

# NODPA NEWS

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

## CONTENTS:

AUGUST 2003

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

WWW.NODPA.COM

### Organic Industry News



## Organic Industry News

**Dean Foods Acquires Horizon** 1

### Dean Foods Company to Acquire Horizon

as milk and milk-based beverages, ice

**NOSB & NOP Requesting Comments** 2

Dean Foods Company (NYSE: DF) and Horizon Organic Holding Corporation (Nasdaq: HCOV) announced the signing of a definitive agreement by which Dean Foods will acquire the 87% equity interest in Horizon Organic it does not currently own. Dean Foods will purchase the remaining 87% interest in Horizon Organic for a cash price of approximately \$216 million, or \$24 per share and will assume approximately \$40 million in debt. The transaction, which was approved by the board of directors of both companies, is expected to close during the fourth quarter of 2003. The transaction is subject to approval by Horizon Organic's shareholders and expiration of the waiting period under the Hart-Scott Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act.

Horizon Organic reported revenues of approximately \$187 million, and in April 2003, the company announced that it had reached a milestone of \$200 million in annual sales. Horizon Organic's product line in the United States includes organic milk, a full line of organic dairy products and organic juices, pudding, fruit jels and eggs. In the U.K., the company markets and sells organic milk, yogurt and butter under the Rachel's Organic brand.

cream, coffee creamers, half and half, whipping cream, whipped toppings, sour cream, cottage cheese, yogurt, dips, dressings and soy milk. The company is also a leading supplier of pickles and other specialty food products, juice, juice drinks and water. The company operates over 120 plants in 36 U.S. states and Spain, and employs approximately 28,000 people.

**NODPA Fundraising: Continuing Success** 2

**Genetically Modifying Consumer Rights** 3

**The Truth in Labeling** 4

**Is Organic Dairy Research Coming of Age?** 8

**More Milk Sought in NE** 9

### Organic Production



**Feature Farm: Spring Brook Farm** 10

**Organic Manure vs. Fertilizer Manure** 11

**Managing Mastitis with DHIA Cell Counts** 13

### Net Update



**O-Dairy Deals with Flies** 15

**Sustainable Ag. Grants for Northeast Farmers** 16

**NODPA Reps** 17

**Calendar** 18

**Resources** 19

Horizon Organic markets the leading brand of certified organic foods in the United States and the leading brand of certified organic milk in both the United States and the United Kingdom. In 2002,

Horizon Organic will continue to be headquartered in Boulder, Colorado and Chuck Marcy will report to Gregg Engles. Dean Foods expects the transaction to be neutral to slightly accretive to earnings in the first full year after closing. In 2004, the financial results of the business will be reported within the Dean Branded Products Group.

Dean Foods Company is one of the nation's leading food and beverage companies. The company produces a full line of company-branded and private label dairy products such

SOURCE Dean Foods Company; Horizon Organic Holding Corporation

### NORTHEAST ORGANIC DAIRY PRODUCERS ALLIANCE

#### MISSION STATEMENT

To enable organic family dairy farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the well being of the organic dairy industry as a whole.

## NOSB & NOP Needs to Hear from Organic Dairy Producers

Compiled By Kathie Arnold

The National Organic Standards Board is requesting comments from organic dairy producers regarding the Replacement Dairy Animal issue.

In the words of George Siemon, Chair of the NOSB Livestock Committee, "Since the release of the Final Organic Rule in December of 2000 there has been debate surrounding the language of Replacement Dairy Animals §205.236(a)(2)(i)(ii) and (iii). The present NOP interpretation of this standard is paraphrased as follows; If a dairy producer transitioned to organic after October 21, 2002 using the 80%/20% feed exemption, all future dairy animals must be under continuous organic management from the last third of gestation. If a dairy producer either entered organic production before October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2002 or, if a dairy producer entered organic production after October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2002 by providing 100% organic feed for one full year, then conventional replacement animals can be brought into the herd, provided that they are under organic management for twelve months prior to production of organic milk. The NOSB believes this interpreta-

tion is unduly confusing and contradictory. In May 2003 we put forward a proposed rule change to require all Dairy Replacement Animals to be raised organically from last third of gestation after a farm becomes certified organic regardless of the method of transition."

**Response needed by September 30, 2003.**

George Siemon has put together an Organic Dairy Replacement Questionnaire for organic dairy producers to fill out to provide feedback to the NOSB and to Mr. Richard Mathews, program manager for the National Organic Program. Organic Valley producers have already received this mailing and plans have been made for other organic dairy producers to receive it through their certifiers. **Please be sure to fill out the questionnaire and send it to Richard Mathews (email or fax is best mode) and to George Siemon by September 30, 2003.**



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\*\* From Northeast organic farmers to Northeast organic farmers \*\*

## NODPA Fundraising Efforts a Success but Needs to Continue

By Lisa McCrory, NODPA Coordinator

A special thanks goes out to the generous contributions that we have been receiving from organizations, individual farmers and consumers. We were successful in raising a total of \$20,953, which means that the fiscal portion of our challenge grant requirement has been met for this year. A report has been submitted to the John Merck Fund (our Challenge-Grantor) and we will know soon if we have met the other grant requirements necessary to continue working with them. Below is a breakdown of our fundraising results.

### Fundraising Results for July 2002 – June 2003

#### High Donors (giving \$250 or higher): \$6,950

- \* -Vermont Organic Milk Producers Association \$1,000
- \* -Stonyfield Farms \$500
- \* -Cornell Small Farms Program \$500
- \* -Organic Valley /CROPP \$1000
- \* -Horizon Organic \$500
- \* -Maine Organic Farmers & Gardeners Assoc. \$250
- \* -Kathie & Rick Arnold \$2,700
- \* -Lancaster County Graziers \$500

#### NODPA News Membership Contributions: \$5,025

#### Field Days (2002, 2003): \$6,694

#### NODPA Outreach: \$890

#### NODPA News & Web Page Advertising: \$1394

#### **TOTAL: \$20,953**

This fundraising effort does not stop here. It is important for NODPA to become self sufficient, which means that continued annual contributions are critical. Subscribing to the NODPA News each year is one

way to support the work that we do. NODPA also raises funds each year through its annual Field Days Event, NODPA News advertising, Web advertising, small grants, and generous donors.

We thought that the membership might like to know what kind of annual budget NODPA is working with and where that money goes.

**We were successful in raising a total of \$20,953, which means that the fiscal portion of our challenge grant requirement has been met for this year.**

**1) Cost to put NODPA News together: \$1,900 per issue, \$7,600 /year**

- \*900 on mailing list
- \*Paid Labor: \$700/issue
- \*Volunteer (in-kind value): \$500/issue
- \*Photocopying: \$900/issue
- \*Postage: \$300/issue

**2) Conference Calls with the NODPA Representatives and sub-committees, \$2000 per year**

- \*Phone usage: \$2000/year
- \*NODPA Representative Time: donated

**3) Project Manager and Office Assistance (20 hours/week): \$20,000 per year**

**4) Web site development and Maintenance: \$4,800 per year**

**5) Other: bookkeeping, rent, utilities, supplies, email etc: \$12,000 per year**

**Total Annual budget = \$46,400**

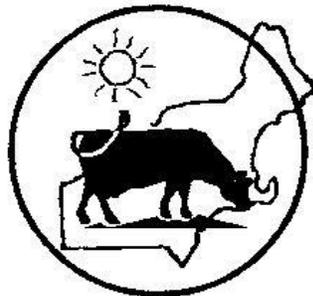
On this budget, NODPA is able to provide a quarterly newsletter, coordinate an annual Field Days Event, network with producers all over the Northeast, provide feedback to the National Organic Program & the National Organic Standards Board, develop positive relationships with processors and other businesses, and stay current on issues within the organic dairy industry. There is a lot of volunteer work

that happens behind the scenes and a special thanks must go out to some of those key individuals. Without them,

NODPA would not exist. Our NODPA News Editors Kathie Arnold, Carly Arnold and Mia Morrison; Bill Casey, our Odairy Moderator; plus our NODPA Representatives (listed on page 17) who donate time and energy above and beyond the call of duty.

NODPA would like to do so much more, but what we can do is limited by funds available to support the effort. At our annual producer meeting on August 22nd, we will be discussing where NODPA should be focusing its energy and how to support these visions. We hope that you can come to the meeting and share your thoughts. If you are unable to make it to the Annual Producer meeting, please send us your ideas by writing to NODPA, C/O NOFA- VT, PO Box 697, Richmond, VT 05477.

None of what NODPA has accomplished could have happened without the generous \$50,000 contribution made in May, 2002 by the John Merck fund. This funding gave NODPA the jump-start that it needed to get 'on the map' and build on the networking and support that producers were asking for. Thank you John Merck Fund; we hope to continue working with you!



