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GEORGIA DAIRYFAX

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APRIL, MAY & JUNE 2011

Dear Dairy Producers:

The enclosed information was prepared by the University of Georgia Animal and Dairy Science faculty in Dairy Extension, Research & Teaching as well as our dairy coworkers in other departments and colleges. We trust this information will be helpful to dairy farmers and dairy related businesses for continued improvement of the Georgia Dairy Industry.

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Climate is what we expect, weather is what we get. -Mark Twain

Sincerely,

Wm. Graves

William M. Graves
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County Extension Director or County Agent

Dairyfax Newsletter

Identifying Problems in the Transition Cow

by Drs. Bradley Heins, DVM, and Michael Overton, DVM, MPVM
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Department of Population Health

In the modern dairy cow, a key component to a successful lactation is ensuring she has a great start. With the significant demands placed on her prior to calving and the onset of lactation, it is vital that the dairyman is able to recognize individual animals and provide appropriate management changes or medical therapy to minimize the risk of lost production or culling of the individual animal. For many herds, great importance is placed on the individual genetics of the animal and ensuring that the cows being milked have high genetic potential for milk production. While genetic potential is important, producers should remember that the environment of the cow, including nutrition, housing, and infection risk actually contribute the greatest percentage of profit to the farm in the form of increased milk production and should be carefully managed (Aalseth, 2005).

The primary diseases that affect dairy cattle during the transition period are hypocalcemia (milk fever), ketosis, metritis (uterine infections), retained placenta (RP), displaced abomasum (DA), mastitis, and digestive upsets. It is extremely important for producers to be able to accurately recognize and diagnose these problems early in the course of disease and to apply appropriate treatments. Lactation number has a significant impact on the risk of disease with first lactation animals experiencing greater issues with dystocia and metritis and mature animals suffering primarily from metabolic derangements such as ketosis and milk fever. Ideally, separate groups would be provided for first lactation and mature animals both before and after calving to allow more individualized attention, better group environment, and different ration formulation; however that is wholly dependent of facility design, herd size, and management preferences.

A variety of methods are utilized by herds to identify and treat these health problems and each herd will have a preferred approach that varies based upon differences in available labor and facilities, number of cows going through transition, the ability of the labor to recognize problems, and the risk tolerance of the individual producer. Two primary approaches to identifying individual cows with transition problems will be discussed in this article including a prompted assessment program and a systematic monitoring and treatment approach. There is not one perfect method that will work for all herds, but rather, each farm's management team should consider the benefits and pitfalls of each approach while also honestly assessing their own ability to manage each system. The keys to success are consistent and accurate detection of problems, timely application of treatment, and accurate recording of these events for further analysis of trends or changes in disease incidence.

The utilization of a prompted monitoring system may be the easiest to implement, but also may severely limit the ability of the farm staff to recognize those animals with subclinical disease and moderate production parameters. One of the most obvious, and perhaps simplest, monitoring tool is a daily visual screening of all fresh animals. Cows that appear to have an excellent appetite, full rumen, and appear bright and aware of surroundings are probably transitioning well. Those animals which appear to be depressed, off feed, have dry noses, increased respiration, lameness, or dull eyes should be examined more closely. The measurement of daily milk production of the individual animal is also commonly used on herds to allow identification of animals for further analysis. Noticing rapid changes or failure to increase production will allow identification of animals which may need more individual attention to diagnose and treat ongoing disease processes. One should recognize that individual milk production may vary by as much as 9-10 lbs per day and while this may or may not indicate disease occurrence, it should be considered when determining a cut-point for a drop in daily milk yield.

Implementation of a systematic approach where all fresh cows are examined on a regular basis, may be a greater strain on the available labor and facilities, but would provide a more accurate knowledge of the number of animals having transition problems and where those problems may originate. While the specifics may vary between farms, the basic approach includes a daily evaluation of each transition animal (primarily during the first 10-14 DIM) including visual observation, rectal temperature, identification of early mastitis cases, and evidence of diarrhea, constipation, or other digestive upset. Trans-rectal palpation for the presence of uterine disease can be performed every second or third day or when prompted by an elevated rectal temperature or evidence of vaginal discharge. Special attention should be paid to high risk cows including those with RP, twins, dystocia, high BCS scores (>4 at calving), milk fever, and known ketosis; however, this does not mean that low risk cows do not suffer from transition issues and should be ignored. Despite which program is used to monitor cattle on an individual basis, without development of a complementary medical therapy plan for each type of disease, herd production will continue to suffer from disease incidence. Your regular herd veterinarian should be utilized to provide training for herdsmen to help them identify disease and to help determine appropriate medical therapy in order to achieve excellent results in a timely manner.

Elevated rectal temperature can be an effective tool and is utilized primarily as an indicator of uterine disease (metritis), mastitis, or pneumonia. The generally accepted reference range for cattle is 100.5-102.5°F (38-39°C), and the majority of animals with a concurrent infection will fall above this range and require treatment (Smith, 2009). The time of day should also be considered when temping cows as those suffering from heat stress may experience elevated rectal temperatures greater than 105°F well into the afternoon, even as ambient temperature begins to subside (Baumgard, L., Rhoads, R. 2009). Internal temperatures may also begin to rise following eating as the cow begins to digest feeds and metabolize energy and protein molecules. Ideally performed in the early morning hours when the effects of ambient temperature and feed intake and metabolism are minimal, it is important to be consistent with the method of measurement, the cut-off points for indication of further analysis or treatment, and possible reasons for a rise in temperature. Since it is not a true inflammatory process, fever may not be present with simple, uncomplicated metabolic derangements such as hypocalcemia, ketosis, or displaced abomasum. Conversely, the presence of an elevated temperature should not rule out a metabolic issue as animals experiencing immune insult often simultaneously suffer from negative energy balance. Additionally, placing a thermometer in an air-filled rectum following palpation or incomplete insertion will give an artificially low recording. For this reason, it is important not to limit fresh cow exams to simple “temp and treat” protocols that may not allow identification of all transitional issues.

