

# NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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## Final Pasture Rule for Organic Dairy Becomes Effective June 17 and will be Implemented and Enforced June 2011

**Existing operations have over a year to implement the new standards**

On February 12, 2010 the Final Access to Pasture Rule was announced by USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan and on February 17, 2010 it was published on the Federal Register. On June 16, 2010 the regulation will become law and all NEW operations will have to implement them fully. By June 17, 2011 all EXISTING organically certified dairy operations are required to be in compliance and will be subject to revocation of their certification if they are not.

### Key points of the new regulations

1. Animals must graze pasture during the grazing season for a minimum of 120 days per year and obtain a minimum of an average of 30 percent dry matter intake (DMI) from pasture over the course of the grazing season.
2. Regionally determined grazing seasons will be determined by the producer and the certifier and may vary, do not need to be continuous and may include the grazing of residual forage.
3. Producers will choose the method for calculating dry matter demand and intake. DMI will be calculated as an average over the entire grazing season for each class of animals.
4. Producers must have a pasture management plan and manage pasture as a crop.
5. Breeding bulls are exempt from the 30% dry matter intake and days on pasture.
6. Any bedding that can be eaten by livestock must be organically certified.
7. Temporary shelter is OK for some management procedures, animal welfare, healthcare needs, for calves under 6 month and special events like a 4H fair.
8. Livestock for meat are only exempt from the 30 percent dry matter intake requirements during the finish feeding period, not to exceed 120 days. They must meet the access to pasture requirements.

**For a full description** what Is and Is Not in the new regulations go to page 20.

**Highlights from the first NOP Pasture Rule Training:** page 5.

**For Sam Fromartz' views** on the pasture rule, go to page 4.

**For ideas on how the regulations will work on the farm** (yes more paperwork) read our feature farm article on Twin Oaks Farm on page 26.

**What the organic community is saying** about the new rule, pages 7, 10 and 13

**Dry matter intake documentation worksheet:** page 16.

**Sample pasture worksheet** from Twin Oaks Dairy: page 29.

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From The NODPA President

Well, now the pasture rule is out. It seems like we’ve been at this forever. Personally, I’m remembering some of the history that goes along with the struggle that went along with this issue. I became involved with it due to a conference call that was, in part organized by Kathie Arnold. I never was, or never intended to be any kind of an “activist”, but some guy named Tony from the west coast thought it would be a good idea for me to go to Washington and testify in front of the NOSB. Why me? What the hell? I’m just a little two bit farmer from Maine, the “cold corner of the country”. Never been to Washington, never even been in a taxi cab before. Pick on someone else.

Like a fool I agreed to go. Got down there, found my way to the place where I was supposed to be, ran into a few people I had met, and more that I’d heard about. Went looking for someone that

looked like they knew what they were doing, KATHIE ARNOLD!!! Never let her get very far out of my sight. WHAT A WOMAN!!!

Prior to going into the crowded room to “testify” she had orga-nized a meeting to bring all of us like-minded people up to speed. Decided that a rule change was way too much to ask for, we should put our effort into a “guidance document” and insert wording in to clarify a definition of pasture.

Just before my turn, this guy named Jim Gardiner handed me a bumper sticker to wave in front of the NOSB board that said “let them eat grass”. Don’t know why he didn’t do it himself. I must have some sign on my back that says SUCKER printed on it.

Very little happened for a number of years except the fact that I seem to have made myself unpopular in certain circles - but we kept trying. All of a sudden there was a change from working for change to a clarification in the guidance document to an actual RULE CHANGE. I remember Richard Mathews saying “be careful what you ask for”. This didn’t deter anybody. NODPA and others

*continued on page 10*

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From The NODPA Desk

*By NODPA Executive Director Ed Maltby*

The Access to Pasture Rule was published on February 12, 2010 and we all let out a deep sigh of relief. While we had been assured, and had faith, that the work we had been doing across the country and in DC would result in a rule ‘that we would like,’ the extra time it took to have it published was worrying. As we predicted, there was nothing to worry about. The delay occurred because different companies and organiza-tions wanted to be heard by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Albert Straus and Aurora Dairy met with them on January 8. FOOD Farmers responded to that meeting and met with OMB on January 12 along with the Organic Trade Association (OTA), the National Organic Coalition (NOC) and Horizon Organic. Cornucopia met with them on January 22 and Organic Valley was the last one to meet with OMB on January 29.

The main lesson we learned by leading the consensus building around the recommendations for change was that producers can make their voices heard by working with each other, with processors and NGO’s.

The 240-page document of comments on the Proposed Rule submitted by FOOD Farmers not only provided suggested regulatory language but also gave documented case stud-ies, economic impact information and anecdotal evidence. It was a massive piece of work co-authored by Kathie Arnold and myself, but the result of input from many producers and organizations. It was no surprise, or accident, that the Final Rule adopted most of what we suggested and what had become the consensus position of the majority of the organic dairy community. Even our good friend and independent pioneer of organic dairy, Albert Straus, found the Final Rule acceptable.

More good news is the publication of a final rulemaking on February 26, 2010 that redefines the producer handler exemp-tion from paying into the Federal Milk Marketing pool will be for processors that sell less than 3 million pounds of milk a month. This brings the exemption back to what it was original-ly designed for; for producers that wanted to process their own milk and didn’t have a large volume or nationwide distribution network or were tied to a large retailer. Three million pounds of milk a month represents a milking herd of approximately 2,000 cows (20,000 lbs. yield/cow/year with some allowance for wastage etc.). This exemption will still allow the average farm family wanting to increase their income from value-added products to have some relief from the higher expenses they have because they are small operations. Paying into

the pool is what all processing plants that sell fluid milk are legally obligated to do. This adds to the cost of their fluid milk products. Those that don’t pay into the pool obviously have an economic advantage. The largest vertically integrated organic producer handler, Aurora Dairy, processes the milk from its 15,000 cows and sells it nationwide with a cost advantage from not paying into the pool. This allowed them to both undercut other companies and also lowered the wholesale price in the market, affecting pay-price nationwide. Kathie Arnold, sup-ported by Faye Benson, again led the FOOD Farmers’ push for change, and what started as a highly unlikely proposal gradually became reality over the years through letters, com-ments, testimony and advocacy on all levels. I believe, in a rash moment many years ago, I said I would eat my hat if such a change happened – perhaps it might be finalized before the next NODPA Field Days and Kathie can sit back and watch me enjoy a dessert of a NODPA hat!

It’s not all good news as we still struggle with a surplus of organic milk, especially in the West, and all the repercus-sions to producers who struggle to stay afloat. Processors and handlers have chosen to manage a surplus in many different ways. HP Hood dropped many contracts, and then introduced utilization clauses before passing its remaining contracts over to Organic Valley. The remaining companies have introduced formal and informal quotas; lowered the farmgate price; in-troduced utilization clauses; cut off producers with low quality or who are in isolated locations; and used their contractual power to the fullest. While we have seen only a 3% drop in national sales of organic fluid milk from 2008 to 2009 (USDA-AMS data), many believe we are still dealing with a national surplus of up to 11%, mostly concentrated in the West. The free market system may well solve the problem but we will lose the most vulnerable farm families; mostly the younger families that transitioned with the promise of a stable pay price in an expanding market. If this happens, we need to recognize what message we will be sending to the next generation of organic dairy farmers.

We now have only two national processors and they need to recognize their responsibility and work with producers and their organizations to rebuild confidence in the organic dairy indus-try. Producers need to work together to protect the long-term future of their community. We need an understandable method for determining pay price that has some basis in the costs of production. We need to plan responsibly for reasonable growth, not unsustainable volatility with many peaks and troughs.

When Kevin and Lisa Englebert became the first certified or-ganic dairy in 1984 there was no defined future but we all knew what was meant by Access to Pasture. A quarter of a century later, we have defined Access to Pasture but still don’t know what the future holds. It’s time we get our act together! ♦

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Pasture Rule Draws Bright Line Benefiting Cows &amp; Consumers

By Samuel Fromartz

After the pasture regulation was published, I happened to be feeding a few goats in Massachusetts. I pulled some grass from a nearby field and walked over to the animals. They came right up to me and started eating the fresh forage from my hand. There was hay nearby but the green stuff clearly won the taste test.

Over at the USDA, it took more than a decade of complaints and advisory statements, reams of documents, a dairy symposium, five listening sessions, at least two comment periods, the overhaul of the National Organic Program, the new Obama administration, and vigorous lobbying by small dairy farmer groups, like NODPA, to arrive at the same conclusion as these goats: ruminants such as cows prefer grass, and on organic farms they should be required to graze a minimum amount of pasture. The USDA also found ample organic land for grazing, especially in the West, where many objections to the pasture standard originated.

Why was this so contentious? Because cows don't need to be on pasture to produce milk. As we know, efficient factory-like organic dairy operations minimized pasture, maximized milk production and thus undercut all those other farmers who wanted to let cows express their natural behavior and eat grass. It also undercut consumers, who wanted organic milk from cows that grazed.

Now, with the new pasture rule released last week, the USDA set a bright line for every producer, big and small. All must graze their cows through the grazing season but not less than 120 days and 30% of dry matter intake. It should be recalled that this standard was arrived at by consensus by organic dairy farmers around the nation nearly five years ago.

The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), the advisory panel that recommends all regulatory changes to the Secretary of Agriculture, had at first recommended that the 120 day/30 percent minimum be for "guidance" only. But in an especially detailed and well-reasoned document explaining the regulation, the USDA said, "public comments showed strong backing for a regulatory change"—not simply guidance.

The agency enacted the bright line standard to avoid confusion among certifiers who had interpreted the "access to pasture" prescription quite differently. Secondly, and perhaps more crucially, the USDA made the change "to satisfy consumer expectations that ruminant livestock animals graze on pastures during the grazing season."

Evidence of those consumer expectations appeared after the first proposed rule, released in April 2006, when more than 80,500

commented. Of those, just 28 opposed to any changes in the pasture requirement and "there was a consistent theme of opposition to confining animals and feedlot feeding," the agency noted.

Consumers, farmers, retailers, and public advocates spoke. And, in this case, the USDA listened—it just took awhile.

That voice is especially important because the National Organic Program was designed by Congress as a "marketing program." (It is officially agnostic on whether organic foods or organic production practices are better or healthier, even though studies have shown that organic milk has higher levels of beneficial fats.) If the market, defined by the 30 percent or so of Americans who occasionally buy organic products, think organic practices are failing to live up to their expectations, the agriculture secretary has reason to "satisfy consumer expectations" and change the program. That was clearly the case in the pasture dispute, where consumers felt large-scale feedlot organic farms were manipulating organic practices with a loophole.

As another example, the agency pointed out that antibiotics are clearly prohibited from organic production. Consumers point to the absence of antibiotics as well as synthetic growth hormones in production as reasons to buy organic dairy products, livestock, meat and poultry. Yet the agency felt compelled "to further clarify the prohibition on the use of antibiotics."

The reason? "In administering this program we have found antibiotics in certified organic feed," the agency said. The document continues:

*Whether used for therapeutic or subtherapeutic reasons or to increase feed efficiency or rate of gain, all antibiotics are prohibited ... It is the producer's responsibility, to obtain assurances from feed suppliers that the feed products supplied are free of antibiotics.*

But the intent of meeting consumer expectations might not apply only to pasture or livestock practices. If consumers have an expectation that organic food should be free of genetically modified crops, then the agency should ensure against GM contamination. (As you know, genetically modified crops are banned from organic agriculture.) In fact, this issue may arise sooner rather than later if the USDA approves genetically modified alfalfa. Organic farmers plant alfalfa in their fields, so nearby crops could be subject to pollen contamination. That prospect has led to yet another consumer campaign for protections, and more lawsuits are likely on the horizon if the GM crops are approved.

Despite clear consumer preference, there were also objections to the new pasture standard.

continued on page 37

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Pasture Rule Training Highlights

By Lisa McCrory

On February 25, 2010, the NOP held its first of what will be four trainings on the new Pasture Rule. The first training (admittedly a dry-run) was held in Lacrosse, Wisconsin, just a day before Moses' Organic Farming Conference. There were around 60 people in attendance with the majority of them being accredited certifiers, inspectors and industry people. Though the first training was encouraging attendance from primarily certifiers and inspectors, the remaining Pasture Rule trainings are open to everyone.

Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator for the NOP, began the day addressing the purpose of the workshop and sharing the developments within the NOP. A chart that Miles showed illustrated the noticeable increase in resources allocated to the NOP - especially over the past couple years, which has allowed them to significantly increase staffing.

Dr. Kerry Smith, a USDA employee on detail to NOP who has

Year	Budget	# staff
2002	\$ 1.6 million	6
2003	\$ 1.0 million	6
2004	\$ 1.6 million	5
2005	\$ 1.5 million	6
2006	\$ 1.5 million	7
2007	\$ 1.5 million	8
2008	\$ 2.65 million	14
2009	\$ 3.87 million	16
2010	\$ 6.97 million	31
2011 (President's budget)	\$10.1 million	40

been intimately involved with the roll out of the final pasture rule, presented the Pasture Rule in all of its glory. There was time for questions and feedback during the training and the Powerpoint as well as other resources should be posted on the NOP site soon. Most of what was covered was a step by step walk through of the new pasture rule including demonstrations of how to cal-

continued on page 6



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

*continued from page 5*

culate Dry Matter Demand (DMD), and the Dry Matter Intake (DMI). Many of the resources on the NOP site are there for producers to use if they choose to. It is up to the producer to adequately demonstrate that they are in compliance with the new pasture rule and documenting the DMD of the livestock on the farm and the feed available to them (purchased, harvested mechanically and harvested by the livestock) should be indicated in the producer's Organic System plan (OSP) and in their production records. This is all about creating auditable records with an on-site inspection determining if the plan is being met.

