

# Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update January 2015

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

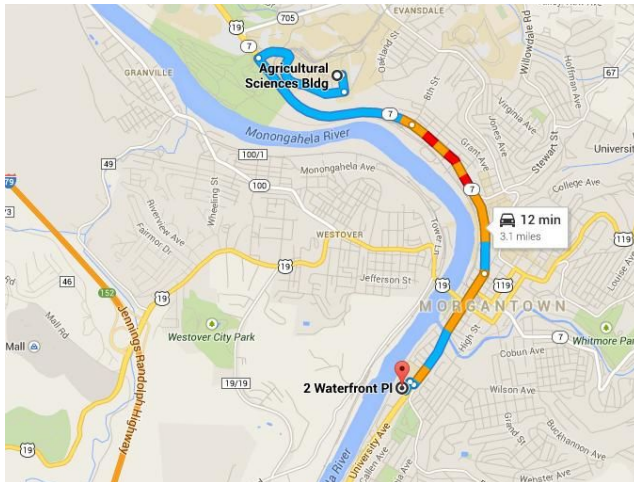
<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor



## 2015 Northeast Pasture Consortium Annual Conference & Meeting

Our annual conference and meeting in 2015 is at the Waterfront Place Hotel and the Greater Morgantown Conference & Convention Center on March 11-12 in Morgantown, WV. It precedes the Appalachian Grazing Conference being held on March 13-14 at the very same location. The Waterfront Place Hotel and Conference Center is located at Two Waterfront Place 3 miles from the West Virginia University Ag. Sciences Building. The Waterfront Place Hotel overlooks the picturesque Monongahela River. We are hoping to avoid the bad weather that we have endured the past two years.



*Waterfront Place Hotel, Morgantown WV*

To make **room reservations** use the following contact information: **Waterfront Place Hotel**, 2 Waterfront Place, Morgantown, WV 26501; phone number: (304)296-1700. The **room rate is \$98.00 per night**, plus taxes. **Each attendee needing a hotel room please note you need to make these room reservations by February 10, 2015 to hold this rate. Give them the group code 262399 for the NE Pasture Consortium Conference.** It is very important for those needing a hotel room to make reservations at the

Waterfront Place Hotel so that we meet our guaranteed number of room rentals. Reservations received after February 10th will be accepted on a space available basis.

The **registration fee** for all public sector members attending the annual conference is **\$250**. This includes the cost of continental breakfast, lunch, and breaks for each of the two days of the meeting and evening dinner on March 11. **Register by February 27, 2015** by contacting Cheryl Herrick at: Cheryl.Herrick@uvm.edu or postal address: UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture, 23 Mansfield Ave., Burlington, VT 05401, or by phone: 802-656-5459. **Be sure to use the registration form on the back page of this newsletter or register the easy way on-line at:**

<https://www.regonline.com/2015northeastpastureconsortiumannualmeeting>



*Waterfront Place Hotel & Convention Center*

### Driving Directions:

#### From South on I-79:

Merge onto I-68 East toward Cumberland, MD.  
Take the US-119 exit – Exit 1- toward University Avenue/Downtown.  
Turn **LEFT** off of the exit ramp  
Travel towards downtown Morgantown going through 3 stop lights  
The Waterfront Place Hotel is on the **LEFT** at the 4th stop light

#### From North on I-79:

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Take I-79 S to US-19 N, exit 152 from I-79 S.  
Continue on US-19 N to University Avenue.  
Turn RIGHT onto University Ave.  
Go 0.5 mile and turn RIGHT onto Waterfront Place.  
Turn LEFT within 112 feet and go 253 feet.  
Hotel will be on the RIGHT.

*concept*

## **From East on I-68:**

Take the US-119 exit – Exit 1- toward University Avenue/Downtown.  
Turn LEFT off the exit ramp  
Travel towards downtown Morgantown going through 3 stop lights.  
The Waterfront Place Hotel is on the LEFT at the 4th stop light.

## **From Morgantown Municipal Airport:**

Take Hart Field Road to US-119 S/Mileground Road.  
Continue on US-119 S/Mileground Road. Take N Willey St and University Ave to Waterfront Place in Morgantown (US-119).  
Turn RIGHT onto Waterfront Place.  
Turn LEFT within 112 feet and go 253 feet.  
Hotel will be on the RIGHT.

