

# PDPW MANAGERS memo

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November 13, 2009

Keep reading to see these highlights and more:

- Visit Seattle to improve your business
- Tips to reduce energy use, mold and feed costs which can save you \$\$
- Fun turkey facts

Thanks,  
PDPW

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## For Your Dairy Business:

**SEATTLE, WASH., IS THE PLACE TO BE JAN. 19-21.** Why? Because that's where CEO dairy producers, industry directors, processors, marketers and distributors like yourself—will gather for the 2010 Managers Academy. This executive-level training conference will arm you with the skills to execute more effectively, help people produce more and make your company better and stronger. The Managers Academy includes two days of intense and highly interactive workshops and a day of tours to Pike Place Fish Market, Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery and Werkhoven Dairy Farm. You'll transition from "sizzled and fizzled" to "empowered and energized", and will be ready to address future challenges to ensure sustainable success. Register today and be among the 100 participants at the 2010 Managers Academy in Seattle. For more information or to obtain a registration form, visit [http://pdpw.org/programs\\_events.php?id=19](http://pdpw.org/programs_events.php?id=19) or call 800-947-7379.

**TOP-NOTCH CALF RESEARCHERS AND EXPERTS** will share the latest research results and cutting-edge techniques during three upcoming one-day Calf Care Connection workshops: Tuesday, Dec. 8, Arlington; Wednesday, Dec. 9, Chilton; and Thursday, Dec. 10, Eau Claire. The opening presentation, "Are You an Investor or Saver?", will help producers pinpoint if they are a "saver" whose goal is to reduce expenses and get heifers to the milking herd with as little cost as possible or an "investor" who tries to maximize their calf and heifer program and receive a return on their investments once the heifer starts milking. Other presentations will zero in on vaccination protocol, cutting health costs by following sanitation protocols properly and consistently, and how to strike a good balance between nutrition, calf health and bottom line concerns. In addition to the four general sessions, Calf Care Connection attendees will participate in their choice of two of three learning labs: handling difficult calvings, life-saving techniques and obtaining optimal results from pasteurizers. You can learn more about this workshop and register online at [http://www.pdpw.org/programs\\_events.php?id=25](http://www.pdpw.org/programs_events.php?id=25).

**STOP SHRINK TO EXPAND YOUR DAIRY MARGIN** With feed cost representing the largest single cost center, understanding and zeroing in on factors that result in feed waste or shrink can have a positive impact on a producer's bottom line. Dr. Michael Brouk, extension dairy specialist, Kansas State University, says the factors that can cause forage losses and deserve attention include delivery weight errors, wind, birds, rodents, tires and tracking, tossed feed, silage bunkers, feed moisture loss, mixing errors, scale challenges and water damage. While Dr. Brouk stresses that getting feed shrink to zero or even near zero may not be possible, it is realistic to set a goal of getting forage losses below 10 percent and work toward 5 percent, with purchased concentrates below 5 percent. To read Dr. Brouk's paper in full, visit <http://www.wdmc.org/proceed.htm> and then click on "Don't Let Shrink Kill You with High Feed Prices."

**FINE TUNING AN OPERATION CAN TRIM ENERGY COSTS**, and Dr. Alvaro Garcia, South Dakota extension specialist, and his colleague, SDSU dairy scientist Kenneth Kalscheur, offer these suggestions to save electricity in a dairy: 1) With nearly 24 percent of the electric bill for a dairy farm for lighting, and fluorescent lighting more than four times as efficient as incandescent, switching entirely to fluorescent lighting can reduce the electricity consumed for lighting in a dairy operation to 56 KWH per cow, or close to \$4 annually, compared to an average of 224 KWH per cow, or \$16 annually, for incandescent. 2) Consider using scroll compressors in cooling systems rather than reciprocating compressors. Scroll compressors have fewer moving parts and are more energy efficient, using 20 percent less energy and potentially saving about \$3 per cow per year. 3) Consider pre-cooling milk with a well-water plate cooler, taking advantage of well water that has an average annual temperature in the Midwest of about 55 degrees F. For every 100 cows milked twice a day, the estimated electricity savings would be 4,200 KWH, or about \$294 (\$3 per cow annually) in yearly savings if the average price for electricity is 7 cents per KWH. 4) A variable speed drive to help regulate the rate at which a milking system pumps milk and washes the system will allow pump motors to work at lower speeds much of the time, saving about 60 percent of the cost of running pumps at a fixed speed. For 100 cows milked twice a day, and energy costs of 7 cents per KWH, the estimated savings of 2,040 KWH/year, or \$143, is about \$1.40 per cow per year.

