

North Carolina Dairy News

Winter, 2007

The North Carolina Dairy News is published quarterly by NCSU Extension Dairy Specialists with the financial support of the NC Dairy Producers Association.

NC Dairy Producers Association Update Report

by Norman Jordan, Jr., NCDPA President

This year's NCDPA annual meeting will be held on January 22nd, and the NC Dairy Conference will be on January 23rd. I encourage you to attend both meetings to learn about your state dairy association and to hear about the NC Dairy Stabilization and Growth Program Strategic Plan and what it can mean to you and NC's dairy industry. A copy of the program brochure is enclosed.

During the summer, NC's dairy farmers learned that most of the Southern milk processors have decided to only purchase and process milk produced by cows that have not been treated with synthetic growth hormone, rBST. Hoard's Dairyman magazine reported on a consumer study that said rBST is not on the consumers' radar screen for being a concern. So the rBST free market is being developed at the expense of milk's reputation for being a safe, wholesome and nutritious product, by implying that milk not labeled "rBST free" is of a lower quality and safety, when there is no difference. By implying that "rBST free" milk is a superior product, then a premium price can be charged to the consumer, with little, if any, of that premium being paid to the dairy producer who is the only one who can make milk be "rBST free".

Longer term the concern is that other technologies and accepted best management practices will come under attack as well. This will lead to less efficient and less profitable production of milk at a greater cost to the consumer as animal rights and anti-dairy groups recognize this as a means to attack the dairy industry and mobilize the support of their membership. Because of the dairy farmer's commitment to providing quality milk, the public can be assured that all pasteurized milk is safe and nutritious. But if retailers and processors exploit the consumer's misunderstanding of modern dairy farm practices in order to increase their profits, then dairy producers and milk's reputations will be damaged.

Because of these concerns, a nationwide dairy producer organization called the American Farmers for the Advancement and Conservation of Technology has been formed. Their mission is to safeguard the image of milk in the marketplace, to provide consumers value and wholesome products, and to advocate for producer's freedom to choose production technologies and practices for the benefit of stakeholders. The NCDPA is concerned about the future of dairying in NC and the potential impact that the loss of production technologies and practices could have on our state's dairy producers. The NCDPA is also concerned about potential loss of consumer confidence in milk products and the job producers are doing in caring for their animals and the environment. Therefore, we will monitor these events and work to represent NC's dairy producers' best interests.

2008 North Carolina Dairy Conference

The 2008 North Carolina Dairy Conference will be held on January 22-23 at the Holiday Inn in Salisbury. A copy of the program brochure and registration form is inserted into this newsletter. Please review the program agenda and plan to attend this important event. The NC Dairy Stabilization and Growth Strategic Planning Committee will present their plan of proposed initiatives that they believe could help stabilize and grow the state's dairy industry. **At the end of the conference, several door prizes, each valued at over \$100, will be awarded in a random drawing to dairy producers who are registered for the conference and are present at the drawing.** Since the annual conference is about one month earlier than in previous years, you are encouraged to **complete and mail the enclosed registration form today.** Don't delay. January will be here before you have time to turn the page on your calendar.

Winning the War with Mycoplasma

Dr. Mitch Hockett, Assistant Professor
NCSU Department of Animal Science

Farms that have survived a Mycoplasma outbreak may question the above title. Does anyone truly *win* any battle that ravages the farm and leaves tens to hundreds of animals infected, stunted, blemished, or even dead? The previous two articles have focused on learning about Mycoplasma and taking an unbiased look at your own operation to determine susceptibility to infections, or if an outbreak is already occurring. In this final segment of the mycoplasma series we will discuss management strategies for dealing with Mycoplasma that have been recommended by professionals or by individuals who have come through the fight.

A recent trip west allowed me the opportunity to visit with two managers of one of the largest dairy farms in Idaho. When the topic came up, both managers admitted that the battle with mycoplasma had taken residence at their farm. The 23,000 cow operation is broken down into dairy units that range in size from several hundred to the largest at 14,000 cows. Expansion has been a must in order to reach their target herd size, therefore herd purchases have become regular occurrences. Since realizing that Mycoplasma was becoming an issue on the farm, testing has been implemented for all cows that are purchased as soon as they arrive on the farm. When asked if mycoplasma is an issue in their area, both were quick to point out that "if someone says that they don't have mycoplasma on their farm then they probably haven't checked for it." The two reported that approximately 10% of the animals they purchase test positive for either Staph or Mycoplasma when they arrive at the farm. The same trend has been experienced by several expanding herds in North Carolina.