## **For those of you with GPS in your car:**

GPS Coordinates:  
Longitude 39.6240618  
Latitude -79.9639946

## **2015 Northeast Pasture Consortium Annual Meeting Agenda**

Wednesday, March 11

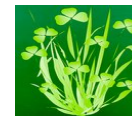
<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
8:00 AM	<b>Welcome &amp; Introduction of Participants</b> - Jim Cropper, Executive Director (Certified Forage & Grassland Professional) presiding, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'
8:30 AM	<b>Session 1 – Findings of the literature review of riparian grazing effects on water quality</b> - Moderator, Howard Skinner, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B' <b>Speakers:</b> <b>Peter Kleinman</b> , Research Leader & Soil Scientist, USDA-ARS, Pasture Systems & Watershed Management Research Unit, University Park, PA – <b>Background and overview of</b>

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Time	Activity	Time	Activity
	<p><b>Robert Brooks</b>, Director, Riparia, &amp; Professor of Geography and Ecology, Dept. of Geography, Penn State University, University Park, PA – <i>Introduction to ecosystem services and benefits from non-production riparian practices</i></p> <p><b>Howard Skinner</b>, Plant Physiologist, USDA-ARS, Pasture Systems &amp; Watershed Management Research Unit, University Park, PA – <i>Evaluating riparian conservation trade-offs with grazing</i></p> <p><b>Peter Kleinman</b> – <i>Next steps</i></p>	4:00 PM	<p><b>Session 4 – Using Life Cycle Case Study Assessments and Self-Diagnostic Tools to Understand Energy Use on Northeast Livestock Farms</b> - Moderator, Jennifer Colby, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <p><b>Jennifer Colby</b>, Program Coordinator, Vermont Pasture Network, University of Vermont, Burlington</p> <p><b>Eric Garza</b>, Energy Use in Food Systems Lecturer, University of Vermont</p> <p><i>Researchers at the University of Vermont have been working with grass-based farmers on demonstration and tool development projects with energy components. Multi-year analyses of direct and indirect energy inputs vs. production outputs will be shared, along with highlights of an easy-to-use tool developed to help farmers better understand the energy and cost trade-offs of different production systems, tractor purchases, and changes in fuel costs.</i></p>
10:00 AM	<p><b>Break</b> - MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</p>	5:00 PM	<p><b>Adjourn</b></p>
10:30 AM	<p><b>Session 2 – Orchardgrass Die-off, Possible Causes and Preliminary Findings</b> - Moderator, Les Vough, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <p><b>Gordon Jones</b>, Graduate Student, Dept. of Crop &amp; Soil Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA - <i>Understanding the causes of reduced persistence in orchardgrass hay stands around the Mid-Atlantic Region and results of 2014 survey</i></p> <p><b>Marvin Hall</b>, Professor, Dept. of Plant Science, Penn State University, University Park, PA – <i>Observations on orchardgrass die off in Pennsylvania</i></p> <p><b>Sid Bosworth</b>, Extension Agronomist, Dept. of Plant &amp; Soil Science, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT – <i>Observations on orchardgrass die off in New England</i></p> <p><b>Ed Rayburn</b>, Extension Forage Agronomist, West Virginia University, Morgantown – <i>Observations on orchardgrass die off in West Virginia</i></p>	5:30 PM	<p><b>Dinner</b> – Salon E</p>
12:00 PM	<p><b>Lunch</b> - Salon E</p>	7:00 PM-9:00 PM	<p><b>Evening Session - Producer Showcase</b> - Moderator, Joe Hatton, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <p><b>Jennifer Jones</b>, Owner &amp; Operator, Swift Level Farm, Lewisburg, WV - <i>Raising Grass-Fed Beef</i> (approx. title)</p> <p><b>Gary Walls</b>, Owner &amp; Operator, Walls Farm, Bruceton Mills, WV - <i>Managing livestock, grass, and water in a rotational grazing system</i></p> <p><b>Joe Hatton</b>, Owner &amp; Operator, Hatton Farm, Morgantown, WV - <i>Using livestock as a pasture management tool</i></p>
1:00 PM	<p><b>Session 3 - Progress of the "Assisting Organic Dairy Producers to Meet the Demands of New and Emerging Milk Markets" research project - Flaxseed supplementation &amp; Ryegrass Trials</b> - Moderator, Andre Brito, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <p><b>Heather Darby</b>, Extension Associate Professor, Agronomic and Soils Specialist, University of Vermont, Burlington - <i>Integrating Annual Forages into Northeast Pasture Systems</i></p> <p><b>Sid Bosworth</b>, Extension Agronomist and Instructor, University of Vermont, Burlington &amp; <b>Howard Skinner</b>, Plant Physiologist, USDA-ARS, Pasture Systems &amp; Watershed Management Research Unit, University Park, PA - <i>Does the Blending of Perennial Ryegrass Cultivars Improve Pasture Yield, Seasonal Distribution, and Resilience to Winter Injury?</i></p> <p><b>A. Fay Benson</b>, Project Manager NY Organic Dairy Initiative, Cornell University, Cortland, NY - <i>Improving Soil Health and Season Extension of Pastures with Brassicas</i></p> <p><b>Andre Brito</b>, Assistant Professor, Dairy Nutrition Research Center, University of New Hampshire, Durham &amp; <b>Kathy Soder</b>, Animal Scientist, USDA-ARS, Pasture Systems &amp; Watershed Management Research Unit, University Park, PA - <i>Feeding Ground Flaxseed to Dairy Cows During the Winter and Grazing Seasons: University and On-Farm Studies</i></p>	Thursday, March 12	
3:00 PM	<p><b>Poster Break</b> – (authors present), MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</p>	8:00 AM	<p><b>Session 5 – Dung Beetles - Their usefulness in the pasture ecosystem &amp; what affects their populations</b> - Moderator, Thomas Griggs, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <p><b>Matt Bertone</b>, Extension Associate, Entomologist, NCSU Plant Disease &amp; Insect Clinic, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC - <i>Natural history of dung beetles and commonly-encountered pasture species</i></p> <p><b>Wes Watson</b>, Interim Department Head - Entomology &amp; Professor and Extension Specialist, Livestock &amp; Poultry, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC - <i>Dung beetle contributions to pasture nutrient cycling</i></p> <p><b>Scott Bowdridge</b>, Assistant Professor of Food Animal Production, Dept. of Animal &amp; Nutritional Sciences, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV - <i>Anthelmintic resistance in cattle and livestock health management to improve survivability of dung beetles in pastures</i></p>
		9:30 AM	<p><b>Break</b> – MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</p>
		10:00 AM	<p><b>Pasture-Based Farming Research and Demonstration Needs Discussion Concurrent Sessions</b></p> <p><b>Topics:</b></p> <p>Private Sector Session to Prioritize Research and Demonstration Needs, Salon AB</p> <p><b>Moderator, Ken Miller</b></p> <p><b>Recorder, Angus Johnson</b></p>

