

NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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John Stoltzfus, 'Outstanding in his field' of summer annuals.

No-Grain, Fodder-Fed Organic Dairy: B-A-Blessing Farm, Whitesville, NY

By Lisa McCrory, NODPA News Editor

John and Tammy Stoltzfus own and operate B-A-Blessing Farm, and farm with their 3 sons in Whitesville, NY. They own 500 acres of which 300 are tillable and 200 are managed as rotationally grazed pasture. Their career in dairy farming began on a farm in Huntington Co, PA in 1989. After a few years there, they made their way to Whitesville, NY, in Allegany County. They milk about 80 cows with an average production of 15,500 pounds per cow. Milk quality and components at last test were 219,000 SCC, 4.0% Butterfat, and 3.2% Protein.

A lot of positive change has been taking place at B-A-Blessing farm - especially in the past

few years. Family members are returning to the farm, and they have been fine-tuning a new feeding system that is proving to keep their cows in excellent health and body condition, rewarding them with reduced feed costs, and earning them a much needed (and deserved) farm profit. They have been feeding their cows sprouted grains (barley fodder) and, in the interest of helping others, they are actively sharing their system through numerous channels including publishing a booklet, 'Our Journey Into The Land Of Fodder'; creating an eOrganic webinar on feeding fodder to organic dairy cattle**; speaking

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Richard Mathews New WODPA Director

The Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) is proud to announce that Richard Mathews has been selected as our first Executive Director. Richard began his position May 15, 2013.

Go to page 28 for more information.

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From the NODPA President

Delayed by the rains in the early part of the summer, we all feverishly work to catch up. Farms in my area were set back at least 2 to 3 weeks during the time when the baleage should have come off. Planting of corn and soybeans was seriously impacted in some areas. Of course we grumbled about the weather, but not too loudly. We all remember the dry season last year, and figure that it could be worse.

The "penny dropped" for a non-farmer friend last week who asked how farmers could make it at all. We are inextricably linked to weather conditions; we are tied to these natural rhythms which are completely out of our control. How do we cope with all this uncertainty? I suppose farmers just take one day at a time, have a sense that things usually tend to even out (it has to stop raining sometime...). We are trained to see the windows of opportunity when it is the right time to plant or mow hay, and most farmers have a Plan B -- the changes in the plan for when conditions don't straighten around. Our lives are filled

with risk, to be sure. I suppose that this is part of what keeps us on the land. It is the challenging part; every year is different from the one before. We make plans and set goals, and then have to scrap the first plan to adjust to the conditions. As a wise old farmer in these parts says, "There's always something to keep it interesting!"

We wish you all a safe and happy haying season!

Liz Bawden, NODPA President

Hammond, NY

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NODPA MISSION STATEMENT

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 wellbeing of the organic dairy industry as a whole.

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From The NODPA Desk July, 2013

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

The dust is starting to settle around the Federal Farm Bill which was deliberately sabotaged by Republican leadership in the House with two amendments designed to ensure that few Democrats would vote in favor of passage. One amendment was directed at more SNAP (Food stamps) cuts and the other was to stop any form of supply control in the Dairy title. Although there are several alternatives that the House and Senate can use to move a Farm Bill forward, it seems more than likely that they will wait until September for a last minute solution to either extend the current Farm Bill, which would see zero levels of funding for many organic programs, or some form of compromise which will satisfy no one. Many are now speculating that 2008 was the last Farm Bill in its current form and that there is no will in Congress to have one in 2013. With nearly 80% of the Farm Bill tied to anti-poverty measures and the declining power of the farm states to bargain for their programs, it will be interesting to see how key congressional leaders will attempt to move their programs forward. Perhaps MILC will be extended yet again, which will be good for organic producers. Watch out for the Organic Trade Association to add amendments onto different bills to pass the Organic Check-Off, a tax on producers at a time when organic farm margins are getting smaller and the premium for organic products are disappearing. If a check-off was in place now with generic organic advertising, it would be stimulating imports rather than encouraging organic production in the United States.

The National Organic Program (NOP) recently released a report that showed that defining outside access for poultry will have an adverse effect on the income of organic poultry producers and therefore they will not proceed (their words were, "it will not be a priority") with the recommendation of the National Organic Standards Board on animal welfare for poultry. This effectively says that economic impact will increasingly become a factor that will exert downward pressure on organic standards and on the NOP's list of priority for rulemaking. We have known for many years that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has been the reason for delays in rulemaking because of their need to evaluate the economic impact of any Federal Rule. With the access to pasture rule, we worked directly with the US Small Business Administration to show how the lack of rulemaking was having a negative impact on small to mid-size operations which dominate organic production in type of farm though not in volume of product produced. As organic increasingly moves

down the path of non-organic agricultural, where large operations dominate the industry because of their volume, it would seem that this latest announcement from the NOP means that the NOSB will be ignored when there is any adverse economic effect on large operations. It also leaves the organic poultry farmers who are currently meeting both the intent and spirit of the law marginalized for doing the "right thing", rather than exploiting the lack of enforcement and bad interpretation of the access to outside requirement for poultry that many large producers have done to achieve market gain and access. It also explains why we still don't have an Origin of Livestock proposed rule and why we are starting to see the expansion of many other humane labels competing for organic consumers.

The NOP have recently launched the Sound and Sensible program to "identify and remove barriers to certification, streamline the certification process, focus enforcement, and working with farmers and processors to correct small issues before they become larger ones. The overall goal of this new initiative is to make organic certification accessible, attainable, and affordable for all operations". NODPA has in the past suggested ways in which certification can be streamlined (one common form used by all certifiers; educated and competent inspectors; one list of accepted products that can be used in organic production and standard interpretations of the standards by all certifiers) and we encourage all producers to comment either directly to the NOP or if you fear repercussion from certifiers, to NODPA so we can represent producers' concerns and challenges. The easiest way to ensure growth in certified organic production is to make it profitable for producers to farm organically and to have confidence in the long term integrity of the seal. We must not lose the gold standard approach to third party audited certification from field to table, nor have a process that is not robust and detailed. 'Sound and Sensible' cannot mean 'easy and lax' but we should not be afraid to re-introduce common sense by qualified inspectors reporting back to their certifiers. An inspection of an organic dairy should not be as short as two hours nor as long as ten and an inspector needs to spend ample time in the field not just riding the property in the farm pick-up.

At the NODPA Field Days one of the first certified organic dairy farmers, Kevin Englebert, will give his thoughts on the future of the organic seal. Organic Valley, at their annual meeting, explored the idea of increasing their international partnerships; WhiteWave sees a more diversified product line in their future; Gary Hirschberg and Stonyfield are looking at a more regional option and tentatively exploring how we can stimulate more organic dairies in the Northeast. As producers, we must ensure that within all these initiatives there is a plan to guarantee adequate margins for the organic dairy farm family. ♦

RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Pasture Quality Variation Throughout The Grazing Season

By Aimee Hafla, USDA ARS

It is important for dairy producers and their nutritionists to have an idea of the nutritional quality of the pasture they are providing to their cows. The ideal way to assess forage quality is to gather a representative forage sample from a given area, send it to a commercial lab and wait patiently for a detailed report of nutrient composition. Unfortunately, the cost of forage testing can be a limitation to producers and the time it takes to get results prevents its use to monitor pastures as they are grazed. On-going research projects conducted by the USDA-ARS Pasture Systems and Watershed Management Research Unit in State College, PA can provide examples of monthly pasture quality for grazing dairy farms in this region.

As part of a larger 5-state interdisciplinary research effort funded by the USDA-NIFA- Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative, we are gathering data to evaluate pasture production strategies and the possibility of supplementing winter flaxseed to optimize production while enriching milk composition (omega-3 fatty acids and conjugated linoleic acids). We are starting year 2 of this 4 year project and part of this study involves

gathering twice monthly pasture samples from our cooperating organic dairy farms to describe available pasture quality, forage fatty acid composition, and the relationship of milk fatty acid composition to quantity and quality of forage consumed. This methodology has allowed us to begin gathering a robust data set of pasture quality for 14 farms across the northeastern U.S.

The following data, shown in Figure 1 and Table 1, is from one of these farms located in southern PA. This farm milks approximately 55 cows and has 47 acres of permanent pasture and 65 acres used for either pasture or hay. Grazing occurs at night and the cows are generally offered a new pasture each night, depending on forage availability. Forage samples for this study were collected in the late morning from different pastures (some permanent pasture and some hay and pasture fields) at each sampling and are representative of forage quality across the farm throughout the grazing season, instead of within a single pasture. Forage quality for each month is an average of 2 samples from different pastures on the farm. The pastures on this farm contained 62% grasses, 18% legumes, 19% weeds and 1% bare ground, with predominant species including orchard grass, fescue, alfalfa, and white and red clover. Over the 6 month grazing period, crude protein (CP), fiber (NDF) and energy (NEL) of the pasture averaged 19%, 60% and 0.52 Mcal/lb, respectively. As expected, energy levels in the forage were greatest (0.57 Mcal/lb DM; Figure 1) in early summer and early fall and the lowest in October (0.45 Mcal/lb DM). During periods of peak growth in the spring and fall, CP and NEL are greater, while NDF is lower. During the warm



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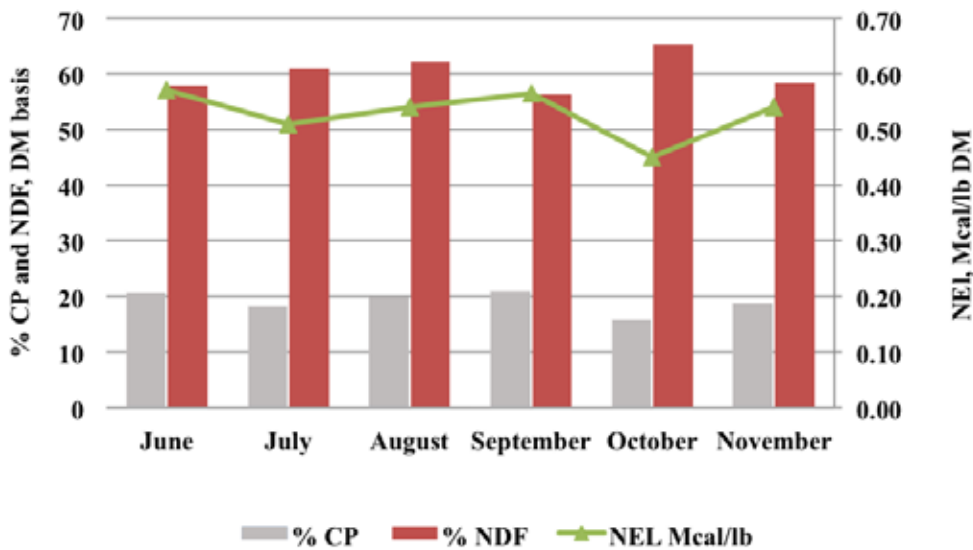
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Figure 1. Pasture quality on a grazing dairy farm in southern PA during the 2012 grazing season



summer months and later fall, growth rates slow and nutritional value of the forage declines. Declining forage quality during the summer is due to high environmental temperatures and low moisture, while later in the fall it is due to lower temperatures and decreasing daylight. The decline in forage quality in July also coincided with the drought conditions (rainfall deficit of 1.07 inches in July, for

this region) that occurred in much of PA in 2012. The greatest drop in forage quality occurred from September to October, and represents a period of time when a negative impact on milk yield would be evident. Calcium concentrations in the forage declined as the grazing season progressed (from 0.82% in June to 0.54% in November), however, phosphorus and magnesium remained steadier (Table 1). The mineral concentrations found on this farm were within the expected range for this region.

Data presented in Figure 2 were collected as part of a one year Northeast SARE funded project evaluating grazing management and pasture productivity. It is

taken from a NY grazing dairy which milks 60 cows and grazes 240 acres of pasture and hay land. During the 2012 grazing season cows were supplemented with molasses and balage in

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Cocktail Cover Cropping Rising

By Abe Collins, founder of Collins Grazing

A cropping strategy that aspires to the diversity and productivity of native prairie called Cocktail Cover Cropping has taken root in Burleigh County, North Dakota and is spreading through US production agriculture.

