



Growing the dairy grazing sector, together

Your monthly update from the Dairy Grazing Alliance

Welcome to the DGA Newsletter

With the spring season just around the corner, we're all getting ready for the busy time ahead. In this issue, we're thrilled to introduce our three new strategic hires: Alex Peterson, Fabian Bernal, and Lissy Matthews, who will be key to our work in market development, sustainability, and strategic partnerships.

We're also excited to share our upcoming "Repro Talks" webinars and Direct Market Roundtable, which will cover livestock precision technology, bull selection for grazing systems, and direct marketing, a spotlight on DGA Mentor Ashlee Kleinhammer, DGA Updates from our Executive Director Joe Tomandl III, a great article from Graze, grazing insights, market news and upcoming events.

Wishing you all the best for the season ahead!

Please send us your news and comments. We would love to highlight awards, successes, grants, activities, media coverage, classes you would like MGIC to develop, etc. Please send your news to Jessica Duran. (jessica@dga-national.org) and if you want to share this Newsletter with someone use [this link!](#)

Jessica Duran, MGIC Director

Dairy Grazing Alliance Update

We are witnessing an exciting period for the Dairy Grazing Alliance.

First, I am delighted to welcome Alex, Fabian and Lissy to the team. They bring remarkable talent and a wealth of experience in the dairy and regenerative agriculture industry. The whole DGA team is excited to work with them to expand grass-based markets and create demand for producers. Our primary focus is generating opportunities that enable producers to maintain profitability and anchor diverse supply chains, ultimately adding value to the U.S. dairy industry. Our initiatives, which include implementing precision pasture measuring technology and providing workforce development through a registered Apprenticeship program, are vital tools. These efforts are forward looking and producer aligned, helping grazing dairy farmers improve, while identifying viable markets, and making grass-based dairy more relevant to the overall industry.

I wish everybody a safe and successful grazing season.

Joe Tomandl, III
Executive Director

Welcome to the Team: Announcing Strategic Hires

We are excited to announce three strategic hires to accelerate the growth of the U.S. dairy grazing sector. The new team members are:

Alex Peterson, Senior Director of Corporate Partnerships & Market Development. A third-generation Missouri grazing farmer and former chair of the U.S. Dairy Export Council. Alex will focus on **connecting producer capacity with market demand**.

Fabian Bernal, Senior Director of Sustainability Impact & Strategic Modeling. An expert in agricultural economics and life-cycle assessment. Fabian will lead efforts to **translate on-farm data into verifiable sustainability metrics**.

Lissy Matthews, Senior Director of Advancement & Strategic Partnerships. Formerly of Advancing Eco Agriculture. Lissy will lead **philanthropic investment** and cross-sector collaboration to support regenerative systems.

These roles were created to strengthen DGA's leadership, partnerships, and internal capacity to support the growth of U.S. dairy grazing. This move signals a significant step forward for DGA as it expands its work beyond the well-known Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship program, which has logged over 750,000 hours of on-farm training.

[Learn more here](#)



Alex Peterson



Fabian Bernal

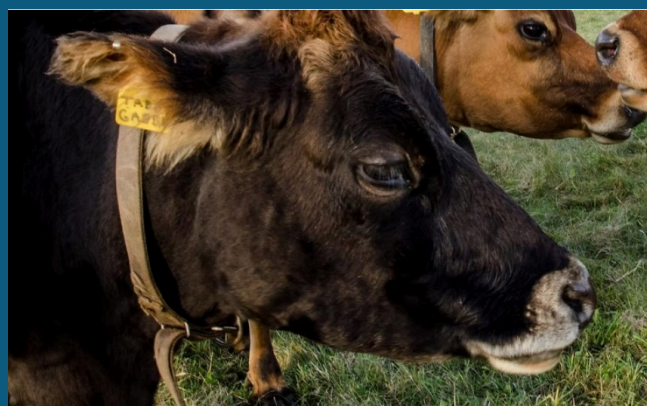


Lissy Matthews

DGA FARMERS IN THE NEWS

Spotlight: DGA Mentor Ashlee Kleinhammer

A recent article from **Resource Rural** highlights the work of **Ashlee Kleinhammer**, owner of North Country Creamery in Kesseville, NY. The article showcases her resilience and innovation as a pasture-based dairy farmer, navigating the challenges of federal funding cuts while continuing to build a thriving business. The story emphasizes the importance of diversified products, regional food hubs, and the strong local food systems in the Champlain Valley and Adirondacks.



