

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

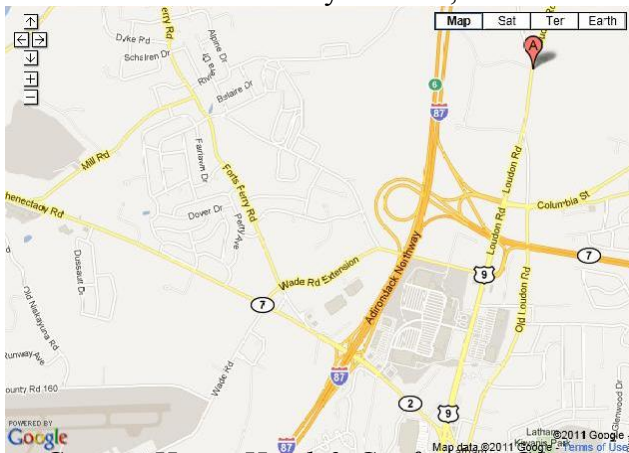
Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

2018 NORTHEAST PASTURE CONSORTIUM ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 2018 annual conference is being held in Latham, NY at the Century House Hotel and Conference Center on January 25 and 26 prior to the Winter Green-Up Grass-Fed Beef Conference being held on January 27 at the same location. The Century House Hotel and Conference Center is located on Route 9 within a half mile of the Adirondack Northway I-87, exit 7.



Century House Hotel & Conference Center, Latham, NY Location - Located at A, upper right. Note Albany Airport in lower left corner.

To make **room reservations** at The Century House call (518) 785-0931. The **room rate is \$114.00 per night** (includes breakfast), plus taxes and gratuities. **Each attendee needing a hotel room please note you need to make these room reservations by January 1, 2018 to hold this rate.** You will not be charged a deposit. **Tell them you are with the NE Pasture Consortium.** It is very important for those needing a hotel room to make reservations at The Century House so that we meet our guaranteed number of room rentals. Reservations received after December 20th will be accepted on a space available basis as they will be released to the public.



The **registration fee** for all public sector members attending the annual conference is **\$250**. This includes the cost of coffee breaks and lunch for each of the two days of the meeting and an evening dinner on January 25. **Register by January 19, 2018** either on-line or 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 NE Pasture Consortium Annual Conference registration form sent with this newsletter (check payment only) or on-line at: <https://www.regonline.com/builder/site/?eventid=2098593>**

Driving Directions:

From the East:

Take the NYS Thruway, I-90, westbound to Exit B-1 (Berkshire Spur). Follow to I-787 north to Route 7 West (Schenectady & Saratoga Springs). Take the exit for Route 9. Turn left on Route 9 (North). Go 1/2 mile north and Hotel-Restaurant-Conference Center with three entrances/exits will be on the right-hand side of Route 9.

From the West:

Take the NYS Thruway, I-90, eastbound to Exit 24. Take the Adirondack Northway, I-87, north to Exit 7 (Route 7), merge from right lane onto east-bound Route 7 towards Troy. Stay in right lane for immediate exit onto Route 9 as right lane merges onto Route 9 North. Go 1/2 mile north and Hotel-Restaurant-Conference Center with three entrances/exits will be on the right-hand

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

side of Route 9.

From the South:

Take the NYS Thruway, I-87, Northbound to Exit 7 (Route 7), merge from right lane onto Eastbound Route 7 towards Troy. Stay in right lane for immediate exit onto Route 9 as right lane merges onto Route 9 North. Go 1/2 mile north and Hotel-Restaurant-Conference Center with three entrances/exits will be on the right-hand side of Route 9.

From the North:

Take the Adirondack Northway, I-87, southbound to Exit 7 towards Troy/Cohoes. Stay in right lane for immediate exit onto Route 9 as right lane merges onto Route 9 north. Go 1/2 mile north and Hotel-Restaurant-Conference Center with three entrances/exits will be on the right-hand side of Route 9.

From Albany International Airport

The Century House offers limited Airport Shuttle Availability. Shuttle runs between 7am-9pm and must be scheduled 24 hours in advance.

The Century House has hosted the **Winter Green-Up Grass-Fed Beef Conference** every year for 10 years so this speaks well of the host. Below are pictures of the meeting room and dining room facilities.