The outcomes that are spurring uptake include increased soil health, elimination of erosion, reduced nutrient loss to leaching, reduced inputs, increased production and profit, efficient use of precipitation, drought resistance, impressive livestock performance when the crops are (lightly) grazed and more.

The farmer-graziers, NRCS personnel and scientists who have been leading the cocktail charge are doing a fine job of experimenting, unraveling the mysteries of the strategy and translating their insights into practical lessons. If you have the opportunity to learn from people like Gabe Brown, Gail Fuller, David Brandt, Jay Fuhrer, Kristine Nichols and Ray Archuleta, for example, take it! I have been doing so for some years now, and feel like I'm just scratching the surface of their knowledge. I've come to believe that the advantages of cocktail cover cropping could address some of the needs of Northeastern agriculture and watershed

health and give us a powerful new set of tools for success. What follows is an attempt to share my understanding of what these pioneers have to teach. I have drawn heavily from conversations with some of these people and their written materials, but any mistakes are solely mine.

What is Cocktail Cover Cropping and Why are Farmers Adopting it?

Cocktail cover cropping involves using complex mixtures of cover crop seeds – commonly between 7 and 20 varieties of seed in a single mix - to achieve multiple soil-health, production and profit goals, usually in no-till farming systems. By definition, the cover crop mixtures are planted between primary cash crops. Often, the cover crops are planted after a summer-harvested crop such as wheat, but any time there is a need to fill a possible growing niche, such as after corn harvest and in the early spring, cocktail cover crops are proving valuable. Increasing numbers of farmers are even improving soil health and subsequent production with full-season cover cropping programs; no-till drilling multiple crops into the grazed or occasionally rolled residue of the previous cover crop. US



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A cocktail cover crop in North Dakota, 45 days after planting, photo by Jay Fuhrer.

pioneers are reporting that their best results are usually achieved when livestock are used to lightly graze the crop, with stock eating usually not more than a third of the above-ground biomass and trampling the rest to the soil surface.

On and in the ground, cocktail cover cropping is demonstrating

real results, including:

- Increased crop yields with decreased inputs of fertilizer, pesticides, tractor time, fuel and herbicides.
- Increased profits.
- Increased soil health, including substantially increased organic matter, improved aggregation, better water infiltration and improved biodiversity in soil.
- Capture of nutrients in biological form, reducing leaching.
- Eliminated erosion.
- More available soil moisture.
- Increased wildlife and pollinators.
- High rates of livestock gain during fall and winter (light) grazing of cover crop mixes.

Origins of Cocktail Cover Cropping and Recent Developments in the US

The origins of cocktail cover cropping – minus the grazing refinement – can be traced to Brazil in the 1970's. North Dakota grazier and farmer Gabe Brown and Bismarck, ND NRCS District Conservationist Jay Fuhrer were first exposed

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Cocktail Cover Cropping

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to cocktail cover-cropping in 2006 during a presentation by Dr. Ademir Calegari, a leading researcher on cocktail cover cropping. The strategy was born when Brazilian no-till farmers began experimenting with complex mixtures of cover crop seeds to address resource concerns including the year-long, rapid rate of soil organic matter decay and the need to maintain soil cover in their zero-tillage grain production systems. The never-ending Brazilian growing conditions enabled planting two cash-crops per year with a cocktail cover crop planted between.

Jay and Gabe both tell the same story. They were sitting a few rows from each other, and when Dr. Calegari described the methods and outcomes that farmers were achieving in Brazil, Gabe and Jay looked at each other, both knowing full-well that this strategy could work for them and that they needed to start experimenting.

As Gabe puts it, “we didn’t have the year-round growing conditions that Dr. Calegari was describing, but we had plenty of available degree-days for growing cover crop blends on both ends of our growing season. We knew that the diversity was going to put us ahead and we wanted the soil-health, production and cost-savings outcomes.”

“The 7, 10 and 12-way mixtures we planted proved themselves in the first year,” Gabe says. Benefits that Gabe had been seeing from using simpler cover crop mixes took a sudden leap with the introduction of more diversity. With the addition of light grazing of the mixes, things really took off in terms of soil health and reduced inputs, and they had a way to capture more income per acre via the livestock gains while returning most of the biomass to the soil surface.

Gabe and his son Paul run Brown Ranch, near Bismarck, North Dakota, where they grow mixed grains and graze cattle on 4,500 acres. Gabe’s been no-tilling since 1993, started using two-way mixes of cover crops in 1994-1996 (for example, a cash crop followed by a triticale/hairy vetch cover crop mixture), eventually moving to 3-way combinations and began cocktail cover cropping in 2006. Gabe says that people should know that he’s blessed with good soils – they’ve had the advantages of glaciation, a long run of prairie community dynamics and tilled agriculture didn’t begin until the late 1800’s. Nonetheless, the Brown’s achievements in a challenging environment – famously long, cold winters and average precipitation of 16” per year – suggest alternate futures for reduced-input, high-yield agriculture and provision of environmental security such as reduced flooding and erosion and improved water quality.

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Jeff and Sheila Koester with sons Nathan, 16, Colton, 14 and daughter Madalyn, 5, at World Dairy Expo booth.

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“Our SCC averaged 120,000 in 2011. It was higher before. As we went from on-and-off to more routine use, Udder Comfort became a key to progressively bring down counts.

“For the past year, we’d spray udders after each of the first 8 post-fresh milkings. Our cows don’t swell much, but we did this, routinely, no matter how much swelling we saw.

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Cocktail Cover Cropping

continued from page 8

The Browns don't purchase much of their production via inputs anymore, but Gabe's investment in soil health is paying dividends. Whereas the Burleigh county average corn yield is 100 bushels per acre, Gabe sees an average of 127 bushels. On good rain years, he sees 170 - 180 bushels of corn and occasionally hits 200 bushels.

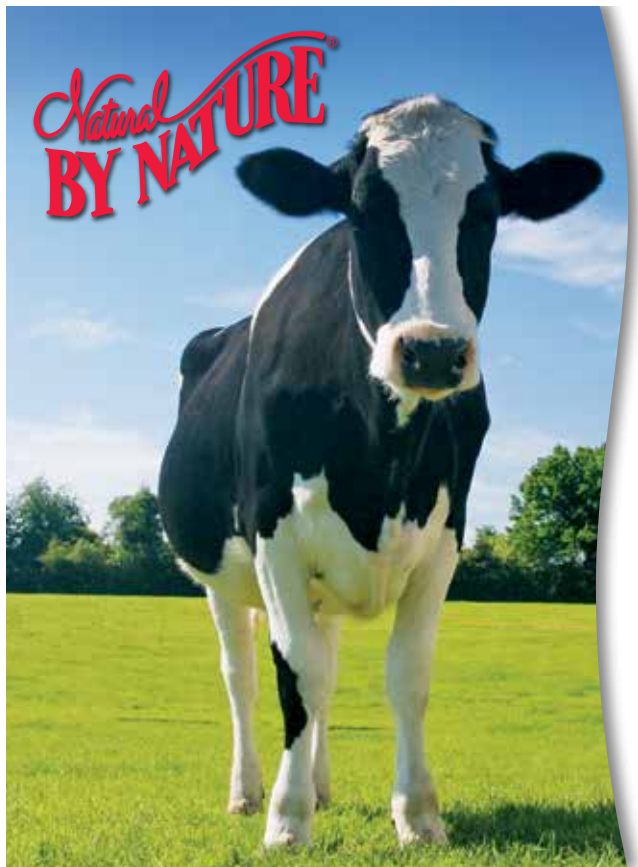
On their owned land, Gabe has used zero commercial fertilizer and pesticides since 2008. His tractor fuel use is about 50% of the county average. His direct cost per bushel of corn is \$1.18 compared to a county average of about \$2.60 per bushel. Gabe has been working diligently to eliminate his reliance on herbicides. He often succeeds and uses a small fraction of the norm in no-till. However, Gabe says his ongoing occasional need for them is deeply frustrating to him. "I don't use herbicide to terminate cover-crops. We achieve that with winter kill and livestock grazing and trampling. For me, the herbicide is only necessary when we're not able to grow enough armor, whether from the cash-crop, the cover crop or residue after grazing - to prevent weed germination. The problem is compounded when there is drought and we don't grow as much biomass. The really frustrating part is that the problem is getting worse as our soil gets healthier, because with that much soil life, there is tremendous digestion of litter. Paul did a

worm-count this spring and found 50 worms per square foot – just think of how much food they need, plus all of the bacteria, fungi and on up through the foodweb."

Gabe's soil monitoring since he began no-till and cover-cropping shows a substantial increase in organic matter. "We are typically pulling cores from the top 6" of soil. We don't use GPS to do our monitoring. What we've seen is that in the early 90's when we began no-till, 1.7% to 1.9% organic matter was the usual range. Today, we'll pull an occasional sample as low as 3.7% organic matter, but the most of our samples come back at 4.7% to 5.3%. On rangeland that's never been plowed, we're seeing organic matter up to 7.3%. In 2012 we worked with Peter Donovan of the Soil Carbon Coalition to establish soil carbon sampling plots with samples taken down to over a foot of depth. We're looking forward to seeing the follow-up monitoring results on those plots in a few more years."

In the recent past, major organic matter increases occurred when he increased the diversity of species in his cover crops mixture. He expects more surges as he fully integrates planned grazing of crops across the whole farm and as dung-beetle activity picks up. This past year, Paul managed their herd at densities of up to 680,000 lbs. per acre, and just recently he has discovered "tumblers," a dung-beetle that was not thought to live locally.

Gabe has seen the water infiltration rate of the Brown Ranch soils increased from 1/2" per hour (that is, the first hour) to 8" per hour. The flood-reduction and water-quality implications



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of this kind of result, if similar infiltration improvements were achieved on many farms, bear consideration and inclusion in policy decision-making. Here in the Northeast, one wonders how much flooding damage during Irene and Sandy might have been reduced if the precipitation infiltration rate of our grazing and farmland soils were increased sixteen-fold.

During a 2010 rainstorm 13.6" of rain fell in 22 hours on the Brown Ranch. The first 8" of rain was infiltrated into the well-mulched soil before surface-flow began. Through the storm there was zero erosion. On nearby cultivated fields and no-till fields with less litter and soil aggregation there was both major erosion and standing water. The next day, Jay Fuhrer assessed that Gabe's land could have supported equipment traffic without damaging soil structure.

Though he is a committed and accomplished grazier, Gabe feels that he is just beginning to take full advantage of managing livestock as a part of the system. He has been grazing the cocktail mixes of 10 to 20 cover crops planted into his just-harvested grain fields, typically harvesting 30% or less of the available biomass to provide 170 animal days per acre per grazing event, while leaving 70% of the biomass as litter to armor the soil and feed soil life. "The amount of residue I leave depends on soil organism needs and the following crop. If I have a corn crop and there is going to be an extended period before I get canopy closure, I'll leave a lot more litter."

In the past, Gabe has considered his dry cows to be "the ultimate

landscaping tool," relying on their grazing and animal impact to terminate cover crops and prepare ground for a subsequent planting. "Now, we're beginning to work on achieving increased rates of livestock gain as we build out our grass-finished operation. We can use these cover crop mixes to fill our nutritional gaps as we build topsoil – it's such a win-win." Gabe refers to a study done on his colleague, Marlyn Richter's ranch, in which calves born in the spring grazed a cocktail cover-crop mix in October for 17 days, during which time they gained an average of 3.1 pounds per day. "We're seeing very high forage quality test results on the mixes we plant in prep for next year's cash crop and to provide quality winter grazing. These are usually heavy on warm-season grasses like corn, sorghum, sudan grass, millet, warm season broadleaves and some brassicas and legumes. The potential to have livestock harvest high quality, standing feed in fall and winter and gain well needs to be explored more. The potential seems really high to me for dairy, too."

Understand Your Soil First

Listening to the leading practitioners, broad principles come into focus. Gabe says "my only purpose is to do whatever is best to improve the soil resource. If I do that, the profitability falls in, and often without inputs. To succeed with cocktail cover-cropping, you had better understand soil health first, and constantly adjust your program as you read the soil. "

continued on page 12

Molds and Mycotoxins - Effects on Dairy Cattle

We are receiving numerous calls from dairymen about aflatoxins in their corn and small grains supply which is causing milk quality issues. Many have even had to dump milk. Hydrated sodium calcium aluminosilicates have been known to help with these types of problems.

