

NODPA News



Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

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Three generations of Young farmers.
From left Zack (youngest son), Hank (grandson) & Jim

FEATURED FARM: YOUNG FAMILY FARM, ANTWERP, NY

By Adam Diamond

Jim Young is a 3rd generation dairy farmer on 210 acres in Antwerp, New York, a 40 minute drive from the Canadian border. He has been farming with his wife Antoinette, who goes by Toni and kids Adam, Morgan and Zachary

since 1993. Starting out with 35 cows, he transitioned his farm to organic in early 2000 and started shipping organic milk that spring to Horizon. What really stands out when talking with Jim and learning about his

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Organic Dairy Farm Cost of Production Study in Vermont – 2017 Analysis

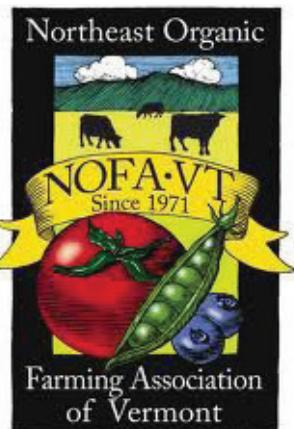
By Jen Miller, Farmer Services Director,
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA VT)

Financial supporters for the collection of information and production of the study included NODPA, Stonyfield Farm, CROPP Cooperative, Danone NA, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Yankee Farm Credit and Green Mountain Feeds

In 2018, NOFA-VT collected financial data from 34 organic dairy farms in Vermont, including 29 organic dairies and 5 grass-fed organic dairies. Each farm had been certified organic for at least 2 years, had good records for the 2017 tax year, and was willing to have their information

aggregated and shared with others. This article will focus on the 28 organic dairy farms for which we had robust, comparable

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Message from NODPA President

I hope that by the time this newsletter reaches you, you are well along in your spring work. Here in New York's northern counties, it has been a late, very wet spring so far. As I write this in the third week of May, the seed still sits in the shed, the fields too wet and soft to work. Water levels are high everywhere and farmers are chomping at the bit to get started with the spring work. But it does our hearts good to have the cows out on lush grass in that perfect time of year when the grass is plentiful, and the flies are not!

Swirling in my head today are thoughts of how different perspectives shape our realities. The sudden loss of my

brother at the end of April has certainly reminded me of some of the most important things in life, and how we sometimes lose sight of them. And our perspective on our life's events is more than just seeing the glass as "half full" or "half empty". So much of our perspectives come from who we are, and how we see ourselves in relation to the larger whole. And that is why I really value the community of organic farmers that NODPA represents; we help to shape each other's perspectives through sharing our experiences, expectations, and outcomes.

In this newsletter, NODPA Field Days Coordinator Nora Owens will be introducing the line-up of sessions for the

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From the NODPA Desk:

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

In this issue we have the Vermont Study on the Cost of Production from 2017 when the pay price average was \$36.24 and the average cash expense per cwt, with only dairy income and expense, was \$31.03. Fast forwarding to 2019 when the average pay price year-round is predicted to be \$31.00, there is not much relief for organic dairy farm families, especially with a very average cull cow price, little demand for replacement heifers and purchased feed averaging at a reasonable price right now but with an uncertain future due both to the weather and reduced level of imports. Grass Fed producers are in no better shape with an average cash expenses per cwt in 2017 at \$32.82 per cwt and a projected pay price for 2019, hopefully looking to be \$32 per cwt.

Hopefully, it will be a good year for maple syrup and other non-dairy income.

What the many years of this study have shown is the economic difference between organic and conventional production, although the outcome for a sustainable pay price is very similar. The organic pay price should never be seen as a premium as the economics of production are so different and to do so is misleading. But in 2019, we see both conventional and organic pay price dictated by the low cost of production of mega dairies. Large scale organic dairies have the added benefit of poorly enforced organic regulations by certifiers and the NOP. Without a dramatic change in that implementation, small to mid-size organic dairies will disappear unless they can find significant non-dairy income.

As Congress winds down for the year, there was some significant language in the Senate Fiscal Year 2020 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. This is only the start of the appropriations process, so don't get too excited as we have to go through continuing resolutions and Government shut downs before we might see a full appropriation bill passed. The bill includes a provision to level the playing field for organic dairy producers. It would require USDA to issue a final regulation on 'Origin of Livestock' within 180 days. The bill also boosts funding for the NOP from \$14 million, annually to \$18 million, annually. With \$52 billion in annual sales in the U.S., 42,800 organic farms and operations in 148 countries, the amount the NOP gets to administer the program is .0346% of US sales, not taking into account the sales in those other 148 countries. And we wonder why the NOP is so ineffective and subject to so much political interference in ensuring the integrity of the NOP standard when they have such a herculean task to perform? The political interference and lack of support from the Trump administration was highlighted by Laura Batcha from the Organic Trade Organization in an article by Chuck Abbott: "Batcha noted that the USDA has been extremely

slow to approve recommendations from the National Organic Standards Board, the body that reviews organic regulations. She said that during the past decade, the NOSB has reached "20 consensus recommendations" — that is, recommendations approved by at least a two-thirds of the board — and the USDA has acted on none of them."

We also had the introduction of the Food and Agribusiness Merger Moratorium and Antitrust Review Act of 2019 which would initiate a moratorium on large agriculture, food and beverage manufacturing and grocery retail mergers to allow time to assess the impact corporate consolidation has on farmers, workers, consumers and communities. It also recommends improvements to antitrust enforcement. The bills were also introduced in the House and Senate in 2018. To quote ex-organic dairy farmer and now President of the National Family Farm Coalition Jim Goodman: "For too long, corporate consolidation in the food and agriculture sectors has been ignored despite alarms raised by family farmers and rural communities of the negative, anti-democratic impacts of this trend. Corporate domination of our rural economies and agricultural markets has undercut independent producers, exploited the workers who grow and process our food, forced rural businesses to close, and degraded our ecosystems." *Food and Water Watch press release, May 22, 2019: Over 200 Farm, Food and Rural Groups Support Merger Moratorium Bills.*

The 2018 Farm Bill authorized the Dairy Margin Coverage program (DMC), which offers financial protection to ALL dairy producers when the difference between the all milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. This is not calculated on the individual farm margin but on the average, so can be used very effectively by organic farmers. It replaces the program previously known as the Margin Protection Program for Dairy. Sign-up for this USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) program opens on June 17 providing coverage retroactive to January 1, 2019, with applicable payments following soon after enrollment. Payments at the \$9 level were triggered in January, February, March and April. Some states are subsidizing the insurance and administration payment.

A new web-based tool has been developed in partnership with the University of Wisconsin to help dairy producers evaluate various scenarios using different coverage levels through the DMC, <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-bill/farm-safety-net/dairy-programs/index>. The tool helps producers calculate total premiums costs, administrative fees associated with participation in DMC and the level of coverage under a variety of conditions. It also forecasts payments that will be made during the coverage year. Please do not immediately dismiss this program as it can be useful. Its more paperwork and trips to the FSA office but there will be money at the end of it.

Good Luck! ♦

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Save the Date: 19th Annual NODPA Field Days

September 26 & 27, 2019

Theodore's Restaurant, 3231 Seneca Turnpike, Canastota, NY 13032



Please Note Change of Location

To say that the organic dairy industry has been undergoing great change over the past few years is quite an understatement. Looking back at the last few years, I see that the NODPA Field Days program titles contain words like 'crisis,' 'survival' and 'embracing change.' It's been an unsettled time for dairy farm families, not knowing how to plan for both the present and future. As producers have come to realize that these current conditions may be the 'new normal', many are wondering if they can remain in farming, and remain viable. So, when the NODPA Field Days planning committee started designing the educational program, they realized that hearing from farmers that are looking forward and already building plans for their farms' long term sustainability would be the way to go.

At this pivotal time for farmers, there is an old adage that

Preparing for the Future of Organic Dairy: Strategies for Long-Term Sustainability

seems to be particularly relevant: "If you're given lemons, make lemonade!" The 19th NODPA Field Days program is being created to help farmers make the lemonade—assess their

long term sustainability and create strategies to increase it whenever possible by thinking outside the box. Most importantly, we have a terrific line-up of presenters who have 'been there, done that' and have advice and important information to share about their experiences. And as the meeting closes, we hope that everyone will feel more optimistic about their farms' futures.

The 19th Annual NODPA Field Days will be held in Canastota, the central New York town in Madison County, which is home to a growing population of Amish farmers who have been a significant force in the rehabilitation of farms and other

often-distressed rural properties. According to an Elizabethtown College study, the 2016 Amish population in New York State was estimated at 18,360, an almost five-fold increase over the course of a quarter-century that ranks New York fourth in the U.S. behind Ohio, Pennsylvania and Indiana. Amish businesses include family enterprises like store- and shop-keeping, construction, furniture building, bakeries, greenhouses, and crafts such as quilt-making. By contrast, according to John Troyer, 48, patriarch of the Fenner-based Troyers, in the 21-family Canastota Amish Settlement, organic farming for the production of milk and other dairy products, as well as raising grass-fed stock for sales of meat, represents a major and rapidly growing source of revenue. Two Amish family farms will be spotlighted during the farm tours. We will



John Troyer at the wrapping machine

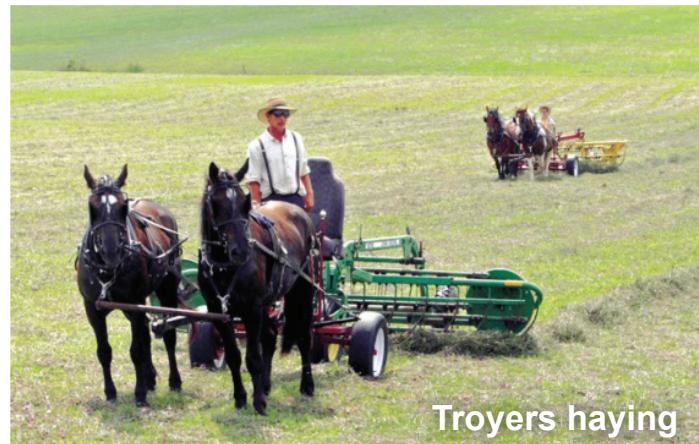
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begin with a tour of the John Troyer Family Dairy Farms, on Thursday morning, September 26th, and will end Field Days with a tour of Nathan Weaver's Aue Grunen Farm on Friday afternoon. The Troyer family operates both their grass based dairy and Troyers Country Store. Tour participants will hear about this family's diversified operation and observe a number of their innovative farming practices, including their compost bedded pack barn.*

A tour of Nathan Weaver's grass based dairy will close out Field Days on Friday afternoon, and participants will see how Nathan, a leader in the grass-fed milk industry, puts his beliefs and theories into a highly successful grazing operation.

The NODPA Field Days educational program will include workshops that aim to prepare farmers for the realities of today's organic dairy market. Looking at the current and future needs of the Grass fed Milk Market, Nathan Weaver kicks off the program with a presentation on how farmers can be prepared to meet the needs of this evolving market. He will focus on both production practices and trends that everyone will need to incorporate into their operations in order to remain competitive.

Klaas Martens and Roman Stoltzfoos will focus on how farmers can position their operations to best manage the



Troyers haying

Photo by Donald McCrimmon

current realities of organic dairy by describing strategies they employ for diversifying their farming operations and income streams. In addition, they will make the case for diversification at this time of low pay price and milk over supply.

This year, we are launching a new format for Thursday evening following the banquet and NODPA Annual meeting. Unlike

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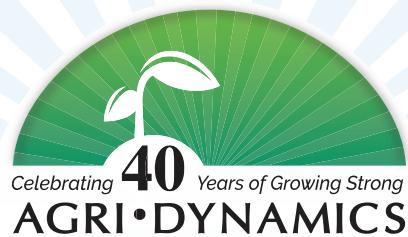
Organic Production

19th Annual NODPA Field Days

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past years, we will not have just one keynote speaker, instead we will have a Keynote Presentation and Panel Discussion entitled Adapting to the New Realities of Organic Dairy: Where do we go from here? Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, will set the stage by reviewing how the organic

dairy industry arrived at its current situation and open the discussion about where to go from here. We've gathered a panel of organic dairy farmers that represent a wide variety of farming philosophies, practices, ages, cultural perspectives and geographic locations, but all with an abiding commitment to the integrity of the organic seal, who will share their thoughts on the new realities of the Organic Dairy Industry, and what they see as its future. The discussion will open up to all in attendance and everyone that would like to voice their thoughts will have time to do so. We are honored to gather such a distinguished and knowledgeable panel: Annie and Ryan Murray, Hidden Meadows Dairy, Cincinnatus, NY, Jim and Anne Phillips, Triple 3 Livestock, Marathon, NY, Forrest Stricker, Spring Creek Farms, Wernersville, PA, Roman or Dwight Stoltzfos, Spring Wood Dairy, Kinzers, PA, and Vaughn Sherman, Jerry Dell Farm, Dryden, NY.



