

2025 Dairy Programs

I am a **SPARTAN** of Michigan's Dairy Industry

The MSU Extension dairy team has a commitment to enhance the **competitive advantage** of Michigan dairy producers and Michigan's dairy industry. We do this by:

- Conducting research and demonstrations directly with dairy producers
- Visiting farms to apply research-based information and concepts tailored to each unique operation
- Holding educational programs throughout the state focusing on issues relevant to the industry
- Creating and sharing educational resources through our website, social media, news releases, and emails

MSU DAIRY TEAM ON-FARM EVALUATIONS



All dairy evaluations and trainings are...



Available on request



Customizable to your farm's protocols



Offered in English or Spanish



Easy to schedule-contact an educator!

- **Parlor Performance** combines digital vacuum recorders (VaDia) and other metrics to analyze milking protocols and parlor efficiency. Educators provide recommendations to address issues such as bimodal milking and poor milk quality. Data can also be used to tailor milker-training programs for the participating farms.
- **Feeding Management** evaluations focus on 6 core areas: efficiency, mixing, production, shrink, hygiene, and safety. A detailed report of findings and recommendations for improvement is provided. Focus areas also include pushup routine, mixing procedure, and equipment evaluation. The feeder's training and consulting program often follow up on this assessment.
- **Heat Stress** will thoroughly evaluate the farm heat stress abatement strategies. The evaluations include wind speed mapping, barn temperature, THI measurement, and other indicators of heat stress. A detailed report of findings and recommendations for improvement is provided to the farm.
- **Passive Transfer of Immunity in Calves** assesses serum total protein levels, to evaluate the effectiveness of your colostrum management and provides critical insights into your calves' immunity status. We supply a recordkeeping tool designed to help your calf care team track and analyze results, enabling data-driven decisions to optimize colostrum and calf care practices, reducing the risk of future illnesses.

MSU DAIRY TEAM ON-FARM EMPLOYEE TRAININGS

- **Stockmanship** training will cover general stockmanship and animal handling. This training meets the requirements of the National Dairy FARM program.
- **Down Cow Management** will teach farm staff about the care of down cows and why these cases should be treated as emergencies.
- **Calf Care** will instruct dairy farm employees in basics of calf care, along with new management practices and research to grow calves to their full potential.
- **Dehorning with Pain Mitigation** is an interactive training which covers the use of a hot iron dehorner and caustic paste, as well as the proper medication administration techniques for pain management in calves.
- **Maternity** training covers critical points around calving, including the care of the cow and newborn, colostrum management, and calving difficulties.
- **Feeder** training goes over the do's and don'ts for a dairy feeder and focuses on explaining the why of feeder tasks and SOPs.
- **Hands-On Euthanasia** uses portable models and a captive bolt stunner to teach placement and protocols for proper euthanasia.
- **Farm Team Communication** reviews the concepts of active listening, effective communication, and conflict approach to improve communication on dairy teams, between colleagues, and with supervisors.

DIGITAL PROGRAMS



- **Heifer Academy** features Extension Educator Cora Okkema discussing various topics on heifer management. There are twelve videos available, each about an hour long. Watch at [YouTube.com/@DairyMSU](https://www.youtube.com/@DairyMSU) or search for Heifer Academy on Spotify. Contact Cora Okkema to suggest a topic.
- **Virtual Coffee Break with the MSU Dairy Team** covers a wide variety of dairy topics, new episodes are released in the spring and fall. Each episode features a dairy extension educator and a guest expert. Episodes are available on Apple Podcasts and Spotify. Contact Martin Mangual to suggest a topic.
- **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series** are weekly online seminars featuring field crops educators during the growing season. This weekly series for farmers and agribusinesses focuses on a wide array of relevant field crops pest and crop management topics. The series is flexible, fluid, and able to adapt when issues arise due to unforeseen growing conditions. The series runs from March to September on Thursdays at 7AM. Register at canr.msu.edu/dairy/events. Contact Phil Katz with questions
- **Managing Farm Stress** provides resources for agricultural professionals, including teletherapy, farm management and financial resources, and stress management strategies. Visit canr.msu.edu/managing_farm_stress or contact Remington Rice.
- **FaceFarmLive!** is a short video series program about farm issues or procedure improvements relevant to dairy farmers. Videos are posted to the Facebook Groups West Michigan Dairy Farmers and Thumb Dairy Group. Contact Martin Mangual for assistance joining these groups.
- **MI Ag Ideas to Grow With** runs from February 24th to March 7th, and features webinars on animal agriculture, field crops, farm finances, and water management. Several seminars offer RUP and/or CCA credit. Register at canr.msu.edu/miagideas. Contact Betsy Braid at braidbet@msu.edu for assistance registering.