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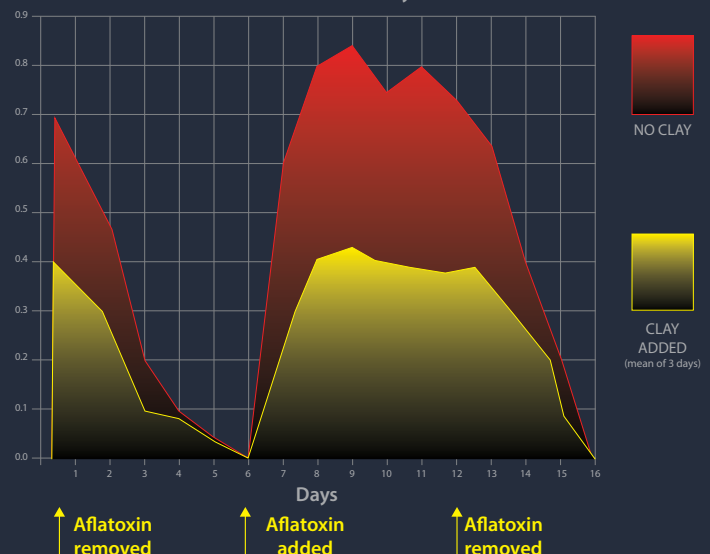
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Lon W. Whitlow, North Carolina State University

ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Cocktail Cover Cropping

continued from page 11

Some of the broad principles of soil health that float to the top in conversation with teachers in the cocktail cover cropping community include the following:

- Diversity puts us ahead - diversity of plants, soil organisms, timing of planting and harvest and presence of animals, including pollinators, wildlife and livestock. Design cover crop mixes, planting and livestock integration to add the diversity of elements that are currently missing from the system.
- Increasing carbon flow into and onto the soil is key to unlocking soil health and productivity.
- We need to keep the soil covered with plant litter, whether on crop or grazing ground ("armor the soil" is the usual description) to shelter and feed soil organisms, moderate soil temperature, increase precipitation infiltration and decrease evaporation, eliminate erosion and to prevent germination of weed seeds.

- Soil organisms are our primary livestock. We need to feed them with plant litter, sloughed root-matter and plant-root exudates through the entire year.
- If the sun is shining and the ground isn't frozen solid, there should be plants growing.
- Replace iron tillage with the effects of diverse plant-root types and soil organisms.
- Get nutrients into organic forms—biologically bound—to keep them out of groundwater and water bodies and gradually available for plant growth.
- Integrate livestock.

These insights are just the beginning of the lessons offered, but they're a strong start. As Gabe notes, "people often want to fit cover cropping into their current production model. A sounder approach is to fit your production model to the (soil) resource. Soil is a living, breathing ecosystem. We need to care for it, nurture it, read it and give it what it needs."

When I asked Jay Fuhrer about some of the largest impacts he's seeing from cocktail cover cropping, without hesitation he gave me a bulleted list. "First, cocktails allow you to adjust the carbon to nitrogen ratio and determine the rate at which you're going to release nutrients to the next crop and the durability of your soil armor. In



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monocultures, the C:N ratio just was what it was. Second, when we bring cocktail cover-cropping into a cropping system, we see good yield, but reduced nitrates in the soil in the spring. The nitrogen is in biological form, so we don't have leaching, spend less on fertilizer and have cleaner water. Third, we have a very high plane of nutrition for grazing livestock in the fall and winter when we use them to return the cover crop to the soil. Finally, we can armor the soil. It's 2013 and we still have wind and water erosion. This isn't necessary and simply has to be reversed."

When Jay works with a given producer to start a cover cropping program, he'll take time to meet with the producer on the farm and go through a grocery list of resource concerns that the farmer wants to address. Usually, these will include:

- Armoring the soil.
- Building soil aggregates.
- Improving the water cycle – getting precipitation into the soil profile and keeping it there, at a level that's just right for plant growth.
- Integrated pest management.
- Building soil organic matter.
- Promote nutrient cycling – for example, accessing nitrates below the current rooting zone and holding N in organic forms.

- Creating food and habitat for pollinators.
- Adjusting the carbon to nitrogen ratios of soil armor to achieve soil health and production goals.
- Wildlife food and shelter.

Jay likes to look at the whole farming system and annual crop rotations and "design for what we don't have." He asks "do you have all four crop types in the course of a year? If not, let's design mixes that bring in that diversity, and feed a balanced diet to soil biology." He points out that "blends of 10 to 20 seed types can accelerate biological time. Think of the diversity of plant root exudates from complex mixes, and the diversity of organisms that they each call and feed."

Here are some examples of cocktail ingredients, drawn from the categories of cool and warm-season grasses and cool and warm season broadleaves and legumes:

Cool Season Grasses:

Barley, wheat, oats, rye, ryegrass, triticale

Cool Season Broadleaf:

Rape, flax, mustard, turnip, radish, phacelia

Legumes:

Lentil, lupin, peas, red clover, crimson clover, sweet clover, alfalfa, chick-pea, cow pea, soybean, sunn hemp.

continued on page 16



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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

July 2013 Feed & Pay Price Update

Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

Sales are growing year over year; feed prices are high and will remain high for the foreseeable future or until more imports arrive or the organic poultry market collapses; all processors realize the difficulties of high inputs and slender margins and are working to maintain farm gate prices; organic manufacturers recognize the expenses of trucking organic powder across the country or even shipping it in from Australasia; the beef price remains high and we still don't have any news about an origin of livestock proposed rule which might eventually add premiums for organically certified replacements.

Not much of an update, but at this time of year and with the varied weather patterns there is more interest and time devoted to conserving some quality forage if possible and making milk from grass.

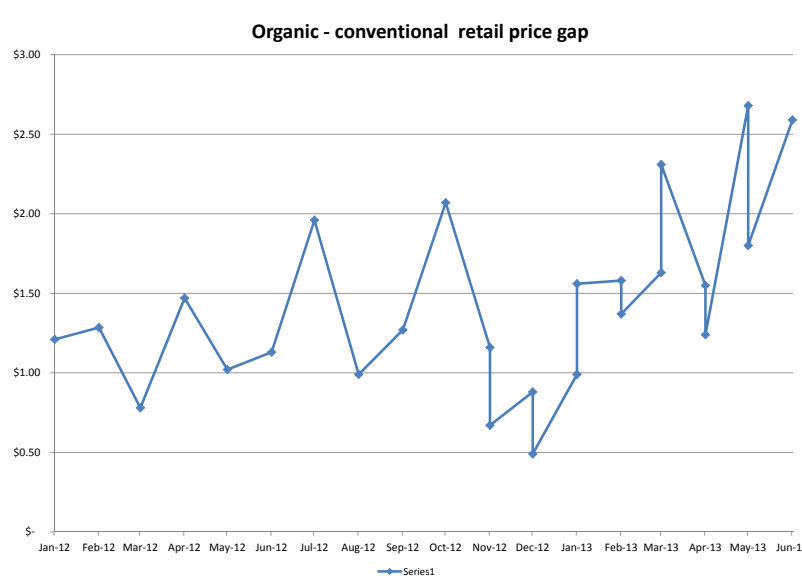
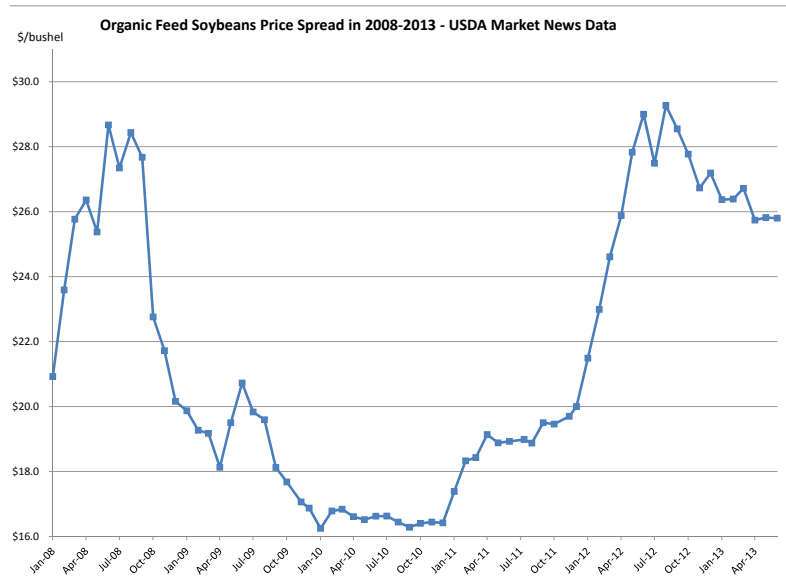
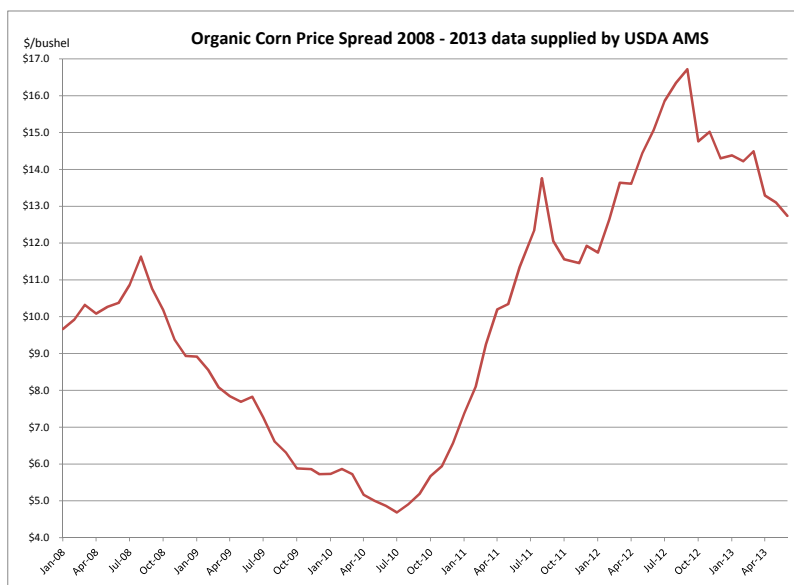
MILC payments are still being made but projections for the summer are not encouraging. The main question now is what will happen without a Farm Bill and will Senator Leahy be able to keep an MILC in place – we have been here before I think!

Month	MILC Payment
September 2012	\$0.5944
October	\$0.0237
November	\$0.0000
December	\$0.0000
January 2013	\$0.1180
February	\$0.522
March	\$0.7546
April	\$0.6988
May	\$0.6980
June	\$0.1400
July	\$0.0000
August	\$0.0000
September	\$0.0000

Forecast provided by NMPF and based on CME futures as of 6/01/13

AMS reports total organic milk fluid products sales for April 2013 of 191 million pounds, which are up 13.5% from April 2012 and up about 1% year to date on 2012. Organic Whole Milk sales for April 2013 were 50 million pounds, which is up 18.5% compared with April 2012 and up 8.4% year-to-date compared with last year. Organic Reduced Fat Milk sales for April of 57 million pounds are

continued on page 24



Firming Up Pasture Fertility With Lime

By Neal Kinsey

Liming the soil for good to excellent pasture, hay and forage production is essential. Depending on its content, lime determines the way the soil works in several ways. What is applied in liming materials, as well as other sources of the principal nutrients lime is normally used to supply, can affect the soil biology, physical structure and chemistry of nutrient uptake from every soil.

Adequate calcium is the key to nutrient utilization by grass, legumes and all other plants. When it comes to plant nutrition, calcium is like "the doorman." Without the proper calcium content in the soil, plants will be robbed of needed nutrients, including nitrogen, even though present in what should be adequate amounts in the soil to grow the best quality and yield.

