NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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Welcome to the July Issue of the NODPA News

In this issue we would like to highlight a couple of speakers who will be presenting at the NODPA Field Days this October. The two articles below will introduce you to Lawrence Andres who will speak about raising calves with nurse cows and [milk] supply management, and Mary Ann Hayes, who will be moderating a panel on Farm Energy highlighting some of the programs in Maine. See pages 15 to 17 for more Field Days information.

Raising Calves on Organic Dairy Farms

By Anne Macey, with assistance from Lawrence Andres

BACKGROUND

On many organic farms there is little difference in approach between the methods used to rear dairy calves and those used on non-organic farms. Calves are separated soon after birth and raised in some form of individual housing only being grouped with others after weaning. The key differences, dictated by the Canadian Organic Standard, address welfare concerns:

- Organic dairy calves cannot be housed individually over 3 months of age;
- The pen or hutch must have bedding, a minimum size of at least 2.5m2 and allow the calf to move freely, and see, smell and hear other calves;
- Tethering is prohibited.

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What's in your farm's energy tool room?

by Mary Ann Hayes, Maine Rural Partners

Do you have solar access, river frontage, high winds, tidal access, extra land, a need for a rotation crop or a lot of manure? Are you willing to spend time on a project that might divert you from your already busy schedule and might not work or save you money? Have you had a farm energy audit yet? Do you want to be in the energy production business? These are some of the many questions facing farmers who are evaluating their energy challenges and opportunities – ranging from managing feed rations to fueling tractors, heating water, trucking manure and cooling milk. We hope you'll join members of Maine's Farm Energy Partners network at the NODPA Field Days to explore your options.

Energy improvements can be a tough maze to navigate, especially with a lot of new tech-

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From The NODPA President

So, here it is, the summer of 2010. Most of you by now have had enough information sent to you and been contacted by your certifier to figure out whether or not the new "pasture rule" is going to affect your operation or not and whether or not you are going to make changes to come into compliance.

This shouldn't have caught anyone by surprise, as this has been years, and I mean years, being debated and worked on, but apparently it's putting many smaller farms in the awkward position of not being able to comply with the minimum standards unless they modify the way they are currently running their farms.

If there is anything I can say about this that would help, it would be to say "don't be reluctant to modify the way you are currently making use of your land, don't be afraid to modify your breeding schedule to accommodate the new regulations." This might shift some production to winter months when pasture is not an issue. Come to think of it, this just might help even out the oversupply in the spring and the shortage in the late fall and winter months that we have historically had to deal with, as long as the handlers will offer enough of a fall and winter premium.

Think of how much money and effort could be saved by not having to deal with the "spring flush". This also plays into the subject of supply management. If some industry wide program could be developed it would result in a much healthier industry. Sure, it's going to take a certain amount of work and cooperation from all players, but don't you think its worth trying?

Henry Perkins, NODPA President
Albion, Maine

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From The NODPA Desk

By NODPA Executive Director Ed Maltby

Raw milk; Department of Justice hearings; ending of quotas; implementation of the Access to Pasture Rule; High Court hearings on GM Alfalfa; Organic Valley's launch of their fortified milk; and the many different ideas for supply management/margin insurance/federal marketing order reform in the non-organic dairy industry. While these issues are buzzing around, NODPA is preparing for its annual Field Days which will be in Unity ME in early October where one of our industry leaders, long time organic dairy farmer, farm advocate and genuinely good guy Henry Perkins will be retiring from dairying. I hope as many of you as possible can attend the event which promises plenty of good education, good company and great food, plus Horizon Organic has donated money to assist organic dairy producers with their expenses to make it easier for them to attend (this is for all producers not just Horizon).

Raw milk is an emotional subject for any conversation and one enters into the debate carefully. While most producers and their families drink raw milk from their bulk tank (I know I did) the legalities of selling/trading/donating raw milk varies from state to state, and for years it's been a matter of "don't ask- don't tell" in many states where it is illegal to sell raw milk. Insurance is also another big question, especially in our litigious society, as is cleanliness, herd health and consumer education about storage. Despite all these challenges, consumers are willing to travel for miles and pay high dollars for raw milk, and for many small to medium size operations it has become a lifeline as cash income to pay family expenses. In some states, like Maine and Connecticut, it has developed into a regular part of farm income and is available in retail stores. It was a surprise to many of us when the Organic Valley Board decided to move away from their previous middle ground and prohibit their producer-owners from selling raw milk and raw milk products. It is an issue that has split the coop members and there is no clear consensus with any of their representative committees for a decision one way or another. While it has always been a part of the Organic Valley's cooperative agreement that producers cannot sell retail to anyone, the coop management has turned a blind eye, many times enrolling producers who were already selling raw milk that they knew had no intention of stopping. As OV management makes recommendations to their Board about implementation, we all hope that they will respect the lifestyle and economic future of many of their owners, and make provisions, either with grandfather clauses or written agreements on volumes, that honor the unwritten commitments made in the past. Other companies already allow this kind of sale and it will obviously become an issue in future negotiations about contracts and cooperative agreements.

> "We come out of the period of the spring flush (a non event?) with increased sales and a reality that organic dairy is now tied to world events and the non-organic dairy market. Surpluses benefit no one- and we need a response mechanism throughout the industry when we see demand contracts or supply expands too quickly."

The Department of Justice hearing, recently held in Madison, WI, about concentration in the dairy industry brought no surprises and no answers. Organic dairy producers, with only two national brands and one vertically integrated company with 8% of the US dairy herd, have seen an erosion of choice as to whom to sell their milk, and their ability to negotiate a pay price tied to their costs of production. The main issues that the non-organic dairy industry appears to face are:

- That the dairy industry is too concentrated on the processor and producer side
- That it is becoming less relevant where the milk is produced and by how many producers.
- That the answer to price volatility and farm profitability assumes that we operate in a low cost world market.

These same issues are lurking around the edge of organic dairy as companies look at milk routes and distance from the processing plant in determining pay price and contracts; where organic milk powder is shipped across the country; with the expansion and concentration of organic production and management in New Zealand and Australia the stage is set for increasing imports; and discussions around how to balance supply and demand in the future without the wholesale losses of producers that we saw with HP Hood/Stonyfield, Humboldt, Organic Choice and others. The major companies held their pay price while each had different approaches to supply management and purchasing on the spot market.

We come out of the period of the spring flush (a non event?) with increased sales and a reality that organic dairy is now tied to world events and the non-organic dairy market. Surpluses benefit no one and we need a response mechanism throughout the industry when we see demand contracts or supply expands too quickly. Many producers would like to balance their own production by using any surplus on their farm as fertilizer, feed etc and we need contracts and regulations that allow that to happen. Non-organic dairy is heading down familiar roads where they balance supply on the low cost world market and solutions are based on the efficiencies of large dairies and more milk being produced from fewer cows. Whatever happens within non-organic dairy will affect organic and we need to be active in the solutions that are being suggested but we also need to be working on our own future that takes into account the true cost of production with a triple bottom line approach that includes long term farm profitability. ◆

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

June, Dairy month, was a busy month for CROPP Cooperative

Edited by Ed Maltby

At its June 16, 2010 meeting the CROPP Board of Directors elected to raise the quota they established in 2009 from 93% to 100% of Active Base starting August 1, 2010. The Stonyfield Supply Group is currently at 100% of their active base. Since July 2009 CROPP will have increased the quota by 13%, first by raising the overall active base by 6% through their January appeal process, and then by raising the quota on August 1 by 7%. The only exception will be that they are going to allow the Southeast to grow their present Active Base up to 110% as part of the regional aspect of their supply program. The Board has not decided on a 2011 plan for the quota, but the CROPP Supply Committee has recommended removing the quota completely during January and February. There will still be a year-end reconciliation for the over quota milk and any dollars deducted that are not over the total quota amount for the period will be returned to the producer owner. There is still a process for producers to appeal their Active Base as a 100% of Active Base does not necessarily equate to production prior to the imposition of the quota in July 2009.

"Raising the quota is a great accomplishment for our farmer-owned cooperative, and a testament to our democratic process. One year ago, we committed to create a sustainable solution through a supply management program to avoid farmer pay cuts, artificially deflating retail price at the expense of the farmer, or dropping the farmer off the truck entirely," said CEO George Siemon.

The Stonyfield Supply Group (SSG) producers will be getting a $1 increase starting August 1 because of the 100% utilization of their organic milk. Monthly utilization of the SSG has ranged from 63-94%. Producers in the SSG had a $0.50 increase in March but they are still getting paid under the full member-owners pool price by approximately $2/cwt.

At the same Board meeting the CROPP Board took a rare 4-3 vote decision to enforce the existing Dairy Pool Diversion Policy, which is part of their cooperative agreement, which states "Engaging in the raw milk business prohibited." The discussion within the cooperative was evenly split, and when the Board took the decision to the DEC for further discussion and possible endorsement, the result was 20 votes for and 20 votes against. Enforcement of the policy will be focused on the producer-owners who are in the raw milk business, not on the "neighborly exchanges" between producers and the neighbors. The effective date for enforcement to start is January 1, 2011. Those CROPP producers who are planning on applying for a diversion allowance or want to continue diverting milk for other products need to contact the CROPP office for an application which will be due back on September 1 in order to continue the diversion after January 1. CROPP will be developing a process for the approval of these diversions.

Currently CROPP is the only organic milk buyer that prohibits the sale of raw milk as part of the milk supply agreement with producers.

CROPP also launched an Omega 3 milk in gallons and half gallons this summer in response to demand from consumers. The Organic Valley Omega-3 Milk has Omega-3 DHA, EPA and ALA and CROPP chose to use Kosher fish oil sustainably sourced from Peru as their additive. This will compete with Horizon Organic Omega 3 milk which is already on the market using Algae DHA as an additive. ◆

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

OMRI Welcomes Their New Executive Director

The Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) Board of Directors is pleased to announce that they have chosen Peggy Miars to be the new Executive Director/CEO for OMRI. Miars came most recently from California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF), where she has served for six years as the Executive Director/CEO. In addition to her efforts at CCOF, she also volunteers her talent and skill to serve on the Advisory Board of the Cal Poly State University College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences, Center for Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Studies. Her previous experience includes more than a decade working in marketing and management positions at Earthbound Farm, Whole Foods Market, and many nonprofit organizations.

