Organic Farming Conference
Mt. Hope, Ohio
November 7-8, 2019
Fifth Annual
# Organic Farming Conference 2019

## Welcome and Overview of the Day—Having a Farm Plan
**By David Kline**

## Do You Have a Dairy Genetic Plan?
**By Amos Nolt, Jon Bansen, and Jonas Yoder**

## Is Your Farm Suited for Raising Sheep?
**By Leroy Kuhns**

## Keynote: Planning for Healthy Soils—Reinvigorating Soil With Cover Crop
**By Jon Bansen**

## Produce Foundations
**By Stephen Esch**

## The Challenges of the Organic Marketplace
**By Preston Green**

## The Organic Home: Introduction to the Home Tables and **Ladies Panel Discussion**
**By Marilyn Yoder, Easy-Sewing Projects By Nettie and Wilma Yoder**

## Vendor Show and Morning Break

## Vendor Show and Lunch Break

## Farmer Panel: Producing High Quality Forages
**By Dennis Wood, Jonathon Yoder, Marcus Schlabach, and Moderator Scott Myers**

## Weed Control and Diseases in Produce
**By Stephen Esch**

## The Organic Home: Getting Your Children Interested in Nature
**By David Kline, Nature Demo Table By Betty Raber**

## Vendor Show

## Dismiss

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**Thursday**
### Room 1

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<td>Welcome and Overview of the Day—Has Your Plan Changed Since Yesterday? By Ernest Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:45</td>
<td>Keynote: Planting for Pollinators and Habitat on Your Farm By Stephanie Frischie</td>
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<td>10:00</td>
<td>Vendor Show and Morning Break</td>
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<td>10:30</td>
<td>Figuring Out Sheep Raising, Organically By John Anderson and Kathy Bielek</td>
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<td>Vendor Show and Lunch Break</td>
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<td>1:00</td>
<td>Farmers’ Round Table Discussion: What Worked for Them and What Didn’t By Jon Bansen, Jeff Miller, Levi Raber, Joseph Yoder, Leroy Oberholtzer, David Erb, Adam Yoder and Jerry D. Miller</td>
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<td>1:00</td>
<td>The Organic Home: Making Homemade Noodles By Elmina Burkholder</td>
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<td>Pollinators in Your Fence Row and Roadsides By Guy Denny</td>
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<td>The Organic Home: Wool Spinning By Karen Gotter and local Spinning Guild Members</td>
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Welcome

To the 5th Annual
Organic Farming Conference

Mt Hope, Ohio
on November 7-8, 2019

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Conference Planning Committee:
David and Elsie Kline
Mike and Martha Kline
Ernest Martin
Leah Miller
Jeff Ramseyer
Joe Schlabach
Aden Yoder
Aaron Weaver

Contact Information
Organic Farming Conference
P.O. Box 214
Millersburg, OH 44654
visit us at: www.organicfarmingconf.com

Vendors:
call Mike at: 330-231-1741
email: vendors@organicfarmingconf.com
General Inquiries:
Call: 330-674-1892
or email: info@organicfarmingconf.com
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Jon Bansen

Jon Bansen Jon, along with his wife Juli, own Double J Jerseys, Inc., a certified organic Jersey cow dairy operation in Monmouth, Oregon. They currently milk 160 Jerseys on their farm and market their milk as part of the Organic Valley Cooperative.

The Bansens are passionately committed to soil health and pasture-focused production, and have passed this way of thinking on to their four children: Ross, Christine, Allison and Kaj, who all grew up working on the dairy. Ross, the eldest, recently followed in his father’s footsteps by graduating from college and joining the family business. Jon is a successful farmer and grazier, with a focused operation, who brings an experienced voice to the conference.

Bansen is a fourth-generation Jersey dairy farmer, and many of his siblings and cousins are also in the industry. One brother owns his grandfather’s dairy in Northern California, and another has taken over their father’s farm in Yamhill, Oregon.

Dairy farming is baked into Bansen’s DNA, with roots tracing all the way back to his great-grandfather, who emigrated from Denmark in the late 1800s, settling in a community of Danes in Northern California. His grandfather followed in the early 1900s, hiring out his milking skills to other farmers until he saved enough to buy his own small farm near the bucolic coastal town of Ferndale in Humboldt County.

Stephanie Frischie

Stephanie Frischie, Ph.D., Agronomist / Native Plant Materials Specialist, The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation—Based in northwest Indiana, Stephanie provides pollinator habitat expertise to farms in Canada and the U.S. She also works with the native seed industry and researchers to plan and develop seed supply of important plant species for restoration of insect habitat. Before joining Xerces, Stephanie conducted research on the potential of native cover crops in Spanish olive orchards at Semillas Silvestres, S.L. through the NASSTEC (Native Seed Science, Technology and Conservation) grant. Previously she was Plant Materials and Conservation Programs Manager for eleven years at the Nature Conservancy’s Kankakee Sands Restoration in northwest Indiana. Stephanie has been part of restoring over 8000 acres in the central US and has published several peer reviewed articles. Stephanie is a native plant enthusiast and volunteers as a rare plant monitor with Plants of Concern and is the secretary of the International Network for Seed-based Restoration.

Cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.

~ Mark Twain
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John Anderson
John has raised registered Polypays and a few commercial type sheep since 1988 on their Lamshear Polypay Wayne County farm near Shreve, Ohio. Their flock consists of 120 ewes and they are on a variable lambing schedule with the flock. They sell mostly breeding stock, but also feed out and sell some lambs at the Mount Hope auction. John retired from OARDC Wooster in 2015 from Poultry Science Department, Animal Sciences. The flock is NSIP (record keeping and ranking of breeding characteristics of flock), has fall lambing genetics and improved parasite resistance. John is a member of the American Polypays Association and is currently a member of the board of directors and also serves as secretary. Over the years they have lambed on the STAR system and then moved to lambing three times a year. Currently they are moving most of the flock to fall lambing with a smaller spring lambing.

