dec 2021 to Mar 2022. All hand raised "show" animals. Excellent for backyard or homestead farming or starting a show string. Contact Ally at 717-320-2696, dvmgrove@gmail.com

Location: Central Pennsylvania

FOR SALE: Herd dispersal, Good Oak Farm, Certified Organic Ayrshire and Jersey herd. On test and registered. Over 20 very, very good cows either milking or due. Very calm, well-mannered herd raised with kids and other animals. Currently receiving mainly pasture, with very little grain. Call Jimmy at (802) 234-9588 (house phone) or (802) 855-3546 (cell).

Location: Royalton, VT

FOR SALE: 10 certified organic Jersey cows in various stages of lactation. $1500/each. Call Daniel at 814-349-5675, x0

Location: Centre County, PA

HAY/FEED

FOR SALE: NOFA-NY Organic BALEAGE (Mixed Grass and Alfalfa) 4x4 round bales. **DRY HAY and BEDDING HAY** 4 x 4 1/2 round bales, 2021 crop. Contact Jeff @ Mitchell Farm 607-566-8477 or Mitchellorganics@hotmail.com

Location: Avoca, NY- Steuben County

EQUIPMENT

FOR SALE:

- **150' of barn cleaner chain** that had no more than two years of use on it before we moved into our new barn. It has 13" paddles and 16" spacing between paddles. All corner boxes come along with it plus extra parts, but we no longer have the Berg head. Free for its removal from the barn.
- **40 CK replacement tie stalls** in good shape--free for the taking out from the concrete curb. Some are already out.
- **Several poly cattle bowl waterers** $10 each.
- **Delaval stainless steel pipeline receiver jar and variable frequency drive pump** only used a couple years.
- **Around 150+ pasture mattresses** (rubber crumb filled mattresses), free.

For more information, contact Kathie Arnold at Twin Oaks Dairy LLC, 3175 State Route 13, Truxton, NY, 607-423-8981, kathieyarnold@gmail.com

FOR SALE: 100 gallon Cheese Vat. $2500.00 Call Henry Stoltzfus, 607-869-4847

Location: Ovid, NY

FOR SALE:

- **Dari Kool 500 gallon stainless bulk tank with compressor** $500.00
- **Nu Pulse 2" stainless pipeline** for 58 cows, complete, $2500.00
- **WW Cattle Trailer** $6500.00
- **New Holland 1034 bale wagon** $3000.00
- **14x35 and 20x75 silo**: yours for take-down

Everything has been well care for. Call Cathy: 320-859-4141

Location: Osakis, MN

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

PASA is hiring!

We're seeking four people who are passionate about sustainable farming and food systems to join our team in these new roles:

- **Dairy Grazing Program Manager** (full-time) to lead our dairy programming, manage a new multi-year project, and grow our network of dairy farmers interested in grazing.
- **Diversified Vegetable Pre-Apprenticeship Program Associate** (full-time) to provide administrative and educational support for our pre-apprenticeship and cultivate new partnerships to grow the program.
- **Community Development Director** (full-time) to ignite enthusiasm to financially support Pasa's mission and ensure that donors are engaged with our work.
- **Human Resources Intern** (paid) to work closely with Pasa staff to support our ongoing HR needs while gaining hands-on experience.

For more information, visit their website: http://pasafarming.org/jobs-internships/

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA)
c/o Ed Maltby
30 Keets Road
Deerfield, MA 01342

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SPRINGFIELD, MA
PERMIT NO. 1094

Save the Dates! Thursday, September 30th and Friday, October 1st

The 21st Annual NODPA Field Days

Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture and the Environment

Freeport, Maine

For more details see Page 18.

Then visit
NODPA's website:
https://nodpa.com/p/117/