Below are some key points discussed at the Pasture Rule Training:

- Pasture is recognized as a crop. A realistic pasture plan must be included in the OSP, and should be updated annually. Pasture Records will complement the pasture plan to show what actually happened. If a Plan states 200 days on pasture, but the operation only has 180 days, the operator should document why there's a difference. 205.406(a)(1)(ii) covers this.
- The grazing season does not have to be a continuous 120 days, but a minimum of 120 days must be achieved.
- Certifiers may chose to vary their annual inspections so that pastures may be evaluated at different times of the grazing season.

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- Producers should manage their herd's subgroups (lactating cows, young stock, dry cows) to ensure that each distinct subgroup meets the minimum requirements of 30% DMI and 120 days.
- Initial Dry Matter Intake (DMI) should be calculated at the beginning of the grazing season for each subgroup and type of animal. Calculations should be made whenever a change occurs to determine average DMI from pasture. At the end of the grazing season, the producer will calculate the average DMI consumed and the number of days achieved. *(See page 16 of the NODPA News for an example calculation worksheet.)*
- Someone asked if a farm was at 28% DMI by the end of the grazing season, would it be a minor or major non-compliance. The response was that the 30% DMI is the absolute minimum. Farms should be aiming for higher than 30% DMI so that there is room in case they fall short of their goals. **If a class of animal (ie heifers, dry cows, milkers) is below 30% DMI, then that group of animals will lose their certified organic status.**
- Organic dairies may ONLY buy feed from certified organic operations, NOT from exempt operations (those selling less than \$5,000).
- A clarification on agricultural products in additives and supplements was made: In the past, the rule was interpreted to require that all agricultural ingredients in additives and supplements, as well as in 205.603 listed items, needed to be organic. Now, the NOP is saying that if the agricultural ingredient is listed on the label of an additive or supplement, then it needs to be

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## What People Are Saying About The Pasture Rule ...

"As a former member of the National Organic Standards Board and one who actively helped craft the 2005 official recommendation to the National Organic Program, it is very gratifying to see that the governmental process has come to completion. Without doubt, public input at many levels through the last years proves that our democratic system of government is alive and well. This ranges from the NOSB meeting of February 2005 when dairy farmers from across the US came in record numbers to the NOSB meeting to give public testimony of why pasture should be mandatory, to the large pasture symposium held at Penn State the next year and then the official listening sessions held in various areas around the country in late 2008.

While many people wonder if the large dairies out west can comply with the new rule (time will tell), I have been wondering more about the small farms with high livestock density on relatively small acreage. The 30% dry matter intake averaged over the entire grazing season for animals 6 months of age and older will undoubtedly mean changes on some of the 60-80 acre farms with 40-50 milking animals along with the usual number of young stock. Land will likely need to be taken out of crops and planted to pasture for enough on-farm pasture feed. Better pasture management and the official need to keep tight records will in many instances revive an agriculture that unfortunately was swept away over the last few decades by focusing on intensive indoor feeding for high production. Having practiced and enjoyed management intensive grazing as a herdsman back in the late 1980's, I really look forward to the new pasture rule to create a bright line between organic and conventional production systems. There will be no more wondering by consumers if organic dairy cows are out on pasture during the grazing season - they will be. Moreover, many certified organic livestock will benefit from the change by eating lots of fresh feed and getting good exercise. It's a win-win situation all around"

**Hubert J Karreman, VMD, Narvon, PA**

*The NOP will be conducting additional Access to Pasture Rule training sessions in New York, Colorado and California and these trainings are open to ALL (See Calendar for more details). NOP will post more information about these sessions as they become available. Pre-registration is required. To pre-register, contact Judith Ragonese, Training Manager, National Organic Program at [judith.ragonese2@ams.usda.gov](mailto:judith.ragonese2@ams.usda.gov). For training updates, go to: [www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop) and click on Pasture Rulemaking Information on the right hand side of the page. A special thanks to Kelly Shea and Joyce Ford for their article contributions.*

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

# Homeopathy: The Mechanics and Its Application for the Dairy Farm, Part 2

By Glen Dupree, DVM

Part 1 of this article can be found in the January 2010 issue, pg 8, of the NODPA News. You can also find it on our website ([www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com)) under Resources:Production:Livestock Health.

To address the nuts and bolts of actually administering the homeopathy remedy, we can talk in even more practical terms.

Homeopathic remedies are supplied as very small pills. These pills can range in size from poppy seed size to baby aspirin size. The size is really irrelevant, as are the number of pills used in a dose.

Homeopathy is an energy based medicine (back to those theories that cannot be explained in current conventional science), not chemical based. Because of this the potency of the remedy (the measure of how it was prepared telling how refined the energy is and how dilute the chemicals are) and the dosing interval is of much more importance than the actual number of pills or the size of the pills.

In order to administer the dose of remedy, all that is required is for some of the remedy to make adequate contact with some mucous membrane of the patient. Again volume and location are not that critical.

On the dairy, when treating the single patient, using the pills directly in the vulva is a convenient approach since the cow is

restrained and that mucous membrane is readily available to the farmer during milking.

But if you need to treat multiple animals that are not being restrained, a different method needs to be developed.

For these situations, I prefer to use remedies dissolved in water.

To dose a liquid remedy, you simply must make some of the solution come into contact with some mucous membrane. This may mean that you are squirting it on the nose or in the mouth with a syringe, that you are misting it over the herd with a sprayer or misting fan, or that you have added it to the stock tank and are letting them drink it.

By dissolving 1-2 pills in a volume of water (ounces to gallons depending on need), you can conserve your resources and ease the administration of the remedy. Again it may seem contradictory to conventional wisdom that we can dilute a medicine but maintain its strength, but you have to remember that we are dealing with energy not chemistry (and that you don't have to understand how it happens but that by watching the response of the patient, you know that it happens).

A remedy diluted in water alone will maintain its therapeutic potential for 7-10 days. If you want to make a solution to store and use for longer periods of time (those remedies that are consistently being indi-

cated in your stock and that you are using frequently), you simply make a stock solution of 50% vodka (and there are organic vodkas available) and 50% water. As long as this solution is stored away from bright lights, extremes of heat, and strong electromagnetic influences it will remain potent indefinitely.

To dose a liquid remedy, you simply must make some of the solution come into contact with some mucous membrane. This may mean

that you are squirting it on the nose or in the mouth with a syringe, that you are misting it over the herd with a sprayer or misting fan, or that you have added it to the stock tank and are letting them drink it (although with this method you must make sure that they are not too sick or too thirstless to come to the tank and drink).

Any method that you find that allows adequate mucous membrane contact, that keeps the stock safe, and that keeps the people safe is acceptable.

On most farms, keeping a 50 or 100 remedy kit in either a 30c or a 200c potency will be the most economic choice. These kits are available from several homeopathic pharmacies and contain the remedies most often indicated for crises and for the most common chronic diseases. There will be remedies in the kits that you may never use but the economics of purchasing the kit rather than so many individual remedies more than offsets that waste.

From there your only other expenses are a few books (that can be purchased from the same places you buy your remedies), maybe some dropper bottles and vodka, and your time.

## Case Examples of the Use of Homeopathy on the Farm

### A Newborn Calf with Diarrhea:

A newborn calf, born to a first time heifer after a normal pregnancy and delivery, developed diarrhea within hours of being born. The diarrhea was profuse and watery. The farmer described the stool as foamy and frothy when expelled. It was yellow in color and odorless. After a few stools the manure began to cake on the tail and around the rectum. The calf was showing no signs of pain or cramping but had a depressed appearance with the ears and tail down and not wanting to follow the momma cow.

#### Analysis:

- 1 STOOL - YELLOW - foamy 6
- 2 STOOL - FROTHY 78
- 3 STOOL - ODORLESS 32
- 4 STOOL - PAINLESS 14

(The numbers following the symptom description is the number

of potential remedies in that rubric)

podo. verat. ars. rhus-t. chin. ferr. kali-bi. sulph. arn. hyos. merc.  
3/7 3/6 3/5 3/5 3/4 3/4 2/5 2/5 2/4 2/4 2/4

(The fractions under the remedies are the number of rubrics the

remedy was in over the sum of the strength of the remedy in that rubric. The higher the 2 numbers the more strongly indicated the remedy for the case.)

The top three remedies, Podophyllum, Veratrum album, and Arsenicum, are all typical diarrhea type remedies. Unfortunately none of these three contained an accurate description of what we were seeing in this calf. It was not until we read Rhus tox that we found the match for this patient, even though Rhus tox is typically thought of as either a skin eruption or a lameness remedy.

This calf was treated with a single dose of Rhus tox 200c diluted in water and squirted into the mouth. Within a matter of a few hours, the calf was as alert and active as any normal calf and was following momma wanting to eat. By the next morning the stool was normal and remained that way. The calf showed no more symptoms.

### Collapsed Cow:

A cow developed a sudden, very high fever. Within a few hours she also had a profuse, watery diarrhea. With the onset of diarrhea, the cow collapsed and was so weak she could not hold her head up off the ground. She continued to be interested in food but would not drink when offered water.

#### Case Analysis:

- 1 FEVER - INTENSE heat 94
- 2 GENERALS - WEAKNESS - diarrhea - from 100
- 3 STOMACH - THIRSTLESS - fever; during 118
- 4 GENERALS - COLLAPSE 127

ars. phos.apis chin. nux-v. sil. con. rhus-t. verat. ant-t. arn. bap.  
4/11 4/9 4/8 4/8 4/8 4/8 4/7 4/7 4/7 4/6 4/6 4/6

This cow was treated with China 200c based on the tendency  
*continued on page 38*

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## What People Are Saying About The Pasture Rule ...

“The new Pasture Rule is a clear indication that grassroots efforts, like those on the part of FOOD Farmers, can actually make a difference. This process was a clear demonstration of the power farmers possess when they work together. I applaud the NOP for living up to our expectations and for setting a standard that will uphold the integrity of the organic label.”

Cynthia A. Daley, Ph.D.

Professor/Organic Dairy Program Coordinator

College of Agriculture

California State University, Chico

Chico, CA 95929

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### From The NODPA President

*continued from page 2*

kept chipping away at the opposition, gathering support along with other groups, getting one promise after another from those “in the know”; that “the rule” would be out soon. More time went by; years in fact. Richard Mathews was quietly doing his job gathering input from many sectors and developing a “rule” in spite of getting flack from various sectors and overcoming internal obstacles within the bureaucracy.

Then new people came in to position in the USDA. The rule is out! For better or worse, everybody I’ve been in touch with is happy. I’m sure some aren’t. There are many people who deserve credit, among them Kathie Arnold, Ed Maltby, Mark Kastel, Will Fantle, Tony Azevedo, Steve Morrison, Kevin Englebert, Lisa McCrory and so many many more.

Special thanks to Richard Mathews, who wrote the rule; you are one of the good guys.

*Henry Perkins, NODPA President  
Albion, Maine*

## RESEARCH & EDUCATION

### Online Resources

#### Let Them Eat Grass!

#### NODPA’s Pasture Rule Resource Page:

NODPA dedicates this page to de-mystifying the NOP Pasture Rule and providing resources that are easy to understand and very accessible. This resource page includes the NOP Pasture Rule, Frequently Asked Questions, a Fact Sheet summarizing the changes to the NOP Pasture Rule, and useful articles and worksheets to help producers, certifiers and resource professionals with the necessary documentation, record keeping and dry matter calculations. This website is updated regularly: [www.nodpa.com/pasture\\_rule.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/pasture_rule.shtml)

#### 2010 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Guide for Organic Dairies:

This guide provides an outline of practices for the management of external arthropod pests such as flies, lice, mites and grubs on organic dairy farms. Left uncontrolled, these pests negatively impact animal health and production.

The organic dairy IPM guide is 39 pages long and comes in 2 versions; one for viewing on screen and one for potential printing. Both can be downloaded for free from the following website address: [http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/organic\\_guide/](http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/organic_guide/)

#### Workshop Recordings: Dr. Paul Detloff, from NOFA-MASS Winter Seminar, Feb 2-3, 2010

In early February, Dr. Paul Detloff, staff veterinarian for Organic Valley Cooperative, gave a 2-day workshop as a NOFA-MASS Winter Seminar. There, he covered the links between soil health and animal health, effective organic methods for treating animals, techniques for predicting the

quality and quantity of a cow’s milk through observation of the hair, and means of mitigating the negative effects of stray currents on herd health. An article about this informative workshop is included in the NOFA-MASS February Newsletter and workshop audio files and presentations are available for viewing and FREE download from the following website address: <http://www.box.net/shared/v3behrp6yb>

#### Understanding Organics’ Conference & Workshop Proceedings, Presentations:

From February 2007 until October 2009, NOFA Vermont and Cornell University’s Quality Milk Production Services worked together in organizing events to advance the learning for extension, veterinarians and other professionals working with organic dairy farmers. Conference proceedings, power point presentations and related handouts can be found on the NOFA Vermont website. Presentations included topics on udder health and milk quality, animal welfare, parasite management, soil health and growing quality forages, grazing management and nutritional benefits of pasture, plus general and advanced presentations on livestock health including the use of herbs, probiotics, biologics, and homeopathy. All resources are available for free download from the following website address: [www.nofavt.org/programs/tech-assistance-education-dairy-farming/dairy-livestock-resources](http://www.nofavt.org/programs/tech-assistance-education-dairy-farming/dairy-livestock-resources)

#### Grazing System Videos

The link below takes you to some cool videos that South Carolina NRCS did with the University of SC to build strong awareness and how-to levels of conservation practices used on grazing systems. The first video does more promotion of prescribed grazing, the remainder of the videos are more of a “how to” type narrative. [http://mercury.esri.sc.edu/NRCS\\_Videos/index.html](http://mercury.esri.sc.edu/NRCS_Videos/index.html) (see instructions on the video)

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

FOOD FARMERS PRESS RELEASE  
Access to Pasture Rule for Organic Livestock provides hope for organic family farms and a guarantee of integrity for the organic consumer

For Immediate Release

**Deerfield, MA:** The Federation of Organic Dairy Farmers (FOOD Farmers) congratulates USDA for listening to farmers and others in the organic dairy community and publishing a practical and implementable Final Rule that ensures there are enforceable standards for all organic dairy farms to have their cows on pasture.

