

# NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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Sonja Heyck-Merlin, Steve Morrison, Ross Ludders - the full time farmers of Clovercrest

## An Interview with Steve Morrison of Clovercrest Farm, Charleston, Maine

By Lisa McCrory

Steve Morrison is one of the founding members of the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance. He attended the first NODPA meeting – its formative gathering – on February 16th, 2001 in Waterbury, Vermont, and was instrumental in crafting NODPA's mission statement and goals, seeing to it that NODPA sticks to these foundational principles (see NODPA's mission statement and goals on page 2). As the first elected NODPA President (February, 2004 until March, 2008), and current a Board Member and Chair for the Policy

Committee, Steve is actively involved in advocating for a sustainable pay price for farmers, closing the loopholes in the NOP Rule pertaining to pasture and livestock replacements, and developing strong networks amongst organic dairy farmers.

Steve takes the time to make himself available to discuss issues and goals with anyone and everyone who may have a question related to NODPA or organic dairy production.

*continued on page 26*

## Diversity: A Grazer's Best Friend, Part II

Following 'Can Forage Mixtures Improve Productivity of Grazing Dairy Cows,' Part I in the May NODPA News (Authors listed on page 4.)

**T**he importance of diversity Biodiversity, the number and kind of living things in a particular area, is a hot topic. News stories and popular publications talk about the causes and consequences of biodiversity loss in natural systems. But what about in pastures? Can understanding and manipulating biodiversity help improve pasture and farm outcomes, or even the eco-

logical well-being of the entire landscape? Diversity has two components. The first, and easiest to measure, is species richness. This is simply the number of species found in a given area: ten species in a square meter, or thirty species in a pasture, or sixty species on a whole farm. The second component is called evenness. If a field has ten species but a single one makes up 98% of the biomass,

*continued on page 4*

**NODPA'S MISSION**

The mission of the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance is to enable organic dairy family farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the well being of the organic dairy industry as a whole, with particular emphasis on:

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

**SAVE THE DATE**

Join us for the 11th Annual NODPA Field Days, *Organic Dairy: What Does the Future Hold?* September 29th and 30th, 2011 at the Cooperstown Beaver Valley Cabins and Campsites, Milford, NY

**Field Days' Highlights:**

- **Farm Tour:** Siobhan Griffin's Sundance Farm, Schenevus, NY
- **Troy Bishopp's workshops:** Reading the Landscape and Thinking Man's Grazing
- **Keynote Speaker** Francis Thicke on The Future of Organics
- **Workshops:**
  - Demystifying Private Label Milk
  - Natural Gas Exploration and Organic Certification
  - Advocacy Groups in the Organic Dairy Marketplace
- **Annual Meeting** and Organic Pig Roast on Thursday evening

More details on page 20 >

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**ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS****From the NODPA Desk, July 2011**

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

When I was farming full time, we were never able to cover everything that we wanted to do and many times "firefighting" and "just in time" were inadequate substitutes for being the most efficient and therefore the most cost effective in our farming practices. Dealing with the policy, production, education and business issues of organic dairy tend to follow the same pattern, with the exception that with farming, change and achievement are tangible, whereas all change with policy and education are incremental. Many things are happening with the issues that are critical for the future of organic, and we need NODPA's independent producer voice at the table to speak out for producers concerns.

I had the honor and pleasure of attending the two day meeting on GMO's in Boulder where we moved towards a more common understanding and approach to fighting the contamination by the GE industry. While finding some way to work toward a moratorium on the development and planting of GMO's is pivotal for organic, it is as important for sustainable agriculture practitioners, direct marketers and farmers that choose not use GE seeds. It's important to educate non-organic farmers that contamination by GMO's will affect their freedom to farm in the way they choose and that co-existence is a non starter from any practical point of view. A more detailed personal report on that meeting is on page 16 of this newsletter.

The National Organic Coalition, of which NODPA is a member, had its semi-annual meeting the day before the GMO meeting and we discussed a frightening array of cuts that are on the table for the 2012 Farm Bill. We face the proposition of losing a lot of the gains from previous years in conservation programs and EQIP, plus cuts in the allocation of funds for programs. At this time, NOP seems safe from any cuts but perhaps cost share will be targeted. We will be advocating strongly for continued funding for the Organic Data Initiative which is essential for organic producers and critical for those who chose some form of Risk Management insurance. There are many strategies being employed to educate newly elected representatives and increase the effectiveness of the Organic Caucus of congressional representatives in order to have as much support for organic programs as possible. The National Organic Coalition is our independent lobbyist with full time representation in DC that allows us to keep abreast of threats and opportunities in real time. They work closely with the Organic Trade Association (OTA) and Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) to cover representation of organic in Washington DC. For the small to mid size operations maintaining the MILC program within the next Farm Bill as a safety net program is critical and we are making our position known on that as well.

NODPA was asked to be a member of the NOSB Livestock Committee Advisory Group (LCAG), which was formed at the invitation of the NOSB Livestock Committee Chair Wendy Fulwider to provide advice and guidance to the NOSB committee on the Animal Welfare and Handling/Transport Recommendations which will be brought back to the full Board in the fall. There was great progress made by the committee at the Spring NOSB Board meeting, and the Livestock Committee has since analyzed the comments they have received with a view to incorporating changes into their recommendations. The LCAG will be able to assist the NOSB Livestock Committee in ensuring that any recommendations are practical, maintain the integrity of the organic seal, reflect consumer expectations and can be implemented within the organic systems plan and annual inspections. While we have high expectations for recommendations from the NOSB Livestock Committee, it is impossible to please everyone and to get consensus from all stakeholders is impossible. With recommendations like these, it is usual that when NOP takes a proposal for regulation through to a proposed rule, there will be an opportunity for those who are unhappy with the NOSB recommendations, or with how NOP has interpreted it in their proposed regulation, to suggest changes. The NOSB is not the last place for input on these issue.

We continue to advocate with the NOP for the origin of livestock to be published as a proposed rule this fall, so that we can have one clear standard for replacement livestock. The current system is very confusing, with many different interpretations of the requirement by different certifiers and producers. With an increase in the demand for organically certified herd replacements, and many operations still continuously transitioning non-organic heifers, we need to get clarification of the regulations and then have consistent interpretation of them for all producers.

With the rise in the cost of inputs, dramatically with corn and fuel, many producers are feeling the strain of both cash flow and ultimately net profit. With reports of corn being in short supply and selling for up to \$15 per bushel in the northeast, it's anybody's guess what the fall will bring, especially with a lot of poor quality first crop forage being made. CROPP and Horizon Organic have responded to the increase in costs by raising their pay price by a total of a \$1 in August 2011--nationally for CROPP but only in 6 states in the East for Horizon. This will provide some relief from some of those costs but for the majority of organic dairies, the final farmgate price is still approximately \$4/cwt lower than is needed for producers to maintain and improve their life, lifestyle and family. Perhaps one of the indicators of profitability should be whether the farm family has health insurance with a reasonable co-pay and deductible. Bob Parsons' article on page 8 has an excellent look back at 2008-2009 data to help answer how we judge profitability and reflect production costs in determining pay price.

All for now, don't forget the NODPA Field Days in the end of September and happy harvesting. ♦

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

# Diversity: A Grazer's Best Friend, Part II

Sarah Goslee, Landscape Ecologist, USDA-ARS Pasture Systems & Watershed Management Research Unit, University Park, PA

Matt Sanderson, Agronomist, USDA-ARS Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory, Mandan, ND

Kathy Soder, Animal Scientist, USDA-ARS Pasture Systems & Watershed Management Research Unit, University Park, PA

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that's intuitively not as diverse as a field with ten species that each make up 10% of the biomass. Calculating evenness provides a way to quantify that intuition. Most diversity indices combine richness and evenness into a single number, making it easy to compare different sites. When people talk about diversity, though, they most often mean simply species richness. It's much easier to count species than it is to measure abundances and calculate evenness or diversity indices.

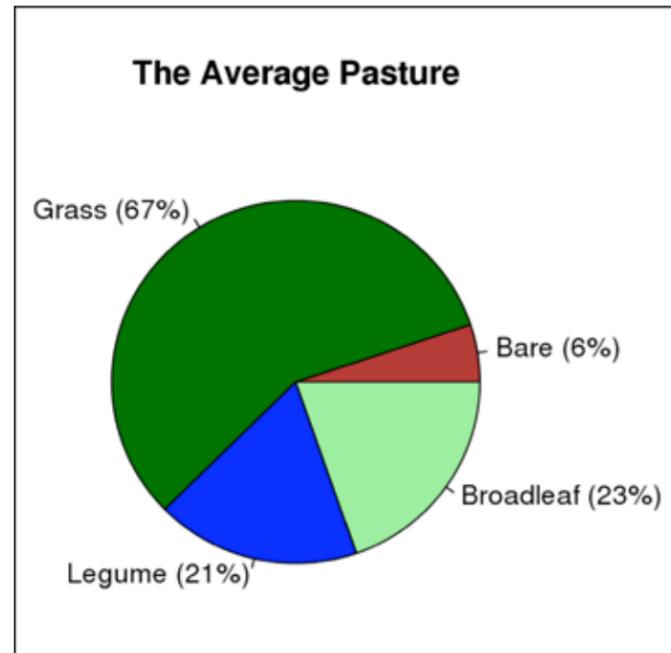
A pasture has certain resources available: nutrients, water and light. A single species can use some but not all of these resources, depending on how its roots are distributed in the soil, how its leaves are arranged, and whether it can fix nitrogen from the atmosphere or not. No matter how efficient that species is, some resources are left over. A second species could use more resources, and a third, and so on until all the available light, water, and nutrients are used up. If the species take up resources in different ways, a more diverse pasture will also be more productive because it uses a larger proportion of the available light, water, and nutrients.

A more diverse pasture has other potential benefits. With many species that use different resource components, in a stressful year there will still likely be something growing, even if not all of the species present can thrive. A diverse mixture may contain some species that begin growing early in the spring and others that persist into the autumn. A pasture with that kind of mixture will have a longer growing season than a monoculture, although its composition changes seasonally. If the resources available are all being used by forage species, there's nothing left for weeds, so a diverse pasture can also resist weed invasion. Species with deep tap roots like chicory can reach water and nutrients deeper in the soil, benefiting not only themselves but other species in the sward. Nitrogen-cycling legumes also help themselves and other species by increasing available nutrients.

## Diversity in Northeastern pastures

It's impossible to design experiments to study pasture diversity without good background information. We carried out a survey of Northeastern pastures to characterize pasture plant diversity and composition. From 1998 to 2005, we surveyed 44 farms from Maryland to Maine. All farms had grazing animals, usually dairy cows. In 2-8 pastures on each farm, we collected information on plant species number and total cover, bare ground, and number

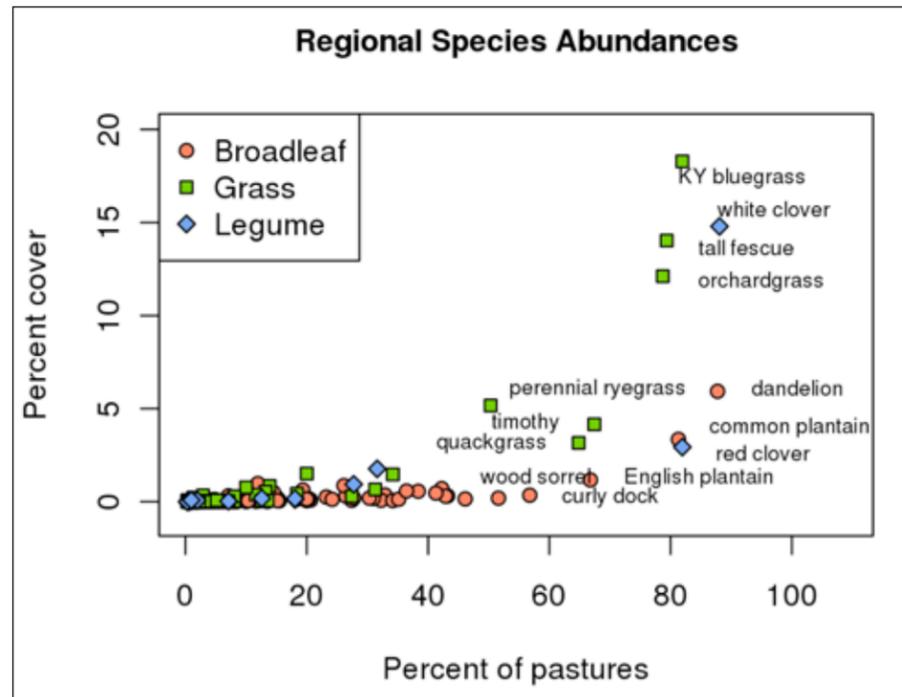
and cover of each species present. We made complete species lists for a 0.25 acre area (1000 m<sup>2</sup>), and estimated species cover in ten smaller quadrats (11 ft<sup>2</sup>, or 1 m<sup>2</sup>) within the larger plot. We also collected soil test results, slope, elevation and aspect (for example, north- or south-facing) for each pasture, and annual precipitation and temperature for each farm.



Northeastern pastures are very diverse. We found 310 species of plants, though most of these were uncommon. The average number of plant species in a pasture was 32, but we found anywhere from 9 to 73. Nearly half of the species identified were native. Many of the most abundant species were forage species, such as orchardgrass, Kentucky bluegrass, tall fescue, timothy and red and white clovers. Other common species included quackgrass, English and common plantains, curly dock and dandelion

## Weed resistance

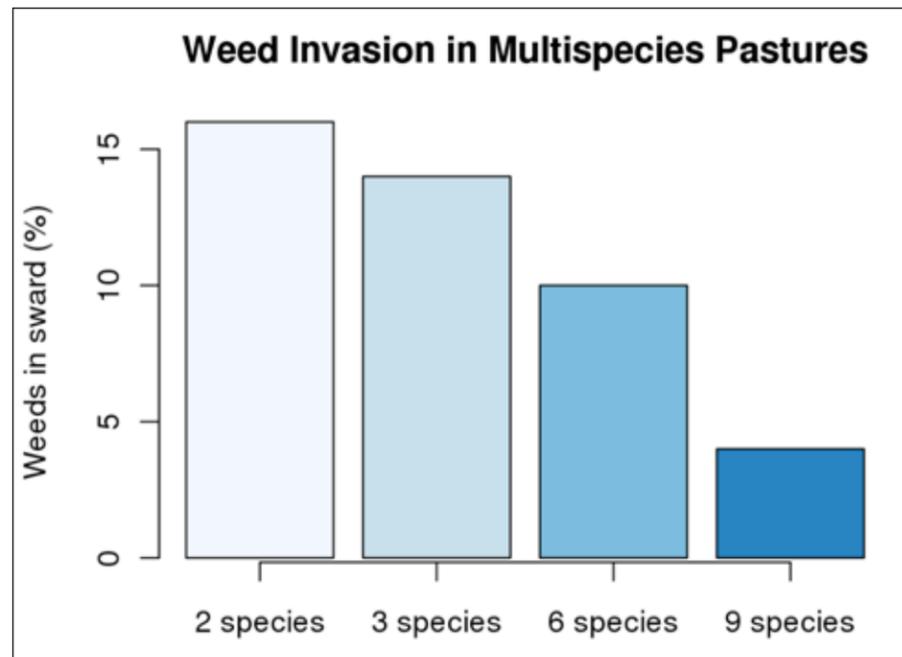
Pastures are particularly vulnerable to weed invasion during establishment. The establishment of a weed-free, thick, productive stand is essential in obtaining high forage yields. We have conducted several studies in plots and in larger pastures to examine how plant diversity of mixtures affected weed invasion. In most studies, we found that greater plant diversity in pastures contributes to resistance to invasion by weeds. For example, in a grazing



study, we found that pastures planted to complex mixtures of forages (3, 6, or 9 species) had fewer weeds than a simple grass-legume mixture. Pastures with a diversity of plant species resist weed invasion because of 1) a highly competitive environment created by greater use of resources by all plant species; and 2) the inclusion of a few highly productive species, which dominate the plant community and prevent invasion.