Kathy Bielek
Kathy raises about 35 ewes with the focus being forage and rotational grazing on her farm, Misty Oaks Katahdins just south of Wooster, Ohio. The genetics are production record EBV (estimated breeding values) and parasite resistance. Katahdins are hair sheep and do not have to be shorn. Kathy sells breeding stock and is on the board of Ohio Sheep Improvement Association and involved in the August NSIP Ram sale at Wooster. She is the program coordinator for the OFFER (Organic Food & Farming Education Research) program at the Ohio State University Wooster Campus.

Stephen Esch
Stephen Esch is a part owner of Oregon Ag, LLC from Lititz PA. They do soil and crop consulting for dairy farmers, produce growers, cash croppers, gardeners, and also distribute organic fertilizers, seeds, and animal nutrition products. Stephen’s passion is common sense soil fertility and has a deep understanding of the value of proper soil balance and how this relates to growing higher quality, nutrient dense, mineralized crops with natural disease and insect resistance. This is what it takes to start growing “FOOD AS MEDICINE”.

Family Farm Fresh Co-op
Family Farm Fresh originated from two brothers growing produce on a small scale back in 2001. As the business progressed, more of the community members opted to join. Peppers, tomatoes, red and green cabbage, eggplant, zucchini and cucumbers were their main crops. Whole Foods Distribution Center in Chicago was their main outlet. Delivering to the site via flat bed trailers covered with tarps. It seemed the demand for certified organic produce was big but supply was short at the time. In 2016 they made some changes so they could better fill the needs of the community. Also, the butcher shop that was used as their loading and handling facility was too small. So in the spring of 2017 the co-op built a 80’ x 126’ warehouse costing over $400,000. Having paid marketers and employees they found that combining the growers and a local co-op can have benefits, although it also has its challenges.

Guy Denny
Guy Denny, former director of the Ohio Biological Survey; retired chief of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Natural Areas and Preserves, and current president of the Ohio Natural Areas and Preserves Association, is considered one of the Midwest’s leading naturalists and prairie experts. He has gone well beyond simply advocating for the protection of natural habitat, though — he has created his own 24-acre prairie on his property in rural Knox County.
Jacob Stoltzfus - (Family Farm Fresh)
Jacob lives in Rockville, Indiana and farms around 10-12 acres of produce per year which include cabbage, zucchini, tomatoes, peppers, broccoli and cauliflower. His father (Isaac, Sr.) started an organic produce business, so it made sense to continue with the idea of getting paid a premium, plus you have healthier soils, etc. all around.

Isaac Stoltzfus, Jr.- (Family Farm Fresh)
Isaac lives in Rockville, Indiana and although he did no wholesale produce this year, he used to put out around 8-10 acres of a variety of vegetables. Like his brother Jacob, he grew into the business after their dad, Isaac, Sr. started the organic produce venture.

Steven Zook - (Family Farm Fresh)
Steven along with his brother Daniel puts out around 12 acres of winter squash, three acres peppers, two acres tomatoes plus some zucchini and beets. He was able to start on land that was certifiable and believes organic soils are healthier which equates to healthier people.

Preston Green
Preston Green is currently Director of Sales at Hickory Nut Gap Meats in Ashville, North Carolina. He grew up farming on a certified organic beef and dairy farm in Wisconsin. With the knowledge of a farmer and the background in Sales from Organic Valley, Preston’s ability to connect wholesale accounts to the HNG Supply Chain is unmatched in the industry. Having recently moved to the HNG farm in Rutherford County with his wife and 4 young children, Preston shifts his time between his family, the cattle farm, and the sales department.

David Kline
David is a semi-retired organic farmer; he and his wife Elsie, have published Farming Magazine since 2001.

Leroy Kuhns
Leroy and Martha Kuhns and their son Andrew have a closed-ewe flock of 250 Old Style Dorsets. They started with sheep in 1986.

Ernest Martin
Ernest, his wife Norma and family have an organic dairy farm near Shiloh, Ohio. They were among the first producers of organic milk in northern Ohio.

Amos Nolt
Amos and his wife Norma operate an organic dairy farm in Ashland County, Ohio. Along with the help of their seven children, they milk around 40 Holsteins on a 100% grass-based farm. Amos was one of the original 12 organic dairy farmers in the state.
Panelists

David Erb
David and his wife Rhoda and their children operate an organic dairy, incorporating intensive grazing near Brinkhaven, Ohio.

Jeff Miller
Jeff, his wife Ina and their children have a 50 cow organic dairy farm near Winesburg, Ohio. They have recently transitioned to 100% Grassmilk.

Jerry D. Miller
Jerry, his wife Gloria and their six children own and operate Rolling Ridge Meadows. They farm 172 acres and milk 55 Jersey-cross cows. They have been certified organic since 2005 and are member of Organic Valley Co-op. They have recently transitioned to 100% Grassmilk.

Scott Myers
Scott Myers is a farmer from North-Central Ohio. He has been making and direct marketing high-quality hay to local dairy farms of all sizes for the past 19 years. His farm consists of hay, corn, soybeans, oats, barley, cereal rye, and peas. He has been certified organic for three years, with 2,000 acres currently certified and another 400 in transition. Besides hay, he also markets his grain crops for feed, seed, and brew. His family (wife Nicole, four boys ages 3-10 years old, and his parents) along with four full-time and multiple part-time employees help to keep this 3rd generation family operation running.

