

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

needs your support today



November, 2025

Every November, during the NODPA Fund Drive, we ask you to support the important work NODPA does. Your dues and contributions fuel the many activities that support organic dairy farm families, and they are crucial to NODPA's survival.

With your support, NODPA will continue to provide a wide range of invaluable resources and services to organic dairy producers, including **hosting and moderating the ODairy Listserv, the 6-times per year print newsletter, bi-monthly e-newsletter, website updates and management, and the annual Field Days located at different locations throughout the region every year.**

In 2026, NODPA will continue to work with the NOP and certifiers to close regulatory loopholes that can change the dynamics of the supply side marketplace. Through our membership in the National Organic Coalition and the Organic Farmers Association, we will continue to ensure **representation for all organic dairy farm families in Washington.** To implement the priorities of organic dairies, NODPA will continue to work closely with the Western Organic Dairy Producers, our regional and national partners and advocates, to bring the maximum pressure to bear on Congress, the USDA and organic trade groups.

At NODPA, we keep costs to a minimum BUT there are still bills to pay, and we need your help. We know you depend on NODPA for the latest news and education, and your support is a vote for the work we do.

No other group can provide those services as effectively and with the same integrity as NODPA, which is why your support is so critical this year.

Thank you,

Kirk Arnold, NODPA Co-President, New York organic dairy farmer

Roman Stoltzfoos, NODPA Co-President, Pennsylvania organic dairy farmer

Ed Maltby, Executive Director

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Letter from the NODPA Executive Director, November 2025

2025 has been stressful for everyone but also full of opportunities for organic dairy farm families! The firehose of Executive Orders, cancellation of grants, USDA personnel reductions and new regulations implemented by the current administration have led many to worry about the potential impacts on their family and their farm operations as they try to anticipate future developments. Additionally, the combination of a wet spring followed by an extended fall drought has prompted producers in the northeast to closely evaluate their forage inventory and reassess feeding strategies—an especially complex task for those certifying to Grass Fed standards. Loss of production has been inevitable and early feeding of hay has made a waiver for meeting the pasture standard part of the discussion with certifiers. The search for good quality hay is intense and expensive.

BUT we have competition in the marketplace. Even those buyers slow to respond to increased costs and shortage of supply have gotten on board with a Pay Price that better reflects the costs of production, even with rising costs of inputs. The new entrants into the market include cheesemakers and those producing cultured products rather than solely concentrating on fluid milk. The beef price remains high for cross-bred calves and those selling replacements, and milking cows are getting good prices that better reflect the cost of rearing organic replacements. One of the presenters at the 25th Annual NODPA Field Days, Robert Goodling from Horizon Farm Credit, thought that the higher prices would stay for another 2 years. As producers assess the costs of keeping livestock over the winter, when they must buy hay -- with trucking costs as an added burden, there is a good market for those that want to prioritize their feed for their dairy herd by culling or selling beef animals.

NODPA was formed on February 16, 2001, at a regional summit meeting at the Congregational Church, Waterbury, VT. We celebrate our 25th year in 2026. In reviewing the minutes from meetings held between 2001 and 2005 they show that priority issues, such as defining pasture and clarifying guidelines for transitioning livestock to organic practices, have been addressed by regulatory changes which were driven by producers working together. An important priority over multiple years is to ensure consistency and integrity in the enforcement of organic standards. Without integrity there is no market for organic milk.

The 2026 NODPA priorities include continuing to work to ensure that producers' needs and opinions are part of decision making on any changes to the Organic System Plan, and review of the certification system. We will ensure that 'regulatory flexibility' and 'streamlining' of organic regulations, that some organizations/groups are promoting, are not interpreted as lowering standards or using consolidation as a reason for lowering costs. NODPA works cooperatively when it can but does not shy away from having 'sharp elbows' when it's required.

What has always been an essential priority for NODPA is Pay Price. Organic dairy farm families require a pay price that covers their operating costs, overhead, maintenance inputs, and allows for reinvestment in their farms, as well as an income sufficient to sustain a family, and encourage future generations of organic dairy producers. Those costs need to be reviewed annually and when there is a change in the costs of feed and/or inputs. If buyers want a healthy, growing supply, Pay Price is central to that equation.