"This is a pivotal point in OMRI's growth as demand for services grows and as the National Organic Program (NOP) steps up enforcement. I'm excited to lead OMRI's dynamic and professional staff into a successful future," said Miars.

Miars' experience in the organic sector, coupled with her extensive experience in nonprofit management, make her a good fit for this position. She will bring with her a wealth of knowledge and expertise gleaned from years of experience as a leader in the organic certification field.

Miars will leave CCOF in August; her transition at OMRI will begin in September. ◆

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Raising Calves on Organic Dairy Farms

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In natural conditions calves have a strong motivation to suck; they form strong bonds with their mother and seek out social contact with other calves which provides the opportunity for play and the development of social skills. In order to meet these behavioral needs, an alternative to artificial rearing where calves are kept with the cows, is being increasingly trialed on European and North American organic dairy farms.
For the most part, research in North America has focused on the relative benefits of group versus individual housing and has not considered a suckling system where the calf is raised with its mother initially and then with a nurse cow.

This fact sheet provides guidance for best management practices to overcome potential problems with each of these systems. Regardless of the method used to raise calves, it is essential that calves ingest enough milk. The dairy code stipulates that calves receive 20% of their body weight of milk per day.

1. USING NURSE COWS

The experience of farmers and veterinarians who have worked with nurse cows indicates that their use warrants serious consideration by organic farmers and further research by the scientificcommunity.

Research results to date are few and are based on European examples using two different systems. One allowed restricted suckling on the mother for a 6-8 week period with machine milking, the other used nurse cows for 3-4 months with no machine milking.

The research and case studies in the literature reported the following advantages compared to other systems using restricted feeding:

- Provides the opportunity for more “natural” rearing allowing for maternal and social behaviour. (5)
- Suckling systems make better use of growing potential of calves between birth and weaning (9)
- Calves learn to eat roughage at an earlier age, provided it is available to them.
- Diarrhea was less frequent resulting in optimum milk intake and digestion. (9)
- Better growth rates: 1.080 kg/day compared to 0.658 kg/ per day for bucket-fed tank milk.(9) And in one Norwegian herd: 1.2 kg/day for calves up to 13 weeks of age.(3)
- Increased milk consumption results in a 30- 40 kg live weight difference at 90 days.(9)
- Increased weight at weaning has a positive impact on milk production at first lactation.
- A restricted suckling system with Holstein cows reduced cross sucking and licking objects and tended to improve udder health. (2)
- Cows had fewer problems with high cell count and udder health.
- Better disease resistance and absence of illness in calves, young stock and growing bulls.(3)

In general farmers who have experimented with suckling systems prefer using nurse cows with two or three calves each over keeping calves with their own mothers. Given that each calf should have up to 8-10 kg of milk per day, the nurse cow should produce enough milk to support the total requirement of her suckling calves.

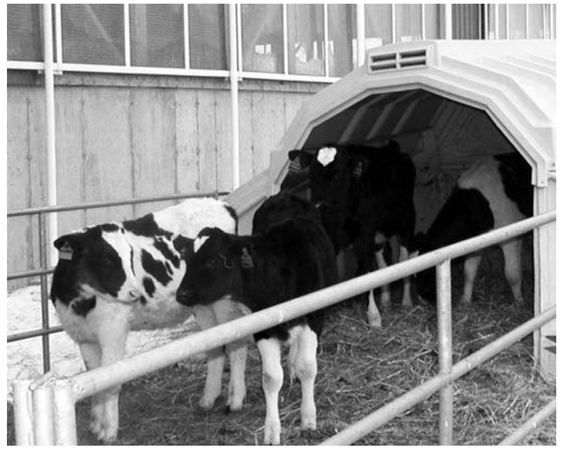
A Canadian Case Study

The experience of Canadian organic dairy pioneer Lawrence Andres provides valuable insights into the use of nurse cows. He started experimenting with this system 10 years ago and for the last 3 years has raised all his calves on nurse cows (an average 50 calves/year with 15 nurse cows).

The following summarizes his methods and his recommendations based on this experience:

- Calves are left with the mother for a minimum of 4 days then moved to the nurse cow, unless the mother is also to foster other calves.
- Select nurse cows that will readily nurse any calf. Older cows are generally more experienced and less likely to reject calves, but it can work well even with first calf heifers.
- Nurse cows should have unsoiled and healthy udders; do not choose cows with high somatic cell counts. The udder position (preferably above the hocks) and the angle of the teats are also important to allow easy access for all the calves. Nurse cows should not be carriers of infectious diseases; they must be Johnes negative.
- Calves are kept with cows at all times so they are never hungry and the sucking need is fully satisfied. The exception is during the grazing season when the cows are on pasture for some of the time leaving young calves in the barn. Older calves join mothers on pasture. Free access means the udder never gets full which is better for the cow’s health.
- Good observation is important in the first few weeks to ensure all are feeding. Check all quarters of the udder; if one is still full, check that all calves are sucking. The cow will pay more attention to the calf that is not doing well.
- Once past the critical stage (3-4 weeks) 2 cows and 4-6 calves can be housed together.
- The preferred timing is to put calves on a cow after she has been rebred. This eliminates the main drawback of the suckling system; that it is more difficult to detect heat if cows are nursing with the result that cows are bred later and it is difficult to regain body condition.
- As lactation declines the calves will become less dependent on nursing. Calves will also copy the cows feeding patterns and eat more solid food.
- Calves are weaned at 7-8 months as they would be naturally, timed to coincide with declining milk production. Or when calves start to get rough and the cow becomes uncomfortable. Weaning can be from four months.
- Weaning is done using the fence line method with a partition separating the cows from the 3 calves. As long as they continue to see, smell and have nose contact with each other, stress is greatly reduced.
- If the cow is near the end of the lactation, calves can be left on for longer until the cow dries up.
- Pay attention to the nutrition levels for nurse cows; they will produce 10-20% more milk when constantly nursing so will lose condition faster and take longer to regain body condition.
- If a nurse cow has recently freshened it is possible to use her for two batches of calves or to return her to the milking string, but then there can be a problem with the cow not letting the milk down.
- Calves with a cow will have a larger flight zone (i.e. the area around the animal that if encroached upon will cause alarm and escape behavior) than those raised individually. Ensure calves get a chance to see, smell and to get close to people so that they become accustomed to interacting with humans.
- Do not put four calves on one cow. Stronger calves will change teats constantly, pushing off a weaker calf. This creates more of a problem when there is only the one teat/calf.
- Do not put calves on a cow if they have already been accustomed to feeding with a rubber nipple. They are more likely to use their teeth which can cause scratching of the teat. If introducing an older calf it will often not be tolerated by the cow.
- A system where a cow nurses a calf and is also milked was not found to be satisfactory as the cow will not let milk down when on the machine.
- Farm set up, farmer attitude and interest in making the system work are important for success. Extra barn space will be needed.

Lawrence Andres has found the condition and vigour of the



calves at weaning to be far superior to those he has raised without cows. They were also more disease resistant and better able to function in the herd and cope with changes.

2. ARTIFICIAL REARING

Calf mortality rates can be high (10% or more) from birth to weaning. Surveys have shown that diarrhea affects 10-35% of dairy calves and accounts for 14% of deaths. Respiratory problems are found in 8-15% of calves and account for 46% of deaths. Farmers should be concerned if mortality rates are above 2% and make adjustments to their husbandry methods.

When raising calves artificially, the quantity of milk fed is a key factor in determining the health and well being of the calf. They should be fed at least 20% of their body weight per day of milk or 8-10 litres/day for calves aged 1-28 days (1L= 1.03 Kg) using artificial teats not buckets. Calves should be encouraged to drink as much good quality colostrum as possible; at least 6L during the first 24 hours after birth and preferably 4L as soon as possible with a further 2L at or before 12 hours after birth.

Research has shown short term sucking has more advantages than disadvantages on production, health and behavior of both cow and calf compared with immediate separation after birth.(4) If the calf is allowed to suck for several days there are health benefits for the cow with reduced incidence of mastitis and placental retention. The disadvantage may be increased separation stress. After removing the calf from its mother, provide milk in three or four feedings a day rather than a larger quantity twice a day.

To reduce stress when weaning, gradually decrease the amount of milk over the last week and leave the teat for another few days

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(without milk) before removing it.

Whichever method of housing is used, a dry bedding area for lying is necessary. A minimum depth of 15cm is recommended.

Group Housing

Research has shown the following welfare advantages of group housing over individual housing:

- Provides more space for calf to run and jump.
- Over the life of a cow, increased exercise, especially from an early age has been shown to improve bone development, muscle and cardiovascular systems.
- Results in calves better able to cope with unusual situations and to maintain balance more easily on slippery floors.
- Allows calves to engage in more social interactions; in natural situations calves join other calves at 1-3 weeks and calves will actively seek social contact.
- Allows calves to develop skills needed for group living through play behavior; calves housed in groups will become dominant when housed with calves raised individually.
- Reduction in labor per calf per day from 10 minutes for individual pens to 1 minute in group housing.

However, concerns over the increased potential for disease transmission, problems with cross sucking which can damage undeveloped udders or aggressive interactions when competition arises at feeding, have limited the adoption of group housing for young calves.

Recommendations for dealing with potential problems:

- Incidence of respiratory disease is reduced if groups are kept to no more than 6-8 animals. Diarrhea is less severe in smaller groups. Small groups record highest gains.
- Cleanliness, adequate ventilation and feeding management are considered more important than housing type for disease prevention.
- It is important that calves feed using a teat (nipple bucket or bottle) rather than a bucket and are allowed to suck for an adequate time after their meal to eliminate problems with cross sucking. The sucking motivation is elicited by the taste of lactose and wanes 10 minutes after a meal.
- A "calf bar" or rectangular box with "peach" teats is much easier to clean than large barrels with tubes which draw milk to the nipples. Dirty feeders can be a cause of scours especially in hot, humid weather.
- Too many calves for the number of teats increases social competition and reduces intake. Keep group size small and increase ratio of teats to calves. Check calves to make sure all have enough.
- Calves in a group should preferably be of the same age.

