

# NODPA NEWS

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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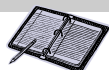
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## Organic Industry News

### Organic Dairy Farmers Speak Out at NODPA Field Days in Vermont

*By Sarah Flack and Nat Bacon*

The Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance's (NODPA's) Fourth Annual Summer Field Days Event was held in Vermont this year. It was attended by over 80 people for the producers dinner and meeting, and over 90 for the Field Day. The Field Day began with a field trip to Butterworks Farm, followed by an evening meeting for producers at Applecheek Farm.

#### Producer Meeting Friday Evening

The Producer meeting drew farmers from all over the country and Canada as well as representatives from the growing number of companies buying organic milk (Horizon, Organic Valley, Hood...)

Discussions on the state of the organic dairy industry was facilitated by Kathie Arnold, Co-Editor of the NODPA News and dairy producer in Truxton, NY. There are some new processors looking for milk and the demand for organic milk has grown by 20% each year (for the past 4 years) nationwide, plus, there is a growing number of farms investing in their own on-farm processing.

Thoughts and concerns discussed were:

- \* Need to clarify what animal health products are acceptable (brand name included) according to the

*(Continued on page 11)*

### NODPA Formulates A Pasture Policy

*By Kathie Arnold*

Developing an access to pasture standard was the number one priority identified by organic producers attending this summer's NODPA Annual Producer Meeting on August 8th. The NODPA Board, State Representatives, staff, and I held a two hour teleconference in September to discuss the formulation of a quantitative, measurable and enforceable pasture standard that could be applicable to all certified organic dairy operations nationwide. The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) Livestock Committee Pasture Recommendation was used as a basis for developing the pasture policy as well as input from CROPP Pasture Task Force committee members. Through numerous phone calls, a slew of emails back and forth, and a second conference call, the current NODPA Pasture Policy was formulated.

NODPA welcomes feedback from organic producers on this Pasture Policy. Its intent is to provide a minimum base pasture requirement for dairy animals to assure consumers that their expectation of organic milk from pastured cows is being fulfilled and to prevent confinement / dry-lot organic animal factories from being certified when they are not meeting the Federal Rule's access to pasture requirement for organic ruminants.

Below are highlights from the NOSB Livestock Committee Pasture Recommen-

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continued from NODPA Formulates Pasture Policy, page 1)

dition that was issued June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2001. The full text can be viewed at NODPA's website, [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com). The Committee's Recommendation spells out the why, a generally stated pasture standard, and the Federal Organic Rule references that leave no doubt that pasture is required for all organic dairy animals. (Bolding added in spots for emphasis). NODPA's Pasture Policy is printed after the NOSB Committee Recommendation.

\*\*\*

### **PASTURE: NOSB Livestock Committee Recommendation**

The NOSB Livestock committee puts forth the following proposed wording as a clarification for the present access to pasture for ruminant's in the Final Rule....

#### **Intent**

The intent of requiring pasture for ruminants is to ensure an organic production system that provides a living condition that allows the animal to satisfy their natural behavior patterns, provides preventative health care benefits and answers the consumer expectation of humane animal care....

Pasture management fulfills an integral role in nutrition, health care and living condition requirements of organic ruminant production. ....

...Organically managed pasture should produce the quantity and quality of edible plants suitable to the species, stage of production, and number of animals. Pasture contributes to preventive health care management by enabling ruminants to develop and reproduce under conditions that reduce stress, strengthen immunity, and deter illness. Pasture affords ruminants the freedom of choice to satisfy natural behavior patterns. Pasture assures a relationship between the animal and land that satisfies both organic principles and international standards for organic livestock.

#### **Benefits**

...Significant benefits gained by pasturing ruminants are in the following areas:

**Herd health** -- Common benefits associated with

*Developing an access to pasture standard was the number one priority identified by organic producers attending this summer's NODPA Annual Producer Meeting.*

pasture are improved feet and leg strength, less breeding problems, lower culling rates and enhanced immunity.

**Environmental**--Animals walking to pasture saves non-renewable energy, reduce equipment needs, spreads manure out naturally avoiding concentration of manure. Water pollution is a primary concern of organic consumers and concentrated manures from

livestock production can be a major source of pollution to water sources.

**Production**--Pasturing can be as productive as dry lot production. While pasture may not produce record amounts of milk or the fastest growth rate for beef animals, net returns are favorable when all factors are measured.

**Consumer expectation**--The public comment from the two proposed rules shows a clear expectation that consumers have for pasture for ruminant livestock as part of humane livestock practices. There are food health and safety benefits from pasture produced livestock products that are important to the organic consumer.

(Continued on page 3)



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### **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.

(Continued from NODPA Formulates Pasture Policy page 2)

**NOSB LIVESTOCK COMMITTEE  
RECOMMENDED STANDARD  
ACCESS TO PASTURE FOR RUMINANTS:**

1. **Ruminant livestock must have access to graze pasture during the months of the year when pasture can provide edible forage, and the grazed feed must provide a significant portion of the total feed requirements. The Farm Plan must illustrate how the producer will maximize the pasture component of the total feed used in the farm system.**
2. The producer of ruminant livestock may be allowed temporary exemption to pasture because of:
  - a. Conditions under which the health, safety, or well-being of the animal could be jeopardized.
  - b. Inclement weather
  - c. Temporary conditions which pose a risk to soil and water quality.
3. The producer of bovine livestock may be allowed exemption to pasture during the following stages of production:
  - a. Dairy stock under the age of 6 months
  - b. Beef animals during final stage of finishing for no more than 120 days

***“Ruminant livestock must have access to graze pasture during the months of the year when pasture can provide edible forage, and the grazed feed must provide a significant portion of the total feed requirements.”***

**-NOSB Livestock Committee**

**Implementation Issues**

...Site-specific conditions in organic pasture management include the area of land available for grazing, the land's pasture carrying capacity, its suitability to accommodate the natural behavior of the herd, and its capacity to recycle the animals' waste. Organic ruminant producers must develop an organic system plan that correlates their intended practices with the site-specific conditions on their operation. ....

Organic ruminant producers must manage pasture by prioritizing the use of available resources to meet the nutritional, behavioral, and waste recycling requirements of the grazing herd. Land that normally produces stored feed may have to be converted to pasture to maximize pasture for the corresponding herd size.... Organic ruminant producers will have to adapt the composition and size of their herd to the site-specific conditions of their operation.

**Final Rule References**

~~Pasture definition: *Land used for livestock grazing*

*that is managed to provide feed value and maintain or improve soil, water, and vegetative resources.*

This definition leaves no question that the pasture is not an exercise lot due to the land management issues listed. Inherently this definition requires that adequate acres be supplied for the number of ruminants on the organic farm for the growing season. In order for pasture to maintain or improve soil, water, and vegetative resources it must be managed to avoid overgrazing. Pasture plants, whatever they are, can not be maintained or improved nor can they provide feed value unless the grazing system maximizes growth via the timing of the animals grazing.

~~Livestock health care practice:

205.238(a) *The producer must maintain preventative livestock health care practices*

Recent studies as well as practical experience by producers show significant benefits for livestock health in diverse areas including feet health, breeding, calving and improved immunity.

205.238(a)3-*Establishment of appropriate pasture conditions to minimize the occurrence and spread of diseases and parasites*

The same practices that assure satisfying the definition of pasture also satisfy this

requirement. Modern pasture management utilizes frequent rotation of pasture which can be timed to disrupt parasite and disease cycle.

~~Livestock living conditions: 205.239(a)-*must maintain livestock living conditions which accommodate the health and natural behavior of animals*

Pasturing ruminants both satisfies this requirement and satisfies the consumer's perception of organic livestock living conditions.

