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North Valley Dairy Day

January 31, 2006

10:00 a.m.

Kountry Kitchen

729 Fourth Street, Orland

Now is the time to call in and make your reservations for the 14th Annual North Valley Dairy Day. The meeting will be held Tuesday, January 31, 2006, at the Kountry Kitchen Restaurant, 729 Fourth Street, in Orland. This meeting is co-sponsored by the University of California and dairy allied industry. It is free of charge, open to the public, and includes an industry-sponsored lunch. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., and the program runs from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

One of the topics on the program for 2006 is organic milk production. Our guest speaker will be Jon Bansen of Double J Jerseys of Monmouth, Oregon. Double J Jerseys have 230 cows of which about 200 are milking at any one time. They pasture on 105 acres for the milk cows and have an additional 220 young stock on another 200 acres of pasture. All of the milk cow pasture is irrigated and 55 acres of the heifer ground has irrigation. Jon and his wife Juli started the dairy in 1991 and converted to organic production in 1999. Jon is a third generation dairyman whose grandfather started dairying in Ferndale. Jon is a member of Organic Valley Cooperative and will talk about his experiences as an organic dairy producer.

Other topics tentatively scheduled for the program include organic alfalfa production, the national Johne's eradication program, the national ID program, and a statewide survey of the mineral profiles for California feeds. I will also present a brief overview of the dairy industry in Kenya and some of the challenges faced in the Kenyan dairy sector.

This meeting is free of charge and open to the public. Please call the Glenn County Extension Office after January 2nd at (530) 865-1107 to make your seating and luncheon reservation or if you need more information or help with wheelchair accessibility. Call early, as space is limited.



Voluntary Johne's Disease Control Program Provides Free Diagnostic Testing for California Herds and Funding for Education, Risk Assessment and Herd Management

Michael Payne, DVM, PhD

Johne's Disease (Paratuberculosis) is known as a silent killer of cows and profits on the dairy farm. What many California producers don't know, however, is that the state has a voluntary program that provides funding for education, management and even testing for Johne's Disease – and it's free.

It is estimated that up to 22 percent of all dairy herds in the US have at least 10% of the herd infected with Johne's Disease – at a cost of anywhere from \$75 to upwards of \$180 per cow. About 10 years ago, the federal government recognized the need to address Johne's Disease and implemented a strategic plan to reduce the prevalence of Johne's in US herds. The California Voluntary Johne's Disease Control Program (CVJDPC) grew out of that effort and provides funding for producer participation. "This program provides valuable information to the dairy producer. Through education and development of a herd management plan, a producer can greatly reduce the risk of Johne's Disease as well as other costly diseases," said Dr. Richard E. Breitmeyer, California State Veterinarian, Department of Food and Agriculture. "I really encourage all dairy producers in California to take advantage of the federal funding that is now available to assist with this important program."

Controlling Johne's Disease on the dairy has numerous benefits. Beyond reducing the potential for infection, taking steps for Johne's Disease mitigation and management also helps reduce common GI disease transmission on the farm for pathogens such as Salmonella, E. coli, cryptosporidia, and rota and corona viruses.

The California Voluntary Johne's Disease Program is made up of three components: Education (Phase I), Management (Phase II), and Herd Testing and Classification (Phase III). Producers can complete any of the three phases but must complete Phases I and II to qualify for free diagnostic testing. All phases are voluntary. According to Dr. David Ewey of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) who, along with Dr. Randy Anderson, serves as a statewide Johne's Disease Coordinator, the program is easy to follow, with guidance from a certified veterinarian leading producers through each phase.

Education is the first step (Phase I). Producers contact a certified Johne's veterinarian who will take them through a free training presentation, which consists of an orientation to the basic biology and transmission of Johne's Disease, clinical signs, control and prevention practices. The dairyman then receives an education certificate and can move to the next step. Following this training, the producer will work with a certified vet to perform a Herd Risk Assessment and will develop a Herd Management Plan (Phase II). The risk assessment entails a comprehensive evaluation of the animals, facilities and management practices on the dairy with a specific focus on identifying areas of vulnerability to Johne's Disease introduction or transmission. Working with the vet, the producer will put together a plan for the management practices that will be implemented on the dairy to mitigate identified risks. The CVJDPC provides a detailed workbook that guides veterinarians and producers in completing this plan, which is then submitted to Drs. Ewey or Anderson.