Nearly four years after a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP) Pasture Symposium, USDA has published a Final Rule to clarify the access to pasture requirement for organic livestock and FOOD Farmers gives it their full approval. FOOD Farmers has been leading the fight for quantifiable standards which can be summarized as “a minimum 30% dry matter intake (DMI) from pasture, averaged over the full grazing season, with the grazing season ranging from 121 to 365 days.”

“This Final Rule provides the clear, defined, specific language needed for enforcement of one of the central tenets of organically produced livestock—that organic livestock spend a considerable part of their lives in their natural pasture habitat and receive a significant portion of their food needs from fresh, green, growing pasture,” said Henry Perkins, Maine organic dairy farmer and President of the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA).

California organic dairy producer and Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) President Tony Azevedo applauded the publication of the Final Rule, “The rulemaking is long overdue, and producers and processors need the clarity in the rule to plan for the future and to continue ensuring the integrity of organic certification for the consumer. We will work with USDA on immediate imple-

mentation and enforcement.”

“This is a critical time for the organic dairy industry,” says Darlene Coehoorn, Wisconsin farmer and President of the Midwest Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (MODPA), “and we need the USDA to help us maintain the integrity of the organic seal as the only independent, third party certification program for dairy products. This Final rule has the specificity and detail that we need to have a level playing field across the country and, combined with the educational workshops that NOP is running, we are confident of quick and immediate implementation.”

The Final Rule provides measurable and verifiable pasture grazing standards, clearly prohibiting drylots and feedlots, and strengthening the role that the organic systems plan plays in organic certification. The rule emphasizes that pasture has to be managed as a crop with a clear pasture plan and that farmers shall provide “year round access for all animals to the outdoors, shade, shelter, exercise areas...” and during the grazing season, farmers shall provide not less than 30% of cow’s diet from pasture.

“Overall this rule puts the consumers first and requires a high standard for organic dairy products labeled as organic,” said Kathie Arnold, New York organic dairy farmer and immediate past President of NODPA, “This proposed rule has the specificity that family farmers asked for and we welcome the opportunity to work with the USDA to implement and enforce the Rule. As President of NODPA, I worked with Ed Maltby in a truly collaborative effort that attracted many organizations to sign on to our recommendations in the knowledge that the producers across the country had authored the document. We see this as a positive example of what can be achieved in working together to ensure the integrity of the organic seal with clear regulatory language based on practical farmers needs. We will continue to work with the NOP to assist with implementation of this rule and work on the publication of a proposed rule on the origin of livestock.”

##

**The Federation Of Organic Dairy Farmers** (FOOD Farmers), is the umbrella organization of the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA), the Midwest Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (MODPA), and the Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA), and represents over two thirds of organic dairy farmers across the country.

**Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance** (WODPA) mission is to preserve, protect, and ensure the sustainability and integrity of

What People Are Saying  
About The Pasture Rule ...

“I agree with the new regulations!

It’s about time that NOP eliminated the gray areas in the pasture rule and finalized it. From what I understand they received an overwhelming majority of comments calling for strict standards, standards that specified that organic cows be on pasture and actually relied on it for a substantial portion of their diets over the course of the year.

Most consumers buy organic milk and dairy products with the assumption that organic cows are on pasture, that is one of the reasons they want organic. I have yet to see a carton of milk picturing a confined dairy feedlot on the label. Grazing cows sell milk because consumers feel the milk is better for them and pasture is better for cows.

We used to confine our cows, feeding all stored feed, until we wised up and put them back on pasture. Where we used to have the veterinary at the farm every other week, now we only need him perhaps once a year. That tells me a lot about how cows should be treated. Confinement may generate more profit in some situations, but giving consumers what they expect and pay for, treating your cows humanely and being ethical; that is where organic principals need to be.”

**Jim Goodman**

Wisconsin organic dairy farmer  
Kellogg Foundation Food and Society Fellow  
Midwest Environmental Advocate Board Member  
USDA Dairy Industry Advisory Committee Member



**The Donald Family, New Sharon, ME**  
Left to right: John Donald, Jr., Zachary Donald, Stephanie Heikkinen, Marcia Donald, John Donald, Sr., Judy Blaisdell of the Maine Department of Agriculture, and Gary Anderson, extension specialist at the University of Maine, Orono

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Retail sales remain stable as price gap with non-organic milk narrows

While December sales of organic fluid milk were down about 8% on 2008 sales (which were unusually high for that month) the overall sales of organic fluid milk for 2009 were approximately 4% below 2008 sales. Looking at sales of organic fluid milk for January in the Northeast Marketing Order, sales were 7% higher than in January 2008, an increase of 1.8 million pounds.

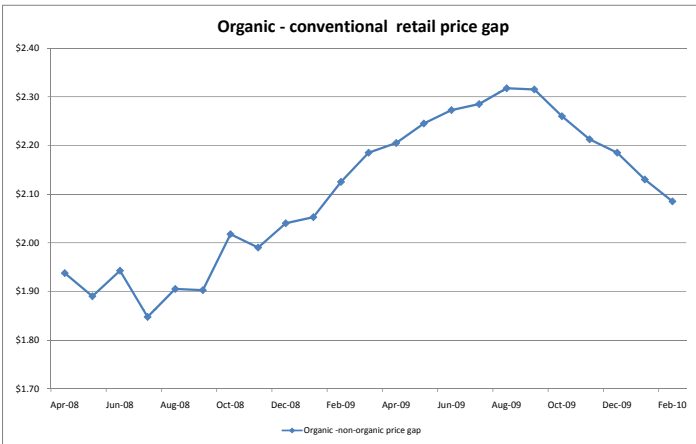
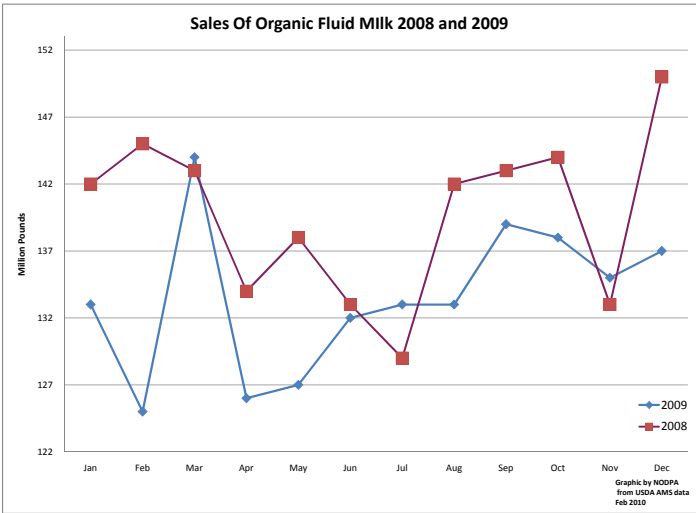
With the rebound of the non-organic market the price gap between organic and non organic retail pricing has decreased, down from a high of \$2.32 in August to \$2.09 in December 2009 which will make organic milk more attractive to price conscious consumers.

The USDA AMS did a selective price comparison to see if the distance from the processing plant affected the organic retail price. Erik Graf compared Miami Beach, FL, with Madison WI.

Some, but not all milk in Miami Beach traveled significantly further from bottling plant to store than milk in Madison stores, but is offered in Miami Beach for a lower price than in some Madison stores. For the same national brand bottled in the same plant, some half gallons of milk were offered for up to \$1.10 more per half gallon in Madison, even though the bottled milk was shipped 269 miles to Madison compared with 1,792 to Miami Beach. Erik conclude that “Thus, comparing Madison and Mi-

National average retail price for organic products February 2010 (USDA AMS)			
	Low	High	Weighted Average
Gallons	\$4.99	\$5.99	\$5.61
Half Gallons	\$2.99	\$3.89	\$3.33
Yogurt 6 oz	\$0.50	\$1.00	\$0.78
Yogurt Greek	\$1.66	\$1.66	\$1.60

ami Beach organic milk prices this 2 week period week does not reflect a correlation between the lower distance a brand of bottled milk travels from the same plant, and lower retail price. For more reports go to: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/Dairyorganic>



NODPA Field Days Update  
October 7 and 8, Unity, Maine

By Nora Owens, NODPA Field Days Coordinator

Plans are beginning to take shape for NODPA's 2010 Field Days to be held at MOFGA's Common Ground Fairgrounds in Unity, Maine on October 7th and 8th. Miles McEvoy, USDA Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program, will give the keynote address on Thursday evening and will be able to update everyone on his first year as chief of NOP. He will bring us up to date on the progress of implementing the Access to Pasture Final Rule and perhaps a Proposed Rule on Origin of Livestock.

We are working on an educational program at this years Field Days that will: tap into the progressive energy renewal work being done in Maine and throughout New England; feature presentations on soil and

animal health by UVM Agronomist Heather Darby and Livestock Nutritionist Jerry Brunetti; include a Canadian Organic Dairy Farmer panel that will focus on the Canadian supply management program; and, of course, we will provide an opportunity for everyone to understand more about the recently published Final Pasture Rule.

As usual, there will be plenty of good food and conversation, a crowded trade show and farm tours. There will also be an in-person meeting of the Board and State reps and producer members prior to the Field Days (October 6) in order to plan for 2011 and beyond. If you have interest and concerns about NODPA's future, please plan to attend this meeting and the producer meeting this October. For more information, or if you are interested in sponsoring or being a part of the tradeshow, please contact Nora Owens, at 413-772-0444, or email: [noraowens@comcast.net](mailto:noraowens@comcast.net).



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This worksheet was taken from the NOP website as one of the many resources to help producers track their dry matter intake from pasture. There are three points in time when Dry Matter Demand (DMD) has been determined on this sample worksheet. The first column (May 1) the herd is being fed 2.46% of their bodyweight in dry matter and for August and October, the herd is being fed 4.% of their bodyweight in dry matter.

Dry Matter Intake (DMI) Calculation Worksheet  
 Utilizing National Research Council (NRC) Referenced Values for Dry Matter Demand (DMD)

[Note: Use a separate worksheet for each livestock class and type (stage of production)]

Class/Stage of Production: Dairy Cow, Lactating [EXAMPLE]

Date	1-May-09	10-Aug-09	1-Oct-09
# of Animals	125	125	125
Average Weight	1300	1300	1300
DMD			
Source: NRC/NOP Table Value or Other	31.97	52.03	52.03

Other Feed Sources:

	corn	corn	corn
lb, as fed	12	25	18
x % DM of Feed Source	89	89	89
= DMI, lb	10.68	22.25	16.02

silage

lb, as fed	12	5
x % DM of Feed Source	30	90
= DMI, lb	3.6	4.5

hay

lb, as fed	5	
x % DM of Feed Source	90	
= DMI, lb	4.5	

lb, as fed		
x % DM of Feed Source		
= DMI, lb		

Total DMI from feed sources, lb	10.68	30.35	20.52
= a+b+c+d			
% DMI from feed sources			
= (B/A)*100	33.41	58.33	39.44

Pasture DMI, lb

= A - B	21.29	21.68	31.51
% DMI from pastures			
= (C/A)*100	66.59	41.67	60.56

Typical dry matter (DM) Content of Feed Sources:
 

- Grain = 89% dry matter
- Dry hay = 90% dry matter
- Grain Silage = 25-35% dry matter
- Haylage/Baleage = 35-60% dry matter

Ave. % DMI from Pasture Over the Grazing Season	56.27
Meet Requirements?	YES

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\_\_\_\_\_ \$0.05 per hundredweight to support the work of NODPA (the amount that has been deducted in the past for national milk marketing but can now be returned to you as an organic producer if you have applied for the exemption.) If you need assistance in applying for the exemption, check here \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$0.07 per hundredweight (the \$.05 marketing check-off plus \$0.02)  
as an assignment from my milk check starting the first day of \_\_\_\_\_, 200 \_\_\_\_\_. The total sum will be paid monthly to NODPA. This agreement may be ended at any time by the producer by sending a written request to their milk buyer with a copy to NODPA.  
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Producer number/ member no: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
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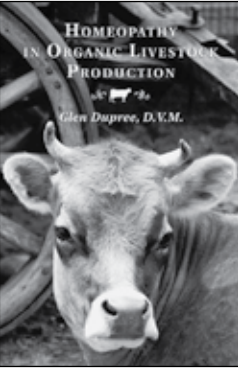
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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

USDA Dairy Industry Advisory Committee (DIAC) to hold its first meeting

The long awaited and anticipated first public meeting of the DIAC will take place April 13, 14 and 15th at the USDA’s Whitten Building, Rooms 104 A and 107A, Washington, DC 20250. In August, 2009, the USDA announced the committee’s formation in order to ‘review farm milk price volatility and dairy farmer profitability and provide suggestions and ideas to the Secretary on how the USDA can best address these issues to meet the dairy industry’s needs.’ On January 6, 2010, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the appointment of 17 members to serve on the committee. The members were selected from more than 300 nominations representing producers and producer organizations, processors and processor organizations, handlers, retailers, consumers, academia and state agencies. For more information go to: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/DairyAdvisoryCommittee>.  
  