## Water stress

ARS scientists carried out an experiment with different forage species mixtures in plots that were either irrigated to maintain the long-term average for the experimental site, a wetter-than-



even in dry conditions. This finding suggests that chicory is bringing up water from deeper soil levels and losing some higher up in the soil where white clover can take it up. The researchers concluded that including a tap-rooted forb like chicory can improve forage yield, although it is difficult to maintain chicory for more than a few years.

## Economics of diversity

In an informal survey of 86 mixed-species pasture plantings on 56 farms, we found that about 30% of the plantings were to four or more forage species. Farmers were concerned about the economics of planting diverse mixtures. We researched the whole-farm economic returns from several pasture planting scenarios that varied in stand life. Our research showed that planting grass-legume or grass-legume-chicory mixtures increased net returns per cow compared with a nitrogen-fertilized orchardgrass pasture. The six-species mixture had a greater net return per cow than the two-species mixture, and the improvement increased with longer stand life. The greater forage yields of the mixture compared with orchardgrass fertilized with nitrogen reduced purchased feed inputs and in some instances increased the income by providing more forage sold off the farm.

normal year, or sheltered to create drought stress. The species mixtures studied had 1) two drought-tolerant species, orchardgrass and red clover; 2) two drought-sensitive species, Kentucky bluegrass and white clover; 3) a five-species mixture with orchardgrass, white clover, Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, and the tap-rooted forb chicory; or 4) Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass, tall fescue, red clover, and narrow-leaf plantain.

The plots with chicory were much more productive under dry conditions than those with other mixtures, and somewhat more productive even under wet conditions. The other five-species mixture was not any more productive than the better two-species mixture under drought stress. In the chicory mixture, white clover grew better and had better leaf water relations than in the two-species mixture,

Economic advantage (increase in net return per cow per year) of growing and

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## Diversity: A Grazer's Best Friend, Part 2

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grazing forage mixtures for dairy cows compared with nitrogen-fertilized orchardgrass.

Mixture	Stand Life (Years)		
	3	5	10
	\$ Per Cow Per Year		
Two-species (grass-legume)	57	107	136
Six-species (grasses, legumes, and chicory)	191	225	246

We also conducted a whole-farm economic analysis to evaluate the short-term (2 years) and long-term (25 years) economics of altering forage mixtures and grazing strategies on a typical dairy farm. Results demonstrated using complex mixtures of up to 7 grasses and legumes increased net return by 15% in the short-term and 32% over the long-term compared with nitrogen-fertilized grass. Furthermore, forage mixtures had 30% smaller production risk. Thus, for dairy pastures, managing complex mixtures of forages is a valuable way to reduce production variability and increase profitability.

### Planning and managing diversity

Planting and managing a single species might be the easiest approach, and possibly the most productive under ideal conditions, but how often do Northeastern graziers experience ideal conditions? A more diverse pasture can improve production in real-world conditions by using resources more completely, being more resistant to stress, and reducing weed pressure. But how to decide how many species and what they should be?

Our research suggests that a moderately diverse pasture of about six species is the easiest to establish and manage, and offers

substantial benefits while still supporting good animal production. At a minimum, planting a grass-legume mixture makes it possible to take advantage of the different rooting depths for the two groups of species and the nitrogen fixation of the legumes. A more complex mixture might include several species of grass and legume, and possibly a tap-rooted species like chicory.

Planting a grass-legume mixture makes it possible to take advantage of the different rooting depths for the two groups of species and the nitrogen fixation of the legumes. A more complex mixture might include several species of grass and legume, and possibly a tap-rooted species like chicory.

The easiest but most expensive method for establishing a diverse pasture is to plant a lot of species and let whichever ones can establish do so. That guarantees that the species that survive are adapted to the site and the management, but isn't the most efficient method. Choosing forage species that are adapted to particular site types, whether steep hillsides or damp streamside pastures, takes more knowledge but is likely to be more effective.

Some seed companies package mixtures of forages for specific uses, such as "intensive grazing mixes." If you want to use a commercial pasture mix, you should closely examine the forage

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Organic Dairy Retail, Pay And Feed Price Update

Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

With a healthy demand for product, a rising retail price, and a high conventional price to minimize the expense of balancing surplus milk, the outlook for processors and consumers appears to be very healthy. There also appears to be a significant difference between the two major companies in how they respond to the needs of producers who have significant increases in feed and overhead inputs. In the Northeast, this difference has shown itself in a pay price that varies by between \$1.50 and \$2 per hundred pounds of milk between Organic Valley and Horizon Organic. In August Organic Valley will pay a dividend equal to \$0.16 for all milk shipped in 2010 and increases its pay price by up to a dollar with an increase of \$0.20 on butterfat; adds \$0.30/cwt to its national premium, and a \$.50/cwt Market Adjustment Premium (MAP). In August Horizon Organic will also raise their MAP by \$1 for the 6 eastern states, so any differential in pay price will remain the same. In other parts of the country Organic Valley and Horizon are closer to each other on an average pay price.

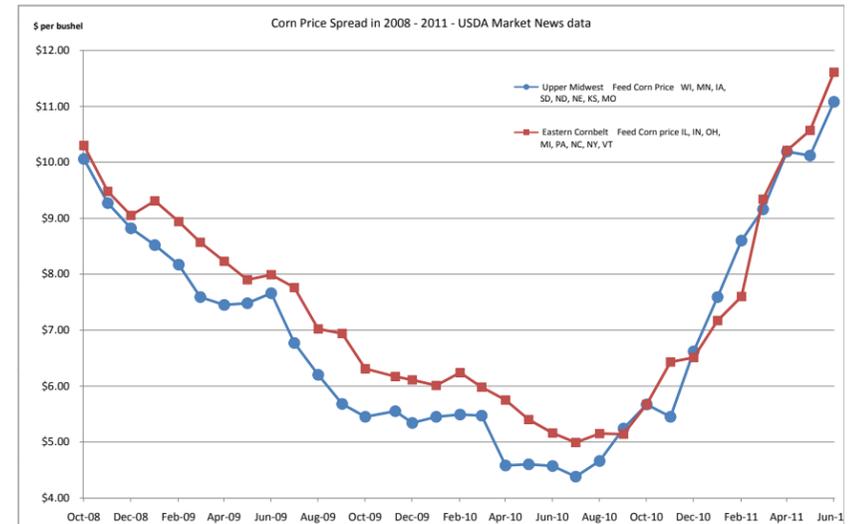
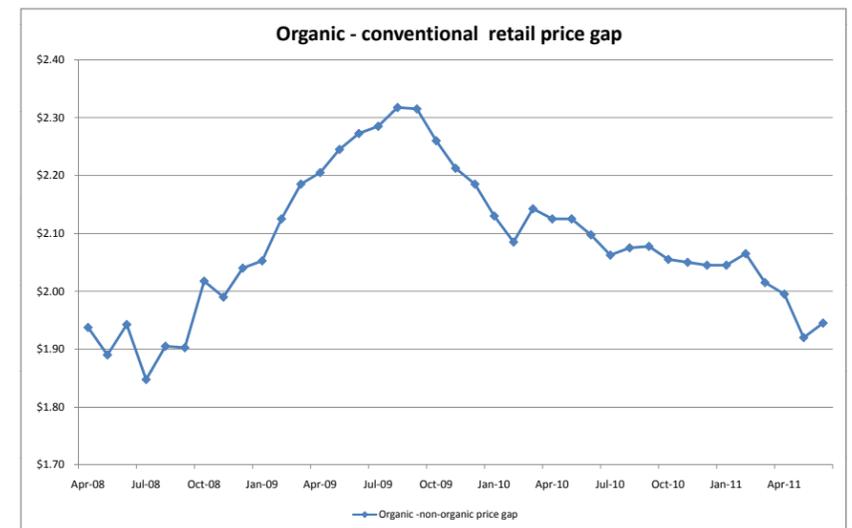
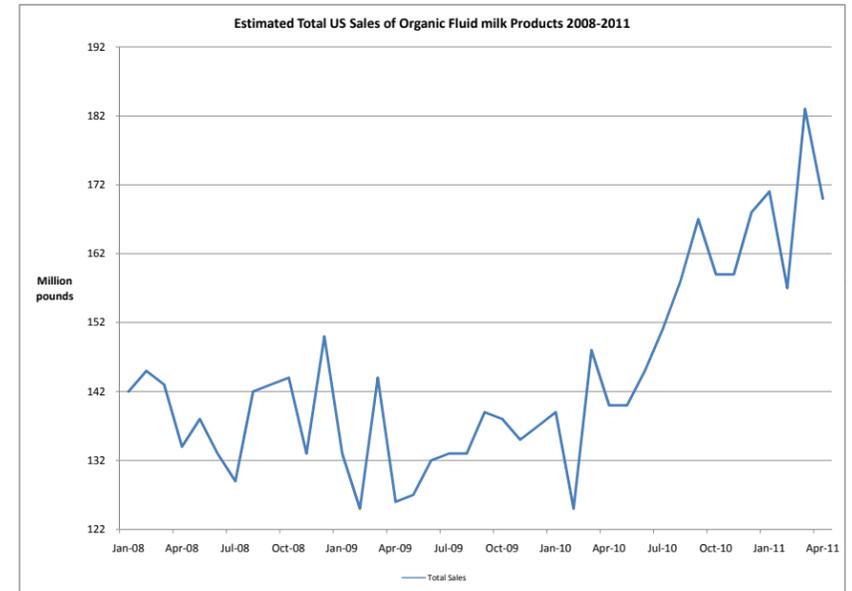
2011 sales of organic milk have been exceptionally strong, with sales of fluid products up 23% from 2010, peaking at an all time high of 183 million pounds in March 2011. Organic fat-reduced milk sales through April 2011 reflect continuous increases over the prior year since January 2010.

The increase in sales has not been at the expense of a strong retail price. Comparing retail half gallon organic reduced fat (2%) milk prices surveyed in January 2011 with June 2011, 17 cities have higher prices, 11 lower prices, and 2 the same price, with the average national retail price for non-fat products increasing by \$0.09 and for whole milk by an average of \$0.08.

Perhaps more significant, the price gap between organic and non-organic went to an all time average low \$1.92 per half gallon which may encourage consumers to buy more organic.

Corn prices are rising to 2008 levels and supply is increasingly tight as the non-organic price competes directly with organic. The weather and the high price of non-organic corn is resulting in less acreage planted to organic which threatens next year's supply. There is also an increasing risk for GMO contamination of organic as market traders increasingly insist on a GMO free sample, which is sometimes outside the ability of the grower to

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

**Trends In Organic Dairy for 2008-2009**

By Bob Parsons, Extension Ag Educator, Professor, University of Vermont

While its been 2 years, sometimes it's worth looking back to see where we have been to help plan for where we may have to go in the future. The year 2009 doesn't bring back many fond memories. As a country, we were in the greatest financial crisis since the Great Depression. The stock market collapsed, wiping out the retirement and savings of many people. In the agricultural sector, we saw our neighboring conventional dairy farmers experience another price collapse, wiping out equity and plunging many into greater debt. Organic dairy farmers were lucky in comparison, but still were undergoing pressure to reduce production as demand for organic milk was waning. But how bad was 2009? Surprisingly, the numbers don't show that much difference between 2008 and 2009, despite the unprecedented actions of milk companies imposing quotas and reductions in production. While this is a relative statement, we all know that family living, real estate taxes, and other charges just keep increasing, putting greater demand on limited profits.

Vermont's ongoing Organic Dairy Economic Study, jointly conducted between UVM Extension and NOFA Vermont, examined the results between 2009 and 2008 and found very little difference. The farms in the study averaged 67 cows for both years. Milk production was down just over 500 lbs per cow in 2009 and milk price averaged \$30.23 vs \$30.90 in 2008. Less money for less milk isn't the way to advance each year and exerts a negative effect on cash flow. Pressure on cash flow was compounded by banks and vendors tightening credit as collateral in property disappeared with the economic collapse.

Total income also was impacted by sale of animals and receipt of government payments. The biggest impact was the sale of dairy animals, where the market almost disappeared as few dairy farmers were looking for more cows. But this was offset by a significant increase in government payments as MILC was in effect for nearly all of 2009 and farmers received a one-time disaster payment from the Federal Government. While many dairy farmers cringe at needing

government payments, on a per cow basis, government payments increased by \$176 per cow, providing significant help for organic as well as conventional dairy farmers.

Overall, gross accrual income per cow in 2009 was down only \$150 per cow, and nearly half of that was the result of lower feed inventories. Accrual income takes changes in feed inventory into account. Feed on hand is like a savings account, so if you end up with more feed left over, its like extra savings, and vice versa, when you end up with less feed, you have a lower savings account and farm families used all their available feed leaving them more exposed to changes in the marketplace

On the expense side, organic dairy farmers saw cash expenses increase \$33 per cow and total expenses decrease by \$68 per cow. A logical question is how can this be when no expenses went down? Parts? Labor? Repairs? Taxes? How can dairy farmers believe some economist who tells them their expenses went down? Well, they did. Lets look at them individually.

