

# ADSA-ASAS Northeast Section Symposium: Bridging the gap between animal protein production and consumers, current and future

**718 University efforts to generate community support for a university farm.** Joe Hogan\*, *The Ohio State University, Wooster, OH.*

Maintaining the functional viability of university farms to assure availability of animals for teaching and research requires the cooperation of many entities both within and outside the university. The approach used by the Waterman Dairy on the Columbus campus of The Ohio State University to involve several groups outside the university will be presented as a successful example of community support. Key contributions from communities outside the university to be highlighted were provided by dairy producers, a breed association, local civic organization dedicated to water conservation, state governmental agencies and a dairy processor. The essential needs for cooperation from college and departmental administration will also be discussed. Specific outcomes from these private sector and university communal approaches for dairy farm support were the repopulation of the herd, renovation of facilities, employment of land and water conservation measures, and innovative marketing of products from the herd. Based on the experiences gained from revitalization of the Waterman Dairy, specific suggestions for involving community support for university farms will be presented.

**Key Words:** university farm, community support

**719 The New York State Junior DAIRY LEADER Program.** Deborah J. Grusenmeyer\*, *Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.*

The Junior DAIRY LEADER program prepares 16 to 19 year olds for successful dairy industry careers. The mission is to give teens an opportunity to build enthusiasm for the dairy industry through personal, professional and leadership development in a networking environment, while discovering the diversity of career options in agriculture. Exposure to different herd, crop and farm business management techniques gives participants the opportunity to experience diverse dairy management styles and ideas. The program also focuses on developing leadership skills necessary to make positive changes and contributions to the dairy industry and challenges participants to focus on personal and career development. Junior DAIRY LEADER is a yearlong program combines a series of 8 hands-on workshops focusing on specific facets of the dairy industry in veterinary science, dairy nutrition, production management, and on-farm production analysis. In addition, participants interact with dairy producers, industry professionals, and other dairy interested young people from across the state and region. Youth will gain advanced industry training for employment and furthering their education and career planning for successful dairy careers. Since 1999, 319 participants and graduates of the program have or will continue their education in dairy or industry related careers. Based on survey results from participants from 1999 to 2013 (using a scale of 1 to 5 and considering rankings of 3 and up to be considered significant influence), 96% of participants felt the program influenced their decision to pursue or enter into an agricultural

career. In the area of dairy knowledge and technical skills 98% had an increase in dairy knowledge and 77% learned technical skills directly applicable to production management. In addition participants responded to being better prepared in the following areas: communication skills (97%), working as a team (87%), choosing a career path (92%), problem solving (69%), and networking with other dairy industry people/leaders (85%). The Junior DAIRY LEADER survey results from the 1999 to 2013 show that 58% of participants who were undecided on a career path before the program, chose to a career path in agriculture after participating in the program

**Key Words:** dairy, education

**720 Using social media to increase consumer acceptance of animal agriculture.** Janeal W. Yancey\*, *University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Fayetteville, AR.*

Social media has fundamentally changed the way people communicate. As animal scientists, we have a story to tell and information to share about agriculture, and we need to be part of this new digital conversation. In today's environment, we see that science is constantly being denied, whether it concerns technology used in food production or the science behind vaccinations for our children. Consumers receive lots of information about their food and try to use that information to make decisions about feeding their families. Decisions about food are highly personal, and in the food industry, we must understand that facts alone do not drive the decisions consumers are making. To really reach consumers, we should be ready and willing to engage in dialog with them. Animal scientists have to embrace a listen-first mentality. We must understand a consumer's questions before we can answer them. Be ready to embrace skepticism; to connect with someone, you must let them know that you understand their concerns. Do not dismiss them. Research from the Center for Food Integrity reveals that a Mom Scientist is the most believable messenger for consumers concerning controversial topics about food production, such as antibiotics or GMO foods. Theodore Roosevelt said, "People don't care about how much you know until they know how much you care." On social media, scientists should be more than the researcher; you need to also be a mom, a dog lover, an artist, or a runner. Shared values carry more weight with consumers over time than a PhD. Last, remember that many voices are needed to fully engage the consumer population. Embrace the diversity among animal scientists and share animal agriculture with people that you really connect with. The ultimate goal is not to win scientific or social arguments, but to connect with people in ways that you become a resource to them (and them to you) for years to come.

**Key Words:** advocacy, consumer education, social media