2018 Northeast Pasture Consortium Annual Conference Agenda

Thursday, January 25

- | Time | Activity |
|----------|--|
| 8:00 AM | Welcome & Introduction of Participants - Jim Cropper, Executive Director, presiding Main Ballroom |
| 8:30 AM | Session 1 – Riparian Area Management in Pastures , - Moderator, Susan Parry, USDA-NRCS State Grassland Specialist, Harrisburg, PA Main Ballroom
Speakers:
Peter Kleinman , USDA-ARS Research Leader, Pasture Management & Watershed Management Research Unit, University Park, PA. <i>Evaluating Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Riparian Buffers in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed</i>
Erik Hagan , Riparian Conservation Planning Project Coordinator for ARS, Graduate student in Ecology, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA. <i>Riparian grazing management through a flexible planning approach</i>
Morgan Hartman , Owner and Operator, Black Queen Angus Farm, LLC, Berlin, NY. <i>Farmer Perspective on Managing Riparian Area Pastures.</i> |
| 10:00 AM | Break – Main Ballroom |
| 10:30 AM | Session 2 – Private Sector Breakout Session – Moderator, Angus Johnson, Recorder, Cliff Hawbaker. Hudson-Halfmoon Room
Renew Stakeholder Action Committee - select members and Chairperson
If time permits, begin reviewing previous research, education, and technical assistance priorities. Ascertain progress, and new direction if needed.

Session 2 - Public Sector Breakout Session - Moderator, Jenn Colby, Recorder, Jessica Williamson. Main Ballroom

Topic: <i>Riparian Area Grazing Management – How do we implement a flexible planning approach to enhance riparian areas and water quality without breaking the bank or the farmer's trust?</i> |
| 12:00 PM | Lunch - White Ballroom |

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

Time Activity

1:00 PM **Session 3 – Pastures and Soil Health - Moderator, Fay Benson**, Main Ballroom

Speakers:

Justin Morris, Regional Soil Health Specialist MN-WI, USDA-NRCS Soil Health Division, Madison, WI. *Improving Soil Health through Adaptive Grazing Management.*

Dave Llewellyn, Director of Farm Stewardship at Glynwood, Cold Spring, NY. *Soil Health and Climate Resilience for Pasture-Based Livestock Farmers*

2:45 PM **Session 4 – Silvopasture Update – Moderator, Jessica Williamson**, Main Ballroom

Speaker:

Brett Chedzoy, SCNY Ag Team-Forestry Specialist; Sr. Resource Educator, Montour Falls, NY. *Where Silvo-Pasture Research and Extension are now.*

3:15 PM **Poster Break – (authors present)** Hudson-Halfmoon Room

4:00 PM **Session 5 – Beef Viability Case Studies – Moderator, Jenn Colby**, Main Ballroom

Speaker:

Sam Smith, Farm Business Specialist, Intervale Center, Burlington, VT. *Beef Viability Case Studies.*

4:30 PM **Session 6 - Soil Health and its Impact on Human Health - Moderator, Jenn Colby**, Main Ballroom

Speaker:

Didi Pershouse, Director, The Center for Sustainable Medicine & Board Member, Soil Carbon Coalition, Thetford Center, VT. *The Ecology of Care.*

5:15 PM **Adjourn**

5:30 PM **Dinner – White Ballroom**

7:00 PM- **Evening Session - Producer Showcase - Moderator, Don Wild**, Main Ballroom

9:00 PM

Speakers:

Bruce Rivington, Kriemhild Dairy Farms, Hamilton, NY. *Churning up butter profits - A grass fed dairy's adventure into processing*

Eric Sheffer, Sheffer's Grassland Dairy, Hoosick Falls, NY. *Transitioning to Organic Dairying in Troubling Times.*

Friday, January 26

8:00 AM **Session 7 – The Saturated versus Unsaturated Dietary Fat Controversy as it relates to Pasture-raised Dairy and Meat Products - Moderator, Kathy Soder**, Main Ballroom

Speakers:

Glen Lawrence, Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY. *Good Fat versus Bad Fat: How Did They Get It So Wrong?*

Adam Lock, Associate Professor, Dairy Cattle Nutrition, College of Agriculture & Natural Resources, Department of Animal Science, Michigan State University, Lansing, MI. *Separating Milk Fats from Fiction: can we alter milk fat composition on-farm and do we want/need to alter it?*