Levi Raber
Levi, along with his wife Linda and five children, operate Stormy Acres in Orrville, Ohio, where they milk 40 cows for Organic Valley and grow corn, oats, hay, and pasture, on their 108 certified organic (since 2012) acres.

Marcus Schlabach
Marcus and wife Rhoda and family have an organic dairy herd in Belle Center, Ohio.

Dennis Wood
Dennis Wood along with his family, farm around 3,000 acres in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. They have 1,700 acres fenced in for their 400 Angus brood cows, 400 head of finished Angus beef, along with Berkshire pork. They also own and operate a butcher shop.

Adam Yoder
Adam and his wife Chistina along with their three children milk around 30 Holsteins near Charm, Ohio. They have just recently transitioned to organics.

Jonas Yoder
Jonas has a herd of about 30 purebred polled Jersey cows near Berlin, Ohio.

Jonathan Yoder
Jonathan Yoder and his wife, Lora Sue have a 35-cow, Holstein-cross dairy near Topeka, Indiana. Their farm is around 90 acres.

Joseph Yoder
Joseph, along with his wife Martha and seven children, operate Hidden Valley Acres in Butler, Ohio, where they milk 45 cows for Organic Valley, and grows hay, sorghum-sudan, and pasture on their 135 certified organic (since 2008) acres.
Nature’s Warehouse

Our Mission

For over twenty years, Nature’s Warehouse has brought health to our customers. We started out by selling produce on the porch of a seven child home, to having three warehouses in Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania and a brick and mortar store in New York. Since expanding, we are able to offer same-day delivery within a twenty mile radius of each warehouse. Grocery delivery is a major advance in recent years, and rural areas tend to miss out on this convenience. We’re changing that.

Our mission has stayed the same; give people affordable, healthy choices that we believe in. We take pride in the relationships we’ve created with our farms, manufacturers and distributors. We visit farms to ensure the animals are treated with integrity. We have built strong relationships with all of the companies we work with so that our customers are getting the very best. Every new product we add goes through a team dedicated to finding products that are the best fit for us and our customers. Whether it’s supplements or food, our vetting process assures that it is the best choice.

Health has always been our number one priority. It is our mission to make it accessible to all and to get healthy delivered to you.

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I am convinced that haybining is therapeutic.

Yesterday morning I went out, persuaded I'd be aggravated about the poor stand of clover and timothy. By the time the field was cut I couldn't have been in better spirits. It wasn't an exceptionally nice day, a bit on the cloudy side to be mowing, but I felt it was time to clip the hay since I wanted to sow some soybeans. A double crop from poor soil seems to be expecting a bit much, but planting time is always a hopeful time.

The haybine went right to work when I lowered it and the freshly greased joints functioned well. Down the field we went. Ahead of us a hen turkey flushed, flying low over the top of the grass and landing in the cover of brush at the edge of the woods. I always feel terrible when I discover a turkey nest in first-cutting hay. I'm always glad when they fly out, especially when a troop of chicks follow them.

Soon Pepper Dog was sniffing around waving his plume above the grass where the turkey had been and came out with a chick. I kept a sharp lookout for more but saw none till later when a single poult struck out across the loose hay in the direction of the woods. It looked like the same one from earlier. If they hold still, the dogs lose interest quickly. Pepper passed within a few feet of it while I kept an eye on things. If he picked it up again I planned to interfere.

After four rounds I stopped to rest the horses and clean the guards. They have seen years of service and the remnant of last year’s grasses can build up between the knife and guard.

There were an unbelievable number of ladybugs on the hay that lay on the slope to the crimpers. Larvae, full-grown and every stage in-between. The larvae don't even resemble adults, but once you know what to look for they are unmistakable. I marvel at the masses as I brush everything out on the ground. One diminutive adult caught my attention and I got it to crawl onto my hand. His wing-covers were a solid orange. Not one spot. He scurried over my hand, in true ladybug fashion, searching for the highest spot to fly from. They look exceedingly awkward during takeoff so I watched closely. He gained the index fingertip and one wing-cover lifted. The rumpled underwing pushed out, but nothing happened. He tucked everything away and traced a few more rounds across my finger. Again the left wing unfolded. He lifted up on his tiptoes and appeared to strain. Nothing. A hind leg scrubbed frantically across the back of his right wing and he made another quick circle. FLIGHT! FLIGHT! The left wings obeyed, the right remained obstinate. The exertions raised him again on tiptoes and almost seemed enough to launch him from his chosen takeoff point. Finally I took pity on him and deposited him out of harm's way. Maybe later his wings would behave.

It is amazing that the ladybug can fly at all. The frail, membranous wings look atrophied and unable to support the body. That is probably why they always try to climb as high as possible before takeoff.

Insects in general are marvelous to observe. The variety alone is endless and unfathomed. Many of them defy man's conceivable laws of science. I think God made insects not only to serve a purpose in the infinite biological circle, but also to show His unlimited creativity.

We are told everything in nature has a purpose. Some of the elaborate designs and decorations and gimmicks of bugs makes me wonder. For example, a tobacco worm has much better camouflage than a monarch butterfly caterpillar, because it is almost solid green. We can spot the monarch caterpillar more easily for its stripes. And when it morphs into a chrysalis, it is adorned with tiny golden jewels. I presume they have a purpose. Then the adult with its gaudy colors...why? I know most of us appreciate them for their beauty. Does...
that mean the purpose of all that color is just to please humankind?

I use a well-known creature only to illustrate my point; there are thousands of similar wonders wherever we look for them. The humble bug can be quite humbling.

