Dairy Grazing Alliance

Monthly Newsletter - October 2026

Growing the dairy grazing sector, together

Your monthly update from the Dairy Grazing Alliance

Welcome to the DGA Newsletter

Happy October from all of us at DGA!

Fall is here, and there's plenty to share from across the DGA community! In this issue, DGA's Alex Peterson explores the growing market opportunity for U.S. grass-fed dairy and the work underway to strengthen the dairy grazing sector. We're also celebrating DGA Mentor farm, Corse Farm Dairy, recipients of the 2026 New England Leopold Conservation Award.

We're sharing updates on the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship's expanded presence on MGIC, including new opportunities to connect and build community, along with upcoming Apprentice Cohort Meetings and opportunities to teach on MGIC. You'll also find the latest from *Graze*, industry news, resources, and upcoming events.

Thanks, as always, for being part of the DGA community.

Happy grazing!

Stepping with Purpose into My Role with Dairy Grazing Alliance

By Alex Peterson, Senior Director of Corporate Partnerships and Market Development

More people should grow up navigating around cowpies. Cowpies teach us to be deliberate with our steps, lest we “step in it.” (Yes, that is where the phrase originates.) About a year ago, I reached a point in my life where I was ready to navigate in a new direction, "stepping with purpose" beyond my well-worn and familiar path.

After 15 years of working on our family’s grazing dairy in North Missouri, and a high level of engagement in the dairy industry via farmer board service, I had already moved quite a bit beyond the farmgate. I enjoyed representing farmer interests, highlighting dairy industry research and promoting U.S. dairy to consumers locally, nationally, and to the farthest corners of the globe. I am proud to have helped efforts to build demand and capture value for U.S. dairy farmers from within the supply chain. On all fronts, it was encouraging to meet and work with skilled professionals supporting our farm families.

The irony of my story is that despite all of my interactions within the dairy community, I was oblivious to the existence of Dairy Grazing Alliance (DGA) and its mission to catalyze the development of and support for a vibrant U.S. dairy grazing sector. My friend Eric made a connection, and I became increasingly impressed the more I discovered. Founder, Executive Director and dairy farmer Joe Tomandl has expanded the organization's work beyond the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship to build a viable market for dairy grazing farms.

It is an honor for me to purposefully step into my DGA role as the Alliance's Senior Director, Corporate Partnerships & Market Development, seeking potential growth pathways for the U.S. grazing dairy sector so it can become as robust as consumers want it to be. Consumer demand for grass-fed products, those produced by grazing dairy farms, is far outpacing what our domestic market is delivering.

Read the full article here.

DGA Apprenticeship Expands on MGIC

The Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship has expanded its presence on MGIC, bringing Apprenticeship administration, hours tracking, and online coursework together in one place. The transition also introduces new opportunities for Apprentices, Mentors, and Education Coordinators to connect, share experiences, access resources, and build community across the DGA network.

If you haven't already, be sure to create your MGIC account! If you have questions or need support, please contact Jessica Matthews at **jessicam@dga-national.org**.

Explore the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship on MGIC

Upcoming Apprenticeship Cohort Meetings

Join fellow DGA Apprentices for our next Monthly Virtual Cohort Meeting on November 18! These casual, one-hour gatherings are a chance to connect, share experiences, learn from one another, and build community with Apprentices across the country.

Watch your inbox for an invitation coming soon!

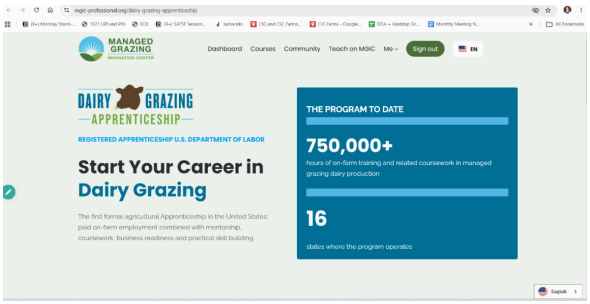
Share Your Experience: Teach on MGIC!

The Managed Grazing Innovation Center (MGIC) invites individuals and organizations to share their expertise through online courses focused on managed grazing, sustainable agriculture and the business of farming. Whether you have an existing course or an idea for something new, MGIC offers support with curriculum

development, course setup and promotion to help you reach a growing community of learners.

Interested in teaching on MGIC? **Learn more and connect with us.**

Don't forget to follow MGIC on social media to get the latest news!



Upcoming Webinar: Website Transition Overview & Assistance

Calling all DGA Website users! Join us for this informational webinar designed for Mentors, Education Coordinators, Apprentices, and prospective Apprentices. This session will provide a comprehensive walkthrough of the new DGA website, helping you confidently navigate and utilize the MGIC platform. We'll also host a Q&A session to address your questions and help fix any issues.

Thank you for your patience during this transition. We're excited to bring more of the Apprenticeship experience together in MGIC and to use it in new ways to strengthen connection across our community.