205.239(a)2-[*The producer of an organic livestock operation must establish and maintain*] *access to pasture for ruminants*

**This standard combined with the definition and the above standards clearly support the requirement listed above.**

\*\*\*

**NODPA Organic Dairy Pasture Policy**

The Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA) supports the Pasture Recommendation of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) Livestock Committee, dated June 7, 2001, which states that "grazed feed must provide a significant portion of the total feed requirements" for organic ruminant ani-

(Continued on page 4)

*(Continued from NODPA Formulates Pasture Policy page 3)*

mals. The National Organic Program (NOP) has failed to adopt this recommendation and has also failed to ensure that all certifiers require sufficient pasture systems as a basis for certification. NODPA concludes that a quantitative minimum pasture policy with measurable parameters needs to be adopted by certifiers, processors, and the NOP. Consistent with the NOSB recommendations and consumer expectations, NODPA recommends the following pasture standard for all organic milk producers:

**Organic dairy animals, from 6 months of age and up, must consume no less than 30% of their daily dry matter intake from pasture for a minimum of 120 calendar days per year, with a maximum stocking rate for lactating ruminants of 3000 animal pounds per acre of pasture up to a maximum of 3 cows per acre.**

- Pasture is land growing suitable grasses and other forages from which the ruminant animals self-harvest the plant material (which is still connected to its roots) for food by grazing. Feeding green chop or any mechanically harvested or stored feed on a pasture setting does not qualify as pasture.
- Pasture must be managed to prevent environmental degradation.
- The only stage of production exemption allowed is from birth to six months of age. Lactation is not an allowable stage of production exemption from providing pasture for milking animals for the entire grazing season.
- Unless under irrigation, most farms will have to maintain a lower stocking rate than the maximum noted in order to meet the minimum 30% dry matter intake from pasture.
- The maximum stocking rate of 3000 animal pounds per acre means that the ratio of animals to the total number of acres in the lactating ruminant pasture system for the full grazing season cannot exceed 3000 animal pounds per 1 acre of pasture. Thus, herds with larger breed cows will have to maintain a stocking rate lower than 3 cows per acre and smaller breeds can have no more than 3 cows per acre.
- This standard sets a base minimum. Organic dairy producers are encouraged to provide much more pasture than this minimum, as many producers are so doing. Ideal intake of pasture for organic dairy animals is 50% or more of their dry matter needs, from weaning age on up through their full life cycle, and for the fullest extent of the grazing season.

- Climates, areas, or farms that cannot provide a minimum of 120 days of grazing should not be considered for organic dairy production.
- Herd size must be adjusted appropriately to the amount of pasture that can be provided by the farm's land base. Land that normally produces stored feed may need to be converted to pasture to ensure adequate pasture intake.

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## DMS Creates Organic Advisory Committee

*By Diane Bothfeld*

SYRACUSE, NY –Dairy Marketing Services, LLC (DMS) based in Syracuse, New York has been involved in the organic milk movement for several years. DMS is a marketing agency, marketing milk for Dairy Farmers of America, Dairyalea, St. Albans Cooperative Creamery, Inc., other affiliated cooperatives and independent farms since 1999.

DMS involvement in the organic market began at the farmer level by providing members the ability to venture into the organic market, at the same time maintaining the security of their cooperative. For the past several years, DMS and its member coops have worked closely with Horizon Organic Dairy and CROPP to develop an organic milk supply in the Northeast. DMS provides services of marketing, payroll processing, lab testing and field services to organic farms in New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Maine.

Through the years of involvement in organic dairy, DMS has developed a vision for this industry: to enhance pay prices for organic producers now and in the future. The ability to supply milk to all customers provides DMS members a choice of markets and pay prices. DMS is also committed to creating a platform for our organic dairy farms to voice their opinion at the local and national level.

Recently, a new customer for organic milk, H.P. Hood, has entered the organic marketplace. H.P. Hood has requested DMS to procure this milk. Hood's entrance into the organic market provides a new opportunity to DMS member farms.

To gain input from organic members, DMS has created an advisory committee. Members from New York and Pennsylvania shipping organic milk took part in the first advisory committee meeting on October 26, 2004.

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Continued from DMS Creates Organic Advisory Committee page 4)

Several topics were discussed at this first meeting which included future organic milk needs in the Northeast, large organic dairy farms, mentoring program for farms entering into organic dairy farming and a process of identifying farms that could transition into organic farming. Guidelines on milk quality and farm management were also discussed and a written guideline was developed. A proposal for cows to be on pasture was included in these guidelines. The language for this requirement came from the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA).

If farmers would like to take part in this advisory committee, they should contact:

Sharad Mathur at 1-888-589-6455 ext. 5523.

Conventional producers looking for information on converting to organic, or current organic producers looking for assistance marketing their milk can call Dave Eyster at 1-888-589-6455 ext. 5409 or e-mail david.eyster@dairymarketingservices.com.

*Diane Bothfeld is the Organic Team Leader for Dairy Marketing Services and is Cooperative Relations Manager for St. Albans Cooperative Creamery, Inc. Diane resides in Vermont.*

## United Ag Services


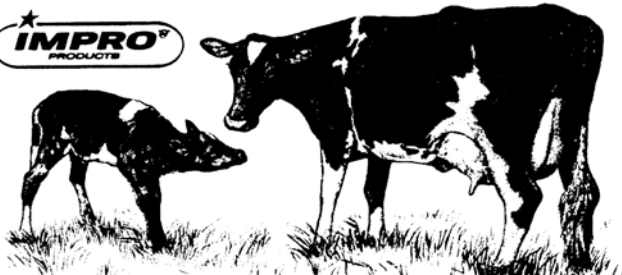
*By Jim Patsos, CEO*

United Dairy Cooperative Services, Inc. dba United Ag Services, located in Seneca Falls, NY, is a Federation of dairy cooperatives serving dairy farmers on a one-to-one basis. United provides marketing, quality control, accounting and payroll services to each of its member cooperatives. Each cooperative is autonomous with their own Board of Directors and bank accounts.

United's member cooperatives are somewhat regional in nature and feel they are neighbor helping neighbor providing the services they need. In addition, United provides these services to other agricultural organizations.

United has several organic dairy farmers in their member cooperatives. United is in the process of organizing a new cooperative "Organic Dairy Farmers Cooperative, Inc." and is seeking new members. For more information, please call United Ag Services at 1-800-326-4251 or 315-568-2750.




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## Organic Valley Has a New East Region Pool Coordinator

*By Regina Beidler*

Organic Valley Family of Farms is pleased to announce the appointment of Peter Miller as its East Region Pool Coordinator for dairy farm procurement activities and educational outreach. Peter comes with a wealth of diverse experiences in the organic world. He grew up in Pennsylvania then moved to Oregon to attend the University of Oregon and Oregon State where he studied agriculture and food science. Following his graduation he was involved as a producer in a small organic vegetable market farm for three years. He also spent a year in New Zealand working on a number of organic farms including dairy farms. Peter worked for a number of years with Oregon Tilth as a staff inspector. This gave him the opportunity to inspect farms and facilities nationwide including a variety of dairy farm operations.

In his new post, which is based in Southern Vermont, Miller will manage the procurement and evaluation of organic dairy farms in the Northeast. This includes Maine, Vermont, New York and Pennsylvania



*Peter Miller*

where pools already exist and in New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut where meetings for those considering transition to organic production will be held. Peter will also be concentrating on the recruitment of organic beef producers (both certified organic cull cows and meat steers) as well as hogs for the Organic Meat Company, a subsidiary of Organic Valley. The Organic Meat Company will be developing a meat production pool in the New England region and in New York and Pennsylvania over the next year. That branded meat product is labeled under Organic Prairie Family of Farms.

Peter has recently been involved in NODPA's West Coast meetings serving as a panel member. He sees NODPA as a good resource to organic producers and supports the development of NODPA as an organization across the country.

Peter welcomes producer inquiries about CROPP Cooperative's membership opportunities including the organic price program or about managing the transition to organic and certification requirements. Contact Peter directly at (888) 444-6455 ext.407 or [peter.miller@organicvalley.com](mailto:peter.miller@organicvalley.com).

*Regina and her husband, Brent are organic dairy farmers in Randolph Center, VT. Regina works with Organic Valley as a co-chair in the Farmers in Marketing program and is Co-Editor for the NODPA News.*

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## Hood and Stonyfield Launch Organic Milk

*By Melissa Connor, PR Manager, HP Hood LLC*

HP Hood LLC is pleased to announce a new partnership with organic yogurt producer Stonyfield Farm. Beginning in November 2004, Hood will produce and sell organic milk under the well-known Stonyfield Farm label. While Hood has produced organic milk through previous license agreements, this will mark the first time Stonyfield Farm offers a fluid milk product. It also marks the first partnership between Hood and Stonyfield, two privately-owned companies with roots firmly planted in New England.