*Lisa McCrory is the Coordinator of NODPA & the Dairy Tech Specialist at NOFA-VT. She and her family live in Randolph, VT.*

**Genetically Modifying Consumer Rights**

Monsanto is suing Portland, Maine-based Oakhurst Dairy for labeling their milk "Our Farmers' Pledge: No Artificial Growth Hormones." According to Monsanto, manufacturer of the genetically engineered recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (known as rBGH or rBST), Oakhurst Dairy does not have the right to let its customers know whether its milk is laced with genetically engineered hormones. Oakhurst says they've been labeling their products like this for four years, in response to consumer demand. Although rBGH has been banned in every industrialized nation in the world except for the United States, Monsanto continues to claim that rBGH-derived milk is no different from the natural stuff, despite documentation that rBGH milk contains substantially higher levels of a potent cancer tumor promoter called IGF-1.

Monsanto sued two dairies and threatened several thousand retailers in 1994 for labeling or advertising milk and dairy products as "rBGH-free." Despite Monsanto's intimidation tactics, more than 10% of U.S. milk is currently labeled as "rBGH-free," while sales of organic milk and dairy products (which prohibit rBGH) are booming. In recent months a Monsanto-funded front group, the Center for Consumer Freedom, has launched a smear campaign against organic dairies, including Organic Valley, claiming they are defrauding consumers.

[http://www.organicconsumers.org/rbgh/071303\\_rbgh.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/rbgh/071303_rbgh.cfm)

For a full discussion on the rBGH controversy, see the rBGH section on the OCA website:

<http://www.organicconsumers.org/rbghlink.html>

## **“The Truth in Labeling” The Facts behind “Stop Labeling Lies” & the Hudson Institute**

By Joe Pedretti

### **Who is the Hudson Institute?**

The Stop Labeling Lies website is funded and maintained by the Hudson Institute. The Hudson Institute is a neo-conservative “think-tank” that is funded by giant food companies Cargill, ConAgra, H.J. Heinz, McDonalds and Philip Morris, the chemical transnationals Ciba-Geigy, Bristol Myers Squibb, Dow Elanco, Du Pont and Procter and Gamble, and last but not far from least, the genetic engineering leaders Zeneca and Monsanto, among many other giant pharmaceutical, chemical and petroleum companies.

The Hudson Institute serves as a public relations front for these companies as they attempt to influence public policies and opinions (under the guise of applied research). The Hudson Institute puts a great deal of money, time and effort into discrediting and downplaying issues or policies that threaten the bottom lines of the corporations that fund it.

You can visit the Hudson Institute’s website here:

<http://www.hudson.org/>

You will be hard pressed to find out who really funds the Hudson Institute from their web pages. They try very hard to present themselves as an unbiased, research-oriented organization, although nothing could be further from the truth. To learn more about who really is behind the Hudson Institute and other right-wing think tanks try this article from the People for the American Way:

<http://www.pfaw.org/pfaw/general/default.aspx?oid=2060>

### **Why attack organic agriculture?**

Organic farmers refuse to use chemical fertilizers or synthetic pesticides. They also refuse to use geneti-

cally-modified seeds, plants or products. Organic agriculture represents a brand new paradigm in agricultural thinking and methods. This new paradigm is at odds with the existing industrialized, largely corporate controlled system. In fact, organic agriculture threatens their very existence.

When organic agriculture was a young, fledgling movement (with small sales), big agribusiness largely ignored organics as a fringe or fad. Now after many years of 20% or greater growth, organic food sales are approaching 2% of all food sold in the United States and shows no sign of slowing down. The companies that control agribusiness, chemical, bio-engineering and petroleum in the

United States, and the rest of the world, are now feeling the sting of lost profits.

They understand that they can no longer ignore organic agriculture, so instead are investing a lot of money into discrediting and attacking organics. They do this primarily through foundation fronts such as the Hudson Institute, and other conservative foundations such as the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute.

The Hudson Institute in particular is very aggressive with its attacks. The Hudson Institute regularly places anti-organic opinion pieces in newspapers under the guise of “expert opinion”. The most notable of these writers is Dennis Avery, whose 1996 book, “Saving the Planet with Pesticides and Plastic” started the whole “anti-organic” propaganda attack.

The Hudson Institute now funds and maintains the “Stop Labeling Lies” website and the website

“Center for Global Food Issues”. Each website/organization devotes a considerable amount of money and time to attack organic agriculture. Stop Labeling Lies has been very aggressive, and has even sent letters to nearly every state and federal agency complaining of labeling inaccuracies and demanding punitive action. They even sent letters to many retail grocers in an attempt to smear organic producers.

### **The “Truth” Behind Stop Labeling Lies**

The Stop Labeling Lies website attacks organic and natural food companies by ostensibly pointing out label and advertising inaccuracies and “lies”. When you carefully dissect their complaints, it is possible to see that most of their complaints have little merit and are based on old propaganda tricks. Lets take a look at some of their complaints and then the truth behind them:

#### **Hormone-Free Claim**

##### **What Stop Labeling Lies says:**

*“All milk produced by cows contains hormones as part of the normal biology of the cow. No cow gives milk unless she’s had a calf, and all of her milk contains a growth hormone that is absolutely necessary for milk production. There is no such thing as hormone-free milk. Milk is Milk and it’s all produced the same way--by cows.*

*The “no hormone” labels are trying to frighten consumers about milk from cows that get extra growth hormone. But the milk from such cows contains the same growth hormone found in all milk, and no more of it than is found in other milk. The FDA says there’s no way to detect any difference. (The growth hormone is just protein, like steak, and is digested in our stomachs, like steak.)”*

**The companies that control agribusiness, chemical, bio-engineering and petroleum... are now feeling the sting of lost profits. They understand that they can no longer ignore organic agriculture, so instead are investing a lot of money into discrediting and attacking organics.**

**The Truth:**

Most organic companies, including Organic Valley, use the claim “produced without hormones”. This is a completely different claim than “hormone-free”. All animal products, and plant products for that matter, contain naturally occurring hormones. The “produced without hormones” claim is accurate and useful for consumers that support certain agricultural practices. There are many hormones used in conventional agriculture, including breeding, growth and production hormones. Organic Valley prohibits the use of all hormones, not just the controversial rBGH.

Hormones are used in conventional agriculture for convenience and profit, often to the detriment of the animals they are used on. Monsanto warns farmers in their rBGH literature that their hormone may cause higher health problems in their cows, includ-

ing higher rates of mastitis (udder infection), hoof problems, and breeding abnormalities. Cows with mastitis give lower quality milk as the result of their infections. More antibiotics are required to control these infections.

Production enhancing hormones like rBGH also “burn-out” cows faster. The hormone injections force the cows to produce about 15% more milk than they would naturally. Such heavy, unnatural production, in combination with the health problems already discussed, result in cows that average only two years of production.

Hormones should not only be avoided for the negative effects they have on the animals, but also because their effects on humans are unstudied and unknown. These unknown factors

are why most other countries in the world have banned the use of rBGH. A University of Wisconsin study released in January 1996 showed 94% of consumers believed there should be labels to distinguished milk from treated and untreated cows. So if 94% of consumers want “hormone labels”, why does the Hudson Institute want to deny them their right to know?

They have reason to be wary since there is evidence to support such concerns. Dr. Samuel Epstein is a scientist at the Univer-

sity of Illinois School of Public Health. He's earned three medical degrees, written eight books, and is frequently called upon to advise Congress about things in our environment that may cause cancer. He and others like Dr. William von Meyer point to what they

say is a growing body of scientific evidence of a link between IGF-1 and human cancers which might not show up for years to come. IGF-1 is created when the cow's body breaks down rBGH. IGF-1 levels are found to be increased in the milk from treated cows.

The most ridiculous argument that Stop Labeling Lies uses is the “vitamin D is a hormone” argument. The definition of “hormone” is: An active regulatory chemical substance formed in one part of the body and carried by the blood to another part of, where it signals the coordination of cellular functions. The definition of “vitamin”: Any of a group of organic substances essential in small quantities to normal metabolism. Vitamin D is an essential vitamin that improves absorption and utilization of Calcium and Phosphorous; required for bone and teeth formation; maintains a stable nervous system and normal heart action. Vitamin D is a “hormone-precursor”. Once in the body our liver can convert Vitamin D into a hormone that controls calcium levels in our blood. Only the amount of hormone needed is made. Calling Vitamin D an added hormone is distorting the truth at best and a deliberate lie at worst.

Hormone labeling allows consumers to exercise their right to choose their foods based on an informed decision.

**No Pesticides Claim**

*What Stop Labeling Lies Says:*

*(Continued on page 6)*

**Most organic companies... use the claim “produced without hormones”. This is a completely different claim than “hormone-free”.**

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(Continued from page 5)

*“Organic standards allow for use of pesticides, many of which are classified by the EPA as carcinogens. By definition all pesticides, including organic, are toxic.”*

**The Truth:**

Pesticide is a very generic word, and Stop Labeling Lies makes great use of the gray area. Anything that kills is a pesticide in the generic sense. Your shoe is a very effective pesticide. Pesticides can kill insects in a number of ways; toxic reaction is only one of several.