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Time	Activity
	Public Sector divides into groups based on their primary interest in these research topics: <b>Two one-hour sessions</b> (allows people to attend 2 sessions of interest) <b>Coordinator, Andre Brito, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</b> <b>Report Compiler, Susan Parry</b> Riparian Pasture Grazing Management to protect water quality Orchardgrass Die-Off Investigation Action Plan Supplementation of Dairy Cows to enhance omega-3 content in milk New Forage Crops & Varieties to enhance and extend pasture productivity Energy Audits on Grazing Farms using the Self-Audit Form Promoting Dung Beetle Activity in Pastures Goat and sheep parasitology progress on pastures (Discuss progress, funding initiatives, demonstration projects, coordination efforts, collaboration opportunities, explore new directions)
12:00 PM	<b>Lunch – Salon E</b>
1:00 PM	<b>Research/Demonstration Directions and USDA Agency Reports - Jim Cropper, Executive Director presiding, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</b>  <b>Concurrent Session Reports &amp; Discussion</b>  <b>ARS report – Mark Walbridge, Beltsville, MD or representative</b> <b>NIFA report - Jim Dobrowolski, Washington, DC</b> <b>NRCS Report - Sid Brantly, Washington, DC</b>
3:30 PM	<b>Break – MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</b>
4:00 PM	<b>Business Meeting – Les Vough, Public Sector Co-Chair Elect and Diane Schivera, Private Sector Co-Chair Elect, Presiding, MEC Exhibit Hall 'B'</b>  Election of Private Sector and Public Sector members-at-large to serve on the Executive Committee of the NE Pasture Consortium  Other business to come to the Floor, such as resolutions and changes to Consortium research, education, and financial & technical assistance priorities.  <i>Jim Cropper, Executive Director, Thank you to the outgoing Executive Committee members. Welcome to the new Executive Committee members, and Announcement of the 2015 Public and Private Sector Co-Chairs</i>
5:00 PM	<b>Adjourn</b>

