Parasites can pose real challenges for both farmers who are new to organic management and to those who are experienced as well. MOFGA Certification Services staff and inspectors frequently talk with farmers who have questions and misconceptions.

Parasiticides need not be confusing or taboo—our aim here is to make parasite control strategies and allowed synthetic parasiticides plain and simple to understand and to incorporate into your organic farm practices.

The key to organic management of parasites, like many aspects of organic management, is to implement as many strategies as possible. Some will be preventative in nature and are the foundation of your organic management; some will be directed toward existing problems. Multiple efforts work together to improve the overall situation, whether in relation to internal or external parasites.

External Parasite Management & Control

Flies. This time of year, flies are taxing cattle in the pastures and in the barn. It is generally agreed that the best results in fly management arise from implementing as many strategies as possible.

Preventative management:
• Pasture-based management such as predatory wasps, clipping weeds to encourage dung beetles, chain dragging to spread manure, pasture rotation with poultry
• For the barn: barrel-type flytraps, sticky tape, fans, sprayers for natural oils (such as soy, canola, etc.)

Control options:
• Essential oil/botanical fly sprays (see below)
• Sprayers for natural oils in the parlor or barn entrance (soy, canola, etc.)
• Dry natural powders (field lime, diatomaceous earth, etc.) on the back & shoulders

Many have found Diane Schivera’s homemade fly spray recipe helpful:
1 cup vegetable oil, 2 cups vinegar, 1 cup water 1 tablespoon essential oil, mix well, put in a spray bottle, need to shake while spraying, it will settle out quickly, for use on animal not equipment or buildings
These ingredients do not need to be organic.

Lice, mites, mange, etc. Many of the allowed products on the next page can help address external parasites other than flies.

Internal Parasite Management & Control

Internal parasite infestation can cause losses for livestock producers. However, it may be more feasible to manage for low parasites and parasite resistance in livestock, rather than attempt to maintain a no-parasite strategy on your organic farm. Preventative strategies are required in organic management. (Cont’d on Pg 2)
Parasite Control
(Continued from Pg 1)

When synthetic parasiticides become necessary, it is time to review your farm’s preventative management plan and address any weaknesses in order to avoid reliance on these products on a routine basis.

Preventative Management:
• Selective genetics for resistance (especially in small ruminants), and culling
• Grazing plan to decrease exposure to parasites: intensive rotational grazing, low stocking densities, high residual grazing height, allowing refusal areas by avoiding harrowing or chain-dragging pastures
• Multi-species grazing (e.g. cows followed by sheep)
• Complete nutrition: Vitamins A, D, and B complex; Minerals cobalt and iron

Control options for both internal and external parasites:
Products with plant-based or natural active ingredients

Allowed Natural & Plant-based Products (August 2013)
• Animax Ltd., Copasure
• Crystal Creek, No-Fly Repellant
• Crystal Creek, Lice & Mange Wash
• Agri-Dynamics, Ecto-Phyte
• Sulfur, FEDCO (powdered)
• Nature’s Balance Care, Bare Skin Barrier
• Ark Naturals, Neem “Protect” Spray
• R & R Group, Defy the Fly
• Garlic Research Labs, Garlic Barrier AG+
• Molly’s Herbals, Formula #1 Wormwood Worm Combination
• Molly’s Herbals, Formula #2 Herbal Weekly Worm Formula & Tonic
• DBC Ag Products, Zyfend A (poultry)
• Pyrethrin-based products may be allowed (please check with staff before use)

Restricted use synthetic parasiticides Ivermectin, Moxidectin, Fenbendazole—on a non-routine basis—along with conservative management as outlined above.

