

ISU Extension View

News from ISU Extension to Iowa Dairy Producers

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Chris Mondak



Larry Tranel



Dale Thoreson

ISU Extension created a goal five years ago that if we could help the dairy industry employ low cost parlor technology we could better maintain our dairy industry due to higher labor efficiencies, increasing both profit and quality of life. It was termed, "Making Milking Easier."

How did we do? With lots of help from dairy equipment dealers and dairy producers, Extension created a driving force that helped producers install an estimated sixty low-cost parlors in Iowa since 2000. We would like to say "thanks" to the many people, especially dairy producers themselves, who helped us accomplish that lofty goal.

And, we're not done yet. We know there is a very high satisfaction level from those who have employed low-cost parlors. We also know it has improved profits on most, if not all operations employing them and that some operations would not be milking cows if the low cost parlor option was not available. Most equipment dealers are now working with us in helping producers adapt this low-cost parlor technology. And, we also know your profits support not only you but also the agri-businesses and communities that serve you. The economy created by a dairy farm is well worth noting. We must seek further opportunities to strengthen dairy producer profits.

So, let's keep up the good work remodeling the Iowa dairy industry as we continue to "make milking easier." Hope to see you at the NE Parlor Tours in March.

Chris Mondak

ISU Extension Dairy Field Specialist, NW Iowa

Larry Tranel and Dale Thoreson

ISU Extension Dairy Field Specialists, NE Iowa

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
University Extension

Helping you become your best.

2006 NE IOWA Low-Cost Parlor Tours

"Help Us Transform Iowa's Milking Systems"

March 13th

11:00 am **Joe and Jim Pfeiler**, from Hwy 52 in **Rickardsville** go North on James Road to 4-way stop, take left, go west to 23343 Flanagan Road

1:00 pm **Tom and Joyce Pasker**, from **Luxemburg** take Hwy 3 west 4.5 miles, left or south on 330th to 1415 330th Ave (X49).

March 14th

11:00 am **Dan and Sarah Gudenkauf**, from Hwy 13 south of Ryan ½ mile, left (east) on X47 2 miles, right (south) to 3277 180th Avenue

1:00 pm **Rick Helmich**, from Hwy 13 south of Ryan about 3.5 miles turn right onto 330th street then left (south) .5 miles to 3332 150th Avenue.

March 15th

10:30 am **Frosty Rock Holsteins**, Stoll Farms, From Hwy 151, take Butterfield Rd south of Cascade 2 miles, left or east onto Richland Rd, then to 19995 Eby's Mill Road.

12:00 pm **Marv and Kim Lynch**, On Hwy 151, Go south of Cascade to 24764 Hwy 151.

March 16th

10:30 am **Robin Marquette**, 20504 J Ave, West Union, Iowa. From West Union go 2 ½ miles Southeast on Hwy 56 to J Ave, then go South on J into farmstead.

1:15 pm **North East Iowa Dairy Foundation Grazing Center**, Calmar.

This stop includes the Sawdust Compost Barn tour and drive-by feeding. From Calmar, go south on Hwy 150 two miles to first farm on right just past NICC facilities.

March 17th

10:30 am **Eugene Stauffer**, 4356 Underwood Ave, Riceville IA. From Riceville go 2 miles West on Hwy 9, Turn North on T62. Go 1 ½ miles North to A31. Go West 2 miles to Underwood Ave. Go North ½ mile.

1:15 pm **Rick Brumm and Sons**, 2370 465th St. Stacyville, Iowa. From Stacyville, go 1 mile East on A23/465th St.

ISU Extension DAIRY TEAM
"Bringing Profits to Life"

**NE Iowa Dairy Extension
Field Specialists**

Dairy Field Specialists

- Dale Thoreson, 319-267-2707
- Larry Tranel, 563-583-6496
- Chris Mondak, DVM, 715-737-4230

Farm Management, NE

- Robert Tigner, 641-394-2174

Crop Management, NE

- Brian Lang, 563-382-2949
- George Cummins, 641-228-1453

State Dairy Specialists:

- Dr. Lee Kilmer
- Dr. Leo Timms

Extension programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability.

