

NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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Thomas, Julia, and Felicity Booiink

Jamink Farm, St. Andrews, Ontario, Canada

by Sonja Heyck-Merlin

Jamink Farm was established in 2014 as a 50/50 partnership between husband and wife Thomas and Julia Booiink. The unique farm name is a combination of equal parts: three letters from Julia's maiden name (James) and three letters from Thomas' last name (Booiink). More than a name, it's a symbol of the couple's shared passion for dairy farming. Thomas and Julia, along with their

three-year old daughter, Felicity, and soon-to-be baby, milk 85 cows. 50% of the herd is Holsten and 50% is Jersey. Both breeds are registered.

The pair owns 500 acres in St. Andrews, Ontario, situated in the southeastern point of Canada's 2nd largest and most populous province. In 2015, there were 3,764 dairies in

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Danone Announces the Purchase of WhiteWave Foods How this will impact Organic Dairy Farmers in the Northeast

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

On July 7, 2016, Danone announced that it will buy WhiteWave Foods in a deal worth \$12.5 billion in cash and a \$34 million golden parachute to the WhiteWave CEO, Greg Engles. Danone merging with WhiteWave will make Danone one of the top 15 food and beverage producers in the US. Danone has more than one-third (33.7

percent) of U.S. yogurt sales in 2015, considerably higher than its nearest rival, General Mills, which has 25.3 percent of the market. Though a smaller portion of the market, WhiteWave's Horizon and Wallaby organic yogurt brands compete with Danone's Stonyfield organic yogurts. Stonyfield makes the number-one selling brand of organic yogurt and the number-three, overall, yogurt brand

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Message from the NODPA President

It is not even Thanksgiving and the kitchen table is littered with seed catalogues again. I guess this means that we have put the past crop year to bed and are looking forward to spring planting already. We talk about where to put the peas and oats, which variety of corn to put in that high field, and plan the mix that will be seeded down next to the heifer pasture. And then, a small voice asks, "what will we do if it is as dry again next year?"

Dave, a retired dairy farmer who spends his summers on the St. Lawrence River, walks his dog by the farm every day when he's here. We chat about the usual farming things; the crops, the cows, but mostly, the weather. It was Dave who told me, "You know, a drought year will scare you to death, but it's a wet year that will break you". Comforting, Dave, very comforting! But I know that he is right - the drought that hit our small corner of the world has left us worried.

So, in this season of gratitude and introspection, we must put

things in perspective. It is my favorite time of year because when we are reminded to be thankful for what we have, we can lose sight of so many things we worry about that don't matter much. We can feel free from the fears and the "what if's". It is what gives us our resilience. Now, where did I put that corn seed catalogue.....?

I hope you and your family enjoy a blessed Holiday Season!

Liz Bawden, NODPA President

Hammond, NY | Phone: 315-324-6926

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.

Board Members & Representatives

PENNSYLVANIA

Arden Landis, State Rep
1850 Bowmansville Rd.
Mohnton, PA 19540-9427
c2graze@dejazzd.com
Phone: 717-484-0038

Roman Stoltzfoos, State Rep
Spring Wood Organic Farm
1143 Gap Rd, Kinzers, PA, 17535
romans@epix.net
Phone: 610-593-2415

VIRGINIA

Rodney Martin, State Rep
Bridge View Dairy
2773 Fadley Road
bridgewater, VA 22812-2711
rodney@lancasterag.com
Cell: 540-705-7834

NEW YORK

Kirk Arnold, NODPA Vice President
3175 State Route 13
Truxton, NY 13158-3107
kickaha21@gmail.com
P: 607-842-6631
Fax: 607-842-6557

Liz Bawden, President, Newsletter Contributor, Associate Editor
119 Factory Rd., Hammond, NY 13646
bawden@cit-tele.com
Phone: 315-324-6926

Siobhan Griffin, State Rep
2518 Co. Hwy 35, Schnevus, NY 12155
raindance@baka.com
Phone: 607-286-9362

Ryan Murray, Board Member
6000 Chenango Solon Pond Rd.
Truxton NY 13158
rcmdairy@gmail.com

Robert Moore, State Rep
Moore Farms, 2083 Moore Hill Rd.
Nichols, NY 13812
Phone: 607-699-7968
cowpoke2@verizon.net

Bill Stine, State Rep
45540 Stine Road
Redwood, NY 13679-3160
Phone: (315) 482-2017
tstine2007@yahoo.com

John Stoltzfoos, State Rep
1553 Hesselton Gully Rd.
Whitesville, NY 14897
jtscribe@yahoo.com
Phone: 607-356-3272

George Wright, Treasurer
821 Pyrites-Russell Rd.
Hermon, NY 14897
wrightdairy@yahoo.com
Phone: 315-347-4604

VERMONT

Craig Russell, Board Member
Brotherly Farm LLC, 570 Lavender Road
Brookfield, VT 05036
brotherlyfarm@yahoo.com
Phone: 802- 272-7726
http://www.brotherlyfarm.com

Jeep Madison, State Rep
2806 Smith Street, Shoreham, VT 05770
Cell: 802-349-6262
email: jojoselixir@yahoo.com

Brian Wilson, State Rep
Morningside Farm, 101 Hemenway Hill Rd, Shoreham, VT 05770
Cell phone: 802-377-1786,
email: bpwilson@shoreham.net

Bonnie and Tom Boutin, State Rep
1184 Cross Road,
Newport Ctr, VT 05857
Phone: 802-334-2081
bonnieboutin@yahoo.com

CONNECTICUT

Rick Segalla, Board Member
96 Allyndale Rd.
Canaan, CT 06018
mccow@earthlink.net
Phone: 860-824-0241

MASSACHUSETTS
Morvan Allen, Board Member
Maple Shade Farm Inc.
229 Hewins St, Sheffield, MA 01257
morvenallen@live.com
Phone: 413-229-6018

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Cindy-Lou Amey, State Rep
Indian Stream Farm
81 Tabor Road, Pittsburg, NH 03592
Phone: (603) 538-7734
cindylouamey@gmail.com

MAINE

Steven Russell, Board Member
RR2 Box 5660, Winslow, ME 04901
jwinrussel@roadrunner.com
Phone: 207-872-6533

Steve Morrison, Secretary
Policy Committee Chair
159 Atkinson Rd, Charleston, ME 04422
smorrison@midmaine.com
Phone: 207-285-7085 Fax: 207-285-0128

Aaron Bell, State Rep
Tide Mill Organic Farm
91 Tide Mill Road, Edmunds, Maine 04628
Phone: 207-733-2551
eatlocal@tidemillorganicfarm.com
www.tidemillorganicfarm.com

AT LARGE NODPA BOARD MEMBERS

Ed Zimba, MODPA Board Member
Zimba Dairy, 7995 Mushroom Rd
DeFord, MI 48729
zimbadairy@tband.net
Phone & Fax: 989-872-2680

Darlene Coehoorn, MODPA President, Newsletter Contributor
Viewpoint Acres Farm
N5878 Hwy C, Rosendale, WI 54874
ddviewpoint@yahoo.com
Phone: 920-921-5541

Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer
3253 150th Ave. Glenwood City, WI 54013
bdrinkman@hotmail.com
Phone: 715-265-4631

Andrew Dykstra, WODPA President
ASDYKSTRA@aol.com

Henry Perkins, Past President,
Box 156 Bog Rd., Albion, ME 04910
Phone: 207-437-9279
bullridge@uninet.net

Kathie Arnold, Policy Committee
3175 NYS Rt. 13, Truxton, NY 13158
kathiearnold@gmail.com
Phone: 607-842-6631
Fax: 607-842-6557

NODPA STAFF

Ed Maltby, Executive Director
30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342
ednodpa@comcast.net
Phone: 413-772-0444 Fax: 866-554-9483

Nora Owens, Editor & Event Coordinator
30 Keets Rd., Deerfield, MA 01342
noraowens@comcast.net
Phone: 413-772-0444
Fax: 866-554-9483

Webmaster / Newsletter Layout
Chris Hill, Chris Hill Media
368 West Duval St., Phila., PA 19144
Phone: 215-843-5704
chris@chrishillmedia.com

NODPA Contributing Writer
Sonja Heyck-Merlin
Clovercrest Farm, 159 Atkinson Road
Charleston, ME 04422
207-285-7085, sjheyckme@gmail.com

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From the NODPA Desk: November 2016

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

My thanks to the NODPA Board, State Reps and especially Patty Lovera for jumping in at the last moment to ensure that the NODPA Field Days were the best ever when I was unable to attend. And, of course, to Nora Owens who organized everything excellently and seamlessly as she usually does.

The Election is over and we have Donald Trump as president. As of this writing, we have little idea about how that affects the USDA or the attitude of a new administration to organic certification. Unlike other transitions, there is not a deep bench of possible candidates for Secretary of Agriculture, plus all the various other appointees that will take a few months to be decided. We also do not have much knowledge about how his campaign pronouncements will be developed into policy and regulation. As far as the lame duck months of the Obama administration, there could well be a push to pass the Animal Welfare regulation to a final rule as this is seen by the current NOP administration as significant but with the other regulation we have been waiting for, its unlikely it will be pushed forward because the comment period will run into the new administration. We have, of course, sent our thoughts on the organic Check-off, the Origin of Livestock and the Animal Welfare regulation to the transition team for President-elect Trump's administration.

For the last few years, we have been waiting for WhiteWave to be purchased as it diversified its operations and increased its attractiveness for a buyer. The article on page one of this issue looks at that purchase by multinational conglomerate Danone. Other multi-commodity/national conglomerates like General Mills are looking to their supply side in their rush to get organic dairy products on the market. Conventional dairy companies are investigating increasing the availability of the supply side for organic cream in the transition of some of their products to organic, like Ben and Jerry. Dairy Farmers of America continues to purchase dairy manufacturing infrastructure, and CROPP Cooperative continues to increase its trade with partners in Europe and Australasia, plus maintains its dominance in the private label/store brand market.

So what does this do to pay price in the next five years? George Siemon was very clear about the direction that he is taking CROPP, the largest purchaser and wholesaler of organic milk in the country. On NODPA's Odairy listserv, he said "We set out to bring organic into the food system, and we have succeeded. ... I hope we all agree that this is good news for family farms. Now, the real challenge is how to maintain the farmer pay price and to ensure integrity at all levels." He is also quoted in a Star Tribune, Minneapolis, Minnesota article on 10/29/16, in which he said that he largely agrees with its accuracy, as saying, "Our job is not to increase our own profits, it's to do organics right," adding that, "General Mills' job is to grow demand." The conventional companies expect that with increased volume, their raw ingredients (organic milk) will become

cheaper. Foreign countries see the large US organic market as very attractive, especially those countries with lower costs of production. This is very evident in the organic grain and feed market which is now overrun with cheap imports.

What does this do to the organic dairy pay price? Organic pay price has to be higher than conventional as organic dairy requires a larger land base and the cost of inputs are higher than conventional inputs, especially feed, – this higher price is not an organic premium but a necessary pay price to cover organic production. I would question the priorities about growing the market first and safeguarding a pay price and organic integrity second. Ideally, the growth in the supply should happen while maintaining pay price and organic integrity at the same time. Earlier in its history, CROPP followed that logic in dealing with Walmart and others but appears to have changed their emphasis in search of volume to support an ever-increasing and expensive infrastructure and customer base. Retailers have not lowered their prices with increased availability and volume over the last 8 years; USDA AMS data show the average retail price increased from \$3.63 to \$3.80 per half gallon. Producers' share of the retail dollar still lags behind conventional producers even with increased volume and availability; conventional producers' share of the retail dollar in 2014 was 61%, organic producers' share of the retail dollar in 2014 was 40%.

Neither of the two national buyers of organic milk has a pay price based on costs of production, although they both have provisions within pay price for regional differences in expenses. Despite pressure from producers, neither has looked at supply control as a way to maintain a stable supply, increasing incrementally to reflect demand at a pay price that reflects cost of production plus return on investment. Quotas have only been applied when supply is out of control. Despite suggestions from producers, buyers have advocated against an organic Federal Milk Marketing Order or inclusion in the conventional margin insurance program. Neither of these work very effectively for conventional producers but they could be approached differently to reflect more clearly the needs of an organic marketplace, where length of time to transition and the costs restrict how quickly supply can grow.

