

DAIRY PRODUCTION SYSTEMS THE MOOSLETTER

June 2007

FPPC Tours DPS as Part of Annual Summit

Carrie Pedreiro

Farm Pilot Project Coordination, Inc. (FPPC) held its 3rd Annual Technology Summit May 9-11 in St. Petersburg, Florida. FPPC is a non-profit organization designed by Congress whose mission is to assist in the implementation of innovative technologies to improve the handling of waste associated with animal feeding operations (AFOs). FPPC is focused on "conservation, development and wise use of land, water, and related sources, while providing



Don't adjust your eyes! The orange haze you see in the photos was due to the Florida wildfires burning close to DPS.

AFOs with opportunities for profitable operation" (www.fppcinc.org).

David Sumrall attended this year's summit which was centered on exploring the economics related to the viability of nutrient management systems. The summit included updates from FPPC project managers on selected projects nationwide. A portion of the recent renovations to the waste water

system at Dairy Production Systems – Branford Farm is a FPPC pilot project. FPPC provided grant funds to support the instal-

lation of a waste water treatment plant designed to remove a high percentage of the nitrogen (N) and phosphorous (P) from the liquid waste stream of the operation. This process gives DPS the ability to further regulate levels of N and P in the effluent that is used to water crops for forages grown and fed to the dairy herd on site. This plant is one piece of the compre-

hensive waste system undertaken by the DPS-Branford location. Additional funding was provided through Florida



Tour members came up close and personal to the waste water system at DPS - Branford Farm.

Pfizer, UF, and DPS Meet

Carrie Pedreiro

Sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health and in cooperation with the University of Florida, Dairy Production Systems held a manager's meeting May 29 on the UF campus at the facilities of the Food Animal Reproductive Medicine Services (FARMS) team. The meeting was organized to discuss various dairy research projects that are ongoing at DPS which



Meeting attendees included DPS, Pfizer, and UF staff members.

are supervised by UF, along with a review of milk quality, reproductive performance, and youngstock programs on all DPS locations.

In an effort to continue to improve all areas of cow health, PCDART herd records were analyzed through the use of Pfizer's "Dairy Wellness Program Manager" program, led by Dr. Bradley Mills, Pfizer Technical

Services Veterinarian. A detailed discussion of all the parameters was held by the group and suggestions were made to push current performance levels even higher. The DPS Senior Management Team was updated on trials conducted by UF including projects related to Spectramast™, timed artificial insemination (TAI), and the effects of gossypol on bull fertility by

(See "Changes" on page 4)

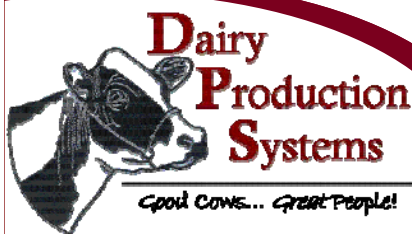
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and the project is a cooperative effort between these agencies in conjunction with the direct investment made by DPS.

FPPC Summit participants traveled from St. Petersburg on May 10 to tour the

(See "FPPC" on page 2)

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President's Ponderings



David P. Sumrall

I have a little framed verse hanging on my office wall that says "No snowflake in an avalanche ever feels responsible." My wife found this somewhere many years ago and presented it to me as a monument to my dogmatic belief that details are important and that precision is not only a worthy goal, but a necessary component of success. All right, I admit it may seem a little strange to be talking about snowflakes in June, especially in Florida, but bear with me a few minutes.

Gradually, and over time since the inception of our little company and the development of our senior management team, I have found myself with the ability to actually spend some quality time doing nothing more than observing our people and studying things that happen in our day-to-day activities. I have become more intrigued and fascinated with the brief glimpses of reality that I am able to glean from those observations. "Reality" is a key word here. When in the course of deep pondering, one must be sure that he or she is dealing with the real thing.

My Dad had a favorite saying as I was growing up that he always used when some concept finally dawned on me. He'd say, "Sonny boy, you learn slow, but you learn good." I must confess that he knew me well. It took me a long time to figure out that we are not (necessarily) what we say, but what we do. Words are cheap, as they say, but actions speak louder than words.

When things get out of kilter with something we are trying to do in our organization, I am always anxious to get to the root of the issue and find out where the first footprint fell outside the yellow-bricked road. It is only in that kind of research that we can engineer a more precise way to go forward and inoculate ourselves from the same mistake in the future. What one can learn in this kind of honest reflection can be liberating, but I have learned over the years that not everyone wants to be "liberated".