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Will the Mild 2005-06 Winter Hurt Hay and Pasture Stands?

There are many interacting factors that influence winter injury of forages. Both uncontrollable climatic factors and controllable crop production practices affect a plant's ability to survive the winter.

Controllable production practices that minimize winter injury include:

1. Variety selection (winter-hardiness and disease resistance)
2. Proper soil pH and fertility
3. Good pest management
4. Proper rest periods between harvests
5. Fall rest period and stubble left to help insulate the stand (except for perennial ryegrass which should be cut or grazed short going into the winter)

Uncontrollable climatic factors include:

1. Fall soil moisture level... drier than normal soil conditions in fall improve alfalfa's ability to winter-harden.
2. Snow cover... insulates stands from extreme cold and moderates temperature fluctuations.
3. Cold air temperatures... as fall air temperatures gradually decline (40's to 30's to high 20's °F), alfalfa undergoes its hardening process, and maximizes its tolerance to cold temperatures as the soil becomes frozen. Temperatures at which crown tissue could now be damaged usually begin around 5 to 10°F. This is below ground temperature, not air temperature. Snow cover provides excellent insulation in most winters where air temperatures might get cold enough to drop soil temperatures this low.
4. Heaving... following a significant hard freeze, extended freeze-thaws cycles may "jack" taproots upward, exposing the crown above the soil line. The crown is then more susceptible to cold-injuring air temperatures (5 to 10°F) and injury from machinery.
5. Ice sheets... solid ice sheets may cause an anoxia condition to which metabolic gases released by the plant are trapped and become toxic to the plant if under this condition for weeks (1 to 3 weeks for alfalfa; 4 to 6 weeks for most grasses).
6. Fluctuating winter-spring temperatures... The process of dehardening of alfalfa generally begins as the mean soil temperature rises above 41°F. Plants will deharden and reharden with fluctuating soil temperatures, but at dehardening they begin to use carbohydrates and proteins for new growth, reducing their carbohydrate reserves. In addition,

as alfalfa attempts to reharden, it can not reach the same degree of cold tolerance that it was at originally. For the rest of the winter, the plants are at greater risk of cold injury and/or its carbohydrate reserves may become dangerously low allowing the plant to become susceptible to some degree of winter injury.

So where does this leave us (as of Jan 31, 2006)?

While we have had very mild winter weather for nearly 5 consecutive weeks, the average 4-inch soil temperatures have remained in the low 30's °F for most of Iowa. Alfalfa should still be safe from breaking dormancy. Recently, southeast Iowa has seen soil temperatures in the high 30's and reaching 41°F for just one day (January 29). As long as temperatures cool down again, this should not be too significant. Average soil temperatures can be monitored at: <http://mesonet.agron.iastate.edu/agclimate/index.phtml>

Although, while not breaking dormancy, the somewhat warmer soil temperatures can still cause a slightly higher than normal respiration rate in the dormant alfalfa plants resulting in a slightly elevated use of carbohydrate reserves compared to normal. This may still influence winter survival if the remaining winter climate adds significant stress.

Another potential risk is if the climate changes rapidly from this mild weather to severe cold without first gaining back the insulation benefits of snow cover. Without snow cover, a rapid air temperature drop could decrease the temperature of the upper soil (alfalfa crown region) down to that 5 to 10°F degree range at which crown tissue could be damaged. If alfalfa has lost some degree of its cold hardiness, even a 15°F soil temperature could start causing damage to crown tissues.