But I’m still in the hayfield. The swaths lie in tidy rows behind me and the haybine is working surprisingly well. The stand is comparable to a mediocre second cutting, but for some reason I feel elated.

When I saw the box turtle hunkered at the edge of the swath I cringed. Heavy equipment is unmerciful even through their protective shell. With no time to stop I was glad to see him slide around the edge of the haybine and be spared. He parked directly where the power unit’s wheels would pass on the next round so I watched closely. The turtles think themselves indestructible in the secrecy of their shells and I had no wish to undeceive this one. I saw no more of him, so I expect he had lumbered off in his steady fashion.

The last uneven sections of hay in the center of the field fell and I swung around to get the outer round. Lots of blackberry brambles and multiflora rose bushes crowd in whenever opportunity exists and I chop away at them on my way in. At one tangle a sinuous shape catches my eye. A giant blue racer reclines atop the brambles.

This species of snake is slender and long. Solid black sides and back make the belly and chin look startlingly white. They have a disquieting ability to raise themselves up to half their length into the air. I harbor a singular dislike for being observed this way. This one could have been five feet or longer.

The snake eyed the clattering apparatus bearing down on it. For a moment it looked like it might duck down and be consumed, but at the last minute it slithered away and disappeared into the shadows of the woods. They are as adept at slithering through the tree-tops as they are on the ground.

So all the field was cut and the equipment stored before noon.

Now before you rush out and buy a decrepit haybine for purposes of relaxation, let me share another, not-so-
therapeutic experience.

To begin with, it rained overnight, setting the stage for a perfect day. The hay was old and neglected. The tallest areas looked like jungles—post hurricane. After 200 yards it got bumpy, clumpy, and clogged. I stopped and backed up to clear the machine. Three or four times. At the far corner I quit. It should be drier after lunch.

Several hours later things seemed vastly improved. One round fell and I was back along the farthest edge of the field. First there was an odd clattering, then the cutter bar clogged. WHOA! Two teeth are loose. I try ignoring it. That definitely doesn’t work. We circle back to the barn. There’s no hammer, but this discarded jack works surprisingly well to smash rivets.

Now we’re ready to get something done. Back on the far edge, what’s that noise? Never borrow trouble; keep going until it stops you.

I just checked all the teeth...Hey! I found the lost hay hook! I knew it had to be somewhere on the farm.

Back to the barn. Out comes the cutter bar again. At least the tools are still out. Three rivets serve to put the knives back in place. It is sunny and breezy, the perfect day to mow hay. This time we make some progress, but because of earlier complications I need to stop when half the field is off.

The drying went well till the third day. Toward evening a dark cloud formed in the west. I watch with apprehension. It passes safely to the south but I stay nervous. Soon its tardy companion comes barreling our way. The worst thing about it is that the hay could probably have been baled already; we were just busy otherwise.

The impending shower was obviously intent on no good. It looked like one of those clouds with not enough rain to do a shred of good, but enough to ruin the hay. That is exactly what it tried to do. At the last minute it swung a bit and almost missed its goal. The dust was barely settled before the sun was back out. Since it promptly dried the hay I didn’t even bother tedding.

The next day proved overcast, but we started raking just before noon. We baled as soon as possible afterward and were well pleased with the result. The only thing better than 250 bales of dry hay in the barn was the 3½ inches of rain we got over the next 24 hours.

So go ahead, plant some hay this summer. If it doesn’t provide relaxation, it might give you a chance to exercise other virtues.

Noah Wenger and his family live and farm near Hillsboro, Ohio.
The Organic Home Demonstration:
Homemade Noodles—
By Elmina Burkholder

Wool Spinning—
By Karen Gotter and the local Spinning Guild Members

Notice:
All Display Tables will be open both days for viewing
**Getting Children Interested in Nature**

Betty Raber is greatly interested in nature and helped fill the table with ideas. She also made the signs behind the tables.

**Wool Spinning & Knitting**

Karen Gotter and members of the local Spinning Guild will have much to share with us.

**Decorations**

Elmer and Verba Graber, dairy farmers from Berlin, Ohio are the creators of the fall decorations throughout the conference.

**Ladies’ Panel**

Mary (Joe) Nisley, Yvonne (Matthias) Yoder, Ruth (Marlin) Miller, Elmina (Jacob) Yoder, Rebecca (Junior) Wengerd—Emily (David) Hershberger, moderator.
Main Course:

Tossed Salad
Fresh lettuce and vegetables raised by local and Greenfield Farms.

Poor Man's Steak
Grass-fed organic beef raised by a local family.

Parsley Potatoes
These tri-colored organic tubers were raised by several local families.

Green Beans
Organic green beans sourced from a local garden and German Village Store in Berlin.

Dessert:

Cherry Crisp/Berry Cobbler with Homemade Ice Cream
Delicious organic fruit baked in locally raised, Stutzman Farm grains. Creamy churned ice cream made with Greenfield organic cream and milk.

OUR FORENOON BREAK:

Chocolate Milk
 donated by Green Field Farms

Cheese and Creamer
 donated by Organic Valley

Pickles
 Raised and produced by Larksong Farms

Einkorn Crackers
 Donated by Stutzman Farms, Fredericksburg, OH

Apple Slices
Organic Gala apples from Rodhes IGA in Millersburg.

Coffee
Baltic Coffee Roasters, Baltic, OH
**Main Course:**

**Spelt Bread' n Apple Butter**  
Whole grain bread freshly baked by Berlin Natural Bakery and served with Organic Valley butter pats and homemade apple butter.

**Hot Taco Salad**  
(Taco beef n beans with Cheese, Lettuce, Tomatoes, Sour Cream, and Chips)  
Grass-fed organic beef topped with Organic Valley sour cream, cheese, fresh lettuce, tomatoes, onions from Nature’s Acres and Greenfield Farms.