Following the general observation and taking of rectal temperature should be a more hands-on physical exam. A physical exam sheet for each animal may be created or the individual responsible for examining sick animals may ask themselves multiple questions. Is she lame when walking or standing? Is equal pressure put on all four limbs or does she favor one or more? Does the animal look painful (elbows out, scooch test, arched spine, grinding teeth) or depressed (dull eyes or unaware of her surroundings)? Does her skin feel turgid (stiff) or does she appear dehydrated in other ways? Can you smell ketones on her breath? How does her heart sound? Is the beat fast, slow, irregular, or difficult to hear? Are her lungs clear on both sides of her body or does it sound like she is having difficulty taking deeper breaths? Does her rumen appear full and does it have 2-3 contractions a minute? Is it hypermotile (>5 contractions per minute)? Does she have an abomasal ping on either her right or left side? Does her skin feel like there is air beneath it or crackle like bubble wrap? Is one or more of her quarters swollen or warm indicating the presence of mastitis? Does she paddle positive to a California Mastitis Test (CMT) or have clots or flakes in her fore-strippings? Using an appropriate ketosis test, does her urine, milk, or blood indicate the presence of an elevated level of ketones? Is there any evidence of vulvar discharge, including blood, pus or mucus? Is there significant trauma to the uterine walls? Does her uterus feel like it has begun to involute following calving or is an abnormal amount of fluid present? Can you express any of that fluid with gentle manipulation of the reproductive tract? How is her manure consistency? Is it softer, more compacted, or does it have a different color or odor than other cows? All of these questions, in some way, should be part of a basic physical exam of a cow suspected to be suffering from transitional disease. It is important to be thorough, starting and ending in the same way each time in order to avoid costly errors.

Ideally, the cursory physical examination will allow the producer to arrive at a decision for intervention. This decision should be made with appropriate information including input costs, prognosis for return to a successful lactation, treatment costs, cull value, and replacement animal value. Possible scenarios for this intervention include: 1) sale for cull value or euthanasia if the situation offers little opportunity for successful lactation, 2) treatment with antibiotics and observation of appropriate withholding times, 3) surgery if the situation warrants, 4) supportive treatment including glucose, dextrose, anti-inflammatory drugs (fluxinin meglumine or aspirin), calcium, drenches or other supplements, or 5) waiting to see if she improves or worsens over time. (Guterbock, 2004).

As much as it is important to identify those animals which are experiencing transition disease, it is vital to consider the time budget of the lactation group when examining transition cows. If cows are to be locked in headlocks for examination, fresh feed should be made available and the fresh cow examinations and treatments completed as efficiently as possible. Management rail systems are nice in that small groups may be selected for further analysis, but there is a risk in keeping those animals away from water and fresh feed and accidentally releasing them to the wrong group. Excessive time away from feed and water and reduced lying behavior may negatively impact the production of those cows transitioning successfully and should be avoided whenever possible. The total time period in lock-up or away from feed and bedding should be no greater than 1.5 hours, including the time spent in the parlor for the morning milking (Nordlund, 2009). For this reason, it is vital to be efficient, but thorough and to ensure all employees are trained in the same manner.

While the methods of examining fresh cows are different on each farm, it remains important to give each animal the best opportunity for a successful lactation. By having standard protocols and continuous employee training, it allows for consistent application of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures to occur. It should go without saying that in addition to the hands-on approach, some form of record keeping should be utilized on a regular basis to record incidence of disease and what treatments (and the subsequent withhold times) are needed. The utilization of records and group monitoring tools will be discussed in a future article to allow identification and manipulation of a herd problem which should be addressed in order to minimize the effect to subsequent groups.

For further information regarding how to evaluate your fresh cows, please talk with your regular herd veterinarian. If he or she would like additional help with providing on-farm training for your dairy, please contact us by emailing Dr. Overton at moverton@uga.edu or by calling the Department of Population Health at (706) 542-4506.

Suggested References for Further Information:

Aalseth, E. Fresh cow management: What is important, what does it cost, and what does it return? Western Dairy Management Conference. Reno, NV. 2005.

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Your Checkoff Dollars at Work!

By J. K. Bernard, W. M. Graves & J. K. Bertrand

The following is a summary of some of the dairy research that has been done the past five years through the support of the GA-FL milk check off.

Forages

- Tifton 85 bermudagrass is more digestible than other improved bermudagrass cultivars because of lower concentrations of lignin.
- Tifton 85 bermudagrass harvested as hay or silage supports similar milk production and composition.
- Feeding increasing proportions of Tifton 85 bermudagrass decreases dry matter intake and milk yield, but supports higher milk fat percentage.
- When diets are balanced for NDF concentrations, diets containing either 12.5% of either Tifton 85 bermudagrass or alfalfa hay supported similar milk yield and composition. Addition of a fibrolytic enzyme mixture to the diets did not improve fiber digestibility or performance.
- Tifton 85 bermudagrass can be fed at 12.5% of DM in diets based on normal or BMR corn silage plus ryegrass silage to maintain milk yield and composition. Intake and milk yield was higher for diets based on BMR corn silage.
- Wilting ryegrass to approximately 50% does not reduce silage fermentation compared with ryegrass silage ensiled at 38% DM when stored in plastic silage bags. Milk yield was higher when ryegrass was wilted and harvested at DM content above 40% DM
- Ten warm-season forage species and cultivars forages were compared. The DM and NDF in Mulato and Tifton 85 was more digestible compared with the other species and cultivars. Because of low soluble carbohydrate concentrations, fermentation is challenging resulting in higher pH and NH3 and lower lactic acid concentrations than desired.
- A breeding line of annual peanuts that can reseed itself produces high quality forage that has similar digestibility to perennial peanuts, but yield are much lower (< 2 ton DM per acre) which limit its use as a forage crop for most producers.

Nutrition

- Calcium salts of safflower oil (~60% linoleic acid) fed in closeup diets supported faster recovery from the negative postpartum energy balance and improved blood concentrations of blood glucose, IGF-I and progesterone compared with cows fed isocaloric saturated fatty acid-supplemented diet.
- Replacing 6.5 lbs of ground corn with glycerol, a byproduct from the production of bio-diesel, supported similar intake, milk yield, milk composition, and body weight gain.
- High concentrate diets (65%) fed with low quality roughage (cottonseed hulls) resulted in more of the dietary energy going for body weight gain rather than milk production compared with cows fed normal energy dense diets (50% concentrate) containing corn silage and alfalfa hay.