Probably of greatest concern at this time is with Perennial ryegrass. I don't believe the perennial ryegrass has broken dormancy yet, but perennial ryegrass breaks dormancy sooner than any of the other perennial forages. And once it breaks dormancy, it has difficulty rehardening sufficiently to avoid being damaged by freezing temperatures that could follow. The reason for cutting or grazing ryegrass short in fall is to stress it somewhat going into the winter so that it does not break dormancy as soon in spring. This management tactic is often successful.

We still have about 2 months of winter left. All we can do is wait and see, and then scout and evaluate our fields in spring.

by Brian Lang, Extension Crops Field Specialist, NE Iowa

Diagnosing Winter Injury to Alfalfa in March

Dig up a few alfalfa plants to see how they've come through the winter so far. Dig up a few plants in different areas of the fields, cutting the roots off at 4 to 6 inches below the soil surface. Inspect the crown, crown buds, and root. Split open the crown and root lengthwise. Healthy roots are firm and white inside, with little evidence of root rot. Winter-injured roots are yellow to gray and water-soaked, or brown due to root rots.

If the crown/root is soft and water-soaked, it is or will be dead. If the crown/root is firm but showing some rot, it may be fine depending upon the severity of winter injury. If over half of the root is damaged, the plant will likely die this year. If less than half of the root is injured, the plant will likely survive for one or two more years. Crown buds are the most cold tolerant below-ground structures on an alfalfa plant, so if they appear gray, withered, and/or water-soaked, the plant may well be dead.

Diagnosing Winter Injury After Significant Green-up in Spring

Slow green-up. One of the most evident results of winter injury is when stands are slow to green up. If other fields in the area are starting to grow and yours are still brown, you should check your stand for injury or death.

Uneven, asymmetrical growth. During winter, some buds on the plant crown may be killed and others may not. Uninjured buds will start growth early, while injured buds must be replaced by new buds formed in the spring. This results in shoots of different height on the same plant. Or some parts of the crown could be damaged resulting in shoot development from only one side of the plant.

Stem counts. Once the alfalfa stand is at least 6 inches tall, determine the average number of stems per square foot in at least four representative areas per field. Stem counts is a better determinant of yield potential than plant counts. Stands with an average stem density greater than 55 stems per square foot are in excellent shape and have full yield potential. Stands with less than 35 to 40 stems per square foot should be considered for termination. An excellent resource on stem counts, including photos can be found at the following web site:

<http://cecommerce.uwex.edu/pdfs/A3620.PDF>

by Brian Lang, Extension Crops Field Specialist, NE Iowa

Dairy TRANS 4.0 Making Millionaires?

By Larry Tranel, NE Iowa Dairy Field Specialist

Great media coverage on ISU Extension's Millionaire Model farms over the past year has prompted many phone calls as to how this is possible.

The model dairy generates a 13% return on assets and a 15% return on equity on average milking 80 cows on 80 acres of rented or owned ground. The profits are reinvested to reduce debt, expand the business or invest off farm. After 25 years, the \$30,000 beginning principal with a \$7,000 annual profit reinvestment grows through the dairy business to create a millionaire after family living (before taxes). Progress starts slow and needs hard work and astute financial management but model farms are proving it is possible as does the following graph. Dairy TRANS helps make it possible by helping producers plan for high profits.



How Can Dairy TRANS help make this possible?

"Dairy TRANS has helped me fine-tune and further orientate my business towards increased profit by using ratios to find weaknesses. Breaking expenses down per cow and hundredweight helps see the big picture relative to model farms."

"What I like most is looking at the relative ratios regarding efficiencies on a per cow, per acre and per full-time labor unit basis. That really tells you how well you're using resources compared to others and if your cattle, land and labor resources are in proper balance. I didn't realize how inefficient our labor was until I saw it on paper. Then, we played "what-if" scenarios on remodeling the farm so we could compete on the labor and feeding efficiencies of better operations to be able to get those kind of returns in our pockets. Five years later our efficiencies are ranking right with the best of them and our profit has really taken off. Now, it's easy to see how I can become a millionaire from milking cows, and my kids have taken more of an interest as well." *Comments from NE Iowa dairy producers*

Producer Profile: Landlord Recounts Helping Young Beginning Producer

by Larry Tranel, ISU Extension Dairy Field Specialist

An anonymous "Dairy Landlord" was interviewed as to his experience in helping a young producer start dairying while remodeling his dairy for them as well. The "producer" reports the landlord's assistance has been very valuable in developing a very profitable dairy operation that enabled him to get started.