There are several factors to consider when determining the need for and the amount of lime (principally used for supplying needed calcium and magnesium) in the soil and how much is enough. These include the nutrient-holding capacity of the soil, the calcium and magnesium content of liming material to be used, how much lime is needed to supply what each soil lacks and the fineness of grind of the lime to be used. All of these factors should be taken into account for every different type of soil and each different type of lime that is being considered for application. The soil test and a good limestone analysis should provide sufficient information to determine how much lime would be needed on each different area of the pasture or field to make any needed corrections or changes.

But that is not the end of the story. Why do soil tests correctly show the need for lime in some pastures that have been sufficiently limed seemingly a few short years ago, but other soils that have not been limed for years still accurately reflect no need for any additional lime? At times samples are sent from dairies that have not limed their soils for years and still their calcium levels are increasing. Is this from applying too much lime years ago? The answer to that question is that after about three years with enough water to grow crops on the land, further increases in calcium or magnesium from lime will no longer occur. Then where else should dairy farmers look for possible calcium additions?

Calcium and magnesium levels only increase for a maximum of three years after limestone is applied. Extremely fine lime will provide an increase in levels only for one year, but coarse lime will provide a build up of calcium and magnesium in the soil for the next three years after it is applied. After three years from the time lime is applied do not expect any additional calcium or magnesium to build up in those soils from that lime. However, limes that contain coarser particles that are still small enough to break down over time can provide enough to help maintain all or part of needed calcium and magnesium for many years to come.

Farms have been tested where coarse ground agricultural limestone was applied 20 years before and it still has enough as compared to land on the same farm that was limed with a sufficient amount of finer grind limestone that already needs it again. This is not to say that the coarse material is better or worse, just that it will tend to break down at a slower rate that can help maintain needed levels over longer periods of time once past the initial build-up in the first three years. And in fact, there are cases where the coarse material was applied but the fines that gave the first response run short after a few years and another application has to be made before the coarser materials kick in to help maintain the nutrient levels of calcium and magnesium several years later.

Just knowing the soil pH does not provide the information that is really needed to evaluate how accurately soils will perform to produce the best crops. It is not the pH, but the actual amounts of each principal element that affect the pH, such as calcium, magnesium, potassium and sodium, that actually shows the present condition and what is needed for each soil to do its best.

If a spark plug on your tractor is not firing properly, how many farmers would be content to just let it go? How many would think that as long as the tractor still runs I don't need to do anything about it? Because it is easy to see the results so quickly, it gets fixed! But soils that are not limed and fertilized correctly are missing some of the "spark plugs" and even the "wires" that make them work. Still, you can grow something there, and because of that the true potential efficiency of that soil is generally never realized or considered because it takes more time and effort to see the results than what a spark plug does.

When the fertility of the soil is not at its very best that farm is losing far more efficiency and power accordingly as compared to what a spark plug supplies to a tractor. But the difference is it takes longer to prove this is so. Prove it on a smaller area first. And don't just "buy a new plug and forget the spark plug wire." Choose an area and do all that is required to help it perform at its best. Continue testing and follow-through on what needs to be done there for three years. When you see the differences for yourself, then you know what works. And then you know who knows how to help the soil instead of just trying to sell what they have to sell.

Manure and compost can provide a significant source of calcium and/or magnesium. Lime used in the barn that is mixed with excrement and bedding material then incorporated into compost or washed into the liquid manure pit can add up when applied to the fields. That is one possibility when calcium levels continue to increase but no lime is being used. Test it then apply accordingly.

Irrigation water should always be tested for calcium and magnesium content to determine the potential effects upon the land where it will be applied. Moving water will deposit sodium and increase its saturation in the soil, but not calcium and magnesium. We can count on this to be the case in fields using flood or furrow irrigation.

We test soils that are irrigated with water from pivots that contain high amounts of calcium and/or magnesium. Where the water from the pivot or sprinkler irrigation falls, the calcium and magnesium rises in addition to the sodium. In the corners where the water from the pivot does not reach, the levels remain as low as ever. However, when using that same water for flood or furrow irrigation purposes then only the sodium content of that soil shows a measureable increase.

Calcium or magnesium in the fertilizer is also a possibility. Soft rock phosphate, for example, will increase calcium levels by 400 pounds per acre for every ton applied.

When it comes to knowing what is needed for liming the soil, only taking soil and limestone samples and having them properly analyzed can correctly determine that need.

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

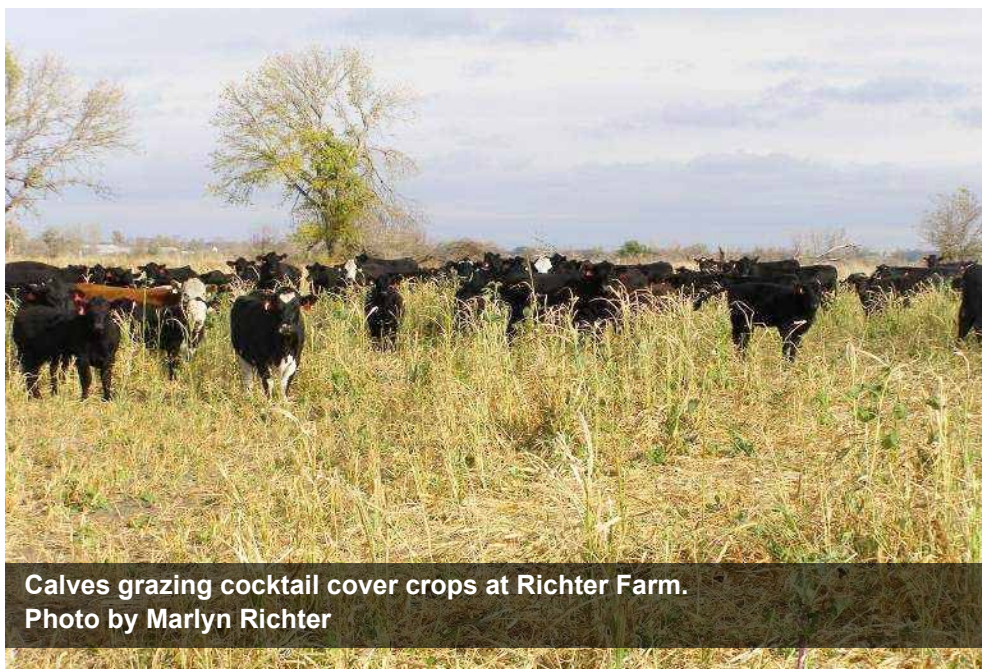
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Warm Season Grass: corn, millet, sorghum, sudan grass

Warm-Season Broadleaf: buckwheat, amaranth, safflower, sunflower

Case Study Example

To illustrate a practical case, a well-monitored cover-cropping experiment was done on Richter Farm, in Menoken, ND in 2007. Marlyn Richter is another pioneer in the cocktail cover cropping world, and a close colleague of Jay and Gabe. Richter Farm had been no-till since 2001. The sandy soils there leach easily and have low-water holding capacity. Marlyn's resource concerns included "providing soil surface armor, building soil aggregates, improving the water cycle, reducing herbicide use, building soil organic matter and integrating livestock." Looking for a window to seed a cocktail into, they selected fields from which field peas and



Calves grazing cocktail cover crops at Richter Farm.
Photo by Marlyn Richter

winter triticale had been harvested early. The land had a long history of growing cool-season grasses, so a mixture of warm season grasses, warm season broadleaves and cool season broadleaves was formulated and drilled in on July 7th.

The recipe contained: Millet, 8 lbs., Cowpea, 10 lbs., Soybean, 15



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lbs., Turnip, ½ lb., Oilseed radish 1 lb. Sweet Clover 1 lb. The seed cost was \$20/acre.

On October 1, 2007, 141 cow-calf pairs were turned into 72 acres of the standing crop. During the 17-day grazing event, the calves gained an average of 3.1 pounds per day. The gross income per acre came out to \$110, with \$45 in expenses, for a net income of \$66/acre.

Notably, available soil water was monitored the next spring by the NRCS on the cover cropped ground and on an adjacent parcel. The cover cropped ground had 3.07" of available water while the bare fallow ground had 3.11." 4/100ths of an inch of water is an insubstantial price to pay for the additional tons of biomass and other benefits realized!

Other benefits not quantified but noticed by Marlyn and cooperating researchers, included increased soil health, improved condition on mother cows and increased recovery time for native rangeland.

Opportunities for Farmers in Northeast

For Northeastern farmers and graziers who often have stored feed as the highest farm expense, the possibility of improving soil health and securing a low-cost, high quality source of standing feed alone suggests for a beginning to experimentation.

In the last four years I have done small experiments with cocktail cover cropping. Though seemingly simple on the surface, it has been a tremendous learning curve. I've always been impressed

with the soil improvements and the livestock performance when I've turned cattle onto the mixes. I continue to experiment, and am increasingly working with clients at using the strategy of cocktail cover cropping to achieve soil, production, and livestock goals. I suspect that Northeastern farmers will begin to work with cocktail cover crops more and see benefits that can help us to increase our financial and environmental performance. I take Gabe Browns' thoughts to heart when I think about the learning that we will all experience as we begin this process. "We have an awful lot to learn about these species of cover crops; which to use, when, in what combinations and how they interact. It's going to take a lot of thoughtful trial and error on relatively small test plots by producers, but it's a worthwhile project. We need to take care of the soil resource, and while we need to work in cooperation with researchers, we can't just wait on researchers to figure this out for us!"

See these resources for more information.

Jay Fuhrer Webinar on Cocktail Cover Cropping:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjI2zWf4uMI>

USDA ARS Cover crop chart ("periodic table")

http://www.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/Place/54452000/CCC/CCC_v13_5_2012.pdf

Brown Ranch Website:

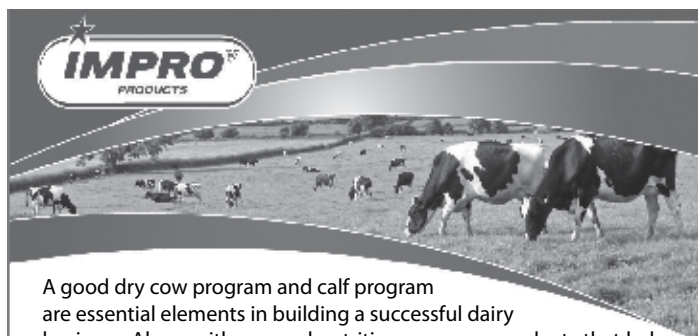
<http://www.brownsranch.us/>

Managing Cover Crops Profitably:

<http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books/Managing-Cover-Crops-Profitably-3rd-Edition>

Abe Collins is a grazier and the founder of Collins Grazing. Collins Grazing works with clients to build farms from the soil-up, achieve environmental security through topsoil formation and achieve rapid gains in soil, grass and cattle. Abe be reached at (802) 782-1883 and abenewsoil@gmail.com.

Learn more from Abe Collins by attending the Nutrient Dense Forages workshop on July 24 in Wells, VT (see details in the Calendar section of this newsletter). Come to the NODPA Field Days in September and learn more about Cocktail Cover Cropping. Details can be found starting on page 18 of this newsletter.



A good dry cow program and calf program are essential elements in building a successful dairy business. Along with a sound nutrition program, products that help support a healthy immune function can lead to healthier, more productive animals. Areas of improvement might be thriftier calves, lower SCC, higher milk production and fewer overall herd health issues.

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NODPA FIELD DAYS 2013: SEPTEMBER 27 & 28

The 13th Annual NODPA Field Days and Annual Meeting

September 26 & 27, 2013

Mansfield, PA

By Nora Owens, NODPA Field Days Coordinator

NODPA's 13th annual Field Days' program, *Organic Dairy: Innovative Strategies to Stay Profitable* is just around the corner and promises to have a farm tour and educational sessions

that will interest everyone. This year's event takes place in North Central Pennsylvania on Thursday and Friday, September 26th and 27th at the Mansfield Hose Company Banquet Hall in Mansfield, PA.

This year's educational program (details below), in collaboration with Holistic Management International™ (HMI), is full of innovative ideas, current research and practical strategies so organic dairy farm families can enhance the health, productivity and profitability of their land and family while effectively and significantly increasing annual profits.

