



**For Immediate Release**

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**PA DAIRYMEN'S ASSOCIATION TO SUPPORT DAIRY CENTER'S DECISIONS CONSULTANT PROGRAM**

Dairy Decisions Consultants Help Families Make Decisions on Farm Future, Viability

**Harrisburg** – Pennsylvania dairy farmers making difficult business decisions after nearly two years of low milk prices and negative margins can benefit from a contribution by the Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association to support the Dairy Decisions Consultant program.

Unveiled by the Center for Dairy Excellence in April 2010, the new program will receive \$20,000 from the association to help cover the cost of consultants used to help individual dairy producers make future decisions for their businesses.

"The partnership with the Dairymen's Association will help us share this program with even more Pennsylvania farm families," said John Frey, executive director of the Center for Dairy Excellence. "Thanks to these funds, we can make consulting services available to farms that may not have used consultants or accessed the center's other programs in the past."

Twelve individuals with significant experience in doing whole farm analysis and viability studies have been identified as consultants and up to \$1,500 in funding is available for each dairy farm to utilize their expertise.

"We are pleased to support this program, which will bring much needed help to dairy farms that are navigating uncharted waters after 18 months of below breakeven milk prices," said David Smith, executive director for the Dairymen's Association. "With margins beginning to improve, now is the time for these farms to make decisions that will help them prepare and plan for future business direction."

The covered cost will allow dairy farm families and farm business owners to work with a consultant to evaluate the farm's business performance, financial condition, and cost of production. Together, they will explore possible scenarios for strengthening the balance sheet and improving financial performance while helping identify strategies to make the right decisions to move forward.

The Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association seeks to enhance the general welfare of the Pennsylvania dairy industry. The dairy producer board of directors directs funds from the sales of its milkshakes at the All-American Dairy Show, Keystone International Livestock Expo and the Pennsylvania Farm Show to numerous state dairy programs, including dairy youth development, dairy product promotion and consumer education.

To participate in the Dairy Decisions Consultant program, dairy farms must apply and submit with the application a current balance sheet and income statement. All



information will be kept confidential. A \$175 application fee must also be submitted with the application, which will be returned if the application is not approved.

Producers applying to the program must have a demonstrated need for unique consulting services and show a sincere interest in improving herd performance and financial position. The program will fund a maximum of 15 hours, or \$1,500 of time, for the consultant to spend with each individual farm business.

To download an application, or for more information about the Dairy Decision Consultant program, visit the center's website at [www.centerfordairyexcellence.org](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org). Click on the "DDC" logo on the middle of the home page, or call the center at 717-346-0849 for more details.

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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](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org).