Stonyfield Farm began in 1983 as an organic farming school in Wilton, NH. The farm began producing yogurt to raise money for the school. In 1995, working with Peter and Bunny Flint at the Organic Cow, Stonyfield Farm launched their organic yogurts. In 1997 Stonyfield Farm began working with Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative. Eighty five percent of Stonyfield Farm's sales are now organic and they continue to purchase the milk for their yogurt, drinks and frozen products from Organic Valley. Stonyfield Farm is the top-selling brand of organic yogurt in the United States. Until now, Stonyfield has only offered organic yogurt, ice cream and cultured soy.

Hood has been providing consumers with fresh, high-quality milk and dairy products since 1846. Hood's branded lines of milk, creams, ice cream, cottage cheese

and sour cream regularly rank number one in the six-state area. By combining Hood's dairy processing expertise with the highly-recognizable Stonyfield Farm organic brand, this new partnership will offer consumers an organic milk from two companies they know and trust.

The new Stonyfield Farm Organic Milk will be produced and packaged at Hood's plant in Oneida, NY. It is available in half-gallons in four varieties: Homogenized, 2% Reduced Fat, Low Fat and Fat Free. Since both Stonyfield and Hood have their greatest brand recognition on the East Coast, the product will be initially offered in New England, as well as in the top markets for organic-aware consumers including the Northeast, Virginia, Baltimore/Washington D.C., North Carolina, Florida, Chicago, Minneapolis and Cleveland.

Mike Suever, Vice President of Milk Procurement and Processing for Hood, has worked closely with organic farmers throughout the Northeast region to secure an organic raw milk supply that meets the stringent USDA and Stonyfield Farm guidelines, which include limitations on non-family farmer milk. Hood has a program to assist dairy farmers transitioning from traditional to organic production and has an agreement with Dairy Marketing Services, LLC (DMS) for field services such as inspection, testing and check writing. Milk producers interested in Hood's program should contact Mike Suever with Hood at 617-887-8419 or Sharad Mathur with DMS at 888-589-6455.



**Thank you,  
organic dairy farmers,  
for all that you do.**

**From all the folks at Stonyfield Farm**



## *From The NODPA Desk*

*By Sarah Flack, NODPA Coordinator*

It has been a busy few months since the last newsletter went out. I want to give extra thanks to the volunteer work of NODPA's farmer representatives, as well as Lisa McCrory, Elisa Clancy and Kathie Arnold, Mia Morrison, NODPA supporters, funders and NOFA VT staff. Thank you also to all the sponsors, donors and both host farms (John and Judy Clark at Applecheek farm and Jack and Ann Lazor at Butterworks Farm) who helped make the August Field Days a success.

Since we finished work on the 2004 Field Days, we have turned our attention to other activities including the development of a NODPA pasture position statement, and fundraising. You should all have received information on how to sign your farm up for the NODPA voluntary milk check-off by now. If you haven't yet, please call the office or email and we'll send you one. We also submitted a grant proposal to Farm Aid, and will be asking individuals and organizations for donations this fall. Our newsletter staff and volunteers have also been working to increase income from advertisers.

NODPA continues to have its main office at NOFA

Vermont, and Lisa and I spend much of our time working out of our home offices. NODPA will be hiring new staff as it continues to become a legally separate organization. Until that transition occurs, NOFA-VT staff and office support will continue to be important for organizational work, administrative work, collaboration, sharing of resources and mailings.

Feel free to contact me, or your NODPA Representatives if you have questions about NODPA or organic dairy issues. NODPA is your organization!

### **WORK FOR NODPA!**

#### **NODPA Coordinator and Administrator**

The Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance will be hiring a **Coordinator** and **Administrator** this winter. Tasks will include some or all of the following: setting up and running a new office, database development, bookkeeping, event organizing, grant writing, supervising part-time staff, and maintaining regular phone and email correspondence with organic dairy farmer representatives, industry and service sector people. Please send a resume and letter of interest to Enid at NOFA-VT, PO Box 697, Richmond, VT 05477, or [enid@nofavt.org](mailto:enid@nofavt.org)

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## Announcing the NODPA Organic Milk Check-Off

By Sarah Flack, NODPA Coordinator

You may already have received a letter from NODPA asking you to sign up for the voluntary organic milk check off. This is a way for our organic milk producers to support their organization by donating 2 cents per hundredweight from their milk check.

As the organic dairy sector grows nationally, an alliance of dairy producers is more important than ever, and NODPA representatives are working with farmers across the country to help keep organic dairy farmers informed and involved. At this critical time in the organic milk industry, NODPA needs to have an increasing amount of its annual budget supported by farmers. This will help it continue its mission: *"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 and to do so in an independent farmer-driven mode"*.

In the next year, NODPA will be hiring new staff (see the job description, p. 8) who will be setting up a new NODPA office, and taking over the administrative services which have so far been provided by NOFA VT. As NODPA takes on more of this work, it is also being asked to provide more services to the increasing numbers of organic dairy producers, and to the rapidly growing organic milk industry as a whole. The success of NODPA to rise to these challenges is largely dependent on funding from the check-off, as well as donations from individuals, industry members and some grant funds.

If you haven't received a form yet, call 802-434-4122 or email [sarahf@globalnetisp.net](mailto:sarahf@globalnetisp.net), and we'll send you one.

**Thank you to the Organic Dairy Producers who have already signed up for the Check-Off!**

## Who Is NODPA, and What Do We Do?

NODPA originated in February 2001 at a summit meeting of organic dairy producers in the Northeast. These producers came together to discuss critical issues within the organic dairy industry including maintaining a sustainable milk price, the National Organic Program, alternative milk markets, and building effective communication lines between fellow producers in the Northeast and beyond. Since that first meeting, NODPA has:

- \* Created effective farmer networking on a state by state and northeast level.
- \* Opened lines of communication with farmers, processors, industry representatives, and the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB).
- \* Participated in national meetings and is assisting with the creation of regional organic dairy producer organizations.
- \* Organized four Annual Field Days Events and Producer Meetings.
- \* Created the *NODPA News* quarterly newsletter that goes out to over 240 members.
- \* Created ODAIRY, the organic dairy electronic discussion group, which has over 235 subscribing members. Anyone can become an ODAIRY subscriber, send an email to: [odairy-subscribe@yahooogroups.com](mailto:odairy-subscribe@yahooogroups.com)
- \* Developed a web site filled with resources including educational information on animal health and grazing management, industry news, certification, classifieds, calendar events, and a organic dairy business directory. ([www.organicmilk.org](http://www.organicmilk.org) or [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com))
- \* Worked to ensure that organic dairy Standards stay strong to uphold consumer expectations and to disallow animal factories in organic dairy production.
- \* Administered producer surveys (2001, 2002) providing information on pay price of milk, cost of purchased feeds, pasture use and feedback on important issues.

In the next 12 months, NODPA will organize its fifth annual Field Day and Producer Meeting (most likely to be held in NY), continue work on increasing database of dairy producers, send members the quarterly newsletter, and continue to participate in national discussion of the organic milk sector to assure a sustainable pay price and infrastructure.

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## Rumensin Now Allowed for Dairy Cows

*By Regina Beidler*

Will the FDA decision to allow Rumensin in conventional dairy cow rations help turn more consumers to organic milk? The feed additive, which contains the antibiotic monensin, has been used in beef production and heifer grain and has recently been approved by the FDA for lactating animals.

Rumensin is promoted to improve feed efficiency in the rumen by selectively killing some types of rumen microbes which encourages increased propionic acid production and decreases the production of acetic and butyric acids. Rumensin has also been used in prevention and control of coccidiosis in cattle.

Emily Brown Rosen of Organic Research Associates recently pointed out on an ODAIRY post that Rumensin "is an antibiotic growth promoter that is banned in Europe, and also of course, in organic production. It is not one used in human medicine, so there may be less outcry about it, and may be why FDA went ahead to approve this extended use, despite other efforts from Congress and various environmental/ health groups to remove routine antibiotics from feed use."