Go to canr.msu.edu/dairy/events for a complete program listing



IN-PERSON PROGRAMS

- **AgrAbility** provides free assistance to people in the agricultural industry who have an injury, illness, or physical disability to enable them to continue working. Staff provide personalized recommendations for assistive technologies and equipment modification, as well as bilingual on-site pain and arthritis screening. Visit michiganagrability.org or contact Sam Wolfe to schedule.
- **Artisan Cheese Workshop** is a three-day class on the art and science of cheesemaking, taught by internationally acclaimed cheesemakers from Leelanau cheese at the MSU Dairy plant in East Lansing. Participants will make six cheeses. Contact Phil Durst or go to canr.msu.edu/dairy/events to register.
- **Breakfast on the Farm** is a series of consumer events where farms open to visitors. Attendees will learn how farmers care for animals, protect the environment, and produce safe and nutritious food. Visit breakfastonthefarm.com to learn when events will occur between June and September 2025.
- **Crisis Preparedness Planning** is a partnership between MSU Extension and the United Dairy Industry of Michigan. Participants will develop an in-depth crisis preparedness plan in response to risks that can impact farm operation continuity. Contact Cora Okkema or Phil Durst to learn more.
- **On-Farm Compost Field Day** will demonstrate large scale composting in a farm setting, including demonstrations and discussions in August 2025. Contact Eliza Hensel, compost systems educator, at Hensele1@msu.edu

4-H PROGRAMS

- **Michigan 4-H Dairy Conference** is a two-day opportunity for 12 to 19 year old's to learn about the Michigan dairy industry on March 1st and 2nd.
- **State 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest** will take place on June 28th, featuring written and oral questions on dairy topics
- **Michigan 4-H Dairy Days** will occur in East Lansing from July 14th to 17th. It includes management and judging contests, as well as showmanship and a celebration picnic.
- **National 4-H Dairy Conference** in Madison, Wisconsin, is an opportunity for youth to visit the World Dairy Expo and learn about the global dairy industry from September 28th to October 2nd.

Contact Kendra Van Order for additional information

Dairy Contacts

Extension Dairy Advisory Team

The MSU Extension Dairy Advisory Team is a group of progressive dairy producers and professionals selected to provide input on need in the industry and feedback on MSU Extension activities. Members serve two-year terms and meet regularly by phone and in person twice per year.

Miguel Acevedo	Husbaldo	Kendra Kissane	Jennifer Roberts
Andrew Arens	Dominguez	Randi McCosh	Sarina Sharp
Nathan Brearley	Josh Garver	Evelyn Okkema	Carla Wardin
Carrie Ceh	Jim Good	Haylee Reisinger	

MSU Extension Dairy Educators

NAME	LOCATION	PHONE	EMAIL*
Paola Bacigalupo	Mason	517-279-6419	paolabs
Phil Durst	West Branch	989-387-5346	durstp
Martin Mangual	West Olive	616-994-4581	carrasq1
Cora Okkema	Big Rapids	231-592-9493	okkemaco
Frank Wardynski	Ontonagon	906-884-4386	wardynsk

MSU Extension Educators Serving Dairy Producers

NAME	EXPERTISE	PHONE	EMAIL*
Chris Bardenhagen	Farm Management	231-866-1959	bardenh1
Cheri Burk	Farm Management	989-985-4026	burkcher
Corey Clark	Farm Management	517-420-2042	clarkcr
Florencia Colella	Farm Management	231-224-6439	coellaf
M. Charles Gould	Bioenergy	616-834-2812	gouldm
Phil Kaatz	Forages	810-338-5242	kaatz
Jon LaPorte	Farm Management	269-414-6418	laportej
Sam Wolfe	ArgAbility	231-882-0025	wolfesa4
Remington Rice	Farm Stress	231-882-0026	riceremi

MSU Extension Dairy Specialists

NAME	EXPERTISE	PHONE	EMAIL*
Angel Abuelo	Animal Health	517-884-7818	abeulo
Barry Bradford	Nutrition	517-432-5400	bjbrad
Kim Cassida	Forages	304-575-6099	cassida
Adam Lock	Nutrition	517-353-8714	allock
Pamela Ruegg	Antimicrobial Stewardship	517-355-8384	pluegg
Richard Pursley	Reproduction	517-281-7289	pursleyr
Augusto Madureira	Precision Technologies	517-353-5102	madurei2
Zelmar Rodriguez	Milk Quality	612-261-9797	zelmar01

*All email addresses end in @msu.edu

Our Sponsors

United Dairy Industry of Michigan
Caledonia Farm Elevator
Cornerstone Ag Management
SE AG Solutions

Wirth and Fedewa
Nobis Agri Science
Michigan Dairy Tech
Corteva Pioneer