NODPA Executive Director Ed Maltby, one of those appointed to the committee, will draw on his 35 years of experience as a dairy farmer and family farm advocate in Europe and North America. He has managed a diverse range of operations from large-scale confinement dairies to grazing operations and smaller

family farms, plus has extensive experience in dairy procure-ment, packaging, and marketing, as founder of a New England-based dairy farmer marketing cooperative. In a recent interview, Maltby said, “this will be a great opportunity to think outside the box and provide systemic changes rather than the usual patch-work of programs at times of crises.” He will work within the committee to ensure that the many different ideas that have been proposed for organizing the milk supply are looked at in-depth, and that solutions are based on the reality of a world market, while recognizing that producers need an adequate and predict-able return for their capital investment and their work. Maltby will also bring to the table his experience in organic dairy where he has been working with processors and producers to consider many different ways to manage supply, and determine pay price as a result of the recent surplus. “As we prepare for the 2012 Farm Bill, and in the wake of 20 years of price volatility, this committee can provide constructive suggestions for regulatory changes that can build on the momentum for change that the last 2 years of crisis management has created,” he said, adding that, “the organic processors reacted to a surplus with milk supply quotas, pay-ing on utilization of organic milk and lowering pay price. They employed crises management in the organic market, rather than careful deliberation, following the more traditional reaction of the non-organic market. The experience we had leading the con-sensus process between producers, processors, NGO’s and USDA over the Access to Pasture Final Rule provides a clear direction in how we can do business in the future.” ♦




# HOMEOPATHY IN ORGANIC LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

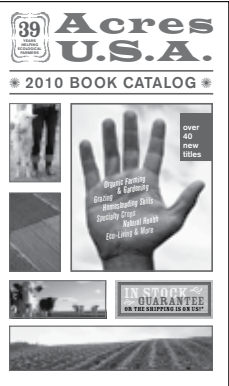
by *Glen Dupree, D.V.M.*

By applying the principles of homeopathy to organic livestock produc-tion, you can impact the health of animal species, with benefits that are seen and felt far beyond the patient. Written for both organic farmers and homeopaths, this book is a comprehensive and indispensable guide for the application of homeopathy on sustainable livestock farms. Going beyond theory and philosophy, *Homeopathy in Organic Livestock Production* presents extensive discussion of the most common maladies that will help readers recognize symp-tom complexes and take logical steps to move from patient to remedy, regardless of the species, ailment or type of farm involved. A valuable resource for organic farmers, the book also includes the most common homeopathic remedies and their specific uses for livestock. *Softcover, 176 pages.*

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THE VOICE OF ECO-AGRICULTURE



# New NOP Pasture Regulation Meets Expectations of Organic Community

By Harriet Behar, MOSES Organic Specialist

In a valentine to the organic community, the National Organic Program released the long awaited clarification to the pasture requirements for ruminants on February 12, 2010. After five listening sessions around the country and over 100,000 comments addressing the need for uniform pasture regulations, this rule provides a clear mandate that ruminants must be allowed to express their natural grazing behavior. The changes to the pasture regulation incorporate quantifiable measurements into the regulation, resulting in a mandate for pasturing of ruminant animals during the times of year when grazing is possible. These stronger standards should strengthen consumer confidence in the organic label, which has been somewhat eroded in the past few years due to the abuses of a few dairies who confined their dairy animals in feedlots rather than providing them with pasture as required in the organic rules. The loopholes in the earlier rule that allowed these abuses have been closed by this new regulation.

### When will this new rule be enforced?

Operations that are currently certified organic will have until June 17, 2011 to fully comply with the changes required by this new regulation. Any new operations that become certified for the first time after June 17, 2010 will need to comply with all requirements of this regulation immediately. Operations who are certified organic for the first time between February and June 2010, have until June 2011 to comply. The National Organic Program, in their Q and A concerning this rule, has stated that they intend to enforce this regulation rigorously, and take the very detailed requirements seriously. In their words “There would be no point in having a specific metric if it is not enforced” The NOP has also stated that if

environmental or other conditions do not allow for a farm to meet the requirements of this rule, then certified organic livestock cannot be produced at that location. The NOP has researched and found that there will be minimal economic cost to producers to comply with this rule. In some scenarios the cost of organic milk production will decrease when the farm switches to a grazing based system.

### Basic Requirements of this Pasture for Ruminants Regulation

The main point of this rule requires that 30% of the dry matter intake of ruminant animals be provided from grazing (this is when an animal breaks off forage from a living plant whose roots are still attached to the soil, green chop transported to the animals is not pasture) or from forage that has been cut and is still laying in the pasture as “residual forage.” The minimum time of the grazing season in a calendar year is 120 days. This can be broken up into more than one time period, it need not be continuous. Farmers must manage their animals in such a way as to allow the animals to achieve this amount

of dry matter intake from pasture, such as not providing large amounts of feed right before being let out of the barn, as well as having them out on pasture for enough hours per day to graze.

In addition, there are some specific documentation requirements to allow for this requirement to be verified by the inspector and certification agency. Many certified organic farmers already provide this documentation, so there should not be a lot of new paperwork for those who already have a complete organic system plan. The documentation necessary includes a description of the total feed ration for all ages and types of animals on the farm, including all feed produced both on and off

## Timeline for implementation of Pasture Rule for Dairy

**February 12, 2010**

Final Access to Pasture Rule is announced by USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan

**February 17, 2010**

Final Rule published on the Federal register

**June 16, 2010**

Final rule is effective. All new operations certified on or after June 17 are required to have an Organic Systems Plan (OSP) that shows how they can meet the new regulations. Operations that are already certified have an implementation period of 1 year.

**June 17, 2011**

All organically certified dairy operations are required to have OSP’s that show how they will meet the new regulations and their operation will need to be in compliance.

the farm, the percentage of each type of feed and feed supplements fed to each age of animal (corn, small grains, beans, forages, pasture etc.) in the total ration, and changes to the rations made throughout the year in response to the use of grazing as part of the ration. This 30% dry matter intake from grazing for 120 days in a calendar year is the minimum, organic farmers can choose to have higher numbers than these when managing their organic ruminant livestock.

### Feeding Areas during the Non-Grazing Season

When there is no green forage growing in the fields (in other words, it is not the grazing season), yards, feeding pads and/or feedlots can be used for access to the outdoors and feeding, as long as the area is large enough to prevent crowding and competition among the animals for the feed provided. Continuous total confinement of ruminants of any species is prohibited, period. In the October 2008 regulation there was a requirement for sacrificial pasture to be used during these non-grazing times of year, this requirement was removed and is not present in the final regulation. These non-grazing season exercise and feeding areas can be concrete or dirt, but must be designed and managed in such a way as to prevent environmental contamination from runoff. Frequent removal of wastes is one method to prevent this contamination, and also serves to promote animal health and well-being. The NOP has also stated verbally that housing cattle in free stall barns without access to the outdoor feeding areas would not be acceptable, check with your certifier if this interpretation is mandated.

### Organic Bedding Required

This new regulation clarifies again, that all “roughage” used for bedding, which would be any agricultural product that the animal might consume, must be certified organic. Wood shavings or sand are not typically consumed by animals and are not agriculturally produced, these do not need organic certification. But straw, corn fodder or cobs, hay, soybean or flax stalks or any other item of this type must be organic in order to bed organic animals. The NOP has stated again that organic livestock feed crops grown by exempt from certification (under \$5000 a year in organic sales) operations cannot be fed to certified organic

livestock. Exempt producers have the option to become certified and then access the market for selling their organic livestock feeds.

### Temporary Confinement

Previously the rule allowing confinement for a specific stage of life or production was used in a loophole to confine organic lactating animals. This new regulation clearly states that lactation is not a stage of life that would allow confinement, and thus not an exemption from the grazing requirement. The allowance for confinement of ruminants

has been further clarified to include sorting or shipping livestock for sales or confining animals for up to one week before they would be shown at a fair or demonstration (ie. 4H). Cows that are being dried off may be confined for one week at the end of their lactation period, and cows may be confined for up to three weeks before freshening, as well as one week after freshening. Cows may be confined for short periods during the day for milking, with the organic system plan incorporating a milking schedule that would ensure sufficient grazing time to meet the dry matter intake mandated in this regulation.

Dairy calves may be confined up to six months of age, and after that must be on pasture during the grazing season and can no longer be individually housed. During that six month period the confined calf must have freedom of movement within their confined area, no tethering where they could not lie down or move about freely. Fiber animals such as sheep or angora goats can be confined for short periods to enable the producer to perform

shearing activities.

### Regulations for Finishing Beef – 60 day public comment period

While the vast majority of this regulation is effective June 17,2010, with an allowance for existing producers to come into compliance by June 17, 2011, the portion which addresses the finishing of beef animals is open for comment for 60 days,

*continued on page 22*



## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Pasture Rule: Key Points

*continued from page 21*

closing April 17, 2010. This section of the rule allows for beef animals to be held for up to 120 days in feedlots or yards. For smaller ruminants, the finishing period cannot exceed one-fifth of the animal's total life, or 120 days, whichever is shorter. However, if the finishing period corresponds with the grazing season, these animals must still be maintained on pasture, but without the 30% dry matter intake from grazing requirement. The National Organic Program felt there was not enough discussion on this aspect of ruminant management, since most of the comments addressed dairy ruminants and not meat ruminant animals. Producers, consumers and others should provide information to the National Organic Program if they support this allowance for a 4 month finishing time, where there is a lesser dry matter intake requirement for these meat ruminant animals, or if they feel the rule should not allow this. All comments will be reviewed, and depending on what is presented, the NOP may leave the regulation as written or not.

## Pasture Management and Recordkeeping

The management of pasture is to be included in the Organic System Plan, and is considered a crop like any other on the farm. The management of the pasture should not lead to soil erosion or water contamination, the health and vitality of the pasture should be sufficient to provide the 30% dry matter intake required for their entire herd. Irrigation can be used, if available, to encourage healthy regrowth of the pasture during the season, and the pasture should be managed in a way that minimizes the spread of diseases or parasites among the animals grazing those pastures. If there is not sufficient pasture to meet this rule, maintain the health of the animal and the vitality of the pasture, then improved pasture management or a lower stocking density should be put in place. While European and Canadian standards have stocking rates for each class of animal, our regulation has not done this, in recognition that various climates and management strategies can have higher or lower stocking rates and still meet the minimum requirements for sufficient feed and a healthy environment. The proposed rule section requiring fencing to protect streams is not present in this final regulation, but producers still must rotate their pastures and/ or upgrade their stream access areas to protect water and soil quality.

Each pasture location needs to be identified in the organic system plan with maps, similar to all crop fields. The plan and maps should detail the type of grazing (mob, rotational, etc.) used on the pastures, the amount of pasture per animal, the duration of the grazing season, as well as all permanent fences (moveable or temporary pasture fences not included), shade areas and water sources present. Protection of natural wetlands and other environ-

*continued on page 25*

## Research &amp; Education

## NODPA awarded grant from OFRF

The Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) awarded NODPA a grant of \$12,000 for a one year project that will organize the NODPA website archives, making information more easily accessible, searchable and downloadable for certified and transitioning organic dairy producers and professionals serving the needs of organic dairy producers. NODPA continually invests time and money to upgrade its website, e-newsletter, NODPA News printed newsletter and the NODPA Odairy listserve in order to provide up to date information to producers, service providers, the media and consumers.

“The main objective of this project is to expand the scope and accessibility of the Odairy archives,” said NODPA's Executive Director Ed Maltby. “The listserve will expand its scope by having all archived educational materials and discussions organized by topic and date for increased ease of accessibility for users.”

The NODPA-sponsored and moderated Odairy is an internet-based listserve that assists organic dairy farmers throughout the Northeast, North America, and Europe and beyond, to access information and to hold discussions about:

1. Organic dairy production practices
2. Organic dairy veterinary practices
3. Organic dairy policy issues
4. Availability of organically certified feed and replacement animals

The listserve facilitates peer mentoring and provides support to transitional and established organic dairy farmers.

Organic farmers can not resort to using chemicals, antibiotics, or buy readily available conventional feed for their animals and land. Instead they must rely on the limited knowledge currently available among dairy service providers pertaining to organically certified practices. Few resources are currently devoted to organic dairy research, the education of large animal veterinarians, or to Cooperative Extension and NRCS personnel to provide those support services to farmers. Maltby notes that, “transitioning and newly certified organic dairy farmers who have not yet developed the skill base to apply organically certified production and veterinary practices may have limited access to information resources and this project will increase the accessibility of that information. This project will expand the volume of research and education related to organic dairy production that is easily available to organic dairy farmers by making a bounty of archived research and educational material easily accessible in a user-friendly format, either on the internet or in written publications.”

