

Dairy Team Training Spanish-speaking dairy workers



“The two gentlemen I sent came home quite enthused and quoted verbatim all the things that I have been trying to teach them about calves through the years.”

-Wisconsin dairy producer

Situation

Dairy producers who have updated their barns and milking facilities and added more cows to their herds need reliable employees who have been trained in modern dairy practices. Many dairy workers working on Wisconsin farms are Latinos from Mexico and Central America and may not speak much English.

Response

The Hispanic Labor workgroup of UW-Extension’s Dairy Team developed four training modules in Spanish and English. These modules cover milk quality and mastitis, reproduction and estrus detection, newborn calf care and herdsmanship skills. Teaching materials include instructions on how to conduct training meetings as well as presentation

slides, speaker notes, handouts, certificates of completion, and evaluation forms for participants and employers. A bilingual newsletter that reinforces the trainings is distributed to farms in Eastern Wisconsin and is posted on the UW-Extension Fond du Lac web site.

Outcomes

- Since 2004, more than 500 Spanish-speaking dairy workers have attended modules on milk quality, reproduction, calf care and assisting cows with calving.
- Evaluation results show that participants made large gains in skill level and knowledge.
- The modules have been sold to educators and dairy producers in Canada, Mexico and South American.
- The Dairy Partner/EI Compañero newsletter is distributed to 550 farms, reaching approximately 2,000 dairy employees. Two articles were reprinted by a national farm magazine.



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