



PDPW

# MANAGERS

memo

May 16, 2013

*Brought to you by Dairy's Professional Development Organization*

## For your Dairy Business...

**MARGINS TO MAKE MONEY?** Register today for May's World Class Webinar "Managing the Margins to Make the Money" presented by dairy economist Mary Ledman. PDPW's Monday, May 20, World Class Webinar -which has a Monday, May 13 registration deadline-will provide a dairy market outlook plus cover factors influencing grain and forage prices in 2013-with a focus on creating a desired margin when markets for feed and milk are so volatile. During her 60-minute presentation, Ledman will deliver valuable insight into margin opportunities for the remainder of 2013 and answer the questions you pose her. Yes, at the end of the webinar, you'll be prepared to explore strategies and create your plan of action! Ledman will also lead the Monday, June 24, World Class Webinar "Seizing Risk Management Opportunities for 2013 and 2014." Both webinars start at noon CDT. If you have a date/time conflict, you can watch a fully recorded version at your leisure but you must be registered to receive a recorded session. Sign up today for the May

webinar or both the May and June webinars by calling 800.947.7379 or go online to [www.pdpw.org](http://www.pdpw.org). PDPW members register for \$100 per session. Non-PDPW members can register at \$125 per session.

**SAVE THE DATE: NOV. 1-2** These are the dates for PDPW's 2013 Youth Leadership Derby which will be held at the Thorp High School in Thorp WI. It's never too early to start planning to attend this leadership event and to start thinking about rural and non-rural youth, ages 15-18, who would benefit from this amazing experience. In addition to meeting new people, this is the place for youth to explore professional opportunities in the dairy industry and see several of these careers first-hand. You'll read more about the 2013 Youth Leadership Derby in upcoming Managers Memos.



**LESSEN HYPERKERATOSIS BY NOT OVERMILKING.** Research indicates overmilking is

a primary cause of hyperkeratosis. Dr. Angelica Chapa, Mississippi State University, says, while very little, if any, teat damage results from moderate overmilking, the risk of bacteria entering the udder through milk droplets impacting teat ends is greatest during overmilking. When the udder has been emptied satisfactorily, the milking unit should be removed. This can be detected by manual observation or, for systems with ACR's, allowing flow sensors to detect low flow and direct the automatic removal of the cluster. Flow controlled milking systems provide a visual indication when low flow has been attained.

**PLAGUED BY CALF MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES?** Uncovering the root of the problem might be as simple as the answers to five questions: 1) Do employees understand what authority they have to make decisions? 2) Does your dairy have a system in place so employees report issues as they arise? 3) Is there an open line of communication between employees and managers? 4) Do employees feel comfortable conveying needs and misunderstandings to rectify a problem? And 5) Are employees told what their specific duties are, and are their roles defined? If "no" was the answer to any of the five questions, Purina Animal Nutrition calf and heifer specialist Christie Underwood says communication could be the issue. She adds that progress can be achieved when protocols are in place, understood and followed and when employees are acknowledged for quality work.

**NO. 1 TRUSTED SOURCE FOR FOOD PRODUCTION INFORMATION: FRIENDS/FAMILY.** That's the findings of a recent Food Think survey conducted by PR firm Sullivan Higdon & Sink. The four next trustworthy sources for food production identified in this study are USDA at 59%, FDA at 57%, medical community at 57% and farmers/ranchers at 53%. With two spots in the Top 5 (friends/family and farmers/ranchers), each of us in agriculture can make inroads by telling our story. There's power in word-of-mouth conversations with non-rural family and friends. Let's all aim to engage, acknowledge people's questions and concerns, share our stories and earn trust. Want help in messaging and gaining confidence? Check out PDPW's Visible Voice program by calling 800-947-7379.

**"VCPR" IS MORE THAN AN ACRONYM.** It's an important tool with tremendous benefits for dairy producers, and allows a non-regulatory approach to continue producing safe meat and milk. While a herd typically has several veterinarians-attending, referral and consulting-the "V" is for the veterinarian who is in charge of oversight-the one who plays the role equal to one's primary care doctor. "C" or "client" is your management team and "P" or "patient," your cowside personnel-both who play vital roles. "R" is for the relationship or effective communication that is an absolute must among your primary care veterinarian, management team and cowside personnel. Five VCPR points to keep top of mind: 1) Drug residue is a symptom; the disease is lack of DRUG VCPR. 2) Drug residues are a people problem, not a drug problem. 3) Drug VCPR includes usage oversight and treatment records. 4) The list of protocols should include the answer to "How you want treatment given in your name, in your absence?" And 5) Oversight involves both Rx and OTC drugs through treatment records.



#### **EVALUATE PLANTS AND OPTIMIZE ALFALFA**

**PRODUCTION.** If you haven't tackled it yet, it's time to evaluate alfalfa stands for condition and yield potential. Dr. Dan Undersander, University of Wisconsin, notes that the earlier a determination is made, the more possibilities you have for remedial action. A stand assessment has three parts: 1) Are individual plants alive? 2) Are plants injured? And 3) Are there thin spots in the field? Assessing if plants are alive can begin as soon as the frost is out of the ground and continue until spring green-up. You can read Undersander's complete article online at <http://hayandforage.com/alfalfa/will-low-midwestern-moisture-levels-hurt-first-cut-hay>. Just click on "Assessing Alfalfa Stand Condition in the Spring" in paragraph 7.