- Feeding synthetic antioxidants during the transition period to cows also fed corn oil had a negative effect on milk fat concentration and uterine health. Cooling cows in the close-up group with fans and sprinklers resulted in greater milk fat concentration and improved immune status.

Cow Comfort

- Compared with a high pressure mister system, a low pressure mister system used 43% less water per day than the high pressure system. Body temperature and respiration rate was similar for cows cooled with both systems
- When 6-row free stall barns are overcrowded, including a sprinklers in the rear alley provides additional cooling to reduce heat stress.
- Using high-pressure fogging in a dry cow calving pack barn can successfully cool cows without increasing the moisture of the sand. The moisture content was usually 8% which compares to a typical free stall with fan and sprinkler cooling.
- Dual chamber water-bed mattresses can provide similar usage and cleanliness as free stalls bedded with sand.

Reproduction

- Development of Ovsynch protocol for timed insemination without estrus detection.
- Conduct research to lower dosage of GnRH in Ovsynch protocol, drastically lowering costs.
- Development of a 5 d Co-Synch + CIDR protocol with one injection of $PGF_{2\alpha}$ as an effective reproductive management program for first and second Timed AI in dairy heifers.
- Support of the Drost Project which serves as a training tool for producers and their employees, veterinarians, and students throughout the world. Most recently the Bovine Reproduction Guide was translated into Spanish.
- Use of embryo transfer during the summer results in pregnancy rates similar to those to AI in the winter.
- Embryos produced using either sexed or conventional semen resulted in similar pregnancy rates when transferred into cows during the summer.
- Repeat breeder cows (open after three breedings) receiving fresh embryo through timed embryo transfer had higher pregnancy rates compared with those subjected to timed artificial insemination.
- Cows with clinical endometritis have lower pregnancy rate and increased pregnancy loss after first timed AI compared with cows that do not have clinical endometritis (30.0 vs. 42.2% pregnancy rate and 20.0 vs. 12.2% pregnancy loss, respectively).

Mastitis

- Mastitis is present in approximately 75% of replacement dairy heifers.
- Antibiotic therapy typically results in a 10% increase in milk yield compared with untreated control heifers regardless of the antibiotic used.
- Unless properly managed, recycled sand can contribute to mastitis. When recycled sand is suspected as a source of pathogens, the sand in the back 1/3 of the freestall should be removed and replaced with fresh sand.

Management

- Dairy Business Analysis Program (DBAP) provided economic benchmark data for dairy producers throughout Georgia and Florida. Participants in the program obtained information of various economic measures to help identify strengths and weakness.

- An Excel program has been developed to optimizes economic decision making related to breeding and culling decisions for individual dairy cows using data from PCDART.
- Data from DBAP were used to develop a program for estimating the cost of capital for dairy farm investment. This program will help producers evaluate the total cost of any building projects they are considering.

Youth and Education

- Each year the checkoff supports youth and students who participant in 4-H and UGA dairy judging teams, National 4-H Dairy Conference, 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl, Southeast Dairy Youth Workshop, and Commercial Dairy Heifer Show in Perry.
- A scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate student based on scholarship, need, character, leadership potential and professional promise.

Georgia Drought Update

by Dr. Dennis Handcock
UGA Forage Specialist

You don't need a weatherman to tell you when it is raining. And, you sure don't need me to tell you when it is dry. But... once again we find ourselves dealing with drought stress all across Georgia. South Georgia and most of Central Georgia has been dealing with this dry weather all spring. North Georgia is now in has just started entering into moderate drought stress.

As we collectively deal with these conditions, I want to bring your attention to a few sources of information about how to react to and deal with drought in our forage crops. The main "clearinghouse" for information on drought-stress in forage-based livestock systems can be found here: http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fieldcrops/forages/drought.html. I would like to point out one specific publication (among the 30+ articles on that page) which helps you to identify how severe the drought stress is by using your forage as a clue to determine which management steps to consider. That publication is entitled "Forage Use and Grazing Herd Management during a Drought" and it is located here (http://www.caes.uga.edu/publications/pubDetail.cfm?pk_id=7708).

At the very least, I would recommend that you identify (and use) sacrifice pastures/paddocks so that you can begin to confine the damage to one or two small areas rather than overgrazing the entire farm. Further, those of you who have been dealing with drought for several weeks now, begin seriously identifying those animals that should be culled. Remember, it is less expensive to cull and depopulate than it will be to feed lots of hay and/or destroy your pasture stands.

Most of us remember droughts that were as severe or more severe than this one (e.g., 2007-08) and we can make it through this one, too. BUT!, take steps now to ensure that the mistakes of the past aren't repeated and that poor decisions made now won't haunt you in the future.

Dietary Adjustments During Heat Stress

John K. Bernard
Dairy Nutrition and Management

Heat stress reduces milk yield and increases health problems costing the dairy industry more than $900 million each year. Most producers use some combination of environmental modification to reduce the negative impact of heat stress. This may be something as simple as shade, a cooling pond, well ventilated free stall barn equipped with fans and sprinklers, or a tunnel barn with a more complex mister/sprinkler system. Most nutritionist recommend changes in rations to maintain nutrient intake and milk production compensate since cows experiencing heat stress consume less feed.

There are several physiological changes that occur during heat stress which must be considered when adjusting diets. As environmental temperatures increase, the cow's body temperature begins to increase. To get ride of the extra heat, the cow responds by increasing her respiration rate and sweating. These two responses result in increases loss of carbon dioxide in her breath and potassium and sodium in the sweat. To maintain blood pH, increases amounts of bicarbonate are excreted in the urine. These responses result in lower quantities of natural buffering (bicarbonate, sodium, and potassium) being available to buffer the acids produced during fermentation of the feeds consumed which may result in sub-acute ruminal acidosis. This may be complicated even more when diets are reformulated with greater amounts of grain and less forage (fiber) to provide more energy per unit of DM which resulting in greater acid production driving ruminal pH lower. The lower ruminal pH frequently results in reduced or depressed milk fat and laminitis longer term.