CROPP has a unique responsibility and opportunity when it comes to maintaining a pay price that reflects cost of production. They are the largest wholesaler of organic milk and have a cooperative legal structure that gives them the ability, under the Capper Volstead Act, to restrict supply in order to raise the pay price to their farmer owners. If CROPP accepted their position as a national leader in supplying organic milk, they could also honor their responsibility as a leader in the fight for a fair pay price that would need to be matched by other buyers of organic milk. Pay price must reflect costs of production, a fair wage for the managers of the operation (living expenses), and a return on investment so that there can be re-investment in the operation or an ability to service debt. Pay price should control supply and growth especially at this moment when dairy manufacturers want organic milk and dairy products. If it doesn't, we are another large step down the conventional road where buyers will be driving down the pay price while pushing for economies of scale that will make organic dairy nonviable in New England and the Northeast. ♦

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Danone Announces the Purchase of WhiteWave Foods

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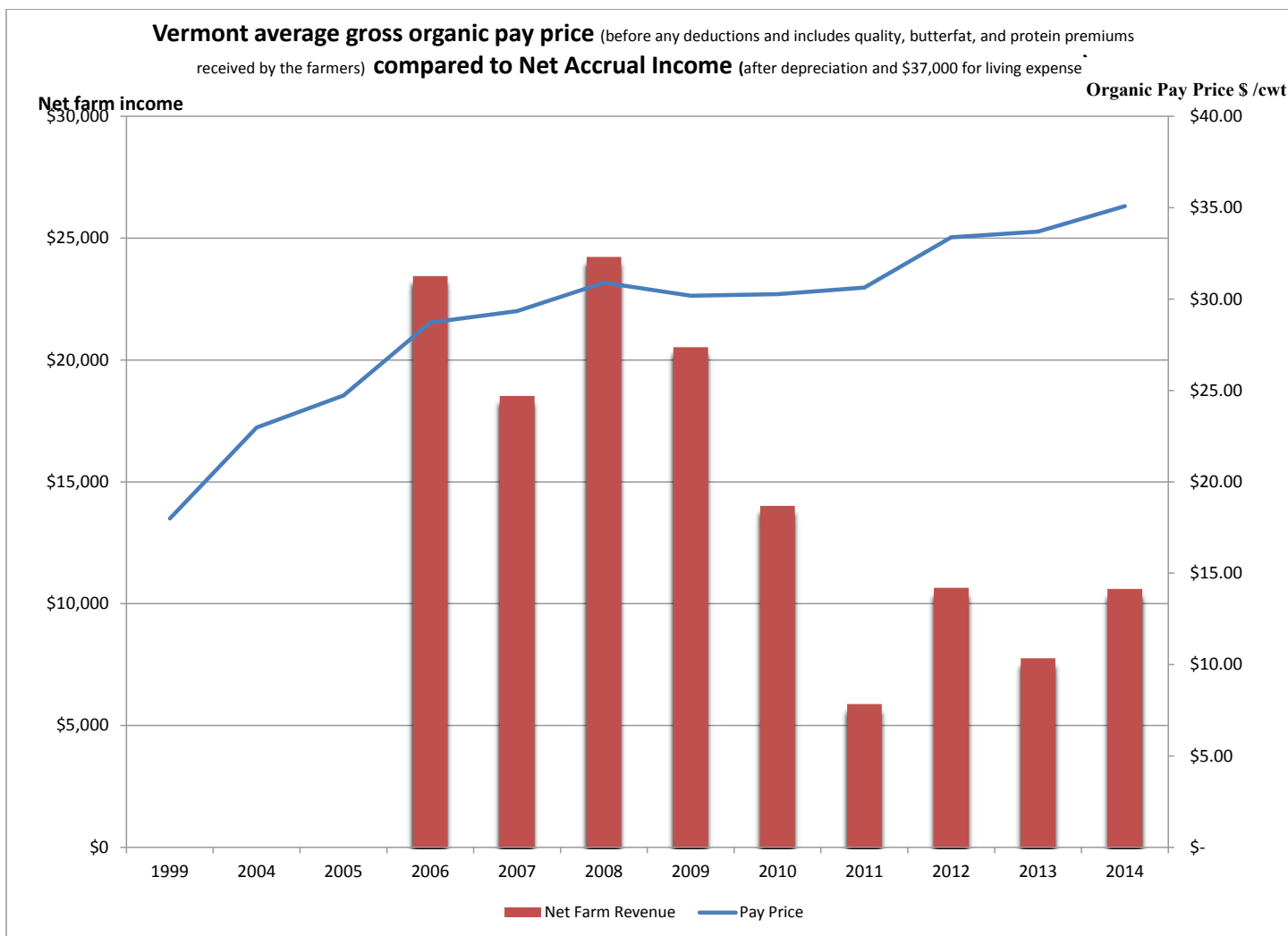
in the United States, according to Fortune magazine. The companies are projecting \$300 million in synergies by 2020. Cecile Canais, chief financial officer of Danone, said the company is projecting \$300 million in synergies on an annual basis. "From these synergies, 75% are cost synergies," she said, "And of this 75%, 85% will be in the U.S. The cost synergies will basically be the results of efficiencies created through the combination, by scaling sourcing and supply chain and fixed cost optimization." As the purchase will be financed by increased debt, Danone is projecting that the combined merged operations will increase its earnings within the first year of the deal's closing. After the merger, Danone will control the Horizon, Stonyfield and Wallaby organic yogurt labels and this will impact CROPP (Organic Valley) which will be Danone's primary rival in the marketplace.

On August 1, 2016, both Danone and WhiteWave filed merger notifications under the U.S. Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976, known as HSR Act notifications and

the Department of Justice (DOJ) commenced its investigation of the merger. On August 31st, Danone voluntarily withdrew its HSR Act notification to provide the DOJ with additional time for review. On September 2nd, Danone refiled its paperwork with the expectation that the DOJ would finish its investigation within the month.

On October 1, 2016, the DOJ requested more information by issuing a "Second Request." If either the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) or the Antitrust Division has reason to believe the merger will impede competition in a relevant market, they may request more information by way of "Request for Additional Information and Documentary Materials", more commonly referred to as a "Second Request". A typical second request asks to gather information about the sales, facilities, assets, and structure of the businesses which are party to the transaction.

The concern of NODPA is that Danone will need to be aggressive in exploiting the benefits of its merger to justify their purchase to shareholders. The main fear is fourfold:



1. Danone will presumably consolidate purchasing through WhiteWave, rather than continue its supply arrangement with CROPP, a WhiteWave competitor that benefits from its current contract. The supply agreement for Danone's Stonyfield yogurt is terminable by either party and includes a four-year wind-down period subject to reduced purchase and sale requirements.
2. In November 2009, Stonyfield agreed to provide CROPP an exclusive license to market fluid milk products under the Stonyfield Farm brand. In 2013, Stonyfield fluid milk sales generated \$64 million for CROPP, with sales centered primarily in the Northeastern US. This relationship is unlikely to continue post-merger. At the moment, Danone (Stonyfield) does not market a fluid milk product. Through the merger, however, Danone would acquire WhiteWave's market-leading Horizon Organic fluid milk—an acquisition that will presumably diminish its incentive to continue to license its Stonyfield brand to a close, fluid milk competitor.
3. Danone is already the leader in the organic yogurt retail market and with the merger they will be the leading branded product in the organic retail fluid milk market. With the merger, Danone will continue to source the milk for their retail brand directly from the farmgate. With the ending of the supply agreement with CROPP, they will be able to source the milk for their yogurt directly from the farmgate. This will make them the largest buyer of organic milk with end sales as branded product. This will give

them the dominant power and leverage in purchasing raw organic milk from the farm.

4. CROPP must also be aware that its relationship with General Mills will be seen by Danone as counterproductive to a long term relationship on the supply side. General Mills is second only to Danone in the yogurt market and appears to be aggressive in sourcing its organic milk at competitive prices.

If the above assumptions were to play out, CROPP would both lose the Stonyfield retail fluid milk franchise and its raw organic milk supply contract with Stonyfield yogurt. It is estimated that the fluid retail Stonyfield brand uses approximately 8% of the total volume of CROPP milk supply and the supply contract with Stonyfield represents approximately 20% of the total CROPP volume. We do not have reliable information about what percentage of CROPP's Northeast organic milk supply is currently used to supply Stonyfield yogurt and retail brand, but we anticipate that it is a significant portion.

What will be the effect on demand for raw organic milk in New England and the Northeast?

The farmgate pay-price for New England and Northeast organic milk is determined by the number of buyers and supply. Although the base price may be stable, producers' payment for

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Danone Purchases White Wave

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components, quality, volume and a Market Adjustment Premium (MAP) will vary. Most recently, the pay price has been determined by supply as the price was increased in early 2015 as supply was tight and inputs increased in price. In August 2016, the buyers determined that the market was in oversupply and reduced their MAP payments by up to \$2 per hundred pounds.

Farmgate pay-price is also determined by competition. When HP Hood came into the market as a buyer in 2005, the pay-price increased by up to \$4 per hundred pounds. When HP Hood left the market, there was stagnation in pay-price for over 3 years despite increases in input costs. Most recently, in 2015, Upstate Niagara Cooperative needed to expand their supply and therefore increased their pay prices. They rapidly increased their supply from within their geographic area by mostly signing up organic producers who sold their milk to CROPP and WhiteWave.

CROPP and WhiteWave, the two main choices for producers as buyers, rightly pay more for Northeast and New England milk than they do for the Midwest and Western milk because of higher input costs. Without a large regional buyer for raw organic milk, CROPP may well decide that they need to shrink or limit their supply in

New England and perhaps in the Northeast. The cost of processing organic raw milk in the Northeast versus the Midwest is higher and the availability of processing plants is less in the Northeast. CROPP has a limited market opportunity for its higher cost organic milk. With the increased competitiveness of the Danone organic brands it is unlikely that CROPP will increase its share of the retail market with its own branded product, the most profitable use of organic milk. WhiteWave has always dominated that market; therefore, it is unlikely that CROPP will process milk in the Northeast into branded product and then transport that pasteurized milk to other parts of the country. It is more likely that any surplus from the loss of the Stonyfield contracts in New England and the Northeast will be diverted into private label and store brand contracts in the Northeast, where the profit margins are tighter.

Without supplying organic milk for Danone's Stonyfield brands, it will be unlikely that CROPP will expand in the Northeast and New England. Instead, CROPP will concentrate on areas for expansion that are more competitive in producing organic milk at a lower price. The recent agreement between CROPP and General Mills to expand supply for General Mills organic products appears to show that CROPP's investment in expansion is concentrated in the Midwest where it has a higher number of producers, a better infrastructure and state financial support for expansion.

As CROPP shrinks or stops any expansion in its supply in New England and the Northeast, Danone would increase its demand for organic supply for its Stonyfield yogurt, retail brands and

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other manufactured product through its WhiteWave infrastructure which might temporarily cause an increase in pay price for New England organic producers. Currently, with the steady and significant volume of raw organic fluid milk that Stonyfield purchases in the Northeast and the steady income it provides to CROPP and its co-op members, the Danone-CROPP relationship provides a counterweight to WhiteWave. Once Danone's initial drive for new suppliers of organic milk has been satisfied, Danone will be in a unique position as the only significant buyer within the region. This shift in purchases would lessen producers leverage in any contract negotiations on pay price and contractual obligations with Danone, effectively creating a monopsony, (a market controlled by one buyer).

Possible Solutions to Creating a Monopsony

The Department of Justice can apply conditions to their acceptance of any merger which will alleviate the very real monopsony concerns that represent the main antitrust hurdle to close the deal.

NODPA has developed a number of solutions to the problems of monopsony, which are listed below:

1. Danone sells off the Stonyfield brand of yogurts and retail milk which would re-establish demand for raw organic milk in New England and the Northeast. There would then be at least two, if not three, competitive buyers for organic milk. As an established brand in the organic market with a

loyal consumer base, this would be attractive to non-organic dairy companies who already have an existing infrastructure for processing and distribution, plus a presence in the dairy case in supermarkets.

2. An extension of the supply contract with CROPP for another ten years with a minimum volume requirement and a price that reflects the cost of supplying organic milk from the New England region which has a higher cost of production. There would need to be an annual re-assessment of the price paid to producers to ensure it reflected any increases in inputs, and cost of living with an adequate return on investment. This would allow CROPP to continue to have an active and competitive producer pool of milk in New England and the Northeast, therefore ensuring that there would be at least two buyers in the region.
3. Danone has a history of working closely with producer groups in Europe to establish contractual agreements that reflect the costs of production and a sustainable return on investment. The biggest impediment to this as a solution is the lack of trust that it would be a long term commitment. The organic consumer is clearly discriminating and selective in their purchases. Danone and Stonyfield have built a strong consumer loyalty based on the perception that they have mutually beneficial agreements with their producers.

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

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When they find out that organic brands are now controlled by big conventional companies (like Danone) consumers don't like it. If the relationship with their producers was part of the branding of their product on an ongoing basis and had oversight from producer and consumer groups as well as the Department of Justice, this might be a proactive solution that could establish Danone as a leader in expanding the organic market based on sustainable producer pay price.

What is next?

Danone predicted that they would complete the merger by the end of 2016, which now seems unlikely. The Second Request will usually ask for more details on the nuts and bolts of how the deal may affect the market and, since this is the first mega merger/acquisition in organic dairy, the DOJ is obviously moving cautiously. Will New England legislators get involved? Will consumer groups concerned about the integrity of the organic label have an opportunity to present their concerns? Will producers be freed of their contractual restrictions by their buyers to comment on how this may affect the future of their family farms? There are more questions than answers and we do not have a crystal ball or the money to employ lawyers that specialize in

representing interested parties in these situations. If you think you will be affected by this merger/acquisition please let the DOJ know your concerns either directly or through NODPA.