**For your Business Mind...**

**ONLY 2 TO 3 SECONDS-THAT'S ALL IT TAKES** for a person to become helpless in flowing grain. In four to five seconds a person can be trapped, and, after 22 seconds, the person can be completely covered. While it is advised to avoid entering a grain storage bin if at all possible, if you or a worker must enter a bin, lives can be saved by following these rules: 1) Turn off and disconnect, lock out or block-off all powered equipment, including augers used to help move the grain. 2) Do not walk on or "down" grain to make it flow. 3) Use a body harness that has an anchored lifeline or a boatswains chair when entering from a level at or above stored grain. 4) Do not enter without having rescue equipment and a trained observer stationed outside the bin or silo who is in constant contact with you. 5) Test the bin's air to ensure there is enough oxygen and no toxic and/or flammable gases. 6) Do not enter onto or below bridged grain or when grain is built up on sides. 7) Confirm the dairy's issued entry permit that all safety precautions are in place and it is safe to enter.

**WARMER WEATHER = INCREASED VISITORS TO A DAIRY.** And, unfortunately, infectious diseases can be carried by visiting family members, friends and even just-plain-curious individuals wanting to see-or show their kids-dairy cows and calves. Non-dairy visitors usually like to interact with young calves and don't realize that calves are highly susceptible to disease. Yes, it's what they don't know that can be most dangerous to your dairy. To reduce the risk of introducing infectious diseases, consider posting a sign politely requesting visitors to register before they do anything on your dairy and to call a given phone number to receive permission for their visit. Visitors should be required to clean and disinfect their footwear before entering a barn, particularly if they have been on another farm that day. Also keep a record of all visitors.

**WITH JUNE 'DAIRY MONTH' ONLY WEEKS AWAY,** why not ask a local teacher if you can visit his/her class this month and talk about where milks comes from. A PowerPoint presentation is fairly easy to prepare and is an easy way to show school-age children pictures of your cows-from just standing in a stall being contented to being milked-as well as pictures of young calves being fed, milk truck picking up milk, etc. Include information about what cows eat and share lots of photos of family members. Then take their questions. Remember: School-age children are tomorrow's consumers.



**HALF OF ALL EMPLOYEES DO NOT FEEL FREE TO VOICE THEIR OPINIONS OPENLY,** and this lack of openness has negative consequences for employees-and the employer. When employees don't feel free to speak up important problems go undetected, good ideas never surface, relationships between management and employees deteriorate and motivation declines. Research by Dr. Bruce Katcher with Discovery Surveys Inc. shows the four key reasons for employees feeling uncomfortable to voice their opinions openly are fear of retribution, job insecurity, lack of management responsiveness and an uncaring organizational climate. To change the culture, Katcher urges senior management to foster a spirit of openness by asking for opinions, listening carefully and not taking information as criticism. His techniques for getting employees to talk include: 1) Use unconditional positive regard. Try not to rush to evaluate opinions and suggestions. View all of them with a positive outlook. 2) Dummy up. Use the technique made famous by "Columbo" of continually asking questions and telling employees that you "don't understand" or "are confused." 3) Avoid threatening questions like "Who told you to do it that way?" and "Who is responsible?" that will restrict the type of responses you will receive. 4) Use open-ended questions such as "Could you please tell me more about that?" or "How would you handle this problem?" 5) Use restatements. - Simply repeating or paraphrasing what an employee has just said will typically encourage him or her to continue speaking.

**PDPW ADDS AMY BONOMIE AS MANAGER OF PARTNERSHIPS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.** In this newly created role for PDPW, Amy will lead influential programming such as Visible Voice and the Agricultural Professional Partnership (APPs) program and will interact with stakeholders on special industry issues. Amy joins the PDPW team after public relations positions with the Wisconsin Agricultural & Life Sciences Alumni Association and Wisconsin FFA Foundation. She grew up on an 80-head dairy farm in Belleville, Wis., served four years in the

U.S. Navy and graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2009 with a B.A. in communication arts and an emphasis in rhetorical studies. For additional information regarding PDPW programming, or to learn more about Amy's role with PDPW, please contact PDPW at [mail@pdpw.org](mailto:mail@pdpw.org), or by phone at 800-947-7379.

**DON'T WANT TO GIVE CASH AS A GRAD GIFT?** Then consider going a different direction for that niece or nephew, neighbor kid or friend's son or daughter. If the new graduate has a car or is getting one before leaving for college, a gas card of any denomination might be appreciated. If you know the grad's interests, a magazine subscription could be a hit and provide some less intense reading during the school year. Then, of course, there are always board games where students can interact with each other and have fun. Popular board games for young adults are Apples to Apples, Settlers of Catan and Balderdash. Or partner a deck of Uno or another card game with a gas card. Every time the student plays cards or the board game, you might just come to mind.

**BOOK REVIEW: "CONSIDER: HARNESSING THE POWER OF REFLECTIVE THINKING IN YOUR ORGANIZATION."** While technology allows us to act and react more quickly than ever before, many of us are taking increasingly less time to consider our decisions before we make them. Author Daniel Patrick Forrester contends that decision-makers would be ahead if they didn't rush in and instead gave themselves permission to slow down the merry-go-round and not swing into action. Forrester maintains that the more critical the situation, the more important it is to take the time to think about a situation, get clear on context and develop a sense of understanding. The result: you can respond in the best possible manner. Using examples ranging from a new mental model for looking at violence in South Chicago to Wall Street's stressful situation and information provided by General Patreus, this book underscores how much better solutions and outcomes can be if you take the time to process and problem-solve plus get other people involved. He says giving ourselves the mental space for reflection "can mean the difference between total success and total failure."

## PDPW Education Calendar

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|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 20  | World-Class Webinar - Managing the Margins to Make the Money                  |
| June 24 | World-Class Webinar - Seizing Risk Management Opportunities for 2013 and 2014 |

*STAY CONNECTED*



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