



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

# EXTENSION QUARTERLY

SUMMER 2019

## GRAZING MANAGEMENT PAYS DIVIDENDS



### 2018 GRAZING SAVINGS

# 36,000+

TOTAL POUNDS OF GRAIN, CORN SILAGE  
AND HAYLAGE PER WEEK

# \$44,000

OVER 24-WEEKS

Hilda Fisk Haines and Steve Haines operate Fisk-Haines Farm in Danby, Vermont. They milk 80 Holsteins, ship milk through Dairy Farmers of America, and manage approximately 250 acres.

Six years ago they were experimenting with rotational grazing on 20 acres and turned to UVM Extension Grazing Specialist Cheryl Cesario for guidance. Looking back, Hilda says, "I did not understand the logistics. I was doing it on a wing and a prayer."

Hilda began meeting annually with Cheryl and completed UVM Extension's four-part class\* where farmers learn in-depth grazing principles, develop plans, and receive on-site consulting.

**“ It has changed our breakeven point. If we hadn't done this, I don't think we could have withstood the price drop. ”**

*Hilda Fisk Haines, Fisk-Haines Farm*

By 2018, their grazing system covered 60 acres and their season savings totaled \$44,000. These savings were thanks to the 5,600 pounds of grain, 22,400 pounds of corn silage and 8,400 pounds of haylage their cows no

longer needed each week. Instead, cows ate approximately 63% of their daily dry matter needs in the pasture over a 24-week period. Milk production remained steady, averaging 70 pounds per cow per day.

Hilda's daily attention to plants and animals has been critical to success, allowing increased recovery time for pastures to grow back and increase dry matter yields. The annual vet bill was reduced by 66%, too. "Our animals are healthier. They breed back better, their feet are stronger."

Improvements to their system, like adding polywire fencing and a water system, are done regularly and without cost-share money. Their motivation? "It's simple," Hilda says. "Money. This is the cheapest milk I've ever made."

Learn more at [go.uvm.edu/cvcrops](http://go.uvm.edu/cvcrops).



*Hilda Fisk Haines and Steve Haines*



*\*This program is part of a two-year Sustainable Agriculture and Research Education (SARE) grant.*





## BRIDGING THE HEALTH CARE GAP

Many Vermont dairy farms rely on migrant workers who spend an average of 69 hours per week in a physically demanding job. Barriers like language, lack of transportation and fear of lost income delay workers from receiving care, resulting in more significant health problems, decreased productivity, and increased work absenteeism.

The statewide Bridges to Health (BTH) program, a collaboration among UVM Extension, Bi-State Primary Care Association, the Open Door Clinic and Vermont Care Network, is the only health care support system in Vermont for immigrant farmworkers. Outreach to workers on local farms helps them communicate emergent, urgent and preventative care needs to employers and receive timely, affordable care — in their local communities and native language.

**“OUR EMPLOYEES TRUST THE PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH THE BRIDGES TO HEALTH PROGRAM. WITHOUT THEM, OUR EMPLOYEES WOULD NOT RECEIVE ADEQUATE CARE.”**

*Vermont Dairy Farmer*

In 2018, BTH coordinated nearly 1,700 in-clinic and on-farm health appointments for farmworkers in all 14 Vermont counties, helped farmworkers access services at over 90 health sites, and assisted 450 immigrant farmworkers/family members with accessing health care services.

BTH helps Vermont's immigrant farmworkers maintain physical, mental, and emotional health. For employers, avoiding costs of health-related absenteeism, turnover, lost productivity and expertise, and training/replacing new employees helps the bottom line.

Bridges to Health is funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Learn more at [go.uvm.edu/bridges2health](http://go.uvm.edu/bridges2health).

## SUPPORTING *PROSPEROUS* COMMUNITIES

New England states have been hard-hit by the opioid epidemic, with rates of drug overdose deaths at or above the national average. The effects of this crisis are felt in every sector — from business to education to social services — and vulnerable populations, like youth, are at especially high risk.

To build and strengthen primary prevention, health and wellness programs in communities and schools, UVM Extension has deployed PROSPER: a partnership model for the delivery of substance abuse prevention programs which relies on strong collaboration among school, community and university.

Since 2013, PROSPER has reached over 1,200 5th, 6th, 7th graders and families in three Vermont communities and will soon expand into three more. Family and in-school programs build protective factors in children (like communication, problem-solving and decision making skills) that help prevent or delay engagement in risky behaviors.

In each delivery of PROSPER's family program, 100% of parents and children have reported positive behavior change. Parents report being more prepared to talk to children about resisting peer pressure and are better able to see things from their child's point of view. And children report knowing at least one step they can take to reach a goal, an important resiliency-building skill.

With PROSPER, Vermont youth learn to navigate peer pressure; caregivers practice effective communication and parenting skills; and communities build a parent network to reinforce that participants are not alone. Financial support is provided by UVM Extension; USDA-NIFA Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR); and the Children's Trust Fund.

Learn more at [go.uvm.edu/prosper](http://go.uvm.edu/prosper).



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