University of Arizona researchers reported that the decrease in intake accounts for approximately 40 to 50% of the reduction in milk yield typically attributed to heat stress. The remaining 50 to 60% of the loss is related to high maintenance cost, reduced blood flow to the mammary gland, changes in nutrient partitioning related to changes in hormonal changes, and deceased lactose synthesis related to lower glucose availability. In their trials, more glucose was directed to muscle and other tissue to provide energy in the presence of lower somatotrophin concentrations. Although cows were in negative energy balance and lost body weight, the mobilized fat was not used to provide energy for milk synthesis like it is in fresh cows.

So what changes should be made in rations during heat stress. Additional buffers should be fed to provide additional sodium and potassium. Diets that provide a higher DCAD (sodium and potassium) has been observed to be beneficial. Earlier research indicated that production was optimized with a DCAD of 25 to 30 meq/100 g DM based on (Na + K) - (Cl + S). When one considers the equation, potassium chloride does not provide any significant impact as the Cl cancels the positive aspects of K. Recent research demonstrates a positive response in production to potassium carbonate compared with potassium chloride. Recommended dietary concentrations during heat stress are 1.5 to 1.6% K, 0.45 to 0.60% Na, and 0.35 to 0.40% Mg (potassium reduces magnesium absorption and magnesium has some buffering benefits as well).

Supplemental buffers will help maintain higher ruminal pH, but fiber concentrations most also be maintained. When high quality forage is available, diets can be formulated with adequate forage and maintain desired energy concentrations. When forage quality is lacking, alternative sources of fiber or supplemental fat may need to be fed. Israel researchers compared diets supplemented with either additional ground corn or protected fat to a control diet with slightly lower energy concentrations. Dietary NDF was maintained at 32% of DM for all rations. Cows fed diets supplemented with either ground corn or fat consumed less DM and produced less milk than cows fed the control diet. However, cows fed diets with supplemental fat had higher milk fat concentrations and slightly higher respiration rates. The results of this trial reinforce the need to maintain NDF concentrations and avoid higher concentrations of starch.

Protein quality is more important during heat stress since there is less energy available for the ruminal microbes to use degraded protein to produce microbial protein. Arizona researchers reported higher milk yield when cows were fed high quality protein supplements during heat stress compared with cows fed diets with lower quality protein supplements. Researchers at LSU reported higher body temperatures and concentrations of blood urea when lower quality protein were fed.

There is a good deal of research which supports a positive response to the inclusion of supplemental yeast and/or Aspergellus oryzae extract during heat stress in the form of improved milk production and lower body temperatures. With reduced ruminal fermentation, there is evidence for supplemental protected niacin and choline, especially during early lactation.

Reformulating diets to maintain nutrient intake needed to maintain milk production during heat stress should provide adequate amounts of digestible fiber, preferably using high quality forage. Concentration of K and Na should be adjusted to provide a minimum DCAD of 25 to 30. Producers should test forages for Cl and S concentrations as well as Na and K so proper amounts of potassium carbonate and sodium bicarbonate can be fed. High quality protein should be used to supplement diets since microbial protein synthesis is less efficient during heat stress. These changes can help reduce the negative effects of heat stress and maintain more desirable milk yield and composition during heat stress.

Plan Now for Reduced Forage Supplies Because of the Drought

John K. Bernard
Dairy Nutrition and Management

Drought is currently affecting much of the state and has prevented or significantly limited the growth of forages which are not irrigated. Forages that are irrigated will be more costly because of the higher cost of production. Now is a good time for producers to begin developing a plan for how they will feed their cattle with either reduced supplies of home-grown forage and more costly forage, either home-grown or purchased forage. This will require good records to determine the true cost of harvested forage and inventory records for budgeting feeding rates.

Ingredient prices are forecast to remain high throughout the year, so feed cost will remain high for the foreseeable future. One of the first steps a producer should do is calculate the cost of production and identify those cows that are not producing adequate amount of milk to cover the bills. It is a good time to cull cows that are not profitable given the current market prices for culls. Eliminating these cows now increases the amount of forage that will be available for those cows that are profitable. The same approach should also be considered for heifers that have had health problems or have not grown well as they will be more likely to produce less milk when they calve.

In some cases there may be opportunities to purchase dry land corn that will not make a desirable grain yield and harvest it as silage. Anyone considering this option should test the potential forage for nitrate concentrations before harvest to avoid problems. Although nitrate concentrations will be reduced by roughly 50% during fermentation, if the concentrations are extremely high fermentation may not reduce nitrate concentrations enough to avoid problems.

It is tempting to harvest forage immediately after rain when drought stressed forage greens up. However, plants often absorb large quantities of nitrates immediately after a rain which take several days to reduce to ammonia and incorporate into plant proteins. Producers should allow time for the plant to convert nitrates to protein before harvest. Typically a week to 10 days is adequate, but testing is the best option to verify when the forage can be safely harvested.

Forages should be stored and fed to minimize waste. It is common for 30% or more of the forage nutrients harvested and stored in round hay bales outside to be lost during storage and feeding. Getting the forage off the ground and using covers to cover the hay reduces storage losses. When feeding producers should consider feeders that minimize the amount of hay that cows can waste or chop / grind the hay and incorporate it into a TMR to minimize feeding losses. These require additional labor, but will stretch hay supplies significantly. When storing silage, using plastic to line the walls of silage bunkers as well as the top has been shown to significantly reduce nutrient losses. Nutrient losses can occur upto 3 foot into a pile of silage. When one calculates the nutrient losses that will occur when silage is not covered, plastic is very inexpensive.

There options or opportunities that are available will vary throughout the state. The key is to start planning for how you can manage with reduced forage supplies now rather than waiting until the end of the growing season. Hopefully, the weather patter will change and this will have been a good exercise in updating forage production cost and where storage and feeding losses occur, but the forecast is for continued hot and dry conditions through the summer.

Drought Again

By
Lane O. Ely
Professor Emeritus

Drought is again hitting the Southeast. North Georgia had a wet spring resulting in a good spring silage harvest, excellent first cutting of hay and early pasture growth. That changed dramatically with high temperatures and lack of rain fall. We have been waiting for four weeks to get adequate moisture to plant sorghum at the UGA Teaching Dairy. Even with irrigation, crop yield and quality will be decreased due to the high temperatures.