Organic farmers do not use any chemical (synthetic) pesticides. They also must follow very specific rules if they need to use an organic pesticide. Organic pesticides like soap, vegetable oil and diatomaceous earth can be used whenever needed since they are non-toxic to humans or animals. These pesticides kill by physically impairing the insect or disease organism. If an organic farmer ever needs to use an organic pesticide that kills insects or diseases through toxic reaction, they must submit a request to a third-party for permission first, and then they can only select from a list of organically-approved natural pesticides. Organic pesticides undergo intense scrutiny by the USDA National Organic Program and only some are approved.

Organic pesticides are typically botanicals that have been used by humans for hundreds, and in some cases, thousands of years to control pests. Pyrethrum is made from ground up chrysanthemum flowers. Rote-none is from the root of a South American shrub. Neem is from the seeds of an Indian tree. Natural, or-

ganic pesticides break down quickly in the environment and are easily metabolized by microorganisms. Because they are natural, native substances, they do not persist in the soil to pollute water resources or accumulate in bodily tissues. It is the long persistence and ongoing toxicity and carcinogenic action of chemical pesticides that is the real reason not to use chemicals. DDT, which was touted as a safe miracle pesticide, was later proven to be extremely harmful to human health and to the environment. Now, even 30 years after it was banned, DDT still shows up as a contaminant in our foods.

Organic farmers rely on crop rotation, resistant plant and animal varieties, natural predators, cultural controls and only when all else fails, do they use “restricted use” organic pesticides.

Organic Valley and many

other organic companies are changing over their packaging to “produced without chemical fertilizers or synthetic pesticides” or similar wording. This more clearly states organic agriculture’s commitment to a more natural farming system.

**No Antibiotics Claim**

**What Stop Labeling Lies Says:**

*Organic standards do not prohibit artificial insemination, which includes semen embedded with antibiotics. All dairy products are tested for antibiotics.*

**The Truth:**

The USDA National Organic Standards prohibits the use of all antibiotics for animal production. While it is true that all milk is tested for antibiotic residue, residues are not the reason that organic farmers refuse to use antibiotics. Honestly, antibiotics are shortcuts that only cover up problems instead of avoiding them. Organic farmers prevent health problems by giving the animals ample space, clean conditions and access to exercise, sunshine and fresh air.

A recent study by the Union of Concerned Scientists revealed that every year in the U.S., 25 million pounds of antibiotics are fed to livestock as a feed supplement. This drug load represents a full 70% of the total US antibiotic production. Human medicine, in comparison, uses only 3 million pounds of antibiotics each year.

These antibiotics are fed to chickens, hogs and cattle, not for curing illness, but for promoting growth and compensating for stressful, crowded and often unsanitary living conditions. Chickens are forced to live in small “battery cages” with as many as eight other birds, that does not allow them to move around or even spread their wings. They are



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then stacked several cages high and raised in large buildings of tens of thousands or even millions of other birds. Hogs are raised in slated crates, too small for them to even turn around and cattle are confined to crowded feedlots, never to see pasture.

Such a concentration of animals inevitably causes great stress and exposes the animals to high levels of feces and urine. To prevent the diseases that are common in such a system, they are fed antibiotics. The conventional industry also learned that by feeding antibiotics non-therapeutically, the animals gained weight faster. The cost of the antibiotics was low enough that routinely feeding the drugs to animals for this extra weight gain produced a profit!

The bacteria that cause diseases can quickly build resistance to antibiotics when they are exposed to constant low levels of antibiotics. Bacteria reproduce very quickly and are constantly exhibiting mutations. Some of these mutations allow the bacteria to survive, even while others are killed off. These "survivors" then pass on their heightened immunity to their offspring, and soon the entire population of bacteria has developed resistances to antibiotics. Through food, these "superbugs" can be passed to humans who, like animals, may not respond to antibiotics, either.

Scientists and doctors have found bacteria that are resistant to our most common antibiotics. And a growing number of bacteria strains are now immune to our strongest antibiotics. Doctors are now forced to use stronger and stronger drugs to treat the same disease. For example, penicillin and its cousins often no longer work to fight common pneumonia. The im-

plications to human health are dire. If we continue using antibiotics irresponsibly, these important health care tools will be rendered useless.

To clarify and restate- organic farmers never use antibiotics for treatment or prevention of disease. Nor do they use antibiotics for increased weight gain. Organic farmers' best treatment weapon is prevention by reducing stress and allowing animals to exhibit their normal behaviors. Should an animal require treatment, they have many natural options available to them. If a veterinarian advises that an animal must be given antibiotics to save its life, then an organic farmer will, or course, administer antibiotics, but that animal will have to be sold through conventional markets.

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), which advises the USDA regarding the National Or-

ganic Program, approved the use of semen preserved with minute quantities of antibiotics. The purpose of the

antibiotics in this situation is not to prevent or cure disease in the animal, but as a preservative to prevent spoilage of the semen. To compare the preservation of

semen to the treatment of disease is a good example of "grasping at straws". Organic farmers stand firmly behind the "produced without antibiotics" claim, and most importantly, the reasons for rejecting their use.

**The "Food is Food" Claim**

Stop Labeling Lies and their counterpart- The Center for Global Food Issues are desperate to make the average consumer believe that "food is food" and that there are no differences whatsoever.

The "truth" is that there are potentially major differences- nutritional differences, bacteriological differences, pathogenic differences, economic differences and environmental differences between foods.

Organic milk from Organic Valley was produced and processed under exacting standards that were developed over 12 years by the United States Department of Agriculture. Organic agriculture is the only type of agriculture that must follow stringent rules of production, and be audited to ensure compliance. These standards result in significant environmental differences and also significant animal treatment differences. While these differences are not qualitative to the milk, they are important points of distinction, of considerable importance to many consumers. In-

**Organic farmers' best treatment weapon is prevention by reducing stress and allowing animals to exhibit their normal behaviors.**



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(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

creasing numbers of research studies show that organic foods contain far fewer pesticide residues than conventional foods. There is also intriguing new research that show some nutritional differences as well. Funding for organic research has been notoriously low in the past, only recently have significant funds and effort been made available. If the initial evidence is any indication, we expect more positive findings in the future.

We also know that production practices such as pasturing have a significant effect on the nutritional profile of milk, meat and eggs. The fatty acid components of animal products will change with a diet of grass. Increased conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) levels (CLA is thought to have cancer fighting properties), and increased Omega-3 levels (Polyunsaturated fatty acids) which play a role in reducing the risk of heart disease. Current research findings suggest that Omega-3 fatty acids help lower blood triglyceride levels.

A recent study by the University of California, Davis, The team found that blackberries grown sustainably or organically and then frozen contained 50 percent to 58 percent more polyphenolics than conventionally grown crops from neighboring plots. Sustainably grown frozen strawberries contained 19 percent more polyphenolics than conventional fruit. Sustainably grown and organic produce also had more ascorbic acid, which the body converts to vitamin C.

This preliminary evidence, along with our knowledge of nutritional differences due to dietary intake, shows that food is anything but a homogenized, universally equal product. How a food is produced “does” have an impact on its nutritional profile and components.

Joe Pedretti is the Pool Membership Coordinator for CROPP/Organic Valley.

## Real Answers to Tough Questions.... Organic Dairy Research Comes of Age?

By Dave Johnson

As organic dairy producers, finding answers to our questions and solutions to our problems is sometimes elusive. From just asking around, to web searches and sheer trial and error, the task of seeking answers is daunting. Most of the help we get is anecdotal...

stories of what has worked or hasn't. Most of the research that Universities and Extension have to offer doesn't fit the organic producer spreading compost and fish emulsion and feeding cows on pasture. For us, there is not much solid scientific research and no easy-to-use indexed reference manual.

While the farmer to farmer interchange provides and will continue to provide the bulk of our organic farming know-how, there is a valid place for some serious on farm scientific research, but we all know this costs big bucks and funding is slim to non-existent. There is little incentive for the pharmaceutical and feedstuffs conglomerates to provide research grants for a bunch of farmers who don't spend much to begin with. The New Zealand dairy farmers contribute to their national farm research programs. How about us? So where's the money to come from?

How about farm bill mandated funds earmarked for organic research? There seems to be the potential for this based on the following information found on the USDA/AMS farm bill web site :

*“The Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative authorizes \$3 million per year in new mandatory appropriations in fiscal years (FY*

*2003-07. Funds will be used to administer competitive research grants, largely through USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. Research is to focus on determining desirable traits for organic commodities; identifying marketing and policy constraints on the expansion of organic agriculture; and conducting advanced research on organic farms, including production, marketing, and socioeconomic research.”*

Now 3 million a year is a small pot of money considering the breadth of organic agriculture. But there is a bigger pot of money that may have some

serious potential for organic dairy research. From this casual observer's interpretation, it seems that the milk promotion money we pay deducted from our milk check could be earmarked for this as well. Another interesting quote from the farm bill website :

*“Certified organic producers who produce and market only organic products and do not produce any conventional or nonorganic products are exempt from paying an assessment under any commodity promotion law. Organic growers had concerns about paying assessments that did little or nothing to market organic products.”*

How about that 5 cents /cwt federal milk promo money or the 10 cents/cwt ADA promo money? Do these assessments serve the needs of the organic dairy producer? Yes, they do promote general dairy consumption, but Organic dairy products are sold on completely unique quality factors and reasons and are then, by definition, a separate officially recognized (by USDA) commodity.