9:30 AM **Break – Main Ballroom.**

10:00 AM **Public and Private Sectors Breakout sessions**

Public Sector – Chair, Jessica Williamson, Main Ballroom
Recorder, Fay Benson

Private Sector – Chair, Cliff Hawbaker, Hudson-Halfmoon Room

Recorder, Diane Schivera

12:00 PM **Lunch – White Ballroom**

1:00 PM **Sector and USDA Agency Reports - Jim Cropper**, Executive Director presiding, Main Ballroom

Private Sector report – *Cliff Hawbaker, Co-Chair Elect*
Public Sector report – *Jessica Williamson, Co-Chair Elect*

ARS report – *David Knaebel, Beltsville, MD*
NIFA report - *Jim Dobrowolski, Washington, DC*
PowerPoint

NRCS Report – *Kevin Ogles, Greensboro, NC*
Special Report – *Allen Matthews, Director and Instructor of Sustainable Agriculture, Chatham University, Pittsburgh, PA. Grass Fed Beef Value Chain Marketing*

4:00 PM **Break – Main Room**

4:15 PM **Business Meeting – Jenn Colby, Public Sector Co-Chair and Richard Swartzentruber, Private Sector Co-Chair, Presiding**, Main Ballroom

Margaret Smith, Administrative Advisor to NERA1603 (Northeast Pasture Consortium), NERA1603 Project for 2016-2021

Election of Private Sector and Public Sector members-at-large to serve on the Executive Committee of the NE Pasture Consortium

Present Consortium by-laws and business plan.

Other business to come to the Floor, such as resolutions and changes to Consortium research and extension priorities.

Jim Cropper, Executive Director, Thank you to the outgoing Executive Committee members, Welcome to the new Executive Committee members, and Announcement of the 2018 Public and Private Sector Co-Chairs

5:00 PM **Adjourn**

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

Guest Speakers Backgrounds

Pastures and Soil Health Session

Justin Morris has been serving as Regional Soil Health Specialist for the Soil Health Division of the Natural Resources Conservation Service since October 2015. Based out of the Madison area of Wisconsin, Justin travels throughout Wisconsin and Minnesota to provide education and training on soil health while specializing in managed grazing. Prior to serving in his present position, Justin served as Pasture Specialist for NRCS in western Montana, Rangeland Specialist in southwestern Montana and southwestern Utah, Soil Conservationist in western Oregon, and as Agriculture Extension agent in northwest Montana.

Dave Llewellyn, working closely with the Senior Director of Farm Programs, ensures Glynwood's farming efforts reflect the highest standards in resilient, regenerative practices, and Glynwood's position as a leader among the national efforts to train beginning farmers.



Dave also shapes Glynwood's strategy and pro-protocol for the practice of fundamental, regenerative farming techniques, and oversees the process of testing innovative techniques and sharing information with regional farmers on the efficacy and outcomes of these techniques. Formerly Director of Farmer Training, Dave now assists Glynwood's Senior Director of Farm Programs in developing and conducting workshops for Glynwood's farmer training efforts, and plays a key role in connecting regional farmers to land access opportunities. He apprenticed at the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Drumlin Farm and managed organic vegetable gardens for

Heifer International's Overlook Farm. Dave holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Susquehanna University and a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from Purchase College.

Beef Viability Case Studies Session



Sam Smith brings a passion for farming and food systems to his work at the Intervale. He grew up in southern Vermont, went to UVM, and recently received a MBA in Sustainability from Antioch New England. He has worked as both a livestock and vegetable farmer, and been involved in the Vermont agricultural community for over 15 years. When he is not at work Sam enjoys cooking, gardening, and getting out to enjoy the mountains with his family.

Soil Health and its Impact of Human Health Session

Didi Pershous of Thetford Center, Vermont is a cross-pollinator, helping to connect the dots between soil health and human health. She is the author of *The Ecology of Care: Medicine, Agriculture, Money, and the Quiet Power of Human & Microbial Communities* & the founder of the Center for Sustainable Medicine. After 22 years of clinical work with patients, she is now working with the Soil Carbon Coalition on a large-scale citizen-science program that engages



Photo by Jennifer Hauck

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

schools, con-servation districts, farmers, and the public in understanding the intersections between soil, water, public health, and climate resiliency. She develops curriculum on soil health principles and whole systems landscape function, and facilitates workshops that empower communities through mutual listening. Didi was one of the featured speakers at the United Nations on World Soil Day 2017.