[Read the article here](#)



MANAGED GRAZING

INNOVATION CENTER

Join us for a couple of "Repro Talks"

Join us for a couple of fun and informative "Repro Talks"! We are hosting two webinars this March focused on technology and genetics.

Whether you are looking to integrate the latest technology or select the perfect genetics for your herd, these sessions are designed to provide practical, real-world insights for your farm.



Using Livestock Precision Technology for Smarter Reproduction

Is your reproduction program backed by real-time data? Join **Dr. Augusto Madureira** (Michigan State University) to discover how Livestock Precision Technologies (LPT) are transforming herd management. Learn how to turn data into actionable decisions that improve pregnancy rates, reduce labor, and identify health issues before they become costly problems.

Wednesday March 18, 2026
6:00 PM EST/ 5:00 PM CST

[Register Now](#)



Selecting the Perfect Bull for Your Dairy Grazing System

Finding the right genetics for a pasture-based system is an art and a science. Join **Suzanne Nelson Karreman**, manager of Reverence Farms, as she shares her expertise on selecting the perfect bull for a dairy grazing system. Learn how to build a resilient, efficient herd that thrives on forage and produces exceptional results.

Wednesday March 25, 2026
6:00 PM EST/ 5:00 PM CST

[Register Here](#)



Monthly Roundtable

Direct Market Roundtable

Direct marketing through on-farm stores, farmers' markets, or CSAs can be extremely successful. Whether you're already established or just starting to look at the logistics of direct market sales, there is no substitute for peer-to-peer intelligence.



We're forming a cohort of graziers to swap successful sales strategies, troubleshoot the logistics that didn't go as planned, and build a collective knowledge base that keeps us all competitive.

If you're looking to sharpen your retail operation or simply want to learn from those who have already navigated this, your perspective is welcome!

[Register Here](#)

Graze
The magazine that is by graziers, for graziers

Longtime graziers focus on production

Almost 30 years into organic production, the Arnolds are looking ahead

By Martha Hoffman Kerestes

Truxton, New York — Many things have changed since Twin Oaks Dairy LLC switched to organic nearly 30 years ago. One thing that hasn't changed is the role of grazing in the farm's profitability, cow health, and production goals.



Kathie Arnold and her son Kirk milk around 150 cows on their central New York farm with about 155 acres grazeable by the milking herd. About 25 of those acres have first cutting made before being added to the grazing rotation. An additional 250 acres are used by heifers and dry cows, with 80 of those in permanent grazing and the rest added throughout the season after haymaking.

Right now total rented and owned acreage, including forage and row crop ground, comes to 760 acres, but after some currently transitioning ground becomes organic, that number will go up to 900. The farthest land is 2.5 miles away.

Productivity varies a lot, from acreage along the river that can flood and good flat gravel ground to poorly drained blue clay and side hills so steep that grazing is the only option and reseeding isn't feasible.

Green chop to grazing

Kathie, her husband, and one of his brothers went into partnership running the dairy when the two men's mother retired in 1980. At that time, the farm was already doing some grazing and green chop. They moved to more intensive grazing management by breaking bigger pastures up as the 80s progressed, with the encouragement of their local NRCS grazing specialist.

To see this article in full, order the specific [back issue](#) you are interested in or [subscribe here](#). This article appeared in the March 2026 issue of Graze.

March 2026 Graze - summary of articles in the issue:

- Longtime graziers focus on production
- Selecting ewes with records
- Setting up for spring grazing success
- Silvopasture for hog and poultry feed

Grazing Insights: Research and Practical Strategies

Spring Grazing Management

As the spring grazing season begins, [Illinois Extension team](#) is emphasizing the importance of careful management to protect pasture health and ensure a productive season. Key recommendations include **delaying turnout until forages are mature enough to handle grazing pressure** and implementing a **more frequent rotation in early spring to keep up with rapid growth**.

