



# Organic Dairy Matters

A monthly resource for Organic Dairy Producers  
published by Pennsylvania Certified Organic



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Upcoming Events:

**October 18-21**

PCO Dairy Intensive Workshop and Inspection Training, Midway Mennonite Center

**October 27**

PCO Standards Meeting, Midway Mennonite Center

**November 5**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual New & Beginning Farmer Workshop, Farm Show Complex.  
Call 717-664-7077

Contact PCO if you have an event to list!  
814-364-1344

## WANTED

### CERTIFIED ORGANIC LIVESTOCK FEED!

After a long drought, NE organic dairy farmers are in dire need of feed. PCO is working to help our certified dairy farmers get in touch with certified producers who have ORGANIC feed for sale.

Contact Erin James at PCO immediately if you are selling certified organic crops or hay so we may put you on our dairy feed supplier list (364-1344, erin@paorganic.org).

## Introducing Organic Dairy Matters!

Welcome to our new monthly newsletter for certified and transitioning dairy farmers. We aim to share information about organic certification, allowed and prohibited materials, herd health, pasture and farm management, and changing regulations and policies relating to organic production. We also hope that this publication will help strengthen the network of dairy farmers, feed, seed and implement suppliers, veterinarians, extension agents, researchers and milk companies, and in turn, strengthen the organic dairy industry in Pennsylvania

and neighboring states. The newsletter will also include classified ads every month, so feel free to call us if you have something to sell or buy. Most importantly, this newsletter is first and foremost, for farmers. If you have an idea for an article that you think would be helpful or a question to ask, let us know—chances are, someone else is wondering the same thing. To pose a question or to be added to our mailing list, give Erin James a call at 814-364-1344, or send an email to erin@paorganic.org.

## Fly Management Featured at Springwood Farm Field Day by Erin James

On a warm August afternoon at the beautiful farm of Roman and Lucy Stoltzfoos in Kinzers, PA, about 45 people gathered to hear Cornell University's "Fly Guys" Don Rutz and Keith Waldron talk about what they know best: flies and fly management. The field day focused on identification of different types of flies, lifecycles and habits, and methods for both preventing fly populations from growing on a farm and dealing with flies once they are already there. The Fly Guys emphasized that flies are not only an annoyance, but a health risk, as they spread diseases like pink eye through and between herds, and an economic risk: cattle covered with flies are uncomfortable during the summer and may end up producing less milk (an estimated 5-10% less!).

The two types of flies discussed were face or "house" flies (commonly seen on livestock faces around the eyes and mouth) and horn or "stable" flies (smaller biting flies seen on the legs and bellies). Rutz and Waldron emphasized that in order to deal with flies, you must "know your enemy". Different approaches work for different insects. The most important changes a farmer can make to deal with both kinds of flies involve cleaning up around the barn and paddocks. Flies

depend on moist organic matter to reproduce, so reproduction is limited if moisture is minimized and walkways, stalls, and parlors are kept free of manure, feed and soiled bedding. Waldron and Rutz also recommended spreading manure thinly and disking it into the soil if possible.

Mechanical or physical controls can help suppress flies as well. The Fly Guys discussed trapping flies using sticky tapes, paper, and ribbons, kept away from where animals can reach them. Screens and  
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**"Fly Guys" Don Rutz (left) and Keith Waldron (right) demonstrate how to identify fly larvae and pupae.**

*Thanks to Roman & Lucy Stoltzfoos & family for hosting this great event!*

*“Cows are the ultimate creatures of habit, and any changes [in feed] should be made very gradually.”*

## Treating Dairy Cows Naturally: Autumn Feeding Changes & Dealing with Scours

by Dr. Hue Karreman

As we enter the autumn season, undoubtedly you are changing into using more cured feeds. It takes about 2 weeks for the digestive system to adapt to new feeds. This is because the rumen bugs are adjusted to a certain feed intake and new feeds change rumen pH, which will kill some rumen bugs but enhance others. Fresh cows will have the hardest time, since they are adjusting to major milk production as well. Often, the worst offending material is bagged haylage.