Plans need to be made now to survive the drought. One must do these things now:

1) Determine how much forage you have available for the season.
2) Determine how much forage you will need. This will vary depending on the time frame one uses. Calculate to getting a full hay crop or full silage or a spring silage crop. Remember that you may need to calculate more than your normal use due to the drought.
3) Determine how much you can feed from your available forage to cover the time you need to feed.

If the calculation in 3 is less than 2 then you will have to make plans to provide forage.

Is forage available to purchase? If this is possible and the finances work, then this should be done as soon as possible.

Change the ration to lower the forage content and increase the use of by products to meet animal needs. This will allow the stretching of your available supply of forage and maximize its value.

Another option is to reduce the requirements for forage by culling animals. Now is the time to remove low producing or non productive animals.

The worst choice to make is to be short of forage and to continue to feed your normal amount, knowing you will run out. Hoping and praying for rain to get a crop in is what we are all doing but we need to plan on the worst case scenario, a long lasting drought.

Make plans now to survive.

Dates to Remember

- Corn Silage and Conserved Forage Field Day, June 16th, Tifton, GA
- Southeast Dairy Youth Retreat, July 10th – 14th, Asheboro, NC

June Dairy Month

By
Lane O. Ely
Professor Emeritus

June is Dairy Month. It is an unusual holiday event since it is a month long. The program was started in 1937. When it started it was called "National Dairy Month" and ran from June 10 to July 10. It was sponsored by chain stores to the theme of "Keep Youthful – Drink Milk". The National Dairy Council (NDC) supported the idea to help increase demand as production rose in many areas where cows went on pasture in the late spring and school ended. The NDC supplied promotional material to 6,300 stores that participated in the first program.

In 1939, "June Dairy Month" became the official title and the focus was on the increased use of dairy products. The effort was funded with a 1 cent per pound of butterfat check off in June. How times have changed with the cost of the checkoff.

During the war years, the focus was on usage and how to obtain an adequate supply of dairy products due to rationing. After the war, efforts returned to increasing sale and regaining the lost butter sales.

In 1955, the American dairy Association (ADA) took over control of the June Dairy Month program. The emphasis was changed to sales promotion for dairy products and became a year around program with promotions for different dairy products.

June Dairy Month also evolved into a celebration of the dairy industry. Many communities have developed festivals, parades, cattle shows, princess contests for June Dairy Month with sponsorship of local business and distribution of dairy products. Even though it is still designed to increase sales of dairy products, June Dairy Month is also a celebration of our dairy industry.

EDITORS NOTE: Our thanks go to all the south east dairy farmers for all their hard work each day to provide us not only nature's most nutritious foods, but providing all of us the opportunity to be part of the Georgia dairy industry. Celebrate June Dairy Month with your employees, friends & families. SUDIA is introducing this year's new theme- POUR ONE MORE!

USDA has launched a new icon to replace MyPyramid as the primary icon for food guidance. According to the USDA, MyPlate is a new generation icon with the intent to prompt consumers to think about building a healthy plate at meal times and to seek more information to help them do that by going to www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. The new MyPlate icon emphasizes the fruit, vegetable, grains, protein and dairy food groups. The following guidelines are emphasized:
Balancing Calories ● Enjoy your food, but eat less. ● Avoid oversized portions.

Foods to Increase ● Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. ● Make at least half your grains whole grains. ● Switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk.

Foods to Reduce ● Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals — and choose the foods with lower numbers. ● Drink water instead of sugary drinks.

All fluid milk products and many foods made from milk are considered part of this food group. Most Dairy Group choices should be fat-free or low-fat. Foods made from milk that retain their calcium content are part of the group. Foods made from milk that have little to no calcium, such as cream cheese, cream, and butter, are not. Calcium-fortified soymilk (soy beverage) is also part of the Dairy Group. Some commonly eaten choices in the Dairy Group are:

Milk*
all fluid milk:
fat-free (skim)
low fat (1%)
reduced fat (2%)
whole milk

flavored milks:
chocolate
strawberry

lactose-reduced milks
lactose-free milks

Milk-based desserts
puddings
ice milk
frozen yogurt
ice cream

Calcium-fortified soymilk
(soy beverage)

Cheese
hard natural
cheeses:
cheddar
mozzarella
Swiss
Parmesan

soft cheeses:
ricotta
cottage cheese

processed
cheeses:
American

Yogurt
all yogurt:
fat-free
low fat
reduce fat
whole milk
yogurt

SOURCE: USDA http://www.choosemyplate.gov/

EDITORS NOTE: Don't shoot the messenger! Now that the food pyramid is a plate, the new symbol at least has something to do with eating. Remember that the research done at Creighton University in Omaha found that calcium put into soy beverages is 25% less absorbable by the body than naturally occurring calcium in milk. Build your bones best with cow's milk and its products, Stick to 3 or more dairy servings a day!

Top 20 DHIA By Test Day Milk Production- March 2011

					Test Day Average				Yearly Average	
Herd	**County**	**Br.**	**Mo.**	**Cows**	**% Days in Milk**	**Milk**	**% Fat**	**TD Fat**	**Milk**	**Lbs. Fat**
Rodgers' Hillcrest Farms Inc.	McDuffie	H	3	401	89	93.5	3.8	3.31	28890	1043
D & T Dairy	Wilkes	H	2	68	85	93.2			25564	
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	H	3	293	86	88.7	3.7	2.74	27629	974
Dave Clark	Morgan	H	3	944	88	85.7	4	3.06	25935	931
Univ of Georgia Dairy Farm	Clarke	H	3	97	84	82.5	4.4	3.55	21734	905
Troy Yoder	Macon	H	3	169	89	81.7	3.8	2.59	23077	833
Ray Ward Dairy	Putnam	H	3	144	88	81	3.5	2.77	22079	764
Rufus Yoder Jr.	Macon	H	2	135	86	80.8	3.5	2.7	22139	764
Robert Paul Yoder	Macon	H	3	86	76	80.4	3.4	2.46	18564	676
Scott Glover	White	H	3	76	85	79.9	4.2	3.12	22832	888
Colin & Niamh Matthews	Jenkins	H	2	232	90	79.7	2.5	1.89	22202	634
Martin Dairy L.L.P.	Hart	H	3	281	90	78.1	3.6	2.72	21725	684
Irvin R Yoder	Macon	H	3	204	87	77.7	4	2.7	22733	850
Vista Farm	Jefferson	H	3	92	88	77.6	3.2	2.44	23301	771
Southern Rose Holsteins	Laurens	H	3	121	85	76.8	3.7	2.64	21313	801
Russ Gilbert	Morgan	H	3	129	85	76	3.8	2.84	19422	767
Bill Dodson	Putnam	H	3	226	91	75.9	3.6	2.72	22985	811
R & D Dairy	Laurens	H	3	107	90	75.8	3.7	2.56	23654	848
Brooksco Dairy	Brooks	H	3	2260	91	75.7			23712	
Williams Dairy	Taliaferro	H	2	128	89	75.5	3.3	2.46	22022	753
Willie Jones Jr Dairy	Putnam	H	3	222	87	75.5			21239	