Why did you decide to assist a young, beginning producer? I wanted to keep my farm operating as a dairy unit and I figured at current land and building rental rates, that it was more profitable as a dairy rather than a row-cropping and/or heifer raising operation. And, although I subsidize the land rent a bit, I'm still generating a good return.

How much do you charge for building rent? The lease began at \$120 per stall per year, plus \$0.75 per square foot for heifer facilities. Adding in a machine shed and several outbuildings at \$0.25 a square foot, it all added up to about \$180 per cow or stall per year.

You more than doubled cow numbers and built a parlor, how'd you pay for and justify that? With our own labor, we built a low-cost, swing 10 milking parlor with a feeding system for \$12,000 in a lean attached to the barn at the beginning of the lease. The lessee paid for half the expense and did his half of the labor. I paid for half and did half the labor as well. So, for his \$6,000 the lessee doubled milking speed from 35 cows per hour per person in the stall barn to close to 70 cows per hour per person in the parlor. The difference in labor alone paid for his half in less than one year. For me, now I have a milking parlor on my farm that will make it much easier to find a renter in the future.

What did you do to house the additional cows? I converted the stall barn to free stalls prior to leasing the farm out. I simply broke the cement and dug the alley out of my stall barn and converted the stantions to free stalls with a neck rail and sand bedding. I then installed some "cow-tels" outside under a small roof. After one winter of experimenting with "cow-tels" which are simply a one row covered freestall on the edge of a cement lot or cement cow lane, we added 33 more "cow-tels" along with a fenceline feeder.

What did it cost to remodel your 36 cow dairy? With the parlor, freestalls and feeders, total cost to remodel to a 90 cow dairy was around \$35,000 or \$640 per additional stall with the parlor cost included. This included setting up the grazing system on this 70 acre parcel along with a manure pit for 2 week storage and building a heifer shed for \$4,500. But, remember

we didn't hire the labor to do the remodeling which not all producers or landlords can afford to do timewise.

What's in it for you? Well, I have the satisfaction of helping a young producer (couple) get started dairying who otherwise may not have gotten an opportunity. I also know I'm helping the local economy as I'm well aware that a 80-150 cow dairy is probably the best way to help economic development. And, it's a way for my farm to be farmed without tilling the soil as the whole parcel is in rotational grazing. The grains are bought from a feedmill and the corn silage from a neighbor. The cropping neighbors are more than happy to take the manure as well. Land is rented at just below going rates but that is worth it to me for the soil it saves versus renting it to a row-cropper. And, the return with the building rent included is as good as other non-farm investments, even without the land appreciation.

How can the "renter" afford to pay half of the freestalls built on your farm? We used sweat equity and built them cheap. Each stall cost between \$190-\$333 (without and with feed bunk, respectively) and the building is only 8.5 feet wide. At a rent of \$120 per stall per year, it would take the renter 1.6 to 2.8 years to pay for the investment relative to renting the facility from me. Thus, it was cheaper for them to help me build it than it was if already there and renting it for that rate. The deal was that if they pay half and do their half the labor, they use it rent-free for the 3-5 year lease term. So, in reality they got a good deal and I will hopefully recoup my additional cost out of the future rental value of the additional facilities.