## Conference Overview

During the Pasture-Based Farming Research Needs Session at our 2013 Northeast Pasture Consortium Conference, a concern was raised by one of our Maryland farmer members that livestock exclusionary fencing was being mandated

in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed on both sides of all streams that ran through pastures. It also appeared this fencing would have to be built to USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service standards. The concern was that it might entail permanent fencing using several strands of non-electrified wire. If the stream had any sizable floodplain associated with it where out-of-bank flow could occur, it would cause recurrent damage to the fence requiring repeated maintenance. The expense and hassle would likely cause many farmers to row crop these riparian pastures rather than continue to graze livestock on them, a very dubious landuse change from a water quality benefit standpoint. This led us to kick off our 2014 Conference with a session entitled: *Managing Pastures in Riparian Areas for Water Quality and Forage Utilization*. In this session, Dr. David Butler from the University of Tennessee presented his graduate work at North Carolina State University that demonstrated that short duration rotational stocking of cattle that was well-managed to leave at least a 4-inch residual grass stubble on a pasture paddock when the cattle were removed to graze another paddock, greatly reduced runoff water concentrations of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment leaving rainfall simulator plots. Dwight Dotterer from Maryland Department of Agriculture explained their new nutrient management regulations relating to setbacks for streams. In these regulations, there were provisions to use other means besides exclusionary fencing if the other conservation practices were similar in effectiveness in reducing nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment loading of streams flowing through pastures.

These two presentations led to a proposal at our 2014 Conference to find and evaluate relevant research to see if other conservation measures other than complete (except for stream crossings) livestock exclusion were viable alternatives. This thereby led to the formation of a work group at the USDA-ARS Pasture Systems and Water-



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shed Management Research Unit at University Park, PA. They did an extensive literature review of riparian pasture management to get existing documentation on grazing management and other treatment measures that would show whether or not these practices mitigate loss of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment to streams flowing through pastures. At our first session of this year's Conference, *Findings of the literature review of riparian grazing effects on water quality*, they will be giving us the results of their work and insight into their future plans.



The second session, *Orchardgrass Die-off, Possible Causes and Preliminary Findings*, is also a product of our farmer membership work on pasture-based research needs that originally was suggested in 2013 and highly reiterated at the 2014 Conference. We knew that Virginia Tech University at Blacksburg was involved in trying to solve what was causing orchardgrass die-off in their hayfields and pastures. When we contacted them, we discovered that a graduate student, Gordon Jones, under the direction of Dr. Ben Tracy was doing an early spring investigation in Virginia and several of our southern states in the Northeast. We collaborated with him to find sites with failing orchardgrass stands so he could visit them and do an assessment. Gordon will be presenting the results of his 2014 inventory of orchardgrass hay stands where stand persistence is an issue. Other researchers from around the Northeast Region will be updating us on orchardgrass survival in their States.

In the afternoon of March 11, the third session will bring everyone up-to-date on the *Progress*

*of the "Assisting Organic Dairy Producers to Meet the Demands of New and Emerging Milk Markets" research project: Flaxseed supplementation & Ryegrass Trials.* Organic dairy milk from pastured cows has more omega-3 fatty acid in it than confinement-fed cows producing conventional milk. This leads to a more healthful omega-3 to omega-6 fatty acid ratio in whole milk. Unfortunately organic dairy cows fed stored forages and typical supplements in the winter produce milk with less omega-3. Dr. Andre Brito and his collaborators have found ground flaxseed increases omega-3 content of organic milk produced by winter-fed organic cow herds. This session will have Dr. Andre Brito and Dr. Kathy Soder update us on their latest findings at the UNH Organic Dairy Research Farm and cooperating on-farm organic dairies.

As the other significant part of this research project, newly introduced perennial ryegrass cultivars were tested at 3 locations in the Northeast. Dr. Sid Bosworth and Dr. Howard Skinner will tell us how the new cultivars fared at the test locations. Drs. Heather Darby and Fay Benson will present information on Brassicas and other annual forages that can extend the grazing season for graziers that want to feed less stored forage.

Our poster paper session follows session 3. This is an opportunity to see how other research projects are progressing or seeing how that research is used to improve the sustainability and economic viability of pasture-based farms in the Northeast as farmers work with educators and technicians to apply best management practices to their pastures. Or, it may be a poster paper that shows how the products produced on pasture are processed and marketed locally for their wholesomeness and safety.