Feed grain prices...down about \$100 per cow. It's not from lower feed prices but farmers fed less grain in 2009 in response to processors asking for cuts in production. With many farmers on restricted production it was not worth the extra grain to produce more and others reduced their cow numbers. So less grain was fed. Repairs and supplies were up \$40 per cow. Logical; when was the last time a machinery part cost you less money? Labor was up nearly \$100 per cow. This is more difficult to explain and is believed to be more of a factor of the sample of farms instead of a general trend across farms to spend more on labor. Depreciation was also lower in 2009. When times are tough, there isn't much investment in new equipment. Surprisingly, unpaid bills actually decreased in 2009. What this tells me is the typical "Yankee Thrift" is still very present among organic dairy farmers and they responded in typical yankee fashion, spending less, making do, and stretching their dollars where they could.

At the bottom line, 2009 saw a drop in net accrual farm revenue of \$82 per cow compared to the 2008 year. The net revenue in 2009 was \$828 per cow. This is what is left to pay for family living, loan repayments, and reinvestment. Please note that net accrual farm revenue takes into account cash income and accrual changes like

feed inventories, herd numbers, depreciation, and accounts payable and receivable.

The recently published USDA organic survey showed that the majority of organic dairy farms are smaller, depend on a variety of other income sources including off farm income, and cannot sustain their operations at the 2009 level of income from organic dairy activity. With smaller herds, it takes a higher return per cow to meet family living expenses. In 2009, Vermont organic dairy farms survived but cannot survive with a future like 2009.

We are now finishing up collecting data for 2010 tax year and should have results ready in August. An initial observation is that farmers were able to regain some stability in their operations as restrictions on production were lifted and financial incentives for winter production increased. The effect of increases in feed costs will not show in the 2010 figures but loom large for the 2011 fiscal year as prices for corn are nearly triple what they were in 2010. The interesting questions for the financial future of organic dairies when we look at the 2010 data are:

1. Will there will be enough increase in net income in 2010 to replace loss equity and savings from 2009 and cover anticipated increase costs in inputs for 2011?
2. Are we destined to imitate the year by year financial roller coaster familiar to non-organic dairy farm families which so many turned to organic to get away from?
3. How will this cumulative data affect the decisions of those wishing to transition to organic production or encourage banks to finance the next generation of organic dairy farmers? ♦

**Summary Results for 2008 and 2009 on a per cow basis**

	Vermont 2008 (n=35)	Vermont 2009 (n=33)
Average # of cows	67	67.1
Lbs shipped total	910,174	880,240
Lbs shipped/cow	13,438	12,874
Milk price	\$30.90	\$30.23
<b>Receipts</b>		
Milk sales (a)	4,155	3,973
Cow, calf sales	219	167
Government payments	48	224
Patronage dividends	25	41
Other	109	122
<b>Total Cash Receipts (b)</b>	<b>\$4,555</b>	<b>\$4,486</b>
<b>Total Accrual Revenue (d)</b>		
	<b>\$124</b>	<b>\$43</b>
<b>Total Farm Revenue (e)</b>		
	<b>\$4,679</b>	<b>\$4,529</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Bedding, Breeding	137	127
Breeding		
Custom hire, DHIA:	160	190
Fertilizers, lime, seed	42	52
Feed - purchased grain & other	1,219	1,117
Feed - purchased forage	64	78
Fuel and Oil	159	130
Insurance	76	79
Interest	180	148
Labor	304	402
Milk Marketing	70	68
Real estate taxes, rent	123	126
Repairs, supplies, auto, truck	501	540
Utilities	139	131
Vet and medicine	53	52
Miscellaneous	47	56
<b>Total Cash Expenses (f)</b>	<b>\$3,271</b>	<b>\$3,304</b>
<b>Accrual Expense Adjustments</b>		
Depreciation	472	429
Accounts payable, prepaid expenses	10	(32)
<b>Total Accrual Expenses (g)</b>	<b>\$498</b>	<b>\$397</b>
<b>Total Farm Expenses (h)</b>		
	<b>\$3,769</b>	<b>\$3,701</b>
<b>Net Cash Farm Income (b-f)</b>	<b>\$1,284</b>	<b>\$1,182</b>
<b>Net Farm Revenue (e-h)</b>	<b>\$910</b>	<b>\$828</b>

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## In Memory of Kevin Brussell ... Organic Activist, Farmer and Researcher

*Submitted by Chuck Schwab, principal at Schwab Consulting, LLC, Boscobel, WI,  
and Professor Emeritus, Animal Sciences, University of New Hampshire*

**K**evin Brussell, 56, a long-time organic activist, researcher and working organic farmer, was tragically killed on Saturday, June 11. Survivors include his wife Juli, his stepson, Eric Katona, and his parents, William and Jean Brussell. Kevin's brother David died of a self-inflicted bullet wound after shooting Kevin.

This senseless and tragic accident took from our earthly world a person with an undeniable, genuine and compassionate heart for humanity and a hope for a more environmentally sustainable and eco-friendly world. His energy and passion were infectious, and his calm demeanor a reflection of the true gentleman that he was. We shared similar values, but it was he, as the organic farmer and activist, that practiced and advocated daily for what he thought was right.

Recognizing his knowledge and expertise in organic agriculture, organic certification, agronomics, and mixed livestock and crop production practices, as well as his wide association with the greater organic community, the University of New Hampshire hired Kevin as the first Farm Superintendent for the Organic Dairy Research Farm, the first certified organic dairy research farm at a land grant university in the United States. As president of Ag Organics, an organic grain consulting and marketing firm, Kevin also continued to work with other clientele in organic-crop production and marketing of grains, beans, and forages.

Kevin had 34 years of organic production experience on his family's fifth generation grain and livestock farm in southeastern Illinois. Following graduation in 1976 with a B.S. degree in Zoology from



Eastern Illinois University, he began his career as a grain and livestock farmer. In 1978, as a representative/dealer for the Wonder Life Corporation, he raised his first crop of organic soybeans. Finding little resource support for organic agriculture when he began, he attended many biological farming workshops and conducted extensive production research experiments on his own farm.

Kevin took leadership roles with the Illinois Sustainable Agricultural Society, the Southeastern Illinois Sustainable Agriculture Association, the Illinois Stewardship Alliance, and the Midwest Sustainable Agriculture Working Group. While president of the Illinois Sustainable Agriculture Society, he helped coordinate on-farm research and demonstration projects with the University of Illinois Agro Ecology Program; his farm was often used for organic farming field day demonstrations and workshops. To ensure a voice for organic and sustainable agriculture at the University of Illinois, Kevin served on the research committee for the Illinois Council on Food and Agricultural Research (CFAR), and as co-chair of the CFAR Rural Economic Development working group.

Kevin was also a founding member of the Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing (OFARM), a marketing agency-in-common for organic grain farmers. He served as General Marketing Director for the Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative from 2001-2002 and General Manager in 2003. Through the Midwest Organic Farmers Cooperative, under OFARM (Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing), Kevin provided leadership in organic commodity crop production and sales.

To promote crop diversity, Kevin helped establish and later served as president of the Buckwheat Growers of Illinois and the Illinois Wheat Growers Association. As founding board member of the Illinois Chapter of the Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA), he served on and later chaired the certification committee. He became certified as an organic farm and processing inspector by the Independent Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA), the only recognized inspector training organization in the U.S. at the time. He taught "Transitioning to Organics" seminars at major organic conferences such as the Upper Midwest Organic Farming Conference and the Indiana Horticultural Congress as well as conducting numerous workshops on organic production and marketing. Kevin also provided impetus for the formation of the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Association (NODPA) and later served as a non-producer board member for that organization.

Kevin had an infectious enthusiasm for organics and enjoyed sharing his knowledge. He put his heart and soul into helping others to be successful. In 2008, Kevin received the Spirit of Organics Award from the Organic Trade Association, which recognized his broad influence on the expansion of organic agriculture.

Just prior to his death, Kevin accepted a position with Midwestern Bio-Ag in Blue Mounds, WI. Looking forward to being together, his wife Juli recently resigned her position as the Agricultural Program Leader for UNH Cooperative Extension in New Hampshire to become Executive Director of the Ceres Trust, a private trust that supports an organic research initiative. Together they purchased a small southwestern Wisconsin farm where Kevin could move his treasured Shorthorn cows, the genetics of which go back to the beginning of his family's involvement with their Casey, IL farm. He LOVED his cows!

Kevin will be sadly missed by all who knew him. Juli has established a scholarship fund in memory of her husband. The Kevin Brussell Scholarship Fund, set up at Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES), will support beginning organic farmers. Donations may be mailed to MOSES, PO Box 339, Spring Valley, WI 54767 or submitted online at [www.mosesorganic.org](http://www.mosesorganic.org). Please contact Faye Jones or Nancy Frank with questions at (715) 778-5775.

For his community and his friends, there will be a celebration honoring Kevin's life at the 2012 MOSES Organic Farming Conference in February, 2012, in La Crosse, WI. ♦

## Kevin Brussell Scholarship Fund

Kevin, and his wife Juli, have been part of the MOSES organic family for many years. Kevin's clear vision, energy and calm demeanor have been present at many organic conferences and educational events around the U.S. for decades.

Kevin will be missed throughout the organic community, and MOSES extends sympathy to the Brussell family for their tragic loss. At the 2012 MOSES Organic Farming Conference, there will be a celebration honoring Kevin's life.

Kevin's wife, Juli, has established a scholarship fund in memory of her husband. The Kevin Brussell Scholarship Fund will support beginning organic farmers. Donations may be mailed to MOSES, PO Box 339, Spring Valley, WI 54767 or online at [www.mosesorganic.org](http://www.mosesorganic.org). Contact Faye Jones or Nancy Frank with questions (715) 778-5775.

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

**The Cost-Effective Way To Feed The World**

By Margaret Mellon and Doug Gurian-Sherman  
Originally published in the Bellingham Herald's Op-ed Section, June 20, 2011

By 2050, the world will have to feed 9 billion people, adapt to climate change, reduce agricultural pollution, and protect fresh water supplies - all at the same time. Given that formidable challenge, what are the quickest, most cost-effective ways to develop more productive, drought-, flood- and pest-resistant crops? Some will claim that genetically engineered (GE) crops are the solution. But when compared side-by-side, classical plant breeding bests genetic engineering. Coupled with ecologically based management methods that reduce the environmental harm of crop production, classical breeding could go a long way toward producing the food we will need by mid-century.

Producing better crops faster certainly would help the world feed itself, but genetic engineering has no advantage on that score. Not only can classical breeding programs introduce new varieties about as fast as genetic engineering, technical improvements are making classical practices even faster.

Early steps in the genetic engineering process avoid the multiple rounds of cross-breeding inherent in classical plant breeding by directly inserting engineered genes into the crop. But seed companies then use classical breeding to transfer engineered genes to the crop's numerous varieties for different markets and climates - and that takes time. And just as in classical breeding, new engineered varieties must be tested in the field for several years to ensure they perform as expected.

Second, GE crops are significantly more expensive to develop. Industry estimates of the cost of developing a single GE trait are in excess of \$100 million. By contrast, a classical breeding program for similar traits typically costs about \$1 million. Most of the cost differential is attributable to GE crops' research and development requirements, which include DNA synthesizers and sequencers and other expensive equipment, in addition to classical breeding facilities.

Genetic engineering might be worth the extra cost if classical breeding were unable to impart such desirable traits as drought-, flood- and pest-resistance, and fertilizer efficiency. But in case after case, classical breeding is delivering the goods.

Plant breeders have already produced drought-tolerant varieties of sorghum, corn, rice, cassava and pearl millet - all critical for poor farmers in developing countries. Genetic engineering, meanwhile,

has yet to commercialize its first drought-tolerant crop varieties. U.S. biotech companies have been working for years on drought tolerance, but two of the three varieties they plan to introduce within the next two years are the result of classical breeding.

Scientists using classical breeding enhanced with genomic information - a process called marker-assisted breeding - also have produced rice varieties that can tolerate flooding. These varieties, now cultivated in the Philippines, Bangladesh and India, are expected to increase food security for 70 million of the world's poorest people.

Classical breeders likewise have developed papaya resistant to ringspot virus and corn that can fend off destructive rootworms - traits previously touted as requiring genetic engineering. And in Uganda, scientists have successfully bred sweet potatoes to resist virus diseases, while a multimillion-dollar, multi-year project in Kenya to genetically engineer similar virus resistance failed.

Finally, classical breeding and better farm management are responsible for all the yield increases for soybeans and most of the yield increases for corn in the United States. Recent yield increases are often erroneously attributed to genetic engineering, but data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and academic scientists show that even during the past 15 years that GE crops have been commercialized, classical breeding and crop management improvements contributed the large majority of the increases, not the newly inserted genes.

Public sector crop breeders have succeeded despite shoestring budgets at public universities, international institutes and the USDA. By contrast, the biotech industry's lavish budgets have

produced commercial crops with only two types of GE traits. More than 60 percent of all GE crops planted worldwide are merely designed to survive being doused with herbicides.

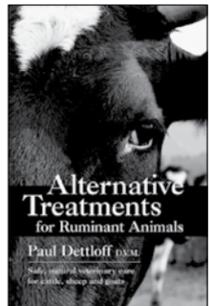
So if the conventional wisdom is wrong, and classical breeding is superior, what does that mean for public policy?

Federal and state governments should dramatically increase their support for tried-and-true, cost-effective classical breeding technology - including better funding for breeding programs at public universities and nonprofit institutes where breeders can work with farmers to develop a wider range of farmer-ready crop varieties. Big biotech companies do not focus on small-acreage crops, which include most fruits and vegetables. Nor do they market many classically improved varieties without including their patented engineered traits, which doesn't help farmers who don't want to grow GE seeds or pay the high prices biotech companies charge for them.

We are not suggesting that genetic engineering has no role to play in developing improved crops. But its modest contributions come with an extremely high price tag. If we are going to meet the challenges of feeding a growing population and protecting the environment, the scientific evidence says we place our bets on technology that works - classical breeding. ♦

**ABOUT THE WRITERS**

Margaret Mellon is the director of the Union of Concerned Scientists' Food and Environment Program. Doug Gurian-Sherman is a senior scientist in the same program. Readers may write to them at: Union of Concerned Scientists, 1825 K Street NW, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20006-1232; website: www.ucsus.org.