**MOLDS, MYCOTOXINS AND CORN** can spell major challenges, moldy corn is known to reduce bushel weight, corn quality, nutrient content and increase the risk of mycotoxin formation. Dr. Mike Hutjens, University of Illinois extension dairy specialist, says mycotoxins associated with cool, wet conditions include zearalenone, T-2 toxin, umonisin, and deoxynivalenol, also called DON or vomitoxin. "Signs of mycotoxin in dairy cattle include rumen disorders and reduced microbial digestion, loose fecal discharges, reduced dry matter intake, decline in fertility, hormonal-like changes such as udder development and fertility, and immune suppression where cattle do not respond to disease challenges," Dr. Hutjens states. He adds that producers concerned about mold can test their feed, add a mycotoxin binder to help reduce the impact of toxins by lessening their impact in the digestive tract and/or not absorbed and/or add propionic acid at the time of ensiling as this can reduce mold development in wet corn. You can learn more about addressing molds and mycotoxins in corn by visiting [http://www.extension.org/pages/Molds\\_and\\_Mycotoxins\\_Show\\_Up\\_in\\_Corn](http://www.extension.org/pages/Molds_and_Mycotoxins_Show_Up_in_Corn).

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## For Your Business Mind:

**WANTED: PRODUCERS TO SERVE AS MENTORS FOR A DAY** to students taking a short course or pursuing a two-year or four-year degree. Now in its 14<sup>th</sup> year, PDPW's Mentorship Program pairs each producer with a student who wants to move from inside the classroom to a real on-farm experience. Students shadow a producer for a day, asking questions and learning anything and everything a producer is willing to share about his or her dairy business. Past participating students and mentors agree that both parties benefit from the experience. What day is selected for the experience is between the producer-mentor and the student. To learn more about the Mentorship Program or to sign up to become a mentor, contact PDPW intern Darci O'Brien at [dobrien@pdpw.org](mailto:dobrien@pdpw.org) or at 608-412-0821. You can make a difference in a person's life career choice – and it will be good for you too!

**UNDERSTAND COMMODITY MARKETING TOOLS** and learn principles that help you better manage risks in the market place. PDPW offers this popular series with trainer Carl Babler, First Capital Ag. The course covers understanding agricultural commodity markets and marketing; developing an effective market plan; analyzing the market for market activity; understanding and utilizing the futures market, the cash market and the options market; and a hedgers and marketers checklist. The first class—which is free—is set for Tuesday, Dec. 1, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Animart headquarters in Beaver Dam. At the close of the informational session, you can decide if this course is for you and you can sign up for the next six classes. Class size limited to just 30. To learn more visit: [http://pdpw.org/library/event\\_brochures/CommMarketing.pdf](http://pdpw.org/library/event_brochures/CommMarketing.pdf). Please call the PDPW office at 800-947-7379 and let us know you will be attending.

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN ONCE SAID, "WERE IT NOT FOR MY LITTLE JOKES,** I could not bear the burdens of this office." What a wise man he was, as research shows that a good sense of humor and laughter is a powerful mood elevator. Five ways to improve your sense of humor—which can improve employee and family relationships in the process—include: 1) Cultivate an atmosphere of humor and laughter by focusing every now and then on the funny things in life—rather than always focusing on the serious and not-so-great things life—and enjoying the laughter the funny things evoke, even if you're alone. Seriously, there is always something funny that happens each and every day. Smile, laugh and enjoy the moments when funny things occur. 2) Associate with fun-loving people and avoid the downers. 3) Learn to laugh at yourself. It's important to realize that we all make mistakes and, when we do, a good laugh can help make the mistake seem human and more trivial. 4) Collect cartoons and jokes and put them on display for all to see and enjoy. Always avoid racist, sexist and filthy humor as they are counterproductive. 5) See the world through the eyes of a child and remember the world is filled with more good than bad.