How much is this potential pot of money? Well, just in the Northeast

**There is little incentive for the pharmaceutical and feedstuffs conglomerates to provide research grants for a bunch of farmers who don't spend much**



(Continued on page 9)

there are at least 325 (Feb 2003) organic dairy producers shipping maybe 7000 cwt per year (a guesstimate based upon recent NODPA survey averages), or a total of \$341,000. Nothing to sneeze at. This would go a long way to fund some research for our industry.

So what do you think? Is this a dream or can it and should it happen? You can bet some of the industry processors are eyeing this pot of money for promotion (also a valuable goal). If this is worth pursuing, NODPA, as an organization representing northeast organic dairy producers, could be the avenue through which these funds could be channeled for research and it could act as the clearinghouse for the results to be disseminated.

*Dave Johnson is an organic dairy farmer. He farms with his wife Maggie and children at Provident Farm in Liberty, PA. Dave is a NODPA rep and is also on the PASA Board.*

**New Report Finds Steady Gains in Organic Research Acreage**  
[www.ofrf.org/publications/SoS/SoS2.overview.page.html](http://www.ofrf.org/publications/SoS/SoS2.overview.page.html)

The total number of organic research acres in the U.S. land grant system has more than doubled between 2001 and 2003, yet it still lags far behind the proportion of U.S. farmland that is certified organic, according to a new report by the Organic Farming Research Foundation. The report, "State of the States: Organic farming systems research at land grant institutions 2001-2003," found that organic research occupies only 1,160 acres (0.13%) of the 885,862 available research acres in the land grant system. A recent USDA report documents that overall, 0.3% of all U.S. farmland is certified organic. The OFRF Board has set a goal that 10% of federal agricultural research funds be directed to organic research by 2006.

**More Organic Milk Sought in Northeast**

**Horizon Organic** is looking for new producer partners in NY, VT and PA. Please contact Cindy Masterman at 888-648-8377.

**Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative** continues to expand their national base of dairy producers. New producer growth is anticipated in 2003-4 in VT, and NY and may add to the ME and PA routes. Please contact Tim Griffin at (888) 444-6455, extension 285.

**OMRI Appoints Laura Morrison to Executive Director Post**

Eugene, Ore. (July 14, 2003)

The Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) recently appointed Laura Morrison to the post of executive director. Morrison will oversee the nonprofit organization that provides technical reviews and maintains comprehensive lists of materials and ingredients for use by organic certifiers, growers, handlers, and processors.

OMRI is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization created to benefit the organic community and the general public. Its primary mission is to publish and disseminate generic and specific (brand name) list of materials allowed and prohibited for use in the production, processing, and handling of organic food and fiber. The organization provides technical reviews and maintains comprehensive lists of materials and ingredients for use in the organic industry. OMRI also conducts scientific research and provides information to organic certifiers, growers, ranchers, and processors.

**Poll: Most in U.S. Would Shun Labeled Biotech Foods**

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - More than half of American adults surveyed said they would be less likely to buy a food product at the grocery store if it carried a label saying it contained gene-altered ingredients, according to an ABC News poll released on Tuesday.

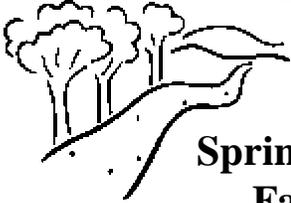
The survey of 1,024 adults also found that 92 percent said the federal government should require labels on biotech foods. U.S. food makers and the Bush administration oppose special labels on genetically modified foods, contending they meet the same safety and nutrition standards as conventional foods. However, the European Parliament earlier this month passed laws to require labels on biotech foods, reflecting the concerns of many Europeans about long-term health and environmental impacts.

The ABC News poll said that 55 percent of Americans surveyed said they would avoid foods carrying a biotech label. However, that survey response rose to 62 percent among women, who do most of the food shopping for U.S. families. The survey, however, also found a gain in the number of Americans who believe biotech foods are safe to eat. Some 46 percent said they considered bioengineered food safe, up from 35 percent in a similar poll conducted in June 2001, ABC News said. About 80 percent of the U.S. soybean crop and 40 percent of the corn crop are genetically modified varieties. The telephone poll was conducted last week with a random national sample of adults. The results have a three-percentage-point margin for error, ABC News said.

The European regulations, which will require the food industry to segregate biotech crops from conventional ones, will not go into effect for several months.

# Organic Production

## Feature Farm



### Spring Brook Farm

Spud (Lyle) & Kitty Edwards

Westfield, VT

By Nat Bacon

#### Background

You'd think a farmer nicknamed Spud would be growing potatoes, but Lyle Edwards always knew he wanted to milk cows. As a boy, he just liked to eat spuds, and the name stuck. Growing up in northern Vermont, Spud loved to help out on his grandfather's and uncle's dairy farms, and worked summers on a local farm through high school. In 1976 at age 24, Spud started to milk cows for himself, renting a small 30-cow farm in Peacham. Over the next 20 years, he went through the ups and downs of dairy farm economics, but had built up a nice herd and always stuck with farming. By 1996 Spud and his wife Kitty were renting another farm near Jack Lazor in Westfield. Although Spud had always pastured his cows, seeing Jack's whole system of organic dairying made an impression on him. Spud wanted to certify his own farm, but at that time there wasn't a buyer of organic milk in the area. By 1999, Spud had bought Spring Brook Farm in Westfield, and waited through the necessary 3 transition years. Just at the right time, Travis Forgues called to say CROPP/Organic Valley was looking for milk: "It all worked out perfectly," Spud remembers.

Before transitioning, Spud was worried about managing mastitis without antibiotics, but quickly came to feel that alternative treatments were about as effective as conventional mastitis tubes, and that mastitis and animal health were better under a less stressful system. Tired of conventional dairying, "I was going to sink or swim with organic" Spud recalls. He feels that the popular notion that cows won't milk well under organic management is a myth, and that maintaining strong genetics and putting up good forages are the keys to making milk profitably.

#### Farm Management

Spud says he farms according to the KISS philosophy – keep it simple. He milks 50 Holsteins in a tie-stall barn, although he would eventually like to cut down to 40 cows and hire less labor. The barn can hold all the milkers and young stock, although Spud would like to build a greenhouse-type barn to improve animal comfort and reduce crowding in the main barn. He believes that taking excellent care of his cows results in good milk production, and has the numbers to back it up: 11 of 43 cows milked over 100 lbs. on a recent DHIA test day, and the herd maintains a 18,500-lb rolling herd average. Spud tries to keep as much good grass as possible in front of the cows, although when the pasture gets short he supplements around one-third of the ration with high-quality baleage. In the winter, he cuts the baleage bales with a tractor-mounted hay slicer in



the haymow, and forks it down to the cows below. The barn has two grain bins; one holds straight cornmeal and the other a higher-protein mix. Instead of changing the grain constantly, Spud just adjusts the amount of protein mix he feeds his cows, depending on the pasture quality and time of year. Grain amounts are figured at 1:3 or 1:4 rate of grain to milk, depending on the stage of lactation, and fortified with kelp and minerals. Buying just two grains allows Spud to feed his young stock milker grain, without needing an extra bin.

In keeping with his philosophy, Spud has a very manageable cropping program on 45 pasture acres and 35 hay acres. He gives cows a fresh paddock daily, and with timely hay supplementation can keep lush grass through the season. Spud thinks Orleans County, with its usually consistent rain showers, is a good place to graze cows. He gets a good response from adding Sul-Po-Mag to his fields, and liming when needed. Spring Brook Farm is a good model for rotational grazing: Spud's pasture management keeps the grass tender and green.

#### Genetics and Herd Health

Spud used to classify Holsteins, and believes in using good genetics whether conventional or organic. When starting his herd, Spud bought heifers out of a well-known herd, and he continues to select top AI bulls from Select Sires and Genex. He breeds for excellent udders first, and good feet and legs plus high compo-

nents, looking for cows that will last.

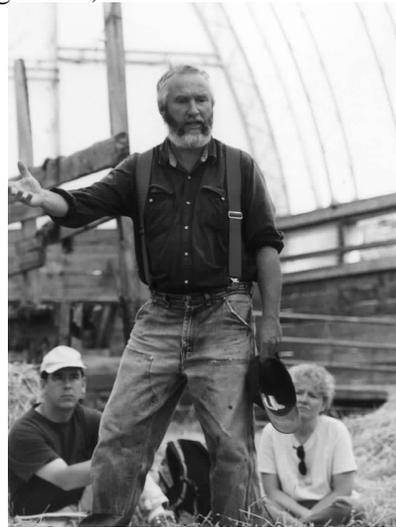
In terms of herd health, Spud and Kitty (who does a lot of the herd health work) are big believers in preventative measures and boosting the cow's immune system. They keep vaccinations up to date, including Lepto and rabies shots. For animals that look off-health, Spud likes using the Crystal Creek drenches and the Impro capsules sold through Brookfield Ag Services. If a cow comes down with mastitis, Spud treats with aspirin, vitamin C shots and peppermint liniment, and keeps the infected quarter stripped out. He feels it's important to use a good barrier teat dip, give selenium/vitamin E boosters, and to dry cows down to 30 lbs of milk per day at dry-off to prevent problems. Attention to detail results in good udder health: a 71,000 somatic cell count average on the most recent DHIA test. Under organic management, Spud feels cows are just less stressed and healthier. His cull rate is 12-15%, about half of conventional cull rates. To keep animals so healthy while milking strongly is the key to Spring Brook Farm's success.

