

**Characteristics, Costs, and Issues for Organic Dairy Farming  
USDA Economic Research Service Research Report No. 82 Nov 2009**

\* McBride & Greene (USDA ERS 2009) found "(a)lmost two-thirds of organic milk producers reported that at least 50 percent of the forage fed to dairy cattle during the grazing months came from pasture..."

\* Organic dairy cattle eat forages and concentrates (grain).

\* Forages for organic dairy cattle include pasture, hay and silage.

\* 50% of forages from pasture equals 11% DMI from pasture when the ration has 25 lb forages and 20 lb concentrates (dry matter basis).

\* 50% of forages from pasture equals 17% DMI from pasture when the ration has 40 lb forages and 5 lb concentrates (dry matter basis).

\* 69% of forages from pasture equals 30% DMI from pasture when the ration has 40 lb forages and 5 lb concentrates (dry matter basis).

\* 83% of forages from pasture equals 30% DMI from pasture when the ration has 25 lb forages and 20 lb concentrates (dry matter basis).

\* **Conclusion: 60% - 80% of organic dairy farms would not be able to comply with 30% DMI.**

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	As Fed LB	AF%	Feed DM%	Dry Matter LB	DM %
<b>% Forage from Pasture</b>	<b>0%</b>			<b>0%</b>	
Forage Non-Pasture	29	57%	85%	25	56%
<i>Forage Pasture</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0%</i>
Forage Total LB	29			25	
Concentrates LB	22	43%	90%	20	44%
Total LB	52	100%		45	100%
<b>% Forage from Pasture</b>	<b>50%</b>			<b>19%</b>	
Forage Non-Pasture	24	34%	85%	20	45%
<i>Forage Pasture</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>34%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>11%</i>
Forage Total LB	48			25	
Concentrates LB	22	32%	90%	20	44%
Total LB	70	100%		45	100%
<b>% Forage from Pasture</b>	<b>83%</b>			<b>54%</b>	
Forage Non-Pasture	14	13%	85%	12	26%
<i>Forage Pasture</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>65%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>30%</i>
Forage Total LB	81			25	
Concentrates LB	22	22%	90%	20	44%
Total LB	103	100%		45	100%
<b>% Forage from Pasture</b>	<b>100%</b>			<b>100%</b>	
Forage Non-Pasture	0	0%	85%	0	0%
<i>Forage Pasture</i>	<i>125</i>	<i>85%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>56%</i>
Forage Total LB	125			25	
Concentrates LB	22	15%	90%	20	44%
Total LB	147	100%		45	100%