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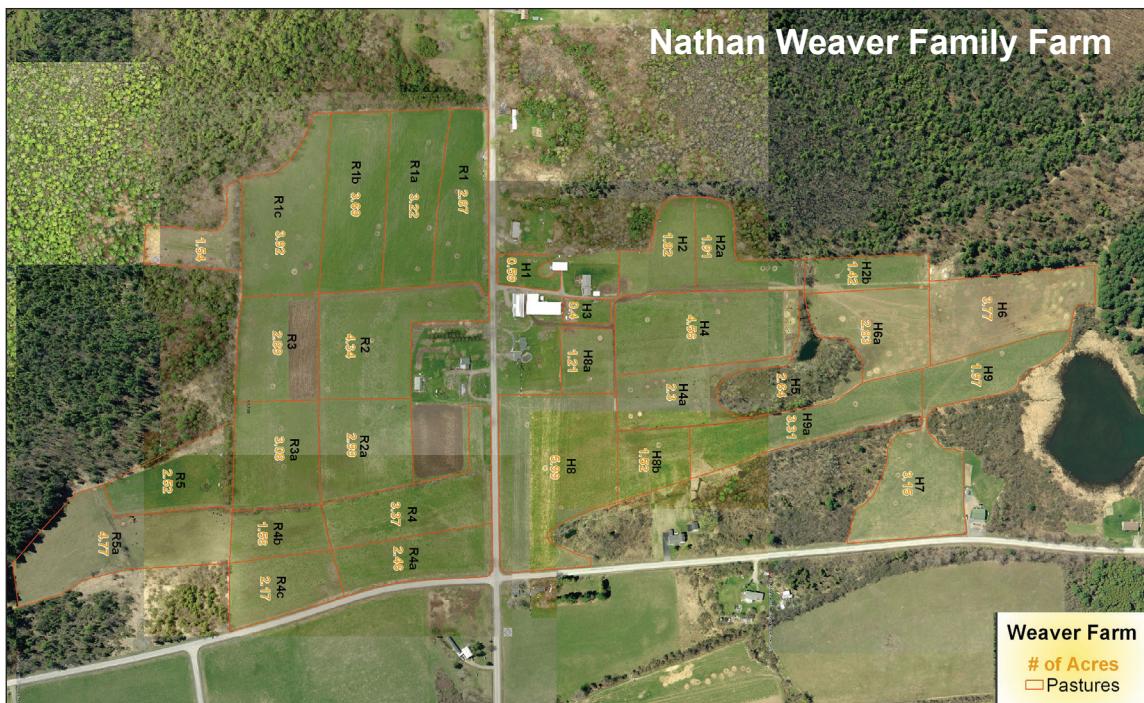


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Bright and early Friday morning, producers can grab some breakfast and join in the Producers-Only meeting where all producers can speak their minds and share information with their peers in a confidential setting. It is followed by a workshop that is focused on increasing efficiency on the farm. At a time when many smaller dairy farms are seeking to become more efficient and productive while also enhancing cow and labor friendly working and living conditions, Steven Weaver, organic dairy farmer and small milk parlor builder from Morrisville, NY, will review strategies for developing a cost-effective milking parlor system that effectively utilizes existing resources and can be planned as the first step in a long range improvement plan or as a one-time upgrade.

The second session will focus on enhancing herd health without breaking the bank. Organic dairy farmers Liz

ORGANIC PRODUCTION



Bawden and Kathie Arnold, and Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) Dairy Specialist Jacki Perkins will share a wide variety of successful strategies they use on their farms or in consultation with organic farmers, to effectively enhance herd health. Treatments include the use of botanicals, tinctures, homeopathic remedies and off-the-shelf products. These strategies will include the use of species growing in your garden or ways to most effectively utilize off the shelf products.

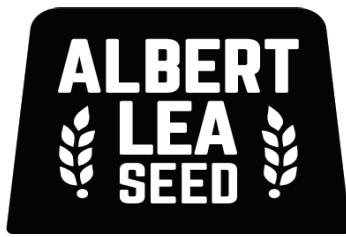
Friday morning sessions will wrap up with an update on industry and policy news that all producers need to hear, and a short introduction to Nathan Weaver's farm tour that starts directly after lunch.

The 19th Annual NODPA Field Days program will be filled with information sessions, discussions and educational workshops that focus on the important and timely issues facing all organic dairy farm families. In addition, we will have a full trade show, our annual social hour and banquet, featuring delicious local and organic food and NODPA's Annual Meeting on Thursday evening.

Throughout the 2-day meeting, attendees will be able to visit the diverse trade show and will have many opportunities to meet new people and catch up with old friends. More

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ORGANIC PRODUCTION

19th Annual NODPA Field Days

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information on the program will follow in the July NODPA News and online at www.nodpa.com, so for now SAVE THE DATE and begin planning to join us in September.

Are you interested in supporting NODPA as a sponsor, supporter or trade show participant? Look for Sponsorship and Trade Show information and opportunities in your email and mailboxes in the next couple of weeks. For more information or if you have questions about sponsoring or exhibiting at the 19th Annual NODPA Field Days, contact NODPA Field Days coordinator Nora Owens any time at noraowens@comcast.net or 413-772-0444. ♦

(*Portions of this article were originally published in the Cazenovia Republican.

*Making "hay" in several ways:
Amish enterprise,
Donald McCrimmon)*





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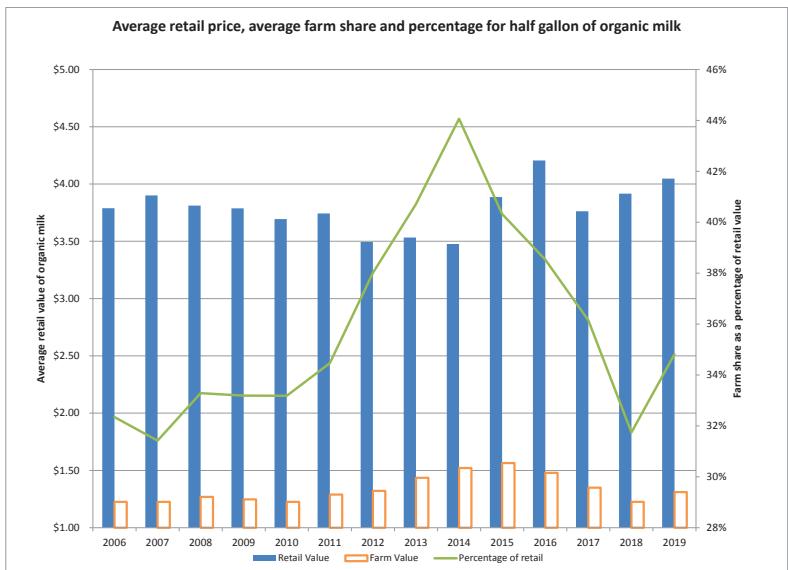
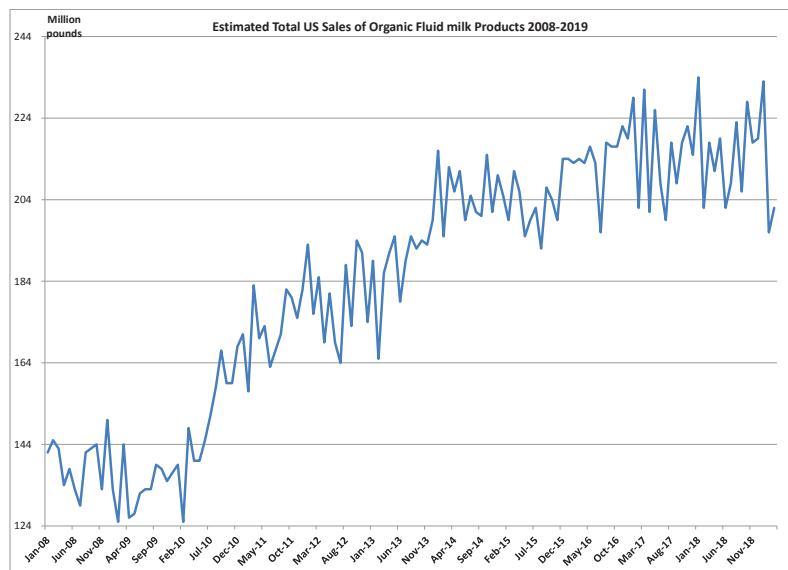
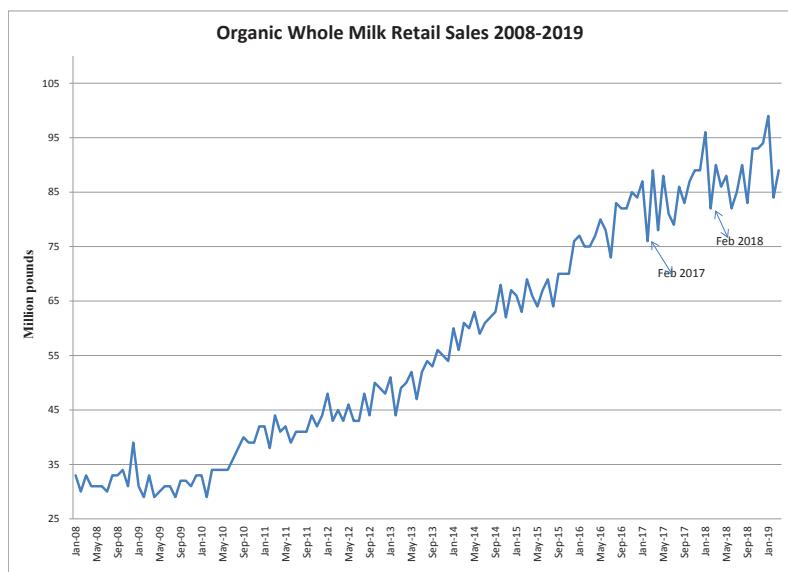
By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) reports total organic milk products sales for March 2019 were 202 million pounds, an 8.1 percent decline from March 2018 and 4.5 percent decline, year-to-date 2019, compared with the same period in 2018. Total organic whole milk sales for March 2019, 89 million pounds, were down 1.4 percent compared with March last year, but up 2.1 percent compared with the same period in 2018.

Producers are now entering their lowest months for pay price with a pay price drop to an average of \$27.13 as reported by USDA AMS. This is the lowest price since 2008. While the pay price will pick up again in August and has a year round average of \$31.30, these pay prices are well below a break even income for northeast organic producers. The latest Vermont study clearly shows that the average CASH expenses per cwt are \$31.30 and when you take into account other expenses it is \$35.03. All these expenses will vary depending on efficiencies, lifestyle, debt service and community support, plus a business model that is based on strong off-farm income or non-dairy income.

Before you disregard this next announcement, please remember that the DMC payout is based on the average of all milk and **is not related to the costs of individual farms**. It can be a useful amount of money for organic dairy producers, especially in those states where the State is stepping in to pay premiums.

USDA announced the availability of a new web-based tool to help dairy producers evaluate participation in the new Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program. [Access the tool at fsa.usda.gov/dmc-tool.] The tool, developed in partnership with the University of Wisconsin through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Office of the Chief Economist, was designed to help producers determine the level of coverage under a variety of conditions that will provide them with the strongest financial safety net. The tool calculates total premiums costs and administrative fees associated with participation in DMC. It



also forecasts payments that will be made during the coverage year.

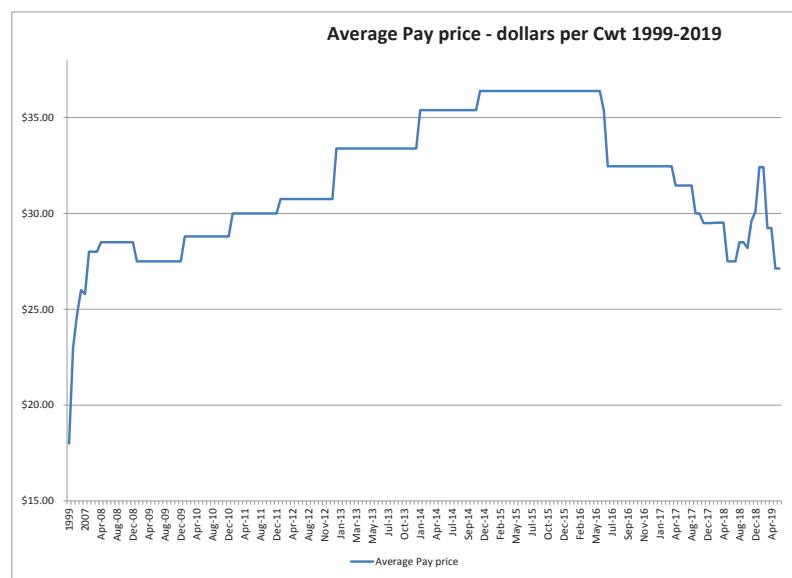
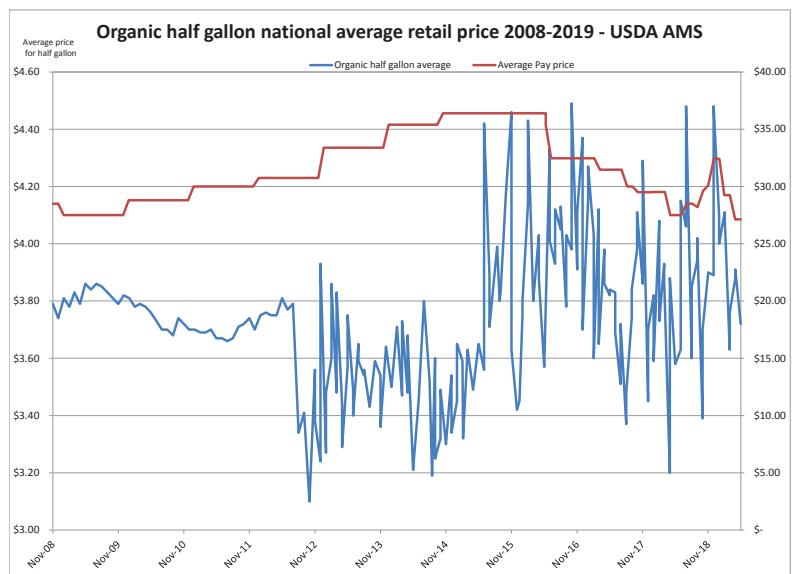
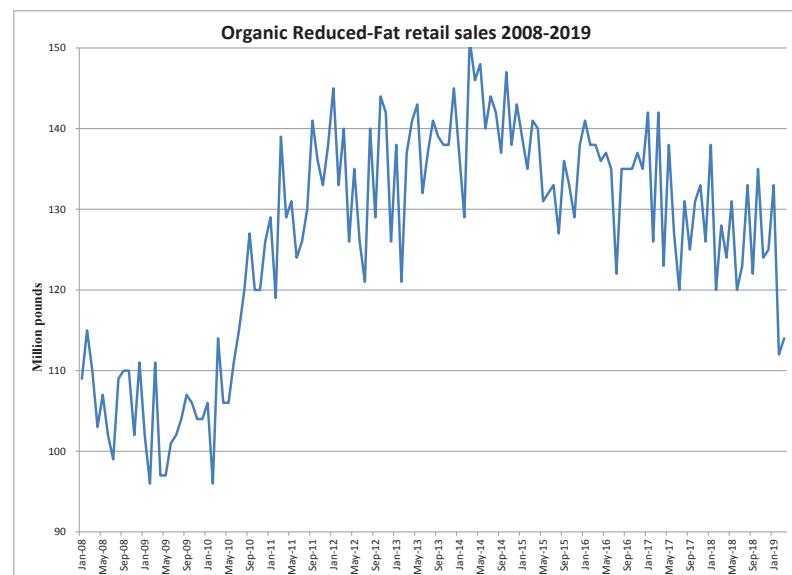
"The new Dairy Margin Coverage program offers very appealing options for all dairy farmers to reduce their net income risk due to volatility in milk or feed prices," said Dr. Mark Stephenson, Director of Dairy Policy Analysis, University of Wisconsin, Madison. "Higher coverage levels, monthly payments, and more flexible production coverage options are especially helpful for the sizable majority of farms who can cover much of their milk production with the new five million pound maximum for Tier 1 premiums. This program deserves the careful consideration of all dairy farmers." The 2018 Farm Bill authorized DMC. It replaces the program previously known as the Margin Protection Program for Dairy. Sign up for this USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) program opens on June 17.