Any product (but especially bagged), if not ensiled correctly, will cause watery scours (diarrhea). To have cows adapt more easily, it is good to begin (or step up) feeding a probiotic product with various lactobacillus bugs. If a cow is already scouring, do not feed her any type of ensiled feed for 24-48 hours. Feed only grass or mixed grass/alfalfa hay along with 2 cups of uncooked oats twice daily (with molasses). A pill or gel form of a probiotic is good too. Remove from pasture if scouring (the only time I am against a cow on pasture) Remember to make feed changes *gradually* or you will get upset rumens.

A product that I've had reasonably good success with is called "Ferro", a tea-colored colloidal liquid mineral drench that has great astringent qualities along with an appreciable amount of iron. Tasting it will make your mouth pucker! Herbs that help

This article was first printed in Dr. Karreman's *Moo News* in October, 2001. For more information about Dr. Karreman and Penn Dutch Cow Care, or to subscribe to his newsletter, please call 717-529-0155 or visit [www.pennndutchcowcare.org](http://www.pennndutchcowcare.org). Our thanks to Dr. Karreman for sharing his expertise!

### Fly Management *continued from previous page*

fans are also excellent ways to control fly numbers in barns and the parlor. Several options for fly sprays for organic producers include Ecto-Phyte (Agri-Dynamics) and No-Fly (oil-based; Crystal Creek). Remember to always check with your certifier before using any sprays, tapes or baits in your barn or on your animals.

Another viable option is Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This method involves buying or supporting natural predators of flies on your farm. There are several types of beetles, mites and parasitic wasps that feed on flies in some stage of their lives; when released on your farm these beneficial insects can be very helpful in controlling fly populations.

For more information about flies and fly control, check online at <http://www.nysimp.cornell.edu/lfc>, or call PCO for handouts provided at the field day.

digestion include peppermint, licorice and aloe. Homeopathic remedies will depend on the character of the animal and the scours, but if spoiled feed is suspected, then *Arsenicum album* is indicated. If the scours are somewhat slimy and perhaps a bit bloody, think of *Merc corr*. If effortless, dark green "pipestream" scours is noticed, think of *Podophyllum*. If black, due to re-digested blood, think of *Phosphorus*.

If spoiled feed (moldy, etc.) is the reason, check your cow's temperature if she is scouring. (Place the thermometer in the vulva to get an accurate reading.) Fever and scours can indicate an infectious process like Salmonella, which can quickly affect others in the herd. Separate the suspect cows and keep them away from other animals to minimize the spreading of disease by shared water and feed areas. Any area splattered with the manure should be sanitized with bleach. Once an area is cleaned up, spread limestone to change the pH and rid the area of any remaining pathogens.

Remember cows are the ultimate creatures of habit and any changes should be made very gradually. This will minimize "off-feed" animals and lost production.

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*NOTE: All materials and methods mentioned in this article are approved for use by PCO.*

### Resources for Organic Dairy Farmers

#### O Dairy List-serve

An informative list-serve with wide-ranging discussions about herd management, health care, and organic standards. Farmers, veterinarians, certifiers, and business people participate.

To sign up, go to:

[Odairysubscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:Odairysubscribe@yahoo.com)

#### NOFA Manuals

NOFA-NY publishes and offers for sale a variety of helpful booklets, including *Organic Dairy Production, Whole Farm Planning, and Soil Resiliency and Health*.

For more information, visit

<http://nofany.org/publications.html> or call 607-652-6632.

