



For Immediate Release
Sept. 23, 2008

Contact: Jayne Sebright, 717-259-6496
c-jsebrigh@state.pa.us

FACILITATORS NEEDED FOR DAIRY PROFIT TEAM PROGRAMS

HARRISBURG – The Pennsylvania Dairy Task Force is seeking facilitators to manage and lead discussions with the state’s dairy profit teams.

More than 130 active teams are in place throughout Pennsylvania, but additional facilitators are needed for support as more farms establish dairy profit, target or succession planning teams.

“The facilitator plays a key role in the success of a profit team,” said John Frey, executive director for the center. “They bring a much-needed level of accountability to keep the team focused on meeting its objectives and helping the farm improve its profitability.”

Currently, individuals serving as facilitators on one or more of the 130 active teams come from dairy sales organizations, artificial insemination companies, banking institutions, private veterinary practices and cooperative extension. Dairy business planning consultants and agricultural advisors can also serve as team facilitators. Some profit teams have facilitators from outside the dairy industry.

The facilitator’s role on the team is to coordinate the meetings, plan the agendas and keep team members on task. All facilitators are encouraged to participate in facilitator training provided by Penn State Dairy Alliance to help them better understand their role.

Any dairy farm in Pennsylvania is eligible to enroll in the profit team program, with three options available for using the team concept: traditional dairy profit teams assess the entire business and take a whole-farm approach to improving farm profitability; target profit teams focus on a specific



bottleneck or initiative to improve profitability within a set timeline; and succession planning teams benefit farm owners who plan to transition the business within the next five to 10 years.

New farms enrolling in programs are eligible to receive up to \$3,500 in funding to offset the cost of paid team members and discovery-related testing and analysis. Profit teams established prior to Nov. 1, 2007, can receive \$3,000. Additional support, including a start-up workshop and other resources from the center, is also provided through the program.

The Pennsylvania Center for Farm Transitions will offer additional help and expertise to those farms establishing succession planning teams.

Participating profit team farms can also enlist the services of a practical dairy advisor—a seasoned dairy producer assigned by the center to add insight and experience to the team discussion. They also have access to the Profitability Assessment Dairy Tool, developed by Penn State Dairy Extension, to identify specific bottlenecks in the operation.

Industry professionals interested in serving as team facilitators through the Center for Dairy Excellence should contact Heather Hostetter, project manager, at 717-346-0849, or [c-
hhostett@state.pa.us](mailto:hhostett@state.pa.us).

Producers can also contact Hostetter if interested in enrolling in the profit team program. More information about the Dairy Profit Team Program can be found at www.centerfordairyexcellence.org. Click on “Producer” and “Learn about Profit Teams.”

###

The Center for Dairy Excellence is an initiative of the Department of Agriculture and was launched in January 2004 by Governor Edward G. Rendell. Bringing together people from more than 40 different dairy organizations in Pennsylvania, the Center’s mission is to enhance the profitability of the dairy industry by empowering people, creating partnerships, and increasing the availability and use of resources. Learn more about the Center at www.centerfordairyexcellence.org.