

## Ways to Develop a Positive Image for Your Dairy Business

By Cecilia Conway/Kimberly Badtke

Large dairy farms attract more public scrutiny because people are not familiar with the dairy's day-to-day operations and may not realize how the dairy benefits the local community. One way to address people's concerns and improve your dairy's image is by becoming involved in local and county activities. Here are a few ways farmers can improve their image:

- 1) Connect with your local 4-H or FFA group to either volunteer or provide educational opportunities for youth interested in agriculture.



Above: The American Dairy Association is offering grants to place milk vending machines in schools. Learn more about the program by calling 1-800-292-MILK. Ineke Verwayen from Far Hills Dairy, pictured on the left, donated funds to place a milk vending machine in their local high school.

- 2) Join your county Farm Bureau and offer to speak about your dairy operation at one meeting.

*Continued on page 2.*

## Market Data

The Mideast Federal Milk Marketing Order, which includes Michigan, Ohio and the majority of Indiana, experienced decreases in all milk price classes.

For more information on the milk marketing system, visit the resources page at [www.vrebahoff.com](http://www.vrebahoff.com)

February 2003 Prices announced on 02/28/03		
Class of Milk	Price per 100 pounds (or 45.36 kg.)	Change from Previous Month
I	\$12.43	-\$ .33
II	\$10.66	-\$ .63
III	\$9.66	-\$ .12
IV	\$9.81	-\$ .26

\*The Class I price is adjusted based on location and will range from \$12.03—\$12.53.

## New World News

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### Source for Voltage Transformers

Submitted by Ard van Dongen, van Dongen Dairy, LLC

Action Electronics is an online shop for transformers so people can use 220 volt electronics such as videos, stereos, TVs from Europe over here in the USA. (Site address: [www.action-electronics.com/trnsupdn.htm](http://www.action-electronics.com/trnsupdn.htm))

Although the voltage is changed from 110 volt to 220 volt, the transformer does not change the frequency. In Europe, the frequency is 50 Hz, and here in the USA it is 60 Hz.

Most electronics such as videos, TVs, and computers will work between 50 to 60 Hz. However, a washer and dryer might not work for long due to the higher frequency here in the USA. Check for a sticker on your electronics to determine if the machine works with 60 Hz.

Specific questions on the site can be directed to Ard at 419-673-0556 or via email at [arddongen@alltel.net](mailto:arddongen@alltel.net)

# Ways to Develop a Positive Image for Your Dairy Business (con.)

- 3) Join your local community business group such as the Rotary Club or Chamber of Commerce organization.
- 4) Connect with your local college or university agriculture professors. There may be opportunities for you to participate in on-farm trials and have access to new technologies.
- 5) Provide internship opportunities for local high school or college ag students to work on your dairy.
- 6) Participate in your local county fair. You may want to assist with the dairy judging preparations, sponsor a dairy showmanship award or participate in the youth's livestock auction.
- 7) Volunteer your farm for organized trainings or farm shows organized through county and community Ag groups.



- 8) Establish an annual scholarship with your local high school to be awarded to a student who continues to study in an agriculture-related curriculum.
- 9) Hold an open house of your farm for the local community.
- 10) Donate dollars to events that will generate good public relations for the farm.
- 11) Donate money towards placing milk vending machines in schools or other public places. Visit [www.adadcmidwest.com](http://www.adadcmidwest.com) or call 1-800-292-MILK to learn about the milk machine grant program.
- 12) Build relationships with the following organizations:
  - \*County Soil and Water office
  - \*Farm Service Agency
  - \*County Extension Officer
  - \*Township Trustee and County Commissioners

Developing and maintaining a positive image of your farm should be an ongoing part of running your operation.

If you need assistance in making contacts at area schools or with government officials, please contact Cecilia or Kimberly at 419.337.5000 to assist you.

## 2003 Fair Dates

County fairs are held during the summer and usually are about a week long. Fair activities vary by location and usually include a livestock show, carnival rides and games, and live music.

Assisting with and attending the livestock shows can be a great way to meet area farmers and familiarize yourself with school and university contacts. Contact your county extension agent for your local fair dates and see what areas you can assist with.



## The Blackboard

If there are specific dairy terms or phrases you've found helpful to use on your dairy operation, please email them to [newsletter@vrebahoff.com](mailto:newsletter@vrebahoff.com)

### Spanish Dairy Terms

Number	English Word	Spanish Word	Spanish Pronunciation
1	right	derecha	day-RAY-chaw
2	left	izquierda	ee-ski-AYR-daw
3	Go forward.	Hacia adelante.	AW-see-ah aw-day-LAWN-tay.
4	Go backwards.	Hacia atras.	AW-see-ah aw-TRAWS.

Source: Simplified Dairyman's Spanish; Utah State University

# NBC Media Trainer Offers Tips to Dairy Producers

Every negative question is an opportunity, not an obligation. That's the message NBC News Media Trainer Joan Horbiak wants dairy producers to keep in mind when they get flustered with difficult questions during an interview.

"Someone will always answer the tough questions. That person should be you," Horbiak said. "If you don't exist in the media, you don't exist."

Horbiak took an opportunity to provide helpful tips to dairy producers who many have never experienced working with the media before, such as turning negative questions into

positive answers. "If someone asks you a question like 'Why are you ripping calves away from their mothers?' you should respond by saying 'We remove the calf from its environment to keep it safe and better cared for.'"



Horbiak also reminded producers not to take for granted small facts about their farms that most people may not be aware of. "If a reporter asks you about the welfare of your animals, don't assume they know you have herd-health checks, cow mattresses, and in some cases, more records on your livestock than you

have on your own children."

Another tip offered during the workshop was to control an interview by being a thermostat, not a thermometer. "If your discussion is getting more tense, you should get more calm."

"If someone starts asking questions more quickly, then respond to the questions more slowly. Keep control of the interview," she said.

Editor's Note: Horbiak was one of the featured speakers at the recent Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin conference. More notes from the conference are available at [www.pdpw.org](http://www.pdpw.org)

From the producer's view:

## The Western Dairy Management Conference

By Jeroen van Wezel, Wezbra Dairy LