

# NODPA News

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

September 2023

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WWW.NODPA.COM

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## Organic Production

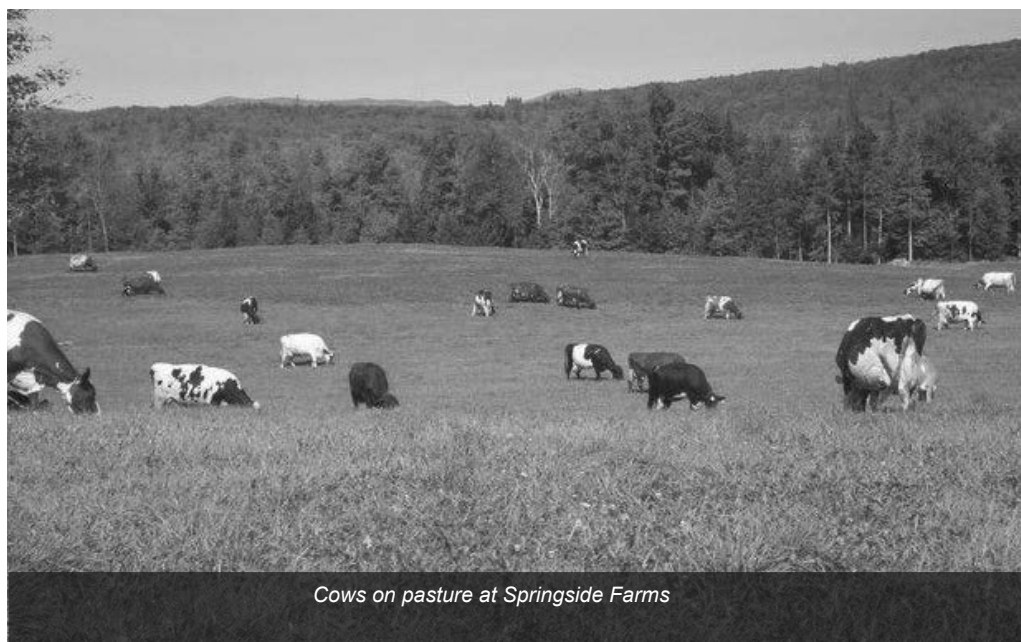
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*Cows on pasture at Springside Farms*

## FEATURED FARM: SPRINGSIDE FARMS

NEW VINEYARD, ME • Owned and operated by Randall & Jill Bates

### Right at Home: Fulfilling the Dairy Dream

By Tamara Scully, NODPA News Contributing Writer

When Randall Bates, of Springside Farms in New Vineyard, Maine opted to become a dairy farmer, he embarked on a long journey to fulfill his lifelong dream. Randall had dairy farming in the blood, passed down through both sets of grandparents, as well as his great-

grandparents. While he inherited the desire to dairy, he did not inherit the dairy farm.

Although Randall partially grew up on the farm he now owns, the journey to dairy ownership was not one of succession planning.

*continued on page 22*

## 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual NODPA Field Days Program

Evangelical Lutheran Church, 200 E. Logan Street, Reedsville, PA 17084

By Nora Owens, NODPA Field Days Coordinator

The Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA) is excited to announce the upcoming 23rd Annual NODPA Field Days, taking place in Reedsville, PA on September 28 & 29, 2023. This year's theme is "Farming with Financial Clarity, Confidence and

Optimism (without digging the hole deeper)", aimed at providing organic dairy farmers with valuable insights and strategies to increase profits and make solid business decisions by focusing on the financial side of their farms.

*For more information ~ See page 18*

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Message from NODPA Co-Presidents

Farming and family are so connected. Is it the family that keeps the farm going, or the farm that keeps the family going? I guess it's both. For generations, the knowledge of farming has been passed on through generations working together on the farm. Kids that have the opportunity to grow up on a farm are exposed, one piece at a time, to the thousands of skills required in farming. Those kids learn how to feed and care for livestock, to help maintain and repair equipment, to plant and hoe vegetables in the garden. They work alongside parents, grandparents, maybe uncles and aunts. Their heads are filled with their family's collective wisdom, "Toss a coffee can of clover seed on every load of manure that goes out", "Don't pull on that calf until its nose is out", "Make sure the cotter pin locks in the drawpin. Remember that accident with the hay wagon your father had.", "Don't pick those beans until their leaves are dry". Kids learn to be part of the team; that they can make a contribution to the farm's wellbeing at any age. And, they learn to be resilient, to fix things when they break; they learn that it's not always someone's fault when a machine breaks or a crop fails or an animal dies.

A few years ago, we were standing in a field of mixed grain during a farm tour when a young well-educated beginning farmer asked my husband who his "mentor" was. I interpreted the question as asking, how does someone learn all this? Brian replied, "I just worked with my father and grandfather."

Family farms today are squeezed; our incomes haven't kept pace with soaring expenses. There's just no room for mistakes. Young and beginning organic farmers really need a mentor, especially if they have not had the benefit of a farm family to help them. Let's get behind them and help where we can. We can all share in helping our younger neighbors, we can participate in ODairy, and we can help spread knowledge and bring it back home from the Field Days. I hope to see as many of you as possible this month at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Reedsville, PA on September 28 & 29 for the 23rd Annual NODPA Field Days!

*Liz Bawden, NODPA Co-President*

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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## Can Kelp Create Healthier Cows and a Healthier Planet?

WCROC News, June 26, 2023

Reprinted with permission from Brad Heins, West Central Research and Outreach Center, Morris, MN

**K**elp as a feed additive for cows isn't exactly new, but it is getting some new attention for its potential to help fight climate change.

"There's some early work out there that shows some promising results, but I think there's a lot of people, myself included, working with the different feed supplements to help try to reduce methane emissions from cows," said Brad Heins, a dairy researcher and professor at West Central Research and Outreach Center in Morris, Minnesota.

The U.S. dairy industry has set a goal to be climate neutral by 2050 and "belching cows" have been pointed to as a climate change contributor.

Cows, with their multi-chamber digestive system, are a "big fermentation vat," Heins said. "They belch it out; 95% of the methane produced by a cow comes out of their mouth."

In June, Heins started on a research project to measure the methane emissions from the grazing dairy herd at the Morris research center, following up on research trials in other parts of the country. There will be a control group without kelp additives and another group given a kelp ration.

"Some of the early research that has come out shows maybe a 20% to 30% reduction in methane emissions from cows by feeding these seaweed supplements. It's pretty promising. If you can get submissions reduced by that amount, that's pretty significant, actually," Heins said.


Heins said he hopes to have some early results of the study this fall and the study may continue beyond that.

### Cow health

Heins has done research on kelp additives before, but that research focused on the health of the cow, not the planet.

Ken and Dori Larson, along with their two adult children, operate an organic dairy farm near Ottertail, Minnesota. Feeding kelp as an additive is common on organic dairies.

*continued on page 31*




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— Emily Pankratz



**EMILY PANKRATZ**, herd manager  
Holtz Ridge Grass Farm, RUDOLPH, WISCONSIN  
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Emily (left) at our Central Plains Dairy Expo booth with her mother Peggy.

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Emily stopped by our booth at Central Plains Dairy Expo after buying the donated gallon in the Dairy Forward auction. “Our protocol is to put it on after every milking (post-calving), until the cow or heifer is not high in the CMT anymore. This includes cows that may acquire mastitis or high SCC during lactation.

“What I like most about this product is how fast it works on edema. It helps blood flow and gets our heifers off to a quick start,” Emily explains.

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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## Combating Lameness in a Grazing Herd

WCROC News, June 01, 2023

*Reprinted with permission from Brad Heins, West Central Research and Outreach Center, Morris, MN*

Lameness is one of the costliest disorders of dairy cattle, even in a grazing dairy herd. Yet, many grazing dairy cattle are not part of a routine hoof trimming schedule because there is an old adage that grazing dairy cattle do not need to have their hooves trimmed as they wear them down while walking on pasture. The thought is that as cows walk in pasture and cow lanes every day, they can wear their hooves down and maintain proper hoof length. However, in the northern U.S., most grazing herds are confined during the winter because of snow and cold weather and are fed stored feeds and a total mixed ration (TMR).

Hoof trimming for grazing herds is very important, and farmers must change their mindset with regards to trimming grazing herds.

To ensure excellent hoof health, hoof trimming of grazing dairy cattle is an important area of farm management. If hooves are not maintained, lameness results, which can decrease milk production and reduce the welfare of grazing dairy cows.

At the University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC) in Morris, Minnesota, it has become evident why hoof trimming is important in managing grazing dairy herds.

The WCROC has a dairy operation that milks 275 cows twice daily and is representative of a mid-size Midwestern dairy farm. The cows are split between a conventional grazing herd and a certified organic grazing herd. Treatment options are limited with the organic dairy herd, so developing a hoof trimming schedule is of utmost importance.

Until 2019, hoof trimming was always an afterthought on the WCROC dairy, which is common on many farms. Typically, cows were only trimmed if it was evident they needed attention, such as long hooves, as well as those close to dry-off or dry. In total, about 90 cows were trimmed every year.

During the spring of 2019, disaster almost hit the dairy farm.

*continued on page 6*

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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## Combatting Lameness in a Grazing Herd

*continued from page 5*

It was very rainy, which resulted in a lot of cows walking through the mud to pastures. This can be very typical in a lot of grazing dairy herds in the spring, depending on the weather. However, because of the excessively wet weather, there were a lot of cows lame with many hoof issues. In the 180-cow conventional grazing herd, 38 cows were treated from April to August of 2019 for hoof issues, and antibiotics were administered more frequently. The organic herd also had many hoof issues, but fixing those incidences was more difficult without the use of antibiotics.

The farm sacrificed a lot of production with the cows that spring, which reduced farm profitability. As a result, a six-month maintenance trimming schedule was developed.

**TABLE 1**

Hoof issues from the University of Minnesota Research Dairy in Morris, Minnesota, from 2019 to 2022

	Cows trimmed	Thin sole	White-line disease	Digital dermatitis	Fissure	Toe ulcer	Sole ulcer	Cows with hoof issues	Cows with no issues
% of cows with hoof issues									
Date of trimming									
September 2019	237	3.4	5.1	1.7	1.7	2.5	1.3	15.6	84.4
May 2020	277	1.1	0	1.4	0.4	0.7	0	7.9	92.1
October 2020	294	1.0	1.4	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.3	4.1	95.9
June 2021	275	1.1	0.7	1.8	1.1	0	0.4	5.1	94.9
December 2021	264	2.7	0.8	2.7	0.08	1.1	1.5	9.5	90.5
June 2022	240	0.8	0.8	0	0	0	0	1.7	98.3
Average of hoof issues		1.6	1.4	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.6	6.4	93.6

In September of 2019, every cow in the herd was trimmed over a two-day period. Hoof issues were recorded and continued to be recorded for the following three years, as shown in **Table 1**. The table shows the percentage of cows with hoof issues for every six-month trimming. For the first trimming, over 15% of the herd had a hoof issue. There were a lot of cows with thin soles, white-line disease, fissures, toe ulcers and sole ulcers, as well as a few cows with digital dermatitis, but those cases were not severe.



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## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

Thin soles are usually observed in cows whose hooves are exposed to wet, muddy conditions and in cows that walk long distances. Because grazing cattle often walk long distances from pastures to milking parlors or barns, the prevalence of thin soles may be higher than observed in confinement cows. Cows that have thin soles usually have a slow and painful walking motion and are considered lame.

White-line disease is lesions that affect the sole and the wall of the claw. It is one of the most common lesions in grazing dairy cattle, and these may appear as hemorrhages, separations of the hoof and abscesses. Sole or toe ulcers are severe hemorrhages and are very painful for cows.

Since the routine hoof trimming schedule was implemented, some of these hoof issues have been reduced in the herd. Thin soles and white-line disease are down to 1% of cows, and the percentage of cows with hoof issues has been reduced to less than 2%. The data from each trim is recorded in PCDART software, and antibiotic use for hoof health issues is also tracked.

So how was the prevalence of many of the hoof issues reduced? It was quite simply achieved with a proper maintenance trimming schedule of every six months for every cow, both lactating and dry. This maintenance trimming might cost the farm more on

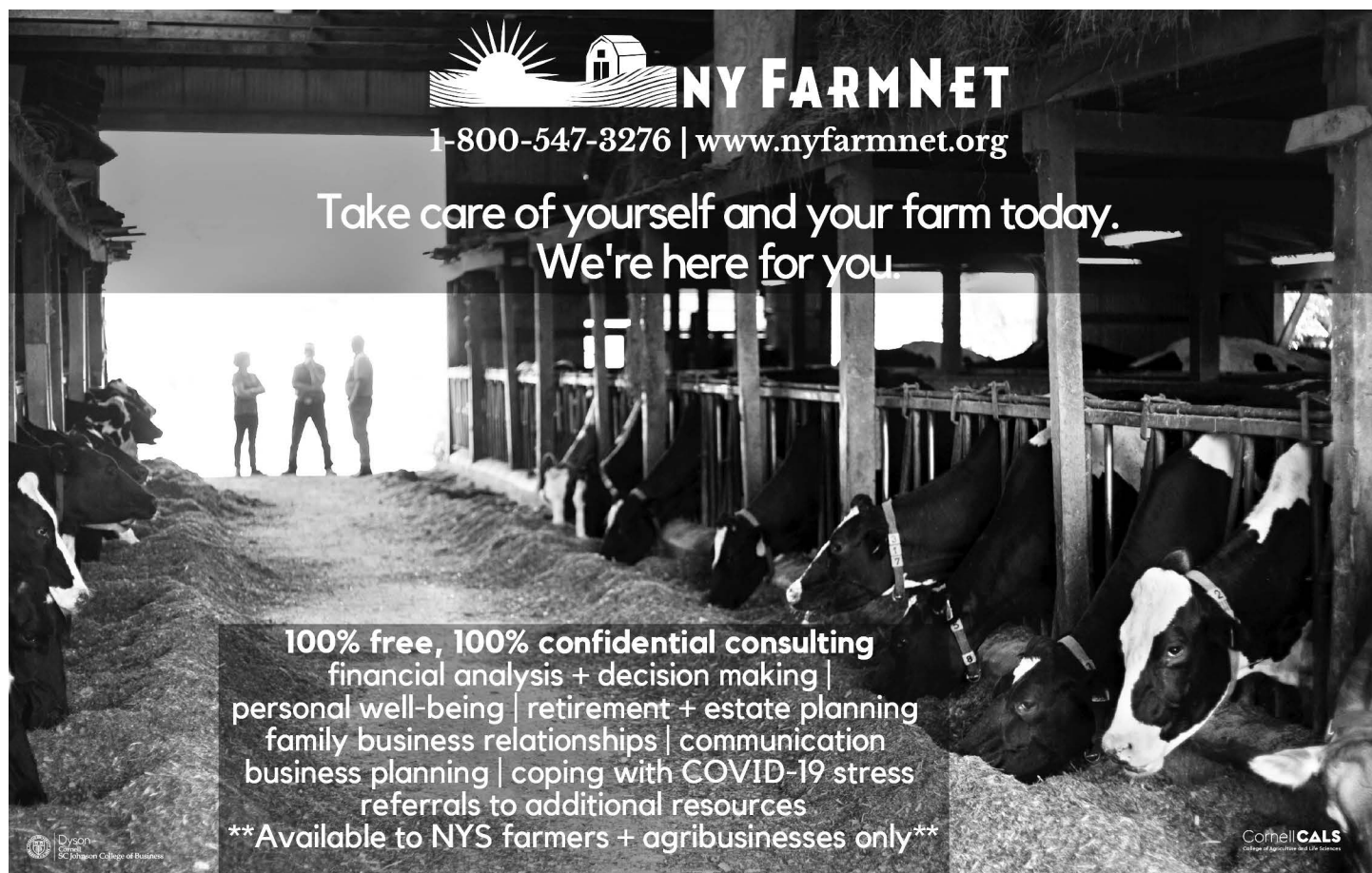
trimming day, but it saves the farm money in the long run with reduced vet bills and increased milk production and welfare. It also brings satisfaction to all workers at the farm that they do not have to deal with many hoof issues in the cows anymore.


Every grazing dairy herd should be on a schedule to trim all cows twice per year. Records of all trimmings should be recorded to ensure all cows are trimmed and to track any hoof issues. It is important to work with a hoof trimmer to determine each farm's schedule and to ensure that all cows are trimmed correctly.

At WCROC, cows are trimmed just before the start of the grazing season each year and once when they are in winter confinement conditions.

Normal hoof trimming can reduce or prevent lameness in grazing dairy cattle and improve longevity of cows, as well as productivity and profitability. Now is the time to work with your hoof trimmer to develop a maintenance trimming schedule. Why wait? ♦

*West Central Research and Outreach Center, 46352 State Hwy 329, Morris, MN 56267. Phone: (320) 589-1711, Fax: (320) 589-4870*



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## OMRI Board Welcomes New Member

(July 28, 2023)

Silvia Abel-Caines, Ph.D., of Organic Valley Coop, has joined OMRI as a member of the organization's Board of Directors.

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, OMRI relies on its board to oversee policy and standards, and provide overall governance for the organization. The board is made up of volunteer stakeholders from across the organic industry, including certifiers, farmers, processors, consumer and public interest groups, and input suppliers. This arrangement ensures independence and impartiality in decision-making by bringing together a wide array of perspectives. OMRI board members may serve up to four consecutive two-year terms. The OMRI Board broadly represents the constituencies of the organic



Silvia Abel-Caines, Ph.D.

industry  
with

members selected from the community of certifiers, inspectors, farmers, suppliers, processors and handlers, and organizations serving consumer and environmental interests. The board is the highest governing body at OMRI. It determines OMRI policy and standards and plays an active part in guiding OMRI in its public service role and in carrying out its mission.

Silvia is a veterinarian with a Ph.D. in Ruminant Nutrition. She has assisted organic farmers for more than twelve years, addressing the challenges of farming in harmony with nature. She has been a staff technical consultant for Continental Grain, Wayne Feeds and Hubbard Feeds, and currently works with Organic Valley. She has authored and co-authored research



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

papers on improving milk fatty acid profiles, and the nutritional value of grass-fed milk. Her professional objective is to provide national and international audiences with education on the value of growing food using regenerative practices, with the end goal of increasing the access of rural and urban communities to nutrient-dense food. Her whole-farm approach to solving animal health and nutritional challenges are rooted in soil health and high-quality forage production. Silvia also owns a certified-organic farm, leads a local community garden, and is an international volunteer with USAID, NCBA, CRS Farmer-to-Farmer and Train-the-Trainer programs.

Founded in 1997 by organic certifiers and stakeholders, OMRI provides an independent review of input products to determine which inputs are allowed for organic use. Over the past two decades, the organization has grown to nearly 10,000 OMRI Listed® products, reviewed to the U.S. National Organic Program standards, the Canada Organic Regime standards, and the Mexico Organic Products Law.

Contact: Roger Plant, Marketing Manager  
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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Pay and Feed Prices September 2023

By Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

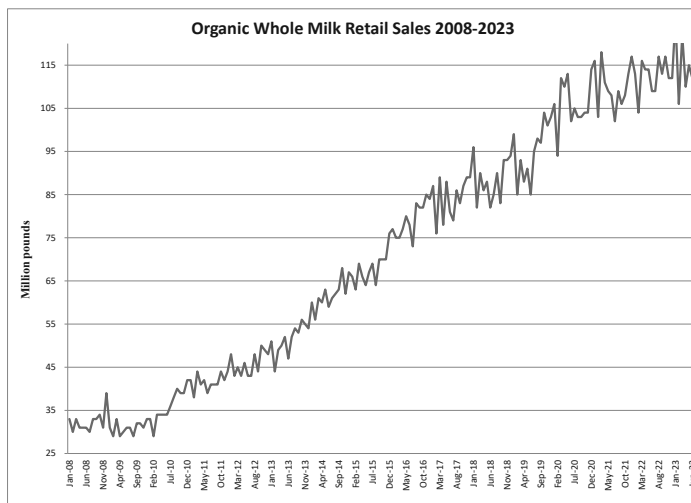
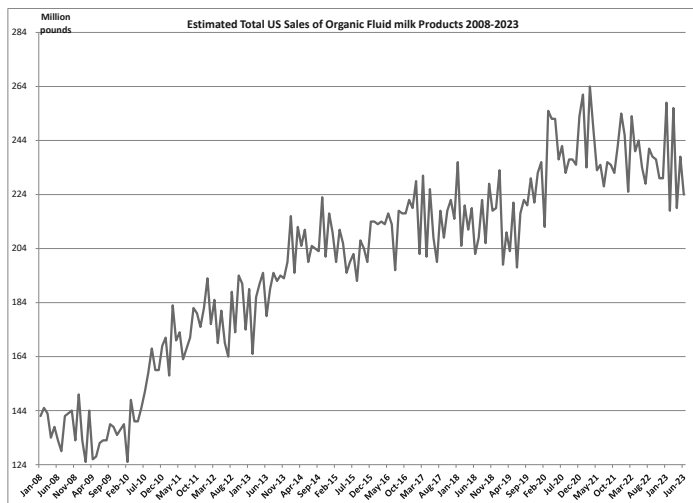
The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) reports of estimated organic fluid product sales nationally for May and June 2023 show a level market but an increase in Class 1 utilization in the northeast. Sales of organic fluid milk products in May 2023 were 238 million pounds, down 2 percent from May 2022, and in June 2023 they were 224 million pounds, down 4.5 percent from April 2022. In May 2023, fluid organic whole milk sales of 115 million pounds were up 0.9 percent compared to a year earlier. Reduced fat milk (2%) sales were 122 million pounds, down 4.0 percent from the previous year. June 2023 organic whole milk fluid sales were 112 million pounds, up 2.9 percent from June 2022. The organic reduced-fat milk fluid sales in June 2023 were 111 million pounds, down 10.5 percent from June 2022. The average retail price for organic milk in this second quarter for 2023 was \$4.82 per half gallon, and in the same period in 2022 it was \$4.54 per half gallon.

The report from retail surveys of selected supermarkets in 30

US cities by USDA shows that the retail prices of a half-gallon of organic Whole Milk and Fat Reduced milks was \$4.85 in June and \$4.86 in July 2023. The prices ranged from a low of \$3.99 in multiple cities to a consistent high of \$6.59 in St. Louis, MO. The simple average price for the year-to-date 2023 was \$4.81, compared to an average in 2022 of \$4.58, an average for 2021 of \$4.13 and an average of \$4.07 in 2019. Regionally in the northeast,

Product Name	Sales of Organic Fluid Milk		Change from	
	May-23	2023 Year to date	May-22	Year to date
	Million pounds		Percent	
Organic Whole Milk	115	579	0.9%	3.1%
Flavored Whole milk	1	4	-69.9%	-58.3%
Organic Reduced Fat Milk (2%)	80	387	-0.3%	-4.4%
Organic Low-Fat Milk (1%)	24	118	-8.0%	-5.8%
Organic Fat Free Milk Skim	12	65	-19.1%	-11.4%
Organic Flavored Fat-Reduced Milk	7	34	-0.8%	5.6%
Other Fluid Organic Milk Products	0	1	267.4%	216.0%
Total Fat Reduced Milk	122	605	-4.0%	-5.0%
<b>Total Organic Milk Products</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>1189</b>	<b>-2.2%</b>	<b>-1.6%</b>

Product Name	Sales of Organic Fluid Milk		Change from	
	Jun-23	2023 Year to date	Jun-22	Year to date
	Million pounds		Percent	
Organic Whole Milk	112	691	2.90%	3.0%
Flavored Whole milk	1	4	-66.10%	-59.40%
Organic Reduced Fat Milk (2%)	72	459	-7.40%	-4.9%
Organic Low-Fat Milk (1%)	22	141	-11.10%	-6.7%
Organic Fat Free Milk Skim	11	76	-16.30%	-12.2%
Organic Flavored Fat-Reduced Milk	5	39	-31.50%	-1.2%
Other Fluid Organic Milk Products	1	2	402%	255.0%
Total Fat Reduced Milk	111	716	-10.50%	-5.9%
<b>Total Organic Milk Products</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>1413</b>	<b>-4.50%</b>	<b>-2.00%</b>



## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

packaged milk was on sale below the USDA data price between \$3.70 and \$3.99 per half gallon.

Federal Milk Market Order 1, in New England, reports utilization of types of organic milk by pool plants. It's important to know that we do not know how much organic milk is being sold at retail that comes from outside the order which is therefore not subject to

Class 1 deduction. This is categorized in the reports as *Class I out of Marketing Area*, but not separated by organic or conventional. While the total milk utilized in the area is accurate, the organic is probably underreported as it would not include milk from other FMMO's. During June 2023, fluid organic whole milk utilization

*continued on page 12*

UTILIZATION OF ORGANIC FLUID MILK PRODUCTS AND CREAM BY POOL PLANTS (Million pounds) IN FMMO 1 (not including organic milk from outside FMMO 1)						
	Fluid retail Organic Milk 2023	Fluid retail Organic Milk 2022	Fluid retail Organic Milk 2021	Fluid retail Organic Milk 2020	Increase/Decrease of 2023 over 2022	Increase/Decrease of 2022 over 2021
JANUARY	37.00	29.14	31.32	23.93	26.97%	-7%
FEBRUARY	31.65	33.65	31.56	26.69	-5.94%	7%
MARCH	37.37	31.56	31.87	27.90	18.41%	-1%
APRIL	31.51	33.23	28.97	29.35	-5.18%	15%
MAY	36.24	30.49	29.72	28.25	18.86%	3%
JUNE	34.59	31.53	28.41	26.90	9.71%	11%
JULY	30.75	29.44	25.50	26.70	4.45%	15%
AUGUST	0.00	32.12	27.18	24.70	0	18%
SEPTEMBER	0.00	35.00	30.26	29.70	-100.00%	16%
OCTOBER	0.00	34.83	29.47	25.78	-100.00%	18%
NOVEMBER	0.00	31.13	31.07	24.47	-100.00%	0.18%
DECEMBER	0.00	33.78	31.36	28.13	-100.00%	8%
ANNUAL		385.90	356.68	322.50		8%

### Average Daily Dispositions by Pool Plants in FMMO 32 for July 2023

Product Sales On Routes	Percent Of Total Class I Area	July 2023		% Change Prev. Year (Daily Basis)	July 2022	
		Inside Area	Outside Area		Inside Area	Outside Area
Whole Milk	28.40	2,294,130	570,259	-0.81	2,249,650	638,119
Reduced Fat Milk	33.68	2,641,391	756,204	-5.25	2,735,879	850,157
Low-fat Milk	8.90	748,948	149,226	-5.08	754,019	192,236
Skim/Nonfat/Fat Free Milk	5.74	464,546	114,367	-12.54	519,988	141,905
Buttermilk	0.98	80,907	17,523	-7.99	85,990	20,991
Flavored Milk & Milk Drinks	6.81	497,085	189,368	-1.16	484,875	209,668
Organic Whole Milk	7.56	92,045	670,711	-4.33	98,846	698,465
Organic Low-fat Milk	7.93	91,725	708,275	-0.59	95,616	709,138
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>6,910,777</b>	<b>3,175,933</b>	<b>-3.80</b>	<b>7,024,863</b>	<b>3,460,679</b>
Percent Of Total Route Dispositions		68.51%	31.49%		67.00%	33.00%

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

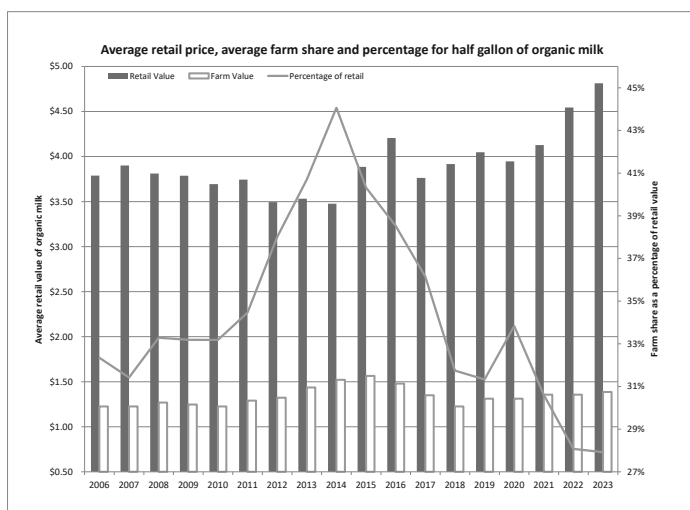
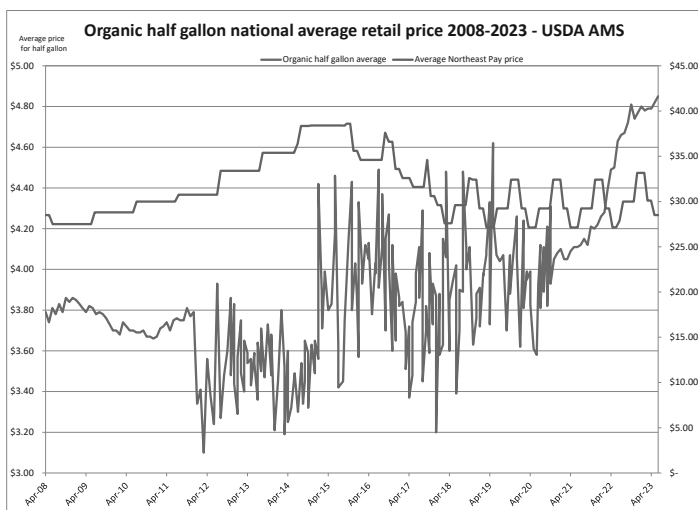
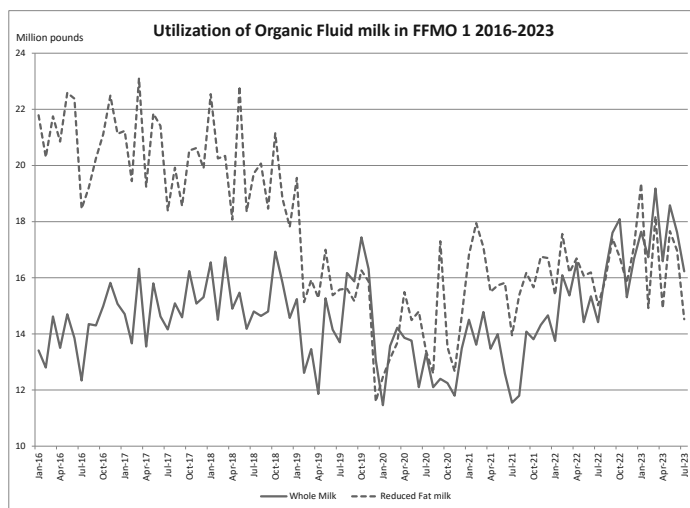
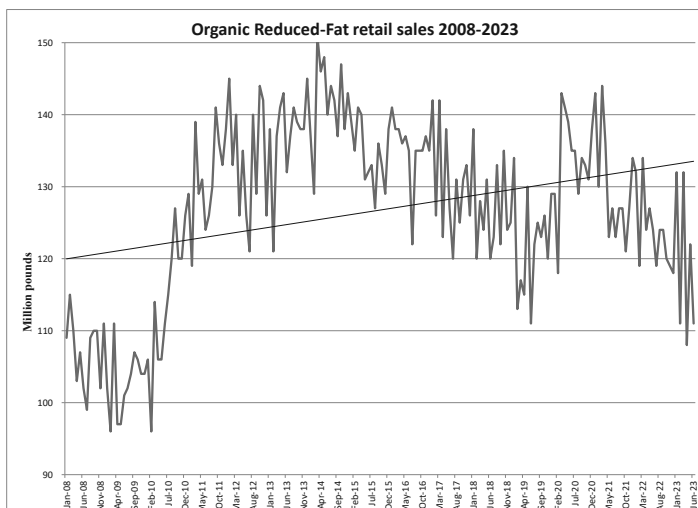
### Pay and Feed Prices

*continued from page 11*

totaled 17.62 million pounds, up from 15.34 million pounds the previous year. The utilization of fluid organic reduced fat milk, 16.97 million pounds, increased from 16.19 million pounds a year ago. In July 2023, the fluid whole milk utilization totaled 16.23 million pounds, an increase from 14.42 million pounds from July 2022. For fluid organic reduced fat milk, the 14.52 million pounds in fluid utilization in July 2023 was a decrease from the 15.02 million in May 2022. Year-to-date, January to July 2023 compared with 2022, shows 2023 at 239.4 million pounds and 2022 at 219.04 million pounds, an increase of approximately 9% year over year. Organic fluid milk utilization is approximately 5.5% of the total fluid milk utilization within FMMO 1 for July 2023, not including the packaged Class1 milk coming into the area. Approximately 20% of Class 1 milk utilized in FMMO is from packaged milk outside the area.

Every day there seems to be a report on another weather event that is both disruptive in its intensity but sometimes beneficial in providing much needed rain. Reports are that in the South-Central region, temperatures are having a huge impact on organic dairy cattle's heat stress levels, leading to daily drops in organic milk production and breeding challenges. USDA AMS sources report that, on a herd-to-herd basis, days in milk are running above normal and culling cows are lower than normal, as operators hold onto cows to maintain the milk supply level. Meanwhile, some processors are requesting additional loads, above their contracted organic milk deliveries but producers are still facing uncertainty around high input prices.

In recent reports from a NOFA-New York certified livestock auction in New York, organic cull cows traded slightly higher than conventional cows in July and August. The average price for the conventional cull cows was \$87 per hundredweight in August, compared to an average price of \$92 per hundredweight for organic cull cows. The average price for conventional cull cows in July 2023 was \$85 per hundredweight, compared to an average of \$100 per



## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

hundredweight for organic cull cows. A report from a Midwest certified (certified by MOSA) livestock auction noted organic cull cows traded somewhat higher than conventional cull cows. The average price for organic 'High Yielding Cows' was \$120-164 per hundred weight and organic 'Low Yielding Cows' was \$119 per hundredweight and lower, compared to the average price of \$85-104 per hundredweight for most conventional 'Market Cows.'

### Update on DMC

June's DMC income over feed cost calculation set a record low at just \$3.65/cwt. Milk covered at the \$9.50 level will realize an indemnity payment of \$4,366.09 for each million pounds enrolled. This is down \$1.18/cwt from May's previous record low.

For conventional prices, premium alfalfa hay fell \$7 per ton to \$310, and corn slipped \$0.05 per bushel to \$6.49. Soybean meal dropped \$10.12 per ton to \$413.46, making feed costs \$14.25/cwt, down \$0.22. The All-Milk Price for June 2023 was \$17.90/cwt. The projections for July are for an equally high payout with an All Milk price at \$17.40/cwt. Premium alfalfa is at \$288 per ton; soybean meal at \$443.15 per ton and corn at \$6.22 per bushel. Estimated feed costs are \$13.88/cwt. This leaves an income minus feed cost at a low of \$3.52/cwt. The DMC margin triggers Tier I

indemnity payments at all coverage levels, from the catastrophic price floor of \$4 per cwt to the maximum coverage level of \$9.50 per cwt. The top payment is \$5.98 per cwt at the maximum \$9.50 coverage level. Outside of feed, the July index of prices paid for commodities and services, interest, taxes and farm wages was up 0.1% from June and unchanged from July 2022.

Machinery costs were up 0.1% from June and were up 3.2% from July a year ago. The July fuel cost index was up 2.7% from the previous month but 29% less than a year earlier. A positive in the USDA Ag Prices report: U.S. average prices received for cull cows (beef and dairy, combined) in July averaged \$111 per cwt, up \$4 from June and the highest monthly average since July 2015

### Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program (ODMAP)

On July 21st the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) responded to pressure from producer groups to extend the deadline for the new Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program (ODMAP) to August 11, 2023. This extension gave organic dairy producers more than two additional weeks to apply for the program. At that

*continued on page 14*

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Pay and Feed Prices

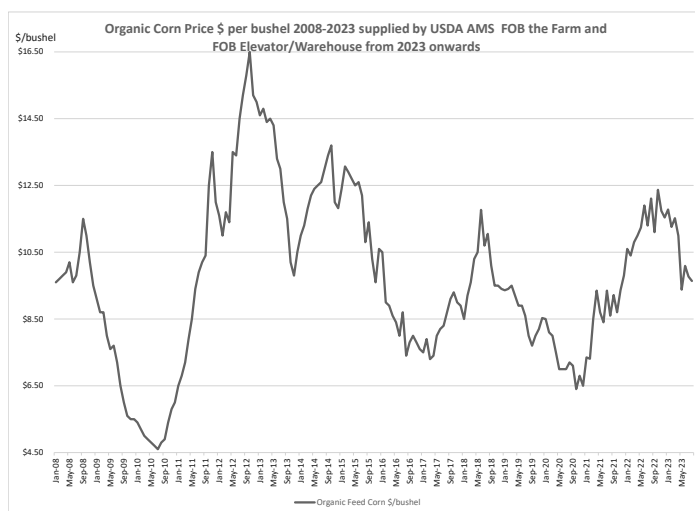
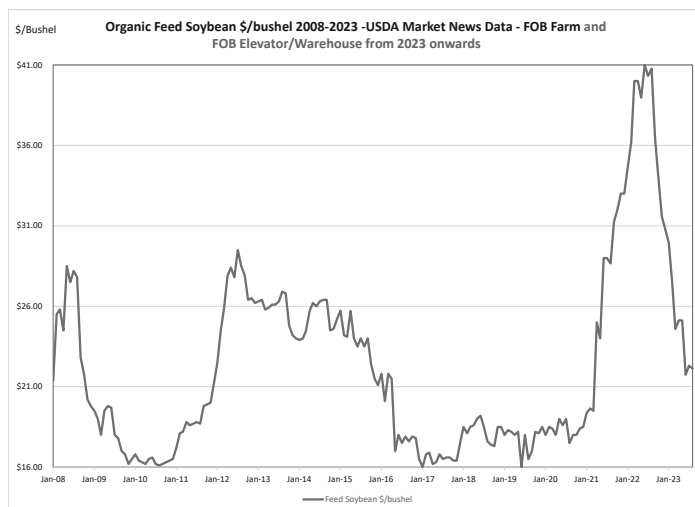
*continued from page 13*

time, USDA FSA reported that slightly over 1,000 applications had been received and \$13.5 million of the \$104 million had been distributed. At the time of writing (9/3/2023) there has been no decision announced as to further payments of either the extra 25% to bring the total paid up to the full amount of \$1.10 that USDA calculated was the marketing cost of organic milk or an increased amount that will come closer to the amount spent by organic dairy on marketing expenses. The largest buyer of organic milk has preferred not to disclose how much they calculate the cost of shipping milk and other marketing deductions. Organic dairy producer groups and representatives of the organic milk buyers and processors have sent a letter to the Secretary of Agriculture asking for the rapid payment of the increased amounts directly to those that have already applied (see letter on page 16). While the amount of applications may seem low, there are factors that differentiate the use of federal funds by organic farm from conventional farms. The number of Anabaptist farms (modern groups within the Anabaptist movement are the Amish, Mennonites, and Hutterites), can be estimated at approximately 45% of total organic dairies (CROPP cooperative estimate more than 40% of their farms come in this category so this may be an underestimation). The majority of these farms do not apply for federal support. Data from the USDA Organic Survey of 2021 showed there were 2,525 organic dairy farms of which only 2023 reported any dollar sales of milk. Did the Amish and Mennonites fill out the survey data from 2021? Knowing that there has been a loss of organic dairies in the last few years, it is a reasonable assumption that the number of non-Anabaptist organic dairies is no more than 1,500 which would have a response rate of 66%. This rate is very acceptable for a new program administered through an agency that organic dairies are not used to working with.

## Feed

When looking at the cost and availability of feed we need to look at what influences these decisions. The world situation is an obvious influencer, as are the other domestic livestock and poultry operations that compete for organic feed. Mercaris reports that since the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 through July of 2023, the United States has received 27,000 MT of organic soybeans from Ukraine. This accounts for about 6% of the organic soybeans imported over that period. The last shipment of Ukrainian organic soybeans arrived in February 2023. Stronger-than-expected exports from other regions during recent months have been able to offset this loss of supply. Turkey has been the sole source of organic cracked

corn imports into the United States for the last two marketing years, but much of the raw corn was brought in from Ukraine and Russia. Organic whole and cracked corn imports fell to 20,000 MT in July, down 38% y/y. Organic cracked corn imports were up just 7% m/m, which did not make up for the decline in organic whole corn. In total, imports in July brought the marketing year-to-date import levels to 302,000 MT, down 3% y/y. Organic Soybean Imports in June are estimated at just 1,400 MT, which is down 97% y/y. All of these imports were sourced from Canada. Organic imports through July of the 2022/23 MY are estimated at 238,000 MT, which is down 7% y/y. Organic Soybean Meal Maritime Imports in July totaled 27,000 MT, which is up 34% from the prior month and 5% from the prior year. Turkey sent 16,000 MT of organic soybean meal in July, and Africa was also a significant source, with 7,000 MT from Ethiopia and 2,300 MT from Togo, plus small volumes



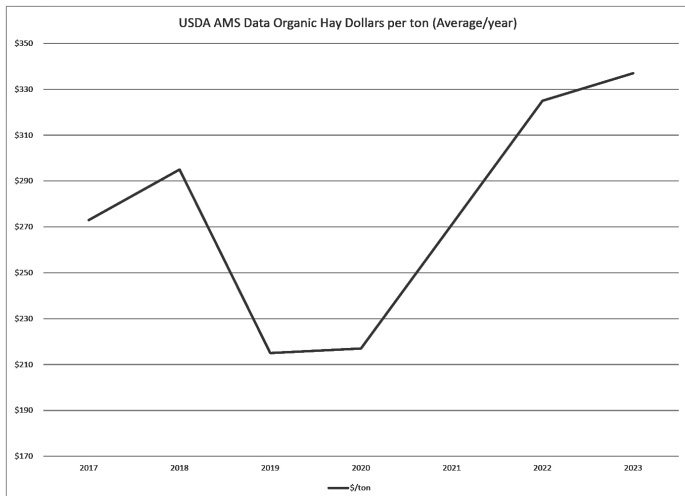
## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

coming from Djibouti, Ghana, Nigeria and India. Total organic soybean meal imports through July of the 2022/23 MY were 209,000 MT, which is 9% below the prior MY.

Mercaris reports that organic broilers' slaughter remained lower over July, and also declined compared to the prior year, down 1%, with U.S. organic poultry slaughter projected to reach 54.2 million head, up 1% y/y. Organic layer numbers

are expected to be approximately the same as last year despite loss of inventory at the start of the year.

Organic feed corn delivered prices averaged \$9.64/bu. in August, down \$3.00/bu. from 12 months prior. Organic feed soybean delivered prices averaged \$22.16/bu. in August 2023, down \$15.79/bu. from 12 months prior. There is no national data on soybean meal. ♦



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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS



The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington DC, 20250

August 17, 2023

### RE: Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program Funds

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

The Organic Trade Association (OTA), Organic Farmers Association (OFA), National Organic Coalition (NOC), Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA), and Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (WODPA) appreciates USDA's ongoing dedication to the success of organic and thanks the Department for taking swift action to address the feedstuff crisis currently faced by organic dairy farmers. The industry applauds USDA's quick implementation of the new Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program (ODMAP) in response to global events outside the control of domestic dairy farmers.

Over the last two years, organic livestock farmers faced catastrophic economic challenges as the availability of organic feedstuffs declined dramatically, resulting in significant increases in feed costs. A perfect storm of trade disruptions, international conflicts, and acute drought conditions created a situation no farmer could have planned for or foreseen. The industry saw painful farm exits from organic livestock production and financial hardships at thousands of kitchen tables across our nation. ODMAP relief is crucial for the survival of hundreds of organic dairy farms in the United States. As the application period for ODMAP ends, we understand the industry utilization rate has not yet reached the anticipated levels. We believe the lower utilization rate can be attributed to a few factors:

- A significant percentage of organic dairy farms are plain communities who will not accept government assistance;
- Inherent challenges associated with new program roll outs and educating regional offices on rapidly implemented programs; and
- Inherent challenges in promoting and raising awareness of the program to farmers.

Due to the demonstrated need for support, we do think there are several revisions to the current program that should be taken by the USDA to further utilize the allocated money to support organic dairy farmers in need.

**USDA should immediately increase ODMAP Payments to 100% of 2022 marketing costs.** ODMAP currently provides farmers with payments for 75% of 2022 marketing costs for up to 5 million pounds of milk. The payment should be immediately increased to 100% of estimated marketing costs, and all current ODMAP applicants should receive an automatic additional payment under this adjustment.

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**Headquarters:** The Hall of the States, 444 N. Capitol St. NW, Suite 445A, Washington D.C. 20001 – (202) 403-8520

**Locations:** Washington, D.C. | Brattleboro, VT

**OTA.com**

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

**Revise calculations used to estimate average organic marketing costs to accurately reflect prices experienced by organic producers.** In the current model, FSA used the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) data from the Federal Milk Marketing Order (FMMO) regional model documentation<sup>1</sup> which estimates the relationship between each FMMO uniform milk price and the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) all-milk price. The uniform price is the calculated minimum producer price announced monthly by each Federal Order for milk pooled within the respective Order. The all-milk price is the NASS announced price for approximately all the milk within a region and approximates the gross price paid to dairy farmers. Averaging the relationship estimates for each FMMO in the model yields an average of 0.94654. In other words, 94.654% of the NASS all-milk price could be attributed to the FMMO uniform price. Conversely, 5.346% could be attributed to marketing costs. Comparing monthly 2020-2022 all-milk price data, FSA determined an average of \$20.63 per CWT and multiplying that by 5.346 yielded approximately \$1.10 per hundredweight of the NASS all-milk price, on average, attributed to marketing costs.

We believe the following two revisions would update the current model to more accurately reflect the average organic marketing costs. **First, instead of straight averaging the relationship estimates for each FMMO, these relationship estimates should be weighted by the volume of milk marketed under each FMMO.** Each FMMO represents a different quantity of milk and by straight averaging them the relationship estimates are given equal weight even though some are a larger and smaller percentage of the overall volume of milk. This becomes an issue as the marketing costs per Federal Order vary, along with the volume of milk they represent. For example, in current ODMAP relief calculations, Federal Order 5 is averaged at 10%; an equal weight with the 9 other Orders. In reality, Federal Order 5 only represents 4.2% of the volume. By contrast, Federal Order 1 is also weighted at 10%, but represents 20.8% of the volume. Utilizing volume weighted averaging would better reflect the marketing costs in a national average and therefore this model should be updated. We provide an example in appendix 1 to this letter on how the current calculation can be updated utilizing USDA AMS latest FMMO volume reporting.<sup>2</sup> In utilizing this reporting we calculate a more accurate percentage of marketing costs to be 6.913% (versus the 5.346% currently used).

Secondly, we believe the marketing costs should be taken from **the latest NASS data on organic milk pricing vs the NASS data on conventional pricing.** Utilizing the organic pricing data reported by the USDA would be more accurate in reflecting organic marketing costs than utilizing conventional pricing data. The most recent organic milk pricing data can be derived from the 2021 NASS organic Survey which showed a national production value of \$1,632,652,318 for a national production volume of 5,196,491.771 CWT of milk. This results in an average organic price of \$31.42 per CWT (versus the conventional price average of \$20.63 per CWT offered in the Economic Model Documentation).

By utilizing both the more accurate marketing percent of the NASS milk price and the NASS organic milk price data – **the estimated marketing costs per CWT for the ODMAP program should be \$2.17.** This number is calculated by multiplying the marketing costs of 6.913% against the Organic Milk price of \$31.42.

We believe these two changes are easy to fix and well justified with current USDA data. However, there are likely other flaws in the calculation of organic marketing costs as it is based on the underlying

<sup>1</sup><https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/FinalDecisionEconometricModelDocumentation.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Market Summary and Utilization 2022 Annual Report,  
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/2022AnnualPriceandPoolReport.pdf>

# 23<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL NODPA Field Days

## Welcome



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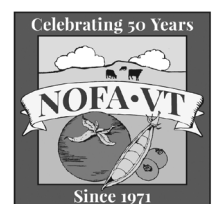
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## 23<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL NODPA Field Days

### SCHEDULE: Thursday, September 28, 2023

8:30 – 11:30 am **FARM TOUR**  
**Sunny Crest Farm**  
*579 Greenwood Road, Belleville, PA 17004*

David and Suzanne Peachey, along with their two young children, farm Sunny Crest Farm, a 100% grass based organic dairy. They have a milking herd of 65 cows and 25 replacement heifers on 62 acres, owned, and 23 more, rented, with approximately 30 more rented and certified by the end of the summer. By focusing on producing premium 100 percent grassfed milk, the Peachey's have been able to reduce their variable costs while selling milk at a premium. The farm ships to Organic Valley's Grassmilk® label.

David refers to his farming practice as the "lean method of farming." The practice is based upon the goal to "graze every acre that we have and buy every ton of forage that we feed," David said.

Noon-1:00 pm **REGISTRATION AND LUNCH**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Church,  
200 E. Logan Street, Reedsville, PA 17084*

1:00 – 2:45 **The Foundations of Profitability in Organic Dairy**  
Presenter: Alvin Peachey, Saddlers Run Farm, Allensville, PA, will identify the key principles to profitability, from understanding the role of soil health to decision-making strategies

2:45 – 3:15 **LIVE MUSIC: Jeff Corle**, singer-songwriter and former dairy farmer, will perform a mini concert featuring his *Empty Barn* song

3:15 – 4:30 **What Does Profitability Look Like on Your Farm, and How Do You Approach It?**  
A Farmer Panel Discussion:  
Invited panel members:  
**Dwight Stoltzfoos**  
Springwood Organic Farm, Kinzer, PA  
**Kirk Arnold/Kathie Arnold**  
Twin Oaks Dairy, Truxton, NY  
**Eric Sheffer**  
Sheffer's Grassland Farm, Hoosick Falls, NY  
Moderator: Ted LeBow

4:30 – 5:30 **TRADE SHOW AND SOCIAL HOUR**

5:30 – 7:00 **NODPA ANNUAL MEETING AND BANQUET:**  
Liz Bawden & Kirk Arnold,  
NODPA Board Co-Presidents  
and Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director

7:00 – 9:00 **KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: "Farming with Financial Clarity: By focusing on the financial side of your business, you can increase profits and make solid business decisions" with TED LEBOW**, Managing Partner and Co-Founder, Kitchen Table Consulting

### Friday, September 29, 2023

6:30 – 9:00 am **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**  
*Evangelical Lutheran Church, 200 E. Logan Street, Reedsville, PA 17084*

7:00 – 9:00 **PRODUCER-ONLY MEETING:** A meeting in which producers can speak freely about all things related to the organic dairy industry.

9:00 – 10:00 **The 6 Principles of Soil Health: Where profit comes from and how to increase it every year.**  
Presenter: Roman Stoltzfoos, Springwood Organic Farm, Kinzer, PA

10:00 – 11:00 **Profitability: Putting the Foundations into Practice.**  
Alvin Peachey, presenter. Alvin will describe the process he uses to increase profitability on his farm, tying together all of the elements—soil and animal health, and clear financial decision making—he successfully employs on his farm, ahead of the afternoon farm tour.

11:00 – 12:15 p.m. **Whole Herd Health: Holistic cow care practices to enhance health and productivity on your farm.**  
*(with a special emphasis on herbal medicine and homeopathic practices)*  
Dr. Cynthia Lankenau, DVM, Holistic Center for Veterinary Care, Colden NY

12:15 – 1:00 pm **LUNCH;** door prize drawing, final announcements

1:30 pm **FARM TOUR**  
**Saddlers Run Farm**  
*12337 Metztown Road, Allensville, PA 17002*

Alvin, Marianne Peachey and their 4 children own and operate Saddlers Run Farm, a 100% grass-fed dairy herd of 75 cows on 150 acres of pasture. They've perfected a system in which they purchase all of their supplemental feed, which consists solely of high-quality certified organic baleage. The decision to focus on grazing and herd management, and leave the growing of hay to someone else, was one of many which was made to enhance the economics of the dairy farm as it has evolved since its establishment in 2010. The Peachey's ship their milk to Organic Valley. Alvin is also a crop consultant and Keystone Bio-Ag dealer. His bottom line is: "understand your finances."

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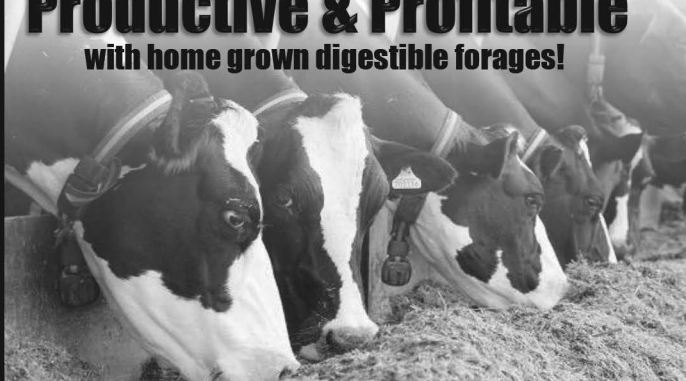


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**23<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL  
NODPA Field Days****LIVE MUSIC AT THE 23<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL NODPA FIELD DAYS!**

*We are pleased to announce that Jeff Corle will be performing on Thursday, September 28th at 2:45, and will be available to meet and greet everyone during the Social Hour. Read all about Jeff, below, and come hear him live at the NODPA Field Days in Reedsville, PA.*

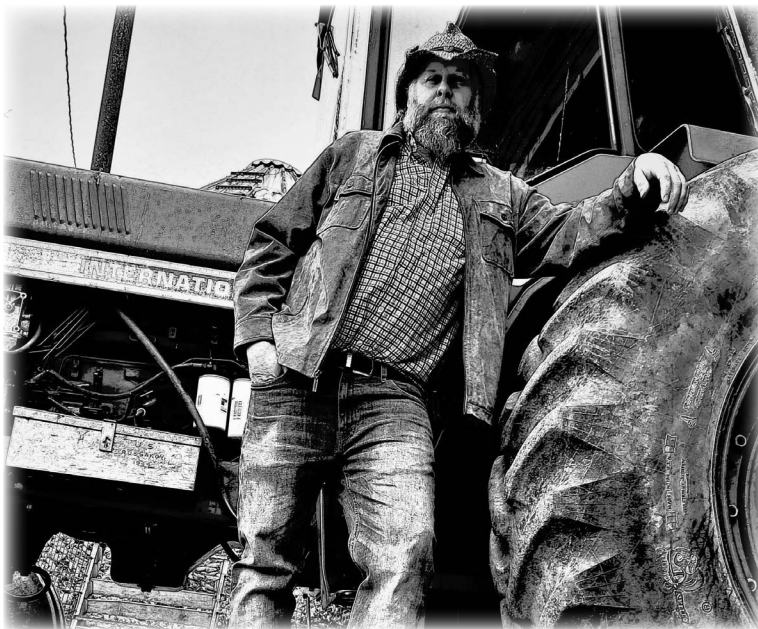
**Jeff Corle:  
From Cows to  
Country Music**

**A**fter economic factors beyond his control forced him to shutter his dairy farm and sell his beloved Guernsey cows, Jeff Corle, a 4th generation dairy farmer, was left heartbroken and depressed, having no idea what he would do next in life.

In the midst of his heartache and pain, Corle turned to an old friend for comfort - his guitar, and through tears he channeled that heartache and pain into what would become the viral sensation, Empty Barn.

The success of Empty Barn garnered Corle national media attention, legions of new fans and a totally unexpected new career as an independent music artist and speaker. With thousands of downloads, thousands of streams and over 125k YouTube views, Corle's unlikely tale of going from cows to country music has also given him a platform to shine a spotlight on the plight of small family farmers and the mental health crisis many are facing in these challenging times.

Jeff Corle is a gifted storyteller, a wonderful singer-songwriter, and an incredible entertainer. He's a farmer and an artist who has something to say and isn't afraid to say it. Listen to *Empty Barns* here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEmrIdIIWDs>



## FEATURED FARM

**SPRINGSIDE FARMS  
NEW VINEYARD, ME***continued from page 1*

The “bulk tank purge” of the 1960s meant that small dairy farming was no longer a feasible means for any generation of his family to make a living as dairy farmers. And no one else was optimistic that dairy farming could be Randall’s choice of career, either.

Once he graduated high school, Randall began working full-time in a non-farming job. But his heart and soul were calling him to become a dairy farmer, and continue his family’s dairy farming legacy. So he did.

Since he purchased his first farm, Randall has been busy fulfilling his life’s quest, and has proven that following your path in life might not be considered the reasonable thing to do, but can be the right thing to do to find fulfillment and purpose, and to thrive.

“This is all I ever wanted to do, and this is the only place I ever wanted to do it,” Randall said of dairy farming, which he now does full-time, on land that belonged to past generations of his family, reviving the family dairy farming legacy into a successful business.

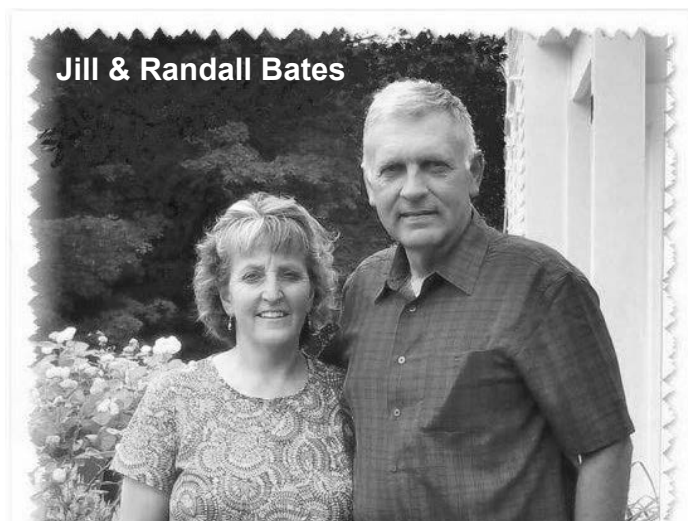
And now, he’s actively working on a plan to keep his dairy farm thriving, and allow the next generation of dairy farmers to be able to live that dairy farming dream.

**Dairy Farm Journey**

Shortly after graduating high school in 1976, Randall began working a full-time job, and he set out to purchase his first farm. In 1977, he purchased the first farm, located one mile up the road from his grandmother’s farm, which had belonged to his maternal great- grandparents. In 1982, with no infrastructure on the farm except “ a two hundred year-old barn with a hole in the roof,” he purchased his first heifers and set to work bringing the now-defunct dairy back to life.

When Randall first shipped milk commercially, in 1987, he recalls that at that time the local creamery was eager to pick up milk from his 150 gallon bulk tank. He was milking eight cows. As per Randall’s recollection, they told him “if we can measure that milk on that stick, we can come get it.”

Randall has grown the dairy from a rundown barn into what is today’s Springside Farms by continuing his full-time manufacturing job for many years, transitioning to part-time off-farm work, and finally dairy farming full-time since 2003. He added animals and infrastructure slowly, and began the transition to organic in 2003, under the old “80/20” rules, becoming certified organic - by MOFGA-in 2005.

**Jill & Randall Bates**

Randall married his wife, Jill, in 1985, when there were 12 animals on the farm, and their milk was primarily used to feed veal calves. Jill was no stranger to dairy farming, having grown up on a dairy where her family milked Ayrshire cows.

“My marriage to Jill, more than anything I have done, insured the success of the farm,” Randall said with sincerity. The couple worked together over the years to raise their children, and to create the successful dairy farm which now consists of Randall’s grandmother’s farm - the 480 acre “big” farm which he finally was able to purchase in 2005, at age 47 - as well as the original home farm he purchased in 1977, known as the “little” farm, consisting of 64 acres.

**Springside Farms overview**

Today they milk 55 head, on average, in a tie-stall barn with 36 stalls, and ship to Organic Valley. While his grandparents’ herd consisted of milking shorthorns, his herd is a mix of Ayrshire, Holstein, and some Jersey, plus a few crosses. He likes the Holstein

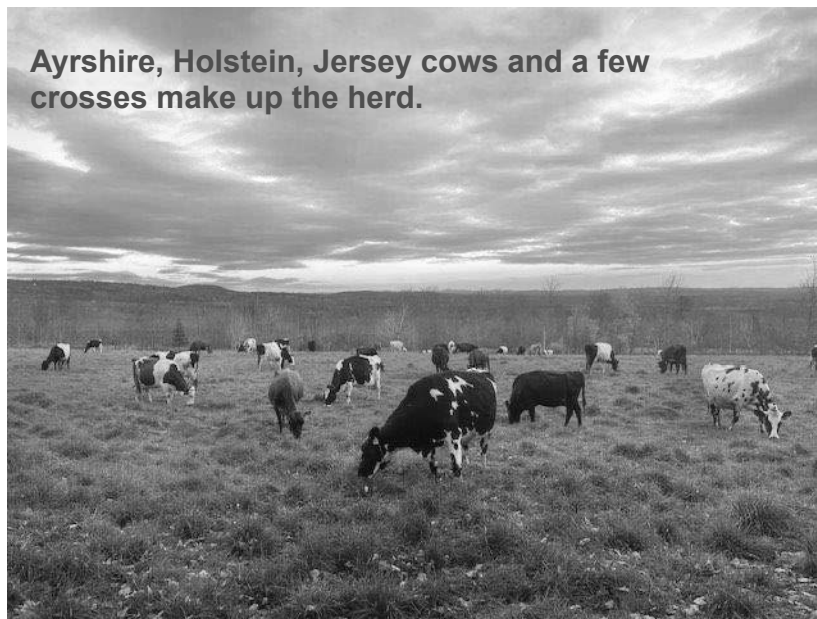
## FEATURED FARM

for the quantity of milk they produce, the Ayrshire fit well with his grazing dairy, and the Jersey cows are there for the components.

"I never intended to have a mixed herd," Randall, who had to purchase whatever cows were available early on in his dairy farming days, said. "I don't find any particular breed has a health advantage over any other breed."

### Organic Transition

In 2003, when transitioning to organic, Randall and Jill were milking 27 head at the "little" farm. But they just weren't large enough to do what they wanted to do with the dairy. His grandmother was ready to sell her farm, and they were able to



**Ayrshire, Holstein, Jersey cows and a few crosses make up the herd.**

purchase it, allowing them to explore organic certification. The farm was in disarray, and outspoken family members didn't shy away from sharing their opinions on the sanity of that decision. But they needed the land in order to grow, and Randall had always dreamed of farming it.

The original "little" farm has 25 open acres of pasture, where the heifers now roam during the grazing season. The land is permanent pasture. The woodlands are in Forestry Management Plan.

At the time of their transition, they sold their milk to Hood. In 2009, Randall sought out Organic Valley, who was seeking new organic dairy farmers in the region. Randall opted to make the transition for financial reasons. Getting paid a significantly higher amount for the milk was the main impetus in exploring certification.

The purchase of Randall's grandmother's farm added 40 acres of permanent pasture, and another 65 acres of ground which is utilized both for pasture and hay. The remainder of the farm is

woodland, and is under a Forestry Management Plan. They are just renovating eight acres of woods into pastures this season. Pastures at both farms are a mix of clover, bluegrass, timothy, orchard grass - with which Randall has a love/hate relationship, and other common pasture species.

Randall is not the biggest fan of orchard grass, and neither are his cows. Wet or dry, the orchard grass does yield well. But it matures earlier than anything else in the pasture, and his cows resist grazing it, as they much prefer to graze a pasture mix.

Achieving the required dry matter intake from pasture grazing was never a concern or a challenge. The herd averages 60 percent of their DMI from grazing in-season, and they were already at that point when managed conventionally. Randall was not feeding much grain when conventional, either. Prior to conversion to organic, the herd was already outside every day, too. While the Bates were already grazing the herd, they needed more land for pasture and hay, and more cows for milk, in order to successfully transition to certified organic production. They also rent another 150 acres for hay production. Hay is their only crop, as they do not grow corn for silage, or any grains.

Prior to going organic, Randall was concerned about no longer having antibiotics available routinely. At the time, a common comment from the conventional dairy farmers in the community when discussing organic dairy farming was the refrain "I'm not going to let all my cows die," Randall said.

Ironically, he's found that since going organic, he doesn't miss the stress of giving antibiotics to cows on a routine basis, and he's only had to treat a cow with antibiotics on a very few occasions over the years. And more than that, his herd has few health issues that cannot be successfully handled under organic standards.

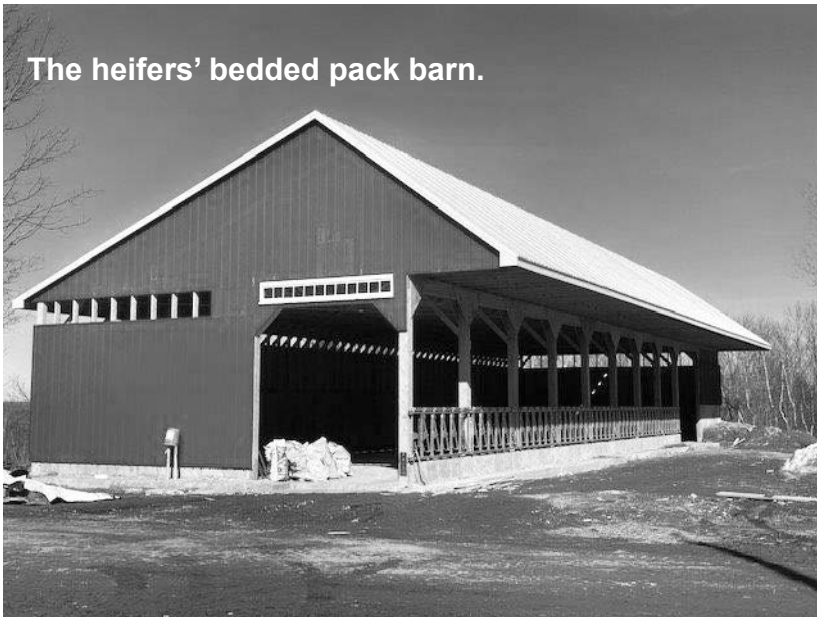
"I would have lost them whether I was organic or not," Randall says of the few cows lost to health complications over the years. "If organic went away, there's very little I would do differently," with any aspect of the farm or herd management.

### Farm Infrastructure

Randall was using chicken litter for fertility on the fields, and would still do so today, but his local source went out of business. He now uses manure from the two bedded pack barns - one 32 by 100 foot structure for the heifers, and one 90 by 120 foot structure for the cows - to capture and add fertility in bulk as needed to the pastures and crop land. The bedded pack for the milking herd

*continued on page 24*

## FEATURED FARM

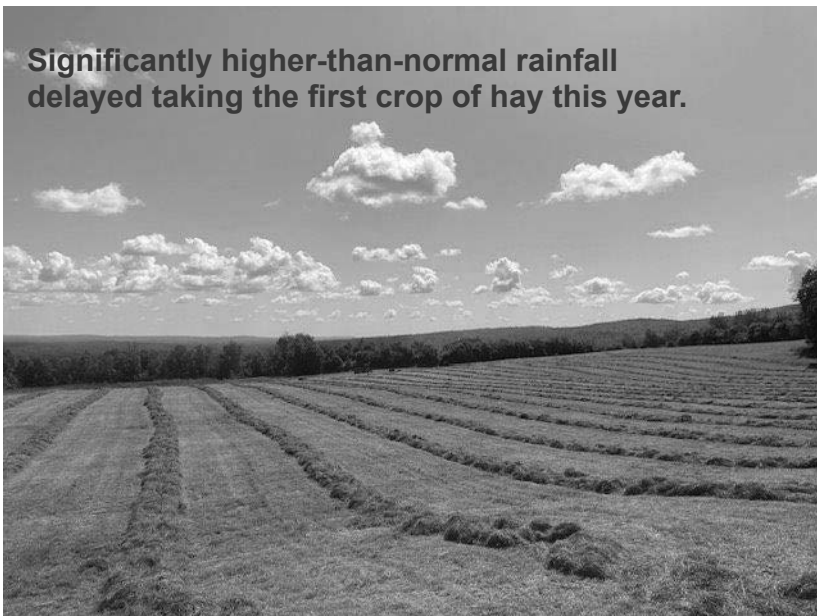


### SPRINGSIDE FARMS NEW VINEYARD, ME

*continued from page 23*

was added in the spring of 2017. In 2022, the heifers were moved into their bedded pack, replacing the concrete pad at the little farm, which provided winter shelter for them in the basement of the barn.

The bedded pack barns “changed our family life tremendously,” Randall said. “Two people can do this” when the cows were moved from the old tie-stall facility where they are still milked, and into the sawdust bedded pack barn.



Prior to the change, the chores had to be done in order to get the cows milked in the tie-stall barn, and feeding baleage both in and outdoors was labor-intensive. And it changed the lives of the cows, too, who absolutely love it, Randall said. Today, the cows’ bedded pack barn has a center feed alley, and they use a skid steer to feed baleage twice per day. The heifers are fed once per day, at their southern-facing feed alley.

The manure from the barns is scraped out daily each evening, and the pack is bedded daily with fresh sawdust.. The manure is collected and stored. They spread 50 acres of pasture in the fall, which is all they have the time to do, and after taking the first crop of hay, they then spread the rest of the hay ground.

With the constant rain, the first crop of hay was just taken in mid-August, when it was taken in June 11th of 2022! That has delayed manure spreading, too. A lot of the land is lower lying, and it takes time to dry out from any rains. This year is a poor crop year. The volume of forages is about the same as normal, but the quality is lacking. Randall will supplement with grain to make up for any nutritional differences. This year, the farm has received 35 inches of rain since the beginning of May.

“I’ve never experienced anything like this,” Randall said of the large amount of rainfall.

The Bates’ have added a few other enterprises to their dairy farm. They do have a highly rated Airbnb vacation rental apartment available on the home farm. Each season, they also plant three acres of pumpkins, gourds and squash, which they sell from their front lawn, much to the delight of the locals and any visitors.

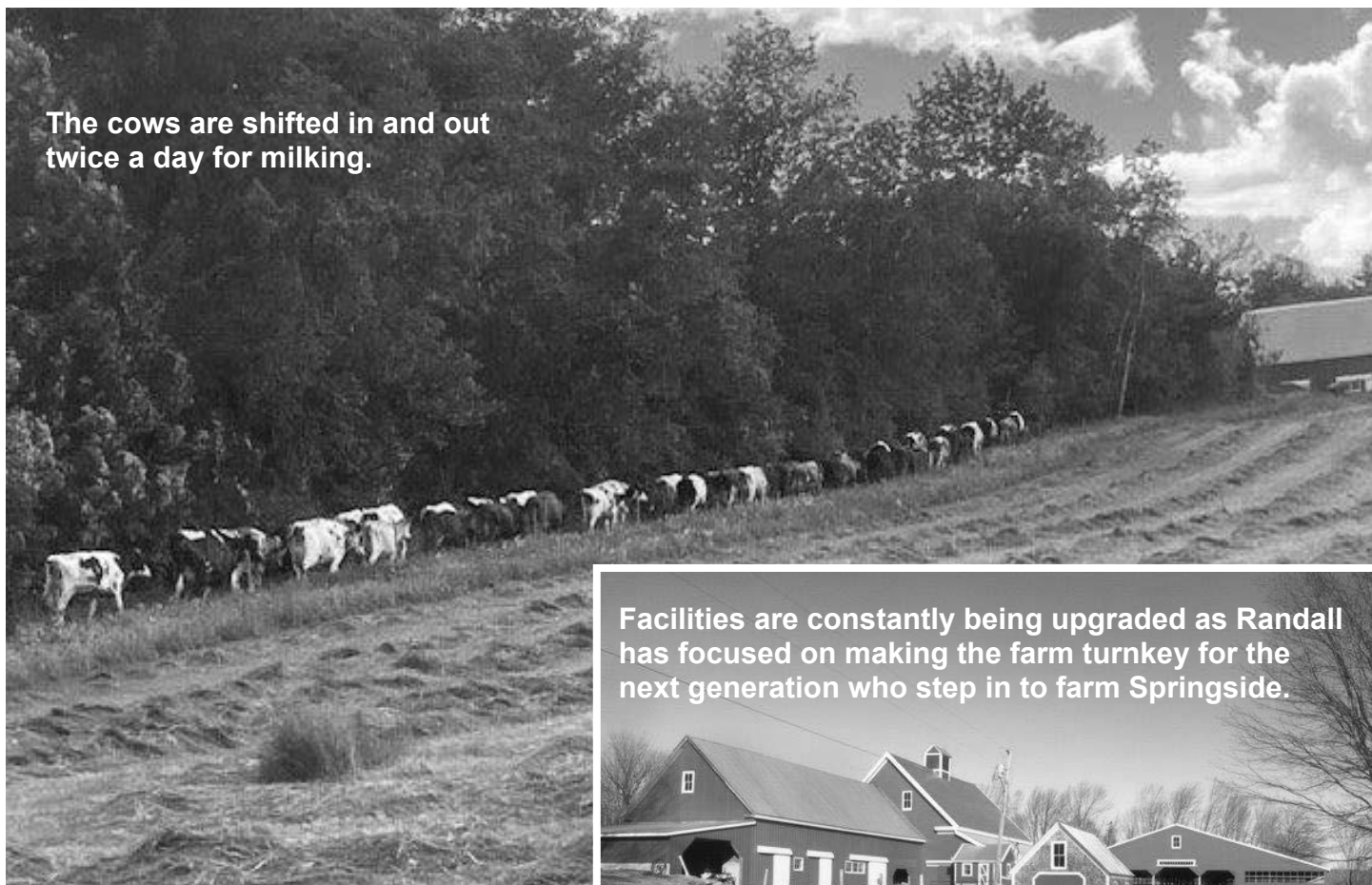
They’ve been doing so for over 30 years, and sell out each season by Halloween.

“I believe in farming the whole farm. You take advantage of the niche things you can find that work for you,” Randall said. “We don’t have all our eggs in one basket,” Jill added.

The “big” farm, located at the end of a dirt road, has been fully renovated, as Randall has wanted to make it as turnkey as possible for the next generation to step into his shoes. Unlike when he began his farm, he’d like for the next generation to begin with functional infrastructure, healthy cows and fertile pastures.

The next generation, however, won’t be their bloodline. The Bates’ adult children are not planning on carrying on the dairy farming tradition. Instead, Randall and Jill have turned to the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship

## FEATURED FARM



The cows are shifted in and out twice a day for milking.

Facilities are constantly being upgraded as Randall has focused on making the farm turnkey for the next generation who step in to farm Springside.



(DGA) program in an attempt to pass on their dairy grazing knowledge through mentoring and gain an extra set of hands in the process, and find the right match, enabling them to put a plan in place to transfer the farm to a new generation- and family - of farmers. Their second and current DGA placement is Stephan Dolan, who along with his wife, Rachel, and their four young children, is considering a dairy farm purchase.

“My goal is to find succession,” Randall said. “It’s a trickier goal than if you want to work on a dairy farm and try it out.”

### Milk Matters

The cows are still milked in the tie-stall, and there are no plans for a parlor. Milking in the tie-stall twice per day does mean shifting cows in and out to accommodate everyone, but it works well for them.

They use DHI to garner a lot of information on their herd, but monitoring SCC is their number one reason. The average somatic cell count this year is about 135,000. And it was 150,000 in 2022. Anything under 200,000 is acceptable to Randall. He culls for SCC or for reproduction issues. The average lactation is four years, four months as per the herd’s records.

The fat percentage is 4.1 on average in summer, while protein is at 3.1 percent. Solids are 4.5 percent. The average production is 45-50 lbs. of milk per cow, per day.

They raise 15 of their own heifers each year to maintain the herd size and productivity and sell all other heifers and bull calves. The lower one-third of the herd is bred to beef. The beef calves are sold, too, as they do not have the facilities to raise beef. They will purchase a bull calf and raise it for breeding the heifers. Breeding is via AI for the cows, and bulls are almost always used for the heifers, whether they are bred for dairy or for beef.

Genetic focus is on medium size cows, with “decent feet, legs and udders, and for a “low maintenance, healthy cow,” Randall said.

*continued on page 26*

## FEATURED FARM

**SPRINGSIDE FARMS  
NEW VINEYARD, ME***continued from page 25*

It's rare that he will cull for low milk production, as long as the cow is breeding back, and has no other issues.

"It takes a lot of milk to make up for issues with a cow," Randall said, explaining why production is lower on the list for culling than SCC, which is his primary and most common reason for culling.

**Calf Care**

Vaccines are not used at all in the herd, including the typical ones often given to calves. The herd has remained healthy without vaccines for many years, Randall said. They've had no issues with pneumonia, and treat any scours that arise by catching it early, and utilizing several natural treatments. Jill is in charge of calf care, and explains how she cares for any calf with scours.

Jill remains alert for any sucking issues, which she tries to catch immediately, and if they occur, she then begins a regime of acacia powder dissolved in water and bottle-fed to the calf. She also adds two or three whipped eggs into organic yogurt, and finds that this combination usually works to treat scours if caught early enough. The eggs help to bind the digestive system and stop dehydration, and the yogurt provides probiotics, she explained.

In severe cases, they have recently begun to utilize electrolytes. These are not fed with milk, but separately, with electrolytes given four to six hours after milk feeding. This means Jill is in the barn at noon and midnight, should the need arise. This is needed when scours isn't caught early enough, and the standard treatment regime won't work. With the addition of the electrolytes for severe cases, they don't lose many calves to scours. Calves that can't suck are intubated, to insure that they receive the electrolytes.

Calving occurs year-round, as the money for calf sales helps to balance the books. They tie the calves up for the first three or four weeks. They do this, Randall said, because they milk in a tie stall, and replacement heifers need to know how to get up and down when they are restrained. This also is needed when the cow is being bred, and if the veterinarian needs to see a cow.

The calves are next moved into group pens. Randall is ambivalent to calf group housing pens. The negative is that the calves suckle one another. They do use an occasional weaning ring if this becomes too severe. They haven't had any problems on calving out, however, he

said. The group pens do make calf care more efficient. Calves are grouped by age, and the pens are in the milk barn. At six months, the calves graduate to larger group pens, where they can access the outdoors year-round. The next stop is the heifer bedded pack, or the pasture, depending on the time of year.

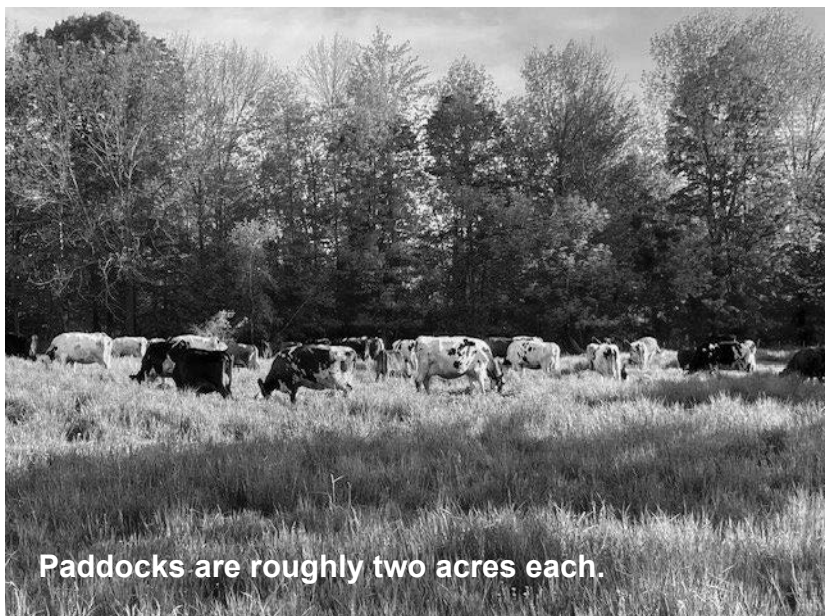
The calves are initially fed the high SCC milk and the pipeline rinse. Weaning happens at four months of age or a bit later, as the amount of milk fed is gradually decreased. Creep feeding of hay and grain is introduced soon after the calves move into the first group pen, to help reduce the urge to suck. Randall feels this system has worked well for him throughout the years. Once weaned, the heifers are no longer fed grains. Baleage is fed to supplement pasture forages.

The veterinarian is not used regularly, and they do not use a nutritionist. When they do need the veterinarian, Randall has found that the local veterinarians are "supportive and knowledgeable" about organic dairy farming.

**Cow Chow**

The cows are fed an average of 11 -12 pounds of grain year-round, as a dairy grain pellet, and are fed baleage off-season in the bedded pack. Kelp is added into the grain to increase the calcium intake. The cows start the grazing season somewhere around May 22nd, in one of the 16 permanent paddocks, and are rotated through each of these. The time spent in each paddock is generally fixed. Paddocks are roughly two acres each, and the cows are moved daily to a fresh paddock.

After the paddocks are grazed, the cows are moved to a few acres where a first hay crop has already been harvested. The cows graze these fields until early September, when two 25 acre hay fields are



## FEATURED FARM

made available, after the first and second hay crop have been harvested. The cows are let in to graze an entire field for six days before being moved to the second field for six days. After that, it is time for them to regraze the permanent pastures, rotating through each of the sixteen paddocks again. Sometime “well into October” the cows go back into the two 25 acre fields until late October or early November, when they move into winter housing in the bedded pack.

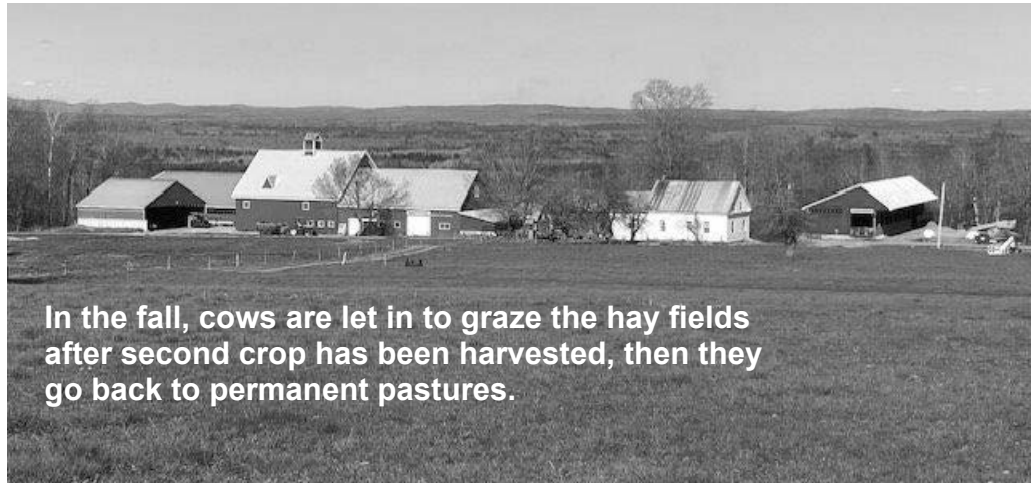
Randall’s grazing plan is partially influenced by the fact that he and Jill, along with their DGA apprentice, provide all the labor on the farm. It would be too labor-intensive to divide the larger hay fields into smaller paddocks for grazing, and move the cows several times per day.

### Organic Thoughts

“I’ve seen organics evolve into the same problems that conventional people have had,” Randall said, and he’d like to see organic leadership “be more proactive for their farmers,” with a more balanced focus on actual dairy farmer concerns, rather than an intensity of focus on the consumer perception and perspectives. Smaller

family farms, with a focus on animal care have been replaced by big industrial-style farms, and the money from organic sales has “been diluted” as the organic dairy sector has become “commoditized.”

“When we started shipping milk in 1987, there were about 1,100 dairy farms in Maine at that time. Now that number is around 170. We (the State of Maine) still produce about the same amount of milk, though,” Randall said, “A sobering



reminder of how much things have changed,” across all segments of the dairy farming industry.



Randall also notes that the cost of being a small organic dairy farmer has increased over the past several years, but the compensation has not, making organic dairy less attractive than it once was for struggling farmers who might want to convert, and for those trying to survive in organic dairy farming.

Transitioning to organic did save the farm, however. “If we remained conventional, we never would have survived and got to where we’re at,” Randall said. ♦

*Randall and Jill Bates can be reached at Springside Farms, 577 Anson Valley Rd, New Vineyard, ME 04956-3006, 207-779-6156, [bates@tdstelme.net](mailto:bates@tdstelme.net)*

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### ODMAP Letter to Vilsack

*continued from page 17*

assumption that marketing costs are the same percentage of pricing for organic and conventional producers. For example, the calculation does not consider the difference in hauling costs and segregation costs between organic and conventional farms. Hauling costs are higher for organic producers due to their smaller size and need for multiple stops. We would like to continue conversations with USDA on more accurate cost models if the changes here fail to utilize the total monies intended to support organic dairy farmers.

**We also request a revision to the current cap of relief payments.** A more accurate calculation of the cap would better respond to the challenges the program seeks to resolve. To conform with the intent of CCC money utilized for this program, USDA has chosen to cap payments for marketing costs at 5 million pounds of milk for each dairy operation to prioritize support for small organic dairies. However, the 5-million-pound cap leaves many small dairies without adequate relief. In 13 CFR 121, the SBA assigned dairy farms a revenue up to \$3,750,000 per year to be considered small (NAICS Code 112120)\*. USDA and the National Organic Program already have a precedent for using this size determination for an allowed variance within the 2022 Origin of Livestock final rule.

Using the average price per hundredweight of organic milk - \$31.42 per CWT - we calculate the maximum size for small organic dairy farm per the SBA definition to be 119,388 CWT annually. Therefore, the maximum payment under ODMAP should be adjusted to cover marketing costs for up to 11.94 million pounds of milk.

**The estimated marketing cost of \$2.17 CWT should be available for up to 11.94 million pounds of milk per operation.** This payout calculation is supported by USDA's organic dairy data, FMMO prices weighted by volume, and the SBA definition of a small dairy. This calculation will ensure maximum benefit to organic dairy farmers without exhausting available ODMAP funds.

Upon publishing these changes to the ODMAP program, the USDA should both automatically increase payments to all current applicants and reopen the application process for more producers to apply. When the application is reopened, USDA should make additional efforts to educate both FSA regional offices and organic dairy farmers of this opportunity. We applaud FSA's effort to date to notify all organic farmers on the availability of funds and terms of eligibility. However, some farmers were still unaware of the relief opportunity even after USDA promotional efforts. A second extension of the program accompanied by additional farmer outreach and FSA education could significantly increase ODMAP participation and ensure the success of the ODMAP program.

In closing, we encourage the USDA to take the following actions:

- Automatically increase the payout to all previous applicants the difference from 75% to 100% of current calculated marketing costs;
- Adjust the estimated marketing costs to better reflect organic marketing costs and the size of small organic dairies;
- Automatically increase the payout to all previous applicants based on the difference between the new maximum volume of milk covered and the new marketing cost calculation;
- Reopen the application period for new applications; and
- Make additional and continuous educational communications to dairy producers and FSA offices during the application period.

We appreciate all the hard work USDA has performed in developing and launching the ODMAP program and this opportunity to provide feedback on how best to utilize monies designated to support organic

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

dairy farmers. We request a meeting to discuss these proposals and to understand the current applicant and funding levels after the close of the current application window. We look forward to partnering with USDA to ensure organic dairy production in the United States remains solvent and thriving.

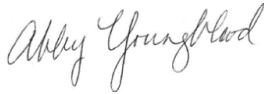
Sincerely,



Tom Chapman  
Chief Executive Officer  
Organic Trade Association



Kate Mendenhall  
Executive Director  
Organic Farmers Association



Abby Youngblood  
Executive Director  
National Organic Coalition



Lia Sieler  
Executive Director  
Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance



Ed Maltby  
Executive Director  
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

CC: Under Secretary Robert Bonnie, USDA FPAC  
Under Secretary Jenny Lester Moffitt, USDA MRP  
Katharine Ferguson - OSEC, DC  
Mike Schmidt, USDA OSEC  
John Berge - FPAC-FSA

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## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

### ODMAP Letter to Vilsack

*continued from page 29*

#### Appendix 1

#### Revised Calculation of % Marketing Costs

Federal Orders	original parameter estimate used by USDA	lbs per region*	% lbs of total	parameter estimate weighted
FO 1	91.2%	26881.6	20.8%	19.0%
FO 5	96.7%	5420.5	4.2%	4.1%
FO 6	92.5%	2482.9	1.9%	1.8%
FO 7	101.1%	3912.7	3.0%	3.1%
FO 30	91.9%	31837.4	24.6%	22.6%
FO 32	90.3%	15637.7	12.1%	10.9%
FO 33	93.7%	16796	13.0%	12.2%
FO 124	94.5%	7582.9	5.9%	5.5%
FO 126	95.4%	13713.9	10.6%	10.1%
FO 131	99.3%	4909.6	3.8%	3.8%
<b>Straight Average</b>				<b>Weighted Average</b>
% FMMO/NASS differential	94.7%			93.1%
% Marketing Costs	5.3%			6.9%

\*Source: Table 6 - 2020 receipts of producer milk

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/2022AnnualPriceandPoolReport.pdf>

#### Revised Calculation of Organic Milk Price\*

Program	Year	Period	Geo Level	State	Commodity	Data Item	Domain	Domain Category	Value	CV (%)
CENSUS	2021	YEAR	NATIONAL	US TOTAL	MILK	MILK, ORGANIC - SALES, MEASURED IN \$	ORGANIC STATUS	ORGANIC STATUS: (NOP USDA CERTIFIED)	\$1,632,652,418	14.4
CENSUS	2021	YEAR	NATIONAL	US TOTAL	MILK	MILK, ORGANIC - SALES, MEASURED IN LB	ORGANIC STATUS	ORGANIC STATUS: (NOP USDA CERTIFIED)	5,196,491,771	14.2
<b>Average Organic Milk Price per lb</b>									<b>\$0.3142</b>	
<b>Average Organic Milk Price per CWT</b>									<b>\$31.42</b>	

\*Source: NASS 2021 Organic Census: <https://quickstats.nass.usda.gov/results/3AA9AF76-961D-3745-950E-89F7D7812605>

#### Revised Calculation of Organic Milk Price

$$\$31.42/\text{CWT} * 6.9\% = \$2.17/\text{CWT}$$

#### Small Business Size\*

$$\$3,750,000 \div \$0.3142/\text{lb} = 11.94 \text{ million lbs}$$

Source: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-13/chapter-I/part-121#121.201>

## ORGANIC INDUSTRY NEWS

## Can Kelp Create Healthier Cows and a Healthier Planet?

*continued from page 3*

“The reason we use kelp is we cannot use antibiotics, so we have to have high-level immune systems in the cows, and kelp does that,” Ken Larson said.

The Larsons’ Silver Dust Farm is all family run. They milk 60 cows with daughter Ellen Dilly overseeing the dairy operations. Son Todd Larson handles the crop farming, about 500 acres.

A new barn, with a robotic milker, went up about two years ago, cutting down on the physical labor needed to manage the herd.

“We started milking in ‘81 as a conventional dairy, and we switched to organic in ‘06,” Ken Larson said, with organic dairies getting a premium price on their milk. But they had already been using a kelp additive even while operating as a conventional dairy.

“Just about all your organic dairy farmers feed kelp,” Larson said. “First thing we noticed with it, it helped heifers calve; there’s more embryonic fluid, so the calf was born easier.”

Silver Dust Farm is part of the Organic Valley cooperative, which also processes the milk that comes from the Morris dairy herd.

While starting out rationing about 2 ounces a day, they now “free choice it,” with cows having access to a tub of granular kelp whenever they feel the need.

“If they’re under stress, they will eat a fair amount of kelp, so you can use it as a gauge of how comfortable they are,” Larson said.

Some of those things that might cause stress are heat and stray voltage from power lines.

Larson said kelp doesn’t replace anything in the diet of the cows and it is expensive, but worth the cost.

Larson said he thinks the benefits of kelp also would help beef cows.

“I would use it on the dry cows, a couple months before the cows calve, just because of the benefits of calving,” Larson said. “Then you’re going to get that immune system built up in the calf, too. There are definitely benefits there.”

### Not Just for Cows

Kelp is a subgroup of seaweed, which is algae. The product that the Larsons use comes from Iceland, but it is sourced in other areas. Heins said commercial kelp farms also are getting started. Makes of kelp additives promote it for

many species of livestock. Kelp is high in minerals and there are even kelp nutrition supplements for people, which Ken Larson uses. “For a wide spectrum supplement, I believe it’s well worth it,” Larson said.

### Technology Advancements

The interest in kelp and research being conducted by Heins and others is made possible by technology developed in recent years that allows for accurate measurement of methane emissions from livestock.

“Once people started to measure the methane emissions from cows, while they were on these seaweed supplements, it was like ‘oh, maybe there’s something here that shows a reduction in methane emissions,’” Heins said.

Heins is conducting his research with the help of a GreenFeed methane measuring device made by C-Lock, a technology company based in Rapid City, South Dakota.

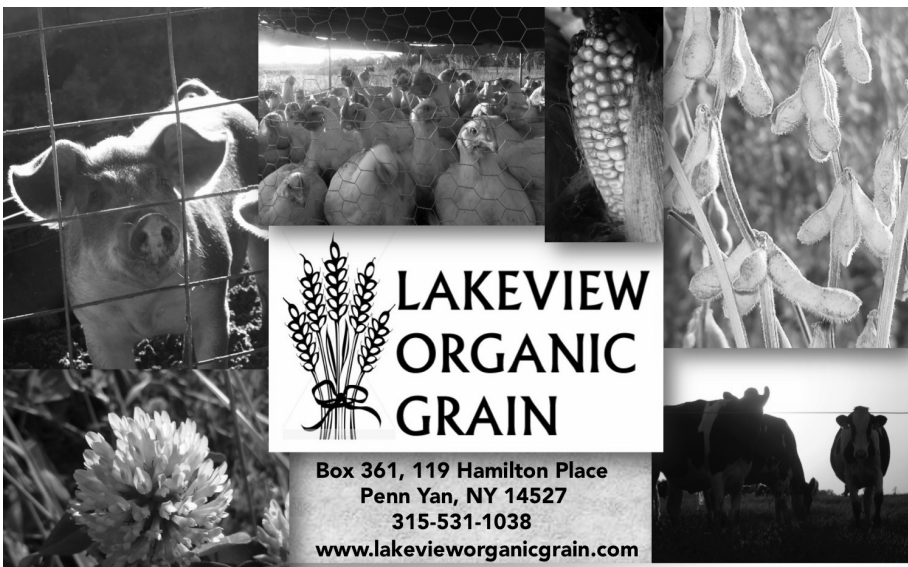
C-Lock’s GreenFeed system also will be used at South Dakota State University as part of its Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities research funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The research in Morris is being funded by a grant from the Minnesota Rapid Agricultural Response Fund, created by the Minnesota Legislature.

Ken Larson does have one concern about the kelp research. If it proves to be effective on reducing methane, he fears small organic dairies like his may get priced out of the market.

“Then the big herds will be using more of it ... then the small farmer’s going to be paying more.” ♦

*West Central Research and Outreach Center, 46352 State Hwy 329, Morris, MN 56267. Phone: (320) 589-1711, Fax: (320) 589-4870*



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## NET UPDATE

## Recent ODairy Discussions

By Liz Bawden, Organic Dairy Farmer, NODPA Co-President

A farmer's herd bull was lame. Thinking it was from overgrown rear feet, the bull's hooves were trimmed when he noticed significant swelling on one leg. Thinking the reason for the lameness was now an injury, he was searching for some support to ease the pain and allow healing. It was suggested that he start by administering homeopathic Rhus tox as it is used when "the first parts of moment are difficult - stiff and creaky - but work out of the stiffness with some movement. Like they "warm out of it". They tend to be restless and want to move around, and moving relieves the pain and stiffness." Oral Vitamin C was also suggested.

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

In the July issue of the NODPA News, we reported on a discussion about a first calf heifer with a uterine torsion. The discussion continued with the farmer reporting that the vet was able to right the torsion, and the cow lived. She asked if the cow should be bred back again, or was she likely to repeat the torsion in her next pregnancy. It was stated in an online article, *Calving: Seek Help If You Suspect a Uterine Torsion* (See below.) that, "Just

like a prolapsed uterus, torsions are an absolute fluke. There is no reason the cow would do it again, so as long as she breeds back there is no reason to cull her." ♦

## Calving: Seek Help If You Suspect a Uterine Torsion

By Roy Lewis, DVM

*Originally published in Canadian Cattleman, February 3, 2016. Reprinted with permission from the author.*

Perhaps because a uterine torsion is a very rare type of malpresentation it is often difficult for producers to recognize. If we can recognize them, and quickly get help, the majority of these calves can be saved. It's important that you don't make the mistake of attempting to pull these calves yourself.

I have never seen an actual percentage of torsions listed because they are often not documented but my guess is there is one every couple thousand births so larger producers may experience one every few years. The practice I was in saw lots of cow-calf operations and I would say we would see upwards of 10 a year.

I always had the producer feel in the vaginal canal when we did diagnose one so they would recognize it the next time. I do the same thing with new vets or students. Once you examine one it is hard to miss it a second time.

A torsion describes a condition where the free portion of the uterus (where the calf is) twists over on itself. The vagina is anchored by soft tissue in the pelvis so really it is much like putting a golf ball in a sock holding the open end stationary and giving the sock a 180- or 360-degree twist. It's so tight you can't reach in and pull the golf ball out. This is exactly what happens in a torsed uterus.

The initial complaint is very similar to a full breech (coming tail first) where the cow or heifer looks like they should have calved hours ago but nothing happened. The cow is bagged up and nesting yet no water bag or heavy straining has started. I always tell experienced cattlemen, if they suspect something is wrong they are probably right. This is especially true if they know the cows' past history and they have calved normally.

A cow that is nesting, bellowing or looking uneasy usually means either a breech, other malpresentation or a torsion so it's best to vaginally examine the cow. When examining a torsion you will usually be able to reach the calf. Initially you will feel bands of tissue running this way and that and it is like running your hand down a corkscrew. When you finally reach the calf your hand may be upside down and the calf may even be upside down. The degree of the torsion will determine how tight the opening is. Generally the cow's contractions line up the calf to be presented normally so if it's upside down or sideways and you feel these bands of tissue it is very likely a torsion.

When one examines a cow that isn't ready to calve you go straight in the vagina and run into a closed cervix that feels like a round doughnut with a hole so tight you may be able to get in only one or two fingers. A torsion feels much different with an uneven

## ORGANIC PRODUCTION

opening that you can wiggle your arm through and the cervix will be open enough to get your arm through, touch the calf, and the water bag will not be broken.

With almost all torsions, once identified, veterinary intervention becomes imperative. Veterinarians have several methods they can use to detorse the uterus. If done successfully the calf can be delivered alive out the back end provided it was alive to start with. A veterinarian must first determine which way the uterus is torsed as it can be either clockwise or counterclockwise, and so one must twist it the opposite way to get it detorsed.

Some very experienced veterinarians can detorse them by hand by getting the uterus rocking and skillfully flipping it back over. The cervix will then continue to dilate and the uterus will now dump out lots of fluid and the cow will start straining again.

Other methods involve using a detorsion rod or detorsion fork to facilitate untwisting the uterus by applying these apparatuses to the calf's leg. With the use of this instrument an experienced practitioner can help the process along when some additional force is necessary.

Another method is to cast the cow on her side. The veterinarian holds the calf while the cow is rolled to untwist the torsion. Again it is critical to know which way the uterus is twisted. I would say that in my experience a higher percentage untwist by moving the calf clockwise meaning they are counterclockwise torsions.

If attempts by any method fail, the veterinarian can rely on getting the calf out by caesarian section. In some cases the calf may be detorsed internally through a C-section incision and then pulled out the back especially if the calf is dead. If the calf is twisted and on the far side of the abdomen often the calf must be taken by C-section first and then the uterus detorsed and sewn up.

As you can see there are many things to consider when we find a uterine torsion but I am proud to say many times we can get a live calf and the cow makes an uneventful recovery. Early detection on your part is the absolute key component.

I have seen backwards calves torsed and twins torsed.



Just like a prolapsed uterus, torsions are an absolute fluke. There is no reason the cow would do it again, so as long as she breeds back there is no reason to cull her.

Heifers have the same odds as cows when it comes to torsing. I have never seen one torse prior to calving, but I know of one in a horse at seven or so month's gestation. The mare had slight colicky symptoms and the owner and vet were quick to detect the problem and correct it with surgery, flipping the uterus to the left, back to normal. The mare went on to deliver a normal foal.

Quite a remarkable story. The message is never give up. If you detect a uterine torsion seek experienced help immediately. The outcome will often surprise you.

Have a great calving season, but if you experience a rare torsion you now know what to do. ♦

*Roy Lewis is an Alberta-based veterinarian specializing in large-animal practice. He is also a part-time technical services vet for Merck Animal Health*

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# Calendar

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**Wednesday, September 20, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

**UVM 2023 VERMONT GRAZING AND LIVESTOCK  
WORKSHOP SERIES:**

**Forage Quality Improvement for Grass-Fed Dairy**

*North Country Creamery, 931 Mace Chasm Road, Keeseville, NY*

This event will focus on strategies to improve pasture productivity and quality for a grass-fed dairy herd. Registration is at: <https://go.uvm.edu/2023grazingworkshops>. Choose Select a Date link to sign up or contact Susan Brouillette at 802-656-7611 or [susan.brouillette@uvm.edu](mailto:susan.brouillette@uvm.edu).

**September 22-24, 2023**

**THE COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR  
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association**

*294 Crosby Brook Rd, Unity, ME*

MOFGA's annual celebration of rural living features 1000+ exhibitors and speakers, and emphasizes vibrant communities, sustainable living and local economies, while highlighting organic agriculture. Visit their website: <https://www.mofga.org/event-calendar/common-ground-country-fair-2023/>

**September 28 & 29, 2023**

**SAVE THE DATES!**

**THE 23RD ANNUAL NODPA FIELD DAYS:**

**Farming with Financial Clarity, Confidence and Optimism  
(Without Digging the Hole Any Deeper)**

*Evangelical Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall  
200 E. Logan Street, Reedsville, PA 17084*

More information coming soon to the NODPA website, [www.nodpa.com](http://www.nodpa.com) and in this issue of the NODPA News.

**October 14 – 15, 2023**

**INTRO TO PERMACULTURE**

*Maine Organic Marketplace, 55 Main Street Freeport, ME 04032*

Introduction to Permaculture covers the principles and ethics of regenerative eco social design. Participants practice pattern literacy, learn a basic design process, and explore site dynamics, uses and cycles. This two day course will run Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This class is taught and hosted by 207permaculture. This course is offered on a sliding scale from \$90-\$170. REGISTER HERE: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/intro-to-permaculture-design-tickets-711230368177?aff=oddttdtcreator>.

**October 14, 2023, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**SAVING REAL ORGANIC**

*Churchtown Dairy, 357 County Road 12, Hudson, NY 12534*

Get ready to immerse yourself in a day of insightful talks and informative break-out sessions. On Saturday, October 14, 2023, starting at 9:00 a.m. ET we will gather to celebrate and learn about the real issues surrounding organic farming, food systems and issues. Lunch is also included!

This event is a fantastic opportunity for organic enthusiasts, farmers, eaters and anyone interested in sustainable living. We have curated a diverse program that includes engaging talks, interactive workshops, and demonstrations by experts in the field. Throughout the day, you'll have the chance to learn about the latest organic topics, become inspired, and learn about the importance of supporting local organic producers. Mark your calendars and join us at the Saving Real Organic event! To learn more and register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/saving-real-organic-tickets-682349996207>

**October 16, 2023 - 9:00 a.m. to October 19, 2023 - 4:30 p.m.**

**Organic Certification Training for Inspectors and More!**

**Vermont State University**

**ORGANIC REGULATION TRAININGS**

*Online and VTSU Randolph Campus*

**ORGANIC SPECIALIST TRAINING FOR LIVESTOCK**

This training is for existing farmers, new farmers, people interested in becoming an organic specialist for a company, agency, organization, and/or if you want to pursue a career in organic certification. The training includes in-person lectures, discussion groups and field trips. It is preceded by a 4 hr. online workshop on the history and meaning of "organic" as well as general organic requirements. This workshop is completed prior to the in-person session.

**Instructor Information:**

The instructor, Cheryl Cesario, is a consultant for Common Sense Solutions. Cheryl has been working directly with farmers since 2004 on grazing management, organic certification, water quality regulations, and big picture planning and goal setting. She helps farmers plan and implement practices, navigate funding channels, and provides grant writing services. She has grazed and worked with animals in her own farming endeavors as well as working on a handful of dairy farms. Cheryl has consulted with farmers and ranchers in the Northeast, Texas, and the lower Plains states.

Phone: 802.261.5943. Email: [glenn.evans@vermontstate.edu](mailto:glenn.evans@vermontstate.edu)

## Classified Ads

### ANIMALS

**FOR SALE: Jersey & cross cows**, Certified Organic, Grass-only, NW Vermont, vaccinated, negative for Johnes. Need new homes as soon as possible! (802) 868-2356 or (802)370-1051, or [jyoust87@vt.edu](mailto:jyoust87@vt.edu)

**Location: Highgate Center, VT**

**FOR SALE: GRASSFED DAIRY COWS, BRED FOR SPRING 2024** Currently making 30-40#/day, OAD milking, 100% grassfed, bred to grass genetics dairy bull, preg checked \$1800 each or \$1700 each for 3 or more All are good cows, selling because we have too many spring calving and just bought some fall calving.

Calved - Due - Lactation - 3/4? - Age:

Scampi 3/28/23 3/29/24 1 3 Half Jersey, half Normande

Fritter 3/31/23 3/29/24 1 3 Half Jersey, half Normande

Pudge 6/10/23 4/11/24 2 Y 3 Jersey

Eve 11/30/22 3/24/24 3 Y 4 Jersey

Oz 4/1/23 4/11/24 3 4 Jersey

Judy 6/1/23 4/13/24 4 6 Jersey

Stones 6/22/23 3/21/24 4 6 Jersey

Pepper 3/6/23 4/21/24 5 Y 8 Jersey

Pictures on craigs list: <https://plattsburgh.craigslist.org/grd/d/keeseville-dairy-cows-for-sale-bred-for/7660494699.html> Contact Ashlee: [info@northcountrycreamery.com](mailto:info@northcountrycreamery.com) 518-645-2697 call or text.

**COWS WANTED: Looking for certified organic Jersey and/or Jersey crosses** currently in milk and bred back for spring calving. Maine preferred but will consider traveling to New Hampshire and Vermont. Contact Andy Smith, 207-933-8184, [mainemilkhouse@gmail.com](mailto:mainemilkhouse@gmail.com).

**Location: Monmouth, ME**

**FOR SALE: Dual purpose cows-certified organic;** closed herd, some bred, some with calves. Leave message at 802-254-6982, or cell 802-380-4783

**Location: Guilford, VT**

**FOR SALE: Sweet Pea is an A2A2 grass-fed, family Jersey milk cow.** She's currently in milk producing 2.5 gallons/day on once a day milking. She is bred and due to calve in October. This will be her 3rd calf and lactation cycle. She's 5 years old and very easy to handle. We've had her since she was a baby and she's been handled every day. She is for sale due to no fault of her own, just life changes! \$2000 OBRO

**Emma is an A2A2 grass-fed, family Jersey milk cow.** She just calved in June and is making lots of milk! She's 6 years old and very easy to handle. We've had her for a few years now and she's been a very good cow. She too is for sale due to no fault of her own. She has a jersey bull calf which we are currently bucket feeding with her milk that could go with her at no additional charge. \$2000 OBRO. Seth Butler, Deep Roots Farm, [deeprootsfarm@vermontel.net](mailto:deeprootsfarm@vermontel.net), 802-325-2008.

**Location: Pawlet, VT**

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

#### HELP WANTED: Management Position

Nice organic dairy farm in Western NY seeks to add a management capable farmer or couple to our team. About 100 cows to milk with room for more. Well capitalized with excellent market, and good future climate potential. Call or email to respond: Doug Murphy, [dsm1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dsm1@sbcglobal.net), 216-401-1052.

**Location: Sherman NY**

#### CHASEHOLM FARM IS HIRING A HERDSPERSON

Chaseholm Farm seeks a highly motivated and hardworking individual who is interested in pursuing a career in regenerative livestock farming. The position is for a herdsman who will be managing both our small dairy herd and our growing beef herd. The position is year round and starts 10/15/23.

Chaseholm Farm is a third generation family dairy located in New York's Hudson Valley. We are certified Organic and 100% Grass-Fed. In 2023-2024 we will be milking 10-12 cows, mostly Holstein and Jersey crosses. The milk is sold through several channels: raw, as yogurt, and made into cheese at Chaseholm Creamery. We also currently manage a herd of 60 grassfed beef cattle and raise 40 pastured pigs each year.

Qualified applicants must be hard workers with excellent communication and computer skills, and love and compassion for animals. Three years of dairy farming experience is a requirement; management experience is a strong plus. Tractor and Skid Steer experience is required.

This position will include all aspects of managing a small grass-fed dairy and beef herd, including once daily milking 4-5 times per week, rotationally grazing our herds, putting up feed in the summertime, and feeding it out in the wintertime. Most of our milk is made into direct-market dairy products, so the position may include customer interactions. Dairy farming is year

*continued on page 36*

**Northeast Organic Dairy Producers  
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c/o Ed Maltby  
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**Classified Ads** - continued from page 35

round, 365 days a year. Some days start early, and some days run long. FOR A FULL JOB DESCRIPTION VISIT: <https://nodpa.com/n/880/Employment-Opportunities>. Contact Sarah Chase, [chaseholmfarm@gmail.com](mailto:chaseholmfarm@gmail.com), 518-339-2071.

**Location: Pine Plains, NY**

**EQUIPMENT FOR SALE**

**FOR SALE: 1985 Massey Ferguson 852 pull-type Combine**

with pick-up head. Asking \$7000.00 Contact Nathan Bawden, [psdfarmer@gmail.com](mailto:psdfarmer@gmail.com), 315-854-1586

**Location: Hammond, NY**

**FEED/GRAIN/HAY FOR SALE**

**FOR SALE: Certified Organic Alfalfa Hay**, 2023 Second Cutting Grown Here On Our 5th Generation Family Farm. RFV 200, CP 20.7%, no rain, stored inside. 3x3x8 square bales weighing approximately 900# each, pick up on-farm. Contact Galen Ackerman, 785-547-7072, [galen.ackerman@gmail.com](mailto:galen.ackerman@gmail.com).

**Location: Sabetha, KS**