To join the Odairy listserv go to page 35. ♦

*“We were surprised by the results.  
We maintain our tank SCC down at 80-100,000 by  
spraying every fresh udder for 4 to 5 days.”*

— Alan Mesman



The Mesman family (l-r) Alan, Ben, Vickie and Samantha.

“We were surprised by our results with Udder Comfort™. We used the new yellow spray, which has a natural coloring. Our SCC had been running 140-170,000, we could not believe how squirting this spray on the outside of the udder would cut our somatic cell count down by 70,000. But it worked. It softens the udder, which relaxes the cow. This helps with edema and irritation when they come fresh,” says Alan Mesman. He and his wife Vickie and son Ben and daughter Sammy milk 140 cows at their Certified Organic dairy near Mt. Vernon, Washington.

“At first we sprayed Udder Comfort on the whole udder of 39 identified cows (out of 140 milking). As a result, the tank SCC dropped down to 80,000. This boosted our quality premium another 29 cents.

“We do not dry-treat any animals here. We are able to maintain our bulk tank SCC down at 80-100,000 by spraying every fresh udder after both milkings for 4 to 5 days after they calve.”

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## RESEARCH &amp; EDUCATION



## WEBINAR BY eORGANIC: A Look at the Newly Released Organic Pasture Rule

Join us for a Webinar on March 17

5:00 PM to 6:15 PM EDT

Space is limited. Reserve your Webinar seat now at:

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/169941112>

On February 12, 2010, the USDA announced details of the final regulation regarding access to pasture for organic livestock operations. This rule amends the National Organic Program (NOP) regulations to clarify livestock feed and living conditions provisions and specify the use of pasture in raising organic ruminants. The final rule is the culmination of a process that was initiated in 2005 when the National Organic Standards Board recommended that ruminants obtain a minimum 30 percent dry matter intake for at least 120 days. The final rule becomes effective on June 17, 2010 (120 days after its publication).

In this webinar, Dr. Kerry R. Smith of the USDA AMS National Organic Program, will give an overview of the main components of the Pasture Rule. The webinar will end with instructions for submitting comments viewers may have on the new Rule to the NOP, as well as taking suggestions for further webinars on this topic.

After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Webinar.

### About eOrganic

The eOrganic eXtension website at [http://www.extension.org/organic\\_production](http://www.extension.org/organic_production) is for farmers, ranchers, agricultural professionals, certifiers, researchers and educators seeking reliable information on organic agriculture, published research results, farmer experiences, and certification. Our current content is focused on general organic agriculture, dairy production, and vegetable production. The content is collaboratively authored and reviewed by our community of University researchers and Extension personnel, agricultural professionals, farmers, and certifiers with experience and expertise in organic agriculture.

### System Requirements

#### PC-based attendees

Required: Windows® 2000, XP Home, XP Pro, 2003 Server, Vista

#### Macintosh®-based attendees

Required: Mac OS® X 10.4 (Tiger®) or newer

breaks over any defined 365-day period. But it also made clear that if the 120-minimum could not be met, the farm shouldn't be organic:

*...if the location is consistently too rainy or the temperature and humidity are too high or low to safely graze animals throughout a 120-day minimum grazing season and still comply with all applicable parts of this regulation, the animal cannot be raised in such location for organic production.*

In the end, Straus found the decision acceptable. "The final rule allows for a grazing season that considers regional variation in climate, soil conditions, and regional water quality regulations," Albert Straus said. "We're very grateful to all of the consumers who urged the USDA to account for such regional variations in the final rule. It's exciting to see the National Organic Program continue to get stronger."

As with many past examples in the organic food arena, a diverse and often conflicted number of constituents came together to urge passage of this rule—including not only farmers and consumer organizations but also processors, retailers, certifiers, environmental advocates, and others. That lesson should be kept in mind for the future, for battles that will surely arise. ♦

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Pasture Rule: Key Points

*continued from page 22*

mentally sensitive areas should be described in the operator's pasture plan. A description of the feed ration and the grazing aspects for all ages of animals should be included, as described earlier.

Lastly, since there are new terms added to the regulation that have not been present in the text before, 15 new items are added to the definition section of the regulation: Class of Animal, Dry Lot, Dry Matter Demand, Dry Matter Intake, Feedlot, Graze, Grazing, Grazing Season, Inclement Weather, Residual Forage, Shelter, Stage of Life, Temporary/Temporarily, and Yards/Feeding Pads.

### Resources to Learn More

The National Organic Program is working diligently to implement this regulation across the U.S., with trainings provided to inspectors and certifiers and worksheets for farmers and others to calculate the various aspects of dry matter, helping them with rotational grazing stocking rates and more. Q and A's are also available on the NOP website. <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop> - click on pasture regulations. ♦

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*came to MOSES after 19 years as an organic inspector and educator of organic farming and processing systems. She has 35 years experience growing and marketing organic specialty crops. Harriet is the MOSES Organic Specialist and coordinates many of the MOSES sponsored field days and training events as well as the numerous farm shows and other conferences MOSES attends. She spent many hours listening at the National Organic Standards Board meetings as well as representing MOSES in the National Organic Coalition. The MOSES toll free organic information line is staffed by Harriet. She and her husband Aaron Brin have an organic farm near Gays Mills, WI*



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Sam Fromartz Column

*continued from page 4*

First, those who opposed it said the standard would raise costs dramatically by increasing the amount of land needed for grazing. (This is a familiar argument of anti-organic camp—that organic production requires more land.) But the USDA said: "We received other studies challenging (this) assertion ... These studies discuss a prevalent misconception that grazing systems require more acres for the same amount of output."

It also found ample organic land for grazing, especially in the West, where many objections to the pasture standard originated. (The bigger issue for large operations is moving cows from pasture to the milking parlor.)

A notable objection had been lodged by Straus Family Creamery, a pioneering organic dairy in California that found the ruling overly prescriptive. But in the final rule, the USDA stated that the 120-day minimum did not have to be continuous—it could be met with



ORGANIC PRODUCTION: FEATURED FARM

Twin Oaks Dairy, LLC: Truxton, New York

Kathie, Rick & Bob Arnold

In this interview with Kathie, we highlight the pasture portion of Twin Oaks Dairy as well as Kathie’s tireless efforts in making sure that the USDA NOP gave us what we were asking for: a level playing field, true use of pasture as a significant portion of the ruminant diet, and measurable standards that all certified farms – both large and small – must adhere to.

By Lisa McCrory

Our Feature Farm for the March 2010 issue of the NODPA News may seem familiar to some as we wrote about Twin Oaks Dairy in 2002, shortly after they hosted the 2002 NODPA Field days. With the Pasture Rule out at last we thought it would be most appropriate to highlight a producer who has advocated tirelessly for the cause and who has made sure that her farm can meet the minimum pasture standards that were recently finalized.

Kathie Arnold, one of the partner owners of Twin Oaks Dairy, has played a large role in advocating for a pasture rule that has teeth. Since the formation of NODPA in 2001, she has put in countless hours facilitating discussion among fellow producers, speaking at conferences, providing testimony at NOSB meetings, crafting position statements for NODPA, pulling together supportive documentation touting the economic, environmental and animal health benefits of grazing management, and being one of the primary authors of the FOOD Farmers comments to the NOP’s proposed Pasture Rule (December, 2008). There were many long days and a farm operation to run, but she did not waver from her mission of seeing a pasture rule with measurable minimum standards.



This Feature Farm article will be presented in an interview format highlighting the pasture portion of Twin Oaks Dairy as well as Kathie’s tireless efforts in making sure that the USDA NOP gave us what we were asking for: a level playing field, true use of pasture as a significant portion of the ruminant diet, and measurable standards that all certified farms – both large and small – must adhere to. Thank you, Kathie.

The Arnolds manage their farm based upon the following Tenets:

- Endeavor to work with nature
- Be good stewards of the land and other resources
- Provide a bovine friendly environment
- Farm as both a business and a lifestyle choice
- Strive to keep mechanical and management systems simple

- and natural systems complex
- Be always attentive to timeliness and details so that small things don’t become big problems

NODPA NEWS (NN): What is your current landbase?

Kathie Arnold (KA): We currently have around 720 acres certified, growing 50 to 60 acres of corn for high moisture corn for use during the winter, 25-40 acres of small grains, 25 or so acres of soybeans, 200 acres dedicated to pasture, and 410 acres of hay crop of which 200 acres can be brought into pasture when it is needed.

NN: How many cows do you milk and how are they housed?

KA: We milk 130 cows and freshen year round. We are usually milking around 110-115 at any one time. Our cows are housed in a 64-stall tie barn and a 62-stall freestall barn. The two barns are separated by a concrete barnyard. In the wintertime, one group is in the tie stall barn in the day and then switched out after they are milked and the other group comes in for the night.

NN: What breed of cow do you have and what is your average annual production per cow? Components? Quality?

KA: Our annual production is a little over 19,000# per cow with 3.9 % Butterfat,

3.1% Protein. We have a mostly Holstein herd, that has seen some crossbreeding over the last several years, with the major other breed being Scandanavian Red. We currently are only buying semen from A2A2 beta casein bulls and are also breeding for the polled characteristic when we can.

NN: How long have you been certified organic and who is your certifier?

KA: We began certifying our land in 1997 and started shipping certified organic milk in May of 1998. Our certifier is NOFA-NY Certified Organic LLC.

NN: What motivated your transition from conventional to organic



From left to right, Rick, Kathie and Tom Arnold and Tom’s wife Miriam Astacio

dairy farming?

KA: Both the premium price and the farming philosophy

NN: How long have you been farming and how many people are currently working on the farm?

KA: My husband, Rick, his brother, Bob, and I have been in partnership for 30 years. Bob and his older brother, John, purchased this farm in 1967 and then in 1980, Rick and I bought John’s half of the farm, and the partnership bought the milk cows. Since that time, as land has come on the market, we have purchased another 350 acres (land is relatively cheap in this area). At the time we started our partnership in 1980, we milked 70 cows, only expanding in the late 90’s and early 2000’s as our land base expanded.

Some neighbors of ours do custom fieldwork for us. They spread our storage manure with their spreader trucks (enabling us to access land we never would be able to get much manure to with a tractor and spreader), do most of our tillage, plant our corn, and harvest our haylage. The last couple of years they have been spin seeding our small grain crops very successfully while pulling a cultimulcher.

As our two children grew (Carly, now 25 and Kirk, 22), they helped on the farm with Kirk, now an integral part. A brother in law works for us a few hours a day; his nature to have things in order makes him a great one to keep our corn cultivated each year. Last fall we hired a very capable herds person, who has a background in developing grazing plans as well as extensive experience with cows and youngstock. Our current team is now rounded out with a high school student who works weekends and an occasional night, and another employee works about 50 hours a week milking, doing chores and fieldwork during the growing season.

An adequate and capable work force has been instrumental in me

having the time to devote to the pasture issue that I have over the years. My brother in law nears retirement age and my husband’s health condition both mean they don’t work the hours they used to. I also have taken on the role of being a County Legislator beginning in 2008 that currently takes much of my time, as well as being on multiple NYS and Northeast agricultural committees.

NN: How long have you been rotationally grazing your herd?

KA: We have always done grazing on this farm but began intensive rotational grazing in 1993.

NN: Describe your grazing system for your milk cows, and young stock.

KA: Our milking herd starts grazing the end of April, is on pasture day and night by early May and continues so until the end of September, when they usually go to just days on pasture through ‘til mid November.

NN: How do you group your animals on pasture?

KA: Our milking cows are one group and get new pasture after every milking. Our breeding age, bred heifers and dry cows are in another group and get 100% of their intake, other than free choice mixed salt and minerals, from pasture for 200 + days, being moved every 3 days or so. We have 5 groups of younger heifers on pasture

and then up to four groups of non-weaned calves on pasture. These younger groups are not rotated except for the oldest pre-breeding heifers.

NN: Is there an average paddock size that your cows occupy for each pasture feeding/occupation?

KA: We give our milking herd two to three acres of new pasture after each milking. Our pastures vary in size, depending on topog

Since the formation of NODPA in 2001, Kathie has put in countless hours facilitating discussion among fellow producers, speaking at conferences, providing testimony at NOSB meetings, crafting position statements for NODPA, pulling together supportive documentation touting the economic, environmental and animal health benefits of grazing management...



## ORGANIC PRODUCTION: FEATURED FARM

*continued from page 27*

raphy and changing soil types; we use polywire to split pastures for each milking's allocation.

NN: On average, how many days are your animals grazing per year and what percentage of the total feed ration (dry matter basis) do the various grazing groups receive from pasture during that time?

KA: The milking herd and older heifers and dry cows are on pasture 200 or more days a year. For the milking herd, they usually average about 70% DMI intake from pasture in May and then decreasing to about 60% in June, 45-50% in July--August, 40% in September, 20% in October and 10-20% for the first half of November.

NN: What would a representative summer ration be for your lactating herd?