Based on HMI's Whole Farm/Ranch Planning Programs, Thursday's educational program begins in the morning at Kress and Tammy Simpson's KTS Farm, Mansfield PA, where HMI Educators

Thursday, September 26, 2013

8:30 – 9:00 am Farm Tour & Field Days Registration and Light Refreshments

KTS Farm, 149 Reynolds Road, Mansfield, PA 16933.

9 am – Noon KTS Farm Tour, Kress and Tammy Simpson and Ann J. Adams, PhD, Holistic Management Certified Educator and Director, Community Services, Holistic Management International (HMI)

Farm tour and educational workshops with HMI leading workshops on forage assessment, grazing strategies, land and infrastructure planning, and more based on HMI's Whole Farm/Ranch Planning programs

Noon – 1:30 NODPA Field Days Registration (If not attending the Farm Tour) and Lunch

Mansfield Hose Company Banquet Hall, 381 Main Street, Mansfield, PA 16933

1:30 – 2:30 Farm Tour Q & A and KTS Farm Succession Planning

Kress Simpson, KTS Farm and HMI personnel at Mansfield Hose Co. Banquet Hall

2:30 – 2:45 Milk Break

2:45 – 4:30 Planning for your Farm's Future: Applying Whole Farm Planning to Your Farm

Ann J. Adams, PhD, Holistic Management Certified Educator and Director, Community Services, HMI

5:00 – 6:00 Social Hour and Trade Show

6:00 – 7:00 Pig Roast Banquet and NODPA's Annual Meeting with NODPA President Liz Bawden and NODPA Executive Director Ed Maltby

7:00 – 8:00 The Future of Organic Dairy

Keynote speaker Kevin Engelbert, Engelbert Farms, Nichols, NY, Pioneer of Organic Dairy and past NOSB member

8:00 – 9:00 Q & A with Kevin Engelbert and Discussion about the Future of Organic Dairy

9:00 pm Close of the meeting (building open until 10 pm)

Friday, September 27, 2013

6:30 – 9:00 am Continental Breakfast and Trade Show

7:00 – 9:00 Producer-Only Meeting

Henry Perkins, facilitator and past NODPA president

9:00 – 10:30 Sprouted Grains: On-Farm Experimentation

Andrew Dykstra, Dykstra Farms, Burlington, WA; Roman Stoltzfoos, Spring Wood Organic Farm, Kinzers, PA; and John Stoltzfus, Be-A-Blessing Farm, Whitesville, NY

10:30 – 11:00 Farm Bill, Policy and Washington DC Update

Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, and TBA

11:00 – 12:30 Odairy Live! Ask the Vet Q & A

(Please submit questions for the Veterinarians at registration or send to Nora Owens, Field Days Coordinator, noraowens@comcast.net in advance.)

Susan Beal, DVM and PASA Agriculture Advisor, Pittsburgh, PA and A.J. Luft, DVM, Chickasaw, OH

12:30 – 2:00 Lunch and Door Prize Raffle, Trade Show

2:00 – 3:30 Multi-Species Cover Cropping (a.k.a. Crop Cocktails)

Dave Wilson, King's AgriSeeds, Ronks, PA; Jeff Moyer, Farm Director, Rodale Institute, Kutztown, PA; and Charlie White, Sustainable Agriculture Extension Associate, Penn State Extension.

4:00 Meeting ends

will lead the farm tour and present educational, on-farm workshops on forage assessment, grazing strategies and land and infrastructure planning. At noon, we move to the Mansfield Hose Company Banquet Hall for lunch and afternoon workshops based on HMI's Planning for your Farm's Future, which will focus, in part, on successful strategies for succession planning for the farm and business, with Kress Simpson sharing his farm's succession plan experience.

Friday's educational program will be filled with the most up-to-date information on a variety of topics. In the morning, Andrew Dykstra, Roman Stoltzfoos and John Stoltzfus will share their experiences with on-farm sprouted grain experimentation. Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, will bring everyone up to steam on current policy, the Farm Bill and other activities in Washington DC that directly impact organic dairy farm families.

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NODPA's 13th ANNUAL FIELD DAYS & PRODUCER MEETING & DINNER

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Registration: Thursday & Friday			
Free	Organic dairy & transitioning producers & families		
\$30	All who aren't organic dairy producers		
Meals			
\$10	Thursday lunch for Adults		
\$5	Thursday lunch (under 11)		
\$25	Thurs. dinner for Adults		
\$12.50	Thurs. dinner (under 11)		
Free	Transitioning farm member, Thursday evening dinner		
\$5	Friday breakfast (7:30-9 am)		
\$10	Friday lunch (under 11, half price)		
\$35	NODPA News Subscription (6 issues)		
	Donation to NODPA		
	Total amount enclosed:		

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

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NODPA FIELD DAYS 2013: SEPTEMBER 27 & 28

Field Days 2013

continued from page 19

And to close out the morning sessions, we will bring the Odairy experience of sharing knowledge and expertise to life with a session entitled "Ask the Vet" where nationally known veterinarians Susan Beal, DVM and A.J. Luft, DVM, along with a room full of experienced dairy producers, will spend 90 minutes answering questions, offering advice and sharing their best practices.

The afternoon session will focus on multi-species cover crops, also known as crop cocktails, will feature the expertise of Dave Wilson from King's AgriSeed, Jeff Moyer from the Rodale Institute, and Charlie White, Penn State Extension.

This year, we are honored to have a pioneer of Organic Dairy and past NOSB member Kevin Engelbert as our keynote speaker following Thursday evening's Pig Roast banquet and NODPA Annual Meeting. Kevin will discuss the future of Organic Dairy and we have set aside plenty of time for Q & A and discussion following his presentation.

In addition to the NODPA Field Days educational program, we will have our regularly scheduled events, too. Social Hour will follow Thursday's workshops, during which attendees can visit the very full Trade Show and talk to the many businesses and service

providers that are integral to organic dairy farm families. The banquet, which follows, will feature a Pig Roast with the organic pig coming to us from NODPA Vice President and Board member Dave Johnson's farm. On Friday morning, there will be the annual Producer-Only Meeting, and this year Henry Perkins, past NODPA president, will facilitate. And last but not least, we will have our famous door prize drawing during Friday's lunch at which everyone gets a chance to win a wide variety of prizes generously donated by our sponsors, supporters and trade show participants.

Perhaps the most important feature of NODPA's Annual Field Days is the opportunity to gather with your fellow organic dairy farm families to share information, knowledge, your past year's experiences and maybe some gossip. As always, there will be plenty of time for visiting with new and old friends, sharing delicious meals and gathering a few new tips and tools to take back to the farm.

Additional NODPA Field Days information can be found online at www.nodpa.com/fielddays_2013_overview.shtml, where you can register today. Also, NODPA 13th Annual Field Days brochures will be in the mail in early August and more information will follow in the September NODPA News but if you have questions, please contact NODPA Field Days Coordinator Nora Owens by email, noraowens@comcast.net or phone, 413-772-0444. ♦

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION: FEATURED FARM

B-A-Blessing Farm, John and Tammy Stoltzfus, Whitesville, NY **No-Grain, Fodder-Fed Organic Dairy**

continued from page 1

at conferences/workshops; and organizing open-house events at their farm. "If we can help other farmers to better themselves and stay in the farming business, we will feel like we have accomplished a great deal and will have gained much joy and satisfaction from it," say John and Tammy.

Transition to Organic Dairy

Farming was not always smooth for John and Tammy; almost 20 years ago they were truly struggling to get by and could not afford the commercial fertilizers and other inputs for their (then) conventional dairy farm. It was at this point in their dairy career that they started to look into organic dairy production; they really had no other option. Their milk handler didn't think that organic dairy farming was going to work for John and Tammy, as their somatic cell counts were often high. But they found that the longer that they stayed organic, their milk quality improved. Some of this could be the result of solving some stray voltage issues, but other reasons can be attributed to the fact that they were no longer pushing their cows for production, which reduced the stress that can often lead to mastitis, reproductive issues and more. Instead of antibiotics and reproductive hormones, they also turned to natural and organically approved approaches including a homeopathic remedy called Mastoblast, and garlic. Dr Edgar Sheaffer, a homeopathic veterinarian in Pennsylvania was a great resource for them – especially in those early years.

Bringing in the Next Generation of Farmers

Cows on B-A-Blessing farm have few health issues and tend to stick around for a while. Normally they raise more than enough replacements for their farm, but recently two of John and Tammy's sons have been purchasing additional livestock; they are increasing the herd size to support not one family, but 3 families. Their two older sons, Jonathan and Joel, are currently working on the farm, and their third son, Jerry, is hoping to return to the farm as well. The level of employment on the farm for each son is relative to the number of cows they own. Jonathan is employed full-time and Joel is working part time, but will be full-time once he owns enough cows in the milking string.

Breeds, Breeding, and Housing

The cows on B-A-Blessing farm are a mix of breeds; half of the herd is Holstein, ¼ of them are Hostein/Brown Swiss, and another ¼ of the herd is Hostein/Jersey. They breed with bulls and this year everything on the farm is getting bred to Brown Swiss. John has found a good source of Holstein and Brown Swiss bulls from a couple good farms in New York and Ohio. He sources his bulls from registered herds who

feed only a little grain, have good milk production.

For John and his family, using DHIA's services has been a tremendous savings towards monitoring milk quality, components, production and fertility. They are now preg-checking their cows through their DHIA milk sampling. The test is 98% accurate at 45-50 days, and the cost is just \$4.50 per sample. For a veterinarian to come to their farm and preg-check their cows, they would be paying a \$75 stop charge plus the cost for services. For a herd this size, the additional services from DHIA has saved provided them a tremendous savings.

The cows are milked in a tie stall barn and winter housing consists of an outdoor bedded pack along the woods with the trees providing a decent amount of shelter. This year they are working with Farm Tek in designing and building a coverall bedded pack barn that will be large enough to house the milking cows, dry cows, and heifers. They hope to have this construction completed before this winter.

Grazing System: Extending their Grazing in the Spring and Fall through Annual Grains

B-A-Blessing Farm has been a no-grain dairy for over 4 years. Milk cows get fresh pasture every 12 hours and the bred heifers and dry cows are moved every 4-5 days depending on where they are grazing. Smaller calves are moved every other day onto fresh grass. The current summer ration for the milk cows is 2 lbs of dry hay, 5-7 lbs of Barley fodder (fed in the morning), and pasture. Dry cows and heifers get dry hay and pasture, plus a free choice minerals, kelp and salt. In the winter, the milkers receive baleage, dry hay and 5-7 # of fodder. Average milk production per cow right is 50# and John feels that if he increases his fodder from 7# to 20# that he will see his average milk production increase to 60# per cow per day. Dry cows and heifers are not fed any fodder, but they hope to make enough to feed all the animals in the near future.

John used to offer free-choice minerals to his milk cows, but since he has been feeding them barley fodder, the cows are no longer interested in eating them. Since he doesn't feed any grain, he doesn't have a way to get the minerals into them. Finding a way to provide minerals to his cows is a puzzle that John is currently working on.

To extend the grazing season in the spring and fall, John plants some annual crops: 20 acres of Spring triticale (available to graze by early July), 20 acres of Sorghum, planted for August grazing, and 20 acres of Fall triticale for late fall and spring grazing. This system adds a total of 2 extra months of grazing on their farm and also provides the cows with some high quality and high energy feed at times of the year when forages are just getting started, forages are slowing down due to hot/dry conditions, or the grazing season is starting to wind down for the year.



The Stoltzfus' grandchildren feeding a calf barley fodder.

A new seeding of perennial pasture is planted following the annual crops. John likes the native plant varieties for his cows; he makes sure to have Orchard Grass, Timothy and Red Clover in his pasture mixes.

Barley Fodder System

John was first introduced to the concept of feeding sprouted grains about 5 years ago when he was at one of Jerry Brunetti's talks (www.Agri-Dynamics.com). Once the concept of sprouted grains was planted in his mind, John was on a mission to learn more about the system and find out how to make it work on his farm. After a lot of research, a lot of trial and error, and some determination, John and his family developed a fodder system that works well for them.