The fourth session wraps up the first day's daytime program looking at *Using Life Cycle Case Study Assessments and Self-Diagnostic*

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**Tools to Understand Energy Use on Northeast Livestock Farms.** Jennifer Colby and Eric Garza will show how farmers can use self-diagnostic tools to do an energy audit on their farm to see where they can better their bottom line by reducing energy usage.

Our evening session is called the **Producer Showcase**. Joe Hatton is the moderator of this session. Jennifer "Tootie" Jones will start this session off talking about Swift Level Farm and their grass-fed beef operation at Lewisburg, WV. Our second speaker will be Gary Walls from Bruceton Mills, WV. He will be talking about his grazing operation and the extensive work he did to provide water to his cattle. Joe Hatton will wrap up the session showing how he uses livestock to improve pastures and reclaim brushy ones.

The following morning, March 12, we begin our last technical session, **Dung Beetles - Their usefulness in the pasture ecosystem & what affects their populations**, hosted by Dr. Thomas Griggs. Drs. Matt Bertone and Wes Watson from North Carolina State University will give the natural history of dung beetles and how they improve nutrient cycling in pastures. Dr. Scott Bowdridge from West Virginia University will follow-up telling us how to avoid killing off dung beetles while ridding livestock of worms and pesky flies.

The remainder of the morning the Private Sector will deliberate on where pasture research and outreach ought to head next to inform pasture-based farmers on better ways to manage their livestock, pastures, farm enterprise, and marketing. The Public Sector will split up into groups to attend concurrent sessions that will focus on current research topics of greatest interest to redirect, enhance, foster collaborative efforts, and explore funding grant opportunities.

In the afternoon, we wrap up the conference with a **Reports Session** and the business meeting. The Reports Session will provide an hour and a half to report to each other what we concluded during the concurrent sessions on additional research and outreach needs to improve pasture-based farming or to demonstrate it works well environmentally as well as economically.

## POSTER PAPER SESSION FOR THE 2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A single poster paper session will be held on the afternoon of March 11<sup>th</sup>. This hour session gives researchers and others a chance to show us what they are doing in support of pasture-based farms in Northeast and elsewhere. These poster papers display wide-ranging efforts that either support the session topics of the current annual meeting or follow-up on previous meetings' session topics. They can also be papers that address new issues of importance to pasture-based farmers and the society that they support with food, fiber, and scenic green open spaces.

Be sure to let Jim Cropper know that you plan to present a paper so that we have adequate wall space to display them. **Deadline for submission of poster paper title and author names is February 6, 2015.** Submit this information by email to Jim Cropper at: [jbcropper@yahoo.com](mailto:jbcropper@yahoo.com)

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*Troy Bishop at his poster paper*

For the Northeast Pasture Consortium members doing a poster paper for the annual conference only, use the guidance below. For those members reprising a poster paper that they have used at other conferences or meetings, there is no need to conform to every specification below. However, keep in mind the target audience is primarily to inform our livestock and pasture farmer members. In the results and summary sections be sure to emphasize how the research findings in the poster paper are or could be relevant to their operations. In previous years, we have had posters sessions on Economics, Carbon Sequestration and the Environment, Pasture Plants and Management, and Pasture-Based Product Quality.

## Introduction

A major purpose of the annual meeting is a 2-way exchange of information. Remember that your paper must be carefully planned, clear and concise, oriented to transfer information effectively, hold the attention of the audience, and have a take-home message.

## Planning

Include: an **introduction, methods, results and discussion, summary, and references**. Use me-

tric and English units (in parenthesis) for **weights and measures**, or English units only. Use Power Point (or other computer graphic software) or make a small-scale layout of your poster on ordinary letter paper (8 1/2 by 11 inches). Emphasize the points you want to stress in your poster. Think of headlines, text, charts, graphs, illustrations, and photos, and incorporate these ideas into your layout. Once you are satisfied with the initial layout, finalize poster. **We can only accommodate small posters this year.** They will be mounted on an easel. **Poster size: half poster** - approx. 36 X 48 inches. **Send abstract to Jim Cropper by February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014.**

## Organization

Your poster starts in the upper left hand corner. From here the poster should flow from left to right and top to bottom. The title - author(s) - sponsoring institution heading for your poster must be at the top of the poster paper. Use letters, numbers, or arrows to indicate the proper flow to the audience.