The Saturated versus Unsaturated Dietary Fat Controversy as it relates to Pasture-raised Dairy and Meat Products Session

Dr. Glen Lawrence was raised on a farm in Greene County, New York. He received his Ph.D. in biochemistry from Utah State University in 1976. He had postdoctoral fellowships at the Uni-versity of Tubingen (Germany) and University of California, Riverside and research appointments at the Neurology Department at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine in New York and the Institute of Human Nutrition at Columbia University. He began teaching at Long Island University in 1985. He served as Science Advisor to the US Food and Drug Administration, New York Laboratory from 1989-92. Dr. Lawrence has studied metals in bio-logical and chemical oxidations, free radical re-actions of biological molecules and food compon-ents, lipid peroxidation and sugar degradation products. His recent work has focused on nutri-tional biochemistry and the influence of dietary fats and sugars on health.

Pertinent Papers:

Lawrence, G.D. 2015. Dietary fats and inflammation. *In Handbook of Lipids in Human Health: Fatty Acids*. Watson, R., DeMeester, F., eds., Academic Press, Boulder, CO, pp. 635-666.

Lawrence, G.D. 2013. Dietary fats and health: Dietary recommendations in the context of scientific evidence. *Adv. Nutr.* 4, 294-302.

Lawrence, G.D. 2010. *The Fats of Life: Essential Fatty Acids in Health and Disease*. Rutgers Uni-versity Press, Piscataway, NJ.



Adam Lock is an associate professor in the Department of Animal Science at Michigan State Univ. Originally from a dairy farm in the southwest of the United Kingdom, he received a PhD from the University of Nottingham and completed a post-doc at that

institution as well as at Cornell University. He had a research and teaching appointment at the University of Ver-mont from 2006 to 2009 before moving to his current research and extension appointment at Michigan State University in the fall of 2009. His research and extension programs focus on both dairy production and human nutrition and health, and the interface between these two disciplines. The central theme is fatty acid digestion and metabolism in the dairy cow and the impact of bioactive fatty acids on animal production and human health. Current efforts concern the effect of diet on the production of biohydrogenation intermediates in the rumen, dietary strategies for maximizing milk fat synthesis, applying this knowledge to improve our ability to troubleshoot on farm issues related to milk fat depression, fatty acid absorption in the small intestine, fat

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

supplementation opportunities, and the potential for omega-3 fatty acids to promote dairy cattle metabolism and health. The impact of milk and dairy products on human health, in particular the role of milk fat is also of special interest.

Reports Session



Allen Matthews, with more than 20 years of experience in Sustainable Agriculture, who is a multi-generation farmer, has been teaching students, nonprofits, businesses, and other farmers about sustainable practices up and

down the mid- to north-eastern United States for a while. For the last nine years, Matthews has been coordinating farm viability business planning, focusing on product development and sustainable production with more than 180 diversified farms. He has also coordinated research on cooperative development, biofuels, farmers' markets, and shiitake mushrooms. He serves as adjunct Instructor at UVM College of Agriculture and Life Sciences for undergraduate and graduate students. In recent years, Matthews has been involved in several international presentations of his work in Lithuania, Canada, The Netherlands, Macedonia, Crete, and Portugal. He has initiated successful grant proposals totaling more than \$2.1 million during that time. Matthews has held numerous leadership roles including being a member of U.S. Senator Sanders' Farm Advisory Committee, of the USDA Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Technical Council and of the Funding Diversity Partnership Center for Rural Affairs/Kellogg Foundation, as well as a member of the Vermont Renewable Energy Alliance. He has worked for

the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, helping to establish Penn's Corner Farm Alliance in west-ern Pennsylvania.

10th Winter Green-Up Grass-Fed Beef Conference, January 27, 2018

By Tove Foss Ford

The Capital Area Ag & Hort Program and Cornell Cooperative Extension, Albany County are pleased to announce our Tenth Annual Winter Green-Up, coming up on Saturday, January 27, 2018. Winter Green-Up 2018 will be held at The Century House, 997 New Loudon Road, in Latham, New York, 12110.

By popular demand, Winter Green-Up 2018 will be a one-day event. We're looking forward to great speakers, vendors, and the traditional Winter Green-Up lunch – at a great price, \$75.00 per person!

