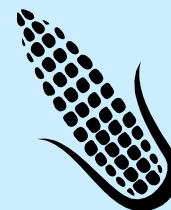
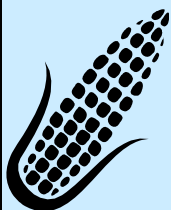


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# Piscataquis Farming Newsletter



University of Maine Cooperative Extension is the major educational outreach program of the University of Maine, with offices statewide. UMaine Extension provides Maine people with research-based educational programs to help them live fuller, more productive lives.

**Goal:**

The goal of the Piscataquis Farming Newsletter is to provide timely information on the production and marketing of crops and livestock grown in Piscataquis County. Upcoming events and programs of interest will also be included.

You can receive this newsletter electronically. To sign up for the electronic version go to [www.umext.maine.edu/piscataquis/farming/newsletter/htm](http://www.umext.maine.edu/piscataquis/farming/newsletter/htm).

If you have a question, feel free to contact me and I can include it in our farming question section.

Sincerely,

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**Emerging Market Opportunities for Small-Scale Producers**

The U. S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) today released Proceedings of a Special Session from the 2008 USDA Partners Meeting: Emerging Market Opportunities for Small-Scale Producers. One of the sessions at the 2008 Meeting, “Emerging Market Opportunities for Small-Scale Producers,” offered an opportunity for farmers and farmer organizations to learn directly from industry insiders what it takes to work successfully with produce buyers. Three panelists- an executive chef for a hospital, a produce buyer for a supermarket chain, and the sales manager of a produce distribution company- addressed the group and answered questions.

The report describes novel ways for small farmers to establish more lucrative and stable markets by selling their crops directly to supermarkets, institutional foodservice establishments, and specialty distributors. It discusses methods for making contact and developing relationships with buyers and what is helpful from a buyer’s point of view. It contains pointers on requirements for this type of marketing as well as pitfalls to avoid. The report can be viewed at: <http://tinyurl.com/q7u4oh>.

Marketing Options for Agricultural Producers		
Mainstream Markets	Alternative Markets	
Major Channels	Farm-to-Firm Marketing	Farm-to-Consumer Marketing
Rural collection markets	Restaurants	Flea Markets
Auctions	Independent	Farm Stands
Terminal Markets	E-commerce Buying Clubs	Pick-Your-Own
Brokers	Grocery	Farmers Markets
Large-scale producer Cooperatives	Mainstream chain	E-commerce Buying Clubs
	Specialty chain	
Federal/state procurement Programs	Independent	Community Supported Agriculture
	Institutions/ Schools	
National food distributors	Food cooperatives	
	Prisons	
Value-added firms (processors, repackers)	Casinos	
	Corporate Cafeterias	
	Hospitals	

Source: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service news release No. 090-09. [www.ams.usda.gov](http://www.ams.usda.gov).

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## Maine HEARTH VISTA Position Available

Maine HEARTH (Home Energy Aid & Response Team Help) has two positions available in Piscataquis and Somerset Counties working with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension. The positions will help to connect the generous responses communities have developed to support those trying to stay safe and warm at home. Resources for these VISTA position have been made available through the 2009 American Recover & Reinvestment Act.

Skills needed for this position include: community organization, writing/editing, public speaking, recruitment, training/facilitation, and communications. Detailed project management experience required, bachelor's degree or equivalent preferred. Independent, self-starter with strong people skills required and ability to multi-task a must.

Position starts 09/01/2009 and ends 08/31/2010

Benefits include: Stipend (\$909/mo), health coverage, and (on completion of year of service) a \$4,725 educational award or \$1,200 cash stipend. Additional benefits available to eligible members: relocation allowance, child care credits, student loan interest payments, term life-insurance. Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) members commit to full-time service for one year and may not hold another job. See [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov) for more information on AmeriCorps\*VISTA service.

Contact Donna Coffin at 564-3301 or 1-800-287-1491 or [dcoffin@umext.maine.edu](mailto:dcoffin@umext.maine.edu) for information on how to apply for the position in Piscataquis County.

## Livestock Gross Margin Insurance for Dairy Cattle (LGM Dairy) In Maine

USDA's Risk Management Agency reminds dairy cattle producers in Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia they are eligible for LGM Dairy. LGM Dairy protects against loss of gross margin (market value of milk minus feed costs) on milk produced from dairy cows. The indemnity at the end of the 11-month insurance period is the difference between the gross margin guarantee and the actual gross margin (if positive).