The FDA states in its release that they have reviewed extensive data to ensure that the product meets all standards for environmental, animal health and human food safety. However, there are concerns on a number of levels. Rumensin's manufacturer, Elanco, which is a subsidiary of Eli Lilly and Company, shared their testing data and methods of testing Rumensin on lactating animals. The testing period was a short nine and a half days after which the milk and tissues of the animals were analyzed for the presence of monensin. The company concluded from these tests that monensin in the tissues and milk of these cows was below the tolerance point established as negligible in the code of Federal Regulations. Is nine and a half days an adequate length of time to draw these conclusions?

A study by Colorado State University has shown the impact of antibiotics, including monensin, on waterways. Since monensin is used only in animals it was used as a marker in the study and was only measured in waterways close to feedlot operations. The study also measured compounds in stream and river bed sediments and found the concentration of monensin to be 1000 parts greater than the surrounding water. Ken Carlson, one of the investigators in the study, says there are two primary concerns regarding the presence of antibiotics in the waterways. First, the potential toxic dangers to fish, plants and aquatic life and secondly,

the potential impact on human health through drinking water as in most cases water treatment plants cannot remove all these compounds. There is also the concern about the emergence of disease causing bacteria resistant to even strong doses of drugs.

The question remains whether consumers will become aware of Rumensin as a regular tool in conventional agriculture. There is pressure by manufacturers to control labeling practices. In a letter to the Chief of the Standardization Branch of the USDA Livestock and Seed program in March, 2003, Elanco recommended to the USDA that labeling claims be designed to enable consumers to make informed decisions based on safety information, nutrition or preferred practices. However, they warned that marketing claims must not mislead by claiming that one production method is safer or more wholesome than another. Elanco concluded that many consumers do not understand modern animal food production methods, particularly around the use of antibiotics.

This is yet another opportunity for organic farming to offer information to consumers as well as a choice to those who don't want antibiotics as a tool in food production. More information about Elanco's testing methods can be found at [www.elanco.com](http://www.elanco.com).



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(Continued from Organic Dairy Farmers Speak Out At NODPA Field Days page 1)

National Organic Program (NOP).

- \* Large organic dairies influencing consumer concerns; how to stop dry-lot organic dairying.
- \* Questionable USDA guidance within the NOP and wondering how much say the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) will have in shaping things.
- \* Increased need for technical assistance and mentoring as more farmers are transitioning to organic dairy; for the farmers, vets and resource individuals.
- \* Maintaining a viable pay price.

Tony Azevedo, an organic dairy producer from California led a discussion on the importance of maintaining the pasture standard on organic farms. Discussion of this led to an overall look at NODPA, and what the organization's priorities should be as it moves forward (see *NODPA Formulates a Pasture Policy* on page 1 of this issue). Producers in attendance listed the most important issues for NODPA to address in the order of importance: 1) Pasture Access Standard, 2) General NOP Standards, 3) Viable Pay Price, 4) Consumer confidence, 5) Consumer Education, 6) Creating a National NODPA, 7) Maintaining Organic Identity (not losing control to big companies), 8) Networking with farmers, 9) Supporting NODPA, 10) Educating farmers.

NODPA announced a new *organic milk check-off* as a way to both increase NODPA's funding, and to give producers a way to directly support the organization (see Check-Off article on page 9). In the next year, NODPA, which is now a program of NOFA VT, will become a *legally separate* organization, adding new staff, and continuing the important work of giving organic dairy farmers a collective voice.

### Field Day on Saturday

Saturday's Field Day event at Applecheek farm included a workshop lead by Jerry Brunetti, who spoke on animal health. In the afternoon, Heather Darby led a hands-on soil workshop and Tyler Webb spoke on Pasture management. Both days included local organic food, and meals were catered by Jason Clark of Applecheek farm. There were many donations of food and raffle items as well as sponsors of this event,



Photo By Lisa McCrory

which is one of NODPA's annual fundraisers.

### Special thanks to field day sponsors and supporters

including the John Merck Fund, Organic Valley/CROPP, Risk Management Agency, Green Mountain Feeds, Horizon Organic, Stonyfield Farm, Inc, Agri-Dynamics (Jerry Brunetti), Applecheek Farm and the whole Clark family, B-A-Blessing Farm (John &

Tammy Stoltzfus), Butterworks Farm (Jack & Anne Lazor), MOFGA, NOFA-VT, the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association (AHVMA), Brookfield Agricultural Services, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), UVM Extension Service, Weston A Price Foundation, Lakeview Organic Grain, and Yankee Farm Credit. Thank you also to those who donated items for the raffle or food: Acres USA Inc., Annie's Naturals, Brookfield Agricultural Services, Crystal Creek, IMPRO Product, Applecheek farm, Butterworks farm, Washington Homeopathic Products, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Horizon Organic, Red Hen Bakery, Organic Valley/CROPP, Stonyfield, and Heart & Soil.

### Calf Raffle at the NODPA Field Days

A calf was donated by John and Tammy Stoltzfus of Whitesville, NY as the grand prize from a number of items raffled off at the NODPA Field Days. 'Official' winner of the calf was Daniel Beard from Iowa who, due to distance, decided to give the calf to Don Faulkner of S. Royalton, VT. Don, however, felt like the calf should go to a young dairy farmer who could show this calf and promote it as the 'NODPA Calf' at shows. Clinton Gardiner, son of Jim and Nancy Gardiner, was ready to take the challenge and is the proud recipient of NODPA'S 2004 calf raffle.



L-R John Stoltzfus, Clinton Gardiner, Daniel Beard, and Don Faulkner. Photo By Beth Holtzman

# Commentary



*Dear NODPA Readers,  
'Commentary' is an open forum for sharing thoughts,  
opinions, concerns, and whatever else inspires you.  
Please send your submissions to any of the Editors  
(see page 18 for contact information)*

## Their Gain Our Loss

Dear Editors:

I felt that I could not let this opportunity go by without further comment.

I am sure all of you at NODPA News are aware how important and far reaching your question is from Kathie Arnold's article about the NE organic milk market. "Do large scale producers bring negatives to the marketplace or are they a boon...Should we be working together...or should we be discouraging their entrance to the Northeast?" (August 2004, Vol. 4, Issue 3)

Your excellent article, also by Ms. Arnold, on Aurora Dairy is the perfect springboard for the discussion it so happens.

Let us start with what we know to be Organic Dairy in the Northeast today: Individual attention to the animals; extended periods between milkings on pasture as the season permits; a herd size to pasture size ratio that promotes proper diet and comfortable grazing; and rotational grazing that keeps both the land and the animals at their optimal health.

Now let us look at Aurora Dairy as Mr. Driftmier, Vice President of Marketing, describes his organic dairy: 4,000 milking herd (but no mention of how they are kept in good health); 4,000 milking head with only 250 acres available to them "currently" (that's 16 cows per acre when the rule of thumb is about 1 cow per acre); he cautions that people in organic that practice different methods should refrain from criticizing others in organics.

So on the face of it, can anyone who really understands organic dairy conclude that Aurora Dairy and the Northeast family organic dairy farmer are producing the same product? The word "organic" has been co-opted, as Joel McNair of The Milkweed proposes, by the corporate marketers. What we do and produce has no resemblance to the factory organic farm and its product. So the question should NOT be about working together or encouraging entrance. Aurora Dairy and its ilk have a right to exist, to do business, to say it produces organic milk if the FDA or whomever says their product qualifies. But they do NOT have the

RIGHT to be a member of a society of producers whose dedication is to the animals and the land before it is to profit. The Auroras of the industry benefit from their association with OUR values, never will we benefit from our association with theirs. Joel McNair is absolutely right when he says of the true organic producers, "they gotta do something different, because what organic has become is rapidly spinning out of their control."

Our job is to continue to distinguish ourselves in the marketplace and to never accept being pooled in with the other types of producers who will be allowed to call themselves organic. It will be all their gain and our loss.

Anyone willing to take up this torch?

Greg Jackmauh, *Barnet, Vermont*

## Herdsmanship

Dear Editors:

Abe Collins here. I work for Ted Yandow in St. Albans. I was writing concerning the young stock on pasture. We raised 15 calves on five nurse cows this summer. The only time the calves were not on pasture was when we were bonding them to their adoptive mothers in the barn...perhaps the first three days.

