

PDPW MANAGERS memo

January 14, 2010

Keep reading to see these highlights and more:

- New Webinar series featuring Dr. Donald J. Jonovic.
 - Water your calves and watch them grow!
 - Business Conference is March 15-16, 2011.
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Featured PDPW Member: Hidden Valley Dairy – Byron & Jennifer Krueger

Byron Krueger and his wife, Jennifer, operate Hidden Valley Dairy in Melrose, Wis. Byron's been dairying full-time since age 18, when he took over the farm from his siblings. Hidden Valley Dairy has five employees: one herdsman, one person managing feed and three people milking the herd of about 400 cows, mostly Holsteins, with some Brown Swiss and crossbred Jerseys. The dairy is spread over two farms. Jennifer manages the calves at the home dairy, which has a stanchion barn and robotic calf feeder.

Byron and Jennifer breed all of their own heifers and raise bull calves, selling them out as feeders. They farm 550 acres of corn and grow a good share of their hay, about 250 acres. Fifty acres or so of oats go to the calves and dry cows. Five miles down the road at their Hidden Valley Dairy operation, where staff works, they have two freshening setups and two parlors. One parlor is for special-needs cows, the other is a double-8 herringbone.

While he appreciates the workshops and meetings organized by PDPW, Byron says PDPW has more value: "The meetings and workshops are great for just getting together with other farmers and talking. We meet and go away with ideas just from talking to each other. I think whenever you can get farmers together you've got some power. PDPW brings us together. Having PDPW gives all of us added strength."

For Your Dairy Business:

MARCH 15-16, MADISON. That's the dates and place to be if you're in the dairy business. The event: the 2011 PDPW Business Conference, "Pathways to Profit." This year's conference includes keynote addresses by Stephen M.R. Covey about trust and its role in today's business culture; Dr. Mike Boehlje who will provide key directions and indicators for future dairy profit; and a top-secret wrap-up-the-conference keynote presenter who will touch and inspire and help us discover more "Pathways to Profit" as well as joy in our professional and personal endeavors. In addition to the keynote addresses and one general session about animal welfare, you'll have your choice of 15 specialty sessions plus the Hall of Ideas Trade Show. Then, of course, there's the interaction with fellow dairy producers and industry partners, plus entertainment and . . . To learn more about the 2011 PDPW Business Conference or to register, [click here](#).

THE NEXT SERIES OF WORLD-CLASS WEBINARS is set for Feb. 28, March 21 and April 18. All webinars are again on a Monday, start at noon CST and last for 60 minutes. Leading the upcoming three webinars will be Dr. Donald Jonovic, Family Business Management Services.

The Feb. 28 World-Class Webinar, "Compensation: Why Pay is a Critical Business Strategy," will take a look at how family farm operations often confuse compensation for performance with return for an owner's investment," often causing "stress, tension and dysfunctions in farm partnerships." Other items on the table for discussion during the Feb. 28 webinar include why it is critically important to differentiate pay from return, both in theory and in practice, and practical pay strategies that both motivate and reward desired performance.

Dr. Jonovic will also address the significance of return on investment and its importance as a strategic tool for assuring farm survival, growth, continuity and successful transition of ownership in families where not all heirs intend to be farmers. Individuals wishing to participate in the Monday, Feb. 28, webinar must register by Wednesday, Feb. 23. Registration cost for PDPW members is \$75/webinar or \$200 for the series of three webinars. Registration cost for non-PDPW members is \$110/webinar or \$300 for the series of three webinars. Cost is based on per computer, so you can gather as many people as you wish around one computer for one registration fee.

SHORT-SIGHTED COST CUTTING. That's the term Jeff Reneau, Professor of Dairy Management, University of Minnesota, uses when he talks about certain cost-control moves dairy producers often take that can compromise animal health and well-being or milk quality. Here are four cost-control moves that Reneau deem as "penny wise but dollar foolish" to make:

1) Reduce bedding use or stall/alley cleaning compromising cow hygiene and comfort – A study has shown that each change in hygiene score (scale of 1 to 5) resulted in a 50,000 change in BTSCC in Minnesota herds whose mastitis problems originated from environmental pathogens. 2) Drop DHI SCC testing – Individual cow SCC testing helps solve herd SCC problems. 3) Shortchange milking equipment clean-up – Skimping on the amount of cleaners used, turning down the water heater temperature, or turning up the bulk tank cooling temperature is a sure way to drive up milk bacteria counts that can have a detrimental effect on milk quality. Since SCC premiums are tied to bacteria counts even if you do succeed in achieving low SCC, high bacteria counts could deprive you of your premium. 4) Drop regular milking equipment maintenance – Sub-par milking equipment function or stretching rubberware replacement time beyond recommendations will likely result in more mastitis and bacteria problems.

BABY CALVES NEED WATER. Research by Donna Amaral-Phillips, University of Kentucky, shows that, starting at four days of age, baby calves should be fed free-choice water along with their calf starter, as this will increase starter intake and weight gain. In a research study, depriving calves of drinking water decreased starter intake by 31% and decreased weight gain by 38% over those calves provided water free-choice. Amaral-Phillips explains that free-choice water along with a high-quality calf starter helps develop the rumen so that the calf can digest forages. When calves are fed milk, she said milk does not enter the rumen but rather the calf's true stomach or abomasum. Thus, milk or water added to the milk will not provide a moist environment for the bacteria to grow in the rumen.