*Nat Bacon works for NOFA-VT's Dairy Technical Assistance Program as the Dairy and Livestock Advisor. Nat has worked on several dairy farms in Vermont and has a BS in Sustainable Agriculture from UVM.*

## Organic Manure Versus Fertilizer Manure

By Jack Lazor,  
Butterworks Farm, Vermont

Cow manure is perhaps the most precious fertility resource we have as organic dairy farmers. The beauty of dairy farming is that much stays behind on the farm after the milk is "harvested" from our cows. Minerals like calcium, magnesium, and phosphorous leave the farm with the milk, while the nitrogen, carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and some of the potassium remain with the manure. Another advantage to dairying is that unlike beef farming or other types of meat production, the cows get to stay. This is already the beginning of a sustainable and self-perpetuating system. How we manage the waste stream of our herds has the potential to make our farms more verdant and wholesome. This sense of balance and wellbeing eventually translates to quality of life and profit.



Take a look around your region and ask yourself if problems on the land have gotten better or worse since the advent of nutrient budgeting i.e. – the liquid manure pit. It is my observation during the last 25 year of farming that we have gone backwards more than forward. The ground is harder and more compacted. Even small cloudbursts run off instead of soaking in. Phosphorous levels and toxic algal blooms are epidemic in many of our rivers and Lake Cham-

plain. By only considering manure as "fertilizer", we have made the earth sick. If we as the human race want to continue living on this earth, we must change our views and habits. As dairy farmers we can be the healers of the earth by changing our "fertilizer" manure mentality to an organic manure mentality.

Carbon conservation and preservation

should be at the heart of our manure management. The organic matter and humus in our soils is mostly carbon. Humus is stabilized organic matter and is responsible for good soil structure and water retention. Adequate humus helps the earth breathe, encouraging capillary action, which allows the earth to drain excess moisture downward or wick water upward when needed during dry times. Modern farming practices fertilize the land instead of nurturing it. Manure (liquid and solid) is spread for the kick. We want to see forages grow fast and tall. The salt index (a measure of conductivity) of all types of raw manure is high because there are many available soluble nutrients. Overuse and abuse of "salty" manure nutrients like nitrates contribute to the de-carbonization of our soils because it takes 20 parts carbon to as-

In today's modern and industrial world, manure management is synonymous with nutrient budgeting. The soil is thought of as the bank. The NPK values are deposited as the manure is spread, and withdrawn as the crop is harvested. The currency is valued in pounds of N, P & K. Knowing the nutrient requirements of a crop and the analysis of the manure used is supposed to give us all the information we will need to be good stewards of the earth. We won't over or under fertilize. Pollution should be eliminated and we should all be eligible for all sorts of conservation awards.

### 2003 NE Organic Dairy Producers

Approximate number of certified farms  
[# transitioning in brackets]

- ? **Maine: 56 [6 Tr.] (15% of total dairies in state)**
- ? **Vermont: 65 [10 Tr.] (4%)**
- ? **Connecticut: 4**
- ? **New York: 125 [18 Tr.]**
- ? **Pennsylvania: 84**
- ? **New Jersey: 1**
- ? **Massachusetts: 1**

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

simulate one part nitrate. Soils that have had too much slurry or fertilized continually turn paler as the carbon fraction is burned up.

As humus levels decline, so does the ability to hold water, drain, or provide nutrients through soil microbial activity. It has been claimed that if the organic matter content of the soils in the U.S. were raised by one percent, we would cure the greenhouse effect caused by increased CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. We need to take the CO<sub>2</sub> out of the sky and put it back in the ground as humus.

What steps can we take with our manure to maximize carbon and humus and minimize the damage caused by excess soluble nutrients? Cow urine is probably the most problematic component of the dairy farm waste stream, since it leaves the cow containing ammonia. The simple an-

swer to this situation is to use enough bedding (straw or wood products) to capture all of the liquid and absorb its odor. The strong smell of "cow piss" on a farm gives a good clue that carbon is being squandered. A little bit of rock phosphate in the gutter or ally will help to stabilize urine nitrates by bonding them to phosphorous. Increasing the amount of bedding will give you better smelling manure and more of it. I prefer straw to sawdust because it is vegetable cellulose. We grow it ourselves and its tube-like nature also helps to conduct air into a manure pile. Straw is alkaline while most wood products are acid in nature. Aside from hardening the soil texture, acidic manure also drives available calcium down from the soil's surface out of reach of crops.

After 20 years of having our cows winter in a stanchion barn, we put our entire herd on a bedding pack of straw. We use two to three 4x4 round bales a day to bed 75 animals in a 60' x 20' solar barn. The hoof action of the cows turns the straw bedding pack into a big sponge. By late April this year, the pack was five to six feet thick. Heat was coming up from underneath, and the cows were clean and dry. Leachate was nonexistent from the straw pack. The manure was removed in early June and wind rowed with a conventional spreader. The manure composts throughout the summer, where upon it is spread in mid to late September. Early Fall is the best time to spread your manure or compost for

many reasons. The ground is as firm as it will get for the season and soil life is active and teeming and ready to digest the material applied. As Fall progresses, the earth begins to draw inward assimilating the compost and all of its influences. Wherever we have applied compost on hayfields or pasture we have seen noticeable improvement in vibrancy the following season. White clover comes up everywhere. Bare spots fill in with native grasses like bluegrass and timothy. Cows love this feed (for pasture or hay) and milk tastes sweet.

The alternative to this vibrant situation of increased plant diversity and wellbeing is the "fertilizer" approach of slathering the land with raw manure. Grasses grow tall quickly and then lodge. Forage analyses at this point will demonstrate high potassium in the feeds. Cows feet get sore from this kind of feed. Legs become stiff and lameness increases. Yields may be higher with raw manure applications but quality and palatability is reduced. Excess nitrates kill clovers and damage earthworm populations. Composting is labor intensive and more expensive to do. It is virtually impossible to do in a deep manure lagoon that is also receiving chlorine-laden milk house waste. Composting is an aerobic practice. By aerating a manure lagoon, some of the bacteria and fungi in finished compost can be found in liquid manure. The salt index will be reduced and the general health of soil, forage, cow and farm will increase. Miracles don't happen overnight, however. By emphasizing carbon sequestration and minimizing the presence of "salty" soluble nutrients, your manure can heal the earth instead of polluting and harming it.

*Jack Lazor is co-owner of Butterworks Farm in Westfield, VT where they produce organic yogurt, cream and cheese. Jack and his wife Anne will be two of the featured speakers at our NODPA Field Days taking place on August 23<sup>rd</sup> in Albion, Maine.*



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## Managing Mastitis with DHIA Cell Counts

By Linda Tikofsky, DVM

Quality Milk Production Services

Clinical mastitis can be just the tip of the mastitis iceberg on farms. For every 5 cows with abnormal milk or swollen quarters, there may be another 4 cows with subclinical mastitis. Cows with subclinical mastitis can be affecting bulk milk SCC without ever showing abnormal milk, especially when the contagious mastitis bugs (*Strep agalactiae*, *Staph aureus* *Mycoplasma*) are concerned. Using cell count information from DHIA and computer programs such as Dairy Comp 305 or Cart can help pinpoint risk areas on your farm, help with management decisions and evaluate the results of these management changes.

Subclinical mastitis is generally caused by bacteria and experts agree that a cow is most likely to have a bacterial infection when cell counts are greater than 250,000 cells/ml. Mastitis and high cell counts result in lost production and decreased milk quality, both of which can be costly to the organic dairy,

Cows live in an environment laden with organisms that put them at risk for developing mastitis. Normally, bacteria enter the teat canal, the cow's immune system responds to the infection with white blood cells (somatic cells), the bacteria are eliminated and the cow's somatic cell count returns to normal. There may only be a transient increase in milk SCC and so a single high cell count test on a DHIA monthly report is not a signal for concern. When counts are elevated for two or more tests, further investigation into the causative bacteria and contributing factors is warranted. Following

**For every 5 cows with abnormal milk or swollen quarters, there may be another 4 cows with subclinical mastitis.**

trends in cell counts over time in your DHIA records is a valuable way to investigate risk areas on your dairy and evaluate your interventions.

There are two distinct mastitis patterns that we see on dairies. The first pattern is that of contagious mastitis where bacteria are spread cow to cow, usually at milking time. The second pattern is that of environmental mastitis where cow factors and environmental factors put the cow at risk for disease.

A good place to start is with bulk milk SCC over time. Are cell counts gradually rising (a sign of contagious mastitis)? Or do they fluctuate, with certain repeatable problem times during the year, or repeatable problems in certain groups? An initial step would be to look at the contribution of individual cows to the bulk milk SCC.