## PCO MATERIALS SCOREBOARD

August – September 2005

### APPROVED FOR USE

#### **Livestock Supplements**

Dairy Cow Mineral (Curtis Nutritional Services)  
Dairy Pre-Mix 383 (Penny Premixes)  
Dry Cow Mineral (Curtis Nutritional Services)  
Hess Super Choice (Hess Farm Supply)  
KOW Organic Calf Concentrate Pre-Mix (KOW Consulting)  
Nutri-Gro (Farmers Select)

#### **Cleaners/Sanitizers**

Bac-Off Heavy Duty CIP (Fisher&Thompson)  
Dynamate Powder (WestAgro)<sup>2</sup>  
Liquid Sani Kleen (Fisher&Thompson)<sup>2</sup>  
Manual SUDS Shine (Fisher&Thompson)<sup>2</sup>  
Premium Dairy Kleen (Fisher&Thompson)<sup>2</sup>  
Quorum Red II (Ecolab)<sup>5</sup>  
Statisan CIP (Fisher&Thompson)<sup>2</sup>  
VigoroX (FMC Corporation)<sup>2</sup>  
XY-12 (Ecolab)<sup>2</sup>

#### **Crop Amendments**

Leroy Glick's Custom 1-2-1 Mix (Nolt Spreading)<sup>1</sup>  
Maxi-Grow 4-3-4 (McGeary)  
Soil Trace Mineral Mix (Hess)<sup>1</sup>

#### **Livestock Medical Treatments**

Aloe-Dine Iodine Teat Dip (Noble Road)  
Anti-Diarrheal Cattle Bolus (Agri-Labs)  
Cal-C-Fresh Gel (IBA)  
Cal-D Caps (BioVet)  
Echinacea Tincture (Crystal Creek)  
I.O.Dine Complex Bolus (PRN Pharmaceutical)  
One-Step Prep Teat Wipes (Fisher&Thompson)<sup>4</sup>  
Sani Teat Dip (Fisher&Thompson)<sup>4</sup>

#### **Other**

Barn Dri (Martin Limestone)

#### **Restricted uses are:**

- 1 must document soil micronutrient deficiency
- 2 must rinse thoroughly after use
- 3 must document that other germicidal agents have lost effectiveness
- 4 allowed to clean food contact surfaces and equipment only

### PROHIBITED FOR USE

**0.06% Selenium (Mar-Gro Feed)**  
**A&L Sani-Wipes (A&L Laboratories)**  
**Advance Energy Booster 100 (Milk Specialities Co.)**  
**Bovine 3 (Ag-Pak)**  
**Hess Conditioner 100 (Hess Farm Supply)**  
**Sea-Lac Ruminant Grade Menhaden Fish Meal (Omega)**  
**Wipe Out (ImmuCell)**

## Materials 101: What's allowed & what's NOT

Some important tips to keep in mind when thinking of buying or using ANY material for your organic herd, including feed, supplements, and medical treatments:

- Call or email PCO or your certifier **before** using any material
- Write ALL materials on Materials Used Form or Medicine Cabinet Inventory and include:
  - ✓ Complete contact information for the manufacturer
  - ✓ How you use the product – some materials are allowed for certain uses, but not for others!
  - ✓ Labels for any products you are planning to use – this speeds up the review process for us, so you can get an answer more quickly! Make sure the labels contain an ingredient list and the manufacturer contact information.

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## Transition Tips

### **Has the “Harvey” court ruling affected organic dairy standards?**

Yes. But not yet. If you have already begun your 1-year transition, the court ruling will not affect you. In fact, if you plan to complete your transition before June 2007, current standards would still apply.

### **What if my transition is completed after June 2007?**

That depends. Efforts are under way in the U.S. Senate to amend the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA, the Act). Several proposals have been presented, but at this point we do not know what changes, if any, would be made. One proposal would allow 3<sup>rd</sup>-year transitional feed to be used as organic feed during the 1-year herd conversion. Another proposal would ensure that the 1-year conversion applies only to transition of an entire herd, and would not allow continuous transition of conventional animals purchased from off the farm.

