

Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension

2009-2013 Plan of Work Update

110 Dairy Team

Statement of Issues:

Growth and development of Iowa's dairy industry provides significant program opportunities. Programs and projects related to dairy business development will enable the industry to remain a viable player in the national milk market. Moreover, program will focus on modernizing dairy facilities, integrated herd and health management, human resource management, and environmental and energy resource stewardship. These complex issues will be addressed by the ISU Extension Dairy Team with rural economic and social development as the intended outcomes.

Performance Goals:

- Increase dairy farm business planning to 1) establish new dairies, 2) remodel/expand existing dairies, and 3) assist transitioning farmers. Establish new dairy farm enterprises, including grass-based and organic systems, confinement systems, and young stock systems.
- Increase the adoption of more competitive dairy production systems and practices.
- Adopt, apply and evaluate approaches to integrated dairy herd and health management practices that result in improved profitability, enhanced food quality and safety, and improved environmental stewardship.
- Increase the awareness and use of interpersonal and organizational skills by dairy personnel.
- Increase efficiency of manure and crop nutrient utilization while minimizing surface runoff and preserving ground water and air quality.
- Increase use of energy efficient and energy conservation technologies and practices. Implement alternative energy systems where appropriate.

Objectives:

1. By 2013, 5% of Iowa dairy producers will implement business planning to accomplish set up of intergenerational transfers, new enterprises, value-added processing or marketing, or risk management strategies.
2. By 2013, 5% of Iowa dairy producers will implement herd management practices or complete facility modifications that will result in increased labor efficiency, improved cow/calf comfort, improved worker well-being and safety, or increased longevity and sustainability of the farm operation.

3. By 2013, 5% of Iowa dairy producers will make improvements in dairy herd productivity or profitability as a result of focused problem-solving in areas of dairy nutrition, milk quality, bio-security/herd health, reproduction, or forage production practices.
4. By 2013, 1% of Iowa dairy producers will acquire or improve human resource management skills.
5. By 2013, 2% of Iowa dairy producers will adopt environmental conservation practices such as manure nutrient management, soil conservation, surface and groundwater protection, or energy conservation.

Outputs (number of activities, contacts, products):

1. Conduct educational sessions on methods to acquire or improve human resource management skills. These sessions may include activities such as:
 - a. In 2008-09, conduct and evaluate four Dairy Owner/Herdsman Farm Safety Workshops
 - b. In 2008-09, conduct and evaluate 15 on-farm bi-lingual Farm Safety Workshops for farm employee crews
 - c. In 2008-09, develop a pilot program to offer human resource management training for farm owners and herdspersons
 - d. Working with Hispanic employees
2. Conduct at least 5 workshops annually between 2008 and 2010 to help dairy producers and dairy nutrition consultants identify economically advantageous feedstuffs and develop feeding programs that are nutritionally sound and cost effective.
3. Develop and conduct 6 feed and forage management workshops during 2008-10 that focus on cost of production.
4. Conduct 6 farm tours annually in 2008-2013 which focus on labor and capital cost efficiency, and environmental and energy conservation.
5. Conduct 6 workshops in 2008-10 for veterinarians, dairy service suppliers, and milk plant field staff on evaluating and troubleshooting on-farm milk quality programs.
6. Plan and sponsor a dairy farm facilities conference to provide updates on animal and human comfort and well-being, and cost effectiveness.
7. Continue to work cooperatively with extension colleagues in neighboring states (IL, MN, & WI and MN, NE & SD) to plan and sponsor annual dairy management programs (4-State and I-29) in 2008-2013.

8. Conduct 6 barn meetings annually in 2009-2010 to discuss issues related to milk quality, animal comfort, and herd performance.
9. In 2009-2013, collaborate with Beginning Farmer Center and the Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation, Northwest Iowa Community College, and others to host educational programs on intergenerational transfers and connecting young people to opportunities in the dairy industry.

Outcome Indicators:

1. 20% of Iowa dairy producers who attend a group or one-on-one educational session will adopt business planning strategies that will enhance the profitability of their dairy enterprise by 2013. These strategies may include intergenerational transfer, development of a business plan, marketing plan, risk management plan, or calculating their cost of production.
2. 25% of Iowa dairy producers who attend a group or one-on-one educational session will make herd management or facility changes that result in improved productivity, profitability and sustainability by 2013. Examples of these changes include improved animal comfort, milk quality, reproductive efficiency, improved forage production practices, transition cow management, herd health/bio-security practices, energy conservation, or nutrient management.
3. 25% of Iowa dairy producers who attend a group or educational session will adopt use of human resource management practices to achieve improved communication, organization, or worker well-being on dairy farms by 2013. Examples of these practices include holding regularly scheduled employee meetings, having written job descriptions and protocols, developing organizational charts, incorporating a formal employee training and evaluation program, and improved worker well-being (both safety of the work environment and the relations between employees).