Restricted use* Synthetic Products (August 2013)
Mineral oil (topically- backs for lice, bellies & shoulders for flies)
*AgriLabs, Top Line (ivermectin) Pour-on for Cattle
*Med-Pharmex, Iver-On
*Merial, IVOMEC Pour-on for Cattle
*Merial, IVOMEC .08% Sheep Drench
*Durvet, Injectable 1% (ivermectin) Injection for Cattle & Swine
*First Priority, Privermectin
*Boehringer Ingelheim, Cydectin Oral Sheep Drench
*Merk, Safe-Guard Dewormer for Goats

*Restrictions on allowed synthetic parasiticides: §205.603(a)(18):
*These products are prohibited in slaughter stock. Meat cannot be sold as organic
*90 day milk withholding before milk can be sold as organic
*Treatment in the last 1/3 of gestation will make the offspring ineligible for organic certification
*Fenbendazole can only be used under the direction of a vet
*Moxidectin can be used for internal parasites only

Our Livestock Products List (enclosed) is not an exhaustive list of products that are allowed under the organic standards. If there is a product that you would like to use, please let us know and we will be happy to review it and add it to this list, and to your organic system plan, if the ingredients meet the requirements.

NOTE: Prohibited materials
• IVOMEC Eprinex/Eprinomectin
• Dectomax/Doramectin
• Prohibit Drench/Levasole

Some products have confusing labels. These products are commonly inquired about but contain prohibited materials. Before using any product, be sure the product’s ingredients meet the organic standards, call or email us at MOFGA Certification. Use of prohibited parasiticides does result in the loss of certification of the treated animals.

Letter from the MOFGA Certification Service’s Director…..

This issue of the Organic Sprout focuses on livestock. It is appropriate therefore to enclosed an updated livestock material input list. Please replace your old list (January 2013) with this one. If you don’t certify your livestock, perhaps this is a tool that may make you reconsider. There are materials available for all aspects of livestock management that also comply with the organic standards.

It’s been a rough season for making hay, but it seems like most farmers are pulling through alright. Nevertheless, if you find yourself short on hay and need help finding a certified organic source, please give our office a call. Remember that hay or straw for bedding also needs to be certified organic. If you have excess certified organic hay to sell, we could use that information too. We’ll try to help farmers get connected over hay.

We hope you to see you at the Common Ground Country Fair!

Mary Yurlina
Sprouted Grain Systems for Livestock Operations

by Mary Yurlina, MCS Director

If we had a regular feature for “what’s trending” in agriculture, sprouting grains for livestock fodder would certainly make the 2013 list. Fodder feed systems designed to mass-produce sprouted grain as fodder for dairy cattle and other livestock have been showing up in farm equipment catalogs. Newsletters, magazines and email listservs have been buzzing about it, too. So it seems appropriate to say a few words about these sprouts in MOFGA’s Organic Sprout.

What is a sprouted grain fodder system? It’s basically a technique for making sprouts for your livestock. In the 90’s I had a roommate who was into wheatgrass. He would soak wheat berries in water overnight and then spread the seed out in a tray lined with either damp potting soil or wet paper towels. Light and water were added as needed and in about 10 days he was ready to harvest blades with a pair of scissors and make juice. The commercial systems aimed at livestock farmers offer specially designed racks for germinating grains—barley is a popular choice—and growing them to a height of about eight inches before presenting them to cows, horses, sheep or swine for consumption. The system is hydroponic, as it does not use soil. Seeds are spread on a special film, which can be consumed along with the sprouts.

What are the benefits of feeding sprouted grains to my cows? Proponents of sprouted grains for livestock assert many benefits. Greater digestibility and greater availability of nutrients over hay or grain concentrates are among them.

Are there disadvantages? Typically there is a decrease in dry matter weight when compared to the original grain. Production costs need to be examined carefully. Capital is needed for facilities and equipment. Operating costs need to include additional labor and utilities. Attention to hygiene is essential; these systems are susceptible to mold, which can have consequences for animal health.

How much does it cost? Systems vary in price. One “Standard Mini Fodder-Pro 2.0 Feed System” unit, which is said to produce up to 125 pounds of fodder daily and is designed for small spaces, can cost about $3000. Larger systems are available and these units cost more. Several companies offer the FodderPro systems including FarmTek. If you plan to set a system up in a barn, keep in mind that you will likely need additional equipment for light and heat.

Can it be part of a Certified Organic Farm Plan? Yes, with restrictions. Seed must be certified organic.

A comprehensive review of hydroponic fodder production systems was conducted by Australian researchers in 2003. If you would like the link to or a hard copy of this report, please give us a call.