Individual Housing

Although individual housing may simplify feeding and disease detection, this approach is being increasingly criticized because it limits the extent to which the calf can behave naturally. Individual housing is considered the least preferable option for organic systems in that it is the most restrictive with respect to natural behaviors.

Practices which help minimize negative impacts:

- Always provide milk via a teat to satisfy the motivation to suck. Do not use buckets.
- Provide calves with an opportunity to exercise and engage in normal social behavior for some time each day.
- Outdoor hutches reduce disease and mortality compared with indoor housing but there is slower or no growth in winter months if farmers do not adjust milk volumes sufficiently.
- Position hutches to minimize environmental impacts e.g. out of wind, facing south and in shaded areas. ◆

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Nebraska dairyman applies raw milk to pastures and watches the grass grow

The following article shows the experience of one farmer in Nebraska. There are many state and federal agencies that might have different opinions on the legality of spreading undiluted raw milk on pasture without a permit, many milk buyers that prohibit the use of large quantities of milk on the farm and some insurance companies that might question the practice. Please check with all relevant agencies and companies before making any decisions about this practice that could well be a great way to manage milk surpluses without the cost of trucking the milk from the farm.

Reprinted from the website www.greenpasture.org/community/?q=node/228

An Illinois steel-company executive turned Nebraska dairyman has stumbled onto an amazingly low-cost way to grow high-quality grass – and probably even crops – on depleted soil.

Can raw milk make grass grow? More specifically, can one application of three gallons of raw milk on an acre of land produce a large amount of grass?

The answer to both questions is yes.

Call it the Nebraska Plan or call it the raw milk strategy or call it downright amazing, but the fact is Nebraska dairyman David Wetzel is producing high-quality grass by applying raw milk to his fields and a Nebraska Extension agent has confirmed the dairyman's accomplishments.

David Wetzel is not your ordinary dairyman, nor is Terry Gompert your ordinary Extension agent. Ten years ago Wetzel was winding up a five-year stint as the vice president of an Illinois steel company and felt the need to get out of the corporate rat race. At first he and his wife thought they would purchase a resort, but he then decided on a farm because he liked to work with his hands. The Wetzels bought a 320 acre farm in Page, Neb., in the northeast part of the state, and moved to the farm on New Year's Day in 2000.

"We had to figure out what to do with the farm," Wetzel said, "so we took a class from Terry Gompert." They were advised to start a grass-based dairy and that's what they did. "There's no money in farming unless you're huge," Wetzel said, or unless the farmer develops specialty products, which is what they did.
In their business, the Wetzels used the fats in the milk and the skim milk was a waste product. "We had a lot of extra skim milk and we started dumping it on our fields," Wetzel said. "At first we had a tank

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RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Organic and Raw Dairy Workshops at Northeast Organic Farming Association Summer Conference

UMass Amherst, August 13-15, 2010

The 2010 NOFA Summer Conference will feature a number of workshops on organic dairy production and grazing, as well as a raw milk symposium taking place just before the conference begins. The conference draws from all over the Northeast, providing venues for dozens of exhibitors, workshops and activities for teens and children, an afternoon fair with farm animals, live music, an auction, and an ALL-LOCAL dinner. Stay on campus in the dorms or camp in a tent under the stars.

Keynote speakers are Sally Fallon Morell, of the Weston A. Price Foundation, and Dr. Fernando Funes, of the Cuban Association of Agronomists and Foresters.

2010 Northeast Raw Milk Symposium
Friday, August 13, 9:00 AM - 12:00 noon

Open to the public, admission $20 for NOFA members, $25 for non-members

This is opportunity for raw milk farmers, consumers and advocates to come together to learn and discuss the issues around access to unpasteurized milk, and to strategize about how to work together to defend and expand our rights. There will be opportunities for dialogue with two of the leading voices in the field of raw milk, Sally Fallon Morell and Pete Kennedy. Learn more: http://www.nofamass.org/programs/organicdairy/symposium.php

Dairy Production Workshops at NOFA Summer Conference

Whole Farm Organism Dairying for the Northeast – Part One
Friday, August 13: 2:00-3:30 PM

Jack Lazor: Organic dairy farmer and owner of Butterworks Farm, grower of grain for humans & animals, & a processor of organic yogurt & Jersey cream for 35 years.

Health and wellbeing begin with mineralized, high humus soil. In this first part of a two-part workshop, we explore the relationship between good earth care and the dairy as a farm organism unto itself. Part one concentrates on soil testing, interpretation, and the addition of amendments necessary to produce healthy, mineralized forages. We will run some soil tests, so bring a soil sample if you wish.

Whole Farm Organism Dairying for the Northeast – Part Two
Friday, August 13: 4:00-5:30 PM

In this second part of this two-part workshop, we will explore dairy farm self-sufficiency; growing forages and grains in rotation for your one cow or your fifty cows. Topics for discussion will include the closed herd concept, compost and the bedded pack housing system, and on-farm milk processing.

Grazing Basics 101
Saturday, August 14: 8:00-9:30 AM

Mike Ghia: Grazing Technical Assistant with the UVM & a private farm consultant.

The basic principles of how plants grow, how to avoid overgrazing damage, what pre-grazing height to choose, how short to graze, why variable recovery periods are essential, and what the signs of overgrazing damage are, how to estimate or measure how much dry matter there is per acre, how many acres are needed, and how big the paddocks need to be. Other topics: pasture design, building lanes, fence and water systems, parasite management, and avoiding common grazing mistakes.

Health and Homeopathy for Dairy Cows
Saturday, August 14: 10:00-11:30 AM

Anne Lazor: Organic dairy farmer using a holistic approach to cow health for the last 25 years.

A brief introduction to homeopathy to familiarize those who are not familiar with this approach to health and healing. Will share experiences and insights gained from using homeopathic medicine in the care of dairy cows over the last 20 years.

TOUR: Sidehill Farm Dairy
Saturday, August 14: 1:00-2:30 PM

Amy Klippenstein & Paul Lacinski: Small-scale dairy producers, vegetable farmers, homesteaders.

Walk pastures and discuss intensive grazing, grass, manure, and fertility management, and animal health. Tour the milking facilities and discuss milking procedures, sanitation, and regulations for raw milk and processed dairy products. Tasting of raw milk and yogurt will follow. ADDRESS: 137 Beldingville Rd., Ashfield, MA 01330.

Check out the NOFA website for more details about the conference, including registration information:

http://www.nofasummerconference.org/

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Maintaining Healthy, Productive Pastures

By Neal Kinsey

What does a statement like the title above bring to mind for those who have livestock? Something like, "Pipe dream!" Or, "My pastures are already as close as they will ever be to that." Maybe even, "I wish it were possible, but it would likely be far too expensive."

Some years ago a good friend who had "beautiful" pastures wound up with blackleg in his cattle. Nothing seemed to work and his problem got worse. He had an "undeveloped" woodlot that was fenced off separately. When he opened it to the cattle they went right in and began eating there and that ended his losses from blackleg – even one animal that seemed so sick it might not be able to get to the gate finally did make it and recovered.

Which of these two areas was healthy productive pasture? In fact, neither one was. The undeveloped area solved the problem, but was not productive enough as such to sustain very many cows for any significant period of time. It just provided the "natural cure" those cows needed. When sick, most readers of this publication would likely look for something natural like herbs, plant extracts or tinctures to help solve the problem where possible, but would not expect to survive on those alone for very long.

The "developed pastures" looked good and produced more forage, but did not contain the nutritional value the cows needed to fight the disease. It was considered as productive, but was not really "healthy" in the way needed for the livestock forced to live on it.

So then, what can livestock producers do to makes the soil both healthy and productive.

One approach may work for one pasture or farm and not for another depending on the circumstances. But there are some basic considerations that need to be made by livestock farmers in order to make the best choices for their soil and their stock.

First of all, it should be noted that a healthy soil is a vibrant living soil. The soil is alive and that life needs to be encouraged. Every grower of whatever plants or crops has to feed the equivalent of one average sized cow per acre in living organism beneath the soil surface in addition to whatever is being grown or produced there per acre. The soil is the plants stomach. And as such, the life in the soil will eat at the first table. What is left over or "utilized, processed and discarded" by what lives in that soil is the available "food" for the plants striving to grow on that land.

There is a foundational principle for natural and organic production that must be considered in this regard. Feed the soil and let the soil feed the plant! How well would our natural health be without properly feeding the organisms in our stomach? The same applies to healthy, productive pastures.

It is not natural to leave the soil to itself. In the Book of Genesis Adam was told to "dress and keep" the garden. Soil was not made to do its best when left alone. To do its best, the soil must be cared for just as much as our stock needs to be provided and cared for to do its best. The soil, when just left to natural forces, actually deteriorates over time. To the extent that life survives in and on the soil actually determines how well it will produce. Without proper care the productivity of a soil goes downhill.

Soils just left alone will generally grow "something" but they must be properly managed in order to be both vibrantly healthy and extremely productive at the same time. And this type of management is only possible when it can be measured and properly evaluated. You can't manage what you can't measure. So then how do you measure in order to manage for healthy, productive soil?

One measure is the biological aspects of the soil. Some consultants advocate adding various microbes to the soil to increase soil life. The soil is alive but not always with sufficient amounts of the organisms needed to best provide for the plants growing there. But others point out that when living conditions are right for soil microbes they will be able to properly propagate and continue to provide the desired beneficial results. How does a producer manage that on their own property if they do not have access to a soil microbiologist?

Another measure is the physical structure of the soil – the amount of air and water that occupies the pore space in each soil as compared to the mineral and humus content. For the ideal healthy productive pasture, this would approximate to 45% mineral content, 5% humus, 25% air space and 25% water. Heavier soils generally tend to hold more water in relation to air and compact more easily due to trampling. Sandy soils tend to have too much air space and may dry out too quickly.