Our speakers for Winter Green-Up 2018 include:

- Brian Maloney is a custom grazer, grass-fed beef and lamb producer, as well as a direct marketer. Brian has been exclusively grazing stock since the early 1990s in western Quebec, where he raises black and red Angus beef. Brian also raises Meadow Veal, nourished on mother's milk, fresh grass, water and sunshine. Katahdin sheep, an ideal breed for meat, are also part of Brian's grass-fed stock. The lambs are born in early spring and spend all summer frolicking on grass with their mothers. They are weaned and fed all winter with our highest quality hay and finished with a minimum of 60 days on grass.
- MacKenzie Waro is the Livestock Processing and Marketing Specialist with the CCE Harvest New York team. MacKenzie works with processors, producers and consumers, helping to iden-

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

tify markets and concepts for marketing of livestock products. She is an HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) Lead Instructor, FSMA (Food Safety Modernization Act) for Animal Feeds Lead Instructor, SQF (Safe Quality Foods) Certified, and works with the USDA for cattle grading and carcass grading. MacKenzie is a graduate of Cornell University with a Bachelor's degree in Animal Science along with a Master's degree in Environmental Studies from SUNY College of Environmental Science.

- Sandra Kay Miller is a grass-based farmer who has been actively raising livestock for over 30 years. She is the owner and operator of Painted Hand Farm, a diversified livestock farm raising pastured poultry, sheep, goats, pigs and calves which are all direct-marketed in the mid-Atlantic area.

The cost for Winter Green-Up 2018 is \$75.00 per person, which includes all events and lunch.

To register online: https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/WGU2018_201.

For questions regarding registration, please contact Tove Ford at cce-caahp@cornell.edu or (518)765-3518.

For questions about Winter Green-Up 2018 or if you wish to be a vendor at this event, please contact Hank Bignell, hdb48@cornell.edu or (518)649-0267, or Tom Gallagher at tjg3@cornell.edu or (518)577-0958.

Rooms are being held for Friday and Saturday nights at The Century House for \$114 per night. Call The Century House at (518) 785-0931 to reserve. Please mention the Winter Green-Up conference to receive this special rate.

Looking forward to seeing you at Winter Green-Up 2018!

Editor's Note: Completing our back to back to back Conference tour at the end of January is the Second Southern New England Livestock Conference. It will be on Sunday, January 28, 2018 in Dighton, MA east of Providence, RI. The details on the Conference follow in the next column. This Conference is produced by The Livestock Institute of Southern New England and Bristol County Agricultural High School Department of Animal Science.



2nd Southern New England Livestock Conference

by Gena Mavuli

The second Southern New England Livestock Conference will be held at the Bristol County Agriculture High School in Dighton, MA, on January 28, 2018. Conference runs 8am - 4pm. **\$10 discount** on ticket purchases! Discount is valid in December only, so get your tickets today! **Discount code is "DECEMBER"**. Purchase tickets here:

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/southern-new-eng-land-livestock-conference-tickets-38585768071#tickets>

The conference will include workshops and panel discussions. You can expect topics to range from beginner discussions on raising animals, to more advanced seminars and panel discussions on certifications, pasture management, marketing, and slaughter. There will certainly be something for everyone!

This conference will gather the region's most experienced and knowledgeable professionals, including experienced producers, pasture specialists, and chefs. There will be a business and organization expo where all attendees can peruse available resources, and we'll also have some great food trucks on site offering a delicious lunch!

2018 Keynote Speaker is Andrew Gunther!

Andrew is Executive Director of A Greener World, home of America's leading food labels: Certified Animal Welfare Approved by AGW, Certified Grassfed by AGW and Certified Non-GMO by AGW. For nearly a decade Andrew has spearheaded the unprecedented growth of AGW's flagship certification. Animal Welfare Approved, and its distinction as the only "highly meaningful" food label for farm animal welfare, outdoor access and sustainability as designated by Consumer Reports. From an agricultural background in the United Kingdom, Andrew and his family pio-neered the world's first organic poultry hatchery for chickens. Andrew is a member of the U.S. del-egation for development of standards related to ISO/TC 034/WG 16. (Editor's Note: Working Group 16 meetings held at the World Organiza-tion for Animal Health (OIE), Paris, in which International Standardiza-tion Organization (ISO) Technical Specification 34700 on animal welfare management related to the food supply chain.)

We will be running EIGHT different tracks for the 2018 Conference! Attendees can attend talks from any track; the hard part will be having to choose.