Can it be part of a Certified Organic Farm Plan? Yes, with restrictions. Seed must be certified organic. No commercial availability clauses apply to this seed. All other material inputs used on or in the system must also meet with certifier approval and be compliant with the National List. Remember, this is making feed for organic livestock.

Can sprouted fodder be considered intake from pasture that is required under the National Organic Rule for ruminants? Absolutely not. This is not pasture. You must keep track of the amount of sprouted grains you feed, calculate its dry matter, and add it to your dry matter fed, just as you would the hay, balage or grain that you feed.

Final words. There is a lot of information about spouted grain systems for livestock feed including photos and videos on the web. If you are thinking about one of these systems for your livestock do careful research. Talk to extension agents. Calculate the costs and benefits for your farm system. If one of these systems is to be part of your certified livestock operation, be sure to also talk to your certifier and get the system details in your farm plan and approved by your certifier before you invest.
The number of MOFGA certified organic producers continues to grow. In 2013 we have already certified 54 new farms/processors. Numbers tell a story, and the growth in the number of MOFGA certified organic farms helps MOFGA with public policy and legislative issues.

These statistics are based only on production certified through MOFGA Certification Services, LLC.

**2013 Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th># Producers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Farms – Crops &amp; Livestock</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairies</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processors/Handlers</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Syrup Producers</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Certified Operations: 8/2013</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kelp are large seaweeds or marine algae. Two hundred and fifty species occur in the Gulf of Maine. Rockweeds (Fucus) and knotted wrack (Ascophyllum spp.) are commercially harvested for fertilizers, livestock feeds, packing material, and for algin production. As a feed supplement, kelp is an easy to assimilate source for minerals, vitamins and amino acids.

FOR LIVESTOCK: On March 4, 2014 all kelp fed to organic livestock must be certified organic. Two current NOP documents have led to this new requirement.

There was a long-standing contention that because kelp and seaweeds are aquatic plants they cannot be certified organic. However, it has been determined that the current organic regulation only excludes aquatic animals from certification, not aquatic plants. This was formally recognized with the January 9, 2013 policy memo (PM 12-1) from the NOP which states that “Certifiers and their clients may use the USDA organic regulations, …, as the basis for the production and certification of cultured and wild crop harvested aquatic plants.”

Following the January 9, 2013 policy memo, the NOP on February 28, 2013 released a guidance document for “The Use of Kelp in Organic Livestock Feed” (NOP 5027). This guidance document requires that ALL kelp fed to organic livestock be certified organic beginning on March 4, 2014. The 12-month phase-in period allows time for suppliers to become certified and for current users to use up any existing non-organic supplies.

So, if you have a large supply of uncertified kelp on hand for livestock, you need to use it up by March 4th and make plans to restock with certified organic kelp. You can always use leftover uncertified kelp as a crop input (see below).

The good news is that this past July MCS certified North American Kelp as a wild crop harvester and producer so they will have a certified organic SeaLife Kelp Meal product. You can contact North Atlantic Kelp at 207-832-5376 or online at [http://www.naomkelp.com/](http://www.naomkelp.com/)

AS CROP OR SOIL FERTILITY INPUT: There is currently no restriction on the use of non-organic kelp as a crop or soil fertility input provided that the certifier approves the kelp product as a fertility input. Call your staff representative at MCS if you have questions regarding your product and, as always, if you are adding any new product to your organic system plan please get confirmation that the product is allowed prior to any use or application.

AS AN ORGANIC INGREDIENT: Kelp, used as a thickener and dietary supplement, has for some time now been allowed in certified organic products, with restriction. This has been allowed due to kelp’s inclusion on 205.606 of the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances with the above noted annotation. Non-organic kelp may be allowed in multi-ingredient certified organic products labeled as Organic provided that the producer can document that the kelp cannot be obtained in the necessary form, quality or quantity.
MOFGA believes that access to the outdoors—which provides livestock with exercise areas, fresh air, and direct sunlight—is a critical part of sound organic management.

The National Organic Standards require that livestock including beef, poultry, sheep, goats, pigs, and dairy cattle over the age of 6 months have year-round access to the outdoors when conditions are appropriate.* Outdoor access is one measure of animal welfare that helps set certified organic farms apart in the public's eye.