KA: We feed a total mixed ration year round. The last few years we have taken out any protein supplements for most, if not all, the grazing season. During the pasture season, the TMR would typically consist of about a third to half of the TMR from corn meal and small grain (depending on how good the haylage is) and the rest from haylage. We feed to appetite when they are in the barn for milking, coupled with plenty of high qual-

ity pasture the rest of the time. From the day they start going out in April, we start cutting back the quantity of the winter TMR we mix each day until we usually get down to feeding 20 to 30% of a full TMR ration during much of May. So at that time, they are only getting about 6 pounds of grain in the TMR and yet making 65 to 70 pounds of milk a day. Too bad the conditions of May couldn't last for a few more months. We slowly increase the amount of TMR through the rest of the grazing season as needed, with a plateau often through later June, July, into August. The milking cows also have daily access to free choice hay when in the barnyard.

NN: What is a representative ration for your other groups?

KA: The large heifer/dry cow group receives 100% pasture for at least 200 days of the calendar year, as does the oldest group of prebreeding heifers. A

younger group of prebreeding heifers comes into the barnyard and freestall for a couple hours a day to clean up whatever TMR is left from the cows, get a couple pounds of ground small grains, and have access to hay. The younger heifers (6-12 months) are all on pasture and get about 3 pounds of grain a day along with a small amount of haylage and /or hay as needed. All our baby calves

*continued on page 34*

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*Twin Oaks Dairy records the number of cows-worth of a full TMR (per nutritionist's per cow ration) being mixed for each day. To determine what percentage of the full ration is being consumed, they divide the number mixed for by the number of cows fed (i.e. 40 cows worth of TMR mixed divided by 110 cows being fed = 36% of a full TMR).*

Farm and/or Group Name <u>Milking Herd - Twin Oaks Dairy</u> Month <u>June</u> Year <u>2009</u>														
Stored Feeds Record										Production Record*				
Day	lbs of grain /cow	lbs of forage #1 or No. of bales/cow or group	lbs of forage #2 or No. of bales/cow or group	lbs of forage #3 or No. of bales/cow or group	No. of cows worth of TMR mixed/ fed	No. of cows fed TMR or in group	lbs. of refusal or group *	Ref to notes below	Paddock ID-AM	Paddock ID-PM	No. of cows in tank*	lbs of milk in tank*	lbs of milk/ day *	lbs of milk /cow/day *
1				25	109			(1)	3	5	104	14094	7047	67.7
2				25	109				3	3				
3				20	113				3	3	105	14276	7138	67.9
4				25	113			(2)	3	10				
5				25	113				8	8	107	14677	7339	68.6
6				25	115				8	7				
7				30	115				7	6	107	14888	7444	69.6
8				25	115				6	6				
9				25	115				6	6	108	14945	7473	69.2
10				35	112				6	11				
11				35	112				11	12	108	14620	7310	67.6
12				40	113				12	13				
13				45	113			(3)	13	11	106	14280	7140	67.4
14				45	113				14	11				
15				45	111				14	12	108	14491	7246	67.1
16				45	114				12	12				
Notes on changes in grain, forage and/or TMR correlated to a designated number in the above column on "ref to notes below"														
1 TMR per full cow ration: 70# haylage (3rd cut 2008), 20# corn meal, 14# triticale														
2 actually eating @ 50# DM: 15# haylage, 4.4# corn meal + 3# triticale / cow														
3 TMR: 70# haylage (2008 3rd cut), 18# corn meal, 14# triticale														
4														
5														
6														



## RESEARCH &amp; EDUCATION

## Current Research On Molasses As An Alternative Energy Source For Organic Dairy Herds

Kathy Soder, USDA-ARS, University Park, PA  
André F. Brito, University of New Hampshire, and  
Karen Hoffman, NRCS, Norwich, NY

As organic grain prices have increased and organic milk prices have decreased, dairy farmers are seeking lower-cost supplementation strategies. Sugarcane molasses, a rich source of sucrose, seems to be a viable option as a source of energy. Molasses frequently costs less per pound of dry matter (DM) than organic corn, is energy-dense, has high palatability, and is available in organic form. Some organic dairy farmers have experimented with molasses supplementation with mixed results- some farmers reported benefits, while others experienced major losses in milk production or body condition. While research is available that evaluated molasses as an energy supplement in confined dairy cows, no specific data exists regarding the impact of using molasses as the only supplemental source of feed to grazing dairy cows. Therefore, a group of experiments, combining on-farm, laboratory, and research farm projects, is in progress to evaluate the value of molasses as the sole supplemental feed for organic dairy cows. The goal of this work is to develop feeding guidelines for molasses supplementation that are backed by science. A brief summary of each project is presented below.

Karen Hoffman is evaluating how pasture quality and molasses feeding worked on an organic dairy farm in central New York over the last two grazing seasons. Feed data was collected and summarized with milk production, components, milk urea nitrogen (MUN), and body condition score of the cows. Taking the project one step further, she also evaluated the diets with the Cornell Net Carbohydrate and Protein System model (CNCPS). To date, only the data from 2008 has been summarized.

The farm used was a 56 cow, seasonally calving, crossbred herd.

They fed a combination of 3 pounds of molasses and 1 pound of a corn/barley mix, with kelp and minerals offered free choice. Pasture samples and body condition scores were collected monthly. At the end of the grazing season, the farm provided copies of all milk weight tank sheets and milk plant reports.

The results showed that the cows had a greater than normal drop in persistency for the first month after they reached their peak of 52 pounds per day. This coincided with the pastures becoming over mature in June, resulting in a drop in forage quality and possibly decreased total intake due to palatability. Thus, it is unclear whether the drop in persistency was due to the molasses feeding, the pasture quality, or both. Body condition dropped to a low of 2.1 in mid-summer, but recovered through September and October to over 2.5 by the end of the grazing season. The MUN levels were consistently greater than 14 mg/dl, suggesting that there was not enough energy in the rumen to recapture the excess ruminal ammonia as microbial protein- rather, it was excreted as urea. The recommended level for MUN is between 8 and 12 mg/dl.

When the diets were evaluated using CNCPS, energy was the most limiting factor for milk production. The recommended level of non-fiber carbohydrates is between 38 and 42%; these diets were only 24 to 33%. Starch levels were between 0.75 and 4.86%, whereas the recommended level is 25%. The sugar levels were at times higher than the recommended 4 to 7%, coming in between 3 and 15%. It will be interesting to evaluate the data from 2009 and compare the results.

André Brito is presently conducting a winter-feeding study using sixteen lactating organic Jersey cows supplemented one of four ways: 1) corn meal; 2) molasses; 3) corn meal plus flaxseed meal; or 4) molasses plus flaxseed meal. The objective is to evaluate the effect of these supplements (particularly flaxseed) on milk production, nitrogen utilization, nutrient digestibility, and milk composition (especially fatty acid profiles). André and colleagues [Kathy Soder, Karen Hoffman, Rick Kersbergen (University of Maine), and Pete Erickson (UNH)], with funds partially provided by the Organic Farming Research Foundation, will study the effects of molasses vs. corn meal on milk production, milk

*continued on page 32*

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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## Current Research On Molasses As An Alternative Energy Source For Organic Dairy Herds

*continued from page 30*

composition, body condition, nutrient digestibility, and income over feed costs of grazing organic Jersey cows beginning in May 2010. Research tailored to farmers' needs is the ultimate goal of the University of New Hampshire Organic Dairy Research Farm.

Kathy Soder evaluated the effects of supplementing a pasture diet with molasses (5% of total DM), corn meal (7% of total DM), or a combination of molasses (5%) and corn meal (7%), on ruminal fermentation using continuous culture fermenters. The fermenters are 'artificial rumens' that are inoculated with rumen fluid, fed various diets, and can be used to evaluate ruminal fermentation patterns, including pH, volatile fatty acid and ammonia concentrations, and nutrient digestibility. This is a screening tool that can be used to evaluate diets before conducting a large-scale animal research trial. The supplementation levels were selected

based on what is currently being fed to organic dairy herds. The results from this study showed that molasses responded similarly to corn meal, with all treatments showing only marginal benefits (at this low inclusion level) over a pasture-only diet.

Previous research results (often with beef cows fed low-quality forages) indicate that forage quality may have an impact on ruminal response to molasses supplementation. Kathy is currently conducting another fermenter study evaluating the effects of forage quality (high and low quality) and level of molasses supplementation (5 and 10% of total DM) on ruminal fermentation. Results from this study will be available later this year.

While this work will by no means answer every question related to molasses supplementation, this research was developed in response to questions from organic dairy farmers who are either currently using, or who may be interested in trying, alternative supplementation strategies to decrease feed costs while maintaining or improving productivity, and ultimately profitability, of organic dairies. Further, the strategy of conducting a combination of on-farm, laboratory, and research farm projects to examine a single management strategy is somewhat unique, and will hopefully result in better answers to many of the questions being raised. ♦

## PAID ADVERTISEMENT

## Measures to Consider for Building Better Pasture Fertility

*By Neal Kinsey*

How many producers assume that due to stocking rates they will have adequate fertility because of all the manure being deposited on their pasture? And how many cattlemen or other livestock producers spend large sums of money to purchase excellent animals and then stick them on pastures that receive an occasional fertilizer topdress, and expect it to suffice for maintaining top herd health and excellent pasture fertility.

Unfortunately, it seems that so many who have livestock on pasture incorrectly make this type of assumption. There are those who have successfully accomplished growing grass this way to a point, and consequently, many consider that testing pasture fertility levels is completely unnecessary. But there are times and circumstances when a high price must be paid for thinking like that. It can ultimately result in costly losses in terms of plant and animal health, and even needlessly limit potential grass production. Most pasture soils treated this way never come close to attaining their top production potential.

The more you rely on pasture as feed for your livestock, the more critical it is to know the actual fertility levels present there. Too many producers neglect the nutrients in the soil, even if they are testing levels in the feed. You cannot properly manage what you do not correctly measure, and this is emphatically true for assuring correct pasture fertility levels for optimum growth and nutrition.

Time and again growers ask, "Why, according to the soil test, does the fertility of my pasture appear to be so lacking, when fertilizer is being spread and/or manure is constantly being deposited there? This is a common question for those who just begin to have detailed soil tests performed on their pasture.

**Pastures generally need more than N-P-K and manure to produce at their best.** N-P-K should be added in sufficient amounts if required, but not at the expense of neglecting other required nutrients for top performance. Furthermore, the two nutrients most affected by manure in terms of an increase in soil fertility levels are phosphorous and potassium. In other words, two of the three most often supplied as fertilizer are the most likely nutrients to be supplied from manure. But cattlemen should keep in mind, this is not always the case, because manure that is produced on pastures that are already lacking one or more of these needed nutrients, will likely also be short when it comes to supplying those same nutrients. Such deficiencies tend to occur in far more pastures than most producers seem to suspect.

Be careful when a soil sample is being taken from pastures. Is it possible that manure deposited there is still fresh enough to affect fertility levels measured and reported on the soil test? In such cases, it may make it appear that the fertility is good when such is not the case. This can happen and will be considered further next time. Just remember, when possible, allow enough time for the grass to show where both manure and urine has been deposited and then pull soil samples in the unaffected areas. Take separate samples from every pasture. And be sure to sample only areas that are of uniform make-up, staying out of those places which are obviously different. For help, see our instructions on the website or request them from us.

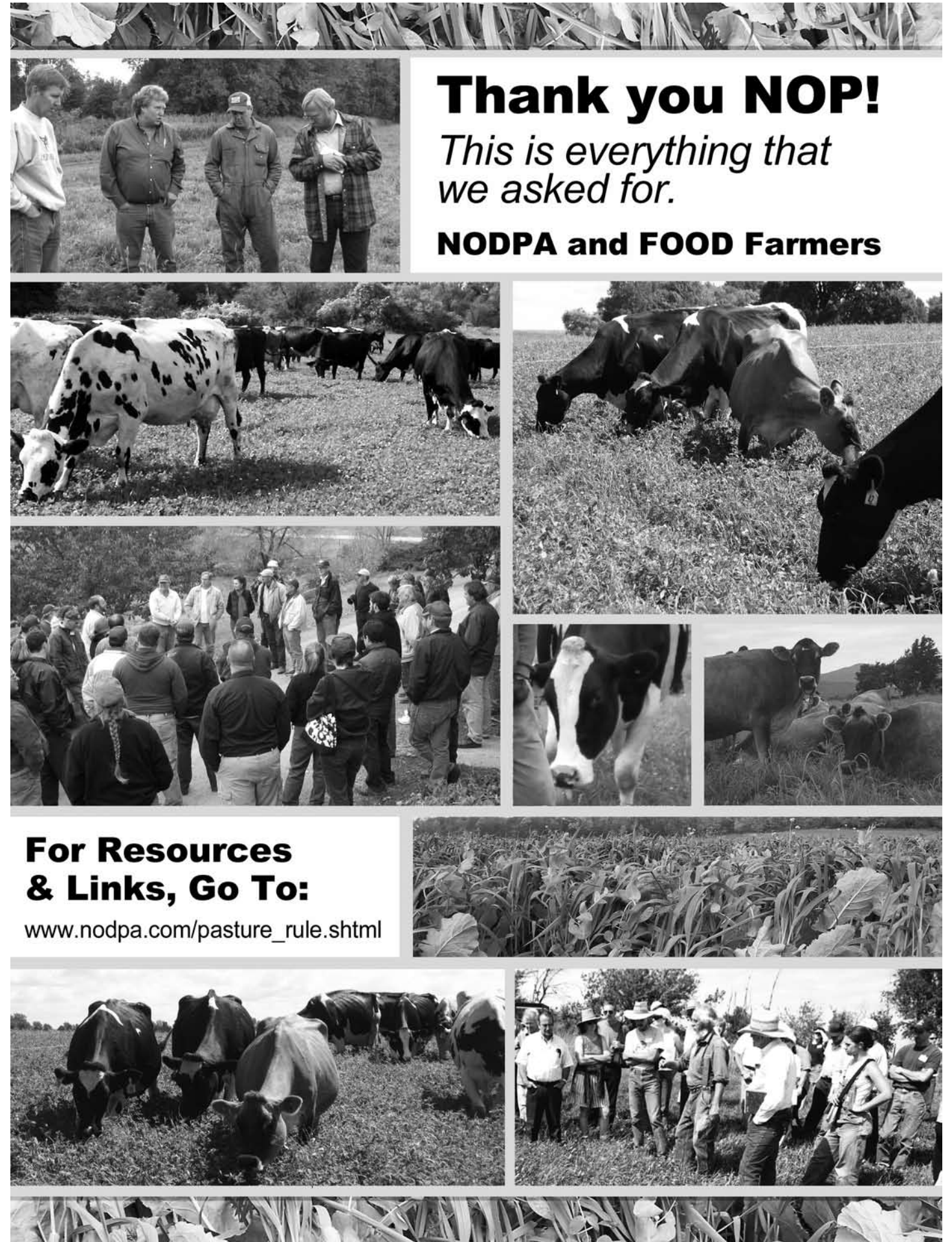
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[www.nodpa.com/pasture\\_rule.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/pasture_rule.shtml)



ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Featured Farm

*continued from page 28*

are also raised on pasture, starting out with access to a hutch on grass for a few days until they are drinking well and their horn buds are big enough for dehorning with a butane dehorner.