On the positive side for the organic industry, the industry's trade association, the Organic Trade Association's (OTA), annual Organic Industry Survey released on 5/17/2019 reported that sales of organic food and non-food products were \$52.5 billion, up 6.3 percent from the previous year. In 2018, the organic non-food category reached \$4.6 billion in sales with a growth rate of 10.6 percent. They report that in 2018, U.S. sales of organic dairy and eggs grew just 0.8 percent to \$6.5 billion – in 2017 the category was also worth \$6.5 billion, but grew at a rate of 0.9 percent, just slightly above last year's growth rate. The growth of organic poultry products is a key indicator of demand and price for organic corn and soybeans, together with controlling the integrity of organic imports.

The OTA reports that the U.S. organic food and beverage market grew 5.9 percent in 2018 to reach \$47.9 billion in sales. As the organic food and beverage market reaches maturity its growth has consistently slowed over the past few years. The growth of the market in 2018 was down from the 6.4-percent growth in 2017, and the 8.4-percent growth in 2016, and far below the double-digit growth rate of the five previous years. The OTA said 5.7 percent of food sold in the United States is now organic.

OTA reports that organic produce continued to be the largest organic food category, growing 5.6 percent to hit \$17.4 billion in sales in 2018, on par with the growth attained in 2017. Produce now

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Pay And Feed Prices

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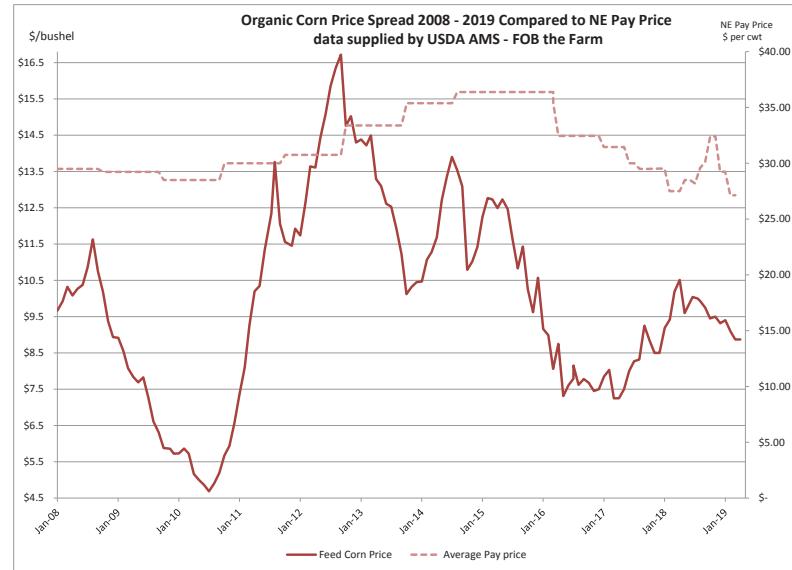
accounts for 36.3 percent of all organic food sales. Organic fruits and vegetable comprise 14.6 percent of all U.S. produce sold, and have nearly doubled their market share in the last 10 years.

Danone CEO Emmanuel Faber commented that Danone NA sales of plant-based product business could surpass its dairy-based yogurt business within the next 10 years. Its plant-based category, which includes vegan brands Silk and So Delicious, currently generates approximately \$1 billion in sales—compared to \$2 billion in dairy—but is growing faster as demand for vegan alternatives continues to rise. “Penetration is very high and it’s very widely adopted already,” Faber said at a recent company event in Barcelona. The corporation acquired WhiteWave Foods in 2016 for \$12.5 billion and plans to triple its total plant-based revenue to about \$5.6 billion by 2025, starting with the expansion of its Alpro brand in Europe with new products such as non-dairy ice cream. Danone also plans to launch vegan yogurt under its largest brand, Activia, to countries such as Spain, France, and the United Kingdom within the next 12 months. Plant-based milk such as soy and almond make up approximately 80 percent of Danone’s current plant-based sales, while 15 percent are from non-dairy yogurts, and five percent from vegan desserts. To meet its targets, Danone plans to expand further into non-dairy ice cream, vegan cheese, and vegan baby food.

Danone NA is not alone in their movement to non-bovine juices to serve an ever increasing consumers demand based on very limited nutrient information. All dairy farmers are indignant about beverages calling themselves milks when they are actually made of oats or almonds or sunflower seeds. These impostors have been draining away at the market share of what cows produce. The National Milk Producers Federation, which represents dairy cooperatives across the nation, has been and is currently advocating for the Dairy Pride Act, legislation introduced in the Senate to force the Food and Drug Administration to police labels. In

public comments to the FDA last September, yogurt-maker Chobani LLC said using dairy terms on labels for plant-based alternatives was “improper,” “illegal,” and “poses a public health risk.”

While farmers and the NMPF use every venue possible to loudly voice their complaints about alt-dairy products, organic and conventional processors are starting to churn them out alongside traditional milk, aiming to cash in on their fast-growing popularity in the U.S. Chobani recently launched non-dairy products that are coconut-based. Notably, though, the products aren’t labeled as “yogurt.” In the northeast HP Hood, has released a product called Planet Oat. On the organic side CROPP cooperative (Organic Valley) is the distributor for a line of almond-based drinks made by New Barn Organics. While its dairy producer owners are suffering from historically low pay prices because of competition from other “milks,” CROPP have in fact used their existing resources to launch and grow New Barn Organics. “We wouldn’t exist without Organic Valley,” said Ted Robb, chief executive officer of New Barn, which makes the almond drinks and other nut-based products, including what it calls a buttery spread. “They have a very hard time calling it milk. That



U.S. Organic Food Sales & Growth, 2009–2018

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Organic Food	21,266	22,961	25,148	27,965	31,378	35,099	39,006	42,507	45,209	47,862
Growth %	4.3	8	9.5	11.2	12.2	11.9	11.1	9	6.4	5.9
% of Total organic	92.2	92.1	92	91.9	91.9	91.8	91.6	91.7	91.6	91.3

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

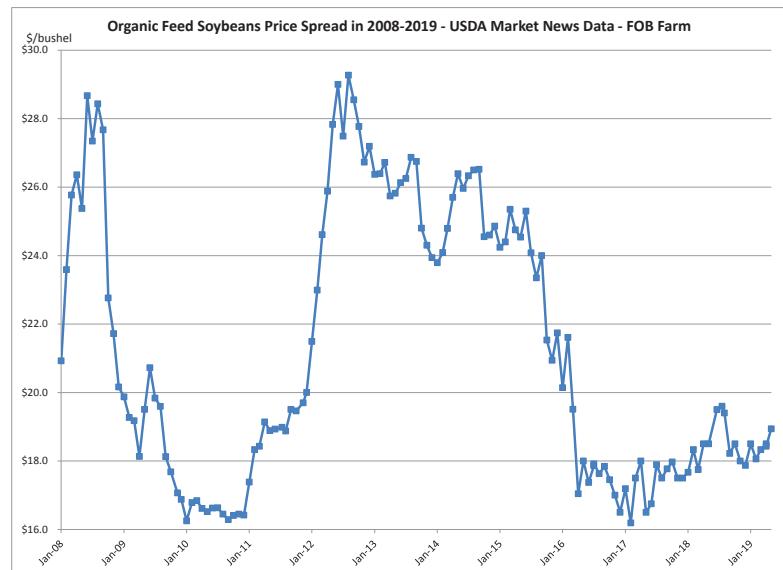
really, really bothers them. But they do understand we're thinking the same way around organic and deeper values."

Americans are drinking 40 percent less milk than in 1975, and prices have suffered a rout. Meanwhile, the plant alternatives are hot. Sales of alt-milks were up 8 percent in the year through Jan. 26, hitting \$1.7 billion, according to data from Nielsen. Plant-based cheeses and yogurts, while a smaller category, are seeing even bigger gains. Beyond Meat Inc., the maker of vegan burgers and sausages surged 163 percent on its May 2 trading debut -- the biggest U.S. listing since at least 2008 among initial public offerings that raised at least \$200 million.

The goals of dairy cooperatives and milk buyers have always been a cause for concern for dairy producers. With highly paid executives and numerous examples of price fixing, it has been evident for many years that the cooperatives primary goal is to maintain the profitability of the company and its workforce rather than the profitability of its farmer member-owners. The statement below from Michele Simon, executive director at the Plant Based Foods Association, sums up the situation. She said that while it looks like there's a fight on the surface, there's an embracing of milk alternatives by traditional dairy companies because, particularly for processors, it's "a huge

economic opportunity." "From a processor perspective, they don't care what goes into the cartons, they just want the cartons filled," she said.

Chobani's statement may deny reality - The new products aren't "a replacement to dairy -- dairy and yogurt aren't ever going to be replaced," the company said in an emailed statement. But the marketplace is proving otherwise. ♦



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USDA's National Organic Program (NOP) Continues to Fail at Protecting U.S. Organic Producers

By John Bobbe

First printed in Milkweed, May 2019; reprinted with permission from the author

Since February 2019, over 150,000 Metric Tonnes (over 6 million bushels) of “supposed organic corn and soybeans” have flooded U.S. markets. These shipments are from the usual suspect region of the world, Turkey and the countries surrounding the Black Sea. The result has been U.S. organic farmers seeing a price drop of \$1.50-\$1.75 per bushel on corn alone.

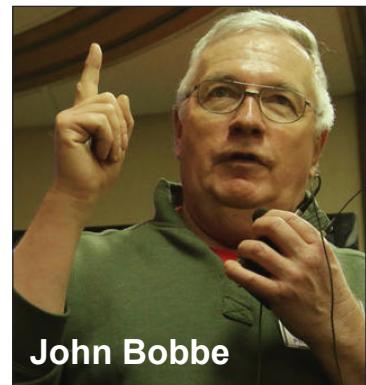
The risk that at least some of these shipments are fraudulent is quite high. If you can believe anything that comes out of USDA in Washington, D.C. these days, especially the National Organic Program (NOP) this is all on the up and up. No worries, all the paperwork is in order. Or is it?

Again, as since 2016, the European Commission issued its annual memorandum “Guidelines on official controls on products originating from Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Moldova and the Russian Federation.” (November 28, 2018 for the entire 2019 year). Much

of the grain flooding U.S. markets is coming from these same countries. The memorandum requires rigid protocols on any shipments from the afore mentioned countries.

On March 20, 2019, the Official Journal of the European Union issued a statement revoking accreditation of Control Union, a certification body out of the Netherlands. The Control Union revocation cited products including grain originating in the same countries as the European Commission and added Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

Meanwhile here in the U.S., the NOP is apparently looking the other way on shipments originating from these same countries.



John Bobbe

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I personally filed a formal complaint with USDA's NOP on the ship, Andalucia scheduled to arrive in Moorhead, N.C. Subsequently, a similar complaint about the overall level of corn and soybean imports was lodged by a significant entity in the U.S. that wants to see this import fraud mess cleaned up. The complaint noted that only half the amount of 150,000 MT of grain was shipped from the Black Sea region a year ago.

A subsequent investigation by a concerned farm group in North Carolina points to the USDA's NOP preventing Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) from inspecting the organic certificate and audit trail of this ship when it arrived in port. NOP reportedly gave the greenlight to unload the ship and asked CBP not to inspect the ship.

Since last September, I have personally reported information on suspicious ships of grain with quite specific information to USDA's NOP and not a single ship to my knowledge was even inspected. The response in some cases was to push back as to why I suspected the shipments might be fraudulent. Control Union, the reported certifier in the Black Sea Region for many of these shipments is still on the NOP's accredited list though having lost it in Europe. One has to ask, "Why"? Especially when the 2018 Farm Bill requires NOP to take action when a foreign government does on matters like revocation.

It is no secret that the NOP is the weakling when it comes to enforcement of organic standards compared to Canada or the European Union on imports. No organic farmer in the U.S. would ever get away with the excuse, "My paperwork is in order, no need for an annual inspection this year."

It is quite probable, NOP can't even provide the Organic Farm Plans from farms supplying the grain for these shiploads and can't even trace the grain. It is certainly not reassuring that these shipments come from an area of the world where there is major civil unrest, war, massive corruption and forgery and fake documents are the name of the game. USDA's own Foreign Agricultural Service issued a report on the massive corruption in Turkish organics in 2016.

Meanwhile, protecting the organic integrity of markets for U.S. organic producers doesn't seem to be much more than an NOP slogan. Producers are looking at major losses due to the flood of questionable imports from suspicious areas of the world thanks to the NOP. To date, NOP's response to my and other complaints questioning these shipments has been met with "total silence." That usually means a backroom deal has been struck to look the other way like in the past. To protect organic integrity requires real honest work, not playing paperwork and computer games with U.S. organic producers who stake their livelihood on organic integrity.