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Top 20 DHIA By Test Day Fat Production- March 2011

						Test Day Average			Yearly Average	
Herd	**County**	**Br.**	**Mo.**	**Cows**	**% Days in Milk**	**Milk**	**% Fat**	**TD Fat**	**Milk**	**Lbs. Fat**
Univ of Georgia Dairy Farm	Clarke	H	3	97	84	82.5	4.4	3.55	21734	905
Rodgers' Hillcrest	McDuffie	H	3	401	89	93.5	3.8	3.31	28890	1043
Scott Glover	White	H	3	76	85	79.9	4.2	3.12	22832	888
Dave Clark	Morgan	H	3	944	88	85.7	4	3.06	25935	931
Ivan Peters	Jefferson	H	3	96	89	69	4.5	2.94	19037	736
Curtis Strange	Morgan	X	3	53	79	64.9	4.4	2.86	15708	657
Fuller- Dairy-Inc.	Putnam	H	3	222	93	73.1	4	2.86	21224	
Rull Gilbert	Morgan	H	3	129	85	76	3.8	2.84	19422	767
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	X	3	676	87	74.3	4.2	2.81	23475	966
Cecil Dueck	Jefferson	H	3	74	90	73.5	3.9	2.79	22205	783
Ray Ward Dairy	Putnam	H	3	144	88	81	3.5	2.77	22079	764
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	H	3	293	86	88.77	3.7	2.74	27629	974
Martin Dairy L.L.P.	Hart	H	3	281	90	78.1	3.6	2.72	21725	684
Bill Dodson	Putnam	H	3	226	71	75.9	3.6	2.72	22985	811
Irvin R Yoder	Macon	H	3	204	87	77.7	4	2.7	22733	850
Rufus Yoder Jr.	Macon	H	3	135	86	80.8	3.5	2.7	22139	764
Earnest R Turk	Putnam	H	2	371	93	73.9	3.7	2.7	21627	811
Phil Harvey #2	Putnam	H	3	704	90	71.9	3.8	2.68	24053	
Southern Rose Holsteins	Laurens	H	3	121	85	76.8	3.7	2.64	21313	801

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Top 20 DHIA By Test Day Milk Production- April 2011

					Test Day Average				Yearly Average	
Herd	**County**	**Br.**	**Mo.**	**Cows**	**% Days in Milk**	**Milk**	**% Fat**	**TD Fat**	**Milk**	**Lbs. Fat**
Rodgers' Hillcrest Farms Inc.	McDuffie	H	4	401	89	93.5	3.4	2.98	29059	1052
D & T Dairy	Wilkes	H	4	66	85	91.9			25912	
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	H	4	277	86	89.1	3.6	2.77	27554	974
Dave Clark	Morgan	H	3	944	88	85.7	4	3.06	25935	931
Univ of Georgia Dairy Farm	Clarke	H	3	97	84	82.5	4.4	3.55	21734	905
Colin & Niamh Matthews	Jenkins	H	4	243	91	81.2	2.6	2.02	22485	625
Scott Glover	White	H	4	71	85	79.1	3.3	2.56	22775	889
Rufus Yoder Jr.	Macon	H	4	133	87	79.1	3.5	2.66	22213	784
Irvin R Yoder	Macon	H	4	197	87	79	3.8	2.9	22812	862
Martin Dairy L.L.P.	Heard	H	4	293	90	79	3.3	2.53	21923	699
Troy Yoder	Macon	H	3	172	89	78.6	3.8	2.68	23191	840
Vista Farm	Jefferson	H	4	91	88	78.3	3.1	2.39	23337	776
Ray Ward Dairy	Putnam	H	4	142	88	78	3.6	2.76	22214	770
Williams Dairy	Taliaferro	H	4	127	90	77.6	3.5	2.63	22331	766
Southern Rose Holsteins	Laurens	H	3	121	85	76.8	3.7	2.64	21313	801
Robert Paul Yoder	Macon	H	4	97	78	76.3	3.2	2.24	19345	697
R & D Dairy	Laurens	H	4	108	90	75.7	3.6	2.58	23491	846
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	X	4	686	87	75.3	4.1	2.84	23573	969
Doug Chambers	Jones	H	4	355	90	74.6	3.6	2.37	23942	872
B & S Dairy	Wilcox	H	4	685	85	74.5	3.4	2.31	21283	696

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Top 20 DHIA By Test Day Fat Production- April 2011

					Test Day Average				Yearly Average	
Herd	**County**	**Br.**	**Mo.**	**Cows**	**% Days in Milk**	**Milk**	**% Fat**	**TD Fat**	**Milk**	**Lbs. Fat**
Univ. of Georgia Dairy Farm	Clarke	H	3	97	84	82.5	4.4	3.55	21734	905
Dave Clark	Morgan	H	3	944	88	85.7	4	3.06	25935	931
Rodgers' Hillcrest Farms Inc.	McDuffie	H	4	401	89	93.5	3.4	2.98	29059	1052
Irvin R Yoder	Macon	H	4	197	87	79	3.8	2.9	22812	862
Fuller-Dairy- Inc.	Putnam	H	3	222	93	73.1	4	2.86	21224	
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	X	4	686	87	75.3	4.1	2.84	23573	969
Russ Gilbert	Morgan	H	3	137	86	70.5	4	2.8	19701	778
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	H	4	277	86	89.1	3.6	2.77	27554	974
Ray Ward Dairy	Putnam	H	4	142	88	78	3.6	2.76	22214	770
Troy Yoder	Macon	H	3	172	89	78.6	3.8	2.68	23191	840
Phil Harvey #2	Putnam	H	3	704	90	71.9	3.8	2.68	24053	
Rufus Yoder Jr.	Macon	H	4	133	87	79.1	3.5	2.66	22213	784
Southern Rose Holsteins	Laurens	H	3	121	85	76.8	3.7	2.64	21313	801
Williams Dairy	Taliaferro	H	4	127	90	77.6	3.5	2.63	22331	766
Earnest R Turk	Putnam	H	4	364	93	71.6	3.7	2.62	21707	814
Danny Bell	Morgan	H	3	264	89	71.4	4	2.62	21580	842
Stovall Dairy Inc.		H	4	128	87	70.1	3.9	2.61	19652	746
R & D Dairy	Laurens	H	4	108	90	75.7	3.6	2.58	23491	846
Scott Glover	White	H	4	71	85	79.1	3.3	2.56	22775	889
Martin Dairy L.L.P.	Heard	H	4	293	90	79	3.3	2.23	21923	699