This, coupled with the fact that there is no known cure for Mycoplasma in lactating dairy cattle, is reason that the best strategy to win over mycoplasma is to stop it before it gets onto the farm. Testing is key to preventing large-scale outbreaks. Animals should be tested before purchase or at time of arrival on the farm before co-mingling with the existing herd. Cows that test positive should be separated immediately into a suspect herd and a second test performed for confirmation. At this point a decision must be made. Do you cull cows that test positive for mycoplasma? Early on, this question may seem easy to answer, especially for an animal that is infected with mastitis for the fifth time this lactation. What about an animal that

shows no clinical symptoms? Each animal presents a different case, and producers vary in their criteria of when to cull. Most extreme is the thought that all positive animals must be culled. On the less conservative side is the idea to manage those animals separate from the rest of the herd, always milking them last through the parlor, and never allowing them access to other animals.

There are those who believe that infected animals can be turned dry and allowed to “self-clear” from the infection. There are published reports of cows that have successfully cleared mycoplasma from their system, but there are far greater numbers of animals that did not clear the infection. A herd in North Carolina chose to dry off 33 pregnant animals that were confirmed to carry mycoplasma. Of the 33, only four tested clean at the next calving. The danger is the damage that one infected cow can do to a group of uninfected animals. This we know to be true, mycoplasma are highly infectious. They can gain entry to the body through the mammary or through the respiratory system, meaning the infected animal with pneumonia may infect others around her even if she is not lactating. For this reason, many people recommend that all positive animals be culled.

If infected animals are kept, they must be isolated from the remainder of the herd. Furthermore, these animals should not be stripped routinely before milking. Pre-stripping these animals often leads to exposure of non-infected animals to Mycoplasma. Additionally, individuals who are pre-stripping these cows should wear gloves and change gloves with each animal. The infected group should be milked last to decrease exposure to other animals. Mycoplasma may also result in pneumonia, especially during times of stress. Cows detected to have pneumonia very early may often be treated successfully. However, less success is achieved when treating animals that are detected late with severe pneumonia. Some producers choose to sell these animals immediately.

Calves that are infected typically show ear droop and a tilt head due to ear infection. These animals often become thin and grow very poorly. Furthermore, they frequently experience pneumonia, which may be complicated with severe, crippling arthritis. Calves that exhibit drooped ear may be treated by washing ears with hydrogen peroxide while massaging the peroxide at the base of the ear. If initiated early enough, this treatment twice daily until symptoms subside has been effective to restore ears and relieve the ear infection. Furthermore, treatment combinations with extended antibiotics have cleared calves from Mycoplasma. One must realize that few antibiotics are effective against myco, and severe cases typically lead to death of the infected animal.

There is no definitive method that one can use and be guaranteed success for managing mycoplasma. The best success is achieved when infections are prevented before occurring. Treatment in calves is most successful when diagnosis occurs early during the infection. Eddie Patrick, a respected North Carolina dairyman, recently said “the more we learn about mycoplasma, the less we seem to know” and indeed mycoplasma are terribly frustrating due to their lack of similarity to typical bacterial or viral pathogens observed on dairy farms. Research continues to increase our understanding about this pathogen and will hopefully lead to greater future success in this war.

**Report on 2007 State 4-H Dairy Judging Teams;
2007 State 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Team and 2007 National 4-H Dairy Conference**

Dr. Brinton A. Hopkins
NCSU Extension Dairy Specialist

2007 State 4-H Dairy Judging Teams Compete at Contests in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Kentucky

Congratulations to both 2007 North Carolina State 4-H Dairy Judging Teams for an outstanding judging season. Coaches were Ken Vaughn (County Extension Director in Iredell County); Nancy Keith (County Extension Director in Yadkin County) Brad Johnson (Dairy and Livestock Extension Agent in Rowan County); and Dr. Brinton Hopkins (Extension Dairy Specialist).

State 4-H Team Members: Melinda Staebner (Yadkin County); Danielle Patterson (Randolph County); Caleb Knox (Rowan County); and Avery Lutz (Davie County).

Alternate State 4-H Team Members: Shelby Karriker (Rowan County); Ben Ketchie (Rowan County); Courtney Elliott (Randolph County); and Katie Wicker (Randolph County). Primary funding for the teams to travel and compete was generously provided by the North Carolina Dairy Youth Foundation.