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Organic Dairy Farm Cost of Production Study in Vermont

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data; the grass-fed results can be found on our website but will not be discussed here. (*Editor's note: Ed Maltby will present an analysis of the grass-fed results at the end of this article.*)

As a group, the 28 farms were representative of Vermont organic dairy farms when compared to the statistics for those that are certified by Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF), the primary certifier in the state. The farms in the study had an average herd size of 81 cows (with a herd size range of 25 to 328 cows), close to the VOF average of 78. The percentage of farms in the study selling to each milk buyer was almost identical to the percentage of VOF farms in each group.

In 2017, the organic dairy farms in the study group shipped an average of 1,294,173 lbs. of milk for a herd average of 14,942 lbs. per cow per year. The average milk price received by farmers in the study group was \$36.90, down from an average of \$38.09 in 2016. It is worth noting that there was a large range in pay prices between farms; the actual pay price received by any given farm was dependent on milk buyer, timing of contract re-signing, inventory deductions, and quality premiums. Gross income

averaged \$487,077 from milk sales plus an additional \$33,859 of other income (i.e. cull cow sales, crop sales, government program payments, maple syrup, beef, and pork).

Examining cost of production in 2017, total expenses per cwt (accrual adjusted expenses, including depreciation from Schedule F) were \$34.53 and cash expenses per cwt were \$30.72. When all other income was taken out of the equation and a dairy-only cost of production was calculated, the cost per cwt was even closer to the pay price with total expense/cwt at \$35.03 and cash expenses/cwt at \$31.03. This may indicate that as farmers try to diversify their business by adding or growing other enterprises, those enterprises are subsidizing the dairy enterprise by sharing expenses. What is apparent, and what will not be sustainable for much longer, is the narrowing of the gap between pay price and total cost of production. Comparing pay price to a fully loaded, accrual adjusted cost of production, in 2016 farmers netted \$3.51/cwt above cost of production but in 2017 that was reduced to \$2.37/cwt above cost of production.

For further analysis, the 28 farms in the study were broken into three equal-sized profitability groups, which will now be referred to as low-, mid-, and high-profit farms. Just as in past years, the low-profit group is composed of the mid-sized farms (average herd size of 66.8 cows) while the smallest farms (average herd size of 49.4 cows) make up the mid-profit group and the largest farms (average herd size of 129.6 cows) continue to be the most profitable. This is unsurprising considering that the mid-sized farms have a harder time capitalizing on the efficiencies of larger farms but also tend to have more hired labor than the smaller farms. Interestingly, the low-profit farms shipped more milk per cow on average (14,194 lbs/cow) than the mid-profit farms (13,664 lbs/cow), yet that additional income does not offset the higher COP of the low-profit farms.

<i>By Profitability Group</i>	Low-profit	Mid-profit	High-profit	All Farms
	N=10	N=9	N=9	N=28
Average # of cows	66.8	49.4	129.6	81.4
Lbs shipped total	946,543	713,462	2,261,140	1,294,173
Lbs shipped/cow	14,194	13,664	17,050	14,942
Milk price	\$36.24	\$37.10	\$37.44	\$36.90
Cash Expenses/CWT	\$32.67	\$29.86	\$29.40	\$30.72

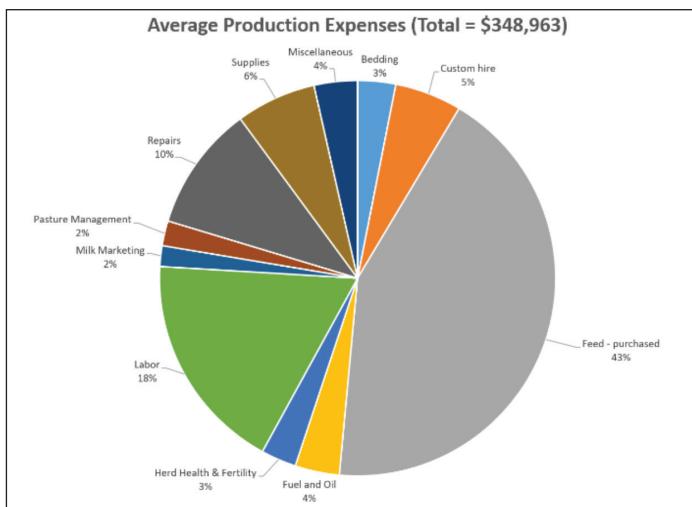


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The average cash expenses per farm in 2017 were \$348,963 with purchased feed (43%, \$150,054), hired labor (18%, \$62,813), and repairs (10%, \$34,896) as the top three categories. The repairs category is one to keep an eye on over time as new equipment purchases as well as infrastructure maintenance and upgrades are being deferred due to tight cash flow situations on many farms. A demonstration of this can also be found in the fact that, on a per cow basis, the following metrics have remained relatively steady for the group as a whole over the past three years: interest expense, average assets, debt to asset ratio, and debt per cow.



When the purchased feed expense is split into grain and forage costs, the high-profit farms spent the most on grain per cow (\$1,810) and the least on purchased forage per cow (\$52). Grain expense per cwt on these farms averaged \$10.63. The mid-profit farms spent the least on grain per cow (\$1,361) and the most on purchased forages (\$241). Grain expense per cwt on these farms averaged \$10.06. This is logical considering that the mid-profit farms are the smallest in-size and tended to have a smaller land base, necessitating more purchased feed. No correlation seemed to exist in 2017 between profitability and fertility expenditures as the low-profit farms spent the most on fertility inputs and seed on a per cow basis (\$49/cow as compared to \$23/cow for the high-profit farms).

Facing depressed milk prices and inventory quotas, the primary option farmers have to remain viable is to have tight cost control systems or, in other words, to focus on efficiency to reduce their variable expenses and maximize their return to overhead. The high-profit group's fixed expense per cow is \$162 and \$131 above the low- and mid-profit group

respectively. This difference is driven in large part by the difference in interest expense; this indicates that the larger farms have been able to leverage funds to make capital investments in their farms, increasing their efficiency and profitability. The mid-profit group had the lowest variable expense per cow (\$3,515), primarily due to lower hired labor expenses. The variable expense per cow for the high-profit group (\$4,313) was only \$187 more than that of the low-profit group, once again indicating the financial and efficiency challenges of mid-sized farms. This challenge was also evident in the paid labor expense metrics. The average number of cows increased by 35.2% between the low-profit group and the mid-profit group, however the paid labor expense decreased by 66.2% on a per cow basis and by 68.6% on a per cwt basis. Currently, with limited or no ability to increase production, it may be a worthwhile exercise for some farms to run their numbers with fewer cows to see if that increases their profitability.

By Profitability Group	Low-profit N=10	Mid-profit N=9	High-profit N=9	All Farms N=28
Average # of cows	66.8	49.4	129.6	81.4
Lbs shipped/cow	14,194	13,664	17,050	14,942
Variable Expense/Cow	\$4,126	\$3,515	\$4,313	\$3,990
Fixed Expense/Cow	\$541	\$572	\$703	\$603
Grain Purchased/Cow	\$1,503	\$1,361	\$1,810	\$1,556
Forage Purchased/Cow	\$169	\$241	\$52	\$155
Paid Labor Expense/Cow	\$714	\$231	\$866	\$608
Paid Labor Expense/CWT	\$5.03	\$1.58	\$5.07	\$3.93

The overall profitability metrics are strongest for the high-profit group. Accrual adjusted net farm income for these farms was \$228,046, which generally meant there was enough money for the farm family's living allocation, debt service, and reinvestment in the farm. This is in stark contrast to the net farm loss of \$11,666 for the low-profit farms. Rate of return on assets (ROA) was also strong for high-profit farms at 11.27%. However, asset turnover ratio was weak at 13.35%, meaning it would take the average high-profit farm about 7.5 years to gross enough to pay for all owned assets (goal is 3 years). Low-profit farms had an ROA of -3.85% and an asset turnover ratio of -.44%.

To get a true apples-to-apples comparison, EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization) was

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Organic Dairy Farm Cost of Production Study in Vermont

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calculated. This comparison is especially important to examine in this data collection system for two reasons. First, Schedule F depreciation is used and the rate applied across farms differs significantly according to their tax situation. And second, debt load between farms varies significantly and thus the interest expense will vary amongst farms based on the percentage of their assets that are financed. The pattern above holds true as EBITDA was \$327,670 for high-profit farms, \$71,956 for mid-profit, and \$41,731 for low-profit. At these points, even if mid-profit and low-profit farms break even, it would likely be at the expense of the family living allocation, capital investments, maintenance tasks, and having any capital reserve on hand.

This is a challenging time in the organic dairy industry. With the pay price continuing to decrease and with many farms facing production quotas in 2018 and 2019, it calls into question how much longer many organic dairy farms can continue to hang on. NOFA-VT is continuing the cost of production study this year in the hopes that capturing and aggregating financial, production, and labor efficiency metrics will support decision-making around the viability of organic dairy farms in the Northeast.

Jen Miller can be reached at NOFA VT, jen@nofavt.org - 802-434-4122

Analysis of Grass-Fed Farms that took part in the survey

Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

With such a small sample of only 5 farms it would be wrong to try to draw too many conclusions from this report but it does support some existing assumptions. Significantly, milk shipped per cow averages 5,000 lbs. less than the average across the 28 farms in the survey which gave an income per cow of approximately \$1,000 less, even with the higher pay price averaging \$3.50 more than the average in the survey. Interestingly the average cash expenses per cow for Grass-Fed were on average \$1,500 less than the average of the survey which gave a very similar net income per cow of \$1,047 as opposed to \$973 for non Grass-Fed cows. Real estate taxes were significantly higher for Grass-Fed which indicates more acreage in production as was interest paid per cow. Obviously purchased mineral, feed and forage for Grass-Fed per cow were

only 30% of the average for the survey. Other expenses that were significantly lower with Grass-Fed (at least 50%) included bedding, breeding, seeds and plants, vet, and medicine.

In summary there are no surprises with the Grass-Fed data and the same criteria that are significant for all dairy farms, organic or not, are the overhead costs that individual operators have very little control over. Those with a high debt load will survive in good times but will suffer when pay price is low. Grass-Fed is no silver bullet but with a skilled producer and low debt load there is opportunity for a modest contribution to family living, especially with non-dairy income and government payments.

continued on page 19

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2017 Vermont Organic Dairy Farms Reported by Profitability Group Per Farm N = 28					
	Bottom Third N=10	Middle Third N= 9	Top Third N= 9	All Farms	N= 28
Average # of cows	66.8	49.4	129.6		81.4
Lbs shipped total	946,543	713,462	2,261,140		1,294,173
Lbs shipped/cow	14,194	13,664	17,050		14,942
Milk price	\$ 36.24	\$ 37.10	\$ 37.44	\$	36.90
Cash Income					
Milk sales	\$ 354,221	\$ 262,377	\$ 859,394	\$	487,077
Dairy cattle sales	\$ 1,590	\$ 2,125	\$ 2,969	\$	2,206
Cull cow sales	\$ 11,073	\$ 4,858	\$ 19,445	\$	11,767
Bob/Veal calf sales	\$ 1,063	\$ 685	\$ 4,015	\$	1,890
Crop sales	\$ 1,234	\$ 2,092	\$ 8,833	\$	3,952
Government payments	\$ 6,360	\$ 277	\$ 3,523	\$	3,493
Patronage dividends	\$ 3,084	\$ 1,662	\$ 2,460	\$	2,426
Custom work	\$ -	\$ 1,285	\$ 1,143	\$	781
Syrup	\$ 2,629	\$ 6,784	\$ 1,600	\$	3,634
Timber	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 646	\$	208
Other	\$ 3,763	\$ 2,786	\$ 3,933	\$	3,504
Total Cash Income	\$ 385,017	\$ 284,931	\$ 907,961	\$	520,938
Cash Expenses					
Auto and truck expenses	\$ 3,231	\$ 2,676	\$ 2,660	\$	2,869
Bedding	\$ 5,669	\$ 10,051	\$ 17,339	\$	10,829
Breeding	\$ 3,378	\$ 3,480	\$ 6,499	\$	4,414
Chemicals/pesticides	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$	-
Custom hire:	\$ 26,930	\$ 14,654	\$ 14,735	\$	19,064
DHIA	\$ 1,418	\$ 1,412	\$ 2,997	\$	1,924
Fertilizers & lime	\$ 3,357	\$ 2,224	\$ 4,016	\$	3,205
Feed - purchased grain & other	\$ 107,950	\$ 70,909	\$ 242,488	\$	139,288
Feed - purchased forage	\$ 13,436	\$ 11,097	\$ 6,460	\$	10,442
Fuel and Oil	\$ 8,599	\$ 6,280	\$ 23,479	\$	12,636
Insurance	\$ 6,301	\$ 4,928	\$ 14,083	\$	8,361
Interest	\$ 7,212	\$ 5,688	\$ 16,225	\$	9,619
Labor	\$ 42,136	\$ 13,744	\$ 134,462	\$	62,686
Milk Marketing	\$ 5,034	\$ 3,787	\$ 9,013	\$	5,912
Real estate taxes (farm portion)	\$ 4,143	\$ 2,911	\$ 2,256	\$	3,140
Rent	\$ 4,425	\$ 3,478	\$ 36,805	\$	14,528
Repairs	\$ 29,112	\$ 17,369	\$ 61,536	\$	35,760
Seed and plants	\$ 3,074	\$ 1,670	\$ 7,018	\$	3,890
Supplies	\$ 19,120	\$ 17,680	\$ 32,077	\$	22,822
Utilities	\$ 13,167	\$ 8,812	\$ 21,718	\$	14,515
Vet	\$ 2,456	\$ 3,361	\$ 4,544	\$	3,418
Medicine	\$ 52	\$ 578	\$ 358	\$	319
Miscellaneous	\$ 7,597	\$ 10,550	\$ 19,441	\$	12,353
Total Cash Expenses	\$ 317,799	\$ 217,341	\$ 680,208	\$	401,997
Net Cash Farm Income	\$ 67,218	\$ 67,589	\$ 227,756	\$	118,939
Accrual Income Adjustments					
Livestock inventory	\$ 1,238	\$ 4,628	\$ 44,495	\$	16,231
Breeding livestock purchases	\$ -	\$ 583	\$ 1,572	\$	693
Accounts receivable	\$ (15,126)	\$ (5,828)	\$ (4,325)	\$	(8,666)
Hay	\$ (9,025)	\$ 3,578	\$ 43,859	\$	12,024
Grain	\$ (6,661)	\$ 521	\$ (897)	\$	(2,500)
Total Accrual Income	\$ (29,575)	\$ 3,482	\$ 84,703	\$	17,783
Accrual Expense Adjustments					
Depreciation - Schedule F used	\$ 46,185	\$ 20,265	\$ 83,399	\$	49,815
Accounts payable	\$ (168)	\$ 4,804	\$ (9,357)	\$	(1,523)
Pre-paid expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$	-
Supplies	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$	-
Total Accrual Expenses	\$ 46,017	\$ 25,069	\$ 74,042	\$	48,292
Total Farm Income	\$ 355,442	\$ 288,412	\$ 992,667	\$	538,719
Total Farm Expenses	\$ 363,816	\$ 242,410	\$ 754,250	\$	450,289
Net Farm Income	\$ (11,666)	\$ 46,002	\$ 228,046	\$	83,920
EBITDA	\$ 41,731	\$ 71,956	\$ 327,670	\$	143,355
Average Assets	\$ 1,070,023	\$ 753,277	\$ 1,997,169	\$	1,266,223
Average Equity	\$ 874,287	\$ 564,490	\$ 1,500,353	\$	975,945
Rate of Return on Assets Schedule F used	-3.85%	2.08%	11.27%		2.92%
Debt/Asset Ratio	20.26%	26.61%	23.04%		23.19%
Asset Turnover Ratio	-0.44%	7.34%	13.35%		6.49%
Average Debt to Cow	\$ 2,663	\$ 3,649	\$ 3,396	\$	3,215

