

PENNSYLVANIA

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DAIRY ADVISORY TEAMS

The Pennsylvania State University ▪ College of Agricultural Sciences ▪ Summer 2000 ▪ Vol. 1 / 1

GLOVER TEAM EXCEEDS GOALS!

When we're making more money, we are less stressed and more relaxed. There is a peace of mind that comes with this too!" This is what Ed and Ron Glover from Addison, PA have said about their RHA increase of 16,000 lbs to 25,500 lbs.

The Glovers have had an active Dairy Advisory Team for four years. During this four year period, the team has made remarkable progress. The Glovers have implemented many ideas that came out of their team meetings including purchasing a new TMR mixer, buying replacement heifers, implementing a crop program, harvesting better forages, and improved cow comfort. With this increase in milk, the farm's financial situation is looking great. "We are selling more milk, milking fewer cows, and enjoying family life."

Congratulations Ed, Ron & Team!

TO BUY OR NOT TO BUY: THE LEASING ALTERNATIVE

Are you in the market for a new tractor? Your dairy business may want to consider leasing instead of purchasing a new tractor. In many cases, dairy producers are not aware that the leasing option is available to their business. Good business sense dictates that *owning* a tractor does not always bring about higher productivity and profitability, but *using* the tractor does.

The flexibility of a lease program allows a business to define lease terms by the conditions of their business. With the volatility in the dairy industry, this is a real benefit! Leasing can also simplify taxes and keep your lines of credit open. If you



are in a situation where cash flow is a problem, leasing eliminates the need for down payments and should the need arise, scheduled payments can be lowered by lengthening repayment terms. Leasing equipment also allows the producer to always have access to the latest technology.

If you are considering a lease program, there are five questions that you and your **Dairy Advisory Team** should answer:

- How is your cash flow situation?
- What is your current tax situation?
- From a profitability standpoint, what are the long-term needs of your dairy business?
- How long do you want to use the tractor?
- What do you intend to do with the tractor at the end of your lease?

Hiring Personnel For Your Dairy Business

Hiring new employees can be challenging. Listed below are benefits that potential employees will look for in your business. How many of these benefits does your business provide?

- Health Package
 - Dental
 - Vision
- Retirement Package
- Vacation & Sick days
- Advancement Opportunities
- Increased Salary Opportunities
- Flexible Scheduling
- Professional Development Opportunities
 - Informational meetings
 - Short courses
- Trade Shows
- Dairy related publications
- A Clean & Comfortable Break Room
 - Tables & Chairs
 - Clean Bathroom
 - Shower
 - Lockers
 - Microwave
 - Refrigerator
 - Water cooler/coffee
- Work Shirts or Uniforms
- A Cooperative and Friendly Atmosphere

COMMON TEAM PROBLEMS & HOW TO SOLVE THEM

It's your monthly team meeting day! You walk into a team meeting with high expectations but walk out feeling like little was accomplished. Unproductive team meetings can be very frustrating and happen occasionally to everyone. Many problems that creep into team meetings can be easily remedied.

- Team members are not taking the meeting seriously. Some people arrive late, others leave early.
 - ✓ Review your ground rules and the purpose of the Dairy Advisory Team. Emphasize that meetings are real work and not just a break in the day. Have incentives, like a free breakfast or lunch! Remind members of their specific role in the team. For an effective team discussion, make sure everyone has an agenda before the meeting date. Consider changing the team make up to match your team goals.
- Meetings are too long. The team is not productive in the 1 ½ hour set meeting time
 - ✓ Get down to business right away and stay focused. Appoint a timekeeper and stick to your planned end time. If all agenda items were not covered, move them to the next meeting's agenda. Allow team members to visit with each other before or after the team meeting at their discretion.
- Team members wander off the topic. They spend more time talking about unimportant issues than the issue at hand
 - ✓ The coordinator must be able to summarize discussion and help others to listen. It is the job of the coordinator to monitor the agenda and evaluate progress the team is making during the meeting.
- Members have hidden issues, so the team does not move ahead.

- ✓ Emphasize confidentiality and open discussion! Establish a meeting atmosphere that fosters team members to have trust in each other. The coordinator has the responsibility of including all team members, and controlling those folks who dominate discussions. Try to find “you win
- Meetings are missing important information that is needed to make critical decisions
 - ✓ Schedule team meetings in a location where information is easily accessible. Team members will be prepared if they have an agenda before the team meeting
- Once a decision is made, team members are not following through with action
 - ✓ Before your team meeting is over, hand out a “to-do” list to each team member. Send a reminder postcard in the mail or make a phone call between meetings to encourage accountability. Show interest in others accomplishments.

A Fable:

A farmer who had a quarrelsome family called his sons and told them to lay a bunch of sticks before him. Then, after laying the sticks parallel to one another and binding them, he challenged his sons, one after one, to pick up the bundle and break it. They all tried, but in vain. Then, untying the bundle, he gave them the sticks to break one by one. This they did with the greatest ease. Then said the father, “Thus, my sons, as long as you remain united, you are a match for anything, but differ and separate, and you are undone.” - Aesop

Quotable Quotes:

If I could solve all the problems myself, I would.
- Thomas Edison, when asked why he had a team of twenty-one assistants

Teamwork: Simply stated, it is less me and more we.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.
-Margaret Mead

No matter what accomplishments you make, somebody else helped you.

-Althea Givson

A successful team is a group of many hands but of one mind.

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