"These management plans are focused on realistic practices, agreed to by the producer, that they can implement and will address the specific goals identified in the risk assessment," said Ewey, who is a Veterinary Medical Officer for the USDA. "Working with certified veterinarians is key because they can identify the steps necessary to each unique dairy and its situation."



After the plan has been reviewed, the producer receives a certificate for having completed the second phase and qualifies for subsidized (free) herd testing. Subsidized testing typically involves sampling either a subset of the herd (10% of the herd or 60 head over 2 years of age, whichever is higher) or the whole herd with a screening test (ELISA blood test). Free fecal testing can be performed to confirm disease status in any cow that tests suspicious or positive on the screening ELISA. Testing results are confidential.

Taking a step further, a producer can enter Phase III, which involves classification of the herd as positive or negative for the existence of Johne's Disease. For Phase III a producer must either test a subset of the herd (as described above), the whole herd, or have environmental sampling, which involves sampling fecal areas of the farm, done. Once this is complete, the herd is classified as either Positive or Negative. Advancement to Phase III is voluntary and a producer's decision – a CVJDCP certified veterinarian can provide details on requirements associated with this phase of the program. Classification status really comes into play on a national level with people looking to purchase replacement cows where a low risk certification can be used as a marketing tool. For dairyman and cheesemaker John Fiscalini – who serves as co-chair of the Johne's Advisory Group and has completed all three phases of the program – it is a win-only proposition. In taking steps for Johne's Disease mitigation and management, he also is helping to reduce other diseases that are transmitted via the oral-fecal route that affect herd health, and in the long run, the bottom line. "It makes good overall sense to participate in this program because it provides for positive on-farm practices that benefit far beyond Johne's control and prevention," said Fiscalini. "With a mitigation plan in place, I have reduced the risk of exposure and infection by calves while also reducing the risk of other diseases. Being proactive about implementing good management practices increases the health of my entire herd." The producer-driven CVJDCP is voluntary and dairymen can choose their level of involvement. Funding, however, will unlikely last forever. Interested producers can contact certified veterinarians directly – a list is available on the CDFA Web site at www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/ah/johnes_info.htm or on the California Dairy Quality Assurance Program (CDQAP) Web site at www.cdqa.org/johnesdiseasecontrol - or they can call their area CDFA District Office (see phone numbers below) for details. Currently 180 California veterinarians are certified to provide these services. "The program takes producers step-by-step through the process and provides funding to offset expenses," said Dr. Anderson. "We encourage all California dairy producers to take advantage of this opportunity while it is available."

CDFA Animal Health Branch Offices:

Sacramento (HQ) (916) 654-1447

Modesto (209) 491-9350

Ontario (909) 947-4462

Redding (530) 225-2140

Tulare (559) 685-3500

Glenn County Dairy Element Adopted

After several years of work in its development, the Dairy Element for the Glenn County General Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors at their December 6th meeting. Adoption of the element creates a process for dairies and other confined livestock facilities to go through a comprehensive environmental review prior to construction of new facilities or expansion of existing facilities. The county-wide Environmental Impact Review may save individual facilities some time and expense in the individual facility review. For more information, contact the Glenn County Planning and Public Works Agency at 530-934-6540.

DHIA Data For November 2005

November DHIA Averages for N. Sacramento Valley Herds

| Rolling Herd Average | BREED | | | | Overall Average |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|----------|--------|-------|-----------------|
| | Brown Swiss | Holstein | Jersey | Other | |
| # of Cows | 47 | 430 | 377 | 403 | 386 |
| Lbs Milk | 20378 | 21280 | 15819 | 18850 | 19069 |
| % Fat | 3.8 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 4.1 | 3.9 |
| Lbs fat | 778 | 782 | 717 | 749 | 740 |
| % Protein | 3.4 | 2.8 | 3.6 | 3.2 | 3.1 |
| Lbs Protein | 684 | 624 | 566 | 595 | 591 |
| Somatic Cell Count (1,000) | 394 | 346 | 265 | 305 | 334 |
| % Cull | 42 | 28 | 30 | 29 | 29 |
| Calving Interval | 15.2 | 14.4 | 13.5 | 13.9 | 14.1 |
| Average Services /Conception | 6 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Percent Conception at first service | 9 | 33 | 39 | 44 | 35 |
| Average days open | 181 | 159 | 134 | 170 | 153 |
| Average days in milk at 1st service | 65 | 78 | 71 | 97 | 77 |

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