Join us November 2nd at 12:30pm ET

Corse Farm Dairy Receives New England Leopold Conservation Award

Congratulations to DGA Mentor Farmers Leon, Linda, and Abbie Corse of Corse Farm Dairy in Whitingham, Vermont, recipients of the 2026 New England Leopold Conservation Award!

The Corse family has been grazing dairy cattle for six generations, demonstrating a longstanding commitment to soil health, water quality, and conservation. Their farm is also home to a successful DGA Apprenticeship partnership, with former Apprentice MacKenzie Wallace now serving as herdsperson, primary mechanic, and farm partner.

The award, presented by Sand County Foundation and its partners, recognizes outstanding stewardship of working lands.

Read more and watch a video about the Corse Family's conservation achievements.

Graze

The magazine that is by graziers, for graziers

What's New from *Graze* Magazine?

The October issue of *Graze* is arriving in mailboxes and email inboxes across the country, featuring practical insights, fresh perspectives, and stories from the world of grazing agriculture. Here's a look at what's inside, along with the latest articles available on the *Graze* blog.

Inside the October issue:

- **Drought Management Tips:** Keeping stock fed and pastures healthy by Janet McNally
- **Advisor Panel:** Making and managing stored feed
- **Editorial:** "How 'Natural' Is Our Grazing System?" by Joel McNair
- **Testing Sustainability Practices** on the Farm by Fabian Bernal
- **Seasonal Dairy Update:** Breeding season lessons, by Geordie Lynd and Silene DeCiucies
- **Following the Circle of Life:** Leaving linear thinking behind, by Allen Williams and Russ Conser
- **Grassfed Organic Dairy Forum:** How do you raise replacements?
- **How Hogs Fit Into the Grazing Rotation** by Jim Van Der Pol

Latest from the *Graze* blog:

- **What's Shade Worth on Pasture?** Austin Unruh explores the dollars-and-cents value of providing tree shade for livestock on pasture.
- **Advisor Panel: Dealing with Flies** *Graze*'s advisor panel shares a variety of creative, practical approaches to managing flies on the farm.

Subscribe to Graze Magazine

Industry News and Resources

Grant Writing Support for Farmers & Ag Orgs

Samantha Gehrett, MGIC instructor of the Farm Business Management course, offers grant writing, grant strategy, and funding opportunity research services through her consulting business, S. Gehrett Consulting. Farmers and agricultural organizations interested in support can contact Samantha at **sgehrettconsulting@gmail.com** or 717-514-4717.

Not All Milk Is Equal: Grass-Fed Organic Milk Packs More Than Three Times the Omega-3s

A year of sampling from Vermont and New York stores shows that how cows are raised — and the season — shapes the fatty acids in the milk on grocery shelves.

Multipurpose Cover Crop Systems

Cover crops began as a way to protect bare soil, but now many producers use them as multipurpose forage that extends grazing into fall, winter and early spring.

Maximize Profits on Your Dairy Farm with Grazing

Dairy farming is the single biggest land use in the Great Lakes Basin. Feeding dairy cows with well-managed pasture can reduce costs, protect water quality, and fight climate change. Maximizing efficiency will increase the probability of long-term financial viability of dairies using grazing.

Could Virtual Fencing Make Intensive Grazing More Profitable?

University of Missouri researchers are studying how virtual fencing can improve grazing efficiency, reduce labor and help farmers turn cover crops and row-crop acres into additional opportunities for cattle production.

Upcoming Events

- **CFSA Sustainable Agriculture Conference** — October 30–November 1 | Winston-Salem, NC
- **Organic Career Network's Organic Job Fair** — November 5 | Virtual Event
- **Women in Dairy: Estate Planning** — November 11 | Springfield, MO
- **Sustainable Agriculture Summit** — November 18–19 | Fort Worth, TX
- **SAVE THE DATE: Acres Eco-Ag Conference** — December 1-4 | Iowa City, IA
- **SAVE THE DATE: GrassWorks Grazing Conference** — January 21–23 | La Crosse, WI

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.

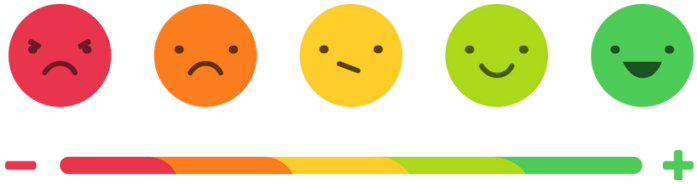
We'd love to feature:

- 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 **info@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

Help strengthen the future of managed grazing dairy in the U.S. Your support advances farmers, education, innovation, and market opportunities that help dairy thrive.

Donate here

Thank you for being part of the Dairy Grazing Alliance community. Together, we're advancing managed grazing and helping build a thriving, resilient future for dairy farmers, rural communities, and the land.

MANAGED GRAZING INNOVATION CENTER

DAIRY GRAZING APPRENTICESHIP

Graze
The magazine that is by graziers, for graziers

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

www.dga-national.org

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