To complain directly:

Citizen Complaint Center, Antitrust Division
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NODPA ANNUAL FUND DRIVE

It's November: Time for the Annual NODPA Fund Drive

Has your NODPA Fund Drive letter arrived? When it does, we hope you will consider all the ways NODPA works for Organic Dairy farm families and those who support the industry, and send in your annual contribution. If you already support NODPA through the monthly Milk Check Assignment or during NODPA's Field Days, we say thanks!

Do you wonder how the events happening in Washington, whether in Congress or at the USDA, are impacting your organic dairy farm? NODPA is the only independent organic dairy farmer-controlled organization that represents your interests and can keep you informed of what is happening before it is too late to act. Are you wondering how to be informed of what the different processors are paying and what opportunities exist to sell your milk? Do you want to know and understand the current retail price for organic milk? Are you interested in learning new and successful animal health care methods, new production practices, and what other producers are doing? The NODPA News print edition, NODPA E-newsletter, and the NODPA website are full of the best and most up-to-date information.

In 2016, NODPA led the way in organizing producers to respond to the NOP Animal Welfare regulations, which, if implemented as was written, would have devastated organic livestock production. We led the way and financed the coordination of a coalition of producer groups and producers that oppose the organic check-off with 1,786 signing a petition against forming an organic check-off. NODPA has been an important resource to the Department of Justice and investment analysts, explaining the supply side of organic milk from a producer point of view. NODPA is a member of the National Organic Coalition Executive Committee and has brought the producers' needs and views to Washington DC, the offices of

Senators and Representatives, the USDA and to the leaders of consumer and environmental groups who are our most important allies in obtaining a living wage for organic family farms. We took the NODPA annual meeting and Field Days to Chambersburg, PA and had a very well attended meeting which achieved the goal of a positive future for organic dairy farming: Regenerate, Renew, Refresh. And, NODPA has been selected by the James Beard Foundation and Food Tank to be included on the 2016 Good Food Guide list of 1000 organizations creating a better food system across the United States (see related article on page 35).

NODPA provides a wide range of resources and services, such as hosting and moderating the ODairy listserv, publishing the print newsletter (NODPA News) 6-times per year, the monthly e-newsletter, managing the resource-rich website, organizing and hosting the annual NODPA Field Days, and providing advocacy on behalf of all organic dairy farm families through membership in the National Organic Coalition. Although we keep costs to a minimum, there are still bills to pay and your generous support is needed.

"NODPA supporters are dedicated organic dairy farmers and industry professionals; hardworking, committed to the principles of organic farming and focused on operating their businesses in the most efficient and informed way possible," said organic dairy producer and NODPA Board President Liz Bawden, "We work long hours and have come to expect reliable information delivered in the most convenient manner possible, and NODPA delivers! We know you depend on NODPA for the latest organic dairy news and education and that your support is a vote for the work we do."

"Many organic dairy farmers already support NODPA with their monthly Milk Check Assignment, and that continues to be a great way to support NODPA. We also offer Business Memberships," said Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, "and applications for both are on page ____ of this newsletter, or on our website, www.nodpa.com." "If you didn't receive a letter in the mail or have misplaced it, you can complete and send in the contribution form on page _____. You can also donate online at www.nodpa.com/donate.shtml, said Nora Owens, NODPA Fundraising Campaign Coordinator. And, if you have questions or need assistance, please give Nora a call at 413-772-0444 or email her at noraowens@comcast.net. Your generous financial support will help NODPA continue to provide the valuable resources and services that you have come to depend on, so please take a moment and send in your pledge today.

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Statement of the Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing, Inc. (OFARM) to the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) Nov. 16, 2016, St. Louis, MO

By John Bobbe, OFARM Executive Director

The Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing, Inc. (OFARM) is incorporated in the State of Minnesota as a cooperative marketing-agency-in-common. OFARM has six organic grain and livestock marketing cooperatives as members. OFARM represents organic producers in 19 states from Montana to Texas and Louisiana to Kentucky, Michigan and states in between. USDA has cited OFARM as the largest farmer controlled block of organic grain in North America (Rural Cooperatives, January-February, 2012)

The U.S. organic market has been deluged with imports of organic corn and soybeans that are highly suspect as to their organic integrity.

Current USDA FAS GATS data shows that Turkey and, Ukraine up until last year as being top exporters of organic corn and soybeans to the U.S. in 2016 (July, Turkey, 930,000 bushels of corn, 333,265 bushels of soybeans; August, Turkey 1,178,308 bushels of corn, 215,210 bushels of soybeans) This trend is on pace to be almost a million bushels of corn into the U.S. per month in 2016. The rise of imports from Turkey especially raises concern as have imports from the Ukraine and Romania. A 2016 report by USDA's Foreign Agriculture Service summarized the potential for fraudulent activity in the Turkish organic sector:

"According to a EUROPOL report, some Turkish companies have been involved in relabeling or repackaging products as organic and bringing the counterfeit products into the European Union, even though the products do not meet the EU's organic standards. Reports from the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in 2013, Eurofins Scientific in 2012, the Cornucopia Institute in 2013 and the French Ministry of the Economy in 2015 uncovered fraud or unapproved production methods in organic products from Turkey. There have also been instances where a few Turkish companies were found to have been using

fraudulent organic certificates. Turkish news articles report that consumers may be misled by conventional products that are marketed as organic, mostly in open air bazaars or independent stores where a vendor could more easily sell a fake organic product. Although inspections and transparency in the Turkish organic food sector are improving, the integrity of organic farming, production, shipping and marketing is not always guaranteed."¹

One Turkish organic certifier, ETKO, has been decertified by the EU.² The introduction of additional testing regimes in the EU has reportedly led some traders to prefer to ship to non-EU destinations (including the United States), as there is less risk of rejection in U.S. markets.³ In addition, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency has also decertified ETKO. Yet ETKO remains on the USDA Integrity Data Base with no mention of its decertification elsewhere in major world markets.

In the words of one western Asian certifier regarding the situation in the Ukraine, they consider the situation too dangerous to do on-farm certifications. The civil unrest in Turkey with 32,000 people currently in jail or under arrest and it is hard to see how "organic integrity" in the market chain can be maintained with the biggest exporter to the U.S.

As the organic market grows rapidly around the world, resulting shortages in the supply of various commodities can create a tempting situation for those who do not value the integrity of the organic standards and see a potential to ship products fraudulently labeled as organic. The potential for fraud is being acknowledged by some participants in the organic sector. With regard to both Turkey and Ukraine, an Anti-Fraud Initiative has been established to "improve cross border communication among inspection and certification bodies, trade companies, label organizations and authorities to strengthen organic integrity."⁴ The fact that fraud is a serious enough concern to trigger the creation of this network, and international workshops with titles such as "Best practice examples to guarantee integrity of organic exports from Turkey,"⁵ should provide sufficient motivation to the NOP to dedicate more effort to this issue. An attendee at the Ukrainian workshop that I met with from a Western Asian country (NOP accredited certifier) wondered why they were even there when the focus was on what to do about the widespread fraud in organic.

In meetings I have personally had in both Europe and western Asia, with farmers and a certifier, (NOP accredited), statements were made that the U.S. is an easy mark with less chance of getting caught for fraudulent organic exports than most anyplace in the world. Although the NOP reminding importers of handling regulations is commendable, (July 13, 2016), simply reminding importers is not enough. Threats of fines and other enforcement actions have been publicized. A fine of the stated maximum of \$11,000 amounts to about 2-2.4 cents per bushel on a shipload of organic grain, a mere cost of doing business.

What is needed to begin correcting potential fraud and integrity

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¹ USDA Global Agriculture Information Network. "Report # TR601, Turkish Organic Market Overview." January 26, 2016.

² IOAS. "IOAS withdraw ISO 65 accreditation of ETKO Turkey." May 25, 2016.

³ Personal communication. Email to John Bobbe, OFARM Executive Director, from a U.K. organic farmer-owned company. August 8, 2016.

⁴ Anti-Fraud Initiative. <http://www.organic-integrity.org/>

⁵ Anti-Fraud Initiative. "Meetings and Events." <http://www.organic-integrity.org/>

The Albrecht Model of Soil Fertility

By Neal Kinsey

The Albrecht Model of soil fertility refers to the principles Dr. William A. Albrecht used to develop a dependable system for testing soils and correcting nutrient needs to achieve the ideal biological environment to grow top quality, highly productive crops and plants of all types. The program has to do with how he regarded soil fertility and approached it with measurable, scientific principles, which could be applied and proven right out in the field. It is, as outlined by the principles given below, the foundational approach for achieving excellent soil fertility.

The Albrecht Model is not a single program or approach to soil fertility. It is a system based on what program is required for correcting fertility based on the actual needs of each soil and the economics required to achieve maximum production. There are three parts to this system. The first and most utilized program is building up medium to heavy soils that are lacking in fertility. This approach involves correcting the soil to 65-70 % calcium and 10-12 % magnesium in order to achieve the needed fertility and the correct physical structure. The second is not as well understood by many who profess to use the Albrecht program. It has to do with soils that are so sandy that adjustments have to be made to reduce the calcium and increase the magnesium for the best response in plant health and production. The third program is rarely mentioned by those who work with soil fertility and by far the least understood and utilized. It has to do with supplying sufficient levels of nutrients in soils that are excessive to extremely excessive in one or more of the four major cations, calcium, magnesium, potassium or sodium. For extremely excessive soils, even an additional test to establish the soil's true exchange capacity is generally required before the true fertility needs of that soil can be realized.

We utilize and teach all three of these programs to those clients who want to learn any one or even all

three parts of the Albrecht system. This is the true Albrecht Model for soil fertility.

It is the chemical make-up of each soil that determines its physical structure. When a soil has the correct chemistry, the physics of that soil is also correct. When the chemistry and physics are right, so long as the principles to avoid soil compaction are observed, the environment for the biology will also be right. That is why so much emphasis is placed on achieving the exact level for each nutrient, based on the specific requirements of every different soil.

Soil nutrients are supplied based on any deficiencies or excesses. When there is too much of one element in the soil, it will generally inhibit the availability of one or more other needed elements. Supplying what is missing in terms of measurable nutrients is the first key to assuring a most productive soil. This is the only way to achieve a truly "balanced" soil and why the Albrecht program emphasizes "feed the soil and let the soil feed the plants."

You cannot manage what you cannot measure. Using the Albrecht system, even the trace element levels in the soil take on measured significance. But micronutrients only work properly when adequately supplied, and only when the needed levels of primary and secondary elements are also present in adequate amounts.

The Albrecht system has been developed to accomplish this. And, as the Albrecht Model for soil fertility, these principles are presently being used successfully for all types of organically grown food and fiber crops around the world including the production of organic dairy pastures and forages.

Kinsey Agricultural Services, Inc.
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CHARLESTON, MISSOURI 63834
PHONE: 573-683-3880 – FAX: 573-683-6227
E-MAIL: neal@kinseyag.com
WEBSITE: www.kinseyag.com

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of organic imports is for the NOP to be pro-active instead of reactive. A first step would be to require importers to be certified by an NOP accredited certifier.

Additional steps beyond this are needed to re-establish U.S. organic using the European Union's protocols as a model.

In December, 2015, The European Commission issued the following document to cover 2016: GUIDELINES on additional official controls on organic products imported from Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Russian Federation

Specifically, the document requires the following:

- (1) Tracking and identification of all consignments of imported organic food and feed
- (2) Complete documentation check at point of entry. The complete documentation of these consignments shall be verified systematically:
 - a. Certificate of inspection, boxes 1 to 15
 - b. Documents of custom declaration
 - c. Transport documents
 - d. Operators and product traceability: verification of names, addresses and valid certification of all operators in the trade flow
- (3) Sampling and analyzing for presence of pesticide residues each incoming consignment at point of entry

In a joint September 1, 2016 letter submitted by Food and Water Watch and OFARM to the USDA's Office of Inspector General, we called attention to this major problem and urged the OIG to take a careful look at the potential for non-organic products, especially bulk commodities like grains, to enter the U.S. market and be sold as organic. The letter stated, "Specifically, we urge you to examine:

- What procedures does NOP have to assess whether the EU's processes for accreditation and certification are adequate to ensure the integrity of bulk shipments of commodities that are pooled from many farms?
- Does NOP have an adequate system to track bulk commodity shipments produced in other countries outside the EU that are certified by EU-based certifiers, or shipped through EU countries?
- What other data collection should NOP set up to have a better understanding of source of imports, back to the certifier and farm level?"

The fact that the NOP is discussing requiring certification of importers is an important step, but late in the game. The widespread fraud in Turkey has been publicly known for at least a year or more and met with total silence and very little action on the part of NOP to address these issues until now.

Prices of domestic organic corn have dropped from \$12 a bushel 18 months ago to \$7.50 to \$8 per bushel today with some bids as low as \$6. A reason often given by buyers is the amount of imported grain available. The cost to U.S. organic producers is an average of \$300 per acre due to a drop in prices, far below their cost of production which is around \$10 per bushel. This amounts to \$30,000 for corn alone on a small operation on up to hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses on larger organic operations. This does not account for additional losses due to the drop in organic soybean prices.