The calves are playful, robust, and large for their age. One calf had scours that came and went in about two days in June... beyond that we had no health problems. Parasitism seems minor... symptoms are not apparent. Their grazing cell had not been grazed by other animals this year, and was hayed once before being grazed 4 more times.

The calves have a lot of fun. The mothers are good with their adopted charges.

Calf care this year consisted of moving cows daily, attending to water and minerals, and spending some quality time to socialize the calves. My wife and daughter enjoyed this job, and balmed a few chapped teats that occurred.

Of course, we're just doing what a lot of others have done for a long time. Newman Turner (Fertility Pastures, etc.) has written a great book on this called 'Herdsmanship'.

We were especially surprised at how easy it is. Even the calf bonding with the nurse cows was smooth.

I appreciate all you're doing with the pasture stan-

*(Continued on page 13)*



(Continued from Commentary page 12)

dard.

On a related note; Ted and I are working toward no-grain dairying. We had a very good grazing season. Our milk production peaked and maintained for months at 42 + lbs./day with 100% grazing. No supplements besides 2 oz. cider vinegar, kelp and minerals. In early November, we are still feeding 100% pasture and are averaging just under 40 lbs a day.

With feed costs like this we are encouraged about the future of profitable dairying.

Abe Collins, *St. Albans, Vermont*

### Field Days Fun

Dear Sarah Flack and Lisa McCrory:

You are an unequalled team when it comes to putting on an Agricultural Extravaganza!

The NODPA [Field Days] Conference was so important, meaningful, educational, and fun.... Thank you for a wonderful two days.

Don Faulkner, *S. Royalton, Vermont*

### TV Show Maligns Organic Milk

Dear NODPA Readers:

In a recent episode of the new NBC drama "Medical Investigation", organic milk was implicated as the cause of "malignant multiple sclerosis" in some athletes. This show follows the work of a mobile medical health team from the National Institutes of Health (a real life government organization) who checks out and tries to eradicate outbreaks of unexplained diseases.

On October 15, NBC aired the fifth episode of Medical Investigation, entitled "Team". It was centered on an incident that takes place in Nebraska where "2 college football players have become ill. Originally, meningitis is suspected. The athletes are diagnosed with malignant multiple sclerosis. The cause is a suspected use of "designer drugs," specifically GHB. However, this speculation is proved false. The team finally determines the athletes became ill from drinking "organic milk" from cows raised on the campus. The USDA's National Organic Program regulates the production and safety of organic milk in this country."

I found the above rundown of the show on the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website, where one could learn about the real life implications of some of the diseases that are showcased in the series. One can link to both the CDC and NIH websites from the Medical Investigation show's home page. The epi-


sode claims the cause of the malignant multiple sclerosis is due to inbreeding in the small, closed, organic herd.

With millions of viewers watching this show, we need to tell NBC that this fictitious plot which slanders small organic farms and organic milk is neither realistic nor acceptable. To contact NBC, you can call: 212-664-4444, e-mail [MedicalInvestigation@nbc.com](mailto:MedicalInvestigation@nbc.com), or write NBC Television Network 30 Rockefeller Plaza New York, NY 10112.

Caralea Arnold, *Truxton, New York*

### EPA Will Use Poor Kids To Study Pesticides

The EPA plans to launch a new study in which participating low income families will have their children exposed to toxic pesticides over the course of two years. For taking part in these studies, each family will receive \$970, a free video camera, a T-shirt, and a framed certificate of appreciation. In October, the EPA received \$2 million to do the study from the American Chemistry Council, a chemical industry front group that includes members such as Dow, Exxon, and Monsanto. The Organic Consumers Association is calling on the nation's citizens to demand the EPA forgo this project. Sign petition at [www.organicconsumers.org/epa-alert.htm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/epa-alert.htm)



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# Organic Production

## Feature Farm

### **Cream of the Crop: Lifeline Farm Adds Milk and Cheese To Its Farm Products Available Locally**

*By Rod Daniel, Photo By Jeremy Lurgio*

A Victor, Montana dairyman has made it easier for people to enjoy the taste of fresh milk, and in the process he's brought back a bit of Bitterroot Valley history.

Two decades after starting a certified organic dairy west of Victor, Ernie Harvey commenced production at his new grade-A milk bottling facility less than a mile away. But the Victor bottling plant - the first to receive a state license in more than 20 years - is only part of what's new at Lifeline Community Creamery. Certified organic cheese has been produced there since August.

Bucking an American trend that's seen corporate agriculture swallow up small farm ventures like dogs eating butter, the new creamery rekindles a proud tradition in a valley that once was home to more than a hundred dairies producing milk for creameries from Grantsdale to Stevensville.

A Dillon native, Harvey started the dairy at Lifeline Farm in 1984 to help complete the soil-fertility cycle on west-side land that was producing up to 80 acres of organic produce. In the dairy's first two years, Lifeline sold milk to the Ravalli County Creamery in Hamilton, which at the time bought from 30 area dairy farmers and produced cheese, ice cream and milk under the Hamilton House label.

The Huls family closed the Ravalli County Creamery in August 1985 when owner Dave Huls died tragically in an automobile accident. Since then the Bitterroot Valley has been without a milk-bottling plant or cheese-making facility and the number of dairies in the valley has shrunk to less than 10.

As the only certified organic dairy in a valley where

all the dairies sell to Darigold in Bozeman, Lifeline found it hard to make a profit buying higher-priced organic feed and selling milk at commercial prices. Harvey said they tried selling their grade-A organic milk to different processing plants who could pay higher prices, but each plant eventually closed.

"Initially, we wanted someone else to do the processing," he said, "but after going through five plant closures, I decided I'd either have to do this myself or get out of the business. It was pretty much a last-ditch effort."

Building and equipping a modern-day creamery is a costly endeavor, but Harvey was able to finance the project by selling many of the farm's breeding heifers as well as its milk base - the right to produce milk in Montana at a certain base price.

"We didn't need the milk base to produce ourselves," he said, "and local producers could use it."

Harvey wanted to locate the creamery as close to the farm as possible, so he approached Victor Mercantile owner Ray Daguerre, who subsequently built the 30,000-square-foot creamery building just north of his grocery store, completing it last fall.

Most of the plant's equipment is recondi-

tioned, including the stainless steel cheese vat and the bottling machine. But the computerized, "high-temperature-short-time" pasteurizer is new.

Currently, Harvey said, about a third of the milk from the dairy's 70 Brown Swiss cows - roughly 500 gallons per week - is bottled and the remaining two-thirds gets made into cheese. In the next few months, after establishing a market for the fresh milk, he hopes to be bottling close to 2,000 gallons per week.

"Right now we're just getting it up and running," he said. "It's out there now and it's selling. In the next few months we should be in three or four times as many stores as we are now."

One advantage of putting the surplus, grade-A milk into cheese, he said, is that it increases in value while sitting on pallets in the 40-degree walk-in cooler.

*(Continued on page 15)*



(Continued from Feature Farm page 14)

"Right now, our coolers are full of 40-pound boxes of cheese," he said. "And really that's money in the bank. The mild cheddar will gain 20 percent in value in six months as it ages and becomes sharp, and another 20 percent in six more months for extra sharp."

Harvey has been making and marketing certified organic cheese for about five years. Until August 2003, Harvey trucked his milk to a cheese plant near Bozeman, where third-generation cheesemakers Duane and Darryl Heap artfully turned the organic milk into handcrafted jack and cheddar.

Getting the bottling operation up and running, Harvey said, has taken a lot of time and energy, due in part to the thorough series of inspections required by the state.

Todd Gahagan, bureau chief for the Milk and Egg Inspection Division of the Department of Livestock, said there are very stern requirements for a grade-A bottling plant, including regular inspections to make sure the pasteurizing and bottling equipment is working properly.

"We take food safety very seriously," Gahagan said. "There are a large number of requirements that have to

be met before they're allowed to sell bottled milk, and we do a very rigorous inspection every three months."

Since Lifeline milk isn't homogenized - a process that breaks down the molecules of fat - a layer of cream floats on top of the milk. For that reason, Harvey recommends vigorously shaking the jug of milk before opening in order to distribute the cream.