John's first approach was to feed sprouted grains to his cattle – which entailed soaking his grains for 24 hours and then feeding it to his cows. As he researched fodder systems in other countries, John started to learn that sprouting the grains for 6-7 days would be better than just soaking them. Barley fodder is highly digestible and provides more natural proteins, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and omega 3's than what the cow could get from consuming grain alone. One pound of grain turns into 7 pounds of sprouted feed, making purchased grains go a long way. How much does it cost to feed fodder? If purchasing barley seed for \$500/ton. One pound of seed provides about 7 lbs of fodder, which comes to \$.25 per cow for every 7 lbs of fodder fed. Investments in the system, plus the added labor would warrant additional costs. The water that is used in sprouting the seed, is fed to the calves and they have noted an improvement in calf health and

vigor since they started doing this.

They have also experimented with sprouting a number of different grains including oats, rye, barley, wheat, and triticale. The seed that works the best for them is Spring Barley, which also tends to be a popular variety used for malting. Finding a clean, high quality source of seed with a high germination is also important. John is currently purchasing his spring barley from the Main Seed Company. Their price is reasonable, and the quality of the seed is excellent. While the average analysis for Spring Barley seed comes in at around 48 lbs per bushel, the Maine Seed Company has been supplying John with Barley seed that is 52-54 lbs per bushel with a 95% germination rate. The company, as a result of the growing demand for organic spring barley, has recently transitioned another 5000 acres to organic production.

At B-A-Blessing Farm, construction is under way to put in a whole new sprouting room that will be 3 times larger than their current system (a 16 x 22 ft room). This additional space will allow for some additional growth down the line. They hope to double the amount of fodder they are currently feeding their cows and would like to feed it to their calves and heifers as well.

Livestock Health

Adding Barley Fodder (sprouted grains) to the cows' diet has changed the health and body condition of their cows in a positive direction. After a recent Organic Valley Animal Welfare visit, John was told that his cows looked very nice – especially for a

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FEATURED FARM

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grain-free herd.

Remedies and nutritional supplements that they like to have on hand include calcium supplements, dextrose, udder liniment, and coconut oil, which has now become their new favorite treatment for udder edema, mastitis, and sun burns/skin irritation.

For calf scours, they learned a trick from Dr. Guy Jodarski; put a couple of their own farm pasture-raised eggs in the milk at feeding time. The raw eggs from your own farm have the antibodies to fight the bugs specific to your farm. John and Tammy have been happy with the results.

Sharing What They Know for the Betterment of All

Over the past couple years, John has given presentations to groups of farmers and resource individuals ranging from 50-150 in size and at each event, he goes away with a sense that a large percentage of the producers in the audience have plans to adopt fodder feeding on their farm.

John and Tammy have also published a booklet titled 'Our Journey Into the Land of Fodder'. In this publication, they cover all the details in building their fodder system; from ventilation, to controlling mold, seed quality, how much space you will need, feed analyses of a few different sprouted grains, and more. They are in the process reprinting and updating their book, and hope to have it completed soon. (Please go to the end of this article for ordering details).

John has recently started working with Farm Tek as a consultant for their fodder feeding systems. He is just a phone call away when the company is looking for feedback on technical aspects of the system, and John is also available to answer questions from farmers or demonstrate how his system works.

How They Stay Informed and Active in Organic Dairy

John and Tammy have been active NODPA members since it's early beginnings. They have made it to all of the NODPA Field Days events, and John has been a NODPA (NY) Representative since the summer of 2001. They love to learn and share and make a point of attending Organic Valley's Herd Health Days, NODPA's Annual Field Days, and local pasture walks. This gives them opportunities to learn from their fellow farmers, network, and stay in touch with friends near and far.

When they go to conferences and pasture walks, they

notice that it is usually the same people showing up each time – and that these regulars are only a small percentage of the farming community. "How do you get those who stay home to come to these events? We need their input", says John. "We could learn from them." ♦

****Webinar: 'Barley Fodder Feeding for Organic Dairies' – Website Address:** (<http://www.extension.org/pages/65651/barley-fodder-feeding-for-organic-dairies-webinar>)

****Booklet: 'Our Journey Into The Land Of Fodder', by John and Tammy Stoltzfus. To order, contact John or Tammy at: Home phone: 607-356-3272, Cell phone: 585-610-7420, Email: jtstrib@yahoo.com**

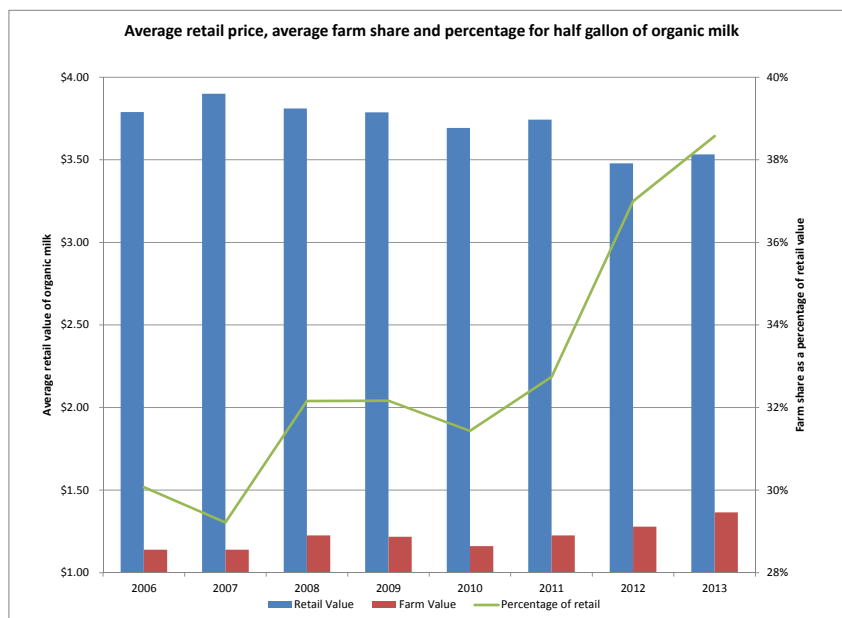
ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Feed & Pay Price Update

continued from page 14

26.9% above sales one year earlier and 7.0% above year-to-date sales last year. The average retail price for organic half gallons remains stable at \$3.59 for June 2013 but has individual high price of branded product at \$4.49 in the northeast and a low price of store brand at \$2.79.

The weather will be the final arbitrator of corn yields with adequate corn yield still predicted even though it's still only June. The drought persists in the far west with little relief in sight. There are many unknowns on what prices might be this fall. IF we get late season drought or persistent wet weather in the heart of the corn belt, we will see rapid movement in prices. So the best predictor of crop prices is the weather forecast in the corn belt plus world trade and the price of imported grains. Corn prices are mostly at 12.50-13.25/bushel in the Central US, while Upper Midwest and Eastern Cornbelt prices were mostly 11.25-12.25/bushel. The bulk of the soybeans are priced between 25.25-27.25 per bushel and wheat prices were mostly steady at \$14 per bushel. ♦





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RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Pasture Quality

continued from page 5

addition to pasture due to droughty conditions. In this study the same field was sampled throughout the season during mid morning hours prior to being grazed, and cattle were subsequently moved 2-5 times daily with 45-52 days between rotations. Samples were taken from a low-input hay field that is only grazed after the removal of hay, and where inputs for years have been limited to manure deposited by cattle while grazing. Second cutting was grazed off in July due to the impacts of drought and an extended heat wave. Protein, NDF, and NEL of the pasture averaged 20%, 54% and 0.60 Mcal/lb (DM basis) from July to October. Similar to the previously discussed study, energy in the forage increased 18% from summer into early fall and declined again in October, coinciding with growing patterns and cessation of the very dry period in July.

When balancing diets, sometimes nutritionists turn to book values when an analysis for a particular feed is unavailable. While this approach is generally acceptable for grains, the nutrient composition of pasture (and the subsequent conserved forages that may be harvested) varies greatly depending on geographic location, soil type, environmental conditions, proportions of grasses

Table 1. Calcium, phosphorus and magnesium concentrations for pasture during the 2012 grazing season in southern PA

Month	Ca, % DM	P, % DM	Mg, % DM
June	0.82	0.35	0.27
July	0.81	0.39	0.27
August	0.65	0.36	0.25
September	0.75	0.38	0.27
October	0.62	0.36	0.22
November	0.54	0.35	0.25

and legumes, previous pasture use (hay or pasture), foliar feeding, soil amendments and grazing management. The 2001 Dairy NRC over-values protein and energy for both cool season grass and legume pasture when compared to the laboratory results for pasture nutrient composition discussed here. Using values that overestimate pasture energy values when balancing and evaluating the rations of grazing dairy herds will result in less than optimal milk yields even when forage quality is considered high.

Forage quality varies throughout the season, across the farm, and between years. Therefore, in addition to managing the amount of available forage in their pastures, producers must keep in mind that



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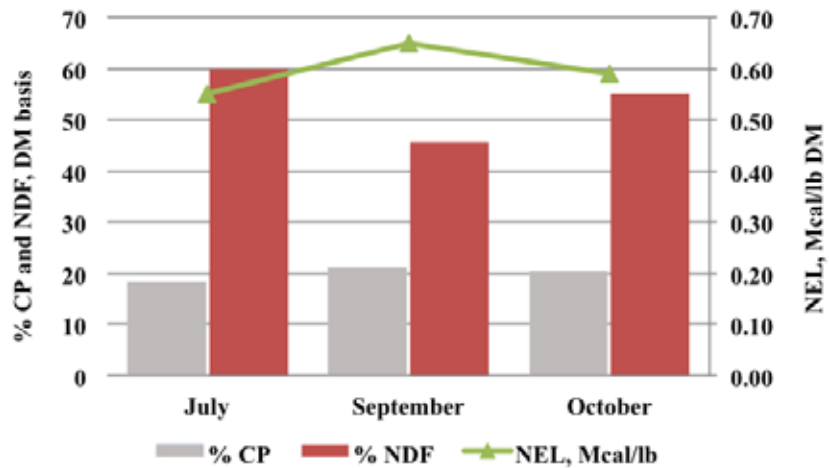
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the quality of available forage is not static. Variability in nutrient composition during the grazing season and between grazing years emphasizes the importance of monitoring milk production for indications of decreasing pasture quality and adjusting supplements (if they are being used) and pasture management accordingly. Additionally, this information reinforces that traditional book values may not accurately reflect the nutrient composition of pastures. An update to the Dairy NRC pasture nutrient composition values divided by region is much needed. Nutritionists balancing and evaluating rations for pasture-based dairies should become familiar with pasture quality values for the region, and, more ideally, with the forage quality on the specific farm they are working with.

Finally, it will be interesting to see the forage quality results for 2013. After the drought and high environmental temperatures of 2012, we expect to see comparatively higher forage quality values in 2013, as so far it has been cooler with more normal levels of precipitation. Both of the projects discussed in this article are ongoing, and therefore the results presented are preliminary. We plan to present more detailed findings and a follow-up article in a future issue of the NODPA Newsletter. ♦

Figure 2. Pasture quality on a grazing dairy farm in southern NY during the 2012 grazing season



Dr. Aimee Hafla is a postdoctoral research animal scientist at the USDA-ARS Pasture Systems and Watershed Management Research Unit in State College, PA. Her current research focuses on extending the grazing season and winter flaxseed feeding to increase profitability and produce high quality component-enriched milk. You can reach Dr. Hafla by email or phone: aimee.hafla@ars.usda.gov, (814) 863-0947.



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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Richard Mathews New Director of WODPA

By Andrew Dykstra, WODPA President

The Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) is proud to announce that Richard Mathews has been selected as our first Executive Director. Richard began his position May 15, 2013.

Richard has nearly 34 years of experience serving American Agriculture through various positions and programs. He was the lead regulation writer responsible for the second proposal and final rule establishing the National Organic Standards. Shortly after the publica-



tion of the organic final rule, Richard was promoted to Program Manager/Associate Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program. He also researched and wrote pasture and other livestock provisions providing clarity and specificity to the livestock standards. Over the years Richard has had a particular interest in assisting Organic Dairy farmers across the country.

As president of WODPA, I would like to say we are extremely excited to be working with Richard. We will work to enhance the integrity and profitability of current and future dairy farmers.