This air and water is dependant on the porosity of the soil – too much space means too much air in relation to water, and too little space means too much water in relation to the available air. The physical structure is the "house" for the microbes and other living organisms that make up the weight of that "average sized cow" that must be fed on each acre before the pasture growing there can receive the nutrients it needs to do its best. But if the soil does not already have this proper physical structure, then how can it be attained?

Once the characteristics from the amount of sand, silt and clay in a soil have been taken into account, the nutrient makeup of each soil then determines how much pore space that soil contains. In general, any soil with an overabundance of calcium will have too much air space and lose moisture more quickly. Soils with excessive potassium – most likely where large amounts of manure is continuously applied - tend to run together and keep water on the top of the soil making it more prone to runoff when bare from tillage, etc. Excessive sodium can cause similar problems. Soils with excessive magnesium tend to exhibit extreme hardening when dry, and in clay soils it makes them extremely sticky when wet and more prone to deep wide cracking when dry.

And here is the key to vibrant healthy productive pastures and vibrant healthy productive livestock. Using the laws of chemistry to correct and manage the proper amount of each soil nutrient determines the physical structure of every soil which in turn determines the quality of the environment for the life in the soil - "the house" required for the biology.

Such can be accomplished by taking soil samples properly for analysis and recommendations. However these determinations are not made based on the number of pounds of each nutrient a soil may contain. It is only determined by measuring the percent makeup of each nutrient in terms of the soils total nutrient-holding capacity. If there is an excess of one or more of the elements mentioned above there will be a deficiency of one or more of the others. This is the true meaning of balanced productive soil. Supply what is deficient to control what is excessive.

Proper interpretation and use of such information is the key to productive and healthy pastures for healthy productive animals. ◆

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RESEARCH & EDUCATION

eOrganic Plans Pasture Rule Webinars for Summer / Fall 2010

When it works, the Internet can be a wonderful tool for receiving information and networking with others across the country. Luckily, it was "wonderful" and cooperated on March 17, 2010 when the eOrganic Dairy Team held its first Webinar.

If the term "Webinar" is new to you, you're not alone. It is a fairly new term and is an emerging distance learning technique; basically it stands for "web-based seminar." Webinars (aka "webcasts" and called "farminars" by the Practical Farmers of Iowa) are basically workshops or seminars transmitted live over the Web.

The eOrganic Dairy Team has scheduled a series of Pasture Rule related Webinars for late Summer and Fall 2010. Mark your calendars for these upcoming events:

August 20, 2010, 2 pm ET. How to Calculate Pasture Dry Matter Intake on Your Organic Dairy Farm, with Sarah Flack, Sarah Flack Consulting.

September 16, 2010, 2 pm ET. Maximizing Dry Matter Intake on Your Organic Dairy Pastures, with Karen Hoffman, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

October 1, 2010, 2 pm ET. Setting Up a Grazing System on Your Organic Dairy Farm, with Cindy Daley, California State University at Chico, and Sarah Flack, Sarah Flack Consulting.

We are also planning a Webinar for November that will look at the Living Conditions provisions in the Pasture Rule, with Harriet Behar, Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES), and personnel from the USDA NOP.

To register or for more information, please visit our "Upcoming Webinars" page at http://www.extension.org/organic_production. They are free-of-charge but do require a high-speed Internet connection. And following each live Webinar, an archive of each presentation will be posted on the website listed above.

eOrganic started its Webinar series during Winter/Spring 2010. eOrganic is an online community of more than 600 ag service providers and farmers who are developing science-, experience-, and regulation-based certified organic articles, videos and other content—including Webinars--at eXtension.org.

The eOrganic Dairy Team's first Webinar focused on the newly released Access to Pasture Rule, with speaker Dr. Kerry Smith of the USDA National Organic Program. Dr. Smith gave an overview of the Rule and responded to questions from the Webinar's virtual participants. You can see an archive of Dr. Smith's presentation at http://www.extension.org/article/26133. More than 100 farmers and ag service providers from 31 U.S. states and 2 Canadian provinces participated in the Webinar. We also broadcast it live at the Western Regional Grazing Conference in Chico, California organized by the Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance and Dr. Cindy Daley at CA State University at Chico. Of the 39 farmers and others who attended the session at the conference, 83% said the Webinar improved their understanding of the topic addressed, and 73% intended to apply their knowledge in their work on the farm or with farmers. We also received lots of comments from participants which have been helpful in planning future articles, videos and Webinars.

If you have any questions about eOrganic or our Webinar series, please contact Deb Heleba, eOrganic Dairy Team Coordinator, at debra.heleba@uvm.edu or 802.656.4046. ◆

ANNUAL FIELD DAYS

NODPA's 10th Annual Field Days

October 7th and 8th, 2010

Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA)

Common Ground Fairground and Educational Center

294 Crosby Brook Road
Unity ME 04988

The 10th Annual NODPA Field Days moves to the autumn this year and will be held October 7th and 8th in Unity, Maine at the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association's (MOFGA) Education Center and Common Ground Fairgrounds.

In order to whet everyone's appetite for a terrific event, we've included the program in the centerfold of this newsletter!

We are excited to welcome our keynote speaker, Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program. Other speakers include Lawrence Andres, Dr. Heather Darby and an on-farm renewable energy panel of producers and resource people discussing various conservation and renewable energy enterprises and practices.

There are a couple of new features this year:

- Thursday afternoon will spotlight renewable energy projects, strategies and opportunities with concurrent demonstrations, workshops and displays.
- Thursday evening during the social hour and Friday morning we will be showing the documentary film, 'What's Organic about Organic?'
- Camping at the MOFGA Common Ground Fairgrounds will be allowed at no charge.
- Grant assistance for attending Field Days: Thanks to a grant from Horizon Organic, NODPA can assist farmers with some costs associated with attending Field Days including travel, relief milkers and other costs associated with leaving the farm.

Sponsors, supporters and tradeshow participants are still welcome! For new contributors and tradeshow folks, your support will be noted in the Field Days Brochure, in the September NODPA News and in e-newsletters before and after the event. Please email Nora Owens (noraowens@comcast.net) or call her, 413-772-0444, with questions or to request further information. The deadline for getting listed in the brochure is August 1st. **SCHEDULE ON NEXT PAGE >**

Featured Speakers

Keynote speaker: Miles McEvoy

Miles McEvoy was appointed by USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack to serve as the Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program (NOP) in September, 2009. Prior to assuming this position, Miles McEvoy's 20-year career has led the development of the Washington State Department of Agriculture's Organic Food Program, which was the first state program to receive ISO Guide 65 accreditation (1999) and IFOAM accreditation (2004). In 1993-1995 he was the founding Director of The Food Alliance, a program that blends sustainable farming practices and social welfare components into an eco-label program, and helped establish the National Association of State Organic Programs (NASOP) in 1998.

Lawrence Andres, organic dairy farmer, owner and president of Harmony Organic Processing, Ontario, Canada

Mr. Andres was born in Canada but was raised and educated in Switzerland. Upon his return Ontario in 1978, he purchased a dairy farm and immediately converted it to organic production making it the first organic dairy farm in Canada. He founded the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario and initiated the EFAO short courses in ecological agriculture. His example and his teachings have inspired farmers in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. He also started Harmony Organic Dairy which processes fluid milk in returnable glass bottles, cartons and bags in a bio-regional market (www.harmonyorganic.on.ca).

Directions:

From I-95 North (Waterville, ME), Take 95 North to Exit 133 and merge onto US 201 South toward Fairfield, ME. Turn left onto ME 139. Take Route 139 East across the Kennebec River in Fairfield, through Benton and all the way to Unity Village. Turn left at the blinking light in Unity onto Route 202. Turn right onto Depot Street. Turn right onto Route 220 and look for Crosby Brook Road on the right. Turn right onto Crosby Brook Road and follow it around until you see the entrance to MOFGA on the left. **For directions other than from I-95**, visit MOFGA's website: www.mofga.org.

Accommodations:

There are many places to stay in the region but please keep in mind that Field Days are being held just before the Columbus Day holiday weekend and during the 'leaf-peeping' season, so planning ahead will be important. For extensive lodging options in the area, please visit MOFGA's website, www.mofga.org. Participants are welcome to camp at the fairgrounds at no charge, and will have access to bathrooms and running water but no shower facilities.

ANNUAL FIELD DAYS

FIELD DAYS SCHEDULE

Thursday, October 7th

NOON - 1 PM: Registration: MOFGA's Common Ground Fairgrounds, 294 Crosby Brook Road, Unity, ME 04988

1 - 4 PM: Renewable Energy on the Farm: Projects, Strategies and Opportunities
Concurrent demonstrations, workshops, displays at the Common Ground Fairgrounds and area greenhouse and farm tours:

- Methane Digester Technology for smaller farms: A demonstration model of the methane extraction process will be on display.
- MOFGA Fairgrounds and Education Center Tour: A tour of cutting-edge renewable energy projects that use solar panels, a wind turbine, biodiesel and energy efficiency strategies that can be duplicated on the farm.
- Bull Ridge Farm Oilseed Production and Processing Operation: Henry Perkins, NODPA President, presents a video on his highly successful sunflower oil enterprise.
- Half Moon Gardens Greenhouse Tour of the Solar Thermal System Project: Water heating technology that can be adapted to a dairy operation.
- Farm Energy Audits and Resources available to Farmers: A slideshow on the Grassland Farm Energy Audit, and government programs and resources available through USDA Rural Development and other federal, state and local organizations.
- Beaver Ridge Farm 4.5 MW Wind Farm, Freedom, ME: visit this former organic dairy farm and view this wind turbine project.
- Displays and Demonstrations: NODPA's members will bring displays, pictures and provide demonstrations of energy efficient or renewable energy projects they have created and/or successfully utilized on their farms.