The result of this has the potential to set back the U.S. organic market due to lack of consumer confidence in USDA's "organic" seal and creating an environment with even more reliance on imports of organic corn and soybeans. The market signal to organic farmers is to produce less, not more when we are encouraging increased transitions to organic production domestically. Unless immediate steps are taken by the NOP to strengthen organic import protocols to be equivalent to what U.S. producers and the industry face here, in the EU and Canada, this stands to be a major economic train wreck setting back the growth of the industry for years to come.

**John Bobbe, is OFARM's Executive Director. He holds a Master's Degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Missouri-Columbia. John is the author of "Marketing Organic Grain, A Farmers Guide." (Levins Publishing, December, 2015)*

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Rob Kinley said in previous projects they have used open path lasers to measure methane in the field.

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Feeding cows seaweed could slash global greenhouse gas emissions, researchers say

By Sophie Kesteven, reporter for ABC Tropical North's cross media ABC.

Seaweed could hold the key to cutting greenhouse gas emissions, one cow burp at a time.

New research carried out in north Queensland could drastically reduce the impact the agricultural industry has on the global environment.

Professor of aquaculture at James Cook University in Townsville, Rocky De Nys, has been working with the CSIRO studying the effects seaweed can have on cow's methane production.

They discovered adding a small amount of dried seaweed to a cow's diet can reduce the amount of methane a cow produces by up to 99 per cent.

"We started with 20 species [of seaweed] and we very quickly narrowed that down to one really stand out species of red seaweed," Professor De Nys said.

The species of seaweed is called *Asparagopsis taxiformis*, and JCU researchers have been actively collecting it off the coast of Queensland.

"We had an inkling that we would get some success from this species, but the scale or the amount of success and reduction we saw was very surprising," he said.

Professor De Nys said methane gas was the biggest component of greenhouse gas emissions from the agriculture industry, and the findings could help alleviate climate change.

He also added that the vast majority of methane comes from the cow's burp rather than the gas from the other end of the cow.

PHOTO Professor Rocky De Nys said they tested 20 different species of seaweed to see which one would be most effective in reducing methane in cows' burps.

Researchers use an artificial cow's stomach to test species

To test the effectiveness of each individual seaweed species, the CSIRO created an artificial rumen.

"You create the conditions you would see in a cow's stomach, in a bottle," Professor De Nys explained.

"You do that by collecting a little bit of the cow's stomach to start with.

"They get a little bit of material from inside the rumen that has all those microbes, and then they add them to different grasses or substrates, and then you add a little bit of seaweed to that.

"As they ferment ... just like you would see in a compost bin or somewhere else, the gas is created and it creates pressure."

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Seaweed

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He said by measuring and sampling the pressure of the gas, they were able to determine how much methane gas was in it.

"Once you establish that works then you can go to whole animals," he said.

"We have results already with whole sheep; we know that if asparagopsis is fed to sheep at 2 per cent of their diet, they produce between 50 and 70 percent less methane over a 72-day period continuously, so there is already a well-established precedent."

The thought of cows chomping down on fresh seaweed in outback Australia may be entertaining thought, however, Professor De Nys said they intend to use dried seaweed instead.

"When the seaweed is harvested it is dried, and it can be added as a sprinkle essentially to the diet, just as you would add a mixture of herbs and spices to the chicken," he said.

Mr De Nys said trials would be underway at the CSIRO Lans-



According to Mr Kinley, the agriculture industry stands to be one of the first industries to make a dramatic reduction to greenhouse gas emissions if this research gets to market.

down facility near Townsville until mid-next year to analyse the effects seaweed could have on cattle production.

"We will feed animals and measure more carefully how the

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seaweed affects both the production of methane and any increase in weight gain in those animals,” he said.

Getting enough seaweed to feed millions of cows

Research scientist with Agriculture and CSIRO, Rob Kinley had been heavily involved in the research project.

“All sectors are trying to be responsible and reduce their contribution to climate change, which in many instances relates to reducing their contributions to greenhouse gas emissions,” he said.

“Agriculture stands to be one of the first to make dramatic reductions if we can get this to market.”

However, while their research was promising, Mr Kinley was concerned about access to seaweed.

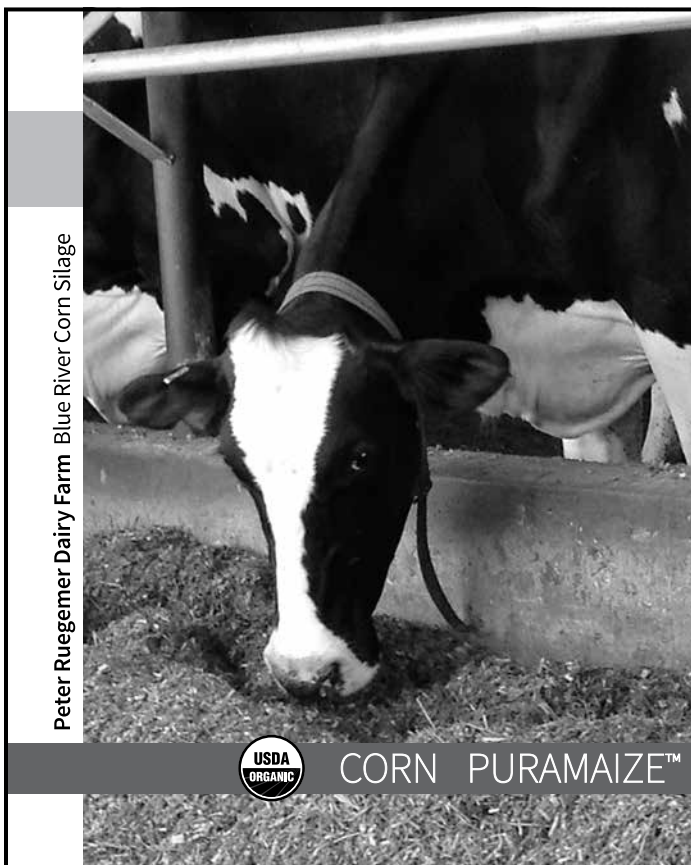
“That is the number one barrier — getting enough seaweed to feed to millions of cows,” he said.



*Mr Kinley said they collected a large amount of *asparagopsis taxiformis* seaweed off Great Keppel Island near Yeppoon.*

“Wild harvesting isn’t going to do it because it’s far too expensive and the resources aren’t enough, so we need to get partners on

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

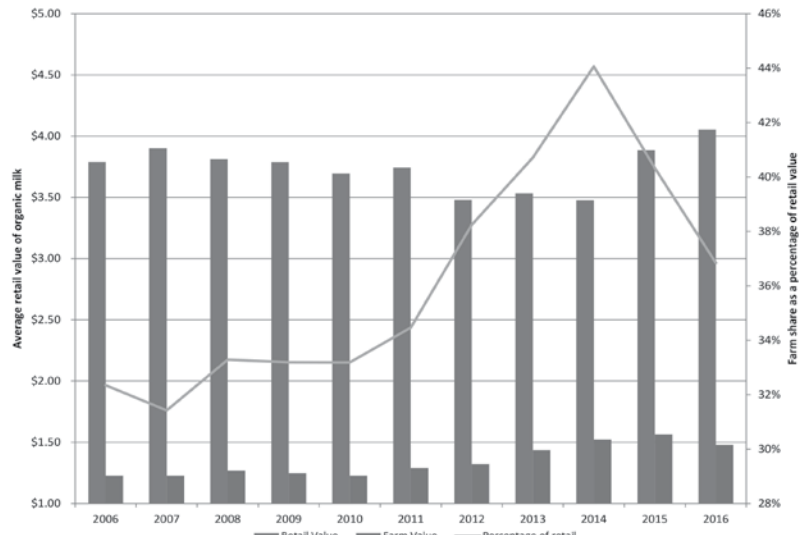
Organic Milk Pay, Retail and Feed Prices for November 2016

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

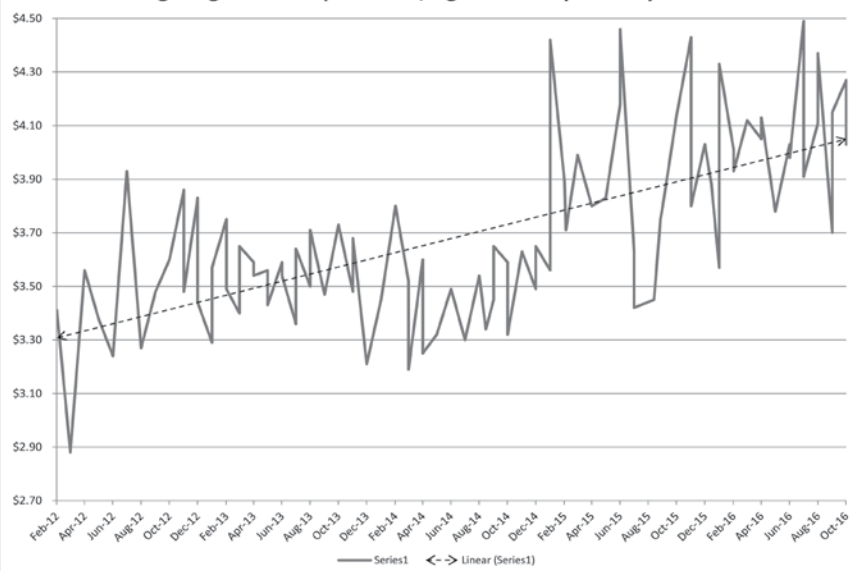
It's official – we are in a surplus supply situation and CROPP is selling organic milk into the conventional market. George Siemon posted on Odairy list serve: “There is an oversupply in most of the nation, and our cooperative for one is selling milk conventionally rather than lowering the target price so that we protect the long-term organic price.” Pay price has been hit though with both CROPP and WhiteWave taking up to two dollars off the Market Adjustment Premium (MAP) which doesn't affect the base price but is significant as we enter into the winter months.

General Mills has signed a multi-year agreement with CROPP as part of its attempt to reach a goal of \$1 billion in organic and natural food sales by 2019. Over the next three years, General Mills also plans to more than double, to 250,000, the number of organic acres from which it sources ingredients. As part of the agreement with CROPP, General Mills will help build the organic milk supply with financial support directly to 20 mostly Amish farmers in transitioning approximately 3,000 acres from conventional to organic production. How much General Mills is giving, to whom and at what final pay price to producers has not been reported. General Mills is now giving CROPP two-year projections in order to ensure adequate supply to its yogurt operating unit in the U.S., including brands like Yoplait, Annie's, Liberté, and Mountain High. The Annie's brand, best known for its kid-friendly crackers, debuted its organic whole milk yogurt in the U.S. earlier this year, and the Liberté brand is transitioning to become a USDA certified organic product starting this summer. General Mills is now among the top five organic ingredient purchasers in the North American packaged food sector. To ramp up its organic offerings, General Mills also has invested in its Yoplait plant in Reed City, Mich., equipping it to meet federal organic processing standards. Steve Young, General Mills' head of natural and organic strategy and vice president of its Annie's brand is quoted in a Star Tribune article as saying, “When you look across our portfolio and forecast demand, we hope to have more deals in place like the Organic Valley deal,” he said. “You can't have a growth company without a robust natural and organic portfolio.” In the same article, Young is quoted as saying that when organic supplies rise to match demand, the price of buying organic foods will fall and become affordable for more people. What he didn't say is what happens to the organic dairy pay price when the prices of organic milk and organic dairy components fall and how we balance supply and demand to maintain a fair pay price. Balancing supply with demand for organic milk

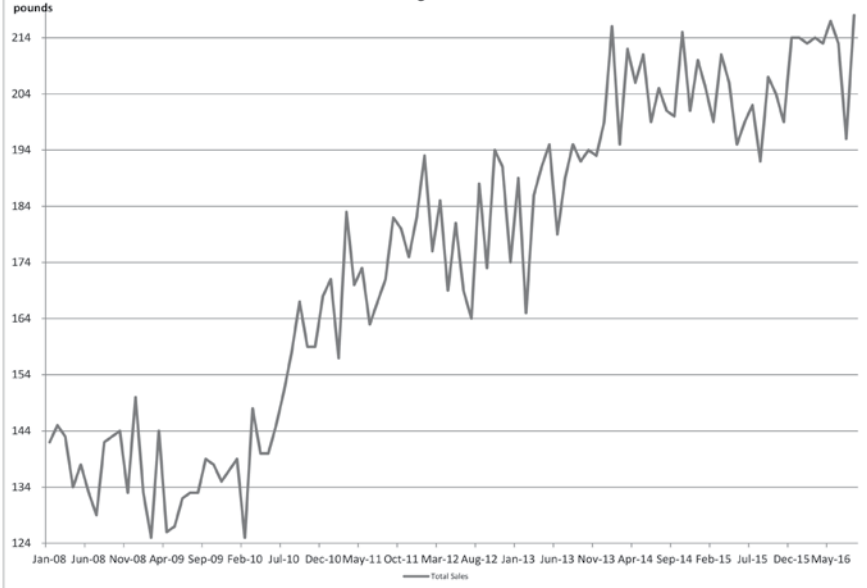
Average retail price, average farm share and percentage for half gallon of organic milk



Average Organic Retail price for 1/2 gallons as reported by USDA AMS



Estimated Total US Sales of Organic Fluid milk Products 2008-2016



ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

is difficult because the transition time to organic is three years and production will vary depending on the cost of inputs and the weather. Balancing conventional milk is a lot easier since most conventional dairies are housed and cows can be added at will.