NN: Do you have a grazing plan that you follow each year? If so, what are some of the highlights within the grazing plan that you think is important?

KA: Pasture is the most cost effective crop we grow, so we work to maximize pasture as much as possible by adding hayland acres as needed throughout the growing season. We always have plenty of easy access to water for the milking cows. Sometimes the dry cow/ heifer group will have to travel a longer way for water, but their needs are far less and they can take the time to travel.

NN: Do you have a dairy nutritionist that works with you to balance rations for production and optimal herd health?

KA: Yes, we have worked with Sonny Golden from PA since 1993 when we changed to intensive grazing. We didn't start out with him, but switched to him within a couple months of starting intensive grazing as things weren't going that well with the feed mill nutritionist who had us topdress-ing fresh cows and high cows with a 35% protein mix when on lush pasture!! We decided we needed to work with someone who had lots of experience with grazing rations.

NN: When do you introduce your calves to grazing? Please describe your calf grazing system including what you do to prevent parasites and training your calves to the electric fence.

KA: We introduce the calves to grazing from day one. When we developed our calf pasture system, we started with a new pasture that had been plowed and cropped one year then plowed and reseeded to a pasture mix. The pasture has high tensile exterior fencing and we started the system with temporary four strand interior fencing to split up the paddocks, but often would have new calves go through that. We found that if we started them in a small patch at the front, enclosed in portable mesh fencing, they could learn about the fence before they went through it on a dead run. After several years, we replaced the interior fences with 4 strands of high tensile and no climb fence on the end (where they tended to run through at first). Once in a great while we will still have one calf get through from one paddock to the next, but it seldom happens, and now we don't bother with enclosing them in the mesh fence for training. We also changed from 6 strand by the highway to no climb fence to be sure they would never get out through the strands. We use mob feeders to feed the calves in groups up to 5.

NN: What are some of the resources you would recommend for

people needing to learn more about developing a grazing plan, intensifying their grazing, or learning how to measure the amount of pasture that their livestock are consuming.

KA: We have wonderful resources here in NY with the Graze NY program and other grazing specialists. They were a big help as we got started as well as through the rough beginning patches. Seeing what other farms are doing is always a plus, as well as reading Graze Magazine and Stockman Grassfarmer. Bringing a knowledgeable grazing nutritionist on board was invaluable to us in our transition.

NN: What are the record keeping forms that you use and how often do you keep track of your grazing routine?

KA: Everyday we record what pasture/s the cows are in, how many cows worth of TMR we are mixing; we record changes in the TMR mix whenever it is adjusted, or if the number of cows we are feeding changes. We have the record book open on a handy desk in the barn so it's quick and easy to record the information. To keep track of the heifers and dry cows, we use a calendar to record the movement from one pasture to another as well as their changing numbers.

Questions related to your involvement with the Proposed Pasture Rule:

NN:What are your feelings about the recently released NOP Pasture Rule?

KA: It is everything I hoped for, but was never sure I could expect. I am absolutely thrilled with it.

NN: What were your concerns with the NOP rule prior to the implementation of the Pasture Rule?

KA:The vagueness of the original rule, which allowed a multiplicity of interpretations, and the consequent lack of enforcement.

NN: Why was this piece important to you?

KA: Livestock being in their natural habitat, and grazing as nature intended, is such a bedrock principle of organic production.

NN: Describe your involvement with the Pasture Rule, its contents and the work entailed in getting the final rule to where it is today.

KA: The Pasture Rule was a multi-year process with many steps along the way, from recognition of the problem to working to establish a collaborative response to the draft pasture rule. NODPA, working in conjunction with fellow organic dairy farmers countrywide, came to a consensus that the 30% dry matter intake from pasture during the growing season, which could be no less than 120 days, became established as the minimum measurable parameter needed.

Complaints filed with the USDA by The Cornucopia Institute alleging inadequate pasture usage on three operations became a catalyst

*continued on page 37*

NET UPDATE

Recent ODAIRY Discussions

*By Liz Bawden*

Recent discussions began with a question about hairy heel warts. Farmers and vets who weighed in on the subject were quick to point out that there is usually a nutritional component to the condition -- either acidosis from pushing too much grain or poor mineraliza-tion (or both together). The other factor is cows standing in slurry. One farmer had good success in addressing her outbreak with just increasing the mineral mix (Ca,P,Mg with Vitamins A, D, and E, and Selenium and Zinc) to 8 oz per head per day along with 4 oz of kelp and 2 oz of Desert Dynamin. Another farmer told of wrapping the lamest cow's feet with an IBA product called HoofMate; the cows experienced a good recovery if left on for 5 days. He also fed 4oz of kelp. A veterinarian uses a combination of an essential oil product like Prism from Crystal Creek mixed together with copper sulfate to form a paste, and applies it to the prepared area of the hoof with 4X4 piece of gauze; then the foot is wrapped. Another vet uses a mixture of 1/2 cup sugar to 20cc providone iodine before wrapping the foot. At another farm, the boron levels in the feed were increased to 45 to 60 ppm, and there hasn't been any new cases of heel warts since. More farmers added their recommendations: one farmer used a product called Quickhit; another fed 1 tsp of copper sulfate and zinc sulfate per head per day along with free choice kelp; selenium levels were raised in the feed on another farm to control the problem.

Twin calves were born on a farm, and were both weak; one was pad-dling or "running" while lying down. One sucked vigorously, one did not. The farmer thought there might be some brain or nervous system damage. It was suggested they could be hypoglycemic, and should be fed 4 to 6 times a day to get the extra energy into them. It was also suggested that they get a shot of Vitamin E and Selenium as soon as possible. If there is no permanent damage, they should be improved in 3 to 4 days.

A producer was having a hard time controlling lice in a few cows that seemed unusually bothered by them. She had used a lice and mange wash, but the lice came back. She asked if there was a homeopathic remedy that might help. A vet suggested Staphysagria since she asked for a homeopathic remedy, but reminded us that sulphur is a good constitutional remedy for cows with skin problems. Elemental sulphur powder can be brushed in. Other suggestions were to bed the cows with cedar sawdust (the repellant nature of the cedar oil keeps the lice away), using preparations with essential oils, and repeating the lice and mange wash weekly until it seems under control.

Apparently, cows love cabbage! A vet had been called to treat a fresh cow who was off feed. The farmer produced some cabbage, and the cow ate it -- much to the surprise of the attending vet! The farmer said he often fed it to cows who were not eating as well as he'd like. Another producer added that he turns the cows into the cabbage at the end of the season, and they much prefer green cabbage over the red.

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To sign up for the Odairy listserv, go to:  
[http://www.nodpa.com/list\\_serv.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml)

A producer noticed a steer had a significant swelling at the base of the animal's ears, causing them to droop. It was suggested that he use ho-meopathic Apis 30C applied 2 to 3 times a day to relieve the swelling; a nasal mist was suggested. Another vet suggested mixing a few pellets with a jar of water, and dispensing an ounce of this mixture daily into the steer's water.

A farmer was considering applying chicken manure on some of his pasture and hay ground, and asked for feedback from others who have tried this amendment. Most farmers agreed that it does make things grow! Several producers suggested that it be applied at a light rate, their recommendations were from 300 to 2000 pounds per acre; others suggested performing the appropriate tests to determine the

*continued on page 38*



# Calendar

**March 15 – 16, 2010**

**New England Farm Energy Conference  
Radisson Hotel, Manchester, NH**

Keynote speaker Dr. Mike Morris, National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), works with farmers, ranchers and communities on more sustainable ways of using energy and water. He is especially interested in irrigation, solar energy, and small-scale biofuels. There will be two concurrent tracks of presentations over the two days: Oil Seeds and Biodiesel and Greenhouse Efficiency and Renewable Energy. Contact: Heather Darby or Rosalie Madden at (802) 524-6501, or go to [www.uvm.edu/extension/cropsoil/out-croppings](http://www.uvm.edu/extension/cropsoil/out-croppings) for more information.

**March 17, 2010**

**[webinar] A Look at the Newly Released Organic Pasture Rule, with Dr. Kerry Smith, USDA, NOP**

On February 12, 2010, the USDA announced details of the final regulation regarding access to pasture for organic livestock operations. This rule amends the National Organic Program (NOP) regulations to clarify livestock feed and living conditions provisions and specify the use of pasture in raising organic ruminants. In this webinar, Dr. Kerry Smith, USDA AMS National Organic Program, will give an overview of the main components of the Pasture Rule. The webinar will end with instructions for submitting any comments viewers may have on the new Rule to the NOP, as well as taking suggestions for further webinars on this topic.

View the full Winter/Spring schedule of eOrganic Farming and Research Webinars at: <http://www.extension.org/article/25242>

**March 23, 24, 25, 2010**

**2010 Vermont Forage Days**

**March 23 St. Johnsbury Extension Conference Room**

**March 24 River Valley Technical Center in Springfield**

**March 25 Middlebury American Legion**

Workshop day will cover: The latest grasses and legumes for hay, pasture and biomass energy; formulating the right forage mixtures for pasture and hay; Innovative pasture systems for reducing costs; A new look at using short season corn hybrids for better silage management and quality, and much more. For more information, call Anne Marie Resnik at (802) 656-0463 or email [pss@uvm.edu](mailto:pss@uvm.edu)

**March 24, 2010**

**NOP Pasture Rule Training Session  
Albany, NY**

The Clarion Hotel & Conference Center

Registration from 7:30 to 8 am; training from 8 am to 3 pm

The National Organic Program (NOP) recently completed a training session on the Access to Pasture (Livestock) final rule on February 25, 2010 in La Crosse, WI. The NOP will be conducting additional Access to Pasture Rule training sessions New York, Colorado and California and these trainings are open to ALL. NOP will post more information about these sessions as they become available. Pre-registration is required. To pre-register, contact Judith Ragonesi, Training Manager, National Organic Program at [judith.ragonesi2@ams.usda.gov](mailto:judith.ragonesi2@ams.usda.gov). For training updates, go to: [www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop) and click on Pasture Rulemaking Information on the right hand side of the page.

**April 7, 2010**

**NOP Pasture Rule Training Session  
Denver, Colorado**

The National Organic Program (NOP) recently completed a training session on the Access to Pasture (Livestock) final rule on February 25, 2010 in La Crosse, WI. The NOP will be conducting additional Access to Pasture Rule training sessions New York, Colorado and California and these trainings are open to ALL. NOP will post more information about these sessions as they become available. Pre-registration is required. To pre-register, contact Judith Ragonesi, Training Manager, National Organic Program at [judith.ragonesi2@ams.usda.gov](mailto:judith.ragonesi2@ams.usda.gov). For training updates, go to: [www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop) and click on Pasture Rulemaking Information on the right hand side of the page.

**April 26, 2010**

**NOP Pasture Rule Training Session  
Davis, California**

The National Organic Program (NOP) recently completed a training session on the Access to Pasture (Livestock) final rule on February 25, 2010 in La Crosse, WI. The NOP will be conducting additional Access to Pasture Rule training sessions New York, Colorado and California and these trainings are open to ALL. NOP will post more information about these sessions as they become available.

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## Advertise With Us!

**NODPA News is Published Bi-Monthly  
January, March, May, July, Sept. & Nov.**

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

Ad rates and sizes listed below.

**Deadline for advertising in the  
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**1/4 Page Ad (3.5" W x 4.75" H) = \$130**

**1/8 Page Ad/Business Card:**

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**Classified Ads:** Free to Northeast organic farmers. All others \$10 for the first 30 words; \$.10 per word over 30

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802-234-5524 or email [Lmccrory@hughes.net](mailto:Lmccrory@hughes.net)

Please send a check with your ad (made payable to NODPA).