Tracks 1 & 2: Marketing

Guest speakers will go over a range of topics from discussing lender's needs, online marketing, sell-ing to restaurants, meat supply chain gaps, labels and certifications, and more! Our guest speakers include industry experts who will provide sound advice based on their vast experience.

Track 3: Birds

We'll discuss everything from the basics of raising birds for eggs to the advanced topics of large-scale broiler production and running a meat CSA. We also have a talk on raising heritage breed birds. This track is for anyone curious about adding birds to their plan, or enhancing their current production.

Track 4: Beef

Local experienced farmers will discuss the basics of raising cattle, the nuances of raising pastured based animals, and the keys to conventional meth-ods that lead to high quality meat.

Track 5: Pigs & Goats

This track will have talks on raising pigs on pas-ture, the basics of raising hogs, and a fasci-nating talk on running a successful goat dairy by a former leader in the field.

Track 6: Sheep

Interested in raising sheep? We'll have a sheep veteran and URI professor here to discuss the bas-ics along with more advanced principles of raising sheep.

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

Track 7: Growing Pasture

It is said that grass-based livestock producers are truly forage farmers. In this track, talks will focus on soil health for climate resistance, LEAN farm-ing practices, growing quality forages. Come ready to learn from some of the best!

Track 8: Butchering

We will have two experience butchers here to show us some alternative meat cuts and a full breakdown of a lamb. Come ready to see how it's done from industry leaders.

If you are a business, farmer, non-profit or other group that would like to be a part of our expo, go to our website: <https://www.thelivestockinstitute.org/2018-conference.html> and click on [see here for instructions](#) at bottom of page.



MEATWORKS
THE LIVESTOCK
INSTITUTE
OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND

Since our News Update is coming out in December, we are also going to plug the Vermont Grazing and Livestock Conference that will be held January 19 and 20, the week before the Northeast Pasture Consortium Conference. I promise that the parade of conferences ends with this one. However, this is always well-attended and interesting so if you have the time and want to learn some more things about grazing and what it can do to produce healthier meat products for

human consumption, this conference will fill the bill.

22nd Annual VT Grazing and Livestock Conference

Produced by the Vermont Grass Farmers Association & the UVM Center for Sustainable Agriculture Pasture Program

Friday, January 19, 2018 at 8:00 AM - Saturday, January 20, 2018 at 5:00 PM (EST)

Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, VT.

Join more than 350 farmers and agricultural resource providers from six Northeast states at this perennial winter conference for a cross section of the region's livestock production.

The event takes places at the family-friendly Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT just off Interstate-91. The conference rate on overnight rooms is \$94/night plus tax. Friday will feature two day-long pre-conference sessions on grazing planning tools and building farm businesses. Saturday in-cludes 21 workshops plus keynote, lunch discus-sions, tradeshow and much more, as well as a kids' conference for ages 6-12. The weekend highlights local, grass-fed and organic foods, great company from over six states, and plenty of new ideas to take home and ruminate on as you plan for 2018.

What have some of these attendees liked best about past conferences?

- The workshop was very informative and took a lot of information home with me.
- Met a lot of people and the networking was key.
- Workshop range and quality
- Innovative ideas, spirit of presenters
- Being with other farmers, hearing their experiences
- Great, varied, fresh speakers

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

- Seemed like there was something for everyone at every session
- Lunch was excellent, and the ice cream was delicious!

The conference is hosted by the Vermont Grass Farmers Association (VGFA) and coordinated by the UVM Extension Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Registration discounts are available for VGFA members. More details about the conference as well as registration are available at www.uvm.edu/pasture or go directly to registration at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/22nd-annual-vt-grazing-and-livestock-conference-tickets-40951476970> Registration is open for business. Contact conference coordinator Jenn Colby at jcolby@uvm.edu, (802) 656-5459 with any questions.

Scholarships are available!

Contact Cheryl Herrick at (802) 656-5459 or cheryl.herrick@uvm.edu to learn more.

Our 2018 conference features keynote speaker Diana Rodgers, RD. In addition to her keynote topic, "Kale vs. Cow", she will be a featured presenter in our Friday workshop intensive focus-ed on marketing, communication with customers, meat quality, and fresh versus frozen cooking.