Net Cash Farm Income = Total Cash Income - Total Cash Expenses

Net Farm Income = Net Cash Farm Income + Total Accrual

Adjustments

EBITDA = Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation & Amortization

Rate of Return on Assets = (Net Farm Income -

Interest - Family Living Allocation)/Average Farm Assets (Goal of over 8%, assigning family living allocation of \$38,000) Debt to Asset Ratio = Total

Farm Liabilities/Total Farm Assets (Goal of under 30%) Asset Turnover Ratio = Gross Farm Income/Average Farm Assets (Goal of over 33%)

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Organic Dairy Farm Cost of Production Study in Vermont

continued from page 19

2017 Vermont Organic Dairy Farms Reported by Profitability Group Per Cow N = 28					
	Bottom Third N=10	Middle Third N=9	Top Third N=9	All Farms	N=28
Average # of cows	66.8	49.4	129.6	81.4	
Lbs shipped total	946,543	713,462	2,261,140	1,294,173	
Lbs shipped/cow	14,194	13,664	17,050	14,942	
Milk price	\$ 36.24	\$ 37.10	\$ 37.44	\$ 36.90	
Income					
Milk sales	\$ 5,148	\$ 5,048	\$ 6,390	\$ 5,515	
Dairy cattle sales	\$ 31	\$ 39	\$ 33	\$ 34	
Cull cow sales	\$ 163	\$ 81	\$ 184	\$ 143	
Bob/Veal calf sales	\$ 18	\$ 16	\$ 28	\$ 20	
Crop sales	\$ 22	\$ 38	\$ 80	\$ 45	
Government payments	\$ 72	\$ 5	\$ 36	\$ 39	
Patronage dividends	\$ 50	\$ 31	\$ 44	\$ 42	
Custom work	\$ -	\$ 18	\$ 15	\$ 11	
Syrup	\$ 47	\$ 99	\$ 16	\$ 54	
Timber	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9	\$ 3	
Other	\$ 57	\$ 62	\$ 50	\$ 56	
Total Cash Income	\$ 5,607	\$ 5,437	\$ 6,883	\$ 5,962	
Cash Expenses					
Auto and truck expenses	\$ 53	\$ 52	\$ 24	\$ 43	
Bedding	\$ 73	\$ 183	\$ 158	\$ 136	
Breeding	\$ 59	\$ 69	\$ 57	\$ 61	
Chemicals/pesticides	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Custom hire:	\$ 428	\$ 222	\$ 103	\$ 257	
DHIA	\$ 26	\$ 28	\$ 25	\$ 26	
Fertilizers & lime	\$ 49	\$ 36	\$ 23	\$ 36	
Feed - purchased grain & other	\$ 1,503	\$ 1,361	\$ 1,810	\$ 1,556	
Feed - purchased forage	\$ 169	\$ 241	\$ 52	\$ 155	
Fuel and Oil	\$ 139	\$ 113	\$ 175	\$ 142	
Insurance	\$ 97	\$ 107	\$ 113	\$ 105	
Interest	\$ 91	\$ 126	\$ 121	\$ 112	
Labor	\$ 714	\$ 231	\$ 866	\$ 608	
Milk Marketing	\$ 66	\$ 83	\$ 79	\$ 76	
Real estate taxes (farm portion)	\$ 67	\$ 52	\$ 37	\$ 52	
Rent	\$ 40	\$ 53	\$ 223	\$ 103	
Repairs	\$ 393	\$ 328	\$ 446	\$ 389	
Seed and plants	\$ 25	\$ 22	\$ 40	\$ 29	
Supplies	\$ 313	\$ 320	\$ 286	\$ 307	
Utilities	\$ 193	\$ 182	\$ 184	\$ 187	
Vet	\$ 36	\$ 61	\$ 41	\$ 46	
Medicine	\$ 1	\$ 11	\$ 2	\$ 5	
Miscellaneous	\$ 131	\$ 206	\$ 151	\$ 162	
Total Cash Expenses	\$ 4,667	\$ 4,086	\$ 5,016	\$ 4,593	
Net Cash Farm Income	\$ 939	\$ 1,351	\$ 1,868	\$ 1,370	
Accrual Income Adjustments					
Livestock inventory	\$ 21	\$ 144	\$ 416	\$ 188	
Breeding livestock purchases	\$ -	\$ 19	\$ 39	\$ 18	
Accounts receivable	\$ (155)	\$ (111)	\$ (19)	\$ (97)	
Hay	\$ (68)	\$ 114	\$ 260	\$ 96	
Grain	\$ (33)	\$ 7	\$ (13)	\$ (14)	
Total Accrual Income	\$ (235)	\$ 174	\$ 679	\$ 190	
Accrual Expense Adjustments					
Depreciation*	\$ 624	\$ 366	\$ 627	\$ 542	
Accounts payable	\$ (3)	\$ 63	\$ (9)	\$ 16	
Pre-paid expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Supplies	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Accrual Expenses	\$ 621	\$ 429	\$ 618	\$ 558	
Total Farm Income	\$ 5,372	\$ 5,611	\$ 7,563	\$ 6,153	
Total Farm Expenses	\$ 5,288	\$ 4,516	\$ 5,634	\$ 5,151	
Net Farm Income	\$ 51	\$ 1,095	\$ 1,874	\$ 973	
EBITDA	\$ 766	\$ 1,684	\$ 2,766	\$ 1,627	
Average Assets	\$ 19,201	\$ 15,782	\$ 17,967	\$ 17,549	
Average Equity	\$ 16,538	\$ 12,025	\$ 14,814	\$ 14,334	
Return on Assets*	-3.85%	2.08%	11.27%	2.92%	
Debt/Asset Ratio	20.26%	26.61%	23.04%	23.19%	
Asset Turnover Ratio	-0.44%	7.34%	13.35%	6.49%	
Average Debt to Cow	\$ 2,663	\$ 3,649	\$ 3,396	\$ 3,215	

Net Cash Farm Income = Total Cash Income - Total Cash Expenses

Net Farm Income = Net Cash Farm Income + Total Accrual Adjustments

EBITDA = Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation & Amortization

Rate of Return on Assets = (Net Farm Income - Interest - Family Living

Allocation)/Average Farm Assets (Goal of over 8%, assigning family living allocation of \$38,000)

Debt to Asset Ratio = Total Farm Liabilities/Total Farm

Assets (Goal of under 30%)

Asset Turnover Ratio = Gross Farm Income/Average Farm Assets (Goal of over 33%)

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

2017 Vermont Organic Dairy Farms Reported by Profitability Group Per Cwt N = 28					
	Bottom Third N=10	Middle Third N=9	Top Third N=9	All Farms N=28	
Average # of cows	66.8	49.4	129.6	81.4	
Lbs shipped total	946,543	713,462	2,261,140	1,294,173	
Lbs shipped/cow	14,194	13,664	17,050	14,942	
Milk price	\$ 36.24	\$ 37.10	\$ 37.44	\$ 36.90	
Income					
Milk sales	\$ 36.24	\$ 37.10	\$ 37.44	\$ 36.90	
Dairy cattle sales	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.30	\$ 0.19	\$ 0.23	
Cull cow sales	\$ 1.15	\$ 0.53	\$ 1.07	\$ 0.93	
Bob/Veal calf sales	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.16	\$ 0.13	
Crop sales	\$ 0.16	\$ 0.26	\$ 0.51	\$ 0.30	
Government payments	\$ 0.52	\$ 0.04	\$ 0.21	\$ 0.26	
Patronage dividends	\$ 0.36	\$ 0.21	\$ 0.25	\$ 0.28	
Custom work	\$ -	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.08	
Syrup	\$ 0.36	\$ 0.87	\$ 0.09	\$ 0.44	
Timber	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0.06	\$ 0.02	
Other	\$ 0.43	\$ 0.49	\$ 0.30	\$ 0.41	
Total Cash Income	\$ 39.52	\$ 40.07	\$ 40.38	\$ 39.97	
Cash Expenses					
Auto and truck expenses	\$ 0.35	\$ 0.34	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.28	
Bedding	\$ 0.54	\$ 1.25	\$ 0.91	\$ 0.89	
Breeding	\$ 0.37	\$ 0.49	\$ 0.33	\$ 0.40	
Chemicals/pesticides	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Custom hire:	\$ 2.97	\$ 1.42	\$ 0.56	\$ 1.70	
DHIA	\$ 0.18	\$ 0.21	\$ 0.15	\$ 0.18	
Fertilizers & lime	\$ 0.32	\$ 0.24	\$ 0.13	\$ 0.23	
Feed - purchased grain & other	\$ 10.65	\$ 10.06	\$ 10.63	\$ 10.45	
Feed - purchased forage	\$ 1.07	\$ 1.79	\$ 0.27	\$ 1.04	
Fuel and Oil	\$ 0.99	\$ 0.83	\$ 1.04	\$ 0.95	
Insurance	\$ 0.72	\$ 0.84	\$ 0.67	\$ 0.74	
Interest	\$ 0.65	\$ 1.00	\$ 0.68	\$ 0.77	
Labor	\$ 5.03	\$ 1.58	\$ 5.07	\$ 3.93	
Milk Marketing	\$ 0.46	\$ 0.62	\$ 0.47	\$ 0.52	
Real estate taxes (farm portion)	\$ 0.48	\$ 0.37	\$ 0.22	\$ 0.36	
Rent	\$ 0.30	\$ 0.35	\$ 1.30	\$ 0.64	
Repairs	\$ 2.72	\$ 2.45	\$ 2.68	\$ 2.62	
Seed and plants	\$ 0.16	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.21	\$ 0.17	
Supplies	\$ 2.14	\$ 2.44	\$ 1.67	\$ 2.09	
Utilities	\$ 1.35	\$ 1.38	\$ 1.07	\$ 1.27	
Vet	\$ 0.26	\$ 0.43	\$ 0.25	\$ 0.31	
Medicine	\$ 0.01	\$ 0.10	\$ 0.01	\$ 0.04	
Miscellaneous	\$ 0.96	\$ 1.54	\$ 0.93	\$ 1.14	
Total Cash Expenses	\$ 32.67	\$ 29.86	\$ 29.40	\$ 30.72	
Net Cash Farm Income	\$ 6.85	\$ 10.21	\$ 10.98	\$ 9.26	
Accrual Income Adjustments					
Livestock inventory	\$ 0.13	\$ 1.25	\$ 2.84	\$ 1.36	
Breeding livestock purchases	\$ -	\$ 0.18	\$ 0.20	\$ 0.12	
Accounts receivable	\$ (1.09)	\$ (0.87)	\$ (0.05)	\$ (0.68)	
Hay	\$ (0.51)	\$ 1.00	\$ 1.61	\$ 0.66	
Grain	\$ (0.25)	\$ 0.03	\$ (0.07)	\$ (0.10)	
Total Accrual Income	\$ (1.71)	\$ 1.58	\$ 4.53	\$ 1.35	
Accrual Expense Adjustments					
Depreciation (Schedule F)	\$ 4.55	\$ 2.63	\$ 3.63	\$ 3.64	
Accounts payable	\$ (0.02)	\$ 0.55	\$ 0.02	\$ 0.18	
Pre-paid expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Supplies	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Accrual Expenses	\$ 4.53	\$ 3.18	\$ 3.65	\$ 3.81	
Total Farm Income	\$ 37.81	\$ 41.65	\$ 44.90	\$ 41.32	
Total Farm Expenses	\$ 37.20	\$ 33.04	\$ 33.05	\$ 34.53	
Net Farm Income	\$ 0.42	\$ 8.61	\$ 11.53	\$ 6.62	
EBITDA	\$ 5.62	\$ 12.24	\$ 15.85	\$ 11.04	
Average Assets	\$ 133.94	\$ 119.70	\$ 104.87	\$ 120.02	
Average Equity	\$ 113.09	\$ 90.44	\$ 84.73	\$ 96.69	
Return on Assets (Schedule F)	-3.85%	2.08%	11.27%	2.92%	
Debt/Asset Ratio	20.26%	26.61%	23.04%	23.19%	
Asset Turnover Ratio	-0.44%	7.34%	13.35%	6.49%	
Average Debt to Cow	\$ 2,663.00	\$ 3,649.00	\$ 3,396.00	\$ 3,215.00	
Cash Expenses per Cwt*	\$ 32.93	\$ 30.70	\$ 29.24	\$ 31.03	
Total Expenses per Cwt*	\$ 37.68	\$ 34.21	\$ 32.97	\$ 35.03	