During September, it is estimated that 4.1 billion pounds of packaged fluid milk products was sold in the United States. This was 0.2 percent higher than September 2015. Estimated sales of total conventional fluid milk products was virtually unchanged from September 2015 and estimated sales of total organic fluid milk products increased 5.3 percent from a year earlier. Sales of organic whole milk in September 2016 was 17.5% higher than sales in September 2015. Retail prices for organic half gallon averaged \$3.95 in September 2016 and \$3.80 in September 2015. The average retail price in the first two weeks of November 2016 for organic half gallons was \$3.60 compared to \$4.13 for the same period in 2015; with a range in 2016 of \$4.08 in the northeast and \$2.94 in the Midwest.

According to the USDA-NASS 2015 "Certified Organic Survey," organic milk was the top commodity sold, valued at \$1.2 billion, with a change of +8% from 2014 to 2015. According to USDA AMS data the sales of fluid milk dropped by 2% from 2014 to 2015 (USDA does not track organic milk being used in manufacturing or being sold into the conventional market). Organic milk volumes and eggs led the way with \$1.9 billion in total sales, 57% of certified organic farms sales of \$6.2 billion in organic commodities. Across the U.S., most farms (71%) sold to wholesalers, 36% directly to consumers, and 22% to retail markets. The percentage of farms selling directly to consumers was highest in southeastern and northeastern states.

Many areas in the northeast are still in an official drought with it persisting in many parts of eastern New England and we have yet to see how kind the winter will be after the October snowstorms. Forecasters at NOAA's Climate Prediction Center issued the U.S. Winter Outlook in October, saying that La Nina is expected to influence winter conditions this year. They predicted the climate phenomenon is likely to develop in late fall or early winter. La Nina favors drier, warmer winters in the southern U.S and wetter, cooler conditions in the northern U.S. If La Nina conditions materialize, forecasters say it should be weak and potentially short-lived. La Nina winters tend to favor above average snowfall around the Great Lakes and in the northern Rockies and below average snowfall in the mid-Atlantic.

Feed corn is trading at \$7 per bushel, about \$2 lower than November 2015, and soybeans are priced at \$17 per bushel as compared with \$20 in November 2015. The last time the prices were this low was in January 2011. Organic hay costs are within the same range as last year, with hay being offer at \$50 per round bale or \$150-200 FOB. ♦

Organic - conventional retail price gap



Organic Corn Price Spread 2008 - 2016 data supplied by USDA AMS - FOB the Farm



Organic Feed Soybeans Price Spread in 2008-2016 - USDA Market News Data - FOB Farm





The 16th Annual NODPA Field Days: *The Future of Organic Dairy Farming: Regenerate, Renew, Refresh*

By Sonja Heyck-Merlin and Nora Owens, NOPDA Field Days Coordinator

Gray and rainy weather conditions are usually unwelcome at most gatherings but for the 16th Annual NODPA Field Days it meant that more farmers were able to attend, and they certainly did. Stakeholders of the organic milk industry gathered together in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania on September 29th-30th. The conference was held at the Chambersburg Mennonite Church.

The 100+ attendees were a diverse group: a multitude of organic dairy farm families (including the Boojinks, a couple from Ontario, Canada who own and operate Jamink Farm, the November NODPA News' featured farm), processors, Extension Agents, certifiers, non-profits, agricultural consultants, product dealers, journalists, a goat milk producer, and some aspiring dairy families. We were warmly received by the Chambersburg Mennonite Church community whose ample meeting space and well-equipped kitchen proved an exceptional venue.

The NODPA Field Days was kicked off by an optional tour of the plant at Trickle Springs Creamery, founded in 2001. Small groups were led through the plant, allowing an inside glimpse into the production and storage facilities of a small and diverse processor. "Farmers should never take a place like that for granted," organic dairy farmer Brian Bawden said as he left the

plant, "The farming's the easy part compared to that."

Following the tour of Trickle Springs, attendees headed back into the Church out of the rain, and settled into a full day of presentations, panel discussions, and lots of conversation over delicious home cooked meals.

Managing for Milk Production per Acre

The educational program got underway late Thursday morning with a 90 minute session featuring John Kempf, founder of Advancing Eco Ag, who explained his theory that by increasing the fat levels of forages, farmers can increase the amount of milk produced per acre. The minimum levels of fats and lipids required to form cell membranes is 1½-1¾%. If a farmer can increase the level of fat up to 4-5% then they can increase the amount of milk produced per acre. Waxy, shiny plants are indicative of high fat content in plants. Kempf recounted one story of a farm which had increased the fat content of their forage to over 8% at which time his cows turned up their nose at grain.

Kempf said that in order to increase the fat content of forage, the number one objective a farmer must have is to help his plants produce as much sugar as possible in 24 hours. These excess sug

ars will be stored as fats. "You must increase photosynthesis," he said. "You have to be obsessed with that." His goal is to increase the photosynthetic potential of the plant from 20% to 60%.

He thinks that foliar sprays are the key to increasing the sugar content of plants. "Foliar sprays are the equivalent of hacking the system by harnessing a plant's photosynthetic engine," he said. "Foliars are a short cut to increase fat content." The five most important nutrients involved in foliar program are magnesium, iron, manganese, phosphorus, and sulphur.

After a delicious hot lunch, the educational program resumed with the first session, Certified Grass Fed Label – A Progress Report. A panel of processors and organic certifiers provided an update on efforts to standardize the words grass-fed. A working group of stakeholders is examining the internal standards of the various grass-fed claims and determining where differences and gaps are. Lauren Tonti of NOFA-NY said the group has been working to refine the standards to be auditable, sound and sensible, and ensure that each stakeholder is operating with the same level of integrity.

The panel raised the concern that some brands are claiming a grass-fed product at a weaker standard than other brands. The working group would like to make sure that the American Grass Association and other certifiers are working together to protect the integrity of the grass-fed label.

The panel was asked if the USDA should become involved. Tim Joseph of Maple Hill Creamery said that Maple Hill has "erred on the side of not," preferring standards to be administered on the industry/trade level. Lauren responded, "The jury's still out on that one. We may be moving that way depending on consumer demand." Fay Benson followed with a brief presentation on the SARE grant he's

involved with, entitled Support for the Grass Fed Milk Market.

Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program: NY and PA

A panel which included DGA executive director Joe Tomandl shared insight into the history and mission of DGA. Founded in 2009, DGA recently made its debut in the East.

Master Grazer Rob Moore of New York shared his frustration in finding qualified help on his farm but said "DGA has triggered a fresh start." Cornell Extension Agent, Fay Benson, noted that locating people interested in dairy farming "is kind of like finding needles in a haystack. DGA is the magnet."

Milking System Tune-ups: Increasing Efficiency and Milk Quality

Jessica Scillieri Smith, veterinarian and Director of the Northern NY branch of Quality Milk Production Services (QMPS) provided a review of best milking practices and their relationship to milk quality. She emphasized the importance of setting milk quality goals. Goals should be defined by management, reflect management's priorities, and be realistic.

A key to producing high quality milk is to establish milking protocols that are followed by every milker at every shift. There should be set protocols for cow movement, pre-dipping, fore stripping, drying of teats, timely attachment, alignment of milking units, detaching, and post-dipping. Jessica said, "Your cows should be so clean and dry that you feel comfortable with your milk straight from the source."

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Preparing to tour Trickling Springs Creamery plant: Brian Bawden, Steve Morrison, Henry Perkins

FIELD DAYS 2016

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Director of the Western QMPS branch, Ricker Watter, underscored the importance of reducing the risk of milking equipment as a factor in milk quality issues. He indicated that the daily, weekly and yearly monitoring and maintenance of milking equipment is often neglected, and then pointedly asked the audience, "How many of you have the hours and date written on the oil filter on your tractor? Take care of your milking routines, your equipment and facilities, and the cows will take care of you."

Social Hour, Banquet Dinner and NODPA Annual Meeting:

Everyone had a chance to spend time with Trade Show vendors and fellow attendees during the late afternoon's Social Hour just prior to dinner. A completely full trade show staffed by prod-

uct vendors, Extension agents, organic certifiers and non-profit groups offered education, samples and lots of good advice and conversation. Many of these same vendors contributed products to our Door Prize Drawing held at the closing lunch on Friday. The banquet followed. Led by the church Food Committee Chair and farmer Maggie Hawbaker, the catering staff crafted a delectable buffet feast, followed by a scrumptious selection of homemade pies topped with ice cream produced by Trickling Springs Creamery. We were fortunate to dine on grass-fed organic beef and lamb produced at Cliff and Maggie Hawbaker's Hamilton Heights Farm, and it was delicious!

After dinner, Liz Bawden, current NODPA president, gave a summary of recent NODPA activity. In 2015, NODPA dedicated a significant amount of time analyzing NOP's new proposed animal welfare standards. Liz said, "We worked with the other 'ODPAS' and went through the proposal word for word, line by line, and came up with a list of revisions."

Liz also reported that the Origin of Livestock Rule is still being churned through the regulatory process in DC, and that the Organic Check-Off seems to have lost momentum in Washington. The Department of Justice contacted NODPA recently, inquiring about the effects of the Danone/Whitewave merger on organic dairy producers in the Northeast. Liz also reported that OFARM (Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing) has filed a complaint with the NOP over concerns with the integrity of organic imported grain.

Lastly, Liz encouraged farmer involvement with NODPA; reminding everyone that NODPA conference calls are open to all.

Keynote speaker, John Kempf, rounded out the evening with his thought provoking and inspiring presentation, Decision Making Principles of Exceptional Farm Managers. He began by noting that at the end of each cropping season, he and his team of consultants analyze the performance of the farms they work with. Kempf ranks farms from 1-10 based on the farm's amount of untapped potential. Lower rankings mean a farm is under-utilizing their resources and higher rankings mean a farm is more fully utilizing them. Based on these rankings, Kempf studied the differences between the low and high ranking farms. "The differences are not necessarily agronomically related," he said. "It has to deal more with the framework of the farm and the management decisions."

Kempf believes lower ranking farms (those with higher levels of untapped potential) are more prone to loss aversion: the fear of loss is more powerful than the hope of gain. "Most farmers spend their time thinking about what they could lose," Kempf said, "rather than constantly thinking of ways to increase revenue." He continued, "In farming, you can't be successful by constantly thinking of saving costs. Dairy has fallen prey to this. You can't go to the extreme of not spending money on inputs."



**NODPA Board President
Liz Bawden**

FIELD DAYS 2016

In his talk, Kempf generated a list of characteristics of exceptional farm managers:

- Prioritize revenue generation rather than cost savings
- Plan for the long-term
- Obsess with the details of implementation; manage employees tightly and carefully
- Have exceptional employee relationships
- Are conscious of their energetic connection to their farm, crops, and livestock
- Prioritize learning about crop management, plant physiology, and science with practical applications
- Make all management decisions based on economic information
- Are imaginative and test new ideas quickly
- Think big, start small, and then scale appropriately

Kempf has more experience in the fruit and vegetable sector and acknowledged that he doesn't have all the answers for what makes a dairy farm financially successful. In closing, he suggested that milk production per acre in relation to feed costs per animals is a possible metric of success.

Day Two:

Producers were up bright and early despite the dreary weather. They loaded up with

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FIELD DAYS 2016

continued from page 21

hot beverages and a hearty breakfast and headed into the producer-only meeting. This meeting is a unique opportunity to share laughter, concerns, questions, and updates from an array of farmer perspectives. The meeting was dominated by a discussion on the future of the grass-fed sector. Other topics included how to best educate consumers on dairy labels, animal welfare standards including those in Canada, and the Danone/Stonyfield merger.

Following the producer-only meeting, the whole group heard Updates on Animal Welfare Rule, Origin of Livestock, Organic Checkoff and Other Issues. Due to NODPA Executive Director, Ed Maltby's unexpected absence from the Field Days, Patty Lovera, Assistant Director of DC based Food and Water Watch, filled in for this session.

Patty explained that the comment period for the animal welfare standards ended in June and we are still waiting for a final version. She expects opposition from the poultry sector to stall the passage of the new standards.

Patty noted there is a lot of talk in the organic community around OTA's proposal to the USDA for a transitional organic label.

Also, there is growing concern about the role of imports in the organic grain industry. "In the first half of 2016, there was a dramatic increase in imported organic corn and soybeans," said

Patty. "And there is concern about the level of integrity within the supply chain."

Patty said there is evidence that GMO contamination is occurring in organic crops from neighboring GM crops. It is no longer an abstract complaint and the USDA is no longer denying that GMO contamination is occurring. "This is real, this is happening," Patty said, "and it's having consequences for the organic, non-GMO side of the fence."

Finally, Patty said, "We really need the farmer voice to act as a reality check. This is a plea for you guys to stay involved in all of these policy issues."