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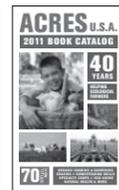
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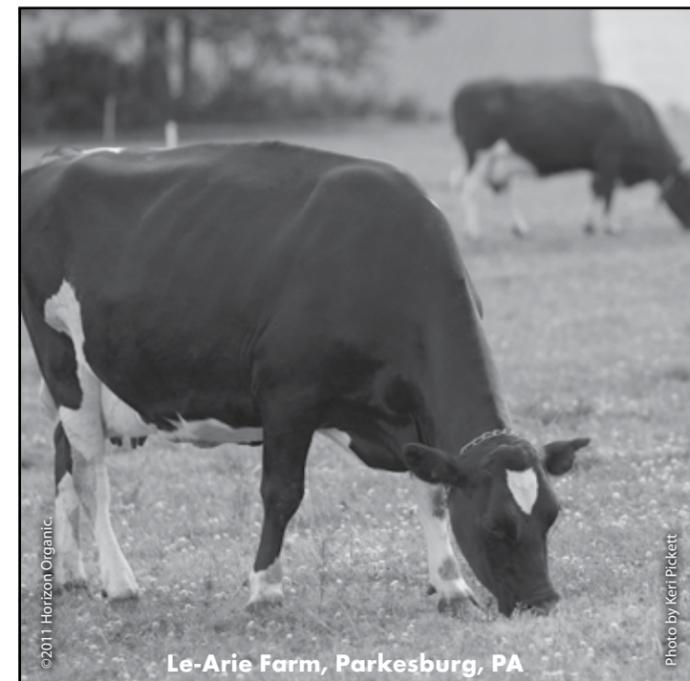
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- In New York, contact David Hardy at (608) 479-1200 or [david.hardy@organicvalley.coop](mailto:david.hardy@organicvalley.coop).
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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

**A Personal Report on the GMO Summit Meeting in Boulder, CO**

*Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director*

There is a quote from Margaret Mead favored by advocates and activists: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has." While this continues to be true in many areas of life, the organic and sustainable agricultural community has a bad habit of proving the opposite by engaging in what many have called a "circular firing squad." Too often, advocacy groups have engaged in activities that project their strongly held beliefs in isolation to, or at the expense of, other sympathetic and friendly groups as they seek to protect their position, power, fundraising niche and media exposure. Occasionally, there are times when the threat to organic agriculture, the environment, or our ideals is so great that those differences are put aside in an effort to work together. In the past, the organic community has stopped fighting with each other long enough to focus on an external challenge or opportunity such as the creation of the Organic Farming Production Act and overturning the first proposed NOP Organic Regulation. In both of these situations we achieved our goals against great odds.

On June 28th and 29th, about 60 people from every side of the organic and sustainable agriculture community (industry and NGO) gathered at the invitation of Michael Sligh, Rural Advancement Foundation Inter-

national (RAFI) and Robynn Shrader, National Cooperative Grocers Association (NCGA) to test whether contamination by GMO's would be one of those issues that our community could unite behind with a common message and coordinated actions. Despite some fears of boycotts and picket lines, the gathering took place and we were "tough on our issues but not our fellow travelers"; we all actively participated (despite the pull of Blackberries, iPhones and laptops that some occasionally succumbed to); we did approach the work with a 'roll-up your sleeves and get it done' attitude and there was never any doubt that we were "celebrating our diversity, and common opportunities." It was evident that there is no national coalition that is solely dedicated to fighting GMO's with dedicated resources that include representation in Congress and the ability to mobilize and coordinate grassroots opposition. The work of opposing GMO contamination and pollution of our seed inventory is part of the work of many organizations. From every corner of the room there was agreement that our external messaging needs to be one of cross-sector unity to the external enemy and a coordinated cooperation with our Administration allies. All the discussions in small groups and reporting out to the whole group agreed that our lack of consensus on these issues is hurting us.

Inevitably, as the meeting progressed it was when we discussed the details that the real challenges became apparent, with the following questions coming up:

- If we don't accept co-existence as an answer, do we accept a certain limited, time limited tolerance for some crops within organic regulations? Due to the movement of pollen, seed, and even crop

dust, it is common for engineered crops to contaminate organic or other non-engineered crops.

- Who pays for the loss of income? Despite the fact that growers do not lose their organic certification if a crop is contaminated by GMO's, many domestic and foreign markets - not just organic - do not accept GE crops or non-GE crops contaminated with GE material, leading to possible loss of income to non-GE farmers and loss of crucial export markets at the national level when contamination is found as a result of testing by buyers.
- If we recognize that a few organic crops (soy, corn, cotton) are already contaminated, is preventing GMO contamination a part of the continuous improvement principle within organic or an outside threat that, no matter what precautions are taken, the contamination cannot be prevented?
- How much improvement can organic producers afford/achieve?

What did the Boulder meeting achieve apart from the opportunity to listen and work with some of the finest minds in organic and sustainable agriculture? The test will obviously come as we move forward with the continued fight on many different levels from legal court cases to marches and boycotts to working on the AC21 committee. We will need to answer the following: Can we unite when necessary behind some easy to understand messaging whether it be "Freedom to Farm" or "Right to Know, Right to Grow" or "protect us from Super Weeds"? Can the NOP under USDA be a vehicle for change under organic system plans? How do we maintain the integrity of the organic seal with the current NOP position that doesn't recognize what the market is demanding? Can we

validate and support those that want to work within the Administration or are the experiences of the past year such that this work by well intentioned and committed individuals will be inevitably manipulated by the GE and "big ag" sponsored and controlled groups?

From a personal point of view of one of the few producers attending this meeting, it was encouraging to hear big ideas spoken out loud as well as different interpretation of the issues. The elephants in the room were clearly identified and articulated, with some media activities recognized as possibly counterproductive to the success of uniting the opposition to the proliferation of GMO's. The small number of producers, and those that represented producer groups, was a concern especially when discussing financial liability (everyone agreed it shouldn't rest with the producers) but when it came to discussion about how producers can recoup losses, there was no coherent and practical solution, and definitely not one that the marketplace can solve with fairness and equality. Most importantly, the effect of consumers rightly demanding accountability for any contamination of their organic product (whether it be directly from product that has been manufactured using GE contaminated materials or from livestock inadvertently eating GE contaminated feed) needs to be faced by the USDA NOP as it directly affects the integrity of the organic seal as a marketing program for producers.

I hope my return flight from Denver was not prophetic of the success of this meeting - the flight was delayed by four hours and I arrived home at just after 4:00 am. The airline did apologize but said it was circumstances beyond their control! ♦

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Learn the latest in organic farming practices and research by attending or watching an eOrganic Webinar. To find the list of eOrganic Webinars, go to: [www.extension.org/pages/25242/webinars-by-eorganic](http://www.extension.org/pages/25242/webinars-by-eorganic). There you will find a list of webinars that have taken place (that you can watch at any time) along with others scheduled to take place. Webinars are free; Below is a list of webinars of particular interest to organic dairy farmers:

eOrganic is an online community of more than 600 farmers and ag service providers who are providing science, experience, and regulation, based on a range of certified organic information on the web. Our eOrganic Dairy Team is made up of about 60 farmers, agronomists, veterinarians, grazing and certification specialists, animal scientists, and other professionals who are working together to publish peer-reviewed content at extension.org, a national initiative among the Land Grant Universities to increase collaboration and provide online education. ♦

Webinar Title	Presenters	Recorded
Fly Management in the Organic Dairy Pasture	Donald Rutz, Keith Waldron, NYS IPM Program	7/6/11
Using Small Grains as Forages on Your Organic Dairy	Heather Darby, University of Vermont Extension	4/14/11
Integrated Pest Management in Organic Field Crops	Eileen Cullen, Robin Mittenenthal, U of WI, Christine Mason, Standard Process Farm	3/29/11
GMO Contamination: What's an Organic Farmer to Do?	Jim Riddle, University of Minnesota	3/9/11
Shades of Green Dairy Farm Calculator	Charles Benbrook, The Organic Center	2/1/11
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Associated with Dairy Farming Systems	Tom Richard, Gustavo Camargo, Penn State	1/25/11
Transitioning Organic Dairy Cows off and on Pasture	Rick Kersbergen, University of Maine	11/23/10
Setting up a Grazing System on Your Organic Dairy Farm	Sarah Flack, Sarah Flack Consulting, Cindy Daley, California State University, Chico	10/1/10
Maximizing Dry Matter Intake on Your Organic Dairy Farm	Karen Hoffman, USDA-NRCS	9/16/10
How to Calculate Pasture Dry Matter Intake on Your Organic Dairy Farm	Sarah Flack, Sarah Flack Consulting	8/20/10
The Economics of Organic Dairy Farming in New England	Bob Parsons, University of VT	4/13/10
Using NRCS Conservation Practices and Programs to Transition to Organic	David Lamm, USDA NRCS	3/30/10
A Look at the Newly Released Organic Pasture Rule	Kerry Smith, USDA, AMS, NOP	3/17/10



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<https://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/summaries/summary.php?pub=357>

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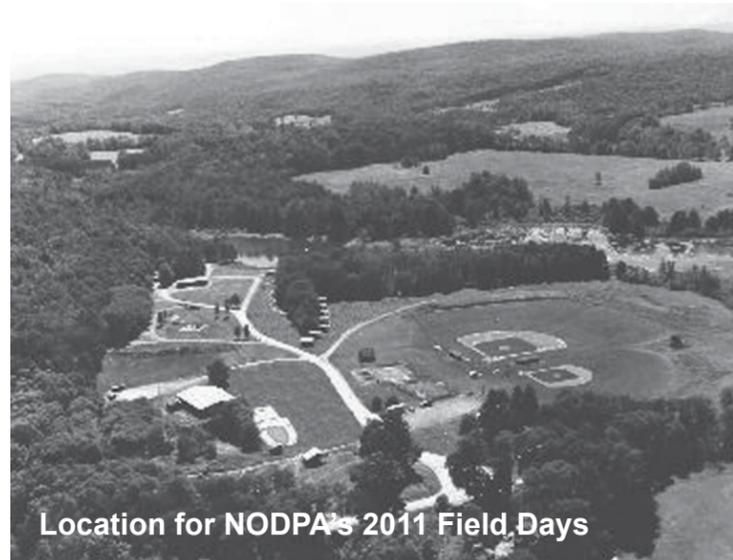
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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS: NODPA FIELD DAYS 2011

# 2011 NODPA Field Days and Annual Meeting

By Nora Owens, NODPA event coordinator

Cooperstown, NY is the site of NODPA's 11th Field Days and Annual Meeting on September 29th and 30th. This year's program, **Organic Dairy What Does the Future Hold?**, a two day event that will be held at the Cooperstown Beaver Valley Cabins and Campsites, Milford, NY, [www.beavervalleycampground.com](http://www.beavervalleycampground.com), will highlight the internal and external opportunities and challenges for producers as demand for organic dairy products is on the rise and supply remains static.



Location for NODPA's 2011 Field Days

Prominent leaders in Organic Dairy will be answering the following questions:

- What can producers do to determine their own future in the face of widespread use of GM seeds with increased contamination of organic crops and the pollution of our soil and water in the search for gas?
- Should producers be concerned about the increasing volumes of organic milk being sold as private label and what does that do for their pay price?
- How can producers become part of the solution and become involved in advocating for regulation and policy change within a positive, collective voice?
- Can grazing and caring for livestock still be fun and profitable in the face of increased recordkeeping and regulation?

The event starts in the morning of the 29th with a tour of Siobhan Griffin's Raindance Farm in the foothills of the Catskills where she milks 90 cows that graze on 200 acres. Participants will learn about incorporating cheese production into their dairy operation and the process of developing markets, creating products and on farm processing of cheese. Troy Bishopp will be also at the farm and show producers how to **'Read the Landscape.'** Troy is a regional grazing specialist from the Madison Co. NY, SWCD/Upper Susquehanna Coalition. Participants in the workshop will learn how to assess whether their pastures are moving forward or backward in productivity and profitability by monitoring (assessing) percentage forage ground cover, biological activity, plant species diversity, earthworm and dung beetle populations, and much more.

Following lunch and registration at noon on Thursday, we will kick off the Field Days program with a panel discussion entitled, **"Facts and Fiction: Demystifying Private Label Milk"** at which industry professionals will discuss what we need to know about private label milk and whether it impacts pay price. Next, and new this year, we will experiment with a different format and will hold an open producer and participant meeting on Thursday afternoon where we will explore the future of organic dairy and how producers can ensure

their voice is heard in regulatory, policy and marketplace issues.

After Thursday's education program, attendees will have time to catch up with both new and old friends, and visit the Trade Show during our Social Hour. We will host an Organic Pig Roast for our banquet and afterward will hear from **Francis Thicke, our Key-note Speaker.** Francis is an organic dairy farmer and soil scientist who has been a leader in the organic community for many years and is very innovative in his farming and marketing practices. He is a leading advocate for sustainable and organic agriculture and recently ran unsuccessfully for the the position of Secretary of Agriculture for Iowa. Francis will challenge us to take more control of our future as organic dairy producers by sharing his own farming experience and vision for the future. Francis Thicke published his book, "A New Vision of Iowa Food and Agriculture" in June 2010. NODPA's Annual Meeting will follow the keynote presentation.

A producer-only meeting will be held early Friday morning, where producers can speak about their concerns, challenges and successes without fear of their views hindering their relationship with their processor. Beginning at 9 am, workshops will include **"Natural Gas Exploration: What impact will it have on Organic Certification?"** with Lisa Engelbert, NOFA-NY organic certifier, James Northrup, energy expert, and a farmer (awaiting confirmation) addressing the group. After a milk break there will be a panel discussion entitled **"Advocacy Groups in the Organic Dairy Marketplace: Why they are important and necessary"**. Panel members for this session include Liana Hoodes, National Organic Coalition's executive director, Kevin Engelbert and Francis Thicke, organic farmers, and a representative from OTA (invited). Afterward, we will have lunch, during which time the Trade Show will

*continued on page 38*

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**ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS**

**NOFA 2011 Summer Conference**

*August 12-14, 2011, at University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA*

NOFA Summer Conference attendees register for an entire weekend of keynote speeches, over 225 workshops, a country fair, farmers' market, over 100 exhibitors and vendors, a children's conference, a teen conference, live entertainment and silent auction. Over the years, NOFA has presented a wide array of thoughtful, engaging and important keynote speakers, including Wendell Berry, Joel Salatin, and others. The 2011 Friday evening keynote will be given by perennial-edibles expert and award-winning author, Eric Toensmeier, from Holyoke, MA. The 2011 Saturday evening keynote will be given by Biology professor and anti-GMO activist Dr. Ignacio Chapela, from UC Berkeley. This year, the 2011 NOFA Summer Conference is proud to feature the Northeast Animal Power Field Days (NEAPFD); a special collection of workshops and hands-on activities for those interested in using draft animals to facilitate farming and logging activities. Local farm tours and most Animal-Power workshops will be held at offsite locations in the Pioneer Valley, for those interested in daytime excursions.

**Workshop topics for 2011 include:** Alternative Energy and the Environment; Animal Power; Animals, Crops, Farm Economics and Management, Farming and the Community, Food and Family, Food and Farm Education, Food Preservation and Cooking, Fruits, Nuts, and Trees; Garden and Greenhouse, Herbs, Land Care, Nutrition and Health, Of the Spirit, Politics and Policy, Practical Skills, Soil and Fertility, and Urban Agriculture. Most workshops are held in and around the UMass Amherst campus. Participants generally select on-campus housing, and reside in the UMass dormitories for the duration of their stay. Camping on the UMass property is also available.