Net Cash Farm Income = Total Cash Income - Total Cash Expenses

Net Farm Income = Net Cash Farm Income + Total Accrual Adjustments

EBITDA = Earnings Before Interest, Taxes,

Depreciation & Amortization **Rate of Return on Assets** = (Net Farm Income - Interest - Family Living Allocation)/Average Farm Assets (*Goal of over 8%, assigning family living allocation of \$38,000*)Debt to Asset Ratio = Total Farm Liabilities/Total Farm Assets (*Goal of under 30%*) **Asset Turnover Ratio** = Gross Farm Income/Average Farm Assets (*Goal of over 33%*)

* Dairy-Only uses data from farms where all non-dairy income and expenses were removed

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Organic Dairy Farm Cost of Production Study in Vermont

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2017 Vermont Organic Dairy Farms Reported by Grass-Fed Milk (No Grain) N = 5			
	Gras-Fed Per Farm	Grass-Fed per Cow	Grass-Fed Per Cwt
Average # of cows	54.4	54.4	54.4
Lbs shipped total	517,041	517,041	517,041
Lbs shipped/cow	9,007	9,007	9,007
Milk price	\$ 40.36	\$ 40.36	\$ 40.36
Income			
Milk sales	\$ 205,247	\$ 3,760	\$ 40.36
Dairy cattle sales	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Cull cow sales	\$ 3,125	\$ 56	\$ 0.59
Bob/Veal calf sales	\$ 373	\$ 8	\$ 0.09
Crop sales	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Government payments	\$ 20,502	\$ 366	\$ 3.55
Patronage dividends	\$ 2,048	\$ 38	\$ 0.41
Custom work	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Syrup	\$ 13,151	\$ 243	\$ 3.11
Timber	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other	\$ 4,281	\$ 71	\$ 0.96
Total Cash Income	\$ 248,726	\$ 4,541	\$ 49.08
Cash Expenses			
Auto and truck expenses	\$ 1,815	\$ 0.34	\$ 0.31
Bedding	\$ 4,116	\$ 1.25	\$ 0.72
Breeding	\$ 1,555	\$ 0.49	\$ 0.35
Chemicals/pesticides	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Custom hire:	\$ 9,779	\$ 1.42	\$ 1.28
DHIA	\$ 745	\$ 0.21	\$ 0.13
Fertilizers & lime	\$ 2,737	\$ 0.24	\$ 0.56
Feed - purchased grain & other	\$ 2,960	\$ 10.06	\$ 0.51
Feed - purchased forage	\$ 472	\$ 1.79	\$ 0.12
Fuel and Oil	\$ 7,318	\$ 0.83	\$ 1.41
Insurance	\$ 6,389	\$ 0.84	\$ 1.37
Interest	\$ 9,568	\$ 1.00	\$ 2.26
Labor	\$ 35,238	\$ 1.58	\$ 6.61
Milk Marketing	\$ 4,041	\$ 0.62	\$ 0.90
Real estate taxes (farm portion)	\$ 7,641	\$ 0.37	\$ 1.48
Rent	\$ 10,973	\$ 0.35	\$ 1.38
Repairs	\$ 19,963	\$ 2.45	\$ 4.32
Seed and plants	\$ 327	\$ 0.12	\$ 0.07
Supplies	\$ 15,376	\$ 2.44	\$ 2.62
Utilities	\$ 10,187	\$ 1.38	\$ 2.13
Vet	\$ 1,308	\$ 0.43	\$ 0.23
Medicine	\$ -	\$ 0.10	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$ 19,490	\$ 1.54	\$ 4.04
Total Cash Expenses	\$ 172,000	\$ 29.86	\$ 32.82
Net Cash Farm Income	\$ 76,726	\$ 1,564	\$ 16.26
Accrual Income Adjustments			
Livestock inventory	\$ 4,640	\$ 83	\$ 1.31
Breeding livestock purchases	\$ 360	\$ 6	\$ 0.10
Accounts receivable	\$ (2,043)	\$ (18)	\$ (0.23)
Hay	\$ 6,933	\$ 90	\$ 1.04
Grain	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Accrual Income	\$ 9,890	\$ 161	\$ 2.22
Accrual Expense Adjustments			
Depreciation (Schedule F)	\$ 39,068	\$ 625	\$ 6.37
Accounts payable	\$ 1,618	\$ 29	\$ 0.45
Pre-paid expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Supplies	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Accrual Expenses	\$ 40,686	\$ 654	\$ 6.81
Total Farm Income	\$ 258,616	\$ 4,703	\$ 51.00
Total Farm Expenses	\$ 212,686	\$ 3,631	\$ 40.00
Net Farm Income	\$ 43,930	\$ 1,047	\$ 11.46
EBITDA	\$ 104,944	\$ 2,113	\$ 23.40
Average Assets	\$ 944,448	\$ 17,981	\$ 206.95
Average Equity	\$ 644,653	\$ 12,825	\$ 148.59
Return on Assets (Schedule F)	0.48%	0.48%	0.48%
Debt/Asset Ratio	30.11%	30.11%	30.11%
Asset Turnover Ratio	7.26%	7.26%	7.26%
Average Debt to Cow	\$ 5,155	\$ 5,155	\$ 5,155

Net Cash Farm Income = Total Cash Income - Total Cash Expenses

Net Farm Income = Net Cash Farm Income + Total Accrual Adjustments

EBITDA = Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation & Amortization

Rate of Return on Assets = (Net Farm Income - Interest - Family Living

Allocation)/Average Farm Assets (Goal of over 8%, assigning family living allocation of \$38,000)

Debt to Asset Ratio =

Total Farm Liabilities/Total Farm Assets (Goal of under 30%)

Asset Turnover Ratio = Gross Farm Income/Average Farm Assets (Goal of over 33%)

NET UPDATE

Recent ODairy Discussions

By Liz Bawden, Organic Dairy Farmer, NODPA President

A producer was seeing a lot of calf scours in calves 7 to 10 days old. His vet advised him this was E. coli based on the aggressive symptoms and the age of the calves at onset. To protect the newborn calves, he began vaccinating with First Defense gel, which should provide immunity to E.coli, but he still noticed scours occurring at day 7. "We've been supporting the sick ones with electrolytes 1-2x daily and have tried a couple tinctures, though they didn't seem to do much. We've also used Bovi-Sera vaccine on the sick ones, but haven't seen a great response." He asked the group if anyone had tried feeding apple cider vinegar in the calf's milk, as he had seen a recent article that claimed great health benefits for the calf. One farmer in the article claimed that by adding a tablespoon of cider vinegar to the calf's bottle, they virtually eliminated calf scours on their farm. He asked for recommendations from farmers on the list. Two farmers suggested the following protocols: We have "instituted a regimen of Crystal Creek Calf Shield and Milk Mate in the milk, starting at about 3 days when the calves are off bottles and on group feeders, and that is continued until weaning. We also started using a product called First Arrival (by DCB Ag Products) for the first two weeks of a calf's life--also added to the milk. Another product paired with that is Last Stand, a paste that comes in a tube that we give if any calf does come down with scours. We do vaccinate our cows with ScourGuard at dry-off, and feed First Defense gel tubes shortly after birth."

A vet agreed that the timing of the scours onset was consistent with E.coli or Rota-Corona virus. He suggested vaccinating dry cows with ScourGuard 4KC to enrich colostral antibodies, feed milk spiked with yogurt for the first week of life, and give 1cc of Amplimune under the skin a few days before typical onset. He suggested that if an onset does occur, withhold milk for 24 hours, feeding only electrolytes with Mallow (Althea) and Slippery Elm. And another farmer suggested that Crystal Creek's Calf 180 is a good choice for an acute situation, while Calf Shield is best as a routine preventative. She also suggested a drench of organic apple cider vinegar changes the gut pH enough to give the calf's immune

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.

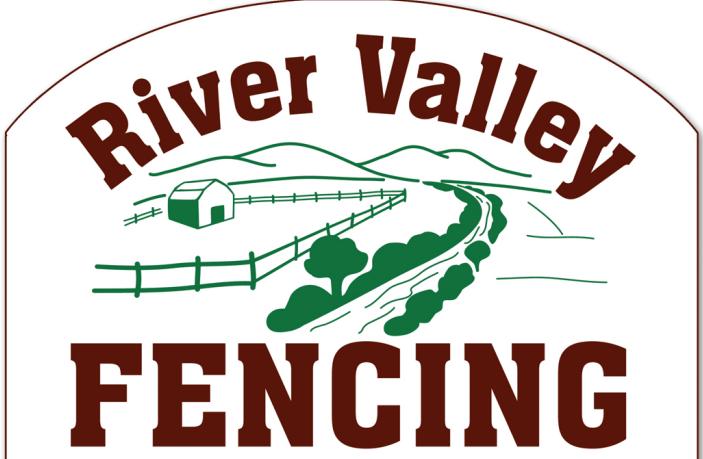
To sign up for the Odairy listserv, go to:

www.nodpa.com/list_serv.shtml

system a necessary advantage. She also has been mixing OrganiCalf milk replacer into the dry calf starter, and feels that it really made a difference in the health and vigor of the calves.

Another farmer shared her protocol for calf scours: first, she reduces the amount of milk fed by one-third, being careful it's at the right temperature. If that doesn't help, she adds Bio-Mos to the milk. If it continues to get worse, she adds a tablespoon of Ferro and a raw egg (shaken up) to their milk bottle, and supplements with some electrolytes between feedings.

A producer asked if anyone had used an Einbock Tine Air Seeder for reseeding or rejuvenating pastures, and one farmer responded that just the Tine Weeder itself can be very useful. "We have an Einbock Tine Weeder that is very useful for rejuvenating pastures. We do not have the air seeder but once we take the Einbock over the field, grasses and clovers spring up usually from seeds now exposed to light. Other uses are: leveling the soil after tilling, spreading compost from a pile dumped on a field, covering a newly seeded pasture with a small bit of soil." ♦



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FEATURED FARM

YOUNG FAMILY FARM, ANTWERP, NY

continued from page 1

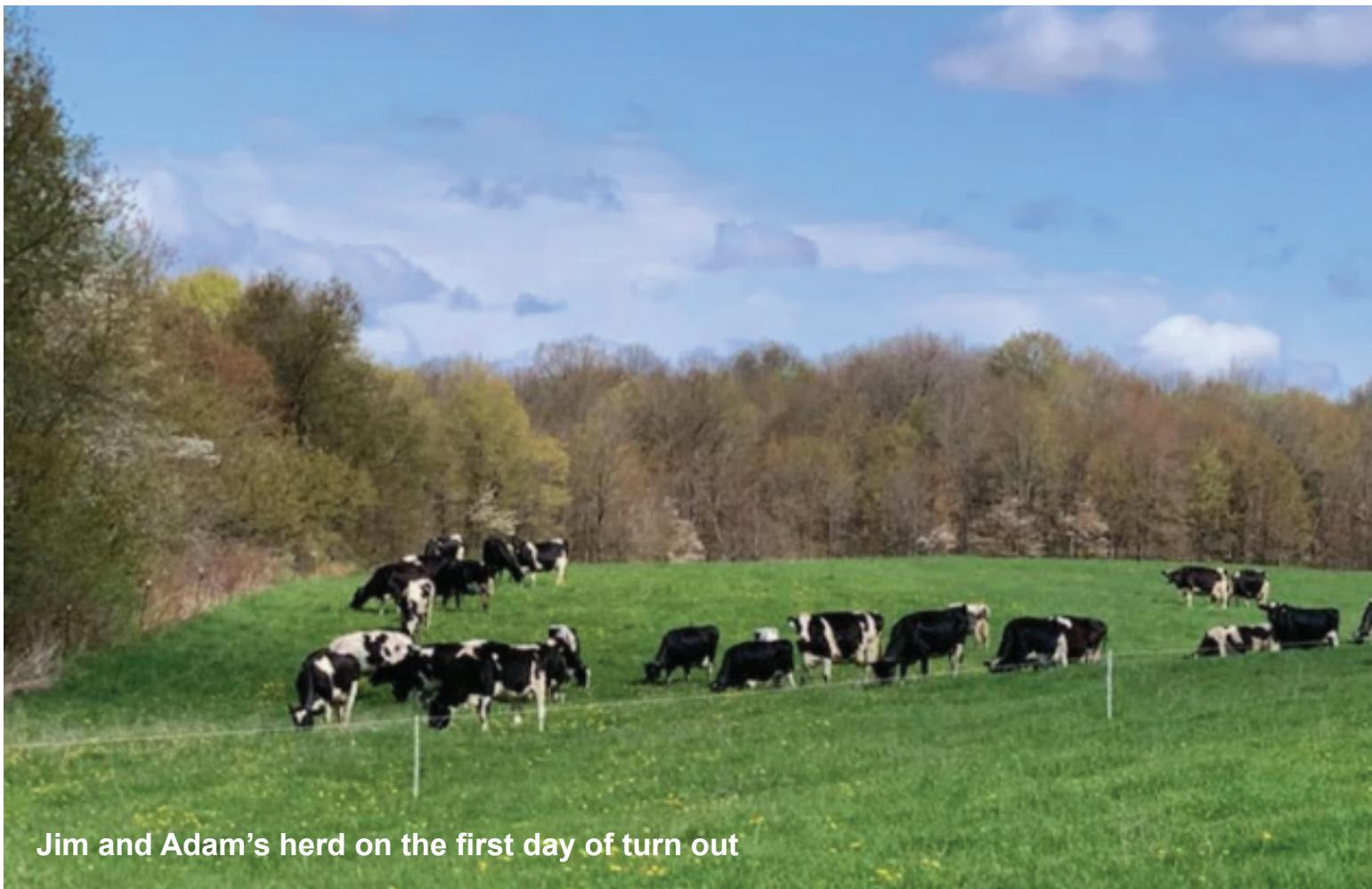
farm and his approach to farming is his steadfast commitment to sustaining his family's involvement in dairy farming, and working closely with his children and brother to help them get established in dairy farming.