If less than 5% of the cows have cell counts greater than 250,000 cells/ml on two tests, mastitis is under control in this herd and decisions can be made on an individual cow basis. A California Mastitis test can be done to determine the infected quarter and a milk sample can be cultured and this cow can be segregated, dried off early if that is a possibility, or culled if indicated.

When more than 5% of the cows, have a cell count greater than 250,000 cells/ml, evaluation of DHIA records on a herd-wide basis is recommended. Milk quality benchmarks are as follows:

- 85% of the

cows should have cell counts less than 400,000 cells/ml

- < 5% of the cows should have new infections

<5-7% of the cows should have chronic infections

New infections are cows that have a previous history of low cell counts but the last two tests have been high. A command to find and begin evaluating these cows in your Dairy Comp 305 program would be:

```
LIST ID LACT DIM MILK RPRO
PLS3 PLS LS FOR PLS3 < 5 PLS>5
LS>5
```

pls3 = cell counts three tests ago

pls = cell counts last month

ls = current test

Chronic infections are cows that have high cell counts for three or more tests and can be found and evaluated with this command:

```
LIST ID LACT DIM MILK RPRO
PLS3 PLS LS FOR PLS3 > 5 PLS>5
LS>5
```

Dairy Comp can also provide you with a graph that gives you a quick indication of the mastitis picture in your herd:

Command: Graph LS by PLS

*(Continued on page 14)*

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(Continued from page 13)

**Evaluating the list**

Are they early in lactation (less than 100 days in milk)? If so, evaluate the hygiene of the dry cow and calving areas since these cows are likely being infected in the dry period or around calving. Does the dry cow ration contain recommended amounts of Vitamin E and selenium? Are there concurrent health problems in early lactation (milk fever, ketosis, metritis) that may be impairing the cow's immune system and making her more susceptible to mastitis?

Are they occurring later in lactation? This may indicate problems with the lactating cow housing (stall cleanliness, wet areas in pasture). Milking technique and hygiene should also be assessed (Are teats clean and dry when machines are attached? Is milking equipment functioning properly? Is overmilking occurring and damaging teat ends?)

**Which lactation group are they affecting?**

Heifers are considered to be the future of the herd but even they can freshen in with mastitis. When heifers are fed discard milk containing Staph aureus or Strep ag and have the ability to suck one another's udders, they may introduce infection in that quarter and subsequently calve with mastitis. Heifer housing should be evaluated when there are many environmental infections in fresh heifers.

Older cows may be more susceptible to new infections because of damage to teat ends or problems with the udder.

**What can I do?**

Culturing cows with repeated high cell counts is recommended to guide management steps. Samples can be submitted to Quality Milk Production Services (QMPS), the laboratory of your choice or to your veterinarian. Samples for culture may also be submitted in some areas through your Dairy One tester for culture at QMPS.

Chronic problem cows that are no longer profitable may be considered for culling. Cows that are later in lactation and bred back may be dried off early to allow the udder maximum time for regeneration and healing (during dry off the involuted udder produces many natural products that aid in the recovery from mastitis).

**What are the culture results?**

*Streptococcus* spp. are most common early in lactation since the udder is most susceptible to invasion by these bacteria during early dry off and also again as the udder bags up pre-freshening. Cows with *Strep* sp. infections may also cause high bacteria counts in the tank. *E. coli* are frequently a bigger problem in the summer months may cause toxic mastitis. *Klebsiella*

infections may be associated with sawdust bedding.

In summary, regular evaluation of DHIA cell counts and their patterns will allow you to do targeted culturing for the most informative results and will allow you to evaluate management changes and how they affect mastitis risks in your herd.

*Linda L. Garrison-Tikofsky, DVM, has been a field veterinarian with Cornell University's Quality Milk Production Services since 1997. Prior to that, she was in private veterinary practice after graduating with a DVM from University of Illinois in 1984. Linda has a growing interest in sustainable agriculture and organic dairying and is a member of the Organic Working Group at Cornell.*



**Following trends in cell counts over time in your DHIA records is a valuable way to investigate risk areas on your dairy and evaluate your interventions.**

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# Net Update



## A Taste of ODAIRY

### Dealing With Flies



Odairy, the email discussion list created and maintained by one of our NODPA members, has been a great resource for producers and industry people covering topics on animal health & crops, posting calendar events, job listings, and livestock & feed for sale. If you haven't joined this list yet, we encourage you to give it a try. To join or read previous postings, go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Odairy/>. Here's a sampling of what's been posted recently about dealing with flies.

\*\*\*\*\*

What's the latest on dealing with flies?

\*\*\*\*\*

I have been recommending:

50% D.E.

50% Coarse Limestone (Barn Grit)

To be used in a hanging dust bag.

\*\*\*\*\*

I am working to become free of chemicals on our dairy.

Flies on cows bother me as much as cows. I keep the lots

scraped daily. I posted a message a while back and someone suggested cedar oil, trouble is my daughter who milks with us is allergic to pine and cedar. The reason I sent this e-mail is to ask when I was checking into parasitic wasps, I found they are an enemy of cats. Is this true? I have several cats that are a part of the farm too.

\*\*\*\*\*



We have not tried the parasitic wasps, but we have found two good products for limiting the fly problem in summer. For a spray on the cows, we use a Crystal Creek product called No-Fly. It's expensive, but it works. It stops the kicking and stomping at the biting flies during milking. For passive fly control, we use a sticky fly paper called "spiderweb" -- it's about 12 inches wide and rolls out to around 26 feet. It stays sticky for longer than other brands, and is sticky on both sides.

\*\*\*\*\*

Hi folks - manure isn't the only thing that can attract flies! Anywhere that water accumulates - clogged drain pipes, old tires, 'unused' water tanks, low spots in the barnyard, tractor/truck ruts, wet spots around building/bin foundations, auger boots, especially if there is spilled grain or feed in the wet spot to rot - this can cause real problems with flies. The

**Fly Spray Recipe**  
**1 cup vegetable oil**  
**2 cups vinegar**  
**1 cup water**  
**1 T citronella essential oil**  
**Mix well, put in a spray bottle.**

rotting grain doesn't have to be deep - the fly larvae will only really use the top few inches anyway. A crust may form over the surface

of the wet grain/feed, but the rotting grain underneath can be a real fly larva haven.

\*\*\*\*\*

A group of organic farmers here in Eastern Ontario recently got together for a discussion on fly control and a presentation by a supplier of parasitic wasps. According to this person, the wasps do not bother anything but fly pupae. I've never heard of them

bothering cats, and can't imagine why they would (unless you're using very different species or something). When we hear "wasps" we don't realize that these are tiny creatures (hard to see with the naked eye once released) and they hop around more than flying.

The presenter also emphasized the importance of sanitation-- all it

**...all it takes is humidity and rotting organic material to provide fly larvae habitat.**

takes is humidity and rotting organic material to provide fly larvae habitat. (Though unlike mosquitoes they won't breed in standing water -- the larva need oxygen).

He also mentioned the use of "solar traps" to catch and kill flies. Does anybody know anything about these?

\*\*\*\*\*

One other thing to add to all the good advice is this. Get the wasp from a supply as close to your area as possible. The reason is the species of flies and wasp must be compatible. I was told this a few years ago by Dr. Gordon Neilson, VT's "Bug Doctor".

\*\*\*\*\*

Here is a recipe for fly spray, it will make a small bottle of expensive citronella oil go a lot further:

**Fly Spray**  
 1 cup vegetable oil  
 2 cups vinegar  
 1 cup water  
 1 tablespoon citronella essential oil  
 Mix well, put in a spray bottle. Shake while spraying, it will settle out quickly.

\*\*\*\*\*

Have you ever used cedar essential oil and eucalyptus essential oil?

\*\*\*\*\*

Yes, both those oils are listed as insect repellents. Lemon oil is another good one that is often used in human insect repellents these days. It

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

smells much nicer than the old standby pennyroyal (one definitely not to use with cows!!!). You can make your own combo to suit your own taste/smell.

**Where to find Fly Control Products allowed for organic production farms**

**Agri-Dynamics** (Jerry Brunetti)  
PO Box 735, Easton, PA 18044,  
Phone (610) 250-9280, Fax (610) 250-7840

**Brookfield Ag Services,**  
(Peter Traverse & Deb Christiana)  
2711 Rt 4A East, Castleton, VT 05735  
Phone (866) 350-FARM

**Crystal Creek Services**  
N9466 Lakeside Road, Trego, WI  
54888 Phone (888) 376-6777,  
Fax (715) 466-5042

**The Fertrell Company**  
(Dave Mattocks)

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Phone (717) 367-1566, 800-347-1566

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(carrying fly predators, dung beetles,  
and odor control materials)

**Spalding Laboratories**  
760 Printz Road, Arroyo Grande, CA  
93420 Phone (800) 845-2847

**Sustainable Agriculture Grants for Northeast Farmers**

Farmers in the Northeast who are interested in conducting innovative production and marketing projects are encouraged to apply to the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program for grant funds for projects starting in the spring.