Message from Richard H. Mathews WODPA's New Executive Director

On May 15, 2013, with great pleasure, I began work as Executive Director of the Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA).

WODPA's mission is to preserve, protect, and ensure the sustainability and integrity of organic dairy farming across the West. As Executive Director, I am responsible for furthering that mission by working with the Board of Directors and State Representatives to manage and develop the organization. Our ultimate goal is a sound, vibrant, sustainable organic dairy sector.

I retired from the USDA in late 2009 with nearly 34 years of experience serving American Agriculture through various USDA positions and programs; including about 11 years in leadership positions with the National Organic Program.

So why would I take on this position? Developing the access to pasture rule drew me close to the organic dairy sector where I had the pleasure of working closely with many of the sector's good people. That experience instilled a keen desire to see organic dairying thrive. WODPA has that same desire. Accordingly, I want to use my skills and knowledge to help WODPA in its quest to make its mission a reality.

Not only do I look forward to working with the WODPA membership, I also look forward to working closely with Ed Maltby and the rest of NODPA's leadership. ♦

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

New Review Criteria for Livestock Feed Supplements and Additives

By Doug Currier, OMRI Product Review Coordinator

The National Organic Program (NOP) recently published a new Guidance Document to advise certifying agents, livestock producers and suppliers of feed additives and supplements regarding which agricultural, nonagricultural and synthetic ingredients are permitted in organic livestock feed. Entitled "Evaluating Allowed Ingredients and Sources of Vitamins and Minerals for Organic Livestock Feed," NOP Guidance 5030 is a clarifying document from the NOP that may have significant implications for the evaluation of livestock feed ingredients.

The major area of clarification pertains to the consideration and review of "minor ingredients" in livestock vitamins and minerals. In alignment with the review criteria of Accredited Certifying Agents (ACAs), OMRI has interpreted section 4.2.3(c) in the guidance document to mean that minor ingredients, whether agricultural or nonagricultural, need not be further reviewed when included in any single generic vitamin or mineral recognized by AAFCO or the FDA. Although the OMRI Livestock

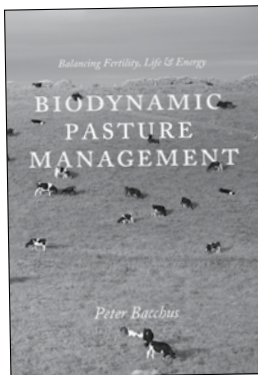
Review Panel will have the final say in how the new guidance is interpreted, it could potentially allow OMRI to list more livestock products, since minor ingredients will no longer prevent these products from being added to the OMRI Products List®.

The NOP's "Response to Comments" document (NOP5030-1) reinforces this interpretation. A "Response to Comments" document accompanies some NOP Guidance Documents, and further explains the reasoning behind the policy. In this response, the NOP has clarified that anyone, farmer or feed mill, who purchases a generic single ingredient vitamin and mineral on the National List at §205.603(d), that meets definitions provided by AAFCO or FDA, would not need to review other minor ingredients in the formulation. This clarification is important since OMRI often receives applications to review products that are allowed synthetic vitamins or minerals with minor ingredients. In the past, OMRI would have reviewed all ingredients, including agricultural ingredients, in such products. The nature of these review types will change based on this new NOP Guidance.

While OMRI often reviews single ingredient synthetic feed additives, applications for the review of multi-ingredient vitamin and mineral pre-mix products are also common. A vitamin and mineral pre-mix contains a mixture of various vitamins and minerals, and may or may not have agricultural carriers, diluents,

continued on page 30

Multi-Pronged, Organic Techniques for Pastures



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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

New Review Criteria for Livestock Feed Supplements and Additives

continued from page 29

etc. A livestock feed pre-mix could be purchased by the end user, or manufactured on the farm or at a feed mill. In the review of a pre-mix product, OMRI will look to the product label in order to evaluate compliance. Any agricultural ingredient listed on the product label would need to be certified organic, and any other ingredients would need to be allowed synthetics or allowed non-synthetic, nonagricultural ingredients.

Any pre-mix product used as an ingredient in a product applying for OMRI listing would be reviewed in the same way. If the pre-mix is sold only in bulk and does not carry a label with ingredient declaration, OMRI will review the complete ingredients list provided by the manufacturer to ensure that agricultural materials are certified organic and that all other materials are otherwise permitted. This review policy is in line with the newly published NOP Guidance.

Another result of Guidance 5030 is that compliance assessments

will now look at whether the vitamin and mineral in their feed supplement or additive contain proteins sourced from slaughter by-products. Before final decision making, proteinated and amino acid complex minerals will be verified by OMRI to confirm they are not sourced from animal by-products. Minerals sourced from bone such as bone meal or bone phosphate are considered animal slaughter by-products and are also not permitted in feed for poultry and mammals. OMRI understands that minerals derived from bone (except bone ash and bone phosphate) are

required by AAFCO to be labeled as bone material, and prohibited materials will be identified during the review of an applying livestock feed product.

OMRI continues to respond to new NOP Guidance documents by adjusting and reevaluating review criteria. As always, livestock producers should consult with their certifier before using a new feed ingredient or product. ♦



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To find out more, contact Kathryn Tokarz at
kathryn@paorganic.org
or visit
farmfest.paorganic.org
814-422-0251

Calendar

July 12, 2013, Transitioning to Mob Grazing Duncannon, Pennsylvania

Join PA-WAGN as we tour Yeeshaw Farm with Judi & Tom Radel and learn how they transitioned to a mob grazing system. Titus Martin, grazing specialist for NRCS, will share his experience as a grazing mentor while pointing out the next steps in the Radels' grazing plan. For more information: www.agsci.psu.edu/wagn/events/transitioning-to-mob-grazing

July 15, 2013

Getting Started in Mob Grazing - a Farminar, online

PA-WAGN is now hosting Farminars - Specialty Mentor Judi Radel will facilitate a Farminar to review the events of the July 12 'Transition to Mob Grazing' field day at her farm and to offer a question and answer session.. For more info: <http://agsci.psu.edu/wagn/events>

July 16, 2013

NOFA-NH Summer Series: Management Intensive Rotational Grazing Litchfield, New Hampshire

Join Steve Normanton for a tour of Normanton Farm, an organic, pasture-based meat and vegetable farm. Steve will take participants for a walk about his pastures; he'll share his experience developing his intensive grazing system, his Tempe Grandin Cattle Handling and Corral System, and will answer questions about his management decisions. For more info: <http://nofanh.org/nofa-event/management-intensive-rotational-grazing/> or contact: Ray Conner, bof@nofanh.org, phone: 603-224-5022

July 16, 17, or 18, 2013, From We-Feeders to Weed-Eaters: Controlling Weeds Through Animal Grazing

In three locations: Jamestown, Rhode Island; Litchfield, Connecticut; or South Deerfield, Massachusetts

This summer workshop features Darrell Emmick, Retired USDA Grazing Land Management Specialist, presenting on animal behavior at workshops in three different states. For more info: www.meatsystems.uconn.edu/grass_fed.php or contact: Jean King, email: jean.king@uconn.edu, phone: 860-916-7367

July 19-21, 2013, Seed Savers Exchange Conference and Campout Decorah, Iowa

Join the Seed Savers Exchange community at the 33rd Annual Conference and Campout. Speakers include Dr. Gary Paul Nabhan, Dr. Jack Kloppenburg, Dr. Jeremy Cherfas, Sara McCamant, and Rosalind Creasy. Workshops, a seed swap, and social events are planned. For more info: www.seedsavers.org/Education/2013-Conference/, phone: (563) 382-5990.

July 24, 2013, Nutrient Dense Forages Larson Farm, Wells, VT

This intensive workshop (part presentation, part field tour) will address soil formation, grass productivity, and livestock performance using innovative soil management and cover crop strategies. Soil experts Abe Collins, operator and founder of Collins Grazing, and UVM's Sid Bosworth, Ph.D. will share the stage with farmers Rich and Cynthia Larson. Contact: NOFA-VT, Email: info@nofavt.org, Phone: (802) 434-4122

July 25-26, 2013, Kneading Conference Skowhegan, Maine

The Kneading Conference brings together the diverse stakeholders

who collectively can rebuild lost infrastructure and create demand for local and regional grain systems – farmers, millers, bakers, chefs, wheat researchers. The event includes speakers, workshops, tours, and an artisan bread fair. For more info: <http://kneadingconference.com/>, email: wendy@kneadingconference.com, phone: 207 620-0697

July 25, 2013, Organic Row Crops with MOSES Farmer of the Year Madison, South Dakota

Charlie Johnson, MOSES Farmer of the Year, hosts a tour of his farm which includes 2,800 acres of corn, soybeans, oats and alfalfa. Charlie will explain how the farm's simple, yet successful systems for crop rotations and cultivation have created clean fields and good yields for many years. MOSES, Dakota Rural Action, and Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society present this free event. Link: <http://www.mosesorganic.org/FieldDays.html>, phone: 715-778-5775

August 1, 2013

2013 Annual UVM Extension Northwest Crops & Soils Field Day Borderview Research Farm, Alburg, VT

For more information: www.uvm.edu/extension/cropsoil, or call: 802-524-6501

August 2-3, 2013, Pennsylvania Organic Farm Fest Grange Fairgrounds, Centre Hall, PA

FarmFest is a fun and free community-building event that fosters knowledge of organic agriculture and sustainable living through educational opportunities, local foods, lively entertainment, and interactive events. For more info, contact Farm Fest Coordinator, Erin McCracken at ecovents@gmail.com or 512-576-4831. Visit the FarmFest Website: www.farmfest.paorganic.org

August 6, 2013 - 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Improving Pasture Productivity with Intensive Grazing and Silvopasture Deberville Dairy Farm, Washington, VT

Learn how this 4th generation dairy farm is striving to improve the quality of forage with better grazing management techniques including silvopasture grazing, experimenting with annuals, and manure management. Contact: NOFA-VT, Email: info@nofavt.org, Phone: (802) 434-4122

August 14, 2013

Beginning Farmer Field Day for Livestock Producers Green Mountain Girls Farm, Northfield, VT

6 hours of livestock talk with NOFA veteran fencing and pasture experts Lisa McCrory and Willie Gibson, veterinary demo with VOF's Rose McDonough, and host, Green Mountain Girls Farm's Mari Omland. Bring your questions and be ready for in-depth discussion of key components to any livestock operation. Please bring a bagged lunch. Contact: NOFA-VT, Email: info@nofavt.org, Phone: (802) 434-4122

August 14, 2013, MOSES Organic Field Day - Organic Dairy Farm Tour Dee Bee Holsteins, Goodhue, Minnesota

Presentations will focus on increasing the profitability of dairy operations. We will tour the farm's new free stall barn and the corn test plot. Speakers include: Dr. Guy Jodarski, Organic Valley Staff Veterinarian; Dr. Wendy Fulwider, Organic Valley Animal Care Specialist; Karl Dallefeld, Prairie Creek Seed Forage Specialist; Josh Elsing, Midwestern Bio-Ag Representative. For more info: www.mosesorganic.org/FieldDayDairy.html, phone: 715-778-5775

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NET UPDATE

Recent ODairy Discussions

*By Liz Bawden, Organic Dairy Producer,
NODPA President*

Robust discussions about the organic check-off, retained placentas, hay in a day systems, and more.

There was a long thread of posts discussing the possibility of an organic check-off. Most farmers were not in favor of installing a check-off program, and were not happy with the OTA pushing this forward, and setting themselves up to administer it. Some said they could see the benefits of having an advertising fund to clear up consumer misconceptions about organic food choices.

A pair of twin heifers was born outside in a muddy area of the paddock. The farmer brought them inside, cleaned them up and fed colostrum and asked the group if they had any other suggestions. A shot of Immunoboost was recommended as well as Vitamin C.

Another producer had a cow with a retained placenta, and she developed a uterine infection. One farmer suggested massaging the uterus (through the rectum) during milking time in the barn, following up with homeopathic Caulophyllum. He also fed garlic cloves - enough to fill a balling gun 3 times. Another farmer experienced good results using Van Beek's UterFlush and Integrated Bio Systems' UtreSept.