While Jim and Toni initially started out with careers in social service jobs, they decided after a few years that dropping off the kids at sitters was not the life they wanted for their family. Jim emphasized that while his wife stayed home with the kids for many years, and has not done a major portion of farm work, she has been very supportive of the entire farm enterprise, and he could not have done it without her. From humble beginnings, Jim said they "started from dirt," Jim and Toni built up a successful small farm. Jim was candid in saying that the primary reason for switching to organic was economic. He explained that the health of his family is important; his kids were raised on raw milk, and

that organic "is better for the soil, but that's not enough. That won't pay the bills. I don't want to be one of my neighbors that's conventional- burning up all their equity. You need to be niche. Next niche—A2 milk, and then grass-fed. I don't want to be in the conventional market."

Jim's journey as a farmer has led him to a few different farms in upstate New York, different milk buyers and several business relationships with family members, but through all these changes he has raised cows organically for almost 20 years, has stayed small, and has been very creative in finding ways to kick start his family's farming operations and manage uncertain market conditions.

For the first five years they farmed, Jim and Toni rented three different farms in upstate New York while they developed their farming skills, saved money and their credit history to buy a



Jim and Adam's herd on the first day of turn out

FEATURED FARM

farm. In 1998 they bought a farm next door to where they are now, and went to organic production a couple of years later. When they started out in organic production it was tight, with only 35 cows, and \$20 milk. Around the middle of that decade the market conditions improved as the organic milk market expanded, as did pay prices.

Jim and Toni's daughter and younger son have taken over this original home farm, and Jim is now farming with his older son Adam, who started farming full-time when he was 18. He had majored in agriculture in high school and knew that he always wanted to farm, and didn't want to go to college. However, as Jim put it, "you can't borrow money without experience. And you can't get experience without money." Jim helped Adam overcome this dilemma by getting him started on rented land 10 miles away, providing cows and some equipment to get him started in the dairy business, allowing him to establish a track record. After only three years Adam met FSA lending criteria and was able to pay back Jim with funds borrowed from FSA.

However, because organic milk prices have dropped along with the rest of the dairy industry, Jim and Adam decided it made more sense to join forces. In November of 2018, they decided to merge their farms; Adam still has his farm ten miles away, but they put in a bigger tank on the main farm and only keep the dry cows and young stock there. The entire milking herd of 50 cows is on what used to be just Jim and Toni's farm. Merging the two farms allows Jim and Adam to share farm chores, allowing them to take more breaks-- Jim explained that previously went 7 years without a single milking off. Furthermore, establishing a slightly larger farm makes them more desirable in the eyes of milk companies. When organic milk was growing fast and companies were desperate for milk they would go miles out of their way to pick up small amounts of milk, but now, as times have changed and supply is plentiful and margins are tight the milk companies are cutting off farmers that are too far off the route, or too small.

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FEATURED FARM**Milk house built in the winter of 2013****YOUNG FAMILY FARM, ANTWERP, NY***continued from page 25*

Some companies are now charging fixed milk hauling fees, which is a major burden for a 25 cow farm.

They ship their milk now to Horizon, after Jim switched away to Maple Hill Creamery after having been with Horizon from 2000 to 2015. When prices were peaking in 2015 Jim decided to switch to Maple Hill, based in Kinderhook, New York as they were looking for milk and were offering more money than Horizon so Jim took a risk and switched. However, after only three years market conditions changed abruptly in the New York and national organic milk markets. Maple Hill's branded milk has always been grass-fed, and Jim has always fed some grain to his cows, so he was unable to have his milk marketed under Maple Hill's label; instead it was going via Maple Hill to Byrne Dairy, which agreed to process Maple Hill's grass-fed milk in exchange for providing additional, organic non-grass-fed milk. However, in December of 2018 Maple Hill gave 6 months' notice to all of its non grass-fed farms that they were not going to be buying their milk anymore. Jim was appreciative of Maple Hill giving a fair amount of notice, but "it was still a bad time." Byrne Dairy could buy cheaper milk from more westerly production regions

with lower prices so Maple Hill lost its contract with Byrne Dairy. Luckily, he was able to go back to Horizon in March of this year as his farm was in a good location relative to Horizon's milk routes. Jim relayed his good fortune—"I left them when they needed us the most, and they took us back when they needed us the least." Besides the good location, Jim had a very strong quality record in his previous stint with Horizon, which may have influenced their decision to take him back.

Meanwhile, Jim worked with his youngest brother Andrew-- who is 18 years younger-- to get him up and running in the dairy business. It was a very productive partnership for the two brothers as Andrew worked construction during the week and worked on the farm at nights and weekends. As Jim puts it, Andrew "had a lot of drive." He helped build the current farm, down the road from the original farm Jim and Toni purchased in 1998, including working with Jim to install a modern milking parlor and build a new barn for a cash outlay of only \$33,000. This second farm was purchased in 2010 as a way to bring in more family members to the business. The two brothers built up the herd to 66 cows and when Andrew found a farm of his own they split the herd in half, as well as the equipment. Andrew paid

FEATURED FARM

back Jim for the help he provided getting him started on his own. When Andrew left, Jim and Toni's youngest two children--Morgan and Zachary took over the original farm. It is truly remarkable that starting with a small herd and land base, and during uneven market conditions Jim has facilitated four family members into becoming full-time, self-sustaining farmers.

To Be Grass-Fed Or Not?

Amidst these myriad transitions, Jim has been experimenting with new forages to explore what it would take to go all grass-fed, which could be a financially beneficial choice given Maple Hill's presence in the region as a grass-fed milk marketer. He has done forage trials with brown midrib sorghum, and has a veterinarian who is super enthusiastic about grass-fed dairying, but he remains hesitant due to economic, agronomic and animal husbandry considerations. Jim is concerned that the \$11/cwt premium is not sufficient to overcome production losses associated with going from 10-12 lbs. of grain daily per cow to zero. Equally important, Jim emphasized that he was not convinced that a grass-only diet is suitable for his all Holstein

herd. He feels that a lot of grass-fed farmers went the grass-fed route by default, meaning they just quit grain cold turkey, and did not make enough improvements in cow comfort. One needs "to create an environment in which that cow thrives, so it will breed back throughout the year....fighting nature to begin with (in terms of year round milking) so going grass-fed makes it even that much harder." The challenge is how to get cows to calve in the fall without mimicking the spring boost in energy. One needs to ensure cows have the energy levels that exist in pasture from May to June all year round if one is going to have year round milking, and doing this without grain Jim argues, "is a tall order". These challenges, along with the fact that he grows all his own grain for a cost of \$200/ton, compared to \$700 on the open market for organic grain, and that he would have to be very sure he would never want to go back to Horizon, makes him wary of going the grass-fed route at this time.

continued on page 28



Homemade flat parlor

FEATURED FARM

YOUNG FAMILY FARM, ANTWERP, NY

continued from page 27

Whither Organic Milk?

We closed our conversation with a brief discussion of the state of the organic industry. Jim is very concerned about the impact of fraudulently certified imports on the integrity of the organic industry. He feels more oversight is needed throughout the supply chain to make sure everyone is following the same rules. Another response to this problem could be more specific labeling, such as "grown in New York" to highlight the North American origins of organic food products to consumers concerned about organic integrity. Despite the travails he and other farmers are experiencing, Jim is committed to organic dairy. "I do feel strongly about this business. I love my way of life... my wife and I both had good jobs and quit them [to pursue farming]. We didn't do it blindly; we knew what we were going into. I hope consumers support us so we can get a decent living....we need consumer confidence [in the organic label]." ♦



WANTED

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Application:

Please send covering letter and resumé to:

Sean Manley, B.Sc.(Agr), A.Ag
sean.manley@pro-cert.org
www.pro-cert.org



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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: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

City: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Are you a certified organic dairy producer? YES NO

Date: _____

Milk buyer _____

Number of milking cows _____

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

June 15, 2019, 10 am - 4 pm

**MANAGEMENT INTENSIVE GRAZING FOR THE DIVERSIFIED FARM,
Earthwise Farm and Forest, Randolph, VT**

Interested in improving your grazing skills or new to Management Intensive Grazing? This class will employ the teachings of Holistic Management along with the techniques of Management Intensive Grazing (MIG) to assist you in improving pasture productivity and raising healthy livestock. Participants will be introduced to fencing & water system designs, and movable structures for hogs, poultry, and small ruminants, and will learn how to determine daily feed needs of various types of livestock. Register via paypal, or mail your payment to: Earthwise Farm & Forest, 341 Macintosh Hill Rd, Randolph, VT 05060. Cost: \$70 per person, \$130 for 2 people. Scholarships available if resources are limited. Contact Lmccrory560@gmail.com to inquire. To Register or to learn more, go to www.earthwisefarmandforest.com.

June 18, 2019, 4:30pm - 6:30pm

**GETTING GOOD GAINS ON GRASS,
Otokahe Farm, 15 Jason Ave, Jefferson, NH**

Join UNH Cooperative Extension and Granite State Graziers at Otokahe Farm in Jefferson, NH for an informal, educational evening to discuss grazing management practices to achieve the production goals you desire in your livestock. We will talk about how to manage your rotation for good gains and forage production, nutritional value and types of forage species, and other factors in management that impact meat quality. This event is for those interested in or currently grazing looking to learn more and network with fellow graziers. COST: Free. No registration required. If you require special accommodations, please contact Elaina Enzien at elaina.enzien@unh.edu or at (603) 679-5616 prior to the event start date. Rain or shine - come prepared for conditions.

July 10, 2019 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

**SEED VARIETIES AND SOIL CAN MAKE
THE DIFFERENCE**

Harris Seeds, 355 Paul Rd, Rochester, NY 14624

Join Daniel Eggert, Organic Seed Manager, and Gillian Meade, Trials Manager, from Harris Seeds at their facility and trial fields in Rochester, NY. First, we'll learn about Harris Seeds' soil health plan for managing their trials long-term. Daniel and Gillian will share their soil assessment, past management practices, and the long-term goals for building healthy soil. Daniel is part of the NYS Soil Specialist Training through American Farmland Trust, and will discuss strategies for managing different soils. We'll cover elements of food safety to keep yourself and your customer safe. Finally, we'll look at different leafy greens and cut flower varieties, and how selecting the right seed can make the difference in your operation. Cost: \$15 (NOFA-NY Members receive 10% discount). To register, use this link: <https://nofany.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/fielddays>

July 10, 2019, 12:00pm

**2019 MIDWEST FARM ENERGY CONFERENCE
U of MN West Central Research and Outreach Center
46352 State Hwy 329, Morris, MN 56267**

The conference will highlight energy efficient systems for Midwest dairies (on July 10), as well as energy conservation for swine production (on July 11). Conference will include: Energy optimized systems for dairy production, including solar shading for grazing cattle; energy conservation and generation in swine facilities, featuring our sow cooling and piglet heating systems; opportunity to network with energy experts and professionals; bringing solar PV to your farm: from idea to operation.

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Renewable Energy tours: dairy facilities that utilize renewable energy technologies and swine facilities with solar photovoltaic systems. Full conference, single day, and student rates available; visit their website for more details: <https://wcroc.cfans.umn.edu/events-education/2019-midwest-farm-energy-conference> or call, 320-589-1711. Conference agenda will be made available soon.

July 14, 2019, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

**SOIL HEALTH FIELD DAY AT GAINING GROUND FARM: PLANTING METHODS FOR SMALL-SCALE NO-TILL FARMING
Concord, MA**

Have you been considering starting, or transitioning to, a no-till farm? Join us at Gaining Ground Farm in Concord, MA to learn small-scale, high-yield methods for crop production using methods that minimize soil disturbance and maximize soil health. Farm manager Doug Wolcik will lead an interactive field walk with observations and input from guest presenter Daniel Mays of Frith Farm in Scarborough, ME. Learn about Gaining Ground's transition by viewing fields that have been no-till for 1 year, 2 years, and 3 years. A hands-on participatory planting demonstration of fall broccoli into a no-till managed cover crop of winter rye and crimson clover will give participants a sense of the soil texture and hand-planting methods that allow Gaining Ground Farm to operate efficiently without the use of tractor-mounted planting implements. Daniel Mays will then offer a presentation on his no-till farming systems. Stay for lunch and participate in a no-till farmer round table discussion about soil health practices. Cost: \$45.00 Contact Doug of NOFA MA at doug@nofamass.org, (978) 355-2853.

July 16, 2019, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm (Lunch included)

**FROM NO-TILL TO NEW CULTIVARS: IMPROVING ORGANIC CORN AND SOYBEAN PRODUCTION
(Organic@Cornell Summer Field Day Series)
Musgrave Research Farm
1256 Poplar Ridge Rd, Aurora, NY 13026**

Connect with fellow farmers and Cornell researchers, while you check out our new no-till planter and get the latest information about rolled cover crop organic no-till soybean production. Learn about our organic cropping systems experiment and crop breeding for organic production. The NY Soil Health Trailer will also be on-site with demonstrations to show participants how healthy soil compares to degraded soil. To register, use this link: <https://nofany.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/fielddays>

Cost: Free!

Tuesday, July 16, 2019, 9:30 am – 2:30 pm AND July 18, 2019, 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

HIGH FAT PASTURES: A GUIDE TO MANAGING FORAGE TO MAKE BUTTERFAT

This field day will be held twice at two different farms:

Tuesday, July 16, 2019, 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

Martin Farm, 5115 Ray Crosby Rd, Dundee, NY 14837

AND

Thursday, July 18, 2019, 9:30 am – 2:30 pm

Huftalen Farm, 2870 Hardscrabble Road, Erieville, NY 13061

By using helpful observational tools such as leaf-count on grasses to determine plant maturity, as well as sward height, Dr. Brickner will discuss ways in which we can optimize our cows' efficiency on pasture. Also, utilizing those same tools we can figure out the basic nutritional aspects of our pastures which lead to greater butterfat in the milk and body condition on our cows. There will also be a brief discussion on cow genetics and breeding for higher component production. These events are sponsored by Organic Valley and Maple Hill Creamery. Cost: \$15 (NOFA-NY Members receive 10% discount)

To register, use this link: <https://nofany.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/fielddays>

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Classified Ads

ANIMALS

FOR SALE: Certified organic grass-fed milking herd currently on the grass-fed milk truck for OV. Some of the service sires used are Rumania, Rager-Red, Diamondback, Manny, Apple- Red, Gold Chip, Desired, Supersire, Donnatello, Mogal, Montross, Lirriano, Sam, Premium, Gianni, Blaine, plus others. 40+ milkers \$2,000.00/ea; 20+ youngstock \$500.00-1500.00/ea. None registered, some can be. we are retiring and moving to Virginia. Selling this herd is extremely hard for us! Harold and Ginny Welch, heavenboundfarm@gmail.com, 802-349-0681.