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Top 20 DHIA By Test Day Milk Production- May 2011

					Test Day Average				Yearly Average	
Herd	**County**	**Br.**	**Mo.**	**Cows**	**% Days in Milk**	**Milk**	**% Fat**	**TD Fat**	**Milk**	**Lbs. Fat**
D & T Dairy	Wilkes	H	5	69	86	91.8			26240	
Rodgers' Hillcrest Farms Inc.	McDuffie	H	5	403	89	91.3	3.7	3.17	29208	1059
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	H	5	266	86	87.8	3.4	2.71	27405	968
Dave Clark	Morgan	H	5	971	88	84.2	3.7	2.82	25874	936
R & D Dairy	Laurens	H	5	111	90	80.8	3.3	2.48	23473	849
Martin Dairy L.L.P.	Hart	H	5	301	90	78	3.4	2.5	22113	717
Westbrook Dairy	Brooks	H	5	2046	90	77.5			23450	
Colin & Niamh Matthews	Jenkins	H	5	243	91	77	2.6	1.96	22700	620
Robert Paul Yoder	Macon	H	4	97	78	76.3	3.2	2.24	19345	697
Irvin R Yoder	Macon	H	5	196	88	76.2	3.7	2.68	22927	873
Troy Yoder	Macon	H	5	168	89	75.6	3.9	2.73	23254	850
University of GA Dairy Farm	Clarke	H	5	106	84	75.5	4.2	3.05	22046	950
B & S Dairy	Wilcox	H	5	675	85	75.2	3.3	2.21	21533	706
Southern Rose Holsteins	Laurens	H	5	123	85	74.9	3.6	2.46	21389	805
Williams Dairy	Taliaferro	H	5	125	90	74.4	3.1	2.17	22560	776
Doug Chambers	Jones	H	5	361	90	73.7	3.5	2.19	23788	868
Scott Glover	White	H	5	71	85	73.6	3.7	2.45	22809	892
Vista Farms	Jefferson	H	5	87	88	73.3	3.3	2.41	23425	782
Cecil Dueck	Jefferson	H	5	77	90	73.1	3.4	2.38	22233	792
Al & Richard Kinder	Hart	H	5	335	87	72.7	3.5	2.53	20196	699

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Top 20 DHIA By Test Day Fat Production- May 2011

					Test Day Average				Yearly Average	
Herd	**County**	**Br.**	**Mo.**	**Cows**	**% Days in Milk**	**Milk**	**% Fat**	**TD Fat**	**Milk**	**Lbs. Fat**
Rodgers' Hillcrest Farms Inc.	McDuffie	H	5	403	89	91.3	3.7	3.17	29208	1059
University of GA Dairy Farm	Clarke	H	5	106	84	75.5	4.2	3.05	22046	950
Dave Clark	Morgan	H	5	971	88	84.2	3.7	282	25874	936
Troy Yoder	Macon	H	5	168	89	75.6	3.9	2.73	23254	850
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	H	5	266	86	87.8	3.4	2.71	27405	968
Irvin R Yoder	Macon	H	5	196	88	76.2	3.7	2.68	22927	873
Russ Gilbert	Morgan	H	5	132	86	64.7	4	2.6	19915	791
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	X	5	697	88	71.8	3.9	2.58	23689	969
Al & Richard Kinder	Hart	H	5	335	87	72.7	3.5	2.53	20196	699
Stovall Dairy Inc.	Madison	H	5	123	87	67.4	4	2.53	19705	765
Martin Dairy L.L.P.	Hart	H	5	301	90	78	3.4	2.5	22113	717
Rufus Yoder Jr.	Macon	H	5	128	87	71.5	3.7	2.49	22240	799
R & D Dairy	Laurens	H	5	111	90	80.8	3.3	2.48	23473	849
Southern Rose Holsteins	Laurens	H	5	123	85	74.9	3.6	2.46	21389	805
Scott Glover	White	H	5	71	85	73.6	3.7	2.45	22809	892
Vista Farm	Jefferson	H	5	87	88	73.3	3.3	2.41	23425	782
Cecil Dueck	Jefferson	H	5	77	90	73.1	3.4	2.38	22233	792
Danny Bell	Morgan	H	5	258	89	65.8	4	2.38	21409	837
Earnest R Turk	Putnam	H	5	373	93	64.4	3.8	2.35	21670	816
Visscher Dairy	Jefferson	H	4	683	83	70	3.8	2.33	19206	722

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Top 20 Lows Herds for SCC Score- March 2011