4:00 - 10:00 PM: Dinner and NODPA's Annual Meeting at Common Ground Fairgrounds

- **4:00 – 5:30** Social Hour and Trade Show with light refreshments and a viewing of the documentary 'What's Organic about Organic' (library)
- **5:30 – 7:00** Dinner (menu details coming soon)
- **7:00 – 7:45** Keynote Speaker, Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program, USDA
- **8:00 – 8:30 NODPA Annual Meeting:**
  - Welcome from Henry Perkins, NODPA President
  - NODPA Year in Review, Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director
  - Reports from the regions and a FOOD Farmers update
- **8:30 – 9:30** Setting Priorities for 2011: open to the whole group

Friday, October 8th

6:30 – 9:00 AM: Continental Breakfast, Tradeshow, 'What's Organic about Organic?' documentary film screening – Main Hall

7:00 – 9:00 AM: Producer-Only Meeting – Library

9:00 – 10:45 AM: Access to Pasture Rule Q & A Session: Miles McEvoy

10:15 – 10:30 AM: Milk Break: refreshments, tradeshow

10:30 AM – NOON: Supply Management: The Canadian Quota model, the US Quota model, Free Market model: presentations and panel discussion

- Lawrence Andres, organic dairy farmer, owner and president of Harmony Organic Processing, Ontario, Canada
- Additional speakers to be announced shortly

NOON – 1:00 PM: Lunch and Door Prize Drawings; Tradeshow

1:00 – 2:00 PM: Calf and Cow Care: nurse cows, calf rearing and cow comfort

- Lawrence Andres, organic dairy farmer, owner and president of Harmony Organic Processing, Ontario, Canada

2:00 – 3:15 PM: What's in Your Farm's Energy Tool Room?

Whether energy is a target product or byproduct, this panel discussion will address the challenges and opportunities faced by farmers as they look at their potential energy assets. Moderator: Mary Ann Hayes, executive director, Maine Rural Partners

Panel members:

- Jeff Bragg, Rainbow Valley Farm, Sidney, ME: methane digester technology for the smaller scale farm
- Anne Weston and Lance Gatcomb, Weston Acres Farm, Litchfield, ME: Solar thermal and on-demand propane water heating system and variable speed vacuum pump
- Henry Perkins, Bull Ridge Farm, Albion, ME: on-farm energy production with oilseed production and processing
- Mick Womersley, Unity College, Unity, ME: Assessing wind resources and wind turbine investments
- Andrew Plant, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Aroostook County, ME: Rotational crops for farm energy production and processing, and grass energy crops for solid biofuels

3:15 – 3:30 PM: Milk Break: light refreshments

3:30 – 4:30 PM: Renewable Energy and the production of small grains, oil seed and heritage seed

- Heather Darby, Agronomist and Nutrient Management Specialist, University of Vermont Extension

4:30 PM: Meeting ends

REGISTRATION

NODPA's 10th ANNUAL FIELD DAYS & PRODUCER MEETING & DINNER
MOFGA's Common Ground Fairgrounds
Unity, Maine | October 7 & 8, 2010

Cost		Qty.	Total
	Registration: Thursday & Friday		
Free	Organic dairy & transitioning producers & families		
$30	All who aren't organic dairy producers		
	Meals		
$25	Thurs. Dinner/person (under 11, half price)		
Free	Transitioning Farm Member, Thursday evening dinner		
$5	Friday breakfast (7:30-9 am)		
$10	Friday lunch (under 11, half price)		
$35	NODPA News Subscription (6 issues)		
	Total amount enclosed:		

NODPA has grant funding available to assist producers with the cost of attending the Field Days. Call 413-772-0444 for more info.

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Make checks payable to NODPA. Mail: NODPA c/o Ed Maltby, 30 Keets Rd., Deerfield, MA 01342.
Email: ednodpa@comcast.net
Phone: 413-772-0444; Fax: 866-554-9483
Pay by credit card. Circle type: Master Card • Visa

Cardholder Name: _____

Billing Address: _____

_____

Card #: _____

Expiration date: _____ Security Code: _____

SPONSORS

Major Sponsors:

Horizon Organic

Organic Cow

MOFGA

Sponsors:

Lakeview Organic Grain

Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative

American Organic Seed

Supporters:

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North American Kelp

NOFA-VT

River Valley Fencing

Farm Energy Partners, a part of Maine Rural Partners

RMA

Unity College

Product and Food Donations:

Horizon Organic

Organic Valley

American Organic Seed

Farm Energy Partners
a network of Maine Rural Partners

Farm Energy Partners receives major support from RMA

What's in your farm's energy tool room?

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nologies often featuring high up-front capital costs factored against low milk prices. Farm Energy Partners has been thinking collaboratively about various challenges and opportunities for 4 years now and offer the following suggestions:

1. First, we recommend that each farm start with an energy audit to find out how to use less energy before exploring new energy generating opportunities. Many states have building audit programs and incentive programs in place for investing in energy-saving technologies (such as Efficiency Maine) and NRCS is rolling out landscape level (including equipment management and cropping practices) energy audits as well as building audits to EQIP producers. Scoping level audits will provide payback period estimates to help prioritize the most compelling investments. The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) can often pay 25% of the cost of implementing efficiency recommendations but the application process can be challenging for busy farmers. Check out the Grassland Farm Energy Audit Workshop Presentation at www.mainerural.org for common small dairy audit recommendations.

2. Next, once you have taken stock of your energy usage and efficiency opportunities, we suggest that each farm consider its business and lifestyle plans and evaluate whether on-farm energy is: (a) a cost factor, (b) an income generating opportunity, (c) a lifestyle/philosophical consideration, or (d) any combination of the above. You could find yourself in a new business and should either embrace the opportunity or avoid the distraction.

3. Once farm objectives are at least somewhat clear, consider: (a) whether you have the time, interest and potential upfront investment capital available to invest in learning about and trying something new, and (b) whether you have access to affordable and reliable technical support.

   If your answer is "no" to either of the questions in #3, you may just want to hold back and wait for the innovators to test the new ideas and implement the proven winners once a track record is more firmly established.

4. If your answer is "yes," there are a lot of exciting opportunities to explore. It's time to look at your particular situation and evaluate what you have for energy assets (tools) and learn all you can about what others have been doing. Farm Energy Partners welcomes members from all states, so sign up at www.mainerural.org. Membership is free.

Henry Perkins shows RMA Community Outreach Program Director Bill Buchanan his sunflower processing set up at Bull Ridge Farm in October 2009.

Anne Weston and Lance Gatcomb thanking Farm Energy Partners for selecting them as a solar thermal demonstration site in October 2009.

We recognize that dairy farmers are both very busy and constantly innovating. The clever solutions invented on every farm are often brilliant and generally hard to find. That's why Farm Energy Partners, with support from the USDA Risk Management Agency's Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program, is building an on-line searchable database and farmer-to-farmer exchange center to help farmers share their experiences with energy-related projects, both good and bad.

Sign up to receive the Harvesting Clean Energy newsletter at www.mainerural.org to find out how to access this service when

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

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it goes live this fall. We also want to know: (1) what you most want to learn, and (2) if you have a story to share with your fellow farmers. We'll help you get it written up and entered. Email us at cleanenergy@mainerural.org or call 207-873-2108.

Those attending Friday's afternoon session at NODPA Field Days on October 8th will learn about five distinct energy innovations that may be relevant for small organic dairy farms. Farmers and applied technology educators from Farm Energy Partners will share their experiences with using wind, solar, manure, oilseeds and grass in new ways. Each will share a story of an energy innovation journey, many with surprise twists and turns – here's an idea of what you will learn from 3 professional dairy farmers and 2 applied educators working closely with farmers and community developers to achieve their goals:

A photo of the Woods End Labs/Rainbow Valley Farm Methane Digester Demonstration that will be at the 2010 NODPA Field Days.

- Jeff Bragg of Rainbow Valley Farm, a certified organic dairy farm in Sidney, will share his journey to develop a working methane digester for smaller farms. This is a process that is already in its 5th year. Jeff has been working with Will Brinton of Woods End Laboratories of Mt. Vernon, Maine since early 2008. A demonstration model of the methane digester has been tested and will be on display during the Field Days. Come check it out on Thursday!

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Energy Panel

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- Anne Weston and Lance Gatcomb of Weston Acres Farm in Litchfield will share their impressive before-and-after change in energy costs for water heating and milk harvesting after two recent investments. Last year, Anne and Lance installed a variable speed vacuum pump and replaced an old electric water heater with a solar thermal and on-demand propane water heating system.
- Henry Perkins of Bull Ridge Farm in Albion will share his experience and advice regarding organic canola, sunflower and soybean oil production, processing and marketing. Henry's search for on-farm energy production led him to a new food crop — his organic sunflower oil sold for $5/pint at the Common Ground Fair last fall.
- Mick Womersley of Unity College will explain practical ways to assess your wind resource and take prudent steps to invest in a wind turbine that fits your values, wind resource and pocketbook.
- Andrew Plant of Aroostook County UMaine Cooperative Extension will share his recent research. He is exploring the use of rotation crops for farm energy production and processing, as well as using agricultural residues and dedicated grass energy crops as solid biofuels for commercial, residential, and on-farm thermal and combined heat and power energy markets.

On Thursday, along with getting a close-hand look and explanation of the Rainbow Valley/Woods End demonstration methane digester, attendees will be able to visit the nearby 4.5 MW Beaver Ridge Wind Farm in Freedom and hear from retired organic dairy farmer Ron Price about how these three grid-scale turbines interface with his ongoing farming business on the same property. Ron will also share challenges any farmer should be aware of in dealing with neighbor concerns and municipal impacts of wind turbine installations. This is not to be missed, even if you don't envision wind as a resource on your farm.

Mary Ann Hayes, Executive Director for Maine Rural Partners

So register for Field Days and remember to sign up for the Harvesting Clean Energy Newsletter at www.mainerural.org. We all look forward to seeing you in Unity in October!

Panelist Bios:

Mary Ann Hayes, panel moderator, has served as executive director of Maine Rural Partners since 2004. Perhaps more significantly, she has helped run her partner Larry Ward's conventional dairy operation just 3 miles from MOFGA's Common Ground Education Center for the last 20 years. Mary Ann has been active in agricultural advocacy and community development at the state, regional and local levels and has served on the Northeast SARE Administrative Council. MRP's Farm Energy Partners network has been providing coordinated energy efficiency and renewable advice to Maine farmers since 2007 to reduce energy usage, improve the environment and strengthen the bottom line. The network's goal is to reach 100% Maine farm energy self-reliance.