Do you feel your experience is applicable to others? Yes, I feel many aspiring dairy producers are out there that can follow a new dairy model using low-cost, efficient facilities and rotational grazing, for example, milking 80 cows on 80 acres with buying the remainder of feedstuffs and be profitable. We need more landowners willing to work with young producers in getting them started rather than getting rid of present dairy herds and renting land to corn and soybean producers. I know of producers who remodeled their facilities, especially with a parlor and now find a son or daughter suddenly has interest in dairying as the increased labor efficiency tends to mean more profit and the parlor means easier working conditions.

What advice would you have for landlords who would like to consider the option you chose? Call ISU Extension for resources. (Request their "Millionaire Model Dairy Farm Project" at 563-583-6496 or e-mail tranel@iastate.edu). Request a facility assessment on your present facilities as they are very knowledgeable at how to remodel dairy facilities into low-cost parlors and freestalls. They've worked wonders for me.

Computerizing Your Financial Records by Larry Tranel, Dairy Field Specialist

With all the emphasis in the dairy industry on labor efficiency, computerizing your financial records is a major step in that direction. Each year as I visit with farm families for the Dairy TRANS financial analysis or to work with bringing a younger family member into the operation, I am amazed at how many families have a computer but don't use it for farm financial records.

Saying the software is too expensive or you are too old too learn can no longer be an excuse. Quicken Basic, just for example, can be bought for around \$30 as can others to at least be able to manage and balance a checkbook and track family and farm expenses in a quick and orderly fashion. The programs are so user friendly after the initial shock of typing into a computer screen rather than using a paper record book and calculator that even the elderly with computer stage fright can learn it rather quickly.

Consider having your expense items categorized and tagged as a Schedule F tax item for this specific tax line when you write the check. So, when you input each check into the check register, you simultaneously are doing your taxes. At the end of the year you simply create a tax report and have your Schedule F printed automatically and without calculation error.

Balancing your checkbook is a snap (as long as there is money in it). At the end of each month, you simply compare your bank statement, check off items that have cleared, put in your new statement balance and see if the amount out of balance equals \$0. If yes, you are done balancing your checkbook in often less than 5-10 minutes. If the balance is not \$0, you simply go back and figure where you made the mistake on clearing or forgetting to input a check or inputting the wrong amount of the check.

There are other programs available such as AAIMS from the University of Wisconsin or PC MARS which are both very agricultural specific but tend to cost more. These seem more adept at handling farm records in addition to feed and other inventories but the less costly products can track other things as well. Which product to choose is a personal preference.

If you would like a demonstration of using a program to computerize your financial records (checkbook) let me know while out on a farm visit or make an appointment in the office sometime. While we're at it, we could also demonstrate how you can use the Dairy TRANS computerized financial analysis to plan for increasing profits in your dairy farm business.

Tax Time is a Learning Time as Well By Larry Tranel, Dairy Field Specialist

As I skim Schedule F forms while doing the Dairy TRANS analysis, I continually find deductions dairy producers should be taking or considering that is overlooked by tax preparers and advisors.

Is Your Spouse Your Employee? Consider It for Health Insurance Benefits! Many spouses are not considered employees. However, you can make your spouse an employee and thus provide him/her with health insurance and be able to deduct this and other medical expenses on your Schedule F rather than an itemized deduction. The difference can be huge as it saves not only the income and self employment taxes but might allow better use of the standard deduction. The labor contract needs to be written.

Breeding Livestock Sold Ends Up on Schedule F Rather than 4797. You sold a breeding age bull or any heifer or cow and it accidentally shows up in livestock sales on Schedule F. Difference again is the 15.3% self-employment tax rather than 4797 where it only is subject to state and federal taxes.

Domestic Production Activities Deduction. This is new for 2005 tax year. You are allowed a deduction for income attributable to domestic production activities. You can deduct 3% of the lesser of your qualified production activities income or your taxable income. Your deduction is limited to 50% of the Form W-2 wages you paid for the tax year.

No Car and Truck Expenses Taken. Your pickup is being depreciated and the gas is already accounted for tax-wise. But what about your car used to run to town for this or that that doesn't use the gas on the farm or is not being depreciated? Keep a simple log in the car (needs to be written) and even though your spouse is getting groceries, too, the mileage to and from the farm supply store can be deducted from your taxes.