What Can Wearable Sensors Do for Your Grazing Operation?

For graziers, these tools offer some unique advantages that can help you get more out of your pastures and your herd.

Know When She's Ready. Activity-based sensors can detect the subtle changes in movement and restlessness that signal estrus, often more accurately than visual observation alone. For graziers whose cows are spread across multiple paddocks, this can be a game-changer for improving conception rates without spending hours watching the herd.

Catch Problems Early. A healthy cow on pasture has a predictable rhythm of grazing, ruminating, and resting. When that rhythm breaks, something is wrong. Different sensors track rumination time, temperature, water intake and activity levels around the clock, flagging drops that can indicate the early stages of a metabolic disorder, mastitis, or lameness often a day or two before you would notice it yourself.

See How Your Pastures Are Really Being Used. GPS-enabled collars can map exactly where your cows spend their time. Are they congregating in one corner and ignoring another? Is a particular paddock being underutilized? This kind of data can help you fine-tune your rotation, adjust paddock size, and improve overall forage utilization.

Save Time Where It Counts. Another big benefit for a grazing operation is the labor savings. Instead of walking paddocks twice a day to check for heats or health issues, you can review alerts on your phone and focus your time on the management decisions that matter most.

The technology is evolving fast, and costs are coming down. If you have been curious about whether sensors make sense for a pasture-based system, the answer might be yes.

Market News and Industry Trends

Policy & Farm Bill Updates

The Farm, Food and National Security Act of 2026 has cleared the House Agriculture Committee and is heading toward a House vote. ([ProAg, March 2026](#)) In response to ongoing market volatility, the Dairy Together coalition is calling on Congress to establish a mandatory program for managed growth based on market demand and price stability. ([NFFC, March, 2026](#)) In the short term, the USDA has announced it will purchase \$263 million in dairy and specialty crops to support farmers and supply food banks. ([SuccessfulFarming, February 2026](#))

Upcoming Events

- Great Lakes Forage & Grazing Conference. March 19, 2026 | Clare, MI
- Marbleseed Organic University. March 26, 2026 | Chippewa Falls, WI
- Kentucky Beginning Grazing School. April 21, 2026 | Morehead, KY
- Appalachian Grazing Conference. April 30, 2026 | Wardensville, WV
- GrassWorks WI School of Grazing. May 19, 2026 | Bloomington, WI
- Heart of America Grazing Conference. July 15, 2026 | Effingham, IL

Share Your Story with the DGA Community

We want to hear from you! Do you have a success story, upcoming event, research findings, or innovative practice you'd like to share with fellow dairy graziers? We're always looking for content that can benefit our community.

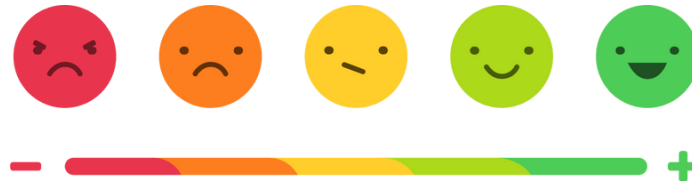
We'd love to feature:

- Farm success stories and lessons learned
- Upcoming conferences, field days, or educational events
- New research or publications relevant to dairy grazing
- Innovative grazing practices or technologies
- Questions you'd like us to address in future newsletters

Submit your suggestions, stories, or events to Jessica Duran at jessica@dga-national.org

Your contributions help make this newsletter a valuable resource for the entire dairy grazing community!

Help us make the DGA Newsletter even better! Your feedback is invaluable in helping us create content that truly serves the dairy grazing community. This survey takes about 3-5 minutes to complete. [Survey](#)



Support DGA

Get involved!! Dairy Grazing Alliance is training a new generation of dairy farmers who utilize regenerative practices to revitalize rural communities, protect the environment, and produce nutrient-dense dairy products.



Thank you for being part of the Dairy Grazing Alliance community. Together, we're building a more sustainable and profitable future for dairy grazing.



This newsletter was compiled in March 2026. For the most current information, please visit our website or contact us directly.

www.dga-national.org

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