He said just about everyone who has tried the new milk has liked the old-fashioned, rich taste.

"We've had nothing but very good reviews," he said. "A lot of people remember old-fashioned milk with cream on top and like the flavor. Ultra-pasteurization really screws up the taste, I think."

The fact that the milk is bottled and shipped often the same day it's produced, means that under ideal circumstances a consumer can buy milk that literally was still in the cow the day before. Such incredible freshness, Harvey said, gives them a leg up on the competition.

Lifeline Farm, in addition to producing milk and cheese, also sells certified organic beef, pork and sausage, and Harvey's partners Luci Brieger and Steve Elliott of Lifeline Produce grow and sell organic

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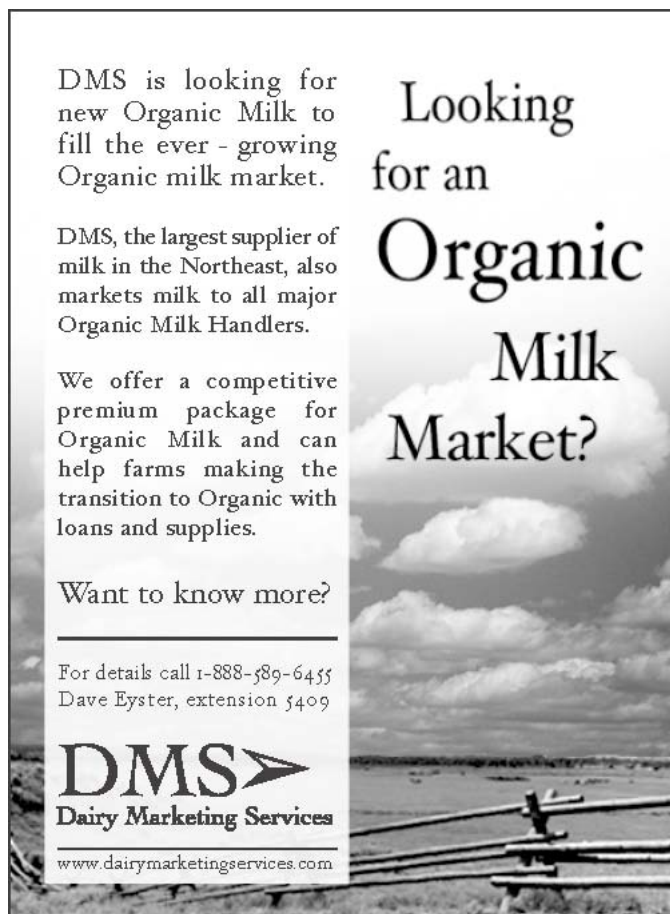
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(Continued from Feature Farm page 15)

vegetables. Harvey said it was never their intention to produce a high-priced product for an elitist market, and the fact that their milk is finally making it to regular grocery store shelves fits in with their philosophy.

"We've always taken a populist bent," Harvey said. "Our farm is producing for the general public. We don't want to sell a little bit of product for high bucks; we want to sell a lot of product at a reasonable price."

Harvey said that was the idea behind the "family packs" of organic cheese introduced three years ago. After successfully marketing the smaller, 8-ounce packages of jack and cheddar cheeses, Lifeline added the more economical 24-oz family packs.

"I think we were the first people in the organic market to offer the larger sizes," he said. "Family packs are two-thirds of the market now. It shows that common people want to eat organic, but it's got to fit into their budget."

Once the bottling and milk distribution is running smoothly, Harvey's next task is to make cultured, organic butter from the fledgling Victor creamery. He already has the commercial butter churn, but hasn't had time yet to get it going.

Eventually, his goal is to have a complete farm

store in the same building as the creamery, where consumers can choose from the wide selection of organic farm products from not only Lifeline Farm but other area organic farms as well.

With the help of the many people associated with Lifeline Farm, Harvey has spent the better part of the last 30 years nourishing the people in his community. And judging by his most recent accomplishment, he's no less committed today to his belief that good food feeds a person's soul than when he started growing vegetables on Sweathouse Creek Road in the late-1970s.

But laced in Harvey's earthy belief in the power of soul food is a pragmatism grounded in reality.

"Meat and milk both show a direct reflection to their source that can be measured in quality, taste and how you feel when you eat them," he said. "You can take a drink of milk and right away tell the quality. The other side is if you have a generation raised on skim or powdered milk, they're not going to know the difference."

Reporter Rod Daniel can be reached at [rdaniel@ravallirepublic.com](mailto:rdaniel@ravallirepublic.com)

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**United Ag Services** in Seneca Falls, NY is looking for organic milk in NY and northern PA. Please contact Jim Patsos at 315-568-2750 or 800-326-4251.

*Any buyers looking for organic milk who would like to be listed in this column for the November issue, please email the desired text to Kathie at [randkarnold1@juno.com](mailto:randkarnold1@juno.com) by January 25<sup>th</sup>.*

## Organic Dairy Cow Consignment

*By Diane Schivera*

This summer the first Organic dairy cow consignment sale was held at Richard Brown's Auction Barn in Richmond Maine. There were about 25 farmers in attendance including conventional and organic farmers and a few cattle dealers. Twelve farms consigned cows. The stock ranged from calves to three year old cows, seventy one animals in total. Most common breeds were represented including some Jersey Holstein crossbreds. Sale prices ranged from \$75 for a Jersey

Holstein cross bull calf, \$180 for a Holstein bull calf, \$1,125 for some very upstanding heifers and \$1350 for some pregnant cows. The highest price was \$1750, paid for a three year old registered Holstein. There was even a calf born at the auction barn the night before the sale. The mood at the end of the sale was favorable for both the sellers and the buyers. Everyone felt that they got reasonable prices. The prices were higher than a conventional cow sale but not by a remarkable amount. It was a good start for the industry.

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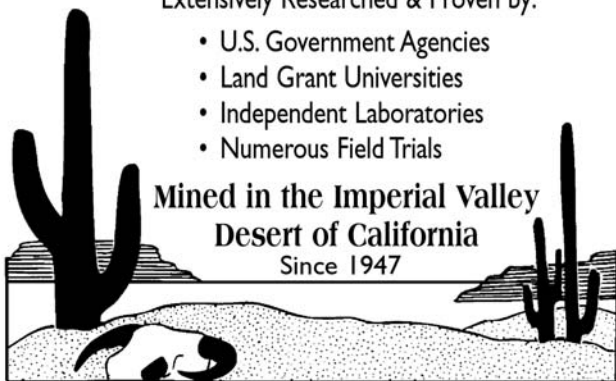
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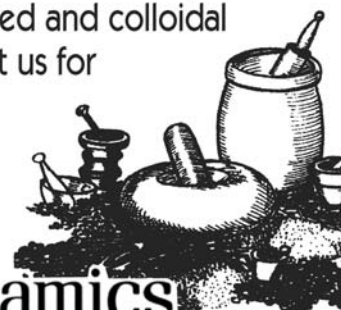
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## Environmental Mastitis, Part 3 of 3

*By Ruth Zadocks, DVM*

### How do we know where to look?

So how do we know where to start, if contagious mastitis cannot even be trusted to be contagious and environmental mastitis cannot even be trusted to be environmental? Since there are three factors that play a major role in the prevention or occurrence of mastitis, the cow, the environment, and the bacteria, there are three things we need to look at: the cows, their environment, and the bacteria. It is rare that any of these factors in isolation causes a mastitis problem, or can provide the solution to a mastitis problem.

Start with the cows. Where does the problem occur? Do you mainly see a problem in the dry cows or the heifers? Those animals are not exposed to milking, so transmission during milking and contagious mastitis are out of the question. Do you mainly see a problem in the milking herd? In that case, there may be contagious transmission among your milking animals, or there may be something wrong with the cows' resistance, or with the bacterial load in their environment. Is there a problem in heifers shortly before or after first calving, but not in the older cows? In that case, and especially if the

*(Continued on page 19)*



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[dianes@mofga.org](mailto:dianes@mofga.org)  
phone 207-568-4142



(Continued from *Environmental Mastitis* page 18)

heifers are managed and fed as a separate group, there may be a nutritional deficit in the heifer ration that makes them more susceptible to infections, e.g. a vitamin E/Selenium deficit. Is the problem mostly in high producing cows at the peak of lactation? In that case, energy supply (ration) may not be sufficient to meet energy demand (peak production), slowing down the immune response and making the cows more vulnerable to bacteria that are commonly present in the environment.