WANTED: Anyone have organic Guernseys? Grandson is looking for one. Contact Ila Terry, terviewfarm@gmail.com, 315-324-6904

Location: Northern New York

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

AGRICULTURE BUSINESS PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Cornell Cooperative Extension, Sullivan County, Full-Time

The Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan County Ag Business Program Coordinator coordinates and provides education and resources to agricultural producers in Sullivan County in business management and development related topics to increase their awareness of available resources, improve their profitability, solve

common agribusiness problems using best management practices, diversify their farm operations, and develop programs that will enhance the economic viability of agricultural enterprises in Sullivan County. As a member of the CCESC Ag Team, the Coordinator will organize and provide workshops, training, written and web-based educational materials, and technical assistance in areas including, but not limited to, financial and business planning, estate and succession planning, farm transfers, farm accounting, business analysis, risk management, funding resources, diversification, and direct marketing by linking with available expertise including other local and regional Extension staff and Cornell University faculty. This is a full time, non-exempt, 37.5 hours per week, benefits eligible position.

Compensation paid at the rate of \$18.68 per hour. All interested candidates MUST APPLY ONLINE at: https://cornell.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/CCECareerPage/job/New-York-State-Other/Ag-Business-Program-Coordinator---Liberty--NY_WDR-00018524. Review of applicants beginning May 15, 2019 and continuing until position is filled

HORTICULTURE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Cornell Cooperative Extension, Sullivan County - PT

The Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan County Horticulture Program Coordinator will provide coordination for the Horticulture Program including education and technical assistance through the Horticulture Diagnostic Lab (HDL) and the Soil Laboratory. The work will focus on coordinating and delivering programs to help the general public and horticulture service industry in areas of horticulture and integrated pest management.

Northeast Organic Milk Buyers

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.

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!

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

Responsibilities include processing diagnostic samples and answering inquiries on the phone, through letters/email, and in person on subjects including food gardening, container gardening, landscaping, lawn care, structural and medically important pests, wildlife, environmental and sustainable issues, forestry and pesticide use and misuse. The position will process and test soil for pH as needed and send out comprehensive soil test reports with recommendations. This person is responsible for vetting or writing articles for various publications, updating factsheets and website information. This is a part-time, 25-30 hours per week, non-exempt, benefits eligible position. Compensation paid at the rate of \$17.15 per hour. All interested candidates MUST APPLY ONLINE at: https://cornellwd1.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/CCECareerPage/job/New-York-State-Other/Horticulture-Program-Coordinator---Liberty--NY_WDR_00018885. All application must be received on-line by June 3, 2019. Position closing dates may change based on Association needs.

HELP WANTED: HERD MANAGER, ORGANIC DAIRY IN CATSKILLS

Bethel Creamery is a small, family owned, certified organic dairy farm with an on-site dairy processing facility. They're seeking a motivated, knowledgeable herd manager who can care for the animals at all stages of development and milk them. Housing is available, a brand new tiny house for a single person or couple. Email resume with references to bethelcreamery1@gmail.com or leave message at 845-866-1776.

HANDLING CERTIFICATION COORDINATOR ASSISTANT

NOFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC announces a job opening for a Certification Coordinator Assistant who is responsible for providing administrative support to the Certification Coordinators to ensure the timely intake and flow of certification applications through the entire certification process. The starting salary for this position is up to \$30,000/year depending on experience along with annual pay increases. Benefits include healthcare, dental and 403(b) as well as generous paid holidays/vacation time. A full job description is available on our website <https://www.nofany.org/about-us/opportunities>. For more information, contact the Certification Office at 607-724-9851 or certifiedorganic@nofany.org. Added May 13, 2019

EQUIPMENT

FOR SALE: Heston 4760 Large Square Baler with processor. Excellent condition; stored under cover \$15,500. Call Kari Lussier, 802-537-2435.

Location: Benson, VT

HAY

Organic grass hay in 4 X 5 (1000 pound) dry round bales stored inside or 4 X 4 baleage. \$55/bale at my farm, delivery available in NYS. Contact Carl Crispell, cac22@cornell.edu, 607-275-1647.

Location: Ithaca, NY

SERVICES

WATER ANALYSIS

Are your animals drinking as much as expected or not producing as much milk as expected? Have you ever been somewhere that you didn't want to drink the water? Do you wonder if your water is safe for a gathering for family or visitors? Holmes Laboratory provides water analyses for farmers and non-farmers, including testing the quality of water your animals are consuming. We test for bacteria, nitrates, sulfates, smell, odors, stains, minerals, and more. After testing your water, we help to explain the results and make recommendations. We do not sell water treatment equipment or products.

Holmes Laboratory, Inc.

3559 US Route 62
Millersburg, Ohio 44654-8834
Phone: 330-893-2933 or 330-893-1326
Email: gary@holmeslab.com
Website: www.holmeslab.com

Advertise With Us!

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

Join as a **Business Member** and receive an additional 5% off all advertising. To learn more about Business memberships and the Web Business Directory, go to www.nodpa.com/directory.shtml or contact Nora Owens.

2019 Ad rates and sizes listed below.

Deadline for advertising in the July 2019 issue is June 15, 2019.

Full Page Ad (7.5" W x 10.25" H) = \$660

1/2 Page Ad (7.5" W x 4.5" H) = \$340

1/4 Page Ad (3.5" W x 4.75" H) = \$190

**1/8 Page Ad/Business Card:
(3.5" W x 2.25" H) = \$100**

Commit to a full year of print advertising and get 10 percent discount: Full: \$600, Half: \$306, Quarter: \$171, Eighth: \$90.

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

ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

From the MODPA Treasurer

Greetings from the cool and wet Upper Midwest. Weather issues have been the biggest topic of discussion locally for the last month. Most planting in my area is way behind. The long term effects of this remain to be seen but it's going to take a big change to make up for these issues. Soil temperatures have remained cooler than normal and definitely cooler than needed. Pasture growth has been slow at best. Normally this time of the year the cows have been on pasture for a while, right now they would have to search for a full meal. Hopefully by the time you are reading this we have seen some correction.

The exit of dairy producers continues to also be a hot topic. Wisconsin averaged 2 producers per day that exited last year. We are on a pace of 3 per day so far this year. Sadly, several of these have been organic producers. It is never good to see a producer go out of business. The effects on our small communities are disastrous. The businesses that we have supported for years are one by one also going out of business. The number of mills, implement dealers and the like are shrinking fast. Yet there seems to be another dollar store popping up in every little town. They continue to drain what little bit of money there is in the area away. Some will call this progress, some call it evolution. I call it bullshit. If we can't take care of our own backyards we will soon find that we no longer have a backyard.

The organic dairy market continues to be on a path of not knowing. There have been many changes in the last year in leadership and also in ownership. It appears that they are all in one happy lovefest together. Gone are the days where they actually appeared to be competing for our milk, now it is more of us begging them to take it with hopes that we can at least have enough of a check to cover our bills. For some it isn't enough. For some it will never be enough. Many dreams have been shattered in the last couple of years. It is time for this to stop.

I know that many producers are struggling with many issues right now. The known rates of suicide and depression among farmers is at an alarmingly high rate. I think the numbers are very likely much higher than reported. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Sometimes an outside set of eyes will see things that you don't; a set of ears that will listen is priceless. But it starts with you. You have to ask for the help. There are many people who will help you through the tough times. I know; been there, done that. If you need a place to start, my contact info is always at the end. Get in touch with me. If I can't help you personally I will help you find someone who can.

Please get involved in your future; there are many groups that are working to try to make this a better situation. It may be the best time that you ever invest in your future and the future of the next generation. MODPA and our sister organizations, NODPA and WODPA, are doing all that we can but we can always use more help and input.

As your summer starts, I wish all the best to each and every one of you. May your blessings be many and the checks once again become bountiful. Don't forget to take time out to stop and smell the clover and enjoy the beautiful world around us.

Bruce Drinkman, MODPA Treasurer

3253 150th Avenue, Glenwood City, WI 54013

715-977-1314

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
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ddviewpoint@yahoo.com
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Phone: 608- 544-3702

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Tel: 563-964-2758

Michigan
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DeFord, MI 48729
zimbadairy@tbnd.net
Phone: 989-872-2680

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

Calendar

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July 22, 2019, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

FOOD SAFETY IN STACKED ENTERPRISE FARMING
Kingbird Farm, 9398 W Creek Rd, Berkshire, NY 13736

This field day will have several layers, just as Kingbird Farm does. Managing the many facets of a farm that produces vegetables, chickens and other livestock can create some challenges when it comes to Food Safety considerations, but it also provides huge opportunities in developing healthy, living, highly productive soils. We will hear how Karma and Michael plan for optimizing their farm's productive capacity while producing safe, nutrient dense foods. Cost: \$15 (NOFA-NY Members receive 10% discount). To register, use this link: <https://nofany.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/fielddays>

SAVE THE DATE:

July 29, 2019, 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm

WATER, SOIL, TOOLS AT DEEP ROOT FARM
Deep Root Farm, 2870 W Walworth Rd, Macedon, NY 14502

Starting a farm is not an easy task. How to manage start up investments, when and what to buy, and determining the best field management tools can be daunting. Once you've grown a bountiful harvest of beautiful produce, how do you pack and wash it safely without a big budget? Join Eric Houppert, owner of Deep Root Farm - currently in its second season, and others for an interactive round table where we'll explore strategies for managing soil and handling produce from field to market. Not all tools are created equal and some may work well with certain soils and not others. Bring a tool you love and maybe one that doesn't work so well. We'll try out tools from hand weeders to walk behind tractors, taking a look at how Eric manages the soil in his context and what you can do on your farm. Following the hands on demos there will be on farm Happy Hour where people can share their own tips, lessons learned, and questions about field management and wash and pack strategies. Cost: \$15 (NOFA-NY Members receive 10% discount). To register, use this link: <https://nofany.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/fielddays>

July 31, 2019, Time: 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm

(Vegetable tastings and light meal included)

INNOVATIONS IN ORGANIC VEGETABLE PRODUCTION
(Organic@Cornell Summer Field Day Series)
Homer C. Thompson Vegetable Research Farm
133 Fall Creek Rd, Freeville, NY 13068

Join Cornell researchers and Cornell Cooperative Extension for field tours of ongoing organic research. Learn about soil health, perennial cover crops, hemp production, tarps for weed suppression, variety trials, and vegetable breeding for organic production. The NY Soil Health Trailer will also be on-site with demonstrations to show participants how healthy soil compares to degraded soil. Cost: Free! To register, use this link: <https://nofany.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/fielddays>

August 7, 2019, 3:30 pm – 6:30 pm

BALANCING QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY AMID AN EVOLVING LABOR FORCE: MYTH-BUSTING H2A FOR SMALL FARMS

Kent Family Growers

1301 County Route 31, Lisbon, NY 13658

Daniel and Megan Kent grow 25 acres of certified organic vegetables with their family near the St. Lawrence River in Waddington, NY. They provide CSA shares across the North Country, attend the Canton Farmers Market, and their produce can be found at restaurants and stores from NYC to Boston and Buffalo. Kent Family Growers will share how their farm manages the challenges of reaching these far-flung markets while offering local CSA members maximum choice, despite their rural northern location. This field day covers a range of topics from how to identify those 1% efficiencies to help you maximize production, to how you can integrate on-farm fruit and vegetable processing while maintaining high food safety standards. Particular focus of this field day will be on farm labor: how the Kent's workforce has evolved over the years, how they find and work with H2A and J1 farmers, and how they train their crew on efficiency and food safety handling practices. Cost: \$15 (NOFA-NY Members receive 10% discount). To register, use this link: <https://nofany.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/fielddays>

August 14, 2019, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm (Lunch included)

BUILDING RESILIENCE INTO ORGANIC FORAGE SYSTEMS
(ORGANIC@CORNELL SUMMER FIELD DAY SERIES)
Twin Oaks Dairy, 3185 NY-13, Truxton, NY 13158

Join Kirk and Kathie Arnold and learn about mixed intercropping, interseeding into corn, and double cropping with triticale and sorghum sudangrass. Cornell researchers will discuss improving soil health and other ways farmers can increase resilience to extreme weather events. The NY Soil Health Trailer will also be on-site with demonstrations to show participants how healthy soil compares to degraded soil.

Cost: Free! To register, use this link:

<https://nofany.secure.nonprofitsoapbox.com/fielddays>

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA)

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

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ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

Message from NODPA President

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Annual NODPA Field Days in September. One of the things I am really excited about is the evening keynote and discussion where Nora is bringing together people from wide and varied perspectives to discuss our common question – how best to adapt to the “new” organic dairying realities. I am looking forward to a good discussion and some new ideas. Are these our challenges, or our opportunities? I guess it all depends on your perspective.

Liz Bawden, NODPA President
Hammond, NY | Phone: 315-324-6926

SOMATIC CELL PROGRAM

Liquid feed supplement (10 ml/day)

- ✓ Dramatic reductions in SCC ✓ OMRI listed
- ✓ Production, fat and protein responses
- ✓ Supporting research ✓ 17-18¢ per day

CINNATUBE™

The natural dry cow alternative — For organic production
Dry cow tube for reduction of new mastitis infections

Dry cow issues are among the most expensive problems to the dairy farmer, and there has been no product for the organic farmer to use.

A recent trial, conducted by North Carolina State University and published in the Journal of Dairy Science, concluded that “The efficacy of the **herbal products (Cinnatube)** was similar to that of conventional (antibiotic) therapy, and the herbal products had **no apparent adverse effects.**”

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