

PRO-DAIRY – ESSENTIAL TO THE NEW YORK DAIRY INDUSTRY

PRO-DAIRY, a premier applied research and extension program founded more than 20 years ago, is recognized widely for its impact on New York's dairy industry. New York's dairy industry provides a strong foundation to the State's economy and is its largest agricultural industry, generating nearly \$3 billion annually in farm gate revenue and upwards of \$9 billion overall.

PRO-DAIRY specialists are dedicated specifically to the New York dairy industry – PRO-DAIRY programs address timely issues and provide critical capacity to enable New York's dairy industry to remain competitive and viable in an increasingly global dairy marketplace. PRO-DAIRY's contribution to New York's economic engine will be eliminated after March 31, 2011 unless funding is restored in the New York State budget. PRO-DAIRY has no substitute.

PRO-DAIRY IMPACT ON NEW YORK RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- New and expanded growth of New York dairy processing plants (e.g., Great Lakes Cheese, Chobani Yogurt, FAGE yogurt, and numerous smaller processing facilities) will require about 15 percent more milk, equivalent to about 2 billion pounds, to operate profitably. PRO-DAIRY is a critical partner to support growth of New York dairies to meet the increased demand for milk. New York dairies will miss a huge economic development opportunity if processors must import this additional milk from other states. Increasing milk production from New York farms to supply this growth in processing could produce over 3,400 jobs on New York dairies, their supporting businesses and rural communities.
- PRO-DAIRY specialists work with dairy farmers, agribusiness professionals, and extension educators across the state to improve dairy farm profitability and meet business and personal goals. Over the past six years 116 farms that participated continuously in the Dairy Farm Business Summary and Analysis project reinvested a total of \$214,753,816, an average of \$1,851,326 per farm. The majority of this investment stays local and supports contractors, supply, and equipment businesses located across rural New York.
- More than 600 New York dairy farm owners and employees, representing nearly 200,000 cows (one-third of all cows in New York), participate in 45 Dairy Discussion groups conceived, developed, and implemented by a partnership of PRO-DAIRY and the New York Farm Viability Institute. 86% report participation resulted in beneficial changes to their businesses.

PRO-DAIRY IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

- PRO-DAIRY specialists provide statewide leadership for educational programs focused on improving environmental stewardship of New York dairies, resulting in significantly decreased environmental impacts on the State's natural resources. PRO-DAIRY specialists provide key input to inform policy decisions by DAM, NRCS, NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee, DEC, and EPA regarding nutrient management, CAFO, and environmental regulations that affect New York farms. Most recently, PRO-DAIRY specialists made critical contributions that significantly changed the direction of EPA's regulatory intentions for parts of 18 New York counties in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. This effort maintained protection for the environment, while saving farms approximately \$100 million in the cost of compliance.
- Nutrient management research and outreach initiated by PRO-DAIRY, and delivered with the assistance of key partners, helped New York producers save nearly \$50 million dollars in phosphorus fertilizer expenses between 2000 and 2006.
- PRO-DAIRY specialists are key drivers of efforts by NYSERDA, USDA and industry partners to speed adoption of on-farm renewable energy production. Implementation of anaerobic digesters of manure on farms enable dairies to reduce or eliminate their reliance on outside electricity and make a net contribution to electricity supply on the grid, reduce their odor footprint, and decrease greenhouse gas emissions. Use of this technology on dairies also contributes to the State's renewable energy goals.

PRO-DAIRY IMPACT ON FUTURE LEADERS OF NEW YORK AGRICULTURE

- PRO-DAIRY's Junior DAIRY LEADER program is the premier professional development program for youth aged 16 to 19, and is the only one of its kind in the country. This program has introduced over 250 youth to career opportunities in the dairy industry and is an important conduit to attract new youth to careers in agriculture. Participants meet progressive, profitable business people with diverse management styles, preparing them for employment as managers, technicians and other agriservice professionals.
- Recent survey data indicates: 98% of the graduates continued their education after high school, 96% said this program influenced their career decisions, and 44% of participants who were planning to pursue careers other than agriculture changed their mind.

PRO-DAIRY RETURN ON NEW YORK'S INVESTMENT

- PRO-DAIRY's ability to reach the farm-level audience creates a multiplier that increases impact and effectiveness of other programs. Following participation in the PRO-DAIRY Winter Management Series of programs, the New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program (NYSCHAP) saw a 30% increase in Animal Welfare Certified herds, and significant growth in dairy producer interest in the program. Quality Milk Production Services (QMPS) saw 23% more dairy farms participate in its bulk tank surveillance program for pathogens. PRO-DAIRY frequently features NYSCHAP and QMPS in "The Manager" section in Eastern DairyBusiness magazine, which is delivered to all New York dairy producers and 12,000 additional dairies in 31 other states.
- PRO-DAIRY specialists have a track record of success, and are awarded more than \$2.3 million annually in grants to support outreach and applied research programs from federal and other competitive sources.