Integrating Crops and Livestock to Enhance Organic Farm Stability, Safety, and Resilience:

Chief scientist, Kris Nichols, of the Rodale Institute explained her involvement in a multi-year OREI research project. The objective of this study is to evaluate an organic system which integrates crops and livestock and emphasizes a holistic approach by using crop rotations that include legume and grass forages for animal production, soil building, and pest cycle disruption.

The morning's workshop sessions wrapped up with an introduction to Hamilton Heights Farm and Emerald Valley Farm, owned and operated by Cliff and Maggie Hawbaker, and the site



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of the NODPA Field Days Farm tour. Cliff, a Trickling Springs grass-milk producer, is famous for saying, "I am a pasture guy, and if there's something I'm going to be wacky about, it's grass and pasture." In addition to introducing his family, Cliff gave an overview of their operations and farming philosophy. Hamilton Heights milks 148 cows, and their satellite farm, Emerald Valley, milks 130. Both farms milk once a day.

Hamilton Heights Farm Tour and Lunch Buffet

Blustery and cool conditions at Hamilton Heights sent people to their cars for more layers as the farm tour began. We started at the milking parlor which is uphill from a set of four free-stall barns stepping down the hill. The barns are strategically oriented at eight degrees west of south for maximum solar gain in the winter and shade in the summer. Cows can move in lanes between the barns.

Cliff's detailed approach to rotational grazing was evident as we moved into a grazing paddock with the milk herd. Despite being the end of September and extremely dry, eight-inch high lush grass/clover was on display.

Utilizing all-bull breeding, Cliff noted that he keeps three bulls with the herd rather than the traditional lone bull. In his experience, the bulls act less aggressively towards people because they have one another to bully.

The meeting ended with a delicious lunch buffet catered by Trickling Springs Creamery. Located in the farm's spotless machine shop, folks had one last time to catch up with their fellow attendees. Even though folks were wishing that they had brought their gloves and mittens, no one could resist the ice cream sundae bar. Physically energized by the fuel of sugar and mentally energized by two days of sharing and learning, we set off for home. Each of us departed with a renewed and refreshed commitment to our stake in the organic dairy community. ♦



Sonja Heyck-Merlin and Steve Morrison's children enjoying breakfast



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heifers. Call for price.

Name: Jason Tillotson, Email: Tillotson228@gmail.com, Phone: 585-721-6025

Location: Pavilion NY

Big Fancy Holsteins. Well-bred Holstein organic certified. 3 close. 3 due mid-winter. Out of a herd that milks 80 lbs. a day in winter. Contact Ralph Caldwell, Maine: 207-754-3871. Location: Maine

Three Jersey Cross Heifers. Ready to breed. Showing strong heats. \$1500 each or all three for \$4000. Contact: Kyra Tafel. Email: kcressotti@yahoo.com. Phone: 607-847-8998

Location: New Berlin, NY

Wanted 100 to 120 cows and or bred heifers. Heifers to freshen in February 2017 to march 2017. Will want to purchase cows in February 2017 when facilities will be completed. Heifers I can purchase now. Will pay market value for all animals. Please call or email any time thanks for your help.

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For Sale: SpringWood Organic Farm has 8 crossbred heifers that will be available for sale in February. All are A1 or A2 positively identified. A2A2 heifers will only be sold at a significant premium. A mix of Norwegian Red, NZ Friesians, and Jersey. Certified organic and PCO 100% Grass-fed certified. Raised on milk for first 7 months in nanny herd environment. Due to calve in March or April. Photos available upon request. Dwight Stoltzfoos info@springwooddairy.com or call: C: 717.278.1208, H: 610.593.5965
Location: Lancaster County, PA

SpringWood Organic Farm has 3 bulls for sale. They were all born and raised here in our 100% grass-fed organic dairy. We select our bull calves from our best cows with the best milk production and lowest SCC counts (we are on DHIA test) and that calve during the March/April window when all the calves we keep are born. They were all on milk for the first 6-7 months in a nanny herd situation where they get all the milk they want along with the best grass and learn to graze with the best. Photos available upon request. Dwight Stoltzfoos info@springwooddairy.com or call: C: 717.278.1208, H: 610.593.5965

Location: Lancaster County, PA

For Sale: Bred Jersey Heifers: My husband and I have a

few for sale. We are certified organic, and have purebred and registered jerseys and Holsteins. Email us at jamink-farm@xplornet.com Located in Ontario, Canada

Wanted: Bred Jersey Heifers. My wife and I have a small herd of Jerseys here in Rhode Island, and are looking to add a few more cows to the herd next year. We are looking for bred Jersey heifers due in March, April or May. Any leads would be greatly appreciated! Andrew Morley, Sweet and Salty Farm, Little Compton, RI, 917-656-6726
Located in Rhode Island

EMPLOYMENT

Director of Marketing & Development:

Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) announces an opening for Director of Marketing and Development. This director will lead the Education and Outreach Team and oversee PCO's resource development, education and outreach, marketing and public relations programs. The ideal candidate will have education and experience in the following areas: writing proposals and securing funding, conducting community education and outreach, and leading

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Chris and Katrina Sunderland, 150 cows, Certified Organic, SCC 100-150,000

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“We start spraying udders 2x/day for a week before calving and continue 4 to 5 days after calving. We want to get the edema out as soon as we can, and Udder Comfort accomplishes that goal. This helped reduce our SCC from averaging 250,000 before to averaging now from 100 to 150,000,” says Chris.

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continued from page 24

marketing initiatives. We are looking for a well-organized and self-motivated person to join our team. This position is based in our Spring Mills, PA office. Remote work locations will be considered. This is a full-time, exempt position. Salary: \$55,000 - \$65,000, depending on experience.

Benefits: health, dental, vision, disability and life insurance; Simple IRA, generous holiday, vacation and paid time off.

Position will remain open until filled. A full job description is available on our website www.paorganic.org/jobs. Please send resume and cover letter to lia@paorganic.org.

Staff Accountant

Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) announces an opening for Staff Accountant. The ideal candidate will have education and / or experience in accounting functions including, but not limited to: accounts payable/receivable, generating financial reports, performing journal entries, etc. We are looking for a well-organized and self-motivated person to join our team-oriented environment in Spring Mills, Pennsylvania.

This is a full-time, exempt position.

Salary: \$40,000 - \$50,000, depending on experience.

Benefits: health, dental, vision, disability and life insurance; Simple IRA, generous holiday, vacation and paid time off.

Position will remain open until filled. A full job description is available on our website www.paorganic.org/jobs. Please send resume and cover letter to lia@paorganic.org.

Pennsylvania Certified Organic announces a job opening for Certification Specialist. The ideal candidate will have education and / or experience in the following areas: familiarity with regulatory compliance and organic certification, knowledge of organic standards and food science/processing. We are looking for a well-organized and self-motivated person to join our team-oriented environment in Spring Mills, Pennsylvania; telecommuting will be considered.

PCO is a growing non-profit organization that works with organic farmers and food producers in the Mid-Atlantic region. PCO provides organic certification services to more than 1000 operations and employs 28 staff and 25 field inspectors. Our staff is dedicated to our mission: to ensure the integrity of organic products and provide education, inspection, and certification services that meet the needs

of our members.

This is a full-time, exempt position.

Salary range: \$40,000 to \$50,000, depending on experience.

Benefits: health, dental, vision, disability and life insurance; Simple IRA, generous holiday, vacation and paid time off.

Position will remain open until filled. Please send resume and cover letter to: Lia@paorganic.org.

Name: PCO- Job Opening! Certification Specialist

Phone: 814-422-0251

Location: Spring Mills, PA

Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) announces an opening for Director of Marketing and Development.

This director will lead the Education and Outreach Team and oversee PCO's resource development, education and outreach, marketing and public relations programs. The ideal candidate will have education and experience in the following areas: writing proposals and securing funding, conducting community education and outreach, and leading marketing initiatives. We are looking for a well-organized and self-motivated person to join our team. This position is based in our Spring Mills, PA, office. Remote work locations will be considered. This is a full-time, exempt position. Salary: \$55,000 - \$65,000, depending on experience. Benefits: health, dental, vision, disability and life insurance; Simple IRA, generous holiday, vacation and paid time off.

Position will remain open until filled. A full job description is available on our website www.paorganic.org/jobs. Please send resume and cover letter to lia@paorganic.org.

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION: FEATURED FARM

Jamínk Farm, St. Andrews, Ontario, Canada

continued from page 1

Ontario with approximately 75 certified organic operations. The majority of the organic farms are located in the southwestern part of the 415,598 sq. mile province. To put Ontario's size in perspective, New England, Pennsylvania, and New York combined amount to only 172,603 sq. miles.

Milk production in Canada is controlled by a quota system. Any farmer who wants to produce milk, conventional or organic, must have a quota. In Ontario, the quota system is administered through the Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO).

Of their 500 acres, 200 are tillable with the remainder in pasture and woods. They are currently clearing 100 acres of ground to create more pasture which will make it possible to meet all of their grazing needs on one side of a road. An additional 200 acres of hay ground is rented.

Thomas' family emigrated from Holland to New Brunswick in 1979,

and eventually purchased the St. Andrews dairy farm in 1987. Little did Thomas know that two hours to the north, his wife-to-be was also growing up on her family's dairy farm and shared a passion for dairy.

Both Thomas, 34, and Julia, 33, pursued post-secondary degrees in agriculture. After college, Thomas spent nine months in New Zealand, and then returned home to work alongside his parents and for some neighboring farms. In 2013, Thomas' parents split the farm between he and his brother. Thomas purchased the cows, quota, and 500 acres. His brother purchased 120 acres of the home farm and currently operates a goat dairy.

After graduating from the University of Guelph, Julia worked for two years as an AI technician for ABS Global Sires. In 2008, she purchased her parent's herd and quota and moved her 30 milk cows and replacements into a rented barn about five hours away from her hometown. In 2012, she was fortuitously introduced to Thomas by a college friend.

The GEA Mlone milking robot



Mixed herd of Jerseys and Holsteins at pasture



“My cows took a circuitous route back to their origin,” Julia said of the return of her herd back to the southeast of the province. Although Thomas’ parents were certified organic in 2002, the amalgamation of the two herds required a second transition which was completed in December of 2015. Their certifier is Eco-cert. In order to merge their herds, Julia and Thomas also had to obtain a quota policy exemption from the DFO.

All of the milk, both conventional and organic, which is produced in Ontario is sold to DFO who then sell the milk to processors. “There are times when our milk is not sold as organic,” said Thomas. “It’s really an unfortunate part of our system.” The couple receives a 29% premium over conventional milk when their milk is utilized as organic. Generally, 95% of Jamink’s milk is utilized as organic but utilization can drop down to as low as 85%. At 100% organic utilization, Julia reported that they are making roughly \$33/cwt. USD.

The couple’s expertise, youth, and relatively stable milk prices provided them the confidence to recently embark on a major infrastructure project. In 2015, they obtained financing to build an 85’ by 247’ bedded-pack barn equipped with a robotic milker. The barn was completed in January of 2016, and was constructed with the intent of growing their herd of 85 milkers to 100.

Thomas explained, “It’s a very simple large rectangular building with the milk house and robotic area at one end. We bed with sawdust every 7-10 days and use a four-wheeler to pull a harrow over it twice a day. It works the manure into the sawdust enough to keep the top two inches dry.”

“We also installed a Cow-Welfare Flex Feed fence into the new barn,”

Thomas said. With a flexibility of 30 degrees forward from vertical, the Danish made feed fence follows the cow’s movements. The flexibility allows the cow to reach further out into the feed ally. It’s made from plastic tubes fastened by a pivot at the bottom and open at the top.

When a cow presses its shoulders at the plastic pipes, the whole construction moves forward, thus preventing injury to the neck and shoulders. Thomas went on, “It’s really comfortable for the cows and makes it easy to accommodate the size variation in our mixed herd. The neck rail in the feed alley of the old free stall was too high for the Jerseys.”

With the service dealer only 15 minutes away, Thomas and Julia chose a German GEA Mlone robotic milker for the new barn. The MI is an abbreviation for “milking intelligence.” This robot sets itself apart from other milking robots because it utilizes one robotic application arm to service up to 5 milking boxes. The Booijink’s robot has two milking boxes allowing the robot to milk two cows simultaneously.

“If you want to put a robot in to spend less time in the barn, that is 100% the wrong decision,” Julia said. “Robotics has allowed us to spend more times on certain things and has added flexibility to the times when we need to be in the barn.” Thomas added, “Robots are practical if one of your goals is to maximize production. They are not for everybody.”

The robot generates a lot of data. It has been a learning curve for Julia and Thomas to decide what information to use and how to use

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FEATURED FARM

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it to make management decisions on the farm. "The activity monitoring of fresh cows is very helpful," said Julia about one way they are utilizing the data. "It gives us an alarm before the cow is clinically ill."

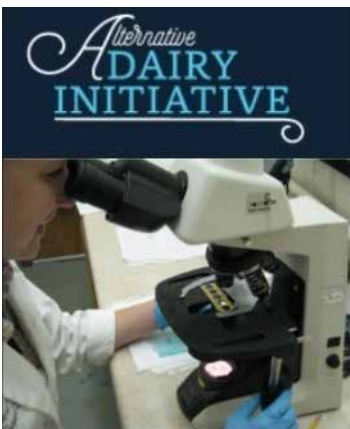
They also appreciate the robot's ability to pick up on slow quarters, measure milk conductivity, and measure milk flow. Right now they are trying out new inflations and paying close attention to the pound of milk per minute reading that the robot shares with the push of a smartphone button.