**Online registration available now.** Go to: <http://www.nofasummerconference.org>

**For information on registration,** contact [registration@nofasummerconference.org](mailto:registration@nofasummerconference.org), or call Kathleen or Siedeh at the registration hotline: (413) 230-7835.

**Can't go to the entire conference?** No problem. Go for one day, or one night. It's well worth a nice drive out to Western Mass. About an hour and 45 minutes from Boston. Lots of folks heading out there...carpools are available. You can preregister or walk in on the days of the conference! Discounts for early registration (by July 11). Check the NOFA conference website for details Ben Grosscup Education Events and NOFA Summer Conference Coordinator Northeast Organic Farming Association/ Massachusetts Chapter (NOFA/Mass) Home: 413-549-1568; Cell: 413-658-5374 | [ben.grosscup@nofamass.org](mailto:ben.grosscup@nofamass.org) [www.nofamass.org](http://www.nofamass.org) ♦

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PAID ADVERTISEMENT

**Increasing Drought Resistance**

*By Neal Kinsey*

Is it possible to increase drought resistance for crops like pastures and hay meadows by increasing soil fertility? In fact, there are several possibilities that could help contribute to drought resistance for whatever crop you may decide to grow on your land. For example, on a new seeding increasing the soil's ability to capture and retain water by correctly incorporating crop residues, compost, etc. will help to increase soil moisture content as it also helps to maintain or increase nutrient levels. To illustrate the point, incorporating wheat stubble instead of burning it will provide an extra three days of moisture to silage corn from an inch or more of rain.

It is also recognized and emphasized in course materials on soil fertility that adequate amounts of potassium and phosphate increase water use efficiency for plant growth. Although there are still soils that lack a sufficient amount of one or both of these major elements, most extremely productive soils have sufficient levels to accomplish water use efficiency. However if either one of them is short in a soil, applying the correct amount for that land could be the most efficient way to improve and increase water use for crops to be grown there.

Time and again farmers ask, "Why, be concerned about pasture fertility when fertilizer is being spread and/or manure is constantly being deposited there?" Be careful about such assumptions, even when a soil sample showing good levels has been taken from pastures. It is possible that the manure deposited there is still fresh enough to affect fertility levels measured and reported on the soil test? In such cases, it may make it appear that the fertility is good - or perhaps even too high - when such is not the case. Just remember, when possible, allow enough time for the grass to show where both manure and urine have been deposited and then pull soil samples in the unaffected areas. It can make a big difference in how well the plants can take up and use water.

Drawing from experience and good common sense, most farmers realize that pastures generally need more than just N-P-K and manure to produce at their best. N-P-K should be added in sufficient amounts if required, but not at the expense of neglecting other needed nutrients for top performance. Furthermore, the two nutrients most affected by manure in terms of building up soil nutrient fertility levels is phosphorous and potassium. In other words, though nitrogen must be used or it will leach away, the P & K supplied with it are the most likely nutrients to be built up in the soil from manure. But keep in mind, a build up from P & K in manure produced by grazing the land may not be sufficient because the manure that is produced on pastures that are already lacking P & K will be more likely to be short when it comes to supplying those same nutrients. Such deficiencies tend to occur in far more pastures than most producers seem to suspect.

Sulfur, like phosphorus, can also contribute to root growth of plants. For the majority of soils expect sulfur to be far more likely than P or K as the limiting nutrient in pastures. It is often overlooked as even being necessary to check on the soil test. Applying a good dry prilled (yet water soluble) elemental sulfur to grasses where sulfur is needed will show a greener color in a week or less with adequate moisture. Increases of as much as 50%, in terms of extra root growth can be measured when ad-

equated sulfur is applied to soils where it is the most limiting factor.

To the extent that the root system is expanded, the efficiency of the crop to find and utilize soil moisture will be increased. Most soils are low to deficient in sulfur, and thus lacking when it comes to enough for optimum root growth. A problem that too often overlooked is that an excess of phosphorus in the soil antagonizes sulfur uptake by the grass. And for maximum efficiency, sulfur only works best when calcium is present in adequate amounts to assure its uptake into the grass.

Once the phosphate, potassium and sulfur are supplied, next consider the calcium levels of the soil to help aid in drought resistance. Calcium must be present in the soil for root elongation. Without sufficient calcium roots will stop growing. Farmers should require that adequate calcium is supplied to the soil for optimum root development. This would generally be accomplished by applying a sufficient amount of the proper type of lime.

After needed major and secondary elements are supplied, there is yet another nutrient that is absolutely necessary in specific amounts for optimum moisture utilization. Without it, plants will not use water, whatever the source, most efficiently. That nutrient is the trace element zinc. Sufficient zinc is necessary for moisture absorption into the plant. Just keep in mind that if the soil is lacking in adequate amounts of phosphate, potassium, sulfur, or calcium then applying needed zinc will still not do the best possible job.

Too often the effects of zinc, if admitted to be needed at all, is discounted in its importance to drought resistance because the farmer or grower is told the soil already has enough, when it is not actually the case. Even after all the aforementioned nutrients are supplied, zinc is often overlooked or not correctly recognized as needed, because the level necessary for proper utilization is set too low on the soil test being used. Soils with barely enough phosphate need only barely enough zinc but soils rich in phosphate also must be rich in zinc to accomplish the proper results. Using the correct form of zinc to keep it available in the soil until used by the plant is also important.

Correcting soil nutrient levels is one of the best methods for assuring excellent water use for optimum crop response. The more a dairy must rely on growing the feed used for the livestock, the more critical it is to know what fertility levels are actually present in the soils that will produce it. Too many producers neglect the nutrients in the soil, even if they are testing levels in the feed. You cannot properly manage what you do not correctly measure, and this is emphatically true for assuring correct pasture fertility levels for optimum growth and nutrition.

For more information on soil testing and other aspects of the soil fertility program we utilize please see our web site, [www.kinseyag.com](http://www.kinseyag.com), or contact us directly for your specific needs.

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

# Managing Horn, Face, And Stable Flies

Several fly pests attack cattle while they are out on pasture especially horn, face, stable, horse and deer flies. Each has distinctive habits, life histories, and management options.

## HORN, FACE, AND STABLE FLIES

### Biological and Importance



**Horn fly:** The adult horn fly, *Haematobia irritans*, is about half the size of a house fly or stable fly. Both males and females have piercing mouthparts which they use to penetrate animal skin to obtain blood meals. Horn flies take blood meals intermittently 20 or more times each day.

The flies normally congregate on the shoulders, backs, and sides of the animals but move to the underside of the belly during very hot or rainy weather. Horn fly adults tend to align their bodies in the same direction with their wing tips facing up while resting on animals.

Unlike other flies, horn flies remain on the animals almost *Horn flies often face the same direction when resting on the*



*backs of animals.*

constantly leaving only briefly to lay eggs on—very fresh (less than 10-minute old) droppings. Development from egg to adult is completed in 10 to 20 days. The average life

span is 30 days depending on the temperature. The flies overwinter as pupae in or under dung pats. Adults are strong fliers and can travel many miles.

This serious pest of pastured cattle causes reduced milk production, poor weight gain, blood loss, animal annoyance and fatigue. The weight of calves plagued by horn flies is often reduced by 12 to 20 pounds over a summer.

*Female face flies congregate on the faces of animals where they tend to feed on secretions from the eyes. >*



**Face fly:** The face fly, *Musca autumnalis*, is a



*Horn flies clustering on the back of a cow.*

of one animal to the next, they serve as vectors of eye diseases and parasites such as pinkeye and *Thelazia* eyeworms. They also gather around wounds to feed on blood and other exudates. Face flies avoid shady areas.



*Life stages of the face fly.*

By contrast, male face flies feed only on nectar and dung. They spend much of their time resting on branches and fences and attempting to catch and copulate with female flies as they move about. Eggs are laid on very fresh droppings and take about 2 to 3 weeks

to develop from egg to adult. Adults live an average of 28 days, depending on temperature. Pupal casings are very hard making it difficult for parasitoids to penetrate.

Face flies are strong fliers that can travel miles to find animals. Unlike house flies, face flies do not enter darkened barns or

robust fly that superficially resembles the house fly. It is a non-biting fly that feeds on animal secretions, nectar, and dung liquids. Female adult face flies typically cluster around the eyes, mouth, and muzzle of dairy cattle, causing extreme annoyance. As they move from the eyes

stables during the summer months. Cows are attracted to shade, so offering shelter from the sun can reduce the incidence and ease the distress caused by face flies. In the fall, however, face flies enter buildings and overwinter as adults indoors in a state of diapause, or hibernation.

Stable flies can also be a problem on cows in the pasture.

### Monitoring and Assessment: Management Options

#### Cultural practices

Horn flies and face flies breed exclusively in very fresh droppings in pastures not in decomposing materials like house and stable flies. As a result, cultural controls such as manure management in and around barn areas that are highly effective against house flies and stable flies will have no impact on horn fly and face fly populations. Practices that disturb fresh manure pats, such as using a chain or drag harrow in pastures, will break the life cycles of horn and face flies but also hinder the work of dung beetles and may deter animal grazing. Moving animals to fresh pasture every 3 days will provide them with unspoiled grass.

#### Biological Controls

If enough natural enemies are present on the farm, they will work to disassemble the manure-filled part of the pasture. More than 125 different species of arthropods live part of their life cycle in manure pats in pastures when pesticides are absent, and

*continued on page 37*



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ORGANIC PRODUCTION: FEATURED FARM

# Clovercrest Farm, Charleston, Maine

**Many hands make light work: It's a family affair.**

*continued from page 1*

**NN: Tell us about your farm; how many acres do you use:**

**SM:** Clovercrest Farm is a blend of 125 acres of pasture and 125 acres of woodland surrounding the barn. All the open land on the home farm is fenced with single strand high tensile for grazing. We rent an additional 250 acres of fields for haylage and corn silage.

**NN: How many cows do you milk and how are your animals housed?**

**SM:** We keep 65 Jerseys and crosses milking in our 65 stall tie barn. Average production is 12,000 lbs. per cow. Dry cows and heifers have access to a pole barn in the winter. We raise all our heifers and keep a closed herd other than an occasional bull calf brought in to raise for breeding purposes.

**NN: How long have you been farming and who do you farm with today?**

**SM:** I was brought up on the family farm through the 70's and early 80's and returned to run it in 1995. I am currently farming with my partner Sonja, my cousin Ross and my parents as well as several seasonal and part time employees.

**NN: How long you have been certified organic and how was your transition experience?**

**SM:** We certified the grassland on the farm in 1997 and certified the herd under the 80/20 rule in 1998 when the Organic Cow of Vermont agreed to pick up our milk. We have always been certified by the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA).

Our transition was pretty straight forward. Most of our land had



**Top: A breeding bull grazing with the cows  
Bottom: Sonja, Steve and Ross again**

been chemical free for years before we transitioned. We did have a few fields that had we had to withhold crops from for the year after we had the herd transitioned. The biggest challenge occurred after we began shipping organic milk. Some of the cows in the herd had been chronic mastitis problems and had been treaded conventionally. These cows didn't last under organic management and we had a very high cull rate for the first several years after transitioning.

Prior to transition, our feed program was based on our hay and haylage, corn silage we bought from neighboring farmers and conventional grain. When we transitioned the herd we had to switch to organic grain which was not well established in our area in '98, and we had to quit feeding corn silage because none of the local dairymen growing corn were organic. In order to replace that corn silage in our feed program we rented some played out hay fields that hadn't been farmed in several years and began harvesting them while working to renovate them with off farm manure and lime. Initially feed quality was

low, cow numbers were down due to the heavy culling, and we were only getting \$18.50/cwt for milk.

**NN: What motivated your transition from conventional to organic dairy farming?**

**SM:** We were motivated to transition to certified organic production by the emerging market of the late 90's. Our family's farming philosophy has always been toward low impact sustainable land management practices. The development of a market premium that actually rewarded that model helped us afford the switch to organic grain.



**Left to right: Cathy Nelson, Sonja Hyeck-Merlin, Steve Morrison, Joan Morrison, Ross Ludders, Bob Morrison, Ryan Clarke and Priscilla Sovis**

**NN: Please describe your grazing system.**

**SM:** We have a lot of pasture available in our system. There are about 125 acres fenced with permanent perimeter fencing. That is about an acre for every cow, calf and heifer on the farm. About 10 acres are across the road from the barn, and we graze that area with calves. The milk herd is rotated through the pasture system in one acre paddocks of temporary fencing. They get a fresh acre after each milking. The residue that they leave behind is grazed by the following herd of dry cows and big heifers. We clip pastures behind the dry cow group at least twice a year on each pasture.

**NN: Have you tried planting any annual forages such as BMR sorghum sudan or a Brassica variety for the summer slump or to extend the grazing season?**

**SM:** We have done some planting of annuals in the pasture system, mostly BMR Sorghum Sudan as a slump buster in case of a dry summer. It is nice to have if there is a drought, and the cows do well grazing it when there is no alternative. If it isn't a dry summer and there is the option of grazing the usual pasture mix of grass and clover,

the cows tend to refuse the BMR. I have not had good luck grazing grass-clover by day and BMR Sorghum Sudan at night

Our milk cows are getting about 10 lbs. of grain and about 15 lbs of corn silage per day in the barn. That works out to ... 61.8 percent dry matter from pasture.

for example. Recently I have not been planting annuals in the pasture system because the establishment time for the annual crop and for the perennial crop the following year requires that that not one but two pieces of ground be held out of the rotation for at least half of each grazing season. I haven't found that to be worth the benefit of having the BMR.

**NN: What would a representative summer ration be for your lactating herd? What percentage of DMI comes from pasture in the grazing season?**

**SM:** Our milk cows are getting about 10 lbs. of grain and about 15 lbs of corn silage per day in the barn. That works out to about 13.75 lbs of DM fed per day. Tables indicate that lactating Jerseys producing 40 or 45 lbs./day will consume 36 lbs of DM daily. (36 lb. Demand) - (13.75 lbs.

Fed) = 22.25 lbs. DM grazed from pasture.  $DM_{Grazed}/DM_{Demand} * 100 = \% DM \text{ from pasture. } (22.25 \text{ Grazed}/ 36 \text{ Demand}) * 100 = 61.8\% DM \text{ from pasture.}$

*continued on next page*

FEATURED FARM

continued from page 27

**NN: What would be a representative winter ration for your lactating herd? Do you feed a TMR?**

**SM:** In the winter we feed a TMR of baleage and corn silage at about a 50/50 ratio by weight as fed. The milk cows get about 16lbs. of grain per day.