The standard mileage rate is \$0.405 per mile before September 1, 2005 and \$0.485 per mile thereafter in 2005. So, you take a 35 mile trip into town in October to pick up something with a personal vehicle. That's a \$16.98 deduction. Do that once a week, that's an \$882.70 legal car and truck expense deduction.

There are software programs that are very reasonably priced (<\$30) that can assist with tax planning and for those who do their own taxes. These can be used independently or in cooperation with farm tax advisors to assist you in increasing cash flow by reducing taxes.

Dairy Herd Management Meeting Highlights

Managing the Dairy Herd for Productive Life

Chris Mondak, NW Iowa Dairy Field Specialist

Eighty-six dairy producers, consultants, and industry partners participated in the NW Iowa Dairy Herd Management Meeting on February 15 at NW Iowa Community College in Sheldon, and on Feb 16 at the community center in Holstein. The theme of the meeting was “Managing for Productive Life,” focusing on important herd management strategies in the areas Herd Vaccination, Nutrition, and Udder Health.

Herd Vaccination Strategies: Vaccinations are no substitute for good management practices!

In his talk on vaccination strategies, speaker Dr. Dick Wallace, University of Illinois Extension Dairy Veterinarian, began and ended with this important advice: “In any herd health program, other good management control procedures such as ventilation, good nutrition, comfortable facilities, and correct milking procedures **MUST** be in place **before** vaccinations against infectious diseases are considered. Resist the temptation to overemphasize vaccination solutions.”

Here are key factors to keep in mind when planning herd vaccination strategies:

- Work with your vet to customize a program based on prevalent diseases on your farm or in your region.
- Avoid once-a-year whole herd vaccination schemes. With once-a-year programs, there is high likelihood that the cows will not receive the necessary booster doses on time, or receive immune stimulation at the right time in their lactation cycle. This will result in money spent on vaccines, but no actual herd immunity gained.
- Make a vaccination plan that focuses around reproductive events of the cows to will ensure they get the right vaccines at the right times.
- An effective herd vaccination program will include protocols for groups of animals: Calf-hood vaccination protocols, Dry cow protocols, Early Fresh cow protocols.

Nutrition: Feeding for Productive Life – Keeping ruminants healthy and cows in the herd longer!

Mike Hutjens, University of Illinois Extension Dairy Specialist, gave a lively presentation that emphasized the feed management connection to keeping cows productive. Citing the fact that replacement animals are expensive - \$2000 or more – dairy producers must focus on practices that successfully get cows and heifers through the dry cow period, transition time, and early post-partum period.

Dr. Hutjens stressed that a sound nutrition program translates to many cow productive life benefits besides simply good milk production:

- A sound feed program avoids rumen acidosis
- Controls metabolic disorders near calving
- Limits foot disorders and lameness
- Achieves energy balance needed to get cows re-bred
- Maintains immunity and health through balanced ration and key minerals
- Meets energy requirements needed for maintaining body condition and avoiding losses from metabolic disorders (milk fever, ketosis, DAs, fatty liver).

Since rumen acidosis is so devastating, he gave the audience this homework: Take time to monitor the cows and the records for signs of acidosis. These signs indicate rumen acidosis:

- Less than 60% of cows cud chewing
- Over 10% cows with milk fat test 0.2% below milk protein test
- Evidence of hardship grooves(ridges) on hoof surfaces
- Erratic shifts in free choice bicarb consumption
- Laminitis
- Loose fecal droppings
- Cows’ consumption of bedding and dirt

Take home message: Working with a nutritionist, completing these monitoring steps, and utilizing a Penn State Shaker Box to monitor the quality of the TMR (Total Mixed Ration) are important management strategies.

