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Announcements

Tri-State Webinar Series: Improving Pasture Management for Sustainable Livestock Production
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Editor,

Masoud Hashemi
Extension Professor
2021 Tri-State SARE Project Webinar Series

Improving Pasture Management for Sustainable Livestock Production

Webinar 1: Friday, February 19th
Webinar 2: Wednesday, March 10th
Webinar 3: Tuesday, March 23rd
Webinar 4: Tuesday, April 6th

WEBINAR 1
Introduction to the development of a simple grazing plan
Jenn Colby (UVM), Susan Parry (PA NRCS), & Daimon Meeh (NH NRCS)

WEBINAR 2
Grazing plan calculations
Masoud Hashemi (UMass), Sam Glaze-Corcoran (New England Grazing Network), & Jenn Colby (UVM)

WEBINAR 3
Mapping out your grazing plan
Jenn Colby (UVM) & Daimon Meeh (NH NRCS)

WEBINAR 4
Refining your grazing plan
Daimon Meeh (NH NRCS) & Susan Parry (PA NRCS)

All webinars will be held from 10 am to 12 noon

Webinars are open to service providers and farmers and will be comprised of time for instruction in addition to interactive breakout sessions. By attending all webinars participants will have a sound understanding of how to help farmers create a grazing plan and/or work to develop a personalized grazing plan for their farm. Partaking in all webinars is encouraged, but not required.

For more information, visit http://meatsystems.uconn.edu/
or contact Rachel Bespuda, Project Director at rachel.bespuda@uconn.edu

Now Accepting Nominations for the

2021 Massachusetts Outstanding Dairy Farmer Award

The 2019 winners of the Massachusetts Outstanding Dairy Farmer Award Tully Farm, 446 Pleasant Street, Dunstable MA.

The selection committee is accepting nominees for 2021. Please nominate a dairy farmer that you think is qualified for such an award by May 1, 2021. Self Nomination is welcome.

Selection will be based on the following criteria:

1) Farm is operated by a full -time farmer with an efficient dairy operation
2) Quality of dairy herd (milk production/cow, breeding program and herd health)
3) Farm Efficiency (milk production/worker, other productivity considerations)
4) The forage program (quality of forage as a well-balanced feeding program)
5) Is the farm operation economically sound?
6) Leadership ability (contributions at the local, regional, state, or national level)
7) Contribution to environmental improvement (management, visibility, appearance, scenic aspects)

For more information, questions, or comments, please contact:

Masoud Hashemi
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MEDIA CONTACT: Diane Petit, Public Affairs Specialist, 413-253-4371, diane.petit@usda.gov

You may apply for NRCS conservation programs at any time; complete applications are ranked for funding in batches periodically throughout the year. All applications determined eligible and high priority by close of business on the ranking date will be considered in the current funding cycle.

The following application ranking dates, pending available funds, are scheduled:

- February 19, 2021
- March 19, 2021
- April 16, 2021
- May 21, 2021
- June 18, 2021
- July 16, 2021
- August 20, 2021

**Ranking dates and the application process are subject to change.** Contact your local field office for the latest information. For more information on available programs, the application process, and natural resource priorities, visit the Massachusetts NRCS website at [www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov).

“If you operate a farm or manage forest land and want to improve your land, we can help,” said Dan Wright, State Conservationist for NRCS in Massachusetts. “You can discuss your vision for your land with one of our conservation planners, who will explain the conservation planning process and how to apply for financial assistance.”

EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers and forest land owners to address natural resource concerns through an array of conservation practices. Assistance is available to support private landowners and managers in addressing farm, field, forest, wildlife, water, and/or plant management issues including:

- Erosion control
- Farm and forestry conservation plans
• Fencing for grazing systems
• Forest stand improvement
• Grazing plans
• Irrigation systems
• Pasture and hayland planting
• Pollinator habitat
• Protection of heavy use areas for livestock
• Restoration and management of declining habitat
• Riparian buffers
• Seasonal high tunnels
• Soil health management plans
• Waste storage facilities
• Wildlife habitat management and development

The AMA program provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation into their farming operations. Massachusetts producers may construct or improve water management structures or irrigation structures and implement high tunnels to benefit plant productivity.

AMA is available in 16 states where Federal Crop Insurance Program participation is historically low: Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

For more information, contact your local USDA-NRCS office:

• Greenfield field office – 413-772-0384, ext 3, serving Franklin County
• Hadley field office – 413-585-1000, ext 3, serving Hampden and Hampshire counties
• Holden field office – 508-829-4477, ext 3, serving Worcester County
• Pittsfield field office – 413-443-1776, ext 3, serving Berkshire County
• Westford field office – 978-692-1904, ext 3, serving Essex, Middlesex and Suffolk counties
• Wareham field office – 508-295-5151, ext 2, serving Bristol, Norfolk and Plymouth counties
• West Yarmouth field office – 508-771-6476, serving Cape Cod and the Islands

Some of the EQIP funding will be provided to farmers and forest landowners via the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which encourages partner organizations to join in efforts with producers to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales. Through the RCPP program, NRCS and its partners help producers install and maintain conservation activities in selected project areas. Partners leverage RCPP funding in project areas and report on the benefits achieved.