**NN: Do you have a basic preventative health plan for your animals? What do you turn to for remedies when you have situations like: mastitis, retained placenta, milk fever, reproductive issues, pneumonia, calf scours, etc?**

**SM:** Our answer for mastitis, if Udder Comfort does not work, is to dry off a quarter, or cull the cow. Mastitis is not normally a problem during the lactation, but we do have cases occasionally during dry off and at freshening. We use the homeopathic remedy Sabina 30c for retained placentas; we treat Milk Fever with homeopathic Mag. Phos. and or calcium IV. The herd is treated with a BVD nosode in the fall of each year, which seems to help protect against winter dysentery. When close up cows come into the warm tie-stall barn from the out door pole barn facility in the winter, we have to shave them to prevent pneumonia. In cases where we get pneumonia, we have had good luck treating with the homeopathic remedy Aconite. Ketosis is treated with glycerin.

**NN: What differences (positive or negative) did you see in animal health with the conversion to organic production?**

**SM:** Overall herd health has improved since our transition to organic production. There was a period immediately following transition that our farm had a very high cull rate as we removed the animals which had become dependent on reproductive hormones or antibiotics for mastitis. Once we recovered cow numbers, the herd was a stronger healthier one because we had removed the cow families with the genetic predisposition toward mastitis or breeding problems. One of the other problems we ran into after transition was a lack of energy in the all grass diet. Low energy in the winter ration led our AI technician to point out that some of our cows had "small ovaries" which might have been contributing to our long calving interval. We have since switched to natural bull breeding and started growing corn silage to support energy levels. Now our calving interval is 12 months or less and the cows are in good condition.

**NN: How do you use your herd veterinarian?**

**SM:** We have very little reason to call the vet these days. We used to have a vet come routinely for preg checks, calf vaccinations

and dehorning. Now we dehorn all the calves at weaning with an electric dehorner, we don't vaccinate anymore, and we use bulls for breeding. Any cow that doesn't bump a calf 10 months after freshening is culled. The occasional open 2 year old heifer makes great beef for our freezer.

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

**SM:** Our grain mill, which is a farmer owned cooperative, has a nutritionist on retainer who provides feed sampling and ration balancing services. We buy a Renaissance brand custom mineral blend through

our nutritionist. Our grain is mixed to provide a pound of mineral per cow per day at the summer and winter feeding rates. We also maintain free choice minerals feeders for all groups of animals year round.

**NN: Please describe your calf-rearing program, including how they are managed, when they are weaned, and whether or not you vaccinate.**

**SM:** Our calves are raised in groups of 4 or 5 on gang feeders. When the youngest calf in a group is 2months old the group is weaned. All the calves have access to water, dry hay and our milk cow grain in their pens from day one. By the time they are weaned they are usually consuming 3 - 4 lbs./day of grain

each. Calves are dehorned at weaning, then moved to an out-door pen for fence training. We have not been using calf vaccinations or annual herd vaccinations for over 4 years.

**NN: What are your major challenges to calf health? How do you handle scours, and Coccidiosis?**

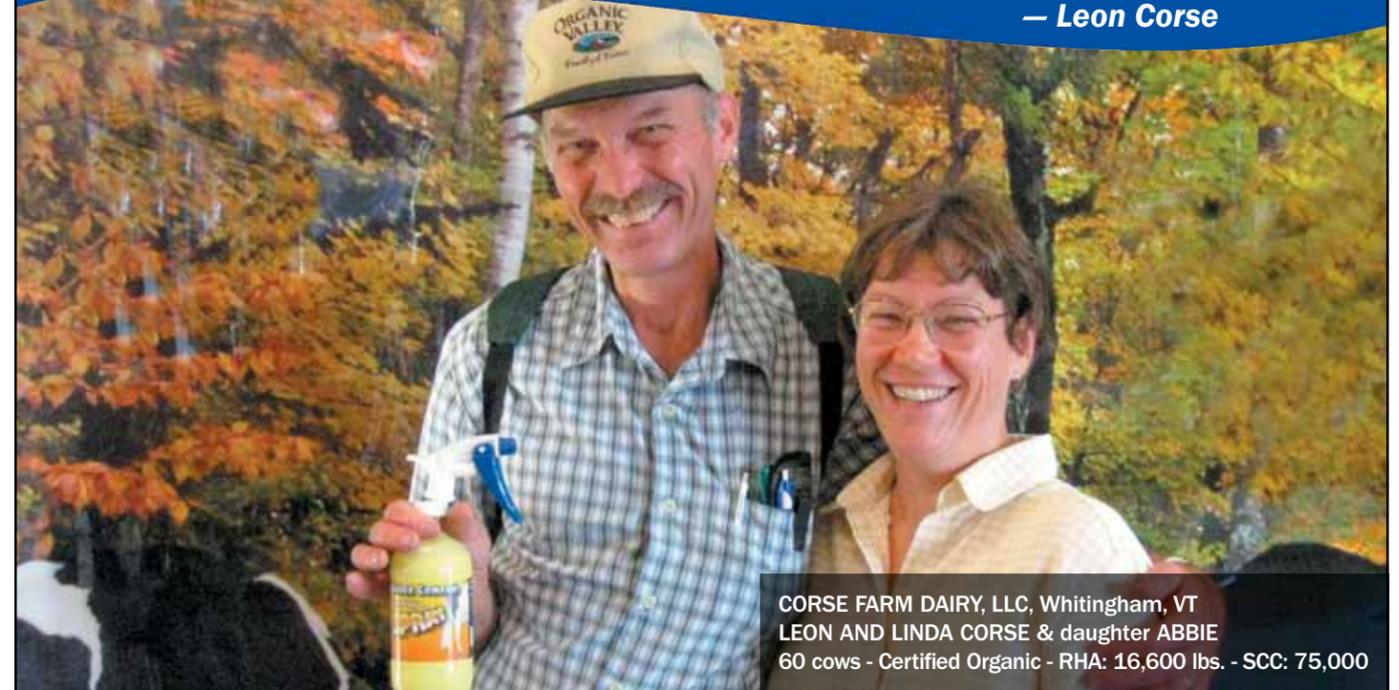
**SM:** Our biggest challenge with calves is scours. We must have every scour bug known to calves on our farm. We have adopted a policy of feeding only milk that could go into the bulk tank to calves. After a feeding of colostrum they are raised on quality milk diverted from the tank rather than fresh cow or high SCC milk. Waste milk is collected by neighbors and fed to their pigs. The calves are raised in a cold part of the barn away from the cows, and we don't have much trouble with pneumonia. For scours we try a shot of "Immunoboost" which contains e-coli antibodies and supplement them with probiotic capsules. If that doesn't work, we may have to feed an electrolyte solution and withhold milk for a couple days.

Coccidiosis was a problem early on after transitioning to organic because calves were fence trained in a dedicated paddock and then released into a "calf pasture" where they became infected with the parasite and exhibited classic symptoms of diarrhea and

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We are in an industry that pays the cost of processing first, and then pays its producers with what is left over. If it is true that the price to retailers can't go up and the cost of processing is always going up and farmers only get what is left over, then we are holding the losing hand.

**"... glad we tried it because we are totally happy with it."**  
— Leon Corse



CORSE FARM DAIRY, LLC, Whitingham, VT  
LEON AND LINDA CORSE & daughter ABBIE  
60 cows - Certified Organic - RHA: 16,600 lbs. - SCC: 75,000

"The main benefit of Udder Comfort™ is the milk quality," says fifth generation dairy farmer Leon Corse. He and his wife Linda and their daughter Abbie milk 50 to 60 cows at Corse Farm Dairy in southern Vermont, which was certified organic in 2008. "Since we've been organic, we get pretty terrific quality premiums, and that made SCC an even greater focus than it was before.

"Historically, our SCC was up in the 150 to 200,000 range. Our numbers for the last 12 months show averages of 95,000 and as low as 75,000 in the first few months of 2010. It's been a gradual decline since we've been using Udder Comfort consistently.

"We use Udder Comfort on any cow with a known high SCC, unusual swelling or any flakes. We apply it after both milkings for a few days. We monitor bulk tanks and cell counts from the milk company, and we test suspicious quarters and also all fresh cows for SCC levels. If high, we put Udder Comfort on for 2 to 4 days to take care of it.

"I was asked to give a quality milk presentation at the NOFA Vermont Winter Conference in 2010. Part of my preparation was to figure out our quality results for 2009. The interesting number I came up with was: On 956,000 total pounds shipped, we received \$26,187 in quality premiums for all 4 measures—SCC is a very significant portion of that.

"Initially, I was somewhat skeptical about what to expect from using Udder Comfort, but I'm glad I was willing to give it a try because we are totally happy with it.

"The best way to see what it does, is to pick out a couple cows that have got a cell count problem and try Udder Comfort on them, and see what you get for results."

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## New England Farmers Union: Working with NODPA on Federal Policy to Support New England Dairies

By Winton Pitcoff, NEFU Executive Director

New England Farmers Union (NEFU) is a membership organization of farmers, consumers, businesses and organizations around the region, working to develop and project a regional voice that supports the issues critical to the long term sustainability of agriculture in New England. As a chapter of National Farmers Union (NFU), we are part of a long tradition of building collective power to support small and mid-sized, owner-operated farms, to ensure that federal policy reflects the needs of these operations.

As an affiliate member of NEFU, NODPA plays a significant role in helping set our policy agenda, and in helping us earn attention in Washington when we communicate with officials about the needs of New England farmers.

Dairy policy is a priority for NEFU, as well as for NFU. Both organizations are strongly in favor of keeping the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program in place, rather than replacing it with an untested insurance program, such as the one called Foundation for the Future, proposed by the National Milk Producers Federation. The Foundation for the Future program would ben-

efit processors and huge dairies, while we advocate for policies geared toward supporting smaller, owner-operated farms such as those that dominate the New England dairy industry.

NEFU also supports states' efforts to allow and regulate sales of raw milk to consumers. Raw milk sales are a proven tool for sustaining small dairies, particularly as demand among consumers has increased. Thanks to advocacy by NEFU, NFU adopted a similar policy earlier this year, making it the only national, general-agriculture organization with a policy that supports the sale of raw milk to consumers.

We also recognize the importance of organic farming as a method to help family farms remain viable and as critical to environmental protection and consumer health. Our policy advocates for ongoing federal support for the programs that maintain oversight over the organic industry; maintaining and protecting the integrity of organic labeling; ensuring accreditation and certification costs do not discriminate against small producers; and maintaining standards that are uniform for growers at all scales. Our policy on GMOs insists on patent holders being held liable for contamination of organic crops due to drift, strict labeling guidelines, and a moratorium on the patenting and licensing of new transgenic animals and plants developed through genetic engineering unless and until the broader legal, ethical and economic questions are resolved.

We work extensively to maintain support for conservation programs that help New England farmers survive and employ management practices that benefit our natural resources. Programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) have already lost funding in recent

budget cycles, and will be threatened in next year's farm bill process as well. These programs help reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat and reduce damages caused by floods and other natural disasters. They provide tremendous benefits to farmers and consumers in helping to sustain agricultural productivity and environmental quality while supporting continued economic development, recreation and scenic beauty.

NEFU has close relationships with all 35 members of Congress from New England, and we are in touch with them when any of these, or other issues, come before them for a decision. They listen to us because they know that we speak for more than 1,300 members from all sectors of agriculture.

*continued on the next page*

*continued from page 30*

NEFU's entire policy book is available online at <http://newenglandfarmersunion.org/policybook.html>. Our policies are always under review, and any member can make suggestions for changes or additions at any time. These are presented at our annual meeting each year, where our members discuss and vote on adoption of proposed changes.

We look forward to working more closely with NODPA, and encourage NODPA members to join NEFU (<http://newenglandfarmersunion.org/join.html>) and get engaged in our policymaking, our work to educate legislators about the need to support New England agriculture, and our ongoing efforts to foster the development of sustainable food production in New England. ♦

*Winton Pitcoff (winton@newenglandfarmersunion.org) is Executive Director of New England Farmers Union (www.newenglandfarmersunion.org).*

## Pay Price Increase for Organic Valley/CROPP Producers

The Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative Board of Directors recently agreed to increase the organic milk price by \$1/cwt starting August 1st, 2011. Fair and stable pricing is a cornerstone of the coop and the increasing cost of production for organic dairy farmers justifies a pay price increase. One of the unique elements of this farmer owned cooperative is the level of farmer involvement in all major decisions. The decision making process described below is typical of how the coop is run.

In April, the Dairy Executive Committee, which is made up of farmer leaders elected locally to represent their region, made a motion to increase the price by \$1/cwt. This motion passed and was then brought to the Regional Supply and Pricing Committee, which is also made up of active organic dairy farmers. The management team also reviewed what that increase would mean to the retailer and consumer and although there was concern about being the most expensive milk on the shelf, the management team agreed that we would have to take the risk and agreed to pass the increase up through the chain. The Board of Directors, made up of 7 active farmers, approved the price increase to farmers at their May meeting.

For the last 23 years, Organic Valley has rejected the conventional dairy pricing model where supply and demand (plus government intervention) has caused the wild swings in milk prices which have driven so many small farms out of business. Organic valley strives for long term stability to farmers income and has shown that farmer ownership, collective bargaining and supply management are critical for achieving fair prices now and in the future. ♦

## Diversity: Grazer's Best Friend

*continued from page 6*

species or varieties, and amount of each in the mixture to be sure that they fit your goals and management. Seed companies may change the components of mixtures from year to year, which makes performance comparisons difficult. It also means that the "intensive grazing" mixture a farmer bought one year ago is probably not the same mix available this year.

Grazing management must be adjusted to support the species that are planted. Keeping the grasses from getting too tall allows clover to thrive, while grazing too short or too often might eliminate orchardgrass or alfalfa. Rotational grazing with appropriate stocking rates can keep the stock from removing the tastiest species and leaving the rest by encouraging more even biomass removal. Rotational grazing will promote biodiversity by allowing a rest period for all species. Under continuous grazing, the more desirable/palatable species are constantly grazed, thereby weakening them and making space for weedy species to enter the pasture. At the same time, less desirable/palatable species are not grazed, allowing them to proliferate.