Dry matter intake from pasture has remained consistent with the switch to the robot. The milk cows average about 35% DMI from pasture over the course of the grazing season. Every 12 hours the herd is given a new paddock, and in order to access the new grass the cows must make a trip through the robot. If they choose to come back to the barn they come through a set of one-way gates which requires them to be milked again before they can return to pasture.

"We actually have to fetch a lot fewer cows when we're grazing." We're averaging about 3 milkings per day during the grazing season and only 2.5 during the cold months," they noted. "It's been a tough year with the lack of moisture and keeping the cows coming through the robot has gone surprisingly well."



Felicity, age 3, sitting on the Milkshuttle, at calf feeding time



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FEATURED FARM

Each cow gets roughly 6.6 pounds per day of a dry corn, wheat, and soy mash while they are in the robot. The remainder of herd's dry matter comes from a TMR of haylage, corn silage that they grow on the farm, and spent brewer's grains from a local organic brewery. The brewery delivers a 12-ton load each week for \$60/ton.

"We like working it," said Julia about the brewery bi-product. "It comes to us quite wet, about 70% moisture but the cows love it. We recently built three little mini bunkers that can each hold a 12-ton load. We cover it and force it through a fermentation process for three weeks before it goes into the mixing wagon." Because of the high moisture levels in the brewery grain they provide free choice dry hay year-round. "It's all about controlling the environment of the rumen and making sure it doesn't become too acidic," Julia said.

The Booijink's rely on a custom operator for their chopping. "We invested our money into the new barn right now," Thomas explained, "rather than equipment." There are five custom operators in the area and the couple said they are thankful they are able to easily source out this part of the operation. Compared to the feed they used to put up, they notice a significant difference in quality. "The amount of feed they can put up in 24 hours compared with what would take us a few weeks, we definitely gain on the quality side," said Julia.

Currently, all their haylage is stored on the ground, covered with plastic

and tires. One of the next steps is to create a better feed storage facility. Unhappy with the spoilage they've seen with ag bags, the couple hasn't decided on a permanent solution to feed storage.

The marrying of the farm's feed program with a milking robot has driven current production to 66# per cow/day with butterfat at 3.94 and protein at 3.3. Pre-robot production was about 50# per cow/day.

The couple uses 100% AI; their philosophy being that AI is the most effective way to improve the genetic potential of their herd. Heifers and the top 10% of the milk herd are bred with sexed semen. The criterion for the top group is based on milk quality and genetic history. The middle group is bred with traditional semen and the bottom 20% is bred to beef. "We've done some," Julia said of genomic testing, "but I don't think we'll continue to do it since it didn't really tell us anything we didn't already know. We can look at cow health and production records and make just as informed decisions."

Julia, a former AI technician and occasional AI instructor, explained that use of sexed semen is becoming more widespread in her area, in particular because of an overall Canadian milk shortage. Several large scale studies that used sexed semen in dairy heifers indicate that pregnancy rates are 10% to 20% lower with sexed semen compared to traditional semen (appliedreprostrategies.com).

Julia countered that the sorting technology used for sexed semen has improved and that "the fitness level of the retained sperm cells in the sexed semen can be just as high, if not higher, than in a conventional straw."

The calves from the bottom 20% of the herd are sold at one week of age. Still in a growth phase, the remainder of the heifer calves stays on the farm. The new milking barn has allowed for improvements to their entire replacement program- their old parlor and holding area has been retrofitted as a calf nursery and the free-stall has been freed up for dry cows and bred heifers.

Fresh cows are sorted and milked with a bucket milker, and within two hours of calving a calf will receive her first bottle of colostrum. Colostrum is tested with a refractometer which provides a digital reading based on the Brix scale – a graduated scale that indicates the weight of sugar per volume of solution. A Brix value of 22% or greater can be considered high quality colostrum. At Jamink Farm, they only feed colostrum at or above this threshold and collect and freeze any surplus.

Calves are kept individually for the first few days of life and then are moved into groups of 2-3. At 14 days they are moved into group pens of 4-6 and mob fed on Milkbar feeders. Cross sucking occurs occasionally, particularly with the Jerseys, but they said, "With cross sucking, the only fault is ours and it's because we didn't change the nipples. If you don't change those nipples every six weeks, you'll definitely increase cross-sucking."

In general, calf and cow health is excellent although one of the couple's current goals is to drop their SCC by 100,000. SCC is currently running 250-300,000. Since most of the new mastitis infections are in fresh cows they are focusing their attention on their dry cow program. The new barn has allowed extra space for the dry cows and they are using the robot to more gradually reduce the grain, ensuring that milk production has dropped before dry-off.

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1/8 Page Ad/Business Card:

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Commit to a full year of print advertising and get 10 percent discount: Full: \$575, Half: \$290, Quarter: \$160, Eighth: \$85.

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 Nora Owens:
413-772-0444 or email noraowens@comcast.net.

Please send a check with your ad (made payable to NODPA).
30 Keets Rd., Deerfield, MA 01342

continued on page 32

Organic Industry News

Seaweed *continued from page 15*

board who can produce the seaweed in a cultivation process.

"Whether that be in South-East Asia where they are already farming millions of tonnes of seaweed, or beginning a new industry somewhere through the southern or western side of Australia."

Although, according to Mr Kinley, time was less critical than money in this case.

"Money will decide how quickly we can move ... the sooner we have more money to move forward with the research, the sooner we will be able to get it out," he said.

"Three years isn't outside the realm if we can get enough support to move with it."

Sophie Kesteven, reporter for ABC Tropical North's cross media ABC. ABC is the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. She can be reached at: kesteven.sophie@abc.net.au.

The article is available at: <http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2016-10-19/environmental-concerns-cows-eating-seaweed/7946630?pfmredir=sm>

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www.LancasterAg.com
60 N. Ronks Rd. Ronks, PA 17572

FEATURED FARM

continued from page 31

For new mastitis infections they follow a treatment protocol: 50 cc Vitamin C and 20 cc Vitamin B-12 intravenously, 10 cc selenium subcutaneously, and 20 cc of a colostrum-based whey extract intravenously. They usually see positive results after one treatment but may administer it for up to three consecutive days.

Mastitis protocols, a carefully calculated breeding program, and a willingness to embrace technology are only a few examples of Thomas and Julia's educated and attentive approach to dairying. Always keen to learn, Thomas and Julia recently traveled seven hours to attend the 16th annual NODPA Field Days. "We don't have as many opportunities as we'd like to network with other organic farmers," Thomas explained about the lack of learning opportunities in their area, and "that is why we traveled to the Field Days." The couple compensates for the lack of an organic network with their 60-plus years of combined farming experience and stacks of reading material.

Jamink Farm is an awesome fusion of intuition collected from growing up on farms, scientific context gained in college, and a continued thirst for knowledge. The passion and commitment of this family will hopefully add momentum to the growth of the organic dairy industry in Ontario. ♦

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NET UPDATE

Recent ODairy Discussions

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

A producer was setting up his water system, and was looking for recommendations for good quality water tubs and floats. Several producers recommended Jobe valves, another likes the Gallagher floats, and two producers used Hudson valves and Brown weight valves. For water troughs, one producer highly recommended High Country Plastics since their products are made by rotational molding instead of injection molding. Rubbermaid troughs are injection molded, and although several producers used them, they seemed to agree they don't last long. The large round, blue trough from Tarter was also recommended. For use on pasture in the winter, a farmer recommended Cobett waterers.

A discussion began about the size of the tub or trough used as the water source on pasture. Some producers use a small, half-barrel trough that is easily dumped and moved to another paddock, while other producers feel that the cows just don't get enough water in that system. "With less than 25 gallons, a few thirsty cows can quickly drain them and then knock them around." Another producer switched to larger water tanks, "and got a production bump ... it seems the bigger tank can service 4 or 5 at a time and the water level doesn't drop so fast". One producer recommended old flat-top milk coolers with a float put down through the dipstick hole; they are easier to clean, and don't seem to grow algae as fast as the plastic troughs.

A Jersey cow came in with a bloody rear quarter, and the farmer asked for suggestions. It was suggested that he should continue to milk her, as the act of milking helps to remove bacteria and toxins. Arnica oil rubbed on externally, and homeopathic Arnica, Apis, Phytolacca, and Hypericum were recommended. A vet suggested that he culture the affected quarter to get a diagnosis. A negative result might benefit from Vitamin K or calcium supplementation to assist with clotting.

Researching a stationary electrically-powered stationary mixer, a producer asked for suggestions on setting up a system that requires 3-phase power (which the farm does not have). A few producers suggested that electrical motors would not likely do a good job, especially in the winter when the bales may be frozen. And, since the motor needs 3-phase power, he would need to invest in a rotary phase converter. It was suggested that he look at other forms of power – a dedicated diesel engine may work well. ♦

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 banner ads 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 banner ads 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.

Discounted rates for commitments of 6 months or more.

Interested in one or both of these opportunities? For more information, contact Nora Owens at:

Email: noraowens@comcast.net

Phone: 413-772-0444

Go to the following web page for more information:

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:

www.nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml

Organic Milk Sought

CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley

CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley is the nation's largest farmer-owned organic cooperative. With members throughout New England, the Northeast and Southeast, we offer a stable, competitive organic milk pay price to members. We are forecasting solid growth in these regions and welcome the opportunity to talk with producers about joining our Cooperative.

We offer veterinary support, quality services, organic food, the Organic Trader buy/sell newsletter and inclusive communications from a farmer-owned cooperative with over 25 years of organic farming and marketing experience. Our Feed Department sources organic feed purchases for our member operations. Please contact our Regional Managers or Farmer Relations for further details.

- In New England, contact John Cleary at (612) 803-9087 or john.cleary@organicvalley.coop or Steve Getz at 207-465-6927 or steve.getz@organicvalley.coop.
- In New York, Contact Anne Phillips at (607)-222-3265 or Anne.phillips@organicvalley.coop
- In the Southeast, contact Gerry Cohn at (919) 605-5619 or gerry.cohn@organicvalley.coop.
- Central to Western PA, contact Peter Miller, Division Pool Manager, peter.miller@organicvalley.coop; cell 612-801-3506.
- In Southeast Pennsylvania and Maryland, contact Terry Ingram at (717) 413-3765 or terry.ingram@organicvalley.coop.

Farmer Relations is available from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern Monday through Friday at (888) 809-9297 or farmerhotline@organicvalley.coop and online at www.farmers.coop.

Upstate Niagara

Upstate Niagara is a member owned dairy cooperative dedicated to high quality dairy products. We are currently seeking new organic member milk. Upstate Niagara offers a highly competitive organic pay program with additional premiums for milk quality and volume. For producers interested in transitioning to organic production, we also have programs to assist you in the transition process.

If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact Mike Davis at 1-800-724-MILK, ext 6441. www.upstateniagara.com

Natural by Nature

Looking for an organic milk market? Natural Dairy Products Corporation (NDP) was founded in 1995 as a family owned

and operated organization producing organic dairy products under the Natural By Nature brand name. Natural By Nature organic dairy products are produced with great care and distributed nationwide.

We are actively seeking organic, grass-based dairy producers in the southeastern PA, northern MD and DE areas. NDP pays all hauling and lab costs, and we are currently offering a signing bonus, so this is the time to call! We'd be happy to answer your questions ... please call 302-455-1261 x221 for more information.

Maple Hill Creamery

Seeking 100% Grass Dairy Farmers! Maple Hill Creamery, located in Stuyvesant, NY is a small manufacturer of 100% grass-fed organic yogurt. We are growing rapidly and are looking for more 100% grass-fed farms in the NY state area to join us.

We offer:

- Six month winter premium
- Grass fed premium paid OVER organic milk price
- Grass fed dairy technical assistance / mineral program
- Organic transition payments possible

Requirements:

- No grain, no corn silage
- Just pasture, dry hay and baleage
- Certified Organic

Please CALL US with questions! Phone: 518-758-7777

Dairy Marketing Services Organic

More milk is needed by Northeast organic customers! Dairy Marketing Services can help you facilitate the transition from conventional to organic production. Count on DMS Organic specialists for organics, transition stabilizers, pasture requirements, pasture supplies and more. Call David Eyster at DMS: 1-888-589-6455, ext. 5409 for more information today!

Stonyfield Farm, Inc.

Stonyfield Farm, Inc is looking for producers to support their comprehensive line of organic yogurt and diversified portfolio of organic dairy products. We offer a stable price platform with competitive premiums for components, quality and volume. In addition, we offer a comprehensive technical assistance program designed with producers to help them achieve their unique business goals. We are actively seeking producers looking to grow their business today and for the future.

To be listed, free, in future Organic Milk Sought columns, contact Nora Owens at 413-772--0444, noraowens@comcast.net.