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Contest: Our state team placed 8th overall and 4th in reasons in the Pennsylvania Youth Dairy Cattle Judging Contest held in Harrisburg, PA. The team placed 4th in Holstein, 6th in Ayrshire, 9th in Brown Swiss, 8th in Guernsey, and 9th in Jersey. Individual highlights included: Melinda Staebner, 4th in overall reasons and 8th in Holstein; Danielle Patterson, 10th in Ayrshire; Avery Lutz, 9th in overall reasons; and Caleb Knox 13th in Guernsey. On the trip to Harrisburg, the team visited the Gettysburg battlefield and the North Carolina Memorial. While in Pennsylvania, the team also toured Hershey, PA and the Amish area in Lancaster County.

National 4-H Dairy Judging Contest held at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin: The state team traveled to Madison, Wisconsin and competed at the National 4-H Dairy Judging Contest held at the World Dairy Expo. Our state team placed 12th in total overall score and 13th in total reasons score out of 29 U.S. teams. The team placed 5th in Holstein; 3rd in Jersey; 6th in Guernsey; 17th in Brown Swiss and 22nd in Ayrshire. Individual highlights included: Melinda Staebner (3rd in Holstein, 4th in Guernsey, 22nd in Jersey and 24th in total reasons score); Danielle Patterson (10th in Holstein and 14th in Guernsey); Avery Lutz (15th in Guernsey); and Caleb Knox (17th in Jersey).

On the Saturday before the contest, our North Carolina State 4-H Team participated in practice judging sessions at Daltondale Ayrshires in Hartland, WI; Vilter Guernseys in Hartland, WI; Agnew Farm in Oconomowoc, WI and Crescentmead Holsteins in Ixonia, WI. On the day before the contest, the teams had a great time participating with the other teams in touring dairy sites in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin including NASCO, the Dairy Shrine, and the Hoard's Dairyman Farm. They also participated in judging practice sessions at Sunshine Genetics, Inc. in Whitewater, Wisconsin and Barlass Jersey Farm in Janesville, Wisconsin. On the day following the contest, the team visited World Dairy Expo where they saw hundreds of dairy exhibits as well as some of the finest dairy cattle and dairy shows in the world.

North American 4-H Dairy Cattle Judging Contest in Louisville, KY: Congratulations to the Alternate State 4-H Dairy Judging Team for placing 11th out of 20 4-H teams in overall score and 12th overall in reasons in the North American 4-H Dairy Cattle Judging Contest in Louisville, KY. The team placed 2nd in Ayrshire, 9th in Brown Swiss, 12th in Holstein, 10th in Guernsey and 14th in Jersey. Individual highlights included: Katie Wicker placed 4th in Ayrshire and 8th in Brown Swiss; Courtney Elliott placed 11th in Ayrshire.

North Carolina State 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Team Competes at 2007 North American Contest in Kentucky

Congratulations to the Rowan County 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Team who did an great job representing North Carolina and competing at the North American 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest in Louisville, Kentucky. Team members included Shelby Karriker, Ben Ketchie, and Hannah Hursey. Brad Johnson (Rowan County Dairy and Livestock Extension Agent), and David and Cheryl Correll (Rowan County 4-H Dairy Volunteers) served as coaches.

North Carolina Youth Participate in the 2007 National 4-H Dairy Youth Conference at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

Congratulations to Brittany Sturgill (Alleghany County) and Carrie Hoffner (Rowan County) for being selected, through an application and interview process, to attend the National 4-H Dairy Conference that was held on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. Dr. Brinton Hopkins, Extension Dairy Specialist and Shelley Lutz, dairy volunteer leader from Treasure Chest Jerseys in Lincoln County, accompanied the youth to this conference.

Youth from across the United States and certain provinces of Canada participated in this educational conference that was held at the University of Wisconsin-Madison during World Dairy Expo. At the conference, youth participated in many outstanding educational sessions and seminars on the University of Wisconsin - Madison campus and visited several dairy farms, a commercial dairy heifer grower farm, ABS headquarters and the World Dairy Expo. They also toured the new dairy facility at Hoard's Dairyman Farm, Hoard's Dairyman publishing company, the National Dairy Shrine and NASCO. Ryan Sloop (Rowan County) also attended this conference serving as one of two youth representatives on the national planning committee for the 2007 conference. Funding for our youth to attend this conference was generously provided by the North Carolina Dairy Youth Foundation and the North Carolina State University Department of 4-H and Youth Development.

NC State Fair Livestock Hall of Fame & NCSU Establish Scholarship Endowment

Animal science students at N.C. State University will soon have a new scholarship available to them, thanks to the generosity of members of the N.C. State Fair Livestock Hall of Fame.

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler and Johnny Wynne, dean of the N.C. State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, recently signed an agreement establishing the N.C. State Fair Livestock Hall of Fame Animal Science Scholarship Endowment.