Enforcement of the organic standards is an important part of strengthening confidence in the organic label, helping to create a viable market for organic farms in Maine.

Over the winter of 2012-2013, MOFGA Certification Services conducted 30 unannounced inspections to verify that livestock have access to the outdoors in winter months, conditions permitting. Dairy, poultry, sheep, goats, and beef, and swine operations were visited on warm sunny days throughout the winter and early spring.

MCS sent letters to roughly 20 of these operations that were observed to be in compliance with the organic standards by providing outdoor access. At these operations, animals could get into the fresh air and sunshine, and have the opportunity to move about freely outside in yards that are well maintained with frequent removal of wastes. Where feed is provided outside, there is ample room so livestock aren’t crowding and competing for food. These operations deserve appreciation from the organic community for their dedication to management practices that promote animal welfare through being certified organic.

We issued notices of noncompliance to operations that were observed to be confining animals indoors or not permitting groups of animals to have access to the outdoors on a regular basis. These operations were visited and/or observed from roadways multiple times before a conclusion was reached by inspectors. Operations who received a Notice of Noncompliance for lack of outdoor access are required to submit a plan on how they are going to provide outdoor access as required by the organic standards, and to implement this plan to be in full compliance.

Additionally, our inspectors also noted operations where they were not able to determine if the organic livestock were provided with adequate access to the outdoors to meet the standards, even after multiple visits and observations. An example of this was typically a farm where outdoor access areas exist and were plowed of snow, but the area was not obviously recently in use by livestock and no one was there to ask about the status of outdoor access.

MOFGA Certification Services will continue to monitor outdoor access on an ongoing basis through announced inspections, unannounced inspections, and planned observations of certified organic farms because outdoor access and proper living conditions are such an important component of animal welfare in the organic standards.

We would like the organic community in Maine—both producers and loyal customers of certified organic farms alike—to have confidence that organic livestock products (eggs, meat, and milk) are produced with proper organic management including access to the outdoors. If you have any questions about organic livestock living conditions or enforcement of the organic standard pertaining to livestock, please contact Katie Webb at our office: kwebb@mofga.org (office:) 568-4142, (fax:) 1-866-344-0991. *National Organic Standards §205.238 Livestock living conditions.

Ergot Warning

Livestock Specialists are warning farmers in the northeast to be on the lookout for ergot fruiting bodies and ergot poisoning this year. The unusually warm wet weather as grasses matured provided the perfect conditions for ergot infection. Frequent rains also meant that there was an increased likelihood that haying was delayed and that hay was baled “headed out” or with seed heads. Ergot is a type of fungus that infects grass seed heads (or grain kernels). It produces hard black masses or fruiting bodies that protrude from the seed heads. This fungus produces a toxin called ergotoxine, which when ingested, effects the nervous and circulatory systems of animals. Symptoms of poisoning can include lameness, loss of appetite and gastronomic distress. Humans can also get “ergotism” by eating contaminated grain. The best way to manage ergot is to remove infected feed and to keep animals off infected pastures. For more information about ergot contamination of livestock feeds and how to manage this problem if you have it, please contact Rick Kersbergen <rick.kersbergen@maine.edu>
To help in the battle against late blight we offer this list of permitted products. These products are to be used as a compliment to cultural practices for disease management. Use products according to the label, and keep a pesticide log.

**Copper Based Pesticide Products**
- Bonide Liquid Copper Fungicide Concentrate / Ready to Use
- Champ WG
- Agri Star Nu Cop 50 WP
- Cueva Fungicide Concentrate
- CSC Copper Sulfur Dust Fungicide

Remember, you need to monitor soil copper levels if you use a copper-based fungicide. A “Comprehensive Soil Test” from the University of Maine Cooperative Extension can provide this information.

**Non-Copper Commercial Products**
- Oxidate Broad Spectrum / Ready to Spray
- Serenade ASO
- Serenade MAX
- Milstop Broad Spectrum
- Sporatec

**FDA’s Proposed Food Safety Rule—Public Comment Reminder**

In January 2013, the Food and Drug Administration released its proposed rules for implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) passed by Congress in 2011. A year in the writing, these proposed rules would have a broad-reaching effect on farmers marketing fruits and vegetables in their raw state.