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

NODPA Featured in the Food Tank and James Beard Foundation's 3rd Annual Good Food Guide

NODPA is honored to announce that it has been included in the 3rd Annual Good Food Guide published by the Food Tank and the James Beard Foundation. The guide features 1,000 nonprofit organizations that are creating a better food system across the United States. The guide can be downloaded at this address: <http://bit.ly/GFOG2016>. Featured in the National Organization section, on page 34, NODPA's listing reads:

NODPA is the largest grass roots organization of organic dairy producers and has remained true to its original goal of advocating on behalf of producers, regardless of who they sold their milk to, for a sustainable pay price plus protect the integrity of the USDA Organic regulations. NODPA is governed by organic dairy producers who meet regularly by conference call and annually in-person as either Board members or State Representatives.



The organization is establishing open dialogue with organic dairy processors and retailers in order to better influence producer pay price and to contribute to marketing efforts. They are also developing networks with producers and processors of other organic commodities to strengthen the infrastructure within the industry.

NODPA thanks the James Beard Foundation and Food Tank for recognizing the important work that it does. If you aren't familiar with both of these organizations, here is information about both.

ABOUT THE JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION

The James Beard Foundation's mission is to celebrate, nurture, and honor America's diverse culinary heritage through programs

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Calendar

December 4, 2016 - 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Assessing Pasture Soil Fertility and Forage Quality

Clover Springs Farm, 234 Ragged Hill Rd, West Brookfield, MA
Cost: NOFA/Mass Member - \$35 (walk-in: \$40) Non-member - \$45 (walk-in: \$50)

In this workshop, organic grass-based cattle farmer Matt Koziol will teach us how to “read” our pastures and the quality of our feed hay. Matt will walk us through how to take, interpret, and implement pasture soil tests to ensure we are making wise economic and ecological choices for our pastures. He’ll cover a variety of pasture improvement strategies and discuss how different organic amendments can be used to fortify the pasture biology. We’ll also interpret several different hay test results and view different samples of various hay types and qualities. You’ll walk away from this workshop confident in making better decisions for your pastures and your animals. There will also be time to discuss other aspects of running a 100% grass-fed beef farm. Matthew Koziol the farmer at Clover Spring Farm, will be presenting. This workshop is part of NOFA MA’s Grass-Fed Cattle: Connecting Soil, Animal, and Pasture Health series. For more information contact Dan Bensonoff, education events organizer, at dan@nofamass.org or 860-716-5122.

December 5 - 6, 2016, 8:30am - 5:30 pm

6th Annual Soil & Nutrition Conference: Nature as Solution - Cultivating synergy to put nutrition and flavor back on the table

Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health, 57 Interlaken Road, Stockbridge, MA 01262

The 6th Annual Soil & Nutrition Conference explores how the intersection of farm and human ecosystems holds the key to environmental sustainability, quality food and overall well-being. Bringing together the collective knowledge of the food movement from the perspectives of successful farmers, cutting-edge researchers, enlightening health practitioners, and pioneers of food quality, this conference is a nexus of information and networking for all interested in delving deeper into the connections and importance of soil and nutrition. Integrating these diverse viewpoints, this year’s program engages growers and gardeners with principles, practices and innovations for ecologically and financially sound farming, and presents the health-conscious consumer and medical professional valuable skills to effectively advocate and select for quality in their local region and food supply. \$225.00, and \$25.00 discount for BFA Members = \$200.00

For more information and to register, visit <http://www.bionutrient.org/soil-and-nutrition-conference>

December 5, 2016

Farmland Access Conference. Augusta Civic Center, 76 Community Dr., Augusta, ME

Join Maine Farmland Trust along with MOFGA and others for a day of discussions on the challenges of providing for a farm’s future when a farmer is ready to retire, and how next generation farmers can position themselves to take on the stewardship of farmlands in transition. Check the Maine Farmland Trust website for information.

December 6, 2016 and January 24, 2017

New England Farm Succession School, Augusta, ME

New England Farm Succession School for senior farmers and farm couples looking toward retirement and farm transition, in Augusta, ME. (Other dates in Concord, N.H., and Randolph, Vt.) Register (\$300 per farmer or farm couple) at 603-357-1600 or www.landforgood.org/rsvp. Sponsored by Land for Good, Keene, NH

January 14, 2017 (All day) NOFA-MA Winter Conference- Worcester State University, Worcester, MA

Go deeper into your winter study sessions at the upcoming NOFA/Mass Winter Conference at Worcester State University on January 14th, 2017! Our full program of adult, teen and children’s courses will be just what you need to prepare for your next growing cycle! There will be a film series, a raffle and plenty of conversation to be had amongst the 1000 farmers, gardeners and activists working to create a more organic friendly world!

This year’s keynote speaker will be Paul Kaiser from Singing Frogs Farm in Sonoma County, CA. Paul and his wife Elizabeth have been successfully demonstrating how to produce high volume, high quality vegetables in an inspiring no-till system since 2007.

Registration opens October 15th, and includes an amazing organic lunch! Visit the conference website for more information: <http://www.nofamass.org/events/wc>. Register Online Now!

January 9-18, 2017

Fundamentals of Artisan Cheese, Sterling College in Craftsbury, VT

Two-week intensive course taught by world-renowned master cheesemaker Ivan Larcher at Sterling College in Craftsbury, Vt., in conjunction with Jasper Hill, an American Cheese Society-Certified Professional Educator. Offered by The School of the New American Farmstead.

Visit <http://www.sterlingcollege.edu/cheese> for details and registration.

January 20 & 21, 2017

The 21st Annual Vermont Grazing and Livestock Conference: Grazing Annual Forages, Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, VT

SAVE THE DATE 2017 Keynote Speaker: Brittany Cole Bush,

continued on page 38

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.)

_____ \$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 handler/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 form AND YOUR EXEMPT FORM 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. **If you need assistance in applying for the exemption, check here _____.** 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.

_____ \$40 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: _____

Calendar

continued from page 36

a self-deemed 'modern-day, urban shepherdess,' is a professional working in the fields of land stewardship, animal husbandry, consulting and education. Her experience derives from managing upwards of 2,500 head of sheep and goats in the Bay Area of California to perform stewardship and fire hazard abatement projects. Since 2012, 'BCB' has developed and managed the treatment of over 3,000 acres of both private and public lands annually using prescribed herbivory as a tool for restoration, remediation and fire hazard reduction in over 6 counties in Northern California. For more information, visit: http://www.uvm.edu/~pasture/?Page=conference.html&utm_source=Main+Center+List&utm_campaign=7938e4aaeb-November_2016_Pasture_Calendar&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_048645c641-7938e4aaeb-139007377

January 25-28, 2017

Ecological Farming Association's 37th EcoFarm Conference, Pacific Grove, California

Prime networking and educational hub for farmers, ranchers, distributors, retailers, activists, researchers and educators - featuring over 70 workshops, plus keynote speakers, discussion groups, an exhibitor marketplace, seed swap, live entertainment, mixers and delicious organic meals. www.eco-farm.org/conference

January 20-22, 2017

NOFA NY Winter Conference, Long Live the Farmer: Diversity and Biodiversity

The Saratoga Hilton, 534 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, New York, 12866

We are pleased to announce that this year's Keynote Speaker will be CR Lawn of Fedco Seeds.

Tying in with our new seed conference, he will focus on the objectives of creating an ethical, sustainable seed system and strategies for overcoming obstacles. For more information and full program, visit www.nofany.org

January 31, 2017 @ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm EST
Landscape Heroes: Carbon, Water, and Biodiversity: Small Steps - Big Impacts
 UMass, Amherst, MA

Carbon expert and author, rancher and activist, Courtney White will be joining us this winter from New Mexico for an exciting conference on practical steps one can take to make big impacts to restore

soil carbon and be a part of the climate solution.

The Carbon Conference will take place at UMass Amherst campus and will feature a wide variety of land care practitioners including land managers, farmers, researchers, and conservationists. They will speak about what is possible for soil carbon and landscape restoration. Special Offer: NOFA Members can use this code for a \$20 discount. \$59 - \$79 For more information see more at: <http://www.ecolandscaping.org/event/carbon-onference/#sthash.k0Bj0PiO>.

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[www.journalofdairyscience.org/article/S0022-0302\(14\)00270-7/pdf](http://www.journalofdairyscience.org/article/S0022-0302(14)00270-7/pdf)

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From the MODPA Treasurer

Hope this finds everybody in good spirit and health. As I write this, the country as a whole has just closed the book on electing a new president. I don't like to get into political discussions much. This election has been one of division and sometimes near hatred of each other. I am an avid study of history. From my perspective it has been over 150 years since we have had this much division in this country. Our goal as a nation now must be to heal and get along with each other regardless of our differences of opinion. If we don't, we fail.

I think that this also applies to us on a smaller level as farmers. We must all be open to differences of opinion. There can be more than one right answer. But also, there are times when there is only one correct answer. I think there are several places in the organic farming sector where this applies. The checkoff and the fact that organic means grown in soil are two that come to mind. I have stated my thoughts on the checkoff in the past and continue to believe that no good can come from this for me as a farmer; just one more fee to pay with little to no return. The business model that most businesses use wouldn't allow this, so why should we? As for the hydroponics issue, try feeding your cow only water. How much hay or corn can you grow in water? And to me, the ultimate clincher is that our clients, those who eat, want and expect that our food is produced from the soils that we work. They have the ultimate say, not corporate America, not the NOSB and many others that could be put on a list. If we want our mission to succeed we will have to do the right thing.

With the change in the seasons also comes a changing of priorities of what to do with the few precious hours of free time that we have. I strongly encourage everybody to get out and take in conferences and gatherings that will help keep moving this forward. I personally have found these events to be inspiring and usually come home with some useful ideas. The camaraderie is priceless.

I personally wish for all of you to have a Happy Holiday season and wish nothing but the best for all in the coming year.

Please remember to take the time to reflect and appreciate all that we have and share a little with those as you can.

Peace and Blessings to all,

Bruce Drinkman

MODPA Treasurer

3253 150th Avenue

Glenwood City, WI 54013

715-781-4856

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**

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." To ensure a fair and sustainable farm gate price.

1. Keep family farms viable for future generations.
2. Promote ethical, ecological and humane farming practices.
3. Networking among producers of all organic commodities.
4. Promote public policy, research and education in support of organic ag.

MODPA Board

Wisconsin

Darlene Coehoorn, President
Viewpoint Acres Farm
N5878 Hwy C, Rosendale, WI 54974
ddviewpoint@yahoo.com
Phone: 920-921-5541

Jim Greenberg, Vice-President
EP 3961 Drake Avenue
Stratford, WI 54484
greenbfirms@tznnet.com
Phone: 715-687-8147

Bruce Drinkman, Treasurer
3253 150th Avenue
Glenwood City, WI 54013
bdrinkman@hotmail.com
Phone: 715-265-4431

John Kiefer, Director
S10698 Troy Rd, Sauk City, WI 53583
taofarmer@direcway.com
Phone: 608-544-3702

Jim Small, Director
26548 Locust Ave.
Wilton, WI 54670
Tel: 608-435-6700

Iowa

Andy Schaefer, Director
25037 Lake Rd
Garnaville, IA 52049
Tel: 563-964-2758

Michigan

Ed Zimba, Zimba Dairy
7995 Mushroom Rd
DeFord, MI 48729
zimbadairy@tband.net
Phone: 989-872-2680

Ohio

Ernest Martin, Director
1720 Crum Rd
Shiloh, OH 44878
Phone and Fax: 419-895-1182

**Northeast Organic Dairy Producers
Alliance (NODPA)**

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

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James Beard Award

continued from page 35

that educate and inspire. Food matters. You are what you eat not only because food is nutrition, but also because food is an integral part of our everyday lives. Food is economics, politics, entertainment, culture, fashion, family, passion...and nourishment. The James Beard Foundation is at the center of America's culinary community, dedicated to exploring the way food enriches our lives. The Beard Foundation offers a variety of events and programs designed to educate, inspire, entertain, and foster a deeper understanding of our culinary culture. These programs include educational initiatives, food industry awards, an annual national food conference, Leadership Awards program, culinary scholarships, and publications. The James Beard Foundation is a national not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization based in New York City. For more information, visit www.jamesbeard.org

ABOUT FOOD TANK

Food Tank is focused on building a global community for safe, healthy, nourished eaters. We spotlight environmentally, socially,

and economically sustainable ways of alleviating hunger, obesity, and poverty and create networks of people, organizations, and content to push for food system change. Food Tank is for farmers and producers, policymakers and government leaders, researchers and scientists, academics and journalists, and the funding and donor communities to collaborate on providing sustainable solutions for our most pressing environmental and social problems. As much as we need new thinking on global food system issues, we also need new doing. Around the world, people and organizations have developed innovative, on-the-ground solutions to the most pressing issues in food and agriculture. We hope to bridge the domestic and global food issues by highlighting how hunger, obesity, climate change, unemployment, and other problems can be solved by more research and investment in sustainable agriculture. Food Tank highlights hope and success in agriculture. We feature innovative ideas that are already working on the ground, in cities, in kitchens, in fields, and in laboratories. These innovations need more attention, more research, and ultimately more funding to be replicated and scaled-up. And that is where we need you. We all need to work together to find solutions that nourish ourselves and protect the planet.