



For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Stephanie Roscinski, 717-346-0849;
sroscinski@centerfordairyexcellence.org

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FUNDING TEMPORARILY INCREASED FOR CENTER'S DAIRY DECISION CONSULTANT GRANTS

Per-Grant Funding Increased to Help Dairy Farms Work through Economic Downturn

Harrisburg, Pa. –The Center for Dairy Excellence increased grant funding to now offer up to \$3,500 per grant to assist dairy farmers who participate in the Dairy Decisions Consultant (DDC) Program. With many farms still challenged by the below-breakeven margins experienced in 2016, the funding is temporarily increased through June 30, 2017 and will cover at least 85 percent or more of the full fees associated with employing a DDC consultant. The Center will continue to waive the \$100 application fee for new applicants through June 30, 2017.

Dairy Decision Consultants provide dairy farm families with professional consulting resources to help make decisions that shape the future of their dairy operation. Consultants focus primarily on helping farms achieve their goals in their business and financial performance. The program lends an outside perspective into the operation to help producers identify bottlenecks, troubleshoot barriers and develop a plan for the future.

“While the Center encourages farms to recognize the value in paying for good consultants, we know that the past year has been especially challenging for dairy farm families,” said Jayne Sebright, executive director for the Center for Dairy Excellence. “We want to put help where it is needed most, and the Dairy Decisions Consultant Program can be a valuable tool in working through challenging financial conditions.”

The Center has thirteen consultants available to work with dairy farms. Other consultants can be requested by a farm, but must be approved by the Center to qualify. Through the program, the consultant will do an initial visit with the farm to review the operation and business, then do a follow-up visit to present a report with recommendations.

Grants and resources are also available from the Center for dairy farmers seeking to establish a profit team, plan a transformation project or transition the farm to the next generation.

To apply for the DDC Program, visit the “Business Tools” tab on centerfordairyexcellence.org. The information on the program can be found under “Dairy Farm Profitability Resources” on the left sidebar. Contact Melissa Anderson at manderson@centerfordairyexcellence.org or 717-346-0849 for more information.

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The Center for Dairy Excellence is a non-profit organization initiated by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in 2004. 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 at centerfordairyexcellence.org.