The policy uses futures prices and state basis for corn and milk to determine expected and actual gross margin, and may be tailored to any size farming operation. LGM Dairy is different from traditional options in that it is a bundled option

covering the price of both milk and feed costs. Producers can sign up 12 times per year and insure up to 240,000 cwt per year.

Although insurance purchases must be executed through insurance agents, producers may access all policy materials, including Premium Calculation Instructions, on the RMA website at: <http://www.rma.usda.gov/livestock/>. Sales are made from the time of posting on the RMA website on the last business Friday of the month until 8:00PM the following evening.

Source: Scott Lucas, USDA Risk Management Agency Raleigh Regional Office 4405 Bland Road, Suite 160, Raleigh, NC 919-875-4880 [rsonc@rma.usda.gov](mailto:rsonc@rma.usda.gov) <http://rma.usda.gov/go/ronc>

## Managing Bedstraw in Hayfields and Pastures

A couple years ago you noticed some white colored areas in your field. Last year before you had the field hayed it seemed to spread and cover a larger area. Your neighbor suggests it might be bedstraw and you may be spreading the seeds throughout the field as you make hay.

Smooth bedstraw is an invasive and opportunistic weed. Historically, smooth bedstraw is first found in fields that have been poorly managed—hayfields with low fertility and high acidity (low pH), or pastures that have been continuously grazed or underutilized. As farm fields are either abandoned or less intensively managed, we see soil becoming acidic, with fertility dropping and smooth bedstraw proliferating. Smooth bedstraw tolerates low soil nitrogen and low pH better than our desired forage species. Lately, however, we have found smooth bedstraw to be invading better-managed stands of forages (long-term hayfields) and adapting to more variable environmental and soil conditions. Recently, it has been seen growing and thriving in a wide variety of conditions, including on lawns!

Manage your hayfield by testing the soil and keeping nutrients and pH at levels where grasses and legumes will thrive. Apply nutrients and lime as needed.

Keep bedstraw plants from flowering, setting, and spreading seed, no matter which additional control option you use. If you manage hayfields, try to get the hay crop mowed before bedstraw sets seeds. This will help control the spread, give the grasses a more competitive edge, and also provide you with a better-quality crop. Be aware of a second flowering and seed-production period in August!

Make sure to control the spread of seed. Mowers, balers, rakes, and tedders can carry

substantial amounts of seed from infested fields to clean fields. Remove any source of seed from equipment when moving from field to field. Research is still inconclusive about the spread of bedstraw via manure applications.

Tillage and rotation is very effective in killing perennial crowns and new seedlings that may develop. Consider a weed-controlling cover crop such as buckwheat or sorghum-sudangrass hybrids as part of your reseeding regime. Remember that a new seeding will need optimum management to keep smooth bedstraw from reinvading the field.

If using an herbicide such as Crossbow, Milestone, or Forefront R&P, make sure you control the weed's seed rain during the season prior to application, and understand that all broadleaf plants, including desirable clovers or alfalfa, will also be killed. If you decide to use glyphosate to renovate a pasture and kill perennial crowns of bedstraw, controlling seed rain is also critically important. Glyphosate treatments are most effective in late-summer applications.

Since bedstraw is so invasive, a neighborhood approach may be necessary to slow down the spread of this weed. A well-managed, fertilized hayfield with a dense stand of perennial forages will be a good defense against invasion by smooth bedstraw.

\*Brand names and trade names are included for educational purposes. No endorsement is implied nor is discrimination intended against similar products or services.

Source: Kersbergen, R. *Forage Facts... Controlling Smooth Bedstraw in Hayfields and Pastures* Bulletin #2278, University of Maine Cooperative Extension

#### **Extension Publications:**

The following Agricultural Extension Publications are available or can be ordered at the Extension office nearest you. You will notice some publications are free and some have a cost recovery charge. Many publications are available for free online at <http://extensionpubs.umext.maine.edu/>.

- **Storey's Guide to Raising Chickens** Item #2234. Publisher: Storey Publishing. Gail Damerow. Described by Ron Macher of Small Farm Today magazine as "the best single book on chicken raising I have seen," this comprehensive guide covers choosing, housing, feeding, and managing a flock of meat birds or layers, as well as collecting and storing eggs, incubation and hatching, chick care, health care, and preparing chickens for show. Damerow is editor of Rural Heritage magazine and a contributor to Backyard Poultry magazine, and has raised chickens since 1970. 352 pages, 1995. **\$18.95**
- **Controlling Smooth Bedstraw in Hayfields and**