Ms. Rodgers is a “real food” Licensed Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, and Nutritional Therapy Practitioner living on a working organic farm west of Boston. She has an active nutrition practice where she helps people get on track with diet and lifestyle. She is also an author, hosts *The Sustain-able Dish Podcast*, and is the mom of two active kids. She is the Consulting Dietitian to several gyms and to: Nom Nom Paleo, Whole30, Dr. Kirk Parsley, The Farm to Consumer Legal Defense Fund, and Fresh Advantage, and is a board member of Animal Welfare Approved. She is a staff writer for *Paleo Magazine*, contributes regularly to several

blogs and her work has been featured in *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *Out-side Magazine*, and *Mother Earth News*.

Drought can strike at any time. On shale soils, it can happen in hot weather with a week without rain. Last Spring, we were praying for it to stop raining. Our prayers were answered, and it stopped to a trickle. What followed was a rather dry summer followed by an even drier Fall. While that is fresh in my mind, the question posed in the next article and the answers in the text need to be followed when the next drought invariably happens.

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

How Do I Handle My Hay Fields and Pastures in Severe Drought?

By David Hunsberger, King's AgriSeed

First, we need to clarify what sort of perennial forage stand we are managing. The answer will be different for pure or very dominant legume or grass swards.

Alfalfa and hayfields with high concentrations of alfalfa

After 30 days or so most alfalfa stands will want to start bloom-ing. Once we have 25% or more bloom, there will be little further growth even with good rains. Leafhopper pressure is often present at a concentration over or nearly over the thres-hold for mitigation at this point. Your

best choice is to cut (or graze) rather than spray an insecticide and wait for the withholding time. You should begin to sweep newly cut fields to get a leafhopper count at 10 -14 days post cut to be sure that leafhopper pressure is not too great to preclude new regrowth as the rains come. Ideally, you should be soil testing and have a fertility program in place. If your cutting schedule has stayed on target up to this point in the season, stay with your fertility application schedule. If you have not removed nutrients with frequent cuttings, hold off putting down new fertilizer applications. Remember that potash and boron can be very limiting nutrients to a healthy, productive stand. Even if old growth is so short that you cannot gather it up, your best option is to clip the stand and let it lie. When the rains return, you will be in a great position to capture the nutrients and grow a harvestable cutting.

Grass Stands

Grasses like orchardgrass and tall fescue that are only 5-10 inches tall and showing browning and wilted leaves are best left uncut. If you have a lot of annual weeds coming through you may want to clip them, but keep the cutter bar high – 5-6 inches – to be certain not to damage the dormant plants. Keep in mind that the carbohydrate reserves are in the bottom 3-4 inches of grass stems, and we want to be sure to preserve these for optimal regrowth. Here again, if you are on a normal fertility pro-gram, consider the annual DM yield so far. It is wise, however, to delay fertilizer application until the drought is fully broken. Do not push nitrogen too hard in the fall, as warm soils naturally release more N in late summer, especially after a drought breaks. Be sure to use a form of nitrogen that is stable, either ammonium sulfate or a good stabil-izer product on the N. Timing this with a good shower can really boost the grass.



Drought stress demands that **grazing operations** slow rotations down to allow a much longer rest between grazing episodes up to 42 days, but do not return to a paddock if grass growth in it is nil. Resist the temptation to allow the animals to nub the grass down to very short 1 to 2-inch residual heights. Although it is painful to open up “winter” stockpiles of forage, your sward will return to productivity much quicker and thrive in the long term if you give it rest. Stopping now may allow you some late fall grazing days, or some opportunities to make some stored feed to replenish supplies used now. If you keep inten-

Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update December 2017

Linking Graziers, Researchers, Extension, and Technicians

<http://www.grazingguide.net>

James Cropper, Executive Director & Editor

sively grazing these stressed stands, you may not see adequate regrowth for winter stand survival when fall rains return.

ment practices that keep pasture-based farms profitable, efficient, and environmentally sound.



If your stands are really thin you may consider interseeding a small grain or annual rye-grass to boost fall and winter

production and take off a big harvest in spring to build forage inventory. (Then, you may want to consider renovating the stand by rotating into a summer and/or winter annual before reseeding the pasture.)

On mixed stands you may want to mow high or just wait it out. The strong desire to “do something” may need to be quelled to allow your fields to recover. Add a little patience to your plans, and you won’t be disappointed.



The News Update Credo

The Northeast Pasture Consortium News Update is published semi-annually, early fall and winter issues. The goal of these news updates is to keep our Consortium members abreast of the latest research and technology that most impact pasture-based farmers, inform them about the upcoming annual conference, and provide a forum to guide and formulate good policies and best manage-