



Conference calls offer insight “at your convenience”

By John Frey, Executive Director
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Editor’s Note: This is a special feature from the Center for Dairy Excellence exclusively for the Farmshine newspaper.

A little over a year ago, we launched a new program at the Center for Dairy Excellence called “Mastering the Dairy Business,” which included a series of conference calls that dairy

producers, their family members and other dairy employees can participate in right from their farm office or at their kitchen table.

In 2009, we hosted over twelve different conference calls, each held during the noon lunch hour to make it more convenient for farmers. Topics in 2009 range from what to do during a down price cycle to managing stress on the farm to lowering feed costs.

In January 2010, we hosted two

conference calls focusing on building a 2010 budget. Both the hand-outs and audio recordings from those calls are available online to view at www.centerfordairyexcellence.org.

Our plan is to continue these conference calls throughout the coming year, hoping to use the venue to provide meaningful information to producers in a convenient way. Two conference calls are scheduled for March, focusing on “Strategy for

Pricing and Marketing.” Details about these calls are outlined in this month’s CDE page in the *Farmshine*.

We have received many positive comments from producers about these calls, and this month we are sharing comments on the value of the calls from a couple of past participants.

Anyone can join the call, and participation is free. Simply call the Center for Dairy Excellence at 717-346-0849 and ask for more details.

JASON BRANDT Sunnybrook Dairy Farm LLC Manheim, Lancaster County

Jason and his brother Jarred took over the farm from their father Carl in 2007 and milk 105 cows. Jason participated in two Mastering the Dairy Business calls — one with Dr. David Kohl last fall and one with Gary Snider last month. Here is what he had to say about them:

Why did you participate? I am trying to gain as much knowledge as I can to run our dairy better and more profitably.

It was very simple to participate. It was a lot of information in a short amount of time without ever leaving my home. I could just get on the phone and listen over lunch.

What value did the calls provide? With Dr. Kohl, it was about gaining more understanding on how the

the global economy affects our dairy industry, and with Gary Snider, it gave me a better idea

on how to create a budget. It’s something I have never done before, and it will give me a better understanding of where we are at.

How do you plan to use the information? Dr. Kohl’s information just gave me a better understanding of how the economy affects my dairy. But with the last one, I plan to do more budgets, hopefully on a month-by-month basis, so I can know what my cost of production is — what it takes — and can make better decisions.



RYAN HAINES Junto Dairy LLC Shippensburg, Franklin County

Ryan operates a purchased-feed commercial dairy with 185 cows. He started in August of 2008 and has a homemade double-13 parabone parlor and bedded pack.

Why did you participate? I participated in the call with Gary Snider on building a budget and putting together a budget to help manage a dairy.

I wanted to finetune my marketing strategies, and I participated in Mark Stephenson’s call to see what his forecasts were for future prices and concerns.

What value did the calls provide? The conference call was very valuable. It provided another source of good information to use in

making management decisions on the dairy.

It was very easy to get connected to the conference call, and you could participate at the convenience of your own home.

How do you plan to use the information? The calls gave me good ideas to incorporate into the spreadsheet I use to calculate our breakeven price.

Since the call, I updated my Excel spreadsheet to have both a breakeven value for my business, as well as a cost-of-production value. The call helped me understand the importance of tracking both of those values as we move forward.

— Mastering The Dairy Business March Series —

THURSDAY, MARCH 11 “Looking Forward to a Milk Price,” with Ben Yale, ag attorney and Progressive Dairyman columnist 12:00—1:30 p.m.

An attorney from Waynesfield, Ohio, Yale will lead a conference call on “Looking Forward to a Milk Price: Focusing on What You Want, Not What You Got.”

In his discussion, Yale will help producers turn their focus from measuring the value of their milk based on the price they received last month to looking forward to what is coming and actually protecting a price or margin for their milk.

Yale has worked with the dairy industry since 1973, with his

practice now entirely focused on the legal and regulatory issues associated with dairy. His practice has taken him to all but a handful of states on issues such as federal milk market regulations and formation of dairy cooperatives from New York to California.

Currently, Yale serves as the general counsel for Select Milk Producers, Inc., Fair Oaks Dairy Farms, and Continental Dairy Products, Inc. He is also a regular columnist for *Progressive Dairyman*.



TUESDAY, MARCH 23 “How to Market with Strategy and Discipline,” with Scott Stewart and Mike Hogan, Stewart & Peterson, 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Since 1985, Stewart-Peterson has been one of the country’s pre-eminent commodity marketing firms, helping producers analyze and act on challenges and opportunities in today’s complex marketplace.

Scott Stewart is a leading authority on market strategies and risk management. He has provided testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. He has also given

countless presentations before a variety of audiences on farm marketing strategies, tactics, and techniques.

Mike Hogan is the director of Market 360, a strategic consulting service that helps producers keep in control of their marketing, helping them to maximize opportunities and minimize risks.

He is an expert at advising producers how to manage their marketing needs and helping them understand the importance of managing their operations efficiently and keeping a watchful eye on the bottom line.



Registration: Participation is free, but pre-registration is required to receive the conference call information. To register, call the Center for Dairy Excellence and provide your name, contact information, and the date of the conference call you would like to join. Or visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org.

For more information about the Center for Dairy Excellence, call 717-346-0849 or log onto www.centerfordairyexcellence.org.