**Dessert:**  

**Pumpkin Torte with Whipped Cream**  
layers of grain crust from Stutzman Farms with creamy pumpkin from Nature’s Acres topped with sweet Organic Valley whipped cream.
There are two country schools within a mile of our farm, and this morning I heard the bells ringing for the first time. On an exceptionally clear morning we can sometimes hear one or two more. There’s something about it that gives me this nostalgic feeling. I can just smell the newly oiled floor of the schoolhouse and remember how exciting it was to have new crayons, a tablet, and, occasionally, a new lunch “bucket.” My school years were enjoyable and I have many pleasant memories.

Children are so moldable and vulnerable during these school-age years. Habits are developed and ingrained—both good and bad. Good teachers can make lifelong impressions. Not only is it important to nurture their minds; it is also important that children have good food to nurture their bodies during these formative years. Mothers can determine their children’s future eating habits.

In the book, Seeds of Deception by Jeffrey M. Smith, he relates an interesting story about the changes that came about in a trouble-prone school, when as an experiment, the students’ diet was changed. They took out the junk food and soft drink vending machines, used no processed foods, and gave the students fresh, whole, and nutritious food. School officials expected to see a few changes, but what they got was a revolution. To quote, “The school is calm, the kids are well behaved, truancy isn’t an issue. Grades have improved and teachers are able to spend their time teaching instead of constantly disciplining.”

Yes, we as farmers do raise most of our food, but it is easy to slack off and buy those processed foods because they are fast and easy. Shortcuts are often not conducive to a job well done, and food is no exception. Many good memories center around a table of good food and good conversation, which go hand in hand. Our eating habits will affect the future more than we realize.

From “The Farm Home”…..Farming Magazine, PO Box 85, Mt. Hope, OH 44660.
Just Plain Values
Finding Joy in the Simple Things

JPV PRESS
STORY. PRESERVED.
We live in an area with a lot of elderly retired farmers and old, empty dairy barns no longer in use. Every now and then I run into one of these retired farmers and the conversation goes like this. "Oh, so you milk cows?" "Yes, I do." Then he says, "I used to milk cows and I had a 60-lb. herd average when I quit. I had some cows milking 80#. What do your cows milk?" I say, "Oh, we get about 33 lbs. per cow." He goes on, "That farming is a good life but a hard life; it got so that feed costs were so high we couldn’t make it."

Another man said that their feed bill exceeded the milk check a few months in a row and they quit. So why do so many people quit dairying when at the same time others like Grassland LLC, locally known as the New Zealanders, are making good profits and are growing? How can they be building more grazing hubs and milking setups every year? They have 65 to 450 cows on one setup. The cows calve on grass when there is grass and are fed round bales in a dry lot in the winter while they are dry. The cows are smaller and they are not organic. They have no Holsteins either.

We bought this farm in October of 2014. That winter we bought 17 Friesian crosses that were raised locally, coming from one of the New Zealand dairies near Newtonia, Missouri. The rest of our cows we had raised or bought here and there. So now we are milking 49 cows and still have 15 of the 17 Friesian crosses. They weigh from 850 to 900 pounds when they are in peak condition. The rest of our cows are Jerseys and Jersey crosses. Our herd bull is a grazing bull from the New Zealand genetics—high components on grass is what they are bred for. He’s just about two years old and weighs 650 to 700 pounds. He is just right, in my opinion, for our climate and style of farming.

I milked a few Holsteins for an English neighbor once when he didn't have his parlor ready yet. They milked well until it got hot and the fescue matured. They literally fell apart. Their ankles swelled up and they wanted to stand in the pond all day instead of grazing. Holsteins and fescue don't mix.

We only have 32 grazing acres at home. We rent more pasture up the road for dry cows and heifers. We do management intensive grazing and grazed the pastures 11 times this year. And clipped residue twice.

Grazing rotations vary with how fast it’s growing—from 19 days rest to 27 days rest. We feed some hay most of the time too.

We freshen our cows in spring starting February 20. About one-half of the herd in spring, the other half starting August 20.

So let’s take a look at milk produced per acre from grass. Grass is not free because we limed and applied gypsum and broadcast some clover too. But grass is cheap
compared to stored and harvested feeds.

We started grazing March 23 this past year (2017). We were feeding 10 lbs. of grain, 10 lbs. hay, and about 11 lbs. of grass according to a 31 lbs. daily dry matter demand. So in theory one-third of the milk produced is actually made from grazed grass. In the month of April our production was at 44,816 lbs. milk milking 44 cows. That made 14,938 lbs. of milk from grass. We are organic and received $31.00 per cwt. for milk after all the deductions and hauling costs. So the milk from grass for April was worth $4630. Breaking it down farther, we were running a 19-day rotation/rest. So we same as grazed 50 acres because we grazed part of the 32 acres twice. The pasture yielded $92.60 per grazing pass or $144.69 per acre per month or $154.33 per day income on grass only.

May was our peak production month at 45,816 lbs. of milk. One-third from grass makes 15,272 lbs. of milk; we received $29.12 per hundred; that makes a cash value of $4,448.22 for milk from grass. The grazing rotation was slowed down to 24 days rotating/rest, so we only grazed 41 acres. That yielded $108.47 per grazing pass or $143.49 per day or $139.01 per paddock acre for the month.

Summary for the month of May—our cost of milk production was $10.87 per hundred—that included a semi load of gypsum and a wagon gear. Also included is hay for the horses and all farm supplies. Everything but the farm payment, rent, or wages. That leaves $18.25 per hundred for rent, payments, and wages.