(continued on next page)

Your On-Farm Udder Health Program – How do you know it is working? *(continued from previous page)*

Leo Timms, Iowa State University Extension Dairy Specialist, described monitoring strategies to evaluate udder health. Leo explained that many udder infections that result in clinical mastitis during the lactation period actually start during the 60-day period **prior** to the start of lactation.

In heifers, 20-30% teats are open prior to calving, and in cows, a certain percentage **never** close teat sphincters during the dry period! Therefore, evaluating dry cow and springing heifer management is vitally important. Key things to monitor:

- Cleanliness in dry cow pens, stress control via correct stocking rates, feed bunk access, and heat abatement.
- Production records graphs to monitor incidence levels of udder infection in fresh cows and heifers.
- CMT paddle results: Use the CMT paddle on all fresh animals to monitor dry cow management. Goals should be <10% CMT gelling in fresh animals, and <5% quarters gelling. If your numbers exceed this, evaluate dry cow management ASAP.
- Consider use of external teat sealants or internal teat sealants at dry-off time to provide a protective barrier from bacteria entering during the dry period. **IMPORTANT:** Carefully clean the teat ends and use clean procedures when inserting dry cow antibiotics or internal teat sealants.

Repeating the theme voiced by Dick Wallace and Mike Hutjens, Leo emphasized the need to **integrate several herd management practices** to achieve udder health and milk quality goals.

Good cow prep and milking procedures certainly contribute to udder health, but without concurrent focus on other management areas of nutrition, clean comfortable facilities, and a sound vaccination program, high herd SCC and mastitis incidence may still occur.

To obtain a copy of the Proceedings from the NW Iowa Dairy Herd Management Meeting, contact Chris Mondak at cmondag@iastate.edu or call 712-737-4230. Cost is \$5.00/book plus mailing fees.

2006 Eastern Iowa Dairy Conference

Plan to attend the 2006 Eastern Iowa Dairy Conference March 9-10 at the Dairy Foundation Center at 1527 Hwy 150 South, Calmar.

Thursday, March 9th 1 pm Dairy Foundation Annual Meeting, then from 3:30 to 6:00 pm, wine and cheese reception with Jack Payne, Vice Provost for Extension. Visit exhibit area, network with peers, tour freestall and compost barns, parlors and calf barn.

Friday, March 10th 10 am – 2 pm
Welcome from Mark Hotvedt, Director at 9:50 am.
-- Market Power for Farmers, Dr. Richard Levins
-- Cozying Up with Cow Comfort, Dr. Leo Timms
Lunch and Exhibits
-- Where We Are Today, Brent Hansen, Hansen's Farm Fresh Dairy, adjourning at 2 pm.

Eighteen Schools are Scheduled for a Spring Visit to "Iowa's Dairy Story"

This Dairy Foundation school enrichment program designed to help 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students learn about the dairy industry and how dairy products reach their tables continues to be highly valued by the schools in the NE region. The schedule includes:

April 25: St. Joseph's, New Hampton and TBD
April 27 -- Waukon and Waterville Community Schools
May 2: Irving Elementary School, Dubuque
May 4: Postville and West Central (Maynard) Community Schools and CFS (Calmar, Festina and Spillville)
May 5 -- Decorah Community School
May 9: Central Elkader Community School and Elma Charter School
May 10: North Fayette and Riceville Community Schools
May 11 -- St. Patrick's, Waukon, and North Winneshiek Community School
May 17 -- East Allamakee Community School and Trinity Catholic, Protivin
May 18 -- New Hampton Community School

Since "Iowa's Dairy Story" started in 2002, there have been 4,587 grade school students who have experienced the program. These students represent 35 different schools located in 12 counties.

Volunteers are always welcome to assist with this program. If you would like to help make home-made ice cream, take kids on the barn tour, or teach them about the ruminant digestive system, dairy foods in the diet, dairy history, or about the breeds of dairy cattle -- **if interested, let Barb Sauser know at 563-245-1451.**