FDA is seeking comments on the proposed rules by November 13, 2013. To learn more about FSMA and for talking points when making your comment, please visit: [http://www.mofga.org/Programs/PublicPolicy_Initiatives/SafetyRule/tabid/2650/Default.aspx](http://www.mofga.org/Programs/PublicPolicy_Initiatives/SafetyRule/tabid/2650/Default.aspx)

**NOP Invites Public Comment on Biodegradable Biobased Mulch**

The National Organic Program (NOP), based on recommendations from the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), is proposing allowing biodegradable biobased mulch film in organic crop production, and is requesting public comments on the proposed rule.

Biodegradable biobased mulch film:
- * Farmers wouldn’t need to remove the biodegradable mulch at the end of the growing season, reducing waste and farm worker labor costs.
- * Mulch couldn’t contain genetically modified ingredients and would need to meet other requirements.

To view the proposed rule: [http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC510484](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC510484)

To submit public comments (deadline is October 21, 2013): [http://www.regulations.gov/#!submitComment;D=AMS-NOP-13-0011-0001](http://www.regulations.gov/#!submitComment;D=AMS-NOP-13-0011-0001)
**2013 calendar**

**Events & Training**

**Sept**

20, 21 & 22 - MOFGA's Common Ground Country Fair

5 and 6 - Chainsaw Safety Level I. Hidden Valley Nature Center, Jefferson. Co-sponsored by MOFGA, Damariscotta Hardware and Mark’s Saw Shop. $120 ($100 for HVNC and MOFGA members). FMI: email: codey@hvnc.org or 207-8840.

19 - Sagadahoc MOFGA: Cider pressing and tour of Big Barn Coffee, a MOFGA Certified Organic coffee roastery. 3 p.m., Potluck at sundown. For information, contact Sally Fesler: fesler11@gmail.com

27 - Great Maine Apple Day. 12 noon to 4:00 pm, rain or shine, MOFGA’s Common Ground Education Center, Unity. Celebrate the history, tradition and flavor of Maine apples.

**Oct**

2, 3 and 4 - MOFGA’s Farmer to Farmer Conference. **Saturday, Sunday and Monday.** Point Lookout Resort, Northport. Farm tours on Saturday afternoon.


14 to 17 - Low-Impact Forestry Workshops. MOFGA’s Common Ground Education Center, Unity. For beginners and experienced people. Sustainable woodlot management, logging with animals and low-impact machinery.

16 & 17 - City of Bangor’s Maine Harvest Festival. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Cross Insurance Center, Bangor. Sampling and purchasing from over 125 Maine farmers and producers. Information: Judi Perkins, Director. 942-9771. gardenridgefarm@roadrunner.com

21 - Negotiation for Farmers - Thursday, November 21, 8:30 am - 4:00 pm, $15 covers food and handouts. Registration is limited and will close Nov 13. To register: http://www.formstack.com/forms/MOFGA-negotiationforfarmers

**Nov**

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**Dec**

4 - Kitchen Licensing Workshop. MOFGA’s Common Ground Education Center, Unity. For those interested in processing food at home for resale. Contact events@mofga.org

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**MOFGA Certification Services LLC**

Mary Yurlina—Director
Kate Newkirk—Associate Director of Processing
Jacomijn Schravesande-Gardei — Associate Director of Crops
Joan Cheetham — Certification Specialist
Katie Webb—Dairy Certification Specialist
Jake Galle—Inspector / Materials Reviewer
Grace Keown—Certification Assistant

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**MOFGA Agricultural Services**

Dave Colson—Ag Services Director
Melissa White Pillsbury—Organic Marketing Coordinator
Katy Green—Organic Transitions Coordinator
Eric Sideman—Organic Crop Specialist
Diane Schivera—Organic Livestock Specialist
John Chartier—Aroostook County Coordinator
Cheryl Wixson—Organic Marketing Consultant
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For a full listing of events visit: http://mofga.org or email: events@mofga.org