My theory on why so many people went out of dairying is they sought after those high-production Holsteins. They stopped grazing and fed cows in confinement. And had vet bills and went broke.

I don't have anything to boast on milk per cow, but my cows are healthy. We keep Redmond salt, kelp, humates, gypsum, Furst-McNess dairy mineral, and sulfur out free choice. The colostrum is rich and the calves are strong. In the mid-summer the cows eat so much kelp that you think you will go broke but you don't. We didn't have one cow with pink-eye and very little lameness.

We have 19 heifer calves this year. We are growing almost too fast, so we may have to sell some eventually. I guess I am still living the dream here at Birdsong Dairy.

This year we added honeybees to our farm, and as I've said before, God bless all the down-to-earth farmers. ✦

Raymond and Lydia Mast and their family operate an organic dairy farm near Rocky Comfort, Missouri.
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The world looked very different in the 1980s, the decade I spent in medical school and family practice residency. Even though my job was mainly with the ill, people in general then seemed so much healthier than today. Back then, most cancers and all Alzheimer’s disease, autism, and autoimmune diseases were rare. Why have they become so prevalent in the last three decades? For the last few years I have been looking through research to find answers. What I keep bumping into is the link between the introduction of Roundup and the increase in illness.

It’s not only physicians of my vintage that are alarmed at the rapid increase in previously rare diseases. Veterinarians are witnessing a surge in livestock infertility and miscarriages. Dogs are getting cancers at an unprecedented rate. Plant pathologists tell of previously confined plant diseases, like bacterial wilt and fusarium, that are now rapidly spreading across the country. Although there are many poisons in our environment today, when we understand the history of Roundup and how it works, it becomes clearer why it's a major factor in making us sick. We can then use this knowledge to keep ourselves and our families healthy.

Roundup’s history: Roundup’s active ingredient, glyphosate, was patented as a “descaling agent” in the 1960s by Stauffer Chemical Company. Its purpose was to clean industrial pipes and boilers by binding, or “chelating” residual minerals. In areas where the used-glyphosate was discarded, plants died. Monsanto Corporation quickly saw its herbicide potential and bought glyphosate for herbicide use in 1969.

The FDA and USDA required no independent safety studies before allowing glyphosate on the market. Monsanto’s convincing argument was that humans don’t have the chemical pathway that glyphosate interrupts in plants and bacteria. Therefore, in 1974, the sale of glyphosate began as “Roundup.” It was marketed to both farmers and homeowners as a weed-killer.

In addition to the mineral-binding component, glyphosate, Roundup also contains “adjuvants” like surfactant. A surfactant breaks the surface tension of water and allows Roundup to enter all parts of a plant. As you will see, surfactant also has a major role in making us sick.

Roundup’s use as an herbicide was limited at first because it couldn’t be used directly on crops without killing them. When Monsanto developed glyphosate-resistant soybeans and corn in 1996, the use of Roundup soared. This was also the beginning of previously rare diseases becoming common.

Crops that are genetically engineered to be glyphosate-resistant have come to be known as GE (genetically engineered) or GMO (genetically modified organisms). Most GE crops were developed to be used with Roundup and are called “Roundup Ready.” When these crops are sprayed with Roundup, they don’t die. However, Roundup does become “systemic,” or everywhere in the plant—including in what we eat. It’s now believed that GE crops are not harmful in themselves. Research shows that it is the Roundup in the GE crops that make us ill.
Roundup is everywhere: There are four main reasons there has been such a rapid increase in the amount of Roundup used since 1996: “Roundup Ready” soybeans and corn grew to become almost 100% of the United States’ market by 2014. Secondly, weeds rapidly gained resistance to Roundup—the first resistant weeds were reported in the late 1990s. To counteract this resistance, the amount of Roundup used in each field has doubled since 1996. Thirdly, the number of GE crops has grown to include sugar beets, canola, and potatoes in addition to the original soybeans and corn.

Finally, the use of Roundup is no longer limited to GE foods. It is now used extensively as a pre-harvest desiccant to “dry down” crops. Non-GE crops like wheat, oats, barley, and sugar cane are sprayed with Roundup about a week before harvest so their foliage will be dry and easier to harvest with a combine.

Monsanto originally told the Food and Drug Administration that Roundup did not stay in the soil or the crops. It’s become clear that this is not true—high residuals have been found in the soil and then in waterways after it rains. It also resides in the entire plant and grains that are harvested and we ingest. Because Roundup is in food and water, its should not be a surprise that it is found in human urine, breast milk, the central nervous system, and bone marrow. Urban dwellers are as vulnerable as their rural counterparts in this regard.

If Monsanto found it so easy to convince our government that Roundup couldn’t hurt humans or other mammals, then why should we be concerned? To answer that, let’s look at what is now known about what happens to our bodies when our food and water is contaminated with Roundup.

Roundup makes our food less nutritious: Besides pleasure, the main reason we eat food is for its caloric and mineral content. As we know from its history, Roundup’s main ingredient, glyphosate, chemically binds to minerals and makes them inactive. When it binds the minerals in soil, these nutrients can’t become part of the plants which are our food. Roundup’s success at binding minerals was apparent when the USDA decreased the weight of a bushel of corn by two pounds since the use of Roundup began. That’s two pounds of minerals lost per bushel.

Fewer minerals in plants mean fewer minerals for our bodies. We’re familiar with calcium and phosphate for our bone structure, and potassium to keep our hearts beating. But our bodies also need a trace amount of other minerals, like manganese, iron, copper, zinc, magnesium, and selenium to serve as enzymes and co-enzymes for the hundreds of chemical reactions in our bodies. When Roundup is used on crops, these minerals stay in the soil instead of becoming part of our food.