Jeff Bragg grew up on Rainbow Valley Farm in Sidney, Maine, migrating to employee status in 1980, partner status in 1987 and becoming the lead proprietor in 1998. Jeff and Kathy have been working throughout this time with Bragg family members to

accomplish an intergenerational transfer that is nearing completion. Rainbow Valley Farm is an innovative enterprise, combining organic wholesale milk sales with a vegetable farmstand operation. Jeff and Kathy have utilized Maine's Farms for the Future program, cooperated on several research projects with UMaine Cooperative Extension and received a Maine Technology Institute grant to explore innovative digester technologies that might work on smaller livestock farms.

Andrew Plant is an Assistant Professor of Extension working in agriculture for Aroostook County, Maine. Andrew has been working on alternative crops and energy, promoting and conducting research on liquid and solid biofuels for Maine farmers. His recent research has been exploring the use of rotation crops for farm energy production and processing, as well as using agricultural residues and dedicated grass energy crops as solid biofuels for commercial, residential, and on-farm thermal and combined heat and power energy markets. Grass pellets represent Aroostook County's #1 economic growth sector potential, according to a recent Mobilize Maine analysis.

Mick Womersley, Associate Professor of Human Ecology at Unity College, works just three miles from the MOFGA Common Ground Education Center. Unity College recently began a service learning program in community wind assessment. In cooperation with Maine Rural Partners, Efficiency Maine and others, Mick provides basic wind assessment services free of charge to Maine communities and farmers, while training students in anemometry and community wind site planning as part of a degree in renewable energy and energy efficiency management called Sustainable Design and Technology. Mick is passionate about increasing the public wind resource data set to reduce the costs and risk of specific site-based feasibility testing. His measurements of the wind resource at the State Correctional Facility in Charleston, Maine are very helpful information for farmers in that region. Mick will be installing an anemometer tower at the Blue Ribbon Farm sheep, hay and vegetable farm in Mercer, Maine beginning in July. He raises sheep and other livestock at his home in Jackson, Maine.

Henry Perkins is NODPA Board Chair and the owner of Bull Ridge Farm, an organic dairy and oilseed crop farm in Albion, Maine. Henry has been doing research and development of a wide range of organic grain and oilseed-based energy crops over the last decade, including wheat, spelt, triticale, winter rye, soy, sunflowers and canola. He knows how to maximize the comparative human food, dairy feed and energy value of his crops and has developed an innovative oilseed processing system at his farm.

Anne Weston and Lance Gatcomb are the owners of the Weston Farm in Litchfield, which has been in Anne's family for generations. Anne was the first farmer to sign up to participate in a Conservation Innovation Grant program of the Kennebec County Soil & Water Conservation District in 2008 to receive an energy audit and qualify for matching incentives to implement results. A propane fired water heater and variable speed vacuum pump have cut electric bills on the farm dramatically. Given the serious commitment to follow-through demonstrated by Anne and Lance, the Weston Farm was selected as a Farm Energy Partners solar thermal demonstration site in 2009. The solar water heating system was installed as a team effort by Lance, Augusta Fuels and KCSWCD staff in August 2009 and has performed far beyond expectations. ◆

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

2010 Northeast Animal-Power Field Days

Friday, October 15th to Sunday, October 17th
Tunbridge Fairgrounds, Tunbridge, VT 05077

Theme: 'Connecting to the Broad Community of Interest in Draft-Animal Power'
Saturday Keynote Speaker: Carl Russell; "Continuity: Passing on Skills"
Event Feature Farmer: Paul Birdsall

This three-day trade fair and conference will present resources for farmers, loggers, and forest landowners pursuing the use of draft animals as part of their land-based livelihoods.

The 2010 NEAPFD is a full weekend of workshops, panel discussions, draft animal presentations, and equipment demonstrations that will provide enough inspiration and information to encourage a full year of worthy endeavors. The program features presenters who put into practice skills and philosophies that advance the initiative of using draft animals on a daily basis and include Les Barden from NH, Jay Bailey form VT, Howard Van Ord from PA, and Sam Rich from CT, to name a few.

Friday, October 15th will feature field and forest working demonstrations

at Howevale Farm, adjacent to the Tunbridge Fairgrounds. Saturday, October 16th will focus on workshops and draft animal presentations, resource exhibitors, local food vendors, an equipment swap-meet, and networking sessions throughout the Fairgrounds. Sunday, October 17th (FREE Admission Day), will start with a Meet-The-Teamsters Breakfast, followed by opportunities for one-on-one time with teamsters and equipment dealers.

The 4th Annual NEAPFD will also feature the launch of the new membership organization, Draft Animal-Power Network, which will provide year-round educational and networking opportunities to interested individuals throughout the Northeast. Membership meeting is on Sunday.

Please Volunteer! Your volunteer time can earn you free admission, free meals, and a free T-shirt and it is a great way to meet others. To register for the event, become a sponsor, advertiser, exhibitor/vendor, or to join the Draft Animal-Power Network, please visit our website www.animalpowerfielddays.org , email: info@animalpowerfielddays.org, or call: 802-234-5524. ◆

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Supreme Court Rules On GE-Alfalfa - Win for consumers and farmers or Monsanto?

On Monday, June 21st, the Supreme Court ruled that a lower court decision to prohibit the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) from allowing more plantings of Monsanto's genetically engineered Round-up Ready alfalfa (RRA) had to be revisited. The 7-1 decision issued by the Supreme Court was on the appeal of the Center for Food Safety's (CFS) successful suit, (Monsanto v. Geertson Seed Farms) which resulted in a ban on GMO alfalfa.

The High Court ruled in favor of Monsanto by reversing an injunction that was part of the lower court's decision. The Court set aside the injunction because it found it to be overkill – the previous court order had already sufficiently stopped the planting.

It also ruled that the ban on GMO alfalfa remains intact, and that the planting and sale of GMO alfalfa remains illegal. No further plantings will happen until USDA completes an Environmental Impact Statement, which will include an evaluation of GE contamination from both an environmental and economic perspective. This will take several months and probably will not be completed until Spring.

USDA can then decide to de-regulate GE Alfalfa and opponents to de-regulation will still have the ability to sue if they feel the decision is improper.

The High Court did not rule on several arguments presented by Monsanto about the application of federal environmental law. As a result, they did not make any ruling that could have been hurtful to National Environmental Policy Act or any other environmental laws. In addition, the Court's opinion supported the Center for Food Safety's argument that gene flow is a serious environmental and economic threat. This means that genetic contamination from GMOs can still be considered harmful under the law, both from an environmental and economic perspective.

In practical terms, it means that Justice John Paul Stevens' eloquent dissent, supporting a continuing injunction, concludes: "In front of it was strong evidence that RRA poses a serious threat to the environment and to American business, and that limits on RRA deregulation might not be followed or enforced -- and that even if they were, the newly engineered gene might nevertheless spread to other crops. Confronted with those disconcerting submissions, with APHIS's [USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's] unlawful deregulation decision, with a group of farmers who had staked their livelihoods on APHIS's decision, and with a federal statue that prizes informed decision-making on matters that seriously affect the environment, the court did the best it could. In my view, the District Court was well within its discretion to order the remedy that the Court now reverses. Accordingly, I respectfully dissent."

So, what is the win for farmers and consumers?

1. USDA must still complete the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS),
2. The ban on GMO Alfalfa is intact for the time being
3. GE Crops must be evaluated under the National Environmental Policy Act for their economic and environmental impact before they are de-regulated
4. Gene transfer does have serious environmental and economic impacts to farmers and consumers

The fight against GMOs in our food and agriculture is a long one, with long odds in favor of Monsanto's money and influence. The highest court has evened the playing field. ◆

This article borrows heavily from articles and comments by Andy Kimbrell, Center for Food Safety and Liana Hoodes, National Organic Coalition. For more details go to: www.truefoodnow.org, specifically link to the Huffington Post blog.

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance Producer Milk Check Assignment Form

I, _____ (please print name on your milk check)

request that _____ (name of company that sends your milk check)

deduct the sum of :

_____ $0.02 per hundredweight to support the work of NODPA

_____ $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.

Milk handlers please send payments to:

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA), Ed Maltby, NODPA Coordinator, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342

Producer signature: _____ Date: _____

Producer number/ member no: _____ E-mail:_____

Number of milking cows: _____ Tel #:_____

Certifying Agency: _____

Farm Address: (please print) _____

Producers—please send this to NODPA, Attn Ed Maltby, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342, so we can track who has signed up and forward this form to the milk handler. Thank you.

Subscribe to the NODPA News and support NODPA!

By becoming a subscriber you will receive 6 copies of the NODPA News and help support the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance. NODPA depends on your contributions and donations. If you enjoy the bi-monthly NODPA News; subscribe to the Odairy Listserv (ODAIRY-subscribe@yahoogroups.com); visit our web page (www.nodpa.com) or benefit from farmer representation with the NOP and processors that NODPA provides, please show your support by making a generous contribution to our efforts.

Note that if you sign up for the NODPA Voluntary Organic Milk Check-Off, you will be automatically signed up as a NODPA News subscriber.

_____ $35 to cover an annual subscription to NODPA news

_____ $50 to become an Associate member (open to all)

_____ $100 to become a supporter of NODPA

_____ $150 to become a Business Member

_____ $300 to $500 to become a Friend

_____ $500 to $1,000 to become a Patron

_____ $1,000+ to become a Benefactor

Name: _____ Farm Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Date: _____ Are you a certified organic dairy producer? YES NO

Number of milking cows _____ Milk buyer _____

Are you transitioning to organic? YES NO If yes, anticipated date of certification: _____

Please mail this form with a check to: Ed Maltby, 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342, or by fax: 866-554-9483 or by email to ednodpa@comcast.net. Please make your check payable to: NODPA

Credit card: Master Card Visa Card #: _____

Name on Card: _____ Expiration Date: __ __ 201__ Security Code on Card: _____

NET UPDATE

Recent ODAIRY Discussions

By Liz Bawden, NODPA News co-Editor, NODPA Producer Representative

My apologies for a rather significant error in the last NODPA News [May 2010, Vol 10, Issue 3]. In discussing treating a cow for potassium deficiency, it was printed that a Fleet enema should be given in a bottle of dextrose or saline. The use of a Fleet enema IV is for PHOSPHOROUS, not potassium deficiency.