**UPGRADING TO WINDOWS 7?** Here are a few do's and don'ts to help determine whether an upgrade makes sense for your business. **DO** find out if all of your software programs will be compatible. **DO** know how to "shake" it. If you like to open multiple programs and then become frustrated having to close them all out to find the one you need, Windows 7 has a "shake" feature that clears your screen from all but one program. **DON'T** hold back from getting the new computers you need. Many Microsoft-approved vendors are selling PCs with the ability to get the upgrade to Windows 7 for free. **DON'T** expect miracles. Ask lots of questions before upgrading your current system!

**ALWAYS BEING RIGHT IS WRONG FOR YOUR HEALTH.** In "*The 100 Simple Secrets of Healthy People—What Scientists Have Learned and How You can Use It*," author Dr. David Niven points out that "thinking yourself always right is neither a helpful social trait nor a sound health habit." Dr. James Coyne, professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, agrees, adding, "Feeling you are always right might seem empowering but it's really mostly isolating. It leads to a tremendous amount of tension." Dr. Coyne notes that tooth decay, ulcers and heart problems can be linked to this very basic ability to get along. Additional research at the University of Bradford, England, found that 62 percent of people with a low tolerance for compromise suffered from high levels of anger and stress that compromised their immune systems.

**YOU CAN KEEP THE THANKSGIVING CONVERSATION FLOWING** when you share these fun turkey and Thanksgiving facts with family and friends. 1) The male turkey got its name "tom" from Benjamin Franklin who named it after Thomas Jefferson when Jefferson would not allow the turkey to be the national bird. 2) The first president to pardon a turkey from Thanksgiving dinner was Truman. 3) Only male turkeys say "gobble, gobble" and only seasonally and when they are going asleep. 4) The original Thanksgiving lasted three days. 5) George Washington proclaimed the first "National Day of Thanksgiving" in 1789 while Abraham Lincoln was the first president to make Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863. 6) A spooked turkey can run 20 mph. 7) A turkey can see 270 degrees of its surroundings without turning its head. 8) Forty-five million turkeys are consumed each Thanksgiving. 9) Turkeys can see in color. 10) Turkeys lived almost 10 million years ago.

**BOOK REVIEW: *THE LEADER'S COMMUNICATION TOOL KIT*.** Author Dr. Becky Stewart-Gross's 90-page, four-chapter book returns to the basics of communication, reminding us that it's the little things that count. Among the most valued items in the book is a chart of tips for communicating with each of the generations in today's workforce as well as reminders about employing the valued skill of listening, the hazards of email and even leaving an effective voicemail message. After discussing a variety of communication modes, the author shares a chart that helps teach readers to methodically analyze each opportunity to communicate and the importance of choosing the right communication tool. The final chapter includes a self-analysis of communication strengths and weaknesses and actions plans to improve communication. One reviewer stated, "Whether this is a first exposure to communication training, or just a review, this short booklet can provide you and your team with the basics, and a plan to build on them."

Why not read the book and then meet the author. Dr. Becky Stewart-Gross will be co-presenting "Sleeping with Your Business Partner" at PDPW's 2010 Annual Business Conference.

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## **PDPW Education Calendar:**

December 1 – **Commodity Marketing Class**, Introduction and Sign-up session, Beaver Dam, WI

December 8,9 &10 – **Calf Care Connection**, Arlington, Chilton, Eau Claire, WI Three – One-day workshops

January 19-21, 2010 – **Managers Academy**, Seattle, Washington

January 20, 2010 – **Masterlink Microsoft Training** (Excel, Word and Outlook), Appleton, WI

March 16-17, 2010 – **PDPW Annual Business Conference**, Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI

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