**Pastures Forage Facts Series, Item #2278**  
Publisher: UMaine Extension. The perennial smooth bedstraw is a competitive, invasive species that can significantly reduce the yields of hayfields. This publication documents the findings of recent research trials in Maine that evaluated mechanical and chemical control methods, and discusses key management strategies. 6 pages, 2008. Download it for free or buy a color printout **\$0.50**

- **New England Guide to Weed Control in Field Corn** Item #1124, Publisher: UMaine Extension. Poor weed control can cause crop failures that can be devastating to New England dairy producers, as well as create weed-seed issues that will plague growers for years. This publication offers a comprehensive approach to weed management in field corn, discussing commonly used herbicides, timing of applications, and alternative controls that reduce herbicide use and risks to the environment. Includes tables listing corn herbicides registered for use in New England, their relative effectiveness, and modes of action. 20 pages, 2007. Download it for free or buy a color printout for **\$3.00**

#### **Calendar**

June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009 **Organic Blueberry Meeting** sponsored by MOFGA at 1:30 p.m. at Daniel and Gail VanWort's Peaked Mountain Farm at 16 Ellery Lane in Dedham. See their web site at [http://peakedmountainfarm.com/about\\_us.htm](http://peakedmountainfarm.com/about_us.htm) for detailed directions. Directions from Bangor: Go to Route 1A in East Holden, just past the intersection of Route 46, take a right on the upper Dedham Road for 2.8 miles, turn left onto Bald Mountain Road and go 2.1 miles to Ellery Lane on your right. Researchers from the *Organic Transitions* research project and other organic growers will be present to discuss the challenges of growing wild blueberries organically.

June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 **Central Maine Sheep Breeders Association Meeting** at 7 pm at the Extension Office in Dover-Foxcroft.

June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 **Maine Highlands Farmers Meeting** 7 pm at Sue Watson's Sheep Farm in Garland [www.mainehighlandsfarmers.com](http://www.mainehighlandsfarmers.com)

June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 **Third Northeastern Forestry Conference... Emerging Trends: Opportunities for the Family Forest**, Messalonskee High School, Oak Street, Oakland Maine. This program has been reviewed and is approved for professional CFE credits by the Society of American Foresters. Category 1-CF: 4 credits (1 for each 1 hr session) Registration \$20 (includes lunch and snacks)

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### **Piscataquis Farming June 2009**



In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and pursuing its own goals of diversity, the University System shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, including transgender status or gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other areas of the University System. The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request.

Information in this newsletter is provided purely for educational purposes. No responsibility is assumed for any problems associated with the use of products or services mentioned in this newsletter. No endorsement of products or companies is intended, nor is criticism of unnamed products or companies implied.

Registration Deadline June 20<sup>th</sup>. For more information contact: University of Maine Cooperative Extension, 7 County Drive, Skowhegan, ME 04976 Phone: 207-474-9622 Fax: 207-474-0374 Email: cesom@umext.maine.edu.

July 18, 2009 **Sheep Field Day 2009** at Crystal Spring Farm in Brunswick, Maine. The field day will focus on effective pasturing. A FAMACHA workshop (parasite monitoring) for sheep and goat producers is scheduled in the morning of the same day as a pre-field day workshop. For more information contact: Richard J. Brzozowski, Extension Educator – Agriculture, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, PO Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104-9300, 1-800-287-1471 (toll free in Maine only) 207-780-4205

July 22, 2009 at 3 pm. **Maine State Pomological Society** summer business meeting followed by a barbeque at Highmoor Farm, Monmouth.

July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 **Roger's Farm Field Day** (tentative) 1 pm to 4 pm. Come and learn about the research

being conducted on this University of Maine Research Farm. CCA credits applied for. For more information contact John Jemison at 581-3241 or [jjemison@umext.maine.edu](mailto:jjemison@umext.maine.edu)

July 30 - August 1, 2009 **Third Annual Kneading Conference and First Annual Artisan Bread Fair and Trade Show** Skowhegan, Maine For updates and information on workshops & presentations please check the website: [www.kneadingconference.com](http://www.kneadingconference.com). 1.0 Continuing Education credit by University of Maine: please contact Dusty Dowse, [dowse@maine.edu](mailto:dowse@maine.edu)

August 19, 2009 **HIGHMOOR FARM 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY AND SUMMER TOUR** Approximately 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM Rain or Shine. There will be a formal celebration in the morning followed by a Maine food products lunch around noon. A short tour of the research plots will be in the afternoon. Warren Stiles and Jim Schupp have been invited as special guests. Specific details regarding the celebration activities will be forthcoming.