I talk a lot around here about how we need to make sure that we are dealing with real problems and not just circumstances. There is a difference. For example, my truck running out of gas may really seem like a problem when it happens, but it is really only a symptom of a problem. The real problem is that I failed to be attentive enough to detail to stop and get gas when it was appropriate to do so. The trick (and sometimes painful part) is to deal in reality. The reality is that I did

not do the right thing and get gas. That is all. There is no one else to blame, no real good excuse that works. Just a dead truck. And so it is with every detail of every chore that every one of us does every day.

Keeping with my empty gas tank example, it matters not how much I have talked about not running out of gas. Because I didn't do the right thing at the right time, I am on the side of the road, mad at the world, late for a meeting, and my day is disintegrating right before my very eyes. All because of a silly little detail like getting gas.

When we are struggling with getting the right results because of less-than-precise execution, the real problem when traced to its origin is the same. And it gets even more complicated when multiple people are involved in a process, each with their own set of details that require precise attention. An oversight here, a mistake there, an outright omission or two, and you have the beginnings of a messy set of circumstances, to deal with. Sort of like an avalanche. And it all started with just one little detail starving for attention.

Over the years, I have drawn a different lesson from that little verse my wife gave me which is almost its converse. (Perhaps that is what she intended?) It is very simply this. I am responsible for what happens to me and for the results I produce. No one else is, and no one else should be. Because I am responsible, I must and **choose** to do the right thing, at the right time, and in the right way.

As one "snowflake" to another, I am committed to seeing that there will be no avalanche around here. How about you? 🐾

FPPC

(Continued from page 1)

facilities and explore how this newly-designed waste system is improving the way waste is handled on the dairy, and its benefits to the environment over conventional methods of handling waste.

"We are very fortunate to have partnered with FPPC and FDACS for this project. Even though we are still early in the information collection and documentation phase, the early numbers look very good and have tremendous potential impact on how DPS will manage our operational waste streams not only here in Florida, but in our other locations around the Southeast as well," said Sumrall. "Our goal is to not only protect the environment, but to enhance it by turning what has conventionally been viewed as a problem into an opportunity. This comprehensive approach holds much promise to that end." 🐾

Protocol POP Quiz

Brought to you by Dr. Tim McComb

Bull Management

- Keeping a young population of bulls (<1 year in service) is important in order to:
 - Minimize risk of aggressive behavior
 - Minimize risk of poor fertility
 - Minimize risk of venereal diseases
 - A & C
- All bulls are to be identified with the following:
 - Two plastic tags
 - Two plastic tags and two metal tags
 - Two plastic tags, two metal tags, and a "date entered herd" tag
 - All of the above plus entry into PCDart
- The bull population requires daily surveillance for the following:
 - Venereal diseases
 - Lameness or injuries
 - Proper pen assignments and ratios
 - B & C
- The purpose of a complete breeding soundness exam is:
 - Screen for venereal diseases
 - Minimize risk of poor fertility
 - Identify physical abnormalities that would hinder successful breeding (i.e. testicular abnormalities, blindness, lameness, etc.)
 - All of the above
- In order for bull management to be successful, it is important to:
 - Retest all deferred bulls in a timely manner
 - Make decisions based on "gut feelings" only
 - Remove all unsatisfactory breeders from service
 - A & C

Answers on Page 4.

Gallardo Named FL Division Manager



Carrie Pedreiro

Effective May 15, Arnel Gallardo has been named General Manager, DPS – Florida Division. Arnel was hired in January as the General Manager of DPS – Bell Farm. Arnel’s responsibilities have now expanded to include both Florida farms, encompassing the milking operations, the dry herd, and replacement operation from birth to four months. 🐄

Waste System Operator Certified in GA

The state of Georgia held its Animal Waste System Operator certification training meeting in Macon, Georgia, May 15-16. The two-day seminar was held at the Georgia Farm Bureau office and was organized by the University of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

In attendance for Dairy Production Systems were Roberto Tovar, Warren Lawrence, Jeff Reed and Michael Pedreiro. It is required by the state of Georgia that all Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) have at least one person certified as an Animal Waste System Operator.

Speakers included Tommy Bass, UGA extension, Dr. Mark Risse, Department of Biological and Ag Engineering, and

Vernon Jones, Georgia Department of Agriculture. Topics included soil, manure and monitoring wells analysis, manure storage and handling, nutrient budgeting and application, record keeping, and management of cattle mortalities.

After nearly a day and a half of discussion a 50 question exam was passed out to all in attendance and a score of 70% or better was needed to receive certification from the state.

“It was a good opportunity for us to hear about the specific requirements that the state of Georgia has for CAFO’s and how that may differ from the states in which our other operations are located,” said Michael Pedreiro, EVP & COO of DPS. 🐄

Dr. Tim’s Tip

Dr. Tim McComb

Last month’s discussion covered the impact of post calving uterine health on fertility later in lactation. Setting the stage for proper uterine health in early lactation, however, begins at calving. Recognizing the onset of calving, the signs of calving difficulty and responding in a timely and appropriate manner are essential for a successful lactation.