## Simplicity

Don't crowd too much information into the presentation; concentrate on two or three main points. Highlight trends and comparisons with **simplified** charts, graphs, and diagrams. Make key points in the legend of the figure or table. Use text sparingly, and make sure it is easily understood by the audience. **Outline important points with bulleted text.** Use abbreviations and acronyms sparingly. Avoid overwhelming your audience with too many numbers, words, and/or complicated graphs or tables. Remember, a lot of people will read or study your poster while you are away or talking to another person about the content of the poster; keep the message clear and simple. Choose one background color for your poster paper. Use contrasting colors where appropriate in charts, graphs, and diagrams.

## Headings



For the **title**, use a finished font that is at least 1 inch high when the poster is printed out to full size. The lettering for authors' names, sponsoring institution, and address should be at least 3/4 inch high. **For section heads and subheads, use a type font** at least 25% larger than the text font (1/4 inch tall when poster is printed at full size). All type must be easily read from a distance of six feet. Use a bold typeface for headings and labels.

### Text Type

Keep your text in short, concise, legible statements; minimize complete sentences and paragraphs. A few summary statements are encouraged. Use a word processor to prepare your text copy. Set your word processor for 1.5 lines of space between each line of type. Text in upper and lower case letters is more readable than all capitals. Lettering for subheads and figure captions should be larger than text type, but smaller than type used for a main heading. This type should also be bold. Text type should be at least 1/4-inch tall and readable from a distance of 6 feet. Choose a plain font type such as Arial.

### Mounting

The best procedure is to use large glossy paper that is on a spool of a plotter used to capture the image from Power Point or similar software. Bring along the necessary items to put up your poster. **This year at the Waterfront Place Hotel, we will use easels to display the posters. You will need to mount your poster paper on hardboard or other rigid material to place it on the easel.** You will be given an assigned easel to display your poster. Bring a supply of business cards to hand out at your poster session so people can contact you if they want to follow-up with you. Have a sign-up pad available for people to list their names and addresses who want more information. You may also provide handouts for interested people to pick up.

## 2015 Appalachian Grazing Conference - “Dollars & Sense of Grazing”

We have traditionally scheduled our conference at a place and time so you can attend two grazing related conferences in one trip. The 2015 Appalachian Grazing Conference is also being hosted by the Waterfront Place Hotel and Conference Center. The Appalachian Grazing Conference is an opportunity that no Appalachian (or Northeast US) livestock producer should miss! There are informative presentations and demonstrations of interest to those with cattle, goats, and sheep. With over twenty different speakers and vendors from across the country, you just can't afford not to attend! Their draft agenda is below.

### **2015 APPALACHIAN GRAZING CONFERENCE DRAFT AGENDA**

*March 13, 2015*

*Registration Begins at 7:15 AM*

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS** (8:45 – 9:00 AM)

**KEYNOTE SESSION** (9:00 — 10:00 AM)

Jim Gerrish

**VENDOR BREAK** (10:00 – 10:30 AM)

(Exhibit Hall)

#### **CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

**SESSION 1** (10:30 — 11:30 AM)

(Choose 1 of the 5 talks listed below labeled A–E)

- A. “Plant Identification, Morphology and Management” — Dr. Ozzie Abaye
- B. “Pasture Condition Scoring” — Jim Cropper
- C. “Internal Parasite Control in Small Ruminants” — Scott Bowdridge
- D. “Risk Management in Pasture Livestock Production” — Tom McConnell
- E. “Conventional Weed Control in Pastures and Hay Fields” — Dr. Rakesh Chandran and Producers

**LUNCH** (11:30 AM – 1:00 PM)

(Exhibit Hall)

**SESSION 2** (1:00 — 2:00 PM)

(Choose 1 of the 5 talks listed below labeled A–E)

- A. “Forage Species for Grazing: The Old-Proven & New-Potential Species” — Don Wild
- B. “Organic Weed Control” — Sid Bosworth
- C. “Selection and Management of Small Ruminants” — Brad Smith
- D. “Holistic Farm Management” — Nola Wilson
- E. “Fencing 101” — Bill Iams

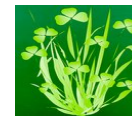


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**VENDOR BREAK** (2:00 – 2:30 PM)  
(Exhibit Hall)

**FRIDAY AFTERNOON PROGRAM** (2:30 — 5:30 PM)

WVU Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources & Design

1. "Aerial Monitoring & Management of Insects and Weeds Using Unmanned Vehicles" – Yong-Lak Park
2. "Pasture, Profits and Prices" — Doolarie Singh-Knights
3. "Demonstration of Artificial Insemination (AI) in Goats" — Marlon Knights and Dr. Paul Lewis

