



DAIRY FARM MANAGEMENT TEAM Question & Answer Information

In order to help producers continue to look forward to improve operations and profitability, the Grow Wisconsin Dairy Team is implementing a Dairy Farm Management Team program for Wisconsin dairy farmers. Through this project, the team approach will help dairy farmers fortify their management tools for increasing profits. This is a dairy producer program and a farm management resource.

Why is this program needed?

In the past five years, dairy producers across the state have reinvested nearly \$1 billion to modernize and improve the efficiency of their farms. These efforts have helped to grow milk production in our state. However even with this growth Wisconsin milk production is currently 10% below the current demand of milk processors located in the state. Furthermore, lower milk prices and rising costs are curbing investment opportunities for producers.

How does the program work?

The Dairy Farm Management Team program works with farmers to develop a team of specialist advisors to help them evaluate opportunities on the farm. Following a single page application process, farmers will be paired with a facilitator. Together they will hold a pre-meeting to identify team members, topics to explore and gain an understanding of the farm's financial situation. By pairing a farmer with a facilitator they can form a unique team based on the needs of the operation. Team member can include, but are not limited to bankers, agronomists, nutritionists, veterinarians, and other consultants.

With the team in place, the program facilitator will schedule a three meeting series where the farmer and team members meet to identify issues and opportunities, develop strategies, and provide input for decision-making and long-term strategic planning. Together they can look at topics concerning new/appropriate technology implementation, farm growth, financial success, long-term sustainability and other production enhancing measures. This is truly the producer's tool because they make the final decisions based on the team's recommendations.

What are the costs?

The Grow Wisconsin Dairy Team will provide up to an initial \$2,000 for a three meeting series. However, a cost share assistance of 10 percent is required by the farmer. This cost will cover team meetings and will set a budget that includes the facilitator's stipend, consultant fees, applicable testing and associated costs - No capital investments (ie. equipment) may be purchased through the program's budget. This will allow teams the flexibility to explore each farmer's unique situation to improve financial success.

Who is eligible?

The program is limited to dairy farmers in Wisconsin who do not have management team advisors in place. The program will work with various set-ups, herd sizes, production practices, and geographic locations to explore any production issue facing the operation.

There is funding for approximately 50 pilot teams in 2009. Applications will be accepted until funds are exhausted.

How can I apply?

For more information about producer programs and the Dairy Farm Management Team application visit www.growwisconsinmilk.org.

For additional information contact:

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How is this program funded?

This program is made possible through the Dairy Business Initiative. At the heart of this initiative has been the focus of modernization, innovation and improved profitability by focusing on producers, processors and the supply chain. The initiative is making great strides with efforts in relocation and reinvestment, market growth and niche market development, along with product innovation and diversification through outreach and education.

The Dairy Business Initiative is funded by grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and supported by Senator Herb Kohl and Congressman Dave Obey. These federal funds are being matched by in-kind contributions of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board and the state of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and Department of Commerce.

Who is the Grow Wisconsin Dairy Team?

The Grow Wisconsin Dairy Team (GWDT) is a cohesive team of Wisconsin interagency members that coordinate and focus resources for dairy farmers to modernize their businesses and for processors to streamline the supply chain. Created to increase support and grow Wisconsin's dairy industry, the Grow Wisconsin Dairy Team is a joint venture between the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; Department of Commerce's Dairy 2020 program; the University of Wisconsin Extension's Dairy Team, Farm and Risk Management Team and Center for Dairy Profitability and Wisconsin Technical Colleges.

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