Look at the environment. Don't forget that the environment includes the milking machine, the people handling, feeding and milking the cows, and nutrition. Are the cows out on pasture or in a barn? If inside, what is the air quality? Is it fresh inside the barn, or dusty and muggy? When dust and moisture have a chance to accumulate, bacteria do too. Are the stalls big enough for the cows? And are their claws healthy? If not, do they animals have trouble getting up, and maybe damage their own or their neighbors' udder while doing so? A barn design or claw health problem may be the underlying cause of a mastitis problem. When the animals lie down a lot, the bedding material doesn't have a chance to dry, and circulation in the

udder may be compromised. Is there any bedding in the stalls? How much? What kind? Is it clean? Sawdust and shavings may harbor *Klebsiella*. Straw and manure pellets may harbor lots of *Streptococci*. Manure contains *E. coli* as well as *Streptococci*. Look at lactating cows, dry cows and heifers. What is the milking management? Are cows forestripped to detect mastitis? Are mastitic cows separated from others, e.g. in a sick pen, or a high cell count string that is milked last? Are cell count data available? Are they used? Evaluate the cow rations too. Is the energy and nutrient content sufficient to meet the animals' needs? Is the quantity and access time sufficient for all animals, including animals low in the social hierarchy, to eat what they need?

Submit samples to identify the main bacteria. Are clinical mastitis cases and high somatic cell counts mostly or partly caused by *Staphylococci*, *Streptococci*, *E. coli*, *Klebsiella*, *Proteus*, *Pseudomonas*, or *Pasteurella*? If *Klebsiella* is a problem, test or replace the bedding material. If *Streptococci* are a problem, testing of unused bedding material may be an option, to verify whether the storage of bedding material is sufficiently clean and dry. Keep in mind that for

(Continued on page 20)

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(Continued from *Environmental Mastitis* page 19)

Streptococci, either the environment or infected cows can cause problems. If multiple animals in a herd have *Proteus*, *Pseudomonas* or *Pasteurella*, often water-borne bacteria, it is imperative to find the source of these bacteria. Herds have gone out of business due to *Pseudomonas* outbreaks that were the results of poorly drained and cleaned milking equipment or after use of infected udder cloths. When *E. coli* is the main issue, improving cow health (nutrition) and barn or milking hygiene should be considered. Simple things such as preventing the cows from lying down for an hour after milking (e.g. by providing them fresh fodder, potentially combined with locking them into head gates) allow for some closure of teat ends and can reduce the risk of environmental mastitis. Bacteria can be identified in milk samples, but also in bedding samples. In special cases, strain typing may be considered to determine whether a staphylococcal or streptococcal problem is of environmental or contagious origin. When a predominant strain is found, the problem is probably contagious. If a large variety of strains are found, the source of the bacteria is in the cows' environment.

Many factors contribute to the health and disease of

dairy cows, and many factors may need to be considered for the solution or prevention of mastitis problems. Invariably, cows, their environment and bacteria play a role. As long as those three components are considered, and expert advice is solicited in all three areas when necessary, a lot of so-called environmental mastitis problems can be prevented or reduced to an acceptable level.

*Ruth Zadocks is a veterinarian and a research associate in the Department of Food Science, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University. For questions or comments, contact Ruth at 607-254-4967 or [rz26@cornell.edu](mailto:rz26@cornell.edu). Part 1 of this article appeared in the May 2004 issue of NODPA News and part 2 appeared in the August 2004 issue. For complete article visit [www.nodpa.com/health.html](http://www.nodpa.com/health.html)*

## Maine Grass Farmers Network

A new organization called the Maine Grass Farmers Network has started in Maine. It's goal is to connect farmers and share information about grazing and pastures. This past summer they held eight pasture walks. The annual conference in October featured Sarah Flack, Gwyneth Harris and Rob Moore. For more information contact Diane Schivera or Paula Roberts at 207-568-4142.



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## Many Thanks to Our Members & Donors

NODPA cannot do the work it does without the monetary contributions and volunteer time given by many. As we are coming near the end of 2004, we are also arriving at the time where we ask all of you for an annual contribution of \$20 or more to keep us going for 2005. Please consider joining for the first time or making your annual contribution soon. If you are signing up for the 'Check-off', that is considered a renewed membership and you will automatically receive the NODPA News. Below is a complete list of our 2004 contributors (Field Days Sponsorship is separate on page 11)

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## Renew your membership for 2005

### 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 that NODPA has been providing, please let us know by making a generous contribution to our efforts.

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# Calendar

**December 4, 2004**

**Producer Meeting for Slaughterhouse Feasibility Study**

*Northern VT*

Discuss results of ongoing study of buying or contracting with a slaughterhouse in northern VT to stabilize prices of services and secure slaughter dates. Contact: Pat Sagui, [pats@pshift.com](mailto:pats@pshift.com), 802-744-2345

**December 4-5, 2004**

**Restoring Our Seed Conference**

*Brattleboro, VT*

Learn to grow, select and breed organic seed for sustainable farming in New England; integrate seed crops and wild habitats for enhanced biodiversity; develop markets for 'vintage vegetables' with communities, schools and chefs. Workshops with master seed growers, more on [www.growseed.org](http://www.growseed.org)

**December 7, 2004, 7 pm**

**Bennington Film Series documentary, "The Future of Food"**

*Library, Bennington, VT*

This film shines the brightest light on the science of genetic engineering (GE) and on the people and politics behind the battle to dominate the global food supply. Contact: Jim Moulton, [jmoulton@sover.net](mailto:jmoulton@sover.net), 802-824-6670, or Rich Garant 802-257-1589

**December 11, 2004, 10 AM – 3 PM**

**Direct Marketing Farm-Raised Meats**

*Lutheran Church, State St, Albany, NY*

Presenters Judy Pangman of Sweet Tree Farm and Denise Warren of Stone and Thistle Farm will explain the concepts and details behind their strategies for selling pasture-raised meats for a livelihood. Contact: Regional Farm and Food Project, 518-271-0744, [www.farmandfood.org](http://www.farmandfood.org)

**January 22, 2005**

**Vermont Grazing Conference: Thinking Globally, Grazing Locally**

*VT Tech. College, Randolph Ctr., VT*

Keynote address by renowned Holistic Management Educator Alan Savory. He will help us to remember how family farms and sustainable management influence our greater community and environment, and our finances, families and herd health. Speakers cover grazing and human health, the technicalities of raw milk sales in VT and beyond, herd health, grazing genetics and more. Contact: Gwyneth Harris, 802-656-3834, [gharris@uvm.edu](mailto:gharris@uvm.edu)

**January 23, 2004, 10 am – 3 pm**

**Changing the Way We Make Decisions: An Introduction to Holistic Management**

Lay a foundation for the practice of Holistic Management. Participants will gain in-depth understanding of the Holistic Management decision-making framework, including formation of a holistic goal and testing guidelines. \$25 for VGFA members, \$35 for non-members. Lunch included. Contact: VT Grass Farmers Assoc. 802-656-5459

**January 28 – 30, 2005**

**NOFA-NY's 23rd Annual Conference**

*Syracuse, NY*

Featured speakers: Dr. Paul Detloff giving 3 consecutive workshops on "Alternative Animal Healthcare" on 1/29; Tom Frantzen, Practical Farmers of Iowa, "What It Takes to Build a Good Farm & a Satisfying Life"; Dr E. Ann Clark, University of Guelph Ontario, "What it Takes to Make Organic More Sustainable"; Diane Whealey, Seed Savers Exchange. Contact: 607-652-NOFA, [office@nofany.org](mailto:office@nofany.org), [www.nofany.org](http://www.nofany.org).