HANDY, INFORMATIVE WEBSITE. UW-Extension dairy nutritionists Dr. Randy Shaver and Pat Hoffman maintain a Dairy Cattle Nutrition website jam-packed with current research summaries, spreadsheets, publications, etc. The Dairy Cattle Nutrition UW-Extension site "is designed to provide research-based information for the public seeking resources on applied aspects of the nutrition of dairy cattle." To hear both Dr. Shaver and Pat Hoffman "live," check out their specialty sessions at the 2011 PDPW Business Conference, March 15-16, Madison. Dr. Shaver will team with Paul Dyk on Wednesday, March 16, to present "Managing Dairy Rations with High Grain Prices" and will walk you through choices that can save you big dollars while maintaining production and cow health. They will highlight on-farm survey benchmarks comparing feed costs on dairies and share ideas on shaving costs, an improved perspective on your dairy's competitiveness and insight regarding margins and pricey corn. In his Wednesday morning "Taking the Bite Out of Heifer Raising" presentation, Pat Hoffman will help you find the keys to growing heifers that will be profitable cows and reducing the amount of manure they make while simultaneously trimming feeding costs. He'll translate field trials, cost analysis and growing trials into commonsense steps valuable in today's economy.

OOPS! DOWN YOU GO. To help avoid winter-related slips, trips and falls, Anna Meyerhoff, Farm Safety Educator at the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine & Health, advises taking your time and paying close attention to where you are going. She also reminds us that “mud can be just as slippery as ice and slush!” Her simple steps you can take to help avoid injury include: be especially careful when carrying large or heavy objects that obstruct vision, keep sand and salt handy and use regularly to help keep walkways clear of ice, wear footwear with a good non-slip tread and be careful when working with animals that might slip and fall and injure you. She also suggests that we clean ice off steps and platforms and keep them clean and dry to avoid ice buildup, be extremely cautious when climbing on and off of tractors and machinery, ensure adequate lighting for outdoor areas and use railings on steps and walkways. Her final reminder: Allow extra time for chores and don't rush or run. If you work with migrants or Hispanic laborers, she says, “Keep in mind that they may not be familiar with winter weather, and be sure to talk with them about hazards and safe practices.”

For Your Business Mind:

JOIN FELLOW PRODUCERS, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS ON THURSDAY, FEB. 24, for an Agriculture Community Engagement (ACE) educational seminar, “Finding Environmental & Community Harmony,” in Wisconsin Dells. The one-day seminar is the ideal place to engage, educate and inform so agriculture and local communities can co-exist and thrive. The Feb. 24 seminar will feature four presentations: Dennis Frame, Discovery Farm co-director, “The Karst Report: What are the Results and What They Mean for Wisconsin Dairies”; Erich Straub, “Immigration: How Did We Get Here and What it Means for Our Dairy Industry”; Kevin Erb, UW extension specialist, “The Call to Build and Protect Better Wisconsin Roads: How Agriculture Can Play Its Part”; and dairy producers Jim Kruger and Linda Hodorff, “Thoughts from the Farm” where they will share challenges and concerns of relevance to local officials. Registration of \$40/person covers the seminar, lunch and workshop materials. To learn more visit: http://www.pdpw.org/programs_events.php?id=34.

GIVING CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE. That's what Cami Walker, a 35-year-old with multiple sclerosis discovered—and what others are finding out as well. After Cami began walking with a cane and staying at home for days at a time, she opted to follow a friend's advice to give away 29 gifts in 29 days. After just one day of gift-giving, she reported being happier and more energetic—and said her health continued to improve with each gift. If you want to try this out, Cami Walker says “gifts can be anything offered to anyone.” Her list includes reading a book to a child, making dinner, volunteering or passing on things you're not using. “A gift isn't just something wrapped in a box,” she notes. A gift can be your time, your involvement.

PATTY ENDRES LEAVES A POWERFUL LEGACY. PDPW board member Patty Endres, Lodi, passed away on Thursday, Dec. 30, 2010, at a Madison Hospital. While the hearts of many are left empty with her passing, PDPW is keenly aware of the legacy this amazing lady left behind. From her role as mother and spouse to her work in the area of organ transplants to involvement in agriculture, the dairy industry and PDPW, Patty gave back enthusiastically. “A heart transplant recipient nine years ago, Patty understood that each day is a gift and set out to make a difference with each of those days, and PDPW definitely benefitted from her input and passion,” states Eric Hillan, PDPW president. “Our hearts go out to her husband Dave and their three children: Mitchell, Sydney and Vince.” Individuals wishing to make a memorial contribution may send it to Patty's family, in care of Dave Endres at W9402 County Road K, Lodi, WI 53555. Patty's family said the best options for memorials will be weighed before selecting the memorial that Patty would have wanted the most.

PDPW Education Calendar:

January 18-20, 2011 **Managers Academy**, Albuquerque, NM
February 24, 2011 **Agriculture Community Engagement (ACE) Education Seminar**, Wisconsin Dells, WI
March 15-16, 2011 **PDPW Business Conference**, Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI
April 20 & 21, 2011 **Hoof Care Sessions**, Marshfield, Chilton, WI – Two One-day workshops

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