Dinner and Entertainment (6:00 PM)  
(Exhibit Hall)

*March 14, 2013*

**KEYNOTE SESSION** (8:00 — 9:00 AM)  
Jim Gerrish

**VENDOR BREAK** (9:00 – 9:30 AM)  
(Exhibit Hall)

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

- SESSION 3** (9:30 — 10:30 AM)  
(Choose 1 of the 5 talks listed below labeled A–E)
- A. "Multi-Species Grazing" — Gregg Brann
  - B. "Building a Year Around Forage System" — Chris Teutsch
  - C. "Goat Nutrition" — Susan Schoenian
  - D. "Business Planning" — John Laughner
  - E. "Pasture Soil Health" — Bob Hendershot

**VENDOR BREAK** (10:30 – 11:00 AM)  
(Exhibit Hall)

- SESSION 4** (11:00 — 12:00 PM)  
(Choose 1 of the 5 talks listed below labeled A–E)
- A. "Grass-Finished Beef" — Scott Barao
  - B. "Nitrogen vs. Legumes in Pasture & Hay Systems" — Dr. Ed Rayburn
  - C. "Pasture Pitfalls" — Kathy Soder
  - D. "Farm Transitioning" — Jared Grissinger
  - E. "Defoliation Management Impacts on Pasture Growth and Root Health" — Thomas Griggs



*A grass-finished steer - See following article*

**LUNCH** (12:00 – 1:30 PM)  
(Exhibit Hall)

- SESSION 5** (1:30 — 2:30 PM)  
(Choose 1 talk listed below)
- A. "Grass-Finished Beef" — Scott Barao
  - B. "Nutrient Management in Pastures and Hay Fields" — Tom Basden
  - C. "Marketing (Small Ruminant)" — John Hopkins
  - D. "Economics" — American Farm Bureau

**VENDOR BREAK** (2:30 – 3:00 PM)  
(Exhibit Hall)

**CLOSING SESSION** (3:00 – 4:00 PM)

**Adjourn** (4:00 PM)

## New tool calculates costs of grass-fed beef

From the NY Grazing Coalition "Grazette" January 2015 Newsletter, Winrock International, and The Grass-Fed Exchange



The Grass-fed Beef Decision Calculator is a new tool to help farmers decide how much they can earn raising grass-fed beef. It is a product of The Pasture Project at the Wallace Center of Winrock International. The Pasture Project works in the Upper Mississippi River Basin to increase the number of acres of farmland that are sustainably managed. The Calculator is a comprehensive, interactive Excel spreadsheet that is easy to modify and use, and helpful to both experienced and novice grass-fed beef producers. The spreadsheet is broken down into multiple worksheets modeling various cattle enterprises such as Cow/Calf, Stocker, Finishing, and Direct Market.

For instance, as the developer Dr. Allen Williams says, "The Direct Market worksheet accounts for either transferring weaned calves from your

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cow/calf operation to a grass-finishing operation, or purchasing feeder calves for finishing, and direct marketing. This worksheet not only accounts for live calf and forage performance, but also post-harvest costs such as processing plant per-head kill fees, per-pound processing costs, cattle and beef transport costs and marketing and sales costs. It allows you to effectively determine where you need to price your end product (retail cuts of beef) on a per-pound basis in order to make the margin you require for desired profitability."

In addition, the decision calculator also provides a five-year cash flow projection tool that allows you to change various inputs and model cash flow for a multi-year period based on anticipated input costs. Finally, there is a Overvalue/Under-value decision calculator that helps in making informed sell-buy decisions. The tool was developed by Dr. Allen Williams, and more information and the spreadsheet are available here: <http://www.wallacecenter.org/pastureproject/calculator>.

Dr. Allen Williams is a founding partner and President of Livestock Management Consultants, LLC, a livestock industry consulting firm specializing in building natural branded food programs, facilitation of Values Based Value Chain management, and Ranch/Farm business planning. He also serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Association of Family Farms (AFF). He is a Committee Member of The Grass-Fed Exchange <http://www.grassfedexchange.com/>.

He holds a Ph.D. in Animal Breeding and Genetics/Reproduction from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA, and an M.S. and B.S. in Animal Science from Clemson University, SC. He served as an Animal Science Assistant and Associate Professor at Louisiana Tech University for nine years and as an Extension Beef Cattle Specialist/Associate Professor at Mississippi State University for five years, prior to the for-

mation of Livestock Management Consultants, LLC.