**January 31, February 28, March 28**

**Marketing Your Livestock Products:**

**Meat, Dairy and Fiber**

*VT College, Montpelier, VT*

NOFA-VT series of 3 classes are designed to help farmers develop effective marketing plans for their livestock products. Topics include: marketing basics, pricing, regulatory issues, labeling, product promotion, and more. Farmer mentoring offered to a limited number of registrants ensuring that learning goes beyond the classroom. Pre-registration required, space limited. Contact NOFA-VT, 802-434-4122, [sarahf@globalnetisp.net](mailto:sarahf@globalnetisp.net)

**February 3, 4 & 5, 2005**

**PASA's 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Farming for the Future Conference**

*State College, PA*

Keynotes: Alan Savory, Jerry Brunetti and Marion Nestle. Contact Lauren Smith, 814-349-9856, [www.pasafarming.org](http://www.pasafarming.org)

**February 5, 2005, Saturday 10-12 am**

**Backgrounding and Pasture Management**

*Wolfs Neck Farm, Freeport, ME*

Eric Jensen and Kevin Wolmath will discuss operation, 207-865-4469

**February 12, 2005, 9 am**

**NOFA-VT's Winter Conference**

*VT Technical College, Randolph Ctr. VT*

Peter Forbes, co-founder of The Center for Whole Communities, and creator of The Good Life Center, will give the keynote. Contact: NOFA-VT, 802-434-4122, [info@nofavt.org](mailto:info@nofavt.org), [www.nofavt.org](http://www.nofavt.org)

**February 24-26, 2005**

**Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference**  
*La Crosse, WI*

"Make Mine Organic." More than 45 workshops and trade show with 130 exhibitors. Contact: [info@mosesorganic.org](mailto:info@mosesorganic.org), 715-772-3153, PO Box 339, Spring Valley, WI 54767

**March 5, 2005, Saturday 1-3 pm**

**Winter Management and Being Efficient.**

*Meadowsweet Farm, Swanville, ME*

Paula and Sumner Roberts will show their cows and sheep, 207-338-1265

**March 26, 2005, Saturday, 1-3 pm**

**Calf Care and Grain Growing**

*Oaklands Farm, Gardiner, ME*

Logan and Phyllis Johnston will have calves to show you and talk about their grain operation, 207-582-2136

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# Net Update



## ODAIRY

By Lisa McCrory,  
ODAIRY Moderator, [lmccrory@together.net](mailto:lmccrory@together.net)

ODAIRY, the online discussion list created by NODPA has had some very lively activity over the past six months. As usual, there are a lot of great contributors helping one another with animal health issues and others who have felt that it would be good to get to know one another, so have provided a brief introduction of themselves. It is wonderful to get to know the people subscribing to this site and to find out how important ODAIRY is to them. Below is a post from an organic dairy producer in New Zealand.

Recently, a couple off-flavor comments were made on the list that irritated some. Recommendations were made to review how ODAIRY was currently managed and possibly to add a *filter* that would only allow 'appropriate', organic dairy related discussions to occur. We decided to keep ODAIRY as it is, meaning anything that gets sent by a subscriber gets posted and if something starts to go off flavor, then the contributor will be contacted by the Moderator with a warning or taken off the list.

Sarah Flack and Lisa McCrory are now ODAIRY List Moderators, relieving Bill Casey (ODAIRY founder) from the added attention that the list was requiring. The Moderators role has ALWAYS BEEN to allow/deny anyone new that wants to join the list and to have the power to take someone off the list when necessary. (*Bill Casey still remains as the ODAIRY List Owner*)

- \* A friendly welcome letter and simple 'Roberts Rules' of how this list is intended to be used gets automatically posted to everyone the first of every month and when someone new joins the list.
- \* ODAIRY remains active with over 230 people subscribed. This is not a producer- only list; anyone can join and participate in the discussions. To subscribe, go to [ODAIRY-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ODAIRY-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

## Recent Submission to ODAIRY

By Ray & Jenny Ridings,  
Jeneraytions Organic Dairy Farm, New Zealand

Hi to everyone, Jenny & I milk 150 cows in New Zealand on 195 acres and we have a 50 acre runoff 5 miles up the road where we run our youngstock. We have been farming organically for about 6 years now and loving every minute of it. We just wonder what took us so long to "wake up". Over the past couple of years we have listened to a few guests from the US, like Elaine Ingham, Hugh Lovell, and Harry Mac Cormack. Unfortunately missed Gary Zimmermann, Jerry Brunetti and one other when they were here last year. I have recently read The Untold Story of Milk by Ron Schmid and recommend it to all of you as it has given us a different perspective of milk after 25 years of

producing it. I am also the chairman of The Organic Dairy Producers Group which has about 95% of NZ's organic farmers as members.

I enjoy being on this list because I think as farmers we all have similar problems world wide, both on and off farm and need to share our ideas.

## Our Web Site

By Elisa Clancy, [webmaster@organicmilk.org](mailto:webmaster@organicmilk.org)

Visit the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance Web Site -[www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com) and [www.organicmilk.org](http://www.organicmilk.org) - today!

For those of you who have not yet visited our site, you will find that it has current events, educational items covering topics on grazing, soil health and animal health & nutrition, calendar events, classifieds, resource listings, old issues of the NODPA News, and much more.

For those of you who visit our site regularly, you may have noticed new advertisements. These ads have been supplied to us by Google since September of this year. They are called contextual ads, and the way they work is very sophisticated; Google scans the words on our web page, and then matches these words to keywords advertisers have picked as important to their audience.

Each time an advertisement is clicked by a web visitor, NODPA receives a referral commission. We have added these contextual advertisements to help us pay for the upkeep of the web site. We hope these advertisements will be relevant to our visitors.

There is currently an ad for "Organic Source Colustrum" from New Zealand, and one for "Dairy Equipment" from Sentinel Products. Our viewers should know that we do not pick these advertisers, they are generated by a computer match. If you see an ad that is inappropriate, please contact me. I can put a block on particular ads so that they don't appear again. So click away and help us pay for our web site!

## Join OMILK; A Producer-Only Discussion List

By George Wright, [wrightwaydairy@yahoo.com](mailto:wrightwaydairy@yahoo.com)

This is a group of ORGANIC MILK PRODUCERS ONLY. This group will FREELY discuss anything that pertains to organic milk production, marketing, NOP rules and anything else you can think of. Membership will be strictly Organic Milk Producers and transition farms only. To join, send introduction to [wrightwaydairy@yahoo.com](mailto:wrightwaydairy@yahoo.com).

Your personal information will be kept confidential. Please include your phone number, certifying agency and a description of your farm such as number of cows, acres, and anything you would like to share. When you are accepted to the group, please introduce yourself to the group. NO POSTS may be transferred to any other sites without permission of the person who created the post. Anyone transferring without permission will be removed from the list. So much for the tough stuff, Lets Have Fun!!

If you do not make your living milking organic cows you probably won't qualify for this group.



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### OPPORTUNITIES

Blue Grass Beef is looking for an intern for 10-15+ hrs/week for a variety of projects including management of animal systems (beef, dairy, horses, pigs, broiler and layer chickens) and/or marketing responsibilities. Housing available, Compensation negotiable. Centre Hall, PA Contact Sarah Rider at 814-364-2516 or [bluegrass-beef@yahoo.com](mailto:bluegrass-beef@yahoo.com).

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Northern VT herd for sale, certified organic. 120 head, mostly Holstein with a couple Brown Swiss crosses. 60 milkers, 60 young stock, young herd. Would like to sell whole herd and asking \$1375/head across the board, but willing to negotiate. Call if interested Jacques Rainville: (802) 868-2009.

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- Several tons of PCO-certified organic rye seed; bulk or bags. Price negotiable and pick-up preferred (Lancaster Cty). Contact Harold Martin 717-653-5234.

- PCO-certified organic hay for sale, small square bales 1st and 2nd cutting, wrapped round bales 1st cutting. Prices from \$100 to \$200 per ton; (Berks Cty); Contact Jeff Moyer at 610-683-1420, [jeff.moyer@rodaleinst.org](mailto:jeff.moyer@rodaleinst.org)

### WANTED

Looking for a dairy farm on certified organic land to lease or to pay a portion of milk check for housing, barn, forages. I am open to all possibilities. Would prefer 100+ acres and a 3+ bedroom house. Will consider all locations but would prefer VT and NY state. Contact me. Kathryn Boulet 315-858-9732, 315-868-9547 [boulet@usadatanet.net](mailto:boulet@usadatanet.net)



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