Applications can address a broad range of agricultural issues such as pest management, soil and water conservation, aquaculture, marketing, grazing, bee health, no-till, pasture management, agroforestry, and other sustainable farming techniques. Northeast SARE defines sustainable agriculture as agriculture that is profitable, environmentally sound, and good for the community. In 2003, the average grant was about \$5,200; grants are capped at \$10,000.

Any full- or part-time farmer in the Northeast SARE region can apply. Applications and more information about the requirements of the Farmer/Grower Grant program are available on the Northeast SARE web site at [www.uvm.edu/~nesare/](http://www.uvm.edu/~nesare/). You can also call 802/656-0471 to request a printed application. **The proposal deadline is December 8, 2003.**

**Cup Plant--A Possible Forage?**

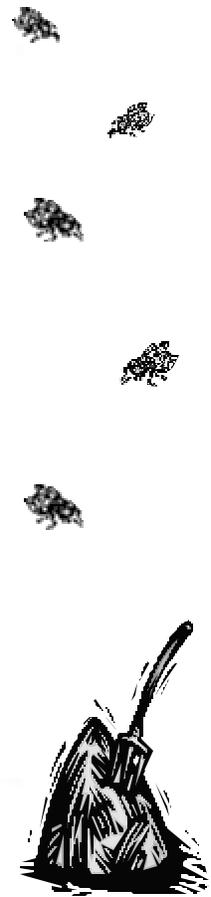
Cup Plant is a 6 to 8 ft. perennial forage crop that is a native prairie plant with large glossy leaves, a thick stalk, and lots of small sunflower type blossoms. It can be cut at bud-stage for silage or pastured when flowering at 5 ft. Sarah Johnston (Executive Director of NOFA-NY) is looking for anyone who has experience or knowledge about this plant and is also looking for farmers who might be interested in growing an acre or more as a perennial crop where silage is desirable for the feed mix. Contact Sarah at (518) 922-7937 [sarahjohnston@nofany.org](mailto:sarahjohnston@nofany.org).

**MANU-RX**  
...A microbial manure treatment.  
**Have This...**  
Get Gravity Gutters Moving With  
**MANU-RX**

**Not This...!!!**

**Directions for Use: 50 Cow Herd**  
Dilute 16 oz. Manu-Rx in 10 gallons of clear water. Pour into gutters, Repeat this application on a monthly basis.

**Aaron Groff & Son LLC**  
103 Clearview Drive  
Ephrata, Pa 17522  
1-800-468-4909



**NODPA REPS**  
**PENNSYLVANIA**

**Arden Landis** 717-529-6644  
667 Puseyville Rd.  
Kirkwood, PA 17536  
c2graz@aol.com

**Roman Stoltzfoos** 610-593-2415  
Spring Wood Farm  
1143 Gap Road  
Kinzers, PA 17535  
romans@epix.net

**Dave Johnson** 570-324-2285  
1254 Black Creek Rd  
Liberty, PA 16930  
provident@epix.net

**NEW YORK**

**Jim Gardiner** 315-653-7819  
2549 State Hwy 26  
Otselic, NY 13072  
horseingaround@citlink.net

**Siobhan Griffin** 607-286-9362  
2518 Co. Hwy 35  
Schnevus, NY 12155  
raindance@baka.com

**John Stoltzfus** 607-356-3272  
1553 Hesselton Gully Rd.  
Whitesville, NY 14897  
jtstribе@yahoo.com

**VERMONT**

**Ted Yandow** 802-524-9454  
3133 Newton Rd.  
Leicester, VT 05733

**Annie Claghorn** 802-247-3979  
1395 Leicester Rd.  
Leicester, VT 05733

**CONNETICUT**

**Rick Segalla** 860-824-0241  
96 Allyndale Rd.  
Canaan, CT 06018  
moocow@earthlink.net

**MAINE**

**Henry Perkins** 207-437-9279  
Box 156 Bog Rd.  
Albion, ME 04910  
bullridge@uninet.net

**Steven Russell** 207-872-6533  
RR2 Box 5660  
Winslow, ME 04901  
jwinrussel@adelphia.net

**Steve Morrison** 207-285-7085  
(ph/fax) 159 Atkinson Rd  
Charleston, ME 04422  
mmorrison@midmaine.com

**NON-DAIRY REPS**

**Lisa McCrory, NOFA-VT**  
802-728-4416 (ph & fax)  
848 N. Randolph Rd.  
Randolph Ctr, VT 05061  
lmccrory@together.net

**Diane Schivera, MOFGA**  
207-568-4142  
PO Box 170  
Unity, ME 04988  
dianes@mofga.org

**Ron Kirk** 315-536-0091  
1168 Travis Rd  
Penn Yan, NY 14527  
kirkrj@eznet.net

**Kevin Brussell / Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative**  
217-923-2702 Fax 217-923-5706  
572 Co. Rd. 2100E  
Casey, IL 62420

**Brian Caldwell** 607-564-1060  
Farm Education Coordinator NOFA-NY  
180 Walding Lane  
Spencer, NY 14883  
education@nofany.org

**NEWSLETTER**

**Mia Morrison** 207-285-7085

**Carly & Kathie Arnold** 607-842-6631  
Fax: 607-842-6557  
3175 NYS Rt. 13, Truxton, NY 13158  
caralea1@juno.com  
randkarnold1@juno.com

**We welcome submissions and letters.**

Please send to: NOFA-VT, attn:  
NODPA, P.O. Box 697, Bridge Street,  
Richmond VT 05477; info@nofavt.org.  
To speak with someone about concerns or  
questions, contact one of the NODPA  
representatives listed.

**NORTHEAST ORGANIC  
DAIRY PRODUCERS  
ALLIANCE  
MISSION STATEMENT  
& GOALS**

To enable organic family dairy farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the well being of the organic dairy industry as a whole with particular emphasis on:

1. Establishing a fair and sustainable price for their product at the wholesale level.
2. Promoting ethical, ecological and economically sustainable farming practices.
3. Developing networks with producers and processors of other organic commodities to strengthen infrastructure within the industry
4. Establishing open dialogue with organic dairy processor / retailers to better affect producer pay price and contribute to marketing efforts.

**Advertise With Us!**

**Half Page Ad** (7.5" W x 4.5" H) = \$75  
**Quarter Page Ad** (3.5" w x 4.75" h) = \$40  
**1/8 Page Ad or Business Card** (3.5" w x 2.25" h) = \$25  
**Classified Ads:** Free to Northeast organic farmers  
All others \$5 for the first 30 words; \$.05 per word over 30

**Deadline for the next issue is October 15, 2003**

Please send your ad and check (made payable to NOFA-VT) to: Lisa McCrory, NODPA Newsletter, 848 N. Randolph Rd., Randolph, VT 05061 For more information, call 802-728-4416 or email lmccrory@together.net

• **Note:** Ads requiring typesetting, xeroxing, statting, size changes or design work will be charged additional fees, according to the service (minimum charge \$10.00). Please send a check with your ad.

# Calendar

**Aug 19 Health From the Ground Up: Growing Quality Forages & Hardy Livestock 10am-4pm** at Vermont Tech. College and Chester and Betsy Abbot's organic dairy farm in Randolph Center, VT. Cost is \$20 including lunch.

NOFA-VT's Dairy Technical Assistance Program invites you to a classroom and on-farm workshop given by Jerry Brunetti, managing director of Agri-Dynamics animal health company. Jerry will speak about the relationships between soil fertility, nutrient-dense forages, and animal health in organic livestock production. NOFA-VT (802) 434-4122 [info@nofavt.org](mailto:info@nofavt.org)

**Aug 22 NODPA Annual Producers Meeting & Lobster Dinner 6-9pm**

&

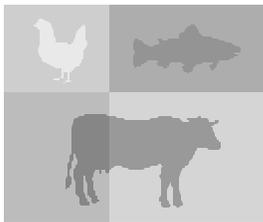
**Aug 23 3rd Annual NODPA Field Days 8:30 am - 4 pm** Bull Ridge Farm, Albion, ME All organic and transitioning dairy producers welcome. For more information contact:

Mia Morrison (207-285-7085)  
Henry Perkins (207-437-9279)  
Lisa McCrory (802-728-4416).

**Sept 3 Transitioning to Organic Workshop 10:30am-3:00pm** at the Tally Ho Restaurant in Richfield Springs, NY. Info: Kevin [khg2@cornell.edu](mailto:khg2@cornell.edu).

**Sept 9 Organic Fish & Kelp Fertilization of Pasture & Hay Land 10-12am** w/ potluck lunch. Beidler Family Farm, Randolph Center, VT A Vermont Grazing Demonstration Project Event.