Last month began with a discussion about the use of nurse cows. One farmer shared some of his method -- he selected easy milkers as nurse cows, put three to four calves on each one, and allowed time for them to bond. Then he put them out in their own pasture with other nurse cows with calves of the same age. He suggested that a farm with a wide calving window would need multiple pastures, since older calves are more aggressive and will go to the new nurse cows, depriving the younger calves of milk. Another farmer shared her strategies -- she runs the nurse cows with the milking herd, then separates the nurse cows out at milking time into pens where the claves are waiting. She felt that this helped weaning time to be less stressful. Another farmer agreed that the calves look great raised in this system, but added that it was important for nurse cows (generally high somatic cows) to be tested for Johnnes' disease. A helpful vet suggested that you can use cows with contagious mastitis (Strep ag or Staph aureus) as nurse cows since these pathogens are not transmitted by ingestion. It takes a cow out of the milking string, but still allows her to be productive. Several producers said they have tried, or are thinking of trying, a nurse cow system for calf raising to avoid problems with scours. It was recommended that the vaccine 'Scourguard 4 KC' be given a week before dry-off, and then again 2 to 4 weeks before freshening the first year, after that just annually before dry-off.

A farmer asked for insight into the behavior of his cows as they refuse their high-energy (low-protein) grain when they are on high protein, lush pasture. We have probably all scratched our heads over this --- for if cows can balance what they need, why don't they crave the extra energy in a low protein grain mix? It was suggested by several producers that it's the lack of fiber that we need to address -- so offer dry hay. One producer suggested pouring some molasses on the hay as an energy supplement at the same time. One researcher summed it up as combination of factors at this time of year: they like pasture best, they would like some hay, they are really full, they may not feel like they need the energy. But this will pass, and they will eventually want the grain.

As producers examine the new pasture rule as it applies to their operation, it was clear to many that they did not "get pasture without the paperwork". The new record-keeping requirements took many by surprise. Some certifiers shared their ideas of getting the forms and paperwork to be complete and thorough, but not burdensome for producers. Some certifiers have been gathering this data on their farms already, so it won't be so much of a change; other certifiers have not been requiring the dry matter calculations, so this will be a new part of the inspections this year.

There was a long thread of discussion around the inconsistency in allowing substances for organic use, especially where the OMRI list fits in. A producer may generally feel safe using a product listed on the OMRI list; although there are many allowable products that are not included on the list because their company has not paid the fee to have them listed. Those products must be reviewed by the certifier. There were many long and interesting posts about the history of the OMRI list and the review process. But most of the posts

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Web Sponsorship Advertising Now Available on NODPA.COM

Support NODPA's Work On Behalf Of Organic Dairy Farmers. Take Advantage Of This Opportunity NOW!

At the request of advertisers, NODPA is now exploring the placement of web sponsorship advertising on selected pages of the NODPA web site.

The ads will be displayed on the 10 pages of the web site which receive the most traffic. There are around 3,000 visits to the NODPA site each month, and there are between 2.5 and 3 pages per visit.

Each ad will link to another page on the web site where a longer message of up to 200 words can be displayed.

The cost of our sponsorship ads: $125 per month for display-ready ads. Those without display-ready ads will be charged an additional $50.

Be one of the first to take advantage of this opportunity to reach a committed farming membership while supporting an organization that courageously advocates for organic farmers.

Go to the following web page for more information:

http://www.nodpa.com/web_ads.shtml

Subscribing to ODairy:

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

To sign up for the Odairy listserv, go to:

http://www.nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml

Calendar

July 22, 2010
Highfields Composting 101 Workshop
Highfields Compost Demonstration and Research Site, Hardwick, VT
9 am – 3:30 pm. This workshop involves classroom, hands-on and demonstration components covering recipe development, feedstock mixing, pile formation, monitoring, management, and site develop¬ment. CONTACT: June, 802-472-5138 x203, or june@highfieldscomposting.org,

July 30, 2010
Achieving and calculating 30% dry matter intake from grazing and producing high quality feed crops.
Dan and Darlene Coehoorn, Rosendale, WI 54974
1-4:30 PM. This field day will discuss how to manage both fields and pastures to produce feed for the organic dairy herd and will include a short description on how to calculate dry matter intake from grazing for the various ruminants on your farm. Contact Kristin Jurcek 920-342-9504, MOSES registration.

July 31, 2010
Introduction to Pasture Management: Using Ruminants to Improve Pasture
1:00pm - 4:00pm. Livestock expert Sarah Flack will cover the fundamentals of setting up a new grazing system for ruminants - or improving an existing one. Topics include plant species, grazing methods, fence, water systems, pasture design and layout, paddock size, and acreage. Cosponsored by the VT Grass Farmers Association. $10 for NOFA-VT and VGFA members, $15 non-members. Contact: NOFA-VT, info@nofavt.org Phone: 802-434-4122

August 8, 2010, Biochar Grower Gathering with David Yarrow
Eagle's Flight Farm, Orwell, VT
Biochar is the key to a new carbon-negative strategy to sequester carbon, create sustainable soil fertility, grow nutrient-dense crops, produce renewable biofuels, and reverse global climate change.This gathering will teach growers simple methods to acquire biochar and incorporate it in soil. Contact Ron Slabaugh, 802-948-2840.

August 12-13, 2010
Midsummer Veterinary Conference on Sustainable Agriculture
Champaign, Illinois
This conference will provide valuable, science-based information to veterinarians serving clients that produce and market natural and organic food animals. The conference is open to any veterinarian, veterinary student, or veterinary graduate student looking for an open exchange of information regarding sustainable, organic agricultural principles. Contact: infocenter@mvc-sa.com or visit the following website: www.mvc-sa.com .

August 13-15, 2010
NOFA Mass Summer Conference, UMass Campus, Amherst MA
Featuring keynote speakers Sally Fallon Morell, Community activist and Nourishing Traditions author and Fernando Funes, considered the father of the Cuban organic agricultural movement and author of Farming Like We're Here to Stay'. Contact NOFA/Mass: Phone: 978-355-2853, Email: nofa@nofamass.org, website: www.nofasummerconference.org .

August 24, 2010
Solar Energy Field Day
Twin Oaks Organic Dairy, 3185 NYS Rt. 13. Truxton, NY 13158
10 am - Noon. Bob, Rick and Kathie Arnold worked wth Triangle Electrical Systems of Plattsburgh, NY to install their 27.6-kilowatt PV (solar electric) system. The system was sized to produce 107% of the annual electrical energy needs at Twin Oaks' main farmstead. Assistance from The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the USDA helped to reduce the cost of the four large arrays that are on two axis trackers. Co-sponsored by the Cornell Small Farms Energy Work Team and the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York. Free. Refreshments will be provided. To register, contact Violet Stone at 607-255-9227 or vws7@cornell.edu.

August 28, 2010: Transition to Organic Field Crops: Corn, Beans & Small Grains, Sutherland, IA
1:00-4:00 pm. Transitioning to organic row crop and small grain production will be discussed on Paul Mugge's organic farm. Paul has been monitoring his various production practices for many years and will discuss the use of underseeded clovers in small grains, growing of canola, and disease resistant soybean varieties. Paul has also planted Prairie Buffer Strips and will discuss this beneficial insect habitat and how it provides some control of soybean aphids. We will also discuss the requirements for transitioning to organic. Contact PFI at info@practicalfarmers.org. Hosted in joint partnership, by MOSES and Practical Farmers of Iowa.

September 10, 2010: Organic Field Crops: Corn, Beans, Small Grains & Alfalfa/Grass Hay, Maple Park, IL
1:00 – 4:00 pm Dave and Mary Campbell have experimented over the years and found methods for controlling Canada thistle as well as problem insects. A representative of Midwest Bio Ag will discuss how the balance of soil health works not only to produce good yields, but also helps with weed and pest control. There will also be discussion of programs within NRCS that offer farmers cost share incentives to incorporate these organically approved practices. Contact MOSES at 715-778-5775 or angie@mosesorganic.org.

September 14, 2010
Animal Health and Pasture Tour, Sylvan Meadows Farm, Viroqua, WI
1:00-4:00 pm. Pasture Walk with National Speaker Jerry Brunetti, founder of Agri-Dynamics and ag consultant. Jerry will present an overview of the strategies and tools available for successful holistic herd health management in your pasture systems. Call 608-637-5480 to register or for more information.

September 20, 2010, Organic No-Till Soybeans Demonstration, Sparta, WI
11:00 am – 2:00 pm. At this field day we will review how the various methods of seeding worked this season in a soybean field of rolled rye mulch (an organic no-

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Raw Milk on Pasture

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and drove it up and down the fields with the spout open. Later we borrowed a neighbor's sprayer."

Sometime in the winter of 2002 they had arranged to have some soil samples taken by a fertilizer company and on the day company employees arrived to do the sampling, it was 15 below zero. To their astonishment they discovered the probe went right into the soil in the fields where raw milk had been applied. In other fields the probe would not penetrate at all.

"I didn't realize what we had," Wetzel said. "I had an inkling something was going on and I thought it was probably the right thing to do." For a number of years he continued to apply the milk the same way he had been doing, but in recent years he has had a local fertilizer company spray a mixture that includes liquid molasses and liquid fish, as well as raw milk. In addition he spreads 100 to 200 pounds of lime each year.

Gompert, the extension agent that suggested Wetzel start a grass-based dairy, had always been nearby – literally. The two are neighbors and talk frequently. It was in 2005 that Gompert, with the help of university soils specialist Charles Shapiro and weed specialist Stevan Kenzevic, conducted a test to determine the effectiveness of what Wetzel had been doing.