**MARCH 2010**

**NODPA NEWS**

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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

### Featured Farm

*continued from page 34*

for action. I helped organize a contingent of organic dairy farmers from across the country and we descended on a National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) meeting in Washington, DC in March 2005. Our presence made a splash and elicited some media attention. Henry Perkins became famous for holding a sign that said “Let Them Eat Grass”. NODPA also worked with the Cornucopia Institute, the Organic Consumers Association and other groups to elicit comments on the need for strong enforcement of the pasture standard resulting in the submission of over 8000 comments to the National Organic Program.

That was the big start to a campaign of constant pressure for the last several years for a more defined pasture standard. On April 13, 2006, the USDA issued an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) on Pasture and held a Pasture Symposium in April 18, 2006. I, along with many organic dairy producers and other experts were tapped to give testimony in front of the NOSB in State College, PA at the Pasture Symposium, along with oral and written comments submitted by producers, processors, NGOs, retailers, and others. With help from several others, I put together a 15-page response (along with a 10 page appendix of grazing studies) to the many questions that the NOP included in the ANPR.

Late July of 2006, Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, and Emily Brown Rosen who works for Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO), and I had a meeting with Barbara Robinson, Deputy Administrator for Transportation & Marketing Programs and NOP Administrator in DC to talk about the need for a well defined pasture rule.

In June of 2007, an Organic Dairy Summit was convened by FOOD Farmers in Boulder, Colorado, with producers and processors from around the country to attempt to come to a consensus position on pasture across the full industry. While we didn't come out with 100% agreement, it was an opportunity to share and understand. One project that came out of the Summit was a committee to get down on paper some details and help on how to measure pasture intake. I sat on that committee which was chaired by Kevin Brusell and included Kathy Soder, Arden Nelson, Lisa McCrory, Jim Gardiner and Juan Velez.

Throughout this time, I gave several presentations in NY, PA, NJ, MN and Ontario, Canada on organic dairying and on our farm's grazing program as well as wrote articles on the pasture issue for NODPA News, Graze Magazine, and NOFA-NY's newsletter.

As part of the Federal rulemaking process, any proposed rule needs to be reviewed by different agencies. In September 2008, as part of that process Ed, I, and several other members of the National Organic Coalition met with staff from the Office of Management and Budget and the Small Business Administration to impress on them that a more strict pasture rule is what farmers wanted and that it would not be an economic hardship.

Then the long awaited happened and the NOP issued a draft pasture rule on October 28, 2008. Its breadth and specificity in so many areas took my breath away, although it did contain the bones we needed for an excellent pasture rule. I spent hours a day for the next several weeks poring over the draft rule and pulling together responses and suggestions from producers, processors, certifiers and NGOs on how the draft rule should be reworded. I took the lead on compiling the input and fine-tuning the wording and Ed Maltby took the lead on writing the supporting comments and collecting documentation for those changes. The work went through draft after draft through the FOOD Farmer channels, and then on to certifiers and advocacy organizations for their input and edits and back through FOOD Farmers time after time. All the while, I was reading and incorporating parts of the draft comments being passed around by other entities.

I went to the NOSB meeting in DC in November where the draft rule was discussed in two forums—one sponsored by FOOD Farmers, National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture and NOC and one sponsored by the Organic Trade Association (OTA) and FOOD Farmers. Those forums led to further refinement. Finally, with FOOD Farmers satisfied with the state of our draft text, our comments were submitted on December 23, 2008.

Then another wait was on. A little over 13 months later, the final rule was published in the Federal Register and I breathed a huge sigh of relief; the final rule being everything I hoped it would be. ♦



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## Organic Livestock for sale:

**Nice group of crossbred cows for sale.** Preg. checked and ready to start freshening in spring-summer. 11 sold as a group only.... they're family. Best way to contact is by cell 570-721-1144; Paul Hails, Pennsylvania.

**Cows for Sale** Choice of Herd 5 - 6 head Contact: West Street Dairies, Cornwall, Vermont, 802-462-3651.

## Organic Feed for Sale:

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4x4 Bales Dry 2nd Cut - \$50 each  
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4x4 Bales 1st Cut Individually-wrapped Baleage Bales - \$35 each  
NY/PA Border. Rob Moore, Nichols, NY (607)699-7968

**1200 Square bales,** \$3.50 each, located in Maine. Contact: (207) 437-5483

**1000 Small second cut Square Bales @** \$3.50/each, 200 Dry Round Bales (stored inside) @ \$50/each, Haylage, \$35/T. Will deliver for a fee. Reeds Canary Grass for bedding \$25.00/each. Contact: West Street Dairies, Cornwall VT 802-462-3651

## Employment Opportunities

**Good opportunity available** on a quality-oriented, progressive, organic dairy farm in Western New York. If interested, please contact Doug Murphy at: 216-401-1052, evenings.

## Equipment for Sale:

**12 Foot Pull-type Gen-til Aerator:** Very good condition. Asking \$8000. Weights also available. Contact: Rodney Martin, Churchville, VA, 540-337-6024 or 717-413-1074 cell.

**Grain Harvesting Package for Sale:** Gleaner F-2 Combine w/ cab, always stored inside. "Corn/Soy Special", hydrostatic drive, diesel, 23" wide tires. Three heads: 4-row corn head, 13' straight cut head with pickup reel, pickup head. Versatile 12-ft swather with pickup reel; new canvasses in 2009; hay conditioner available. Three gravity wagons: fair condition, "duct tape specials". \$11,000 for the lot.

Contact: Brian and Liz Bawden  
Email: bawden@cit-tele.com  
Phone: 315-324-6926  
Location: Hammond, New York

## NET UPDATE

## Recent ODAIRY Discussions

*continued from page 35*

spreading rate. If the manure must be stored for a while before application, it can be tarped to minimize nitrogen loss. Several farmers recommended that it be spread just before a rain, and one suggested incorporating it into the soil for best results. Some liked broiler litter

since it has less N, so is less likely to burn plants. Others preferred the layer litter because it adds Ca. It should be spread with a lime spreader for best results; a standard manure spreader will lay it out too thick and potentially burn the plants.

A heifer was exhibiting the following symptoms: grinds her teeth, stands with her back humped up, refuses to lie down, her ears are hanging down, has a 103 degree fever, has some diarrhea, and was somewhat bloated in the AM. She will eat only oats and hay. The farmer suspected hardware, and gave a magnet. The symptoms point to peritonitis, according to a vet on the list. He suggested that antibiotics be given, as peritonitis is a life-threatening condition. This sparked an ethical discussion around the fate of the afflicted animal. A producer suggested that the animal should be immediately sent to slaughter; others thought it was a moral obligation to treat the animal to restore health, even though it meant the loss of organic status for the animal, and she would have to be shipped or sold anyway. ♦

## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## Homeopathy: Mechanics & Application for Dairy Farms, Part 2

*continued from page 9*

of a China patient to collapse into prostration with loss of body fluids (vomiting, diarrhea, lactation, hemorrhage, etc). With the suddenness of her symptoms, we expected sudden response to the remedy so she was dosed every hour until she began to respond.

After 3-4 doses her fever broke and she was able to lift her head. No more doses were given until her fever returned. This pattern was followed over the next day until the cow was up and walking and had no more diarrhea.

Both of these were cases of diarrhea that required totally different remedies because the presentation of the patient and the diarrhea were totally different. Homeopathy can never be a "cookbook" approach based on a static diagnosis. Homeopathy is only successful then the individual tendencies and patterns of the patient are addressed.

## Conclusion

Homeopathy is not very high tech and does not require any of the new and fancy diagnostics that drive so many forms of medicine. Its strength is in its simplicity and the fact that anyone can master it, with just a little guidance and some hard work.

*Glen Dupree, DVM, CVH, has practiced veterinary Homeopathy for the past 10 years in Louisiana, Pennsylvania and New York. He received his initial training in Homeopathy from Richard Pitcairn, DVM. Further studies have been made with various human Homeopaths. Currently Dr. Dupree's practice of veterinary Homeopath is based in St. Francisville, Louisiana.*

# MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

## From the MODPA President

We're just back from the Organic Conference where it seems MOSES had another record crowd. The long anticipated pasture rule appeared to be the topic for much conversation, with many wondering how it would affect milk supply and ultimately the price of milk. With all this happening at a time when some organic processors are reporting 120-130% utilization one would think things are going well in the organic sector, but a closer look reveals there are still dairy farmers without an organic market for their milk and there is talk of an even larger percent reduction on quota bases; all because of predicted spring flush milk? It would seem that we farmers need to be proactive and work to minimize the negative impact of "spring flush" milk by increasing on farm utilization for a short period when the greatest effect of this milk and seasonal milk hits the marketplace. By controlling the supply on our farms we can retain the organic value of

### About MODPA

The Midwest Organic Dairy Producer Alliance (MODPA) represents organic dairy producers in WI, MN, ND, SD, IA, NE, KS, MO, IL, IN, OH, & MI with the mission "to promote communication and networking for the betterment of all Midwest organic dairy producers and enhance a sustainable farmgate price." Objectives are:

- To ensure a fair and sustainable farm gate price.
- Keep family farms viable for future generations.
- Promote ethical, ecological and humane farming practices.
- Networking among producers of all organic commodities.
- Promote public policy, research and education in support of organic agriculture.

### MODPA Board

<b>Wisconsin</b> Darlene Coehoorn, President Viewpoint Acres Farm N5878 Hwy C Rosendale, WI 54974 ddviewpoint@yahoo.com Phone: 920-921-5541  Jim Greenberg, Vice-President EP 3961 Drake Avenue Stratford, WI 54484 greenbfirms@tznnet.com Phone: 715-687-8147  John Kinsman, Secretary E2940 County Road K La Valle, WI 53941 Phone: 608- 986-3815 Fax: 608-986-2502  Bruce Drinkman, Treasurer 3253 150th Avenue Glenwood City, WI 54013 bdrinkman@hotmail.com Phone: 715-265-4631  John Kiefer, Director S10698 Troy Rd	 Sauk City, WI 53583 taofarmer@direcway.com Phone: 608- 544-3702  Jim Small, Director 26548 Locust Ave. Wilton, WI 54670 Tel: 608-435-6700  <b>Iowa</b> Andy Schaefers, Director 25037 Lake Rd Garnavillo, IA 52049 Tel: 563-964-2758  <b>Michigan</b> Ed Zimba Zimba Dairy 7995 Mushroom Rd DeFord, MI 48729 zimbadaairy@tband.net Phone: 989-872-2680  <b>Ohio</b> Ernest Martin, Director 1720 Crum Rd Shiloh, OH 44878 Phone and Fax: 419-895-1182
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ALL MILK-or we can attempt to market it all and become subject to supply and price control measures imposed on ALL of our production instead of a small percentage. Many of the vendors on the trade floor were guardedly optimistic that if the interest shown in their product or services expressed at the show turned into dollars of income or increased sales they would have a good year. Many were coming off a bad year in 2009 as farmers were forced to cut spending which dropped their income levels drastically. Many of those who shared with me expressed the opinion that the farmers who direct marketed their production were the most profitable. As reported by our certifier at their annual meeting, the vegetable growers with direct market sales had an increase in sales and income in 2009. Almost all other categories income and sales were down, which resulted in a less than profitable year for the certifier as well. It seems the more control farmers have in the process the greater the share of the profit there is for the farmer-not a new concept but one worth revisiting. We all need to become more active in both influencing the needed rule/law changes and controlling production volumes. As farmers we need to manage supply on the farm or the processors will force us to manage supply at their price and terms. ♦

*Darlene Coehoorn, MODPA President*  
*Rosendale, Wisconsin*

### Become a Member of MODPA!

Member dues are \$35 per year, for which you receive our newsletter and become part of our team working for the best interests of all organic dairies.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Certified Organic Dairy? Yes No # of cows: \_\_\_\_\_

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I wish to support MODPA (check whatever applies):

\_\_\_\_ By becoming a state rep or director.

\_\_\_\_ By supporting MODPA with a %/cwt check-off.

\_\_\_\_ By providing a donation to support the work of

MODPA. \$\_\_\_\_\_ enclosed.

**Please send this form to: Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer, 3253 150th Ave, Glenwood City, WI 54013**



## Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA)

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

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## CALENDAR

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Pre-registration is required. To pre-register, contact Judith Ragonese, Training Manager, National Organic Program at [judith.ragonese2@ams.usda.gov](mailto:judith.ragonese2@ams.usda.gov). For training updates, go to: [www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop) and click on Pasture Rulemaking Information on the right **hand side of the page**.

**October 7-8, 2010**

**10th Annual NODPA Field Days**  
**MOFGA Fairgrounds, Unity, ME**

NODPA's Field Days will be held Thursday and Friday, October 7 and 8 at the MOFGA Fairgrounds in Unity, Maine. More information will be coming soon. To sponsor or exhibit, contact Nora Owens, 413-772 0444.

**October 15-17, 2010**

**4th Annual Northeast Animal Power Field Days**  
**Tunbridge Fairgrounds, Tunbridge, VT**

Friday, October 15th will feature field and forest working demonstrations at Howeale Farm, adjacent to the Tunbridge Fairgrounds. Friday evening will include a community potluck dinner on the Tunbridge Fairgrounds. Saturday, October 16th will focus on workshops and equipment presentations, resource exhibitors, local food vendors, and networking sessions, throughout the Fairgrounds. Sunday, October 17th will start off with a Community/Teamster Appreciation Breakfast, then will offer a variety of activities including the premier annual meeting of the newly formed Draft Animal Power Network.

For more information, contact: Carl Russell & Lisa McCrory, 802-234-5524, [info@animalpowerfielddays.org](mailto:info@animalpowerfielddays.org).



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