## Conclusion

Andre Voisin stated that "the cow is a gourmet." Treating your cows to a monotonous "meat and potatoes" diet of only a grass with a bit of legume thrown in not only insults their sophisticated palate, it may also cost you money in terms of lower milk production from pastures. The grazing season can be extended with planned plant diversity. Plant production increases with forage species diversity, especially in drought years, and this leads to increased animal production. Considering the many additional benefits of growing complex mixtures of forages, such as weed- and stress-resistant pastures along with greater stability of forage production year to year, why not give your herd of gourmets what they deserve—a rich, robust sward abounding in diversity. ♦

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Dear Ann,  
I just wanted to tell you that last winter was the 1st year to feed hay fertilized with your Fish. 10 to 12 pounds per day, as opposed to 20 to 25 for conventionally grown hay, to maintain a body condition score of 4. These cattle are fed on winter range so they have "pickins" other than hay. Outstanding product!  
P.S. I also fed 80% less mineral!  
Tom Seawald  
Mantle Ranch

## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## The Beneficial Impacts of TERROIR on your Food

By Jerry Brunetti

In the European food vernacular, there is a term called “terroir”, essentially an agricultural description pertaining to the bouquet of flavors in foods that originate from the soil. Terroir not only influences the food flavor but also affects the keeping quality of meats, milk/dairy products and eggs. To maximize the beneficial impacts of terroir on your food, it’s necessary to incorporate the three-legged stool of geology, biology and diversity.

Geology consists of the minerals you were blessed with by natural forces like glaciers, marine sediments and volcanoes; or what you applied to the land, such as limestone, gypsum or trace elements. Biology pertains to the billions of bacteria, fungi, protozoa, arthropods, earthworms, nematodes, etc that dwell in large, vigorous root systems (rhizosphere) and that are literally the plant’s digestive and immune systems.

Diversity is the gift of at least dozens of species of grasses, forbs, legumes and hedgerow trees, shrubs, vines and brambles that interact with the geology and biology to synthesize the primary plant metabolites (proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals); as well as the secondary metabolites (phenolics, terpenes, alkaloids, etc.) that are plant protectants against U.V. light, insects and diseases.

So what does all of this have to do with flavor? Let’s take protein for instance. Milk protein is what gives milk a unique sweet flavor. To make high milk protein, an essential amino acid, isoleucine, is needed, along with other essential amino acids such as lysine, methionine and tryptophan. There are twenty-two amino acids and eight of them are essential or necessary in our diet. Pastures that are devoid of certain minerals such as calcium, boron, magnesium and zinc are less likely to produce essential amino acids, thereby being higher in non protein nitrogen (NPN) which makes Blood Urea Nitrogen/Milk Urea Nitrogen (BUN/MUN), creating an off flavor meat or milk. This can also be caused by applying nitrogen, which if taken up too quickly creates “funny protein” instead of “true protein.” This off flavor often appears as a compound called “skatole” (C6H9N), a microbial metabolite that has a fecal odor/flavor.

In order for amino acids to combine and create peptide chains which combine to create many thousands of proteins, sulfur is needed. Applying soil sulfur will do the trick on domesticated grasses and legumes- but can be expensive. Native plants such as burdock, plantain, nettle, dandelion, willow and brassicas (e.g. kale, turnips, radishes) are very rich sources of sulfur and the reason why livestock crave them when in a lush, high- protein paddock. Most forbs and native plants are rich in tannins which

not only suppress parasites, but also suppress the production of certain microbes which convert protein into rumen ammonia. Tannins thus help livestock create a slow release “by-pass” protein which suppresses skatole production. Molybdenum, essential for nitrogen fixation in legumes, also helps detoxify nitrogen in livestock.

To remove BUN/MUN an enzyme called arginase is produced in the liver which converts ammonia to less toxic urea for excretion. Arginase production is dependent upon manganese in the diet. Manganese in the soil also assists plants production of vitamin E (tocopherol), which is the best food preservative and keeps the color and flavor of milk intact. Tocopherol extends the shelf-life of meat by 400%! Manganese is also a carotene booster.

Copper has been recognized to increase carotene and ascorbate levels in plants. Both are antioxidants like vitamin E. Beta carotene is only one of over 600 carotenoids! Others include lutein, zeaxanthin, cryptoxanthin, and lycopene. Carotenoids impart the bright colors of yellow, orange and red to animal fats (butterfat, egg yolks, lard, and tallow) and impart distinct flavors to those fats. That’s because carotenoids are terpenes (terpenoids), actually cousins to the aromatic terpenes known as “essential oils.” Native plants are a rich reservoir of terpenoids which act as antimicrobials and antiparasitics.

The phenols (phenolic acids) include the flavonoids and are found in high amounts in legumes. Plant phytoestrogens (e.g. isoflavones) are one example; quercetin a powerful one is yet another. These aromatic compounds are also antioxidant and anti-inflammatory. In order to synthesize phenols, legumes require adequate calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, cobalt, molybdenum and sulfur.

The bottom line is this: the fewer the species diversity, the more important it is to analyze your soils geology and provide the missing/deficient macro and micro elements. Mineral deficient and acidic soils are worth amending with lime and even trace elements, as has been proven in university trials for milk cows (an extra 1400#/acre DM and extra 300# milk per ton of DM due to digestibility). Beef trials on pasture have shown that amending poor soil translated into reduced finishing times (15 months down to 12 months) and increased carcass yields (57%-61%). So, take the pulse of your land, encourage plant diversity (!), soil test and correct major production limiting deficiencies. Until your paddocks “get there,” supply free-choice supplements (70% of consumed minerals go out the “back door” onto the land, packaged in a microbial rich delivery system) and foliar feed your paddocks. The proof of the pudding is in the eating (i.e. flavors and shelf life).

*Jerry Brunetti is managing director of AgriDynamics, which specializes in products for farm livestock and pets, and consults on a wide variety of other issues. He can be reached at Agri-Dynamics, P.O. Box 267, Martins Creek, Pennsylvania 18063, Phone 877-393-4484, email: info@agri-dynamics.com, website: www.agri-dynamics.com. ♦*

## Featured Farm

*continued from page 28*

weight loss. Now we train calves to poly wire in a movable pen made from stockade panels and release them into a larger group which grazes top quality grass somewhere in the pasture system. The weanlings are supplemented with 3 lbs. of grain/day and 2 lbs. of hay on pasture until they are 1 year old.

**NN: Who and what are your resources that your turn to, to keep your organic operation running smoothly?**

**SM:** Our farm has been in the family for 2 generations, and we are trying to keep it viable for a third generation. A tremendous amount of support comes from having a lot of family committed to the success of the operation and willing to work for nothing to help maintain it. I personally have learned much of the most useful technical information about organic dairying at seminars and field day visits to other farms. Having a farmer mentor who can help distinguish between the soil and animal science and the myth in all the information out there is also invaluable.

**NN: What are some of the things you see in the organic dairy industry that need to be addressed in order to for organic livestock producers to be better served? Do you have any ideas/suggestions on how we can get there?**

**SM:** I am looking at the organic dairy industry from the standpoint of a producer who transitioned before the NOP existed and before the industry had consolidated into the two player system it is now with Organic Valley/CROPP and Horizon owning most of the brands, controlling most of the supply and competing with a few large independent producers for the store brand business. There has been slow steady progress by the NOP to clarify the standard and begin to control violations of the law. There is still a long way to go to make the standard clean, clear and fair. Currently loopholes in the rule allow for certain producers to raise heifers from conventional

farms and transition them to organic production on a continuous basis. Work by the NOP on this issue is ongoing and hopefully a “replacement rule” will close some of the loop-holes in the near future.

Growth in demand for organic dairy products has been significant and steady except for a period during the recent recession when it leveled off. Processors struggled with surplus organic raw milk and some didn’t survive, producers accepted quotas or price reductions while transitioning farmers had to be deferred until demand recovered. That period of over supply is gone now; growth in demand is approaching double digits again and processors are looking for more milk. The lesson that we can all take from our recent experience is that oversupply is not good for anyone, and that an industry-wide supply/control mechanism might be a better solution than boom and bust growth in the industry.

Pay price for organic milk has not been keeping up with increasing costs of production on farms and producers are being squeezed into less and less sustainable production practices. The cost of processing is going up as well; for example the cost of health care benefits for employees has increased dramatically in the past 5 years. Those increased cost of processing is being met before a pay increase to farmers can be considered. Many farmers without off farm jobs live without health coverage at all.

Organic dairy processors compete to offer products to retailers at the lowest price. Both major brands claim that the competition with the other is so fierce it is impossible to raise prices. We are in an industry that pays the cost of processing first, and then pays its producers with what is left over. If it is true that the price to retailers can’t go up and the cost of processing is always going up and farmers only get what is left over, then we are holding the losing hand.

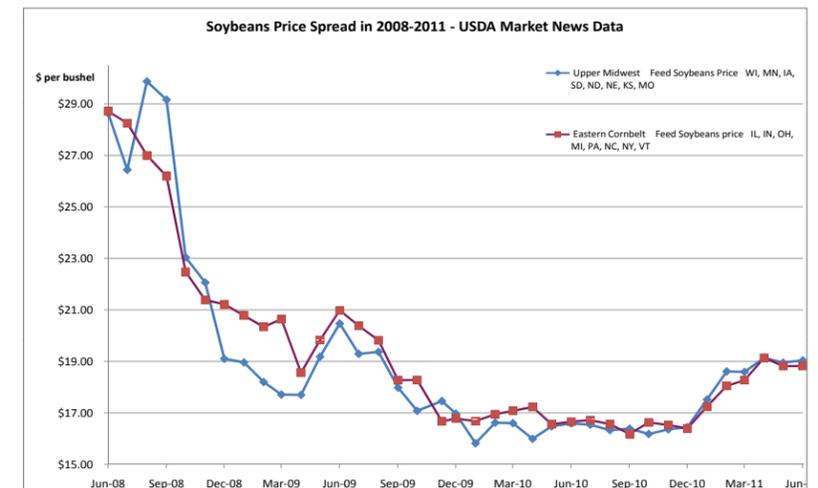
It seems to me that a farmer voice in the development of a supply management system could help us to avoid periods of oversupply such as we have seen recently. It might also help to make paying a fair price for the raw material the industry depends on a priority. ♦

## Retail, Pay & Feed Price

*continued from page 7*

control with drift, contaminated seed and contamination during transport. The increase in price of small grains has varied and the price for soybeans has remained relatively stable at this time.

As these feed prices increase and work their way through the system and into new contracts for 2011 and 2012, the costs of inputs for this winter are uncertain at best. Harvesting forage has varied and although some hay crops have been large, the quality of first cut has been quite varied. With plenty of grazing available, there will be ample opportunity for producers to plant season extension crops to balance out the higher costs of grain; however, inevitably this winter will be expensive for feed and the premiums offered by processors will not cover the extra expense. ♦



**Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance Producer Milk Check Assignment Form**

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 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 \_\_\_\_\_, 201\_\_\_\_. 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:**  
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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.

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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      \_\_\_\_\_ \$300 to \$500 to become a Friend  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 to become an Associate member (open to all)      \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 to \$1,000 to become a Patron  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 to become a supporter of NODPA      \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000+ to become a Benefactor  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$150 to become a Business Member

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, Organic Dairy Producer, NODPA State Rep, NY*

There was a lot of conversation last month about udder preparation - especially in the extra muddy conditions during the spring. Several producers used the “dip, strip, and wipe” routine - pre-dip with an iodine dip, strip, and wipe with individual towels. Other suggestions included using homemade dip mixtures: one farmer uses a mixture of 2 ounces of 35% food grade hydrogen peroxide and 2 ounces of glycerin in a gallon of water; another farmer mixes a solution of Dr Bonner’s peppermint castile soap and sprays it on as a pre-dip. One farmer reminded us how important the let-down is and he likes to give the cow 45 seconds to one minute before attaching the milker. For chapped teats, one producer really likes Udder Fancy from Crystal Creek. Other producers suggested that the handling of the cattle and the emotional state of the milkers come into play as well.

A producer asked for some advice about his 4 week old heifer calf with a hernia. It was suggested that he push the intestines back in, and wrap a band around to keep them in place until it heals. Elastikon was recommended for this use; use 2 rolls and repeat in 2 weeks (duct tape was also suggested). It was recommended to give homeopathic support as well -- Calcarea is often used.

Several producers felt that production costs have increased broadly, and the pay price has not kept up. One farmer suggested that we work together to create a cost index for producing organic milk that would include factors affecting cost of production. It was suggested that it include factors for grain and diesel fuel, and could be applied to the base just as fuel surcharges are used. It could be a monthly index, rising and falling with its associated costs. It should be kept simple, honest, and realistic. Another producer recommended that we use the parity figures, since those calculations are already done there.

A farmer felt that his pastures are over-run with bedstraw. He indicated that he plans to graze those pastures fast, then cut it before it flowers. Others added that bedstraw does not stand up to intensive pasturing and cutting; it will likely disappear with those practices. Improving overall fertility to give grasses and clovers a competitive advantage was also suggested.

A farmer who keeps his calves on the cows discussed problems with let down. Other farmers chimed in with some advice, and it seems to work well to keep the calf in the barn at night and milk the cow in the morning. Then allow them to be together on pasture during the day. Two farmers agreed that the butterfat in the milk increased dramatically after the calf was removed.

A heifer was showing signs of poisoning after grazing milkweed. It was recommended that activated charcoal be administered right away; using one tube at a time, and repeat every 4 to 6 hours. Sedation may be required if she is uncoordinated. ♦

**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](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](http://www.nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml)

**Why Not Advertise With Us?**

You’ll reach a motivated, qualified audience with information about your products and services ... at an affordable price.

**Go to our website to learn more:**

[www.nodpa.com/nl\\_print\\_advertising.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/nl_print_advertising.shtml)

# Calendar

July 26th, 2011

## Farmer to Farmer Discussion Group (all welcome)

11-2 PM, Corse Family Dairy, Whitingham, VT. Hosted by Leon and Linda Corse

Contact the NOFA-VT Office (802-434-4122); Willie Gibson (willie@nofavt.org, 802-535-9067).

July 28, 2011

## Pasture School: Harvest Home's Evolution to Mob Grazing Bangor, Pennsylvania

Second session of a three-part Pasture School, learn about Harvest Home's mob grazing system and their grass-fed, direct-marketed beef. For more information: <http://extension.psu.edu/start-farming/courses/pasture-school>

July 30, 2011

## An Introduction to Farming with Horses Essex Farm, Essex, NY, 1:30pm – 4:00pm

Join Mark & Kristin Kimball at Essex Farm for an introduction to farming with horses! We'll discuss basic cultivation and harvesting techniques, appropriate equipment, and the financial costs and benefits of using draft power. Farmers thinking of powering their farms with horses won't want to miss this opportunity for some hands-on work and training with the teams at Essex Farm. Show up earlier for a farm-

ers-only tour of the farm (10:00am, \$10 apiece, no pre-registration). Please register for this event by calling Katie (Membership & Registration Coordinator) at (585)271-1979 ext 512.

July 30, 2011

## Vermont Beef Producers Summer Social: Capitalizing on the Vermont Brand

Sudbury, Vermont

Join members of the Vermont Beef Producers Association at the annual Summer Social. Contact: Jenn Colby, 802-656-0858 or jcolby@uvm.edu.