A few farmers discussed their use of the "hay in a day" system, where the hay is cut and made in the same day in an attempt to maximize the nutritional content of the forage. The idea is that the hay would be cut on a sunny morning (after a few sunny days if possible to maximize the sugars in the plant from photosynthesis). It is laid out flat so that it can begin to dry down evenly while still continuing photosynthesis. It is then merged just before being chopped or baled. Then the forage is quickly packed and sealed. Reducing the time forage lays in the field before it is ensiled, either as haylage or baleage, and the time it takes to complete fermentation can increase yield and quality. Two of the farmers recommended forage inoculants to limit energy losses in fermentation.

Farmers on the list were asked if anyone had experience with an Aqua Float cow flotation tank. Two responded saying that they have saved cows with them.

A grazing meeting was announced on the list, and sparked some discussion about whether the speaker from an arid climate had much in common with a group of Northeastern farmers. The technique of "mob grazing", using high densities of animals in a small paddock for a short time, is often used in holistic grazing management. Several farmers who use these grazing methods explained that this technique not specific to any one climate or region, but is meant to be adapted to any environment. A few

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Website & E-Newsletter Advertising

NODPA is pleased to provide additional advertising opportunities for our organic dairy supporters and resource individuals through our Website and our monthly E-Newsletter.

Website Advertising

Three ad spaces are located at the top of the home page and at least 10 other pages on NODPA's website. NODPA.com receives over 2500 visits each month navigating to an average of 3 pages per visit.

Ad Design: Display-ready ads should be 275 pixels wide by 100 pixels tall. Your ad can link to a page on your website.

Cost: Display-ready ads are \$150 per month.

E-Newsletter Advertising

Two ad spaces are located at the top of each E-Newsletter, going out monthly to over 2,000 individuals through our E-Newsletter, the NODPA-ODairy discussion forum, and NODPA's Facebook page.

Ad Design: Display-ready ads should be 300 pixels wide by 125 pixels tall. Your ad can link to a page on your website.

Cost: Display-ready ads are \$125 per month.

Interested in one or both of these opportunities? For more information, contact Lisa McCrory, NODPA News and Web Editor, at:

Email: Lmccrory@hughes.net

Phone: 802-234-5524

Go to the following web page for more information:

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

Subscribing to ODairy:

ODairy is a FREE, 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

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance Producer Milk Check Assignment Form

I, _____ (please print name on your milk check)
 request that _____ (name of company that sends your milk check)

deduct the sum of :

_____ \$0.02 per hundredweight to support the work of NODPA

_____ \$0.05 per hundredweight to support the work of NODPA (the amount that has been deducted in the past for national milk marketing but can now be returned to you as an organic producer if you have applied for the exemption.) If you need assistance in applying for the exemption, check here _____

_____ \$0.07 per hundredweight (the \$.05 marketing check-off plus \$0.02)

as an assignment from my milk check starting the first day of _____, 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:

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

Producer signature: _____ Date: _____

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

Number of milking cows: _____ Tel #: _____

Certifying Agency: _____

Farm Address: (please print) _____

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

Subscribe to the NODPA News and support NODPA!

By becoming a subscriber you will receive 6 copies of the NODPA News and help support the Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance. NODPA depends on your contributions and donations. If you enjoy the bi-monthly NODPA News; subscribe to the Odairy Listserv (http://nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml); 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, NODPA Executive Director, 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: _____

Classified Ads

Livestock:

Up to 25 or 30 lactating cows and a few springing heifers for sale from SpringWood Organic Farm in Lancaster PA. Cross-breeds and from a primarily spring freshening herd. Herd has been grain free since 9/2012. For more details or to discuss pricing contact Dwight at info@springwooddairy.com, call 717-278-1208, or check out www.springwoodfarm.com.

Four Certified Organic Dairy Cows: 2 Holsteins, fresh this spring, 1 Jersey, due in October, 1 cross (dry), due in July. 1 Jersey heifer has been out with the bull, but not preg checked. \$1300/cow, \$1000 for the heifer or \$6000 for the group. Certified through GOA.

Contact: Heidi Tafel, Email: htafel@hotmail.com, phone: 607-336-3656, South New Berlin, NY.

Certified Organic Milking Shorthorns: Sleek and healthy, 100 percent grassfed, granddaughters of our best milker, Daisy. Both could be registered with a bit of paperwork.

Contact: Jen Linck, Email: lathefarm@gmail.com, Phone: (802) 586-2401, Location: Craftsbury, VT

100% Grass Fed Certified Organic Dairy Cattle. Milking Devon crosses, Short Horn and New Zealand Frisian grass fed organic seasonal herd, calving May through June. Call for more details at 802-888-4482. Added June 4, 2013.

Contact: John Clark, Email: applecheek@applecheekfarm.com Phone: 802-888-4482 | Location: Hyde Park, VT

30 Cow dairy herd with 22 head of young stock (one week to springing heifers). Closed herd for fifteen years, Accelerated Genetics Young Sire bred cows and Registered Holstein bulls bred to the heifers. Two years Johnes Free certified, grass fed with a little grain. No silages fed. Yearly hoof care. DHIA tracked for the full fifteen years. Certified Organic with ICS. Westby, WI. Paul at 608-397-2808.

18 certified organic Jerseys currently milking in their first lactation, and are bred back (A.I.). Also 5 heifers over 6 months and a bull 8 months old. Asking \$23,100 for the herd. DH1 records available.

Contact: Paul West. Email: Pwestfarm@roadrunner.com Phone: 207-487-2739 | Location: Pittsfield Me

Feed for Sale:

Organic hay for sale from the upcoming hay season. Mix of timothy and clover. Round bales on the field \$25.00. Haylage is possible.

Contact: Shane Provencher, Email: provencher_n2009@yahoo.com, Phone: 802-744-4019, Location: North Troy VT

Equipment for sale/wanted:

Wanted: I am looking for a small bulk tank- probably 200 gallons

would be great.

Contact: Kristen Herrick, Email: herrickfarmcsa@gmail.com. Phone: 978-509-2201

Surge "C" style milker. In good working order. \$150.

Contact: Benjamin Crockett
Email: wildcarrotfarm@gmail.com
Phone: 802-579-1261 | Location: Brattleboro, VT

NET UPDATES

ODairy Discussions

continued from page 32

thoughts offered by some of the farmers who responded:

- "If you see your cows panting, it is not because they are hot; it is because they have an excess of protein."
- "Our goal no matter what climate or location is to maximize animal performance. To do that we have to have a full rumen and a urine pH of 7."
- "Our cows were outside through last season's heat wave, and there was very little panting despite the extremely high temperatures. This had not been our experience before speeding up the spring rotation to only nip the top third off the plants. The cows spent more time grazing, and less time seeking shade." ♦

Advertise With Us!

**NODPA News is Published Bi-Monthly
January, March, May, July, September & November**

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 or contact Lisa McCrory.

Ad rates and sizes listed below.

**Deadline for advertising in the
September, 2013 issue is August 15, 2013.**

Full Page Ad (7.5" W x 10.25" H) = \$550

1/2 Page Ad (7.5" W x 4.5" H) = \$275

1/4 Page Ad (3.5" W x 4.75" H) = \$150

1/8 Page Ad/Business Card:

(3.5" W x 2.25" H) = \$80

Classified Ads: Free to organic dairy farmers and business members. 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

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

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From The MODPA Treasurer

As I write this it is raining again. Here in the Upper Midwest it has been a spring of never ending rain. Those who have been able to get all of their crops in are the lucky ones. It seems Mother Nature is doing her best to make up for the shortage of moisture from last year. Or as my wife says, it gives all of the farmers something new to talk about. I don't think she is talking about the latest in designer boots.

From my conversations with other farmers, I think it as important this year as ever to buy your feed early if you will be needing to purchase. I think the prices will only go up over the upcoming winter season. Seems funny to talk about this in the middle of summer but I think the memories of this past year will serve as a reminder to us what happens when we don't plan ahead. If possible do what you can to maximize your output of feed going into this fall. In my area, late summer planted small grains for forage usually do quite well. They traditionally have yielded well with excellent quality, plus they are a great way to break the weed cycle. Fall planted pasture crops are also well

worth the time and expense. Every day that you can nurse out of your pasture is a day of profit. There is no more efficient way to produce than from pasture. Hopefully the processors will recognize the need for an increase in pay price to offset our increased costs of producing milk for them to market. They need to remember no milk to market means no job for them. We must make this as viable for our farmers as it is for the processor. The farmer needs his margins covered too.

There has been much talk about the proposed organic check-off. In my conversations with other farmers the consensus has been that this is a bad idea. Even the conventional producers I talk with agree that if organic can avoid this money trap, we should do it. I like to be able to put my money where I think it will do the most good, not where somebody else thinks I should. Our processors already have budgets for promotion and advertising in place so I see no need for them to get more at the farmer's expense. No good has ever come back to the farmer from a check-off and I have no reason to believe this would be any different.

Hoping the balance of your summer will bring you a bountiful harvest. As always feel free to contact your MODPA Rep if you have any thoughts or comments. We enjoy the break in the action.

Be Safe,

Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer
3253 150th Ave, Glenwood City, WI 54013
715-265-4431 Home | 715-781-4856 Cell

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

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zimbadaury@tband.net
Phone: 989-872-2680

Ohio

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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

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Northampton, MA

CALENDAR

continued from page 31

August 19, 2013, Learning from First Year Pasture Irrigation Miller Farm, Vernon, VT

Miller Farm has installed an "Irripod Flexible Pasture Irrigation" system to help improve pasture productivity. Bring your pasture irrigation questions for farmer Peter Miller and NOFA's livestock and pasture expert, Willie Gibson. Contact: NOFA-VT, Email: info@nofavt.org, phone: 802-434-4122

August 23, 2013, Learning from the Stokers: Homeopathic Herd Health and Smart Grain Marketing Cazenovia, NY

Join Henry Stoker of Sto Farm and John Stoker of Stolor Organics to learn how their farm business structure supports their dairy and grain businesses. During the morning program Henry will discuss the use of homeopathy for treating his dairy herd, and the afternoon will focus on the grain operation of the business. Contact: Stephanie, by phone at 585-271-1979 ext. 509, by email at register@nofany.org

August 29, 2013 - 5:00pm - 7:30pm Farm and Homestead Resiliency Strategies Whole Systems Research Farm, Moretown, VT

See the systems and species used in converting 10 degraded acres of hillside into a resilient small farm/homestead, including rice paddies, fuel wood hedges, grazing, aquaculture, swale earthworks, soil decomposition, terraquaculture/fertigation, mushrooms, and more. Contact: NOFA-VT, Email: info@nofavt.org, Phone: (802) 434-4122

September 20-22, 2013, Common Ground Country Fair

If you've ever been to the Fair, in Unity, ME, 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 info: www.mofga.org/TheFair/tabid/135/Default.aspx, Phone: 207-568-4142

September 26 & 27, 2013, 13th Annual NODPA Field Days Mansfield Hose Company Banquet Hall, Mansfield, PA

Theme: Providing organic dairy farmers the tools to enhance the health, productivity and profitability of their land and family while effectively and significantly increasing annual profits. On Thursday, in conjunction with Holistic Management International's Open Gate Program, NODPA will focus on whole farm planning using holistic management principles and will visit Kress and Tammy Simpson's KTS Farm, Mansfield PA, to view these practices in action. Friday will focus on the important and timely issues confronting all organic dairy farm families, along with educational workshops. For more information, or if you have questions about sponsoring or exhibiting at the NODPA Field Days, contact NODPA Field Days Coordinator Nora Owens anytime at noraowens@comcast.net or 413-772-0444.

September 28-29, 2013, Draft Animal-Power Field Days Barton Fairgrounds, Barton, VT

Equipment & Training Demonstrations; Yoke & Harness Fitting, Making & Styles; Considerations for Animal Powered Forestry & Vegetable Operations; Haying, Plowing & Fieldwork Demonstrations; ... and so much MORE! You don't want to miss this event. For more information: www.draftanimalpower.com/dap-field-days or contact Rebekah Perry, DAPNet Administrator: Email: dapnetinfo@gmail.com, phone: 802-763-0771.