Beginning in 2008, scholarships of \$1,000 will be awarded to one or more undergraduate students in the N.C. State Department of Animal Science. The scholarships will be awarded based on academic merit, quality of character, leadership ability and understanding of animal agriculture. Priority will be given to students with a background, interest or career plans in large animal and production animal agriculture.

Awards will be for one year and may be renewed if the recipient maintains a grade point average of 2.8 on a 4.0 scale in animal science courses.

The scholarship endowment has a goal of \$50,000, and at press time had received pledges totaling \$25,000, said James Smith, a Livestock Hall of Fame member and chairman of the endowment committee.

Livestock Hall of Fame members who contribute at least \$1,000 to the endowment will be recognized as charter members on a plaque to be placed in the Jim Graham Building at the State Fairgrounds.

Memorials for deceased Hall of Fame inductees will be accepted from family members and friends.

For information about contributing to the scholarship endowment, contact Keith Oakley, president of the N.C. Agricultural Foundation, at (919) 515-9262.

NCSU Extension Dairy Specialists

Dr. Geoff Benson - 919/515-5184
 -dairy farm management, marketing & policy
Dr. Brinton Hopkins - 919/515-7592
 - nutrition, replacements, 4-H/Youth
Dr. Don Pritchard - 919/515-8805
 -milking management, mastitis, special programs, newsletter editor
Dr. Steve Washburn - 919/515-7726
 - reproduction and farm systems
Dr. Lon Whitlow - 919/515-7602
 - nutrition & feeding management

Specialized Area Ext. Agents

(Each of the area agents serve several counties. Their home county is listed after the phone number.)

Marti Day – 919-542-8202 – Chatham
vacant – 336-679-2061 – Yadkin
Lara Worden - 704-922-2118 – Gaston

North Carolina Cooperative Extension
North Carolina State University
Dept. of Animal Science, Dairy Extension
Box 7621, Polk Hall
Raleigh, NC 27695-7621

Dairy Success Program Participating County Ext. Agents

Roger Cobb - 336/570-6740 - Alamance
Brad Johnson – 704/633-0571 - Rowan
Tony McGaha – 828/456-3575 - Haywood
Carl McKnight – 336/242-2082 - Davidson
Carl Pless - 704/920-3310 - Cabarrus
Ken Vaughn – 704/878-3165 - Iredell

NCSU Dairy Extension Web Page Address

http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/an_sci/extension/dairy/Dairyh~1.htm



North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A & T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Conference support provided by these Exhibitors is greatly appreciated.

Exhibitors & Sponsors:
(as of November 28, 2007)

ABS Global
Alltech, Inc.
Automated Farm Systems
Bartlett Milling Company
Cargill Brewing Residuals Solutions
Carolina Farm Credit
Dairy Records Mgmt. Systems
Deal-Rite Feeds, Inc.
Genex Cooperative, Inc.
Harper Financial Services
Intervet, Inc.
Land O' Lakes Purina Feed
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers
Mid-Atlantic Agri Systems
Pfizer Animal Health
Piedmont Agri-Systems, Inc.
Select Sire Power
Southeastern Silo Co. of VA
Southern States Co-op, Inc.
SUDIA
Sunset Feeds, Inc.
Trouw Nutrition - AVP, Inc.
West Central/ Soy Plus
WestfaliaSurge, Inc.
Zinpro Corporation

Other Exhibitors:

NC Ag Dev & Farmland Pres Trust
NCDA&CS Food & Drug Services
NCDA&CS Veterinary Division
NC Dairy Producers Association
NC Dairy Ind Stab & Growth SP
NC Dairy Youth Foundation
NCSU Dairy Foundations
NCSU Dairy Science Club

Planning Committee:

Board of Directors of the NC Dairy Producers Association, and NC State University Extension Dairy Specialists Dr. Geoff Benson, Dr. Brinton Hopkins, Dr. Don Pritchard, Dr. Steve Washburn, and Dr. Lon Whitlow

Employment and program opportunities are offered to all people regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.



57th Annual North Carolina Dairy Conference and Meetings of Dairy Industry Organizations

January 22 - 23, 2008

Holiday Inn
Salisbury, NC

Sponsored by the North Carolina Dairy Producers Association, with assistance from Extension Dairy Specialists at North Carolina State University.

Tuesday, January 22
NC Dairy Organizations Meetings

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Dairy Foods Safety and Quality Conference

- *Jackson Room*

1:30 p.m.

NC ADA/SUDIA Board Meeting

- *Steele Room*

2:00 p.m.

NC Dairy Youth Foundation Board Meeting - Suite 102

7:00 p.m.