NRCS is a federal agency that works hand-in-hand with conservation districts and the people of Massachusetts to improve and protect soil, water and other natural resources.
**Ask the Expert: How to Encourage Horses to Move During Winter?**

Hannah Lochner, BS, and Krishona Martinson, PhD, UMN.

From: January 2021 [UMN Extension Horse e-Newsletter](https://www.extension.umn.edu/p/1994)

**Question:** At the end of the grazing season, I transitioned my horse from pasture to hay in a dry lot in preparation for winter. I've noticed that my horse tends to be less active now and continuously stands at or near the hay feeder. Is this detrimental to his digestive health? How can I encourage him to move?

**Response:** Natural horse behaviors that support digestive health and gut motility include eating small frequent meals throughout the day and locomotion (e.g. walking and movement). Grazing best satisfies these behaviors; however, year-round pasture access is not possible in the Midwest. Horses may be less inclined to move during the winter due to forage type (e.g. pasture vs. hay), poor footing, and limited space. Minimal locomotion in horses may lead to ‘stocking up’ and a heightened risk of colic. However, having access to good quality forage and clean, “tepid water” (45 to 65 degrees) is key to maintaining digestive health.

There are several management practices you can take to encourage your horse to move during the winter months. If feeding small square bales, you can divide your horse’s hay ration into smaller parts and place them around the perimeter of the dry lot to encourage movement and mimic grazing. To avoid feeding off the ground, hay nets can be used to contain the hay. If feeding round-bales, placing the round-bale furthest away from the shelter and water can encourage movement. Similarly, if feeding grain or a ration balancer, place feeders in areas furthest away from hay feeders. Although not convenient for owners and managers, these strategies should encourage horse movement.

Additionally, many horses may be reluctant to walk on frozen manure piles or ice. Therefore, it’s important to routinely pick manure and manage ice in dry lots throughout the winter months. Periodically hand-walking or riding your horse can be beneficial in stimulating gut motility; however, we realize weather conditions may not allow for this unless there is access to an indoor arena.
We have created a [CDLE YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/c/CDLEUMassExtension).

You will find:

- Recorded webinars that you might have missed (more info pg 14-16)
- Educational videos
- Information on research projects
- Farm tours

Please provide us with feedback on the kinds of content you would like to see on the channel by filling out this short survey:

[https://forms.gle/Xt7Zc6LMbzz65Bq6A](https://forms.gle/Xt7Zc6LMbzz65Bq6A)
MASSACHUSETTS NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS

REVIEW & RECORD KEEPING WEBINAR

Recorded

Available online here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuDAV-gaOlw

Speakers

Hotze Wijnja, MDAR: Regulation Review
Masoud Hashemi, UMass Extension: The 4R’s of Nutrient Management
Kate Parsons, NRCS: Record Keeping

Does it seem like it’s been a while since you’ve heard about the Nutrient Management Regulations in MA? Do you have questions about what the current rules are and what records you need to keep in case questions of compliance come up? This workshop has you covered. Hotze Wijnja of MDAR will start the workshop with a review of the current state regulations - an excellent refresher for both farmers and ASPs. Hotze has been the face, the voice, and author of the regulations and is the perfect person to bring us all up to speed. Longtime Extension Faculty member at UMass, Masoud Hashemi, will then discuss the 4R’s of good nutrient management: right source, right rate, right time, and right place. Kate Parsons of NRCS will bring it home with the details on what records you should be keeping and strategies for organizing these records in the event you need to provide them to an outside source. Collectively, this workshop will prepare participants to be in compliance with the regulations, clear up questions about record keeping details, and help attendees make money smart and environmentally conscious decisions about nutrient applications.
Testing Soil for Meaningful results

With Dr. Masoud Hashemi & Dr. Sam Corcoran

- Benefits of testing soil for fertility
- Overview of how to correctly sample soil
- Interpreting soil test results

This webinar is beneficial to all field/vegetable farms, managing pastures in equine and livestock operations, and backyard growers.

Recorded and available online through this link:

https://youtu.be/C7QipinnWdE
Recorded and now available to view online.

**Summer Annuals with Caleb Goossen of MOFGA**

**No-Till Pasture Improvement with Rick Kersbergen of UMaine Extension**

**Brassicas and other cool-season annuals with Heather Darby of UVM Extension**

**Harvesting over-wintering cover crops with Sam Corcoran of UMass Extension**

**Stockpiling with Troy Bishopp: 60 Days From Your Fall Feeding Plan**

**Alternative Forage with Kathy Soder**

Here is the entire playlist: [Grazing & Forage Season Extension Playlist](#)

The series is a collaboration among UMass Extension, UVM Extension, & UMaine Extension, and is supported in part by a Northeast SARE Research and Education Grant with organization and administration supported by the Livestock Institute of Southern New England via the New England Grazing Network with the support of the Cedar Tree Foundation.

For any questions about the series, please contact Sam Corcoran at sglazecorcor@umass.edu