

2008 Annual Plan of Work

Aerica Opatik
Agriculture Educator
Kewaunee County UW – Extension

Situation Statement:

Kewaunee and Door Counties have an informal specialization agreement involving the duties of both Agriculture educators. This educator will be responsible for planning and implementing educational programs and services directly relating to Dairy and Livestock Management in the dual-county area.

Kewaunee County's economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, mainly the dairy industry. Kewaunee County's 31,500 cows are expected to produce nearly 700,000,000 pounds of milk in 2007. Average herd production is 21,500 pounds of milk per cow per year. Average herd size increased from 112 in 2006 to 130 in 2007. Agriculture generates nearly \$190 million of economic activity annually and provides 2,200 jobs in Kewaunee County.

In October 2007, the Agriculture Educator conducted a needs assessment pertaining to dairy and livestock topics and issues in Kewaunee and Door Counties. Surveys were sent to 370 Kewaunee residents and regional agri-business owners/representatives, and an additional 166 were sent to Door County residents. Additional face-to-face conversations between dairy and livestock producers and the Agriculture Educator, as well as a literacy survey conducted (April 2007) in conjunction with the Family living Educator also contributed to assessing the priorities in Kewaunee and Door Counties. Of the 132 responses to the October 2007 survey, milk quality, feeding and nutrition (lactating cows, dry cows, and heifers), and farm management issues were top priorities. Since 70% respondents were from farms less than 100 cows, this needs assessment shows a clear direction of programming for smaller farms, but not much insight on large farms since just three farms with 500 – 999 cows, and just two with more than 1,000 replied. These large dairies are a key demographic in the county since approximately 50% - 60% of Kewaunee County's 31,500 cows are on just 30 farms. Through one-on-one interviews with owners of larger dairies, the Agriculture Educator has established that nutrient management, employee training in herd health, (employee) farm safety, and general farm management are priorities. Kewaunee County offers a unique opportunity to have an even split of large farm programming and small.

Outcomes:

Feeding and Nutrition: Based on surveys and one-on-one interviews of educational priorities, the topic of Feeding and Nutrition was a top priority for dairy producers. Feeding and Nutrition is a major factor in herd health. By providing proper nutrition at all stages of growth and production, a cow's production should be at her top potential. Related outcomes should be:

1. Producers will adopt feeding practices that limit the occurrence of digestive and metabolic disorders such as milk fever, ketosis, and displaced abomasums.
2. Producers will adopt practices to maximize production
3. Producers will adopt practices to harvest and store top quality feed.

Milk Quality: Producers lose milk production due to mastitis and early lactation culling. Producers also lose milk quality premiums due to high Somatic Cell Counts which can attribute to loss of income and potential profit. Outcomes to increasing milk quality include:

1. Producers will adopt practices to reduce the spread and incidences of mastitis in the herd.
2. Producers will lower Somatic Cell Counts and evaluate how mastitis impacts farm profits.

Nutrient Management: Producers have a responsibility to properly manage farm manure in an effort to properly fertilize fields, protect ground water supplies, and keep good relationships with non-agriculture neighbors. Outcomes to nutrient management are:

1. Producers will adopt practices to properly apply manure to reduce run-off while fertilizing fields at maximum potential.
2. Producers will adopt “neighbor friendly” practices to prove they value being good stewards of the land.

Farm Management: Producers have a variety of management challenges. Employee training and safety are major concerns for not only the health of the employee, but also for those around him, as well as the cattle. Outcomes for employee management are:

1. Producers will adopt training procedures for employees in herd health, milk quality, and general farm work.
2. Producers will adopt farm safety protocols and training sessions.

Implementation:

First Quarter: (January – March)

1. Host **Gaining the Competitive Edge** meeting
2. Host and present at **Extreme Makeover: Parlor Edition** with Center of Dairy Profitability
3. Host (with Brown County) and present statewide at **Livestock (Dairy Steer) Feeders Meeting**
4. Plan and present **Meat Animal Quality Assurance meetings** for Youth Livestock Auction participants
5. Write and develop **Animal Handling Module** with Maria Bindixen, Clark County

Second Quarter (April – June)

1. Plan and Organize barn meeting based on **Dairy Worker Training: Module II Reproductive Skills**
2. Plan and present **Meat Animal Quality Assurance meetings** for Youth Livestock Auction participants.
3. Write and develop **Animal Handling Module** with Maria Bindixen, Clark County
4. Prepare virtual **Farm Tour Fact Sheets** for Kewaunee County Dairy Brunch.
5. Plan and organize **farm tour – Transition cow** facilities
6. Serve as leader and presenter at **Rural Safety Day**
7. **Alfalfa Scissor Cutting**

Third Quarter (July - September)

1. Plan and organize barn meeting based on **Dairy Worker Training: Module IV Assisting cows with Calving/Fresh Cow Exam.**
2. Plan and organize **Manure Spill Demonstration** with Kevin Erb
3. Plan and organize **Rural Land Owners Meeting** in conjunction with Kewaunee County CNRED Educator
4. Plan and organize **Corn Silage Burn Down** in conjunction with Door County.

Fourth Quarter (October – December)

1. Plan and organize dairy **farm tour - innovative farm technologies and management.**
2. Plan, organize, and present at **joint forage meeting** with Dean Volenberg (Door County) and Peninsular Research Station.
3. Plan, organize, and present **Youth Livestock Selection Meetings**

Year Round:

1. Contribute and write articles for Kewaunee County UW – Extension’s monthly newsletter, “The Foghorn”.
2. Radio and television interviews, and news releases as opportunities and needs arise.
3. Farm calls on an as-needed basis, as well as continued efforts to meet and visit dairy and livestock producers.
4. Attend, speak at, and contribute educational efforts at local dairy and livestock related organizations and meetings.
5. Contribute to, and maintain Kewaunee County UW – Extension website.

Evaluation Plan:

- Pre and/or Post meeting written evaluations
- Individual one-on-one interviews with attendees of sessions/meetings
- Feedback from area sales/marketing representatives and/or veterinarians and nutritionists who work with producers who attended meetings/sessions.

Resources:

- UW – Extension Specialists (i.e. Paul Fricke, Kent Weigel, Pat Hoffman, Pam Ruegg, Brian Holmes, David Kammel, Doug Reinemann, Bernie O'Rourke, Dave Thomas, Ted Halbach, Joy Kirkpatrick, Jeff Lehmkuhler, Bruce Jones)
- Area and state-wide UW – Extension County Agriculture Agents
- Local veterinarians
- Local nutritionists
- Local Dairy Industry sales/marketing representatives
- Steenbock Library services
- Dairy Team Blog
- USDA Dairy Forage Research Laboratory
- UW – Madison Veterinary School
- UW – Madison Departments of Dairy, Animal, and Bio-Systems Engineering and Faculty

Resources to be Developed:

- Dairy and livestock related articles
- PowerPoint presentations
- Spanish on the Dairy Pocket Notebook
- Newsletter contributions
- Fact sheets
- Cattle Handling DVD and Module

Professional Development

- Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin Conference, Madison, WI
- Wisconsin Public Service Farm Show, Oshkosh, WI
- ANRE All-Faculty Conference, Wisconsin Dells
- District and State In-services
- Continue on-going Spanish Classes
- Wisconsin Farm Technology Days, Brown County 2008
- World Beef Expo, Milwaukee, WI
- World Dairy Expo, Madison, WI