A second way Roundup makes our food less nutritious is by killing the soil’s bacteria. These bacteria are an essential part of the soil-food web that delivers the minerals from the soil into plants. In 2010, Monsanto patented glyphosate as an antibiotic—and antibiotics kill bacteria. Glyphosate could never be marketed as an antibiotic because it only kills “good” bacteria and not the “bad.” But glyphosate’s role as an antibiotic continues in the soil, leaving our food with even less nutrition.

Besides reducing food’s nutritional value, Roundup has many direct effects on our bodies. When reading through published research, I felt a bit overwhelmed by these many mechanisms, and so gathered them together in the following categories:

Roundup is found throughout the body: Roundup’s harmful effects in the soil also occur in the human body when we eat plants and animal products that contain Roundup. Roundup has a free pass to go throughout the body because surfactant allows glyphosate to bypass the liver—the major organ that clears poisons out of the body. That is why Roundup has been found throughout the human body and has such wide-spread detrimental effects.

Roundup binds minerals in our body: Not only are there fewer minerals in the food we eat, but when Roundup binds the minerals in our bodies, these minerals can’t perform their myriad of functions. The body becomes unable to
clear toxins, repair damaged DNA, or even generate energy.

Roundup kills the bacteria in our large intestines: The last five feet of our intestines is known as the large intestines, or colon. It is here that the vast majority of bacteria are found in the intestines—tens-of-trillions, in fact. Back in the 1980s our knowledge of these bacteria was confined to their essential role in digesting food. We also learned that using too many antibiotics, which only happened in the hospital setting, caused the large intestines to be overrun with the bad bacteria, C. difficile.

Today, people who haven’t been hospitalized or put on any prescription antibiotics are getting this same dangerous and uncomfortable bacterial infection. Now that Roundup is incorporated in most processed foods, the majority of Americans are eating an antibiotic daily.

Another consequence of ingesting daily antibiotics is the surge in gluten intolerance. A more severe form is Celiac disease which has gone from being extremely rare to now being found in five percent of our population. The medical world tells those that suffer from these uncomfortable diseases that they should avoid wheat—but wheat hasn’t undergone basic changes. Back in the 1980s our knowledge of these bacteria was confined to their essential role in digesting food. We also learned that using too many antibiotics, which only happened in the hospital setting, caused the large intestines to be overrun with the bad bacteria, C. difficile.

The known consequences of killing intestinal bacteria play a large role in the rise of gluten intolerance. For example, ninety percent of our feeling of well-being, is manufactured by bacteria in the intestines. Killing these bacteria can result in a depressed mood for us as well as big profits for pharmaceutical companies that sell serotonin proteins: One of the more frightening aspects of having Roundup in our bodies was only recently discovered. In 2016, it was shown that glyphosate is mistaken by the body for the small amino acid, glycine. Proteins are able to perform their unique roles because they are made up of amino acids linked together in specific order and size. Glyphosate is larger than glycine and therefore prevents proteins from folding into their normal shapes. When they lose this ability, these proteins can’t perform their required functions.

The widespread implication of damaged proteins is almost too much to imagine. Some proteins are part of the enzymes in our bodies that speed up all chemical reactions. Other proteins form hormones like insulin that regulate blood sugar. Proteins also serve to transport other substances such as hemoglobin that carries oxygen. It’s no wonder that scientists conclude that most diseases that have soared during the last three decades can be linked to Roundup’s ability to damage proteins. Let’s look at some of these diseases now.

It seems evident that having Roundup throughout our bodies would result in disease as it binds minerals, kills good bacteria, and distorts proteins. The increase in the following diseases since the 1970s correlates with the amount of Roundup in the environment and in our bodies:

Autism and Alzheimer’s have reached epidemic proportions: It’s frightening that autism and Alzheimer’s,
which weren’t even in the medical textbooks in the 1980s, have become household terms. Autism’s incidence has increased from two in 10,000 in the 1970s to currently being 59 in 10,000 according to the Centers of Disease Control (CDC). Alzheimer’s disease was defined as “a rare, pre-senile dementia.” It is now more common than vascular disease as the cause of dementia. Different types of studies—laboratory models, correlation studies, and biochemical models—strongly link both diseases to Roundup.

Cancer is now widespread: The incidence of cancer has also taken an astronomical leap from 1/100 in the 1970’s to one-of-two people today. Although I worked with an oncologist for three years in the 1980s, I never saw a case of Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, pancreatic cancer, or lung cancer in a non-smoker. These cancers are now so common that most of us know of someone who’s had them.

Since sugar cane workers in Central America have been exposed to Roundup, they have been dying in their 40s of renal tubular carcinoma—a disease that was not previously present.

Based on both Roundup’s link to cancer and many international studies, the World Health Organization declared glyphosate a “probable carcinogen” in March of 2016. Shortly after, four farmers filed a lawsuit against Monsanto saying that their exposure to Roundup gave them Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. In August of 2018, the Superior Court of California awarded a large settlement to a former school district groundskeeper who stated his Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma was caused by prolonged exposure to Roundup. Although Monsanto is contesting this, many other lawsuits have been filed.

The list of diseases continues: Besides autism, Alzheimer’s, and cancers, Roundup’s ability to kill bacteria, bind minerals, and distort proteins is linked to diseases as varied diabetes, obesity, asthma, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), Parkinson’s disease, lupus, neural tube defects, and infertility.