Thursday, August 4, 2011: Crops and Soils Field Day

Borderview Farm 46 Line Rd, Alburgh, VT, 10:00am to 3:30pm

This year's theme is Cultivating a Healthy Farm! From the ground up, we will highlight healthy soils, healthy crops and healthy people. Come and see over 2,000 research plots focusing on reduced tillage and cover crops, long term cropping systems and integrated pest management, as well as cropspecific research evaluating different annual forage systems, wheat, barley, oats, flax, oilseed crops, and hops. Contact Heather Darby, 802-524-6501 or hdarby@uvm.edu

August 8, 2011

## Judy-Peterson Pasture Walk

Lexington, Nebraska

Spend the day with Greg Judy and Chad Peterson who are well versed in Holistic Management, and practice low-cost cattle production. For more information or to register, please call 402-288-5611.

August 7-12, 2011

## Hands-on Biochar Camp

New England Small Farm Institute, Belchertown, MA

The Biomass Energy Foundation (BEF, <http://www.woodgas.com/>) is launching its instructional five-day events called "BEF Camps" around the world in 2011. Contact Warren Hubley: Email - warren@small-farm.org, Phone - 413-323-4531.

August 9-11, 2011

## MOB Grazing Tour: 5 Farms, Endless Information, Iowa

The five farms will demonstrate how sheep, beef and dairy cattle are used in high-density grazing. Speakers are scheduled at each tour stop. For more information: <http://practicalfarmers.org/events/field-days.html>

Wednesday, August 10, 11am-3pm

Choiniere Family Dairy, Highgate Center, VT

Cost: \$15, includes lunch. Pre-registration required.

Owner and operator Guy Choiniere will talk about grain production and innovative ways to integrate small grains into a dairy ration, as well as using bedded pack compost to improve pastures and extend the grazing season, and growing tillage radishes to reduce compaction. For more information or to register, call the NW Crop and Soils Program (802)524-6501.

August 12-14, 2011

## Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) Summer Conference with Northeast Animal-Power Field Days

Amherst, Massachusetts

See page 22 for details. Contact: Kathleen and Siedeh, Registration

Co-Coordinator, (413) 230-7835, registration@nofasummerconference.org

August 13, 2011, Farm Aid 2011, Kansas City, Kansas

Farm Aid 2011 will feature HOMEGROWN concessions, featuring local, organic or family farm-sourced ingredients. For more information: [www.farmaid.org](http://www.farmaid.org)

August 14, 2011

## Genetically Engineering Crops: What Do You Need To Know? Discussion and NOFA-vore Social, 4-6pm

Amazing Planet Farm, Williamsville, VT

\$10 for NOFA-VT members, \$20 non-members. Pre-registration is requested for the NOFAvore social and donations for dinner are suggested. All are welcome. The discussion is cohosted by Post Oil Solutions. Dave Rogers, NOFA Vermont's Policy Advisor, will facilitate.

## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

### Fly Control

*continued from page 25*

only three of these are considered pests. One of the most active natural enemies are scarab or dung beetles.

Biological control against horn and face flies is limited to beneficial organisms occurring naturally in the field, especially those spending part of their life in cow dung. Face flies have very hard pupal casings, which many parasitoids cannot penetrate but they can be attacked by parasitic nematodes. Predaceous mites and beetles prey on the immature stages of both horn flies and face flies. Adult flies are attacked by yellow dung flies. Face flies are occasionally attacked by pathogenic fungi. Birds, bats, and spiders also contribute to overall reductions in flies of all types.



### Control Agents.

*Small dung scarab and red dung scarab beetles.*



**Dung Beetles:** Horn and face flies require fresh manure to complete their life cycle, but dung beetles can dramatically reduce these pest populations by competing for the manure and depriving horn and face flies of a habitat for their larvae to develop. A single manure pat can produce 60 to 80 horn flies if left unprotected from predators. One of the most beneficial dung beetles has a habit of forming balls from dung in which they lay their eggs. These balls



are rolled into tunnels the beetles have dug in the soil, away from the access of horn and face flies. Some studies indicate that healthy dung beetle populations can bury up to 90% of cow manure within a pasture in one week.

The benefits of dung beetles go well beyond reducing face and horn fly populations. Burying manure reduces runoff problems

tate. Contact NOFA VT at 802-434-4122 or info@nofavt.org.

Tuesday, September 20, 2011

## Processing & Storing Small Grains Field Day

Butterworks Farm, Westfield, VT, 11 am – 3 pm

Cost: \$15, includes lunch by the NOFA-VT pizza crew. Pre-registration required.

September 23-25, 2011, MOFGA's Common Ground Fair

MOFGA Fairgrounds, Unity, Maine

If you've ever been to the Fair, you know — and if you haven't been, anyone who has will tell you — it's an event like no other, that brings together so many people from so many walks of life, all in the spirit of celebrating the rural and agricultural traditions of Maine. For more information: email: [Mofga@mofga.org](mailto:Mofga@mofga.org) or phone: 207-568-4142

*continued on page 40*

and increases nutrient availability from the manure, improves organic matter in the soil, and is a general benefit to soil health resulting in improved pasture growth. Removing manure makes more area available for grazing. In addition, dung beetle activity breaks the cycle of some internal pests of dairy cattle which are dependent on manure pats remaining undisturbed.

Under ideal conditions, dung beetle larvae will pupate in about 3 weeks and the life cycle is completed in about 6 weeks. Dry spells will reduce dung beetle activity. Even though dung beetles are thought to be capable of flying up to 10 miles in search of fresh dung, their populations can be improved by planning to graze animals in pasture areas where new adult beetles are expected to emerge from the soil. This effectively decreases the time beetles spend looking for fresh manure.

In some emergency cases, a farm certifier may allow the use of ivermectin for control of internal parasites, but use of this pesticide is detrimental to dung beetle populations for weeks after treatment and the NOP rules restrict the sale of milk after treatment.

To assess dung beetle activity, check the outside of manure pats for holes in the surface, or the inside for tunneling or a shredded appearance.

**Poultry:** When allowed to range in pastures, poultry, particularly Muscovy ducks, assist to reduce fly populations through their habit of searching for larvae in manure pats.

### Mechanical Controls

**Face flies:** Face flies do not enter darkened barns or stables during the summer months. Offering shelter can reduce face fly incidence on cows.

**Horn Flies:** The only effective traps mechanical controls are walk through traps that can assist in reducing horn fly populations. ♦

*Excerpt from the publication '2011 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Guide for Organic Dairies'; reprinted with permission by the New York State Department of Ag and Markets. To download the complete booklet and find other information on IPM for organic livestock, please go to: [www.nysipm.cornell.edu/organic\\_guide/default.asp](http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/organic_guide/default.asp)*

## Advertise With Us!

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

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

Ad rates and sizes listed below.

**Deadline for advertising in the  
September, 2011 issue is August 10, 2011.**

**Full Page Ad (7.5" W x 10.25" H) = \$450**

**1/2 Page Ad (7.5" W x 4.5" H) = \$230**

**1/4 Page Ad (3.5" W x 4.75" H) = \$130**

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

**(3.5" W x 2.25" H) = \$60**

**Classified Ads:** Free to Northeast organic farmers. All others \$20 for the first 30 words; \$.20 per word over 30

For advertising information call Lisa McCrory: 802-234-5524 or email [Lmccrory@hughes.net](mailto:Lmccrory@hughes.net)

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

# Classified Ads

## Livestock

**For sale:** 70 certified organic springing Holstein and Jersey heifers and some cross bred, certified organic, due mid August. Call Morvan Allen: 413-229-6018 and leave a message

**15 to 20 high quality certified organic holstein heifers for sale,** yearlings to short bred. All are AI sired and out of the top bulls of the breed. The herd averaged 68# on last test with a 100% of forage coming from pasture. Phone: 802 744 6121, Lyle & Kitty Edwards, Westfield Vermont

**Certified Organic Jersey cows for sale.** Too many to fit in the barn; some must go. Contact Colin Maroney at orders@butterworksfarm.com or call: 802-744-6855.

## Feed

**Certified (in good standing) Organic Hay, Alfalfa and grass mix.** Heifer and sheep quality in medium square bales. Organic wheat straw in medium square bales. Ph: 218-790-0236 Lee Thomas, Moorhead, MN or lthomas622@juno.com

**Certified organic dry round bales,** unwrapped, approximately 550 # and stored inside. Cost is \$40/bale at the barn. Located in Barnard, VT. Contact Joe Ladouceur, email: ladouceurj@aol.com, Phone: 802-763-7454.

## Wanted

**Wanted:** Dairy farm to test OMRI-certified trace mineral product. Need a minimum of 15 to 20 cows/test group and two groups needed (Control and Test). Product provided for test. Contact Doug Fodge, dougfodge@gmail.com or call (301)919-5208 if interested.

## Advertise in the September issue of the NODPA News!

This issue will contain articles and resources for the 2011 NODPA Field Days and Annual Meeting, so you will have added exposure, as additional copies will be printed and available on the days of the event.

Contact Lisa McCrory:  
Lmccrory@hughes.net or  
802-234-5524 or

visit our website for more information:

[www.nodpa.com/nl\\_print\\_advertising.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/nl_print_advertising.shtml)

(See page 36 for advertising rates and sizes.)

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### 2011 Field Days

*continued from page 20*

be open, and there will be the ever-popular door prize drawings for products generously donated by NODPA sponsors and trade show participants.

We have devoted the whole afternoon to a production based workshop entitled "Thinking-Man's Grazing: Learning How to Plan your Grazing for Profit, Production and Success." This workshop offers practical, hands-on learning experience on grazing plan strategies and will include examples of farms that have applied these strategies. Attendees will learn how to plan their grazing ahead of time to meet their personal production goals. Troy Bishopp, who will lead the presentation, is a grazing consultant, a Holistic Management Educator from the Madison Co. NY SWCD/Upper Susquehanna Coalition, and a project leader for a NESARE funded professional development grazing training project through the CNY RC&D Council in Norwich, NY.

This year, participants have a variety of places to stay in the beautiful surrounding area at very cost-effective rates. Attendees can stay on-site at the Cooperstown Beaver Valley Cabins and Campsites, Milford, NY (minutes from the center of Cooperstown), and NODPA Field Days participants receive half price rates on campsites and cabins. A small cabin sleeps up to 4-6 people; has a small kitchen, eating area and bathroom, even a front covered porch. The rate is \$62.50 per night (NOT per person). For reservations, call 607-293-7324 and mention 'Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance's Field Days' in order to get the discounted rate. Since this is the off-season, you will need to bring your own linens. There are campsites and cabins without electricity and bathrooms available, too. For pictures and further information about the cabins and campsites, visit [www.beavervalleycampground.com](http://www.beavervalleycampground.com). There are also conveniently located hotels for you to choose from that have very reasonable rates, such as Country Inn and Suites of Cooperstown, Budget Inn, Red Carpet Inn and Suites, and Best Western Plus Cooperstown Inn and Suites. Visit internet travel websites, such as Expedia and Travelocity, for more information and reservations.

Watch your mailbox for your NODPA Field Days brochure, which will be mailed out in early August and will be available for download from NODPA's website. Visit the NODPA Field Days webpage regularly for updates on speakers, sponsors and other program details as they become available:  
[www.nodpa.com/fielddays\\_2011\\_june7\\_announcement.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/fielddays_2011_june7_announcement.shtml).

The September NODPA News will have many pages devoted to the Field Days including more information about our wonderful presenters. Because of the generous support of our sponsors and supporters, NODPA has been able to offer registration for free for organic producers plus free Thursday banquet dinners for transitioning producers and their families.

Save the date and plan to attend this year's NODPA Field Days for learning opportunities, good food and plenty of time to meet with fellow NODPA members. **Have questions? Call Nora Owens, Field Days Coordinator, 413-772-0444, or email her at [noraowens@comcast.net](mailto:noraowens@comcast.net).** ♦

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### 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 test below the limit be good enough; each farm's 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 there 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 ODPAs work together to formulate such a system. Your input and involvement is greatly encouraged.

As we have just celebrated 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

<b>Wisconsin</b> Darlene Coehoorn, President Viewpoint Acres Farm N5878 Hwy C Rosendale, WI 54974 ddviewpoint@yahoo.com Phone: 920-921-5541	Sauk City, WI 53583 taofarmer@direcway.com Phone: 608- 544-3702
Jim Greenberg, Vice-President EP 3961 Drake Avenue Stratford, WI 54484 greenbfirms@tznnet.com Phone: 715-687-8147	Jim Small, Director 26548 Locust Ave. Wilton, WI 54670 Tel: 608-435-6700
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Bruce Drinkman, Treasurer 3253 150th Avenue Glenwood City, WI 54013 bdrinkman@hotmail.com Phone: 715-265-4631	<b>Michigan</b> Ed Zimba Zimba Dairy 7995 Mushroom Rd DeFord, MI 48729 zimbadaairy@tband.net Phone: 989-872-2680
John Kiefer, Director S10698 Troy Rd	<b>Ohio</b> Ernest Martin, Director 1720 Crum Rd Shiloh, OH 44878 Phone and Fax: 419-895-1182

### 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

Prsrt Std  
US Postage Paid  
Permit 183  
Greenfield, MA

### ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

*continued from page 37*

This workshop, hosted by Jack and Anne Lazor at Butterworks Farm, will highlight post-harvest techniques for cleaning, storing, and processing small grains.

Contact the NW Crop and Soils Program, (802) 524-6501. Organized by UVM Extension.

**September 29-30, 2011**

**11th Annual NODPA Field Days**

**Cooperstown, NY**

This year's program theme is: *'Organic Dairy: What does the Future Hold?'*

Keynote speaker, Francis Thicke. For more information, go to [http://www.nodpa.com/fielddays\\_2011\\_june7\\_announcement.shtml](http://www.nodpa.com/fielddays_2011_june7_announcement.shtml) or call Nora Owens at 413-772-0444, email: [noraowens@comcast.net](mailto:noraowens@comcast.net)

**November 4, 2011**

**Organic Dairy & Field Crop Conference**

**Crown Plaza Hotel, Syracuse, NY**

Workshop topics include: grazing dairy cows, diversifying your dairy farm, soil and weed control in field crops, nutrient density in grain crops, food grade grains, seed cleaning and milk quality. Contact Bethany Wallis, Phone: 585-271-1979 ext 513, Email: [dairyconference@nofany.org](mailto:dairyconference@nofany.org).



### Get Your NODPA Gear Today!

**Hat = \$15.50**

**T-shirt = \$13.50**

**Bumper Sticker = \$1.25 each**

(or) 25 for \$19.75

*Shipping Included*

**Make check payable to: NODPA.**

**Send to: NODPA, c/o Ed Maltby**

**30 Keets Rd., Deerfield, MA 01342**