A cow that experiences calving difficulty (also referred to as “dystocia”) is more likely to have retained fetal membranes, uterine infection, and other early lactation diseases, and is more likely to produce a dead calf. Often, when appropriate attention is given to the calving process, the level of difficulty calving can be reduced, allowing the cow greater chance for a successful lactation. The challenge therefore, is determining when assistance is required and when it is not.

As the due date approaches, the vulva and udder will appear swollen in preparation for passing and feeding the calf. When a cow is ready to calve she may separate herself from the rest of the herd. Discharge on the tail or udder is a sign that the cervix is open as well, although it may not be dilated enough to pass the calf. The time should be noted to monitor for appropriate progress allowing a mature cow 1-2 hours for the entire calving process, while heifers may take a little longer lasting 2-3 hours. Visible progress should be noted every 45 minutes in a normal situation.

Some signs that a cow is need of assistance include, increased restlessness (repeatedly laying down and getting back up, circling behavior, walking fencelines), signs that the cow is straining (tail raised and pushing) without progress, or signs that cow has given up. If the calf is visible, some signs that it is distressed include a swollen tongue and head, and brown staining of the hair.

If intervention is deemed necessary three key ingredients are patience, proper technique and plenty of lubrication. Early identification of calving difficulty will benefit both cow and calf. For tips on calving assistance, see the protocol quiz from February 2007.

safety SPOT

Heat Stress

Rick Hedrick

It is the time of year where we must pay close attention to our fellow employees and our cows to make sure they are not getting overheated. Keep these tips in mind to ensure a safe summer.

- Make sure you drink plenty of water all day
- Wear a hat and sunscreen
- Check to make sure the fans and misters are all working and there are no cows in distress
- Look out for each other!

If you observe anything wrong, let your supervisor know immediately.

Quality

→ CORN

Rick Hedrick

DPS hangs its hat on producing the best quality milk possible. We take good care of our cows, not only because healthy cows make more milk, but because it’s the right thing to do. Quality numbers reflect the intense attention to detail and passion for quality shared by all employees. It is a big deal when we meet or surpass our quality goals, yet it only takes a small lapse in the process to go from good to bad. Remain focused on proper procedures to ensure healthy cows and top milk quality.

April Bonus Makers

Location	Bonus Made
DPS- Bell	• Herd Turnover
DPS - Branford	• Quality • Herd Turnover
DPS - Georgia	• Herd Turnover
DPS - Mississippi	• Quality • Herd Turnover

June is Dairy Month!

Celebrations

June Anniversaries





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OUR MISSION:

**“To provide an
ATMOSPHERE
and the
RESOURCES
to enable our
PEOPLE
and our
COWS
to be the
leading,
most efficient
producer of
MILK
in the nation.”**

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DPS - Branford
Enrique Aguilar, 7 years
Santos Alvarez, 7 years
Alberto Aranda, 1 year
Alex Bonilla, 7 years
Manuel Espinoza, 2 years

DPS - Georgia
Raul Guerrero, 6 years

DPS - Mississippi
Chance Nicholson, 3 years

June Birthdays

DPS - Headquarters
10th Jamie Sumrall

DPS - Branford
17th Manuel Espinoza
21st John Holt
26th Jose Romero

DPS - Mississippi
12th Roy Phillely
27th Jorge Asencio-Viera

DPS - Bell
10th Ramon Dias
29th Angel Colindres

DPS - Georgia
15th Noe Miranda
Martha Sanchez
20th Luis Amador
28th Tomas Martinez

May New Hires

DPS - Bell
Gloria Quijano

DPS - Georgia
Salomon Prado

Meeting

(Continued from page 1)

Dr. Carlos Risco, Dr. Mauricio Benzaquen, and Dr. Fabio Lima. In addition to Senior Management Team (SMT) members David Sumrall, Michael Pedreiro, Dr. Tim McComb, Rick Hedrick, and Sergio Madrid, the meeting was also attended by site general managers Warren Lawrence, Mel Nicholson, Arnel Gallardo. Other DPS farm personnel joined in to participate and express their concerns and suggestions, including Mario Soto, Alberto Ortega Alex Bonilla, Manuel Vasquez, and Jaime Gonzalez.

Pfizer attendees in attendance included Dr. Bradley Mills, Heath Graham, Frank Rowley, and Jamie Hinck.

DPS would like to extend our gratitude to the staff of Pfizer and UF for a productive, informative meeting.



Protocol POP Quiz

Answer Key:
1. D, 2. D, 3. D, 4. D, 5. D

Father's Day is June 17th.
Don't forget to let your father know how special he is!
Happy Father's Day to all DPS employees who are dads.
We hope you have a great day!