When we read about how pervasive Roundup is and how it damages our health, it’s easy to feel overwhelmed. When things feel too big for me to handle, a dear friend’s advice comes to me—just keep chipping away at it. Protecting ourselves and our families provides the motivation we’ll need to make continual small changes in what we eat. Here are some suggestions that have helped me:

Eat organic foods when possible: The organic label is the only label that guarantees no herbicides or GE ingredients. That means no Roundup in plants via GE crops or dried-down plants. Meats, dairy, and eggs that are "certified organic" cannot come from animals fed with any food containing Roundup. When you know local farmers who grow food sustainably and without herbicides, you’ll want to support them even if they’re not officially “organic.”

Avoid all GE foods: Even if GE foods haven't been found to be harmful in themselves, all GE foods are "Roundup Ready" and contain Roundup. Unlike 64
other countries in the world, the United States does not require GE labeling on its food. Congress passed a bill in 2016 which required GE labeling, but since then the USDA has only suggested bar labels that can be read with smart phones or a deceptively smiling sunflower with a “BE” (“bioengineered”) on it. “Bioengineered” is not a common term for GE food. This attempt at deception means we consumers need to keep aware. GE foods include soy, corn, canola, sorghum, sugar beets, and potatoes.

Avoid non-GE food that may be dried down with Roundup. If not organic, it’s best to avoid all wheat, oats, canola, flax, peas, lentils, safflower, barley, rice, sunflower seeds, and cane sugar.

Avoid processed foods: Over 90% of the food we Americans buy is processed, so this is indeed a tall order. But because flour and sugar contain Roundup, we might begin by buying these ingredients as organic. I appreciate that even our rural grocery store now carries organic brands of both flour and sugar and many other ingredients. If bread and cookies are part of the family’s fare, we can bake our own! Processed food is convenient, but it is not convenient to be ill.

Grow what food we can: Michael Pollan has been encouraging us for years to convert our lawns into gardens—bit by bit. As urban, suburban, and country folks gain knowledge about the contents of corporate food, it may now seem more feasible to begin or to continue growing our own food. Those who haven’t begun may start with some tomatoes and basil plants around the house or in patio containers. Adding a raised bed for vegetables in the lawn may be the next step. When increasing the size of your garden is taken in annual increments, your knowledge and pleasure will grow along with the amount of home-grown food on your dinner table.

The corporate food system gradually elbowed its way into our kitchens by promising to make the housewife’s work easier. Perhaps we didn’t see how processed food would take over our dinner tables or perhaps we trusted corporations to give our health priority over their profits. When we read about how damaging something like Roundup is to our health, we can feel either victimized or empowered. I believe I alternate between these feelings depending on my mood. But in gathering and sharing this information, I’m hoping we will all be better able to take back control of keeping ourselves healthy.

Mary Lou retired as a physician and now homesteads with her husband, Tom, south of Columbus, Ohio. Her book, Growing Local Food, can be bought through Carlisle Press at 800-852-4482.
From Gene Logsdon’s “Homebodies.”

...For myself, the only thing I can add is that I was willing to give up a secure financial future, if there is such a thing, to come home because of a deep yearning for tranquility. Growing up on a farm, I knew so many moments of utter peace when I listened to cows munching hay at night, or watched the sun come up out of the fog when I was already in the field, or sitting by the creek under a shade tree for a noon break watching the water flow by, or listening to the corn grow on a July night, or the sound of rain falling on the roof after dry weather. No matter how many times I walk or work this same land, there is always something new to discover and turn into even more tranquility. That is my reward, my destiny, my life.
The ultimate test of a man’s conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard.

~ Gaylord Nelson
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United Fencing, Ltd.
13369 Dover Road
Apple Creek, OH 44606
330-857-0154

Van Beek Natural Science
3689 460th St.
Orange City, IA 51041
712-707-4132

Vidafeld Preservation
918 Log Cabin Rd.
Leola, PA 17540
717-824-7309

W.G. Dairy
12993 Cleveland Road
Creston, OH 44217
330-435-6522

Wood Farms
11402 Indianapolis Road
Fort Wayne, IN 46809
260-433-6878
*Gold Sponsor

Woodlyn Acres Farm, LLC
647 S. Kurzen Road
Dalton, OH 44618
330-465-2248
*Silver Sponsor

Yoder’s Produce, Inc.
9599 S. Apple Creek Rd.
Frederickburg, OH 44627
330-695-5900

Young Living-Betty Yoder
30100 TR 227
Fresno, OH 43824
740-545-5141

Young Living - Julia Gasser
11702 Frick Rd.
Sterling, OH 44276
330-641-2293
Our Mission is to:
Care about humans and humus; encourage working the land for future generations; and support community life and stewardship that is prosperous and enduring.

We do this by:
- Promoting growing practices that conserve, renew, and improve our soils; to provide healthy food for the well-being of families, communities, and all inhabitants that share our farms and land.

- Advocating a way of farming that offers products for the markets that are nutritious, wholesome, and delicious.

- Building a local agriculture with practices that benefit our rural and urban communities.

It is vitally important that we can continue to say, with absolute conviction, that organic farming delivers the highest quality, best-tasting food, produced without artificial chemicals or genetic modification, and with respect for animal welfare and the environment, while helping to maintain the landscape and rural communities.

~ Prince Charles
A Special Thanks to Our Sponsors:

**Platinum**
- Green Field Farms
- Organic Valley Co-op
- Nature’s Warehouse
- Just Plain Values

**Gold**
- Farming Magazine
- Sunrise Supply
- Small Farm Institute
- Pioneer Equipment
- Maysville Elevator
- Bowman Harness
- JDS Seeds

**Silver**
- Woodlyn Acres Farm
- Wood Farms
- Farmer’s Equipment & Repair
- Timbercrest Farm
- Kauffman Lawn Furniture
- Holmes Power Equipment