North Carolina Dairy Producers Association 13th Annual Meeting

- *Steele Room*

- President's Report
by Norman Jordan, Jr.

- Comments by NCDA&CS Asst.
Commissioner Howard Isley

- Presentation on the NC Dairy Biosecurity
Committee's FMD Business Continuity Plan
by
NCDA & CS Representative

- NCDPA Board Reorganization meeting

Wednesday, January 23
57th Annual North Carolina Dairy Conference Program
"Planning For Tomorrow"

8:30 a.m.

Registration and View Exhibits

9:50 a.m.

Morning Session: *Steele Room*

Chair: Norman Jordan Jr., President, NC Dairy Producers Association

Presentation of Don Wesen Quality Milk Producer Awards - Kay Sigmon, NC Milk Sanitation Program Asst. Branch Head, and Norman Jordan Jr., NCDPA President

10:00 a.m.

"The Benson Report"

- Dr. Geoff Benson, NCSU

10:15 a.m.

SUDIA Report – New Directions - Partnerships and Progress - Cheryl Hayn, General Manager, and Eric McClain, Industry Relations Manager

11:00 a.m.

"Coping With a FMD Outbreak"

- Mr. Jim Howie, Dairy Biosecurity Comm.

11:10 a.m.

Presentation of the Marvin E. Senger Distinguished Dairy Farmer Award

- Dr. Roger McCraw, Head, Department of Animal Science, NCSU

11:30 a.m.

Luncheon Session:

Jackson & Overman Rooms

Chair: Ronnie Charles, President
NC Dairy Youth Foundation

- Buffet Lunch

- Dairy Youth Foundation Report and Raffle Drawing

"What Will A Successful Dairy Look Like In 10 Years"

- Dr. Mark Stevenson,
Cornell University

View Exhibits

2:00 p.m.

Afternoon Session: *Steele Room*

Chair: Leigh Lane, Past Chairman,
NC Dairy Foundation

"Programs That Are Assisting Dairy Producers In Wisconsin and Pennsylvania"

- Mr. Matt Lange, WI Dept Agriculture, &
Mr. Zach Myers, NC Dairy Producer

2:30 p.m.

North Carolina Dairy Industry Stabilization and Growth Strategic Plan
- *Strategic Planning Comm. members
Ronnie Trantham & Norman Jordan Jr*

2:55 p.m. Drawing for door prizes

3:00p.m. Adjourn

**Registration Information for the
57th Annual North Carolina Dairy Conference
and Dairy Industry Organization Meetings
January 22 – 23, 2008 - Holiday Inn - Salisbury, NC**

NC Dairy Foods Safety & Quality Conference

Tuesday, January 22, 2008, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

NC ADA/SUDIA Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 22, 2008, 1:30 p.m.

North Carolina Dairy Youth Foundation Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 22, 2008, 2:00 p.m.

North Carolina Dairy Producers Association 13th Annual Meeting & Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 22, 2008, 7:00 p.m. The program will feature comments by a representative from the NCDA&CS concerning the NC Dairy Biosecurity Committee's Foot and Mouth Business Continuity Plan.

Fifty-Seventh Annual North Carolina Dairy Conference

Wednesday, January 23, 2008, 8:30 a.m.

Please complete the registration form below and return by January 4, 2008. Registration fees for the conferences are listed on the back (next page).

A block of sleeping rooms is being held at the Holiday Inn in Salisbury (704/637-3100) for participants who will be staying overnight. Call the hotel directly and identify yourself as a Dairy Conference participant to receive the special room rate. If you have questions about the conferences call 919-515-7602 or 919-515-8805.

Please cut along dotted line and mail completed form to address shown below.

Please make your check payable to the North Carolina Dairy Producers Association (NCDPA) and mail it along with this form by January 4, 2008, to Dr. Don Pritchard, Dairy Conference, Box 7621, NCSU, Raleigh, NC 27695-7621.

Name _____; Address _____

City _____; State _____; Zip _____ County _____

Phone Number _____; \$ Amount Enclosed _____ (See registration fees on back)

Please Check Below What You are Registering For:

___ Dairy Foods Safety & Quality Conference on January 22

___ Dairy Conference on January 23

___ NCDPA Annual Membership Fee (___ producer, ___ associate)

Registration Fees for the Conferences and NCDPA Membership

Event	Pre-Registration Fee	On-Site Registration Fee
Dairy Foods Safety & Quality Conference	\$25	\$30
57th Annual North Carolina Dairy Conference For NCDPA Members -----	\$20	\$30
For Non-NCDPA Members -----	\$30	\$40
North Carolina Dairy Producers Association Membership	\$50	\$50