That the raw milk had a big impact on the pasture was never in doubt, according to Gompert. "You could see by both the color and the volume of the grass that there was a big increase in production." In the test the raw milk was sprayed on at four different rates – 3, 5, 10 and 20 gallons per acre – on four separate tracts of land. At the 3-gallon rate 17 gallons of water were mixed with the milk, while the 20-gallon rate was straight milk. Surprisingly the test showed no difference between the 3-, 5-, 10- and 20-gallon rates.

The test began with the spraying of the milk in mid-May, with mid-April being a reasonable target date here in central Missouri. Forty-five days later the 16 plots were clipped and an extra 1200 pounds of grass on a dry matter basis were shown to have been grown on the treated versus non-treated land. That's phenomenal, but possibly even more amazing is the fact the porosity of the soil – that is, the ability to absorb water and air – was found to have doubled.

So what's going on? Gompert and Wetzel are both convinced what we have here is microbial action. "When raw milk is applied to land that has been abused, it feeds what is left of the microbes, plus it introduces microbes to the soil," Wetzel explained, adding that "In my calculations it is much more profitable (to put milk on his pastures) than to sell to any co-op for the price they are paying."

Wetzel's Observations

Wetzel has been applying raw milk to his fields for 10 years, and during that time has made the following observations:

- Raw milk can be sprayed on the ground or the grass; either will work.
- Spraying milk on land causes grasshoppers to disappear. The theory is that insects do not bother healthy plants, which are defined by how much sugar is in the plants. Insects (including grasshoppers) do not have a pancreas so they cannot process sugar. Milk is a wonderful source of sugar and the grasshoppers cannot handle the sugar. They die or leave as fast as their little hoppers can take them.
- Theory why milk works. The air is 78% nitrogen. God did not put this in the air for us but rather the plants. Raw milk feeds microbes/bugs in the soil. What do microbes need for growth? Protein, sugar, water, heat. Raw milk has one of the most complete amino acid (protein) structures known in a food. Raw milk has one of the best sugar complexes known in a food, including the natural enzyme structure to utilize these sugars. For explosive microbe growth the microbes utilize vitamin B and enzymes. What do you give a cow when the cow's rumen is not functioning on all cylinders (the microbes are not working)? Many will give a vitamin B shot (natural farmers will give a mouthful of raw milk yogurt). Vitamin B is a super duper microbe stimulant. There is not a food that is more potent in the complete vitamin B complex than raw milk (this complex is destroyed with pasteurization). Raw milk is one of the best sources for enzymes, which break down food into more usable forms for both plants and microbes. (Again, pasteurization destroys enzyme systems.)
- Sodium in the soil is reduced by half. I assume this reflects damage from chemicals is broken down/cleaned up by the microbes and or enzymes.
- If you choose to buy raw milk from a neighbor to spread on your land, consider offering the farmer double or triple what he is paid to sell to the local dairy plant. Reward the dairy farmer as this will start a conversation and stir the pot. The cost for the milk, even at double or triple the price of conventional marketing, is still a very cheap soil enhancer.
- Encourage all to use their imagination to grow the potential applications of raw milk in agriculture, horticulture and the like – even industrial uses – possibly waste water treatment. ◆

Classified Ads

FORAGES & GRAINS

Certified Organic Small Square Bale Hay for sale – Berkshire, NY 13736. Marz Farm, 1st cutting certified organic small square bale hay, $3.50 per bale or $175 ton (quantity discounts). All hay is stored indoors and the facility is in excellent condition (see website for pics http://www.marzfarm.com/pictures.html). Forages are tested and the results are available at the web site or by fax/mail. We ship throughout the northeast and have several delivery quantities available or pickup at the farm. Samples are available. Average bale weight 40–45lbs. Located in NY Southern Tier between Binghamton and Ithaca, Tioga County. Contact Tony Marzolino: 607-657-8534 or tmarzolino@yahoo.com

2000 Bushel Organic Certified roasted shelled corn. Lewisburg, PA 570-966-7215.

Organic certified farm producing top quality hay. Tested with a protien content of nearly 17%.

Contact: Earl S Bell / Riverstone Farm
Email: earl.bell@wildblue.net, Phone: 240-405-2162

NOFA-NY certified organic hay and baleage. Excellent quality. Alfalfa and timothy mix lucky enough to cut on time. Large round bales 1st and 2nd cutting (700lbs) and first cut 2010 baleage (1200 lbs). Large round bales are $45 each and baleage is $50 each.

Contact: Frerichs Farms
Email: organichay@live.com, Phone: 7167516342
Location: Wilson, NY

LIVESTOCK

Six certified organic heifers; 2 Holstein, 3 Jersey and one Holstein x Jersey due late summer to early fall bred to a Jersey Bull. Pictures can be seen at http://BreezyAcresOrganicDairy.com All Offers considered.

Contact: Bill Sullivan
Email: william_sullivan@hotmail.com, Phone: 6075912171
Location: Cuyler NY 13158

EMPLOYMENT

Multi-facetted individual wanted. Must be proficient in all of the following skills: Operating construction and agricultural machinery, heavy equipment mechanic work, agricultural field work, welding and metal work, logging, maple sugaring and carpentry. Individuals who excel in the above skill areas but cannot spell personal responsibility, punctuality, and most of all accountability, should not apply. $50,000 starting annual salary package. Includes salary, benefits, perks, and housing in a well maintained 1850's farmhouse house sitting on a quiet acre of lawn with many perennials. For more information, call 802-644-5138.

Contact: Robbie Nuzzo
Email: shoebox2004069@yahoo.com, Phone: 802-644-5138
Location: Jeffersonville, Vermont

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Recent ODairy Discussions

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returned to the same frustrating point that allowable products vary from one certifier to another, and that we must call to ask if a product can be used, since lists may not be published by the certifier or the NOP. A frustrating thing with a sick animal late at night when no one is there to answer the phone ...

A farmer asked for input from anyone using a good teat dip made with hydrogen peroxide. A producer responded with this pre-dip recipe, which he has used for 4 years with good success: 2 oz peroxide and 2 oz glycerin to one gallon of water. He uses an iodine-based product with lanolin for a post-dip.

Many producers were seeking clarification around the 30% DMI rule in the new pasture policy. Some farmers questioned the 30% number - it is meant to be the average over the grazing season (not on a daily basis). So if your cows eat more supplemented feed during dry spells or at the beginning or end of the season, just keep records so you can calculate the average.

Other producers are seeking clarification on the minimum of 120 days as the grazing season. The length of the grazing season is based on climate and geography -- 120 days was set for the northern reaches of Minnesota and Maine, most of New York and Vermont are around 150, southern Pennsylvania at about 180 days. Farmers will be required to average 30% DMI over the length of their farm's grazing season. It was pointed out that the grazing season may or may not be continuous. For parts of the country that have very wet or very dry seasons, the grazing season may be split. ◆

NODPA FIELD DAYS
October 7 and 8, 2010
Unity, Maine

See Page 15 in this issue for the exciting details of our annual gathering.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

From the MODPA President

Hi all, from the soggy Midwest. We have been blessed with an abundance of moisture this season at times making cropping difficult to impossible. After rain the hot topic for conversation is raw milk and raw milk. It seems those who want it are persistent enough to want to retain the freedom to choose what they eat and drink, and those who sell it see it as a service to their consumer as well as a great revenue source that certainly helps keep their farm viable. To me this is a simple freedom of choice. I didn't grow up on raw milk, but I intend to grow old on it.

I urge all those producing or selling milk to maintain extreme cleanliness on your farm and insure the quality and purity of the products you are selling whomever you are selling to. This brings us to the new European Union standards for somatic cell count. As of October 1st all milk will need to test below 400,000 for any product from that milk to be shipped to Europe. No longer will a load testing below the limit be good enough; each farm sample must also test below the limit. So do what you can now to insure that your quality helps sell your milk. Even if you ship to a cheese plant your quality will need to meet these specs as whey is often sold elsewhere and their will be no market for any product out of specs.

Also in the news is talk of quotas being lifted this fall. This should remind all of the importance of farmers working together to implement a workable on farm supply management system, or we will again have a plan dictated to us. I encourage you to become involved in the process as the ODPA'S work together to formulate such a system. Your input and involvement is greatly encouraged.

As we are fast approaching Independence Day I want to remind you to use, value, and protect the freedoms you enjoy today as once they are given-up or lost it is very difficult if not impossible to get them back. ◆

May God Bless you with enough,

Darlene Coehoorn, MODPA President
Rosendale, WI

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:

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

MODPA Board

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: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Certified Organic Dairy? Yes No # of cows: _____

Transitioning: _____

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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Greenfield, MA

CALENDAR

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till system). Contact: Kelly Jacobs, Vernon County Land & Water Conservation Department 608-637-5480 or kjacobs@vernoncounty.org. Hosted in partnership by MOSES and Vernon County Land & Water Conservation Dept.

October 5, 2010: Draft Horse Farming, Osceola, WI
1:00 – 5:00 pm. Join MOSES and Dan Guenthner, owner of Common Harvest Farm, for this field day afternoon showcasing draft horse equipment for small scale vegetable production. Witness the hitching, adjusting and use of various horse-drawn implements, including a plow, disk, manure spreader, mower, tine weeder, various harrows, various cultivators, and many others. To register, please contact MOSES at 715-778-5775 or angie@mosesorganic.org.

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 details located on pgs 15-18 of the newsletter. 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
Saturday's Keynote Speaker will be Carl Russell: 'Continuity: Passing on Skills' and the 2010 Feature Farmer will be Paul Birdsall. Friday, October 15th will feature field and forest working demonstrations at Howevale Farm. Saturday, October 16th will focus on workshops and equipment presentations, resource exhibitors, local food vendors, and networking sessions. Sunday, October 17th (FREE Admission Day) will commence with a Meet the Teamster Breakfast, followed by the premier meeting of the newly formed Draft Animal Power Network. Contact: 802-234-5524, Email: info@animalpowerfielddays.org or Website: www.animalpowerfielddays.org