Herd	County	Br.	Mo.	Cows	Milk-Rolling	SCC-TD-Average Score	SCC-TD-Weight Average	SCC- Average Score
David Addis	Whitfield	H	3	57	18249	1.4	106	1.4
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	X	3	1098	24751	1.8	117	2.2
Copelan	Putnam	H	2	42	15435	1.9	62	3.4
Martin Smith Dairy	Wilkes	H	2	205	17787	1.9	125	2.9
Dave Clark	Morgan	H	3	944	25935	1.9	121	2.1
Jumping Gully Dairy LLC	Brooks	X	2	1754	14451	2	240	2.5
Walnut Branch Farm	Washington	H	2	363	18482	2.1	150	2.8
Eugene King	Macon	H	3	125	19195	2.1	159	2.6
R & D Dairy	Laurens	H	3	107	23654	2.2	170	2.3
Mervin Martin	Mitchell	H	3	209	16489	2.3	169	2.9
David Hilsman	Morgan	H	3	181	17173	2.3	159	3.1
Robert R Yoder	Wayne	H	3	54	18840	2.3	160	3.4
A & J Dairy	Wilkes	H	2	313	19734	2.3	201	3
Mark E. Brenneman	Macon	H	3	145	20187	2.3	177	2.8
Coastal Plain Exp. Station	Tift	H	3	256	21590	2.3	202	2.5
Irvin R Yoder	Macon	H	3	204	22733	2.4	264	2.3
Rufus Yoder Jr.	Macon	H	2	135	22139	2.5	329	3
Butcher Farms Inc.	Mitchell	H	3	87	10610	2.5	181	3.7
Jess Barker	Jones	X	3	63	12398	2.5	238	2.9
Phillip B Smith	Troup	H	3	110	14234	2.5	270	3.4
Mark E. Yoder	Macon	H	3	123	16240	2.5	273	3
G & H Dairy	White	X	3	72	17444	2.5	193	3
W.T. Meriwether	Morgan	H	3	97	18210	2.5	185	2.6
Horst Crest Farms	Burke	H	3	151	18648	2.5	263	2.7
Richard Hardie	Putnam	H	2	198	20226	2.5	194	2.9
Marvin Yoder	Macon	H	3	176	20402	2.5	309	2.7
Southern Rose Holsteins	Laurens	H	3	121	21313	2.5	307	2.8
Agri-Fresh Dairy	Laurens	H	3	198	21593	2.5	230	2.3
Danny Bell	Morgan	H	3	267	21681	2.5	220	2.6
Dairy Production Systems-GA	Mitchell	H	3	3533	22200	2.5	187	2.7
Troy Yoder	Morgan	H	3	169	23077	2.5	162	2.8
Doug Chambers	Jones	H	3	354	24029	2.5	208	2.5

Top 20 Lows Herds for SCC Score- April 2011

Herd	County	Br.	Mo.	Cows	Milk-Rolling	SCC-TD-Average Score	SCC-TD-Weight Average	SCC-Average Score	SCC- Wt. Average
David Addis	Whitfield	H	3	57	18249	1.4	106	1.4	85
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	X	4	1096	24718	1.6	117	2.2	193
Stanley W. Yoder	Macon	H	4	142	17072	1.8	245	3.7	570
Bill Dodson	Putnam	H	4	229	22937	1.9	128	2.6	257
Dave Clark	Morgan	H	3	944	25935	1.9	121	2.1	141
R & D Dairy	Laurens	H	4	108	23491	2	106	2.3	234
Copelan	Putnam	H	3	44	14923	2.1	110	3.2	250
Walnut Branch Farm	Washington	H	2	363	18482	2.1	150	2.8	277
Mark E Brenneman	Macon	H	4	140	20360	2.1	178	2.6	197
Coastal Plain Exp Station	Tift	H	4	267	21558	2.1	206	2.4	203
Scott Glover	White	H	4	71	22775	2.1	115	2.2	158
Joel Keith	Troup	H	4	190	9571	2.2	180	2.8	346
Berry College Dairy	Floyd	J	4	40	14291	2.2	172	2.7	243
Marty Smith Dairy	Wilkes	H	4	204	18277	2.2	153	2.7	272
Eugene King	Macon	H	4	133	19253	2.2	147	2.6	245
Larry Nisley	Macon	H	4	170	21165	2.2	202	3.1	340
Irvin R Yoder	Macon	H	4	197	22812	2.2	266	2.3	209
Mervin Martin	Mitchell	H	3	209	16489	2.3	169	2.9	300
W.T. Meriwether	Morgan	H	4	97	18061	2.3	211	2.6	223
Robert R Yoder	Wayne	H	3	54	18840	2.3	160	3.4	479

Top 20 Lows Herds for SCC Score- May 2011

Herd	County	Br.	Mo.	Cows	Milk-Rolling	SCC-TD-Average Score	SCC-TD-Weight Average	SCC-Average Score	SCC- Wt. Average
David Addis	Whitfield	H	4	56	18152	1.4	60	1.5	87
Bill Dodson	Putnam	H	5	227	22782	1.7	127	2.4	239
R & D Dairy	Laurens	H	5	111	23473	1.8	100	2.3	226
J. Everett Williams	Morgan	X	5	1119	24636	1.8	137	2.2	186
Charles Strange	Morgan	X	5	194	15466	1.9	163	3	286
Robert R Yoder	Wayne	H	4	55	19319	1.9	77	3.2	443
Doug Chambers	Jones	H	5	361	23788	1.9	179	2.5	228
Dave Clark	Morgan	H	5	971	25874	1.9	127	2.1	144
Walnut Branch Farm	Washington	H	5	389	18370	2	176	2.6	250
Marty Smith Dairy	Wilkes	H	5	203	18474	2.1	145	2.4	230
Eugene King	Macon	H	5	134	19057	2.1	149	2.6	239
Al & Richard Kinder	Hart	H	5	335	20196	2.1	143	3.3	324
Mark E Brenneman	Macon	H	4	140	20360	2.1	178	2.6	197
Bud Butcher	Coweta	H	5	341	21523	2.1	342	2.8	375
Coastal Plain Exp Station	Tift	H	5	278	21561	2.1	186	2.4	194
Irvin R Yoder	Macon	H	5	196	229227	2.1	231	2.3	219
Jumping Gully Dairy LLC	Brooks	X	5	1752	13820	2.2	224	2.5	265
Berry College Dairy	Floyd	J	4	40	14291	2.2	172	2.7	243
Lee Whitaker	McDuffie	H	5	238	19416	2.2	179	3.1	331
Green Glades Farms Inc.	Putnam	H	5	288	19525	2.2	282	3	388
A & J Dairy	Wilkes	H	5	285	19762	2.2	209	2.9	313
Larry Nisley	Macon	H	5	169	21135	2.2	154	3	325
Danny Bell	Morgan	H	5	258	21409	2.2	196	2.6	246
Rufus Yoder Jr.	Macon	H	5	128	22240	2.2	224	2.9	374

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