### **Why does there seem to be so much confusion over the organic dairy standards?**

Good question. The “Harvey” court ruling said that feeding a ration of 80% organic feed rather than 100% during the first 9 months of a herd's conversion was not allowed because OFPA requires 1 year of organic management. However, OFPA does not state how animals born on the farm or purchased from off the farm must be managed once the herd is converted to organic. A broad interpretation would allow non-organic management of these animals as long as they are managed 100% organically for 1 full year before producing organic milk. A strict interpretation could require that replacement animals be raised organically from birth (or before) once an operation has converted to organic production.

This question could be resolved through NOP regulations or by amending the Act. The difficulty with amending the Act is that it is being done as we speak by Senators and others in Congress

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## Sponsors

### Joel Steigman

Steigman Enterprises  
1188 Mountain House Rd  
Halifax, PA 17032  
(717) 362-9850

### Hue Karreman

#### Penn Dutch Cow Care

*"dedicated to providing natural treatments and herd health management services to ecologically motivated dairy farmers"*

Penn Dutch Cow Care  
1272 Mt. Pleasant Rd.  
Quarryville, PA 17566  
717-529-0155  
[penndutch@earthlink.net](mailto:penndutch@earthlink.net)

### Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Initiative

*"helping advance farming systems that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for communities"*

Northeast SARE  
University of Vermont  
105 Carrigan Dr.  
Burlington, VT 05405-0082  
(802) 656-0471  
[www.sare.org](http://www.sare.org)

For more information about organic farming or transitioning to organic production, call a member of PCO's transition team: **Patty Neiner, Jessica Greenblatt, or Erin James.**



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[www.paorganic.org](http://www.paorganic.org)

**Assuring the Integrity of Organic Products in the Marketplace.**

## Bovine Beware: Handling the "unknown" feed supplement

### Dear Buttercup,

A feed dealer came by my farm last week selling a dairy cow nutrient supplement called "Formula Z". He said it was okay for my organic herd. I checked the ingredients list and thought everything looked fine. Should I feed this to my herd? - *Trusting in Tioga County*



### Dear Trusting in Tioga,

Although this feed dealer probably has the best of intentions, ALWAYS call your certifier

to check if a material is allowed before you feed it. Get a label for the product if it is pre-packaged, and have it ready to send to PCO so we can review the ingredients. If you are buying bulk feed from a dealer or farmer, always ask for a copy of their organic certificate to verify that the material is organic, and to keep for your records at inspection time. Remember, feeding prohibited materials to certified animals can result in suspension or revocation of certification. If you have any other questions about allowed materials, consult the current PCO materials list, the OMRI lists, or call PCO at 814-364-1344.

*-Buttercup*

## Classified Ads

**FOR SALE:** Mixed and grass hay for heifers and dry cows. Large square bales, PCO certified, \$170/ton. Shelled corn available, call for more information. Joel Steigman (717) 362-9850

**WANTED:** Lancaster County farmer interested in purchasing 15-30 certified organic cows. Call Elam Eversole at (610) 273-2469.

**FOR SALE:** Organic grass hay (Union County). Briar Patch Organic Farms selling PCO-certified small bales for \$75-100 per ton. Call Preston Boop (570) 966-1658 or [presboop@uplink.net](mailto:presboop@uplink.net).

**FOR SALE:** 2 certified organic calves, 5 months old, 1 Holstein, 1 Holstein-Guernsey cross, milk and grass-fed; nice, big calves. Call (717) 768-7848 and leave a message.

Ads are free to certified producers and supporting members. Please limit ads to 30 words or less; one ad per month.

Call or e-mail Erin at PCO: 814-364-1344 or [erin@paorganic.org](mailto:erin@paorganic.org)

## Transition Tips

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with no opportunity for farmers and others in organic agriculture to be directly involved in the outcome. When NOP writes regulations, on the other hand, it may be a longer process but it requires significant input from the organic community.

### What do we do now?

Contact your Senators and Representatives and tell them of your concern. No matter what the outcome in Congress, new regulations will be required before any changes to the standards can be implemented. We should all have a chance to contribute to the rulemaking process before anything is final.

-- Leslie Zuck  
PCO Executive Director