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As interest increases in silvopasture management in hardwood forests in the Northeast, here are some words of caution in the article below if there are oak trees in the mix of trees in your silvopasture. Acorn poisoning not only happens to cattle, but also can happen to horses, goats, and sheep if they eat too many of them. The tannins they warn you about in the acorns are not the same tannins contained in birds-foot trefoil that is beneficial in binding up some of the protein in the trefoil forage so it becomes by-pass protein that is digested in the lower digestive tract of ruminants. Trefoil and some other legumes contain condensed tannins, whereas acorns have hydrolyzable tannins that can be toxic to some livestock. In fact, there are efforts underway to increase condensed tannin content in alfalfa so that its protein is better utilized in making milk by causing some its protein to bypass rumen conversion in dairy cows.

## **Pasture-Based Livestock Producers Need to Be Alert for Acorn Poisoning**

Source: University of Arkansas Press Release.  
[www.uaex.edu](http://www.uaex.edu)

Little Rock, Arkansas (December 10, 2014)-- Autumn's generous acorn crop may be great for deer, but could be deadly for cattle, said Tom Troxel, associate head-Animal Science, for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture.

"Arkansas, where cattle are frequently grazing pastures that may contain oak timber, the possibility exists for cattle to consume acorns," he said. An occasional acorn isn't a threat, but too many open the door to acorn poisoning."



*Burr Oak Acorns*

Troxel said cattle (horses, goats, and sheep) eat acorns for a variety of reasons.

“Rainfall has been below average in August, September and October, leaving fall pastures’ forage short, stemmy, fibrous and not very nutritious,” he said. “And with this recent cold snap, cattle need more calories to stay warm, so they’re eating whatever they can find and that often includes acorns.”

Tannins are the toxic agents found in acorns, Troxel said. “Consumption of tannins can lead to gastrointestinal problems, severe kidney damage and death,” he said. “Some cattle may consume acorns and experience no ill effects, while others suffer severe disease.”

Many species of oaks are considered toxic to animals. They typically affect cattle and sheep, and they also can occasionally cause toxicity in horses.

Acorns aren’t the only danger. Poisoning can also arise when cattle consume buds and small leaves from standing or cut trees in the spring, he said.

Early signs associated with acorn poisoning are abdominal pain, poor appetite, diarrhea that is often black or bloody in color, and occasional constipation. As the disease worsens there may be signs of kidney failure. Affected cattle will show symptoms of dehydration, increased thirst, general weakness, weight loss, frequent urination and a rapid, weak pulse. Edema, or fluid-swollen tissue, may be seen in the chest, legs and

abdomen.

“Since there is no specific antidote for acorn poisoning, treatment is limited,” Troxel said. “A veterinarian should be contacted immediately.”

### **Preventing acorn poisoning**

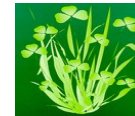
Prevention is the best medicine for acorn poisoning. Keep cattle away by fencing off an area where oaks are prevalent. If that’s not possible, giving the cattle a supplement that contains 10 percent hydrated lime - calcium hydroxide - will lessen the hazard of acorn poisoning.

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## 2015 NORTHEAST PASTURE CONSORTIUM ANNUAL CONFERENCE PUBLIC SECTOR REGISTRATION FORM

### FULL REGISTRATION FEES

Paid on or before **02/27/15** \$250.00

Paid after **02/27/15** \$275.00

**Single-Day Registration fee** \$150.00

If paying by check, make check payable to **University of Vermont**.

### REQUIRED REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Full Registration

Single Day Reservation  03/11/15 or  03/12/15

Organization/Farm \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

If paying by credit card,

Credit Card Type \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Three Digit Security Code # \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check 03/12 Concurrent Session  
Preference (no more than 2):

Riparian Pasture Mgt

Orchardgrass Die-off

Dairy Cow Supplements

New Forage Cultivars

Farm Energy Audits

Fostering Dung Beetles

Goat/Sheep Parasitology

### PAYMENT ADDRESS

Send completed registration form, and if paying by check,

payment check to: ATTN: Cheryl Herrick  
UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture  
23 Mansfield Ave.  
Burlington, VT 05401

### QUESTIONS

If you have registration questions, you may contact Cheryl Herrick at Cheryl.Herrick@uvm.edu or by phone at: 802-656-5459.

### CANCELLATIONS

Cancellations must be received on or before **March 4 , 2015**.