Return to the Beidler Family Farm to share the results of an experiment looking at the effects of organic foliar kelp/seaweed applications on grazed and harvested forage crops. We will look at soil and forage test results, as well as an assessment of palatability. We will also take time to tour the farm and look at their grazing system. 802-656-3834, [gwyneth.harris@uvm.edu](mailto:gwyneth.harris@uvm.edu)



**Sept 13, 2003—Summer, 2004: Learn the Basic Principles of Biodynamic Farming & Gardening**, a one year part-time program. Pfeiffer Center, Chestnut Ridge, NY. Info: 845-352-5020, x 20, or [info@pfeiffercenter.org](mailto:info@pfeiffercenter.org)

**Sept 18 Stoltzfus Farm Pasture Walk 10:30am-2:00pm**, Centre County, PA. Free, with lunch provided. Rotational grazing, IPM, forage in pastures, herd health and nutrition balance, watering and fencing will be covered. Info: PASA 814-349-9856

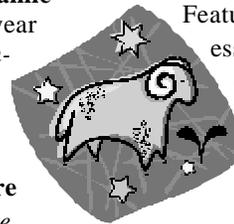
**Sept 19-21 Common Ground Country Fair**, Unity, ME. Info: [www.mofga.org](http://www.mofga.org) or 207-568-4142

**Sept 19 Carcass (Mortality) Composting Workshop 10-12 noon**, Foster Brothers Dairy, Middlebury, VT. Carcass composting is one alternative to rendering services which

have become increasingly expensive and unreliable or unavailable for some regions and types of livestock. Avoid the risks that come with means of disposal by leaning about proper composting. Visit the Foster Brothers Dairy and see how their site and process is working for them. NOFA Summer Workshop: cost for NOFA members = \$5, cost for Non-members = \$8 Info: NOFA-VT at 802-434-4122

**Sept 20 Pasture Walk: Established Pasture Management and Pasture Renovation** Hancock, NH. Info: UNH Extension, 603-563-9978

**Sept 27 First Annual Grass Fed Meats Festival**, High Falls, NY: Chef competition, heritage breeds, tasting, farmer marketplace, children's activities, hayrides, and more. Seeking vendors. Info: Dina Falcone 845-687-8938 or Jen Prosser 845-657-6059.

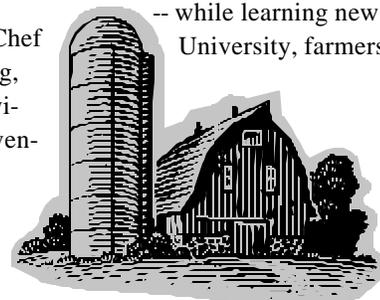


**Oct 12 Second Annual Maine Food Festival, 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** Featuring Cheese and Other Processed Dairy Products; Common Ground Education Center, Unity, Maine. A fee will be charged. MOFGA at 568-4142 or [mofga@mofga.org](mailto:mofga@mofga.org).

**Oct 16 to 19 Katahdin Hair Sheep Conference**, Pinelands Farm, New Gloucester, Maine. For more information, contact Tom Settlemire, 21 Lisbon Falls Rd., Brunswick, ME 04011; (207) 729-9748; [tsettle@bowdoin.edu](mailto:tsettle@bowdoin.edu), <http://academic.bowdoin.edu/bio/grants/sheep/index.shtml>.

**Oct 17 & 18 Sally Fallon of the Weston Price Institute will speak in Fryeburg ME, at the St. Elizabeth Anne Seton Catholic Church on Rt. 5. Friday's talk, from 7 to 9 p.m., is "The Oiling of America." Saturday's 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. workshop and discussions includes lunch. A fee of \$15 covers Friday; \$45 covers Saturday; \$50 covers both events. Discounts are available. Info: Brad McCabe 603-694-2101.**

**Oct 31-Nov 2 Farmer to Farmer Conference**, Atlantic Oaks by the Sea, Bar Harbor ME. Where farmers and other agricultural experts sit down and learn from each other about sustainable agriculture in Maine. MOFGA and Cooperative Extension have organized the conference so that farmers can talk about what works for them -- and what doesn't -- while learning new ideas from the University, farmers and others.



## NODPA Membership Form

In order for NODPA to continue as a viable organization, it is necessary for NODPA to raise fund through grants and membership contribution. If you enjoy this newsletter, visit our web page, and / or benefit from the education and farmer representation the NODPA has been providing, please let us know by making a generous contribution to our efforts.

\_\_\_\_ \$20 to cover NODPA NEWS      Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ \$50 to become a Friend of NODPA      Farm Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ \$100 to become a Sponsor      Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ \$500 to become a Patron member      City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ \$1000 to become a Benefactor      Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to NOFA-VT & send to Lisa McCrory, 848 North Randolph Rd., Randolph Center, VT 05061

### NODPA's website

www.nodpa.com  
www.organicmilk.org

### How to Direct Market Farm

**Products on the Internet**, available in print and on the internet at [www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/msb.htm](http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/msb.htm) or 202-7208317.

### Ask a Sustainable Agricultural Expert

Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA), the national sustainable agriculture information service now has a new feature on its Web site, <http://www.attra.ncat.org>, that allows farmers to submit questions about sustainable agriculture online to NCAT's agriculture specialists, who provide either tailored research reports or appropriate ATTRA publications to address the questions. Both the publications — which are also available for downloading from the site — and the research services are free to U.S. farmers and those who serve them.. Questions and requests for literature can also be made by calling ATTRA's toll-free number, (800) 346-9140.



**OFARM's website:**  
[www.ofarm.org](http://www.ofarm.org)

### Organic Agriculture at Cornell:

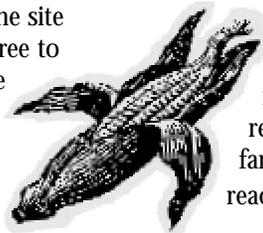
[www.organic.cornell.edu](http://www.organic.cornell.edu)

### New Farm Online Magazine:

[www.newfarm.org](http://www.newfarm.org)

### Tails and Tassels Newsletter

Contact Mary-Howell Martens, 315-536-9879 or [kandmhfarm@sprintmail.com](mailto:kandmhfarm@sprintmail.com)



**www.organicaginfo.org:** is an on-line database of research reports, farmer-to farmer information, and outreach publications.

# Resources

### Web-Based Map of Local Farms

<http://www.foodroutes.org/index.jsp>

### Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Grant Program

NESARE Web page:  
[www.uvm.edu/~nesare/](http://www.uvm.edu/~nesare/)  
Phone: 802-656-0471

### The Milkweed website:

[www.TheMilkWeed.com](http://www.TheMilkWeed.com)

**Funding opportunities are available through the Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS) for organic transition, grassland reserve, pasture management, nutrient management, etc. Farmers are encouraged to sign up. Check with your local NRCS office. Many programs have continuous sign-ups.**

**NOFA-Vermont**  
**Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance**  
**(NODPA)**  
P.O. Box 697  
Richmond, VT 05477

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit # 37  
Richmond, VT

# Classified Ads

Send items to: **Lisa McCrory** 802-728-4416 (ph & fax)  
848 N. Randolph Rd., Randolph Ctr, VT 05061 [lmccrory@together.net](mailto:lmccrory@together.net)

## **PRODUCTS:**

**Neptune's Harvest Organic Fertilizer and Animal Feed Products** include liquid hydrolyzed fish, seaweed, blends, dry kelp meal, crab shell and humate. Pest controls include liquid garlic spray and hot pepper wax.

### **"OUR PRODUCTS WORK!"**

FREE CATALOG  
1(800) 259-4769

[WWW.NEPTUNEHARVEST.COM](http://WWW.NEPTUNEHARVEST.COM)

## **EQUIPMENT**

**Orkin Fly Blocker:** 10 foot wide, walk through fly zapper for livestock, \$4000 OBO, Nichols, New York, Rob Moore, 607-699-7968.

## **OPPORTUNITIES:**

**Small certified organic family dairy, rotational grazing, seeking full time year round help.** Salary and housing provided, experience not required. Mohawk, NY. Susan and David Hardy, 315-823-1189: leave message.

## **ORGANIC LIVESTOCK**

**For Sale On-The-Hoof 2 Holstein steers.** Grass-fed, no grain. Age: 21 months Weight: approximately 1400-1600 lbs each. Ready to go! Lisa or Carl at 802-728-4416 (Randolph, VT) — managed organically, but not certifiable.

**Certified Organic Jersey Cow, 2 1/2 years.** Cabot, VT. Jen or Mark at 802-563-2103

**4 Certified Organic Jersey Cows for sale:** 2 to freshen in July, 2 fresh end of June, Livewater Farm Westminister, VT 802-387-4412, [liveratr@sover.net](mailto:liveratr@sover.net)

## **FEED**

150 dry square bales (3x3x8), approximately 800 lbs each. Bales are mostly alfalfa and are certified organic by NOFA-NY. Price is \$125-\$130 per bale. New York, Daniel France, [organicmilkman@hotmail.com](mailto:organicmilkman@hotmail.com), 518-234-2188

## **Organic Milk Cartons Help Support Farmland Protection**

[http://www.farmland.org/events/organic\\_cow.htm](http://www.farmland.org/events/organic_cow.htm)

The American Farmland Trust is featured on the side of half-gallon milk cartons for The Organic Cow of Vermont. AFT earned this honor through its affiliation with Earthshare of New England, a unified fundraising organization for environmental and conservation groups (including AFT). For every clipped strip sent in before Dec. 1, 2003, The Organic Cow of Vermont makes a 50 cent donation to Earthshare.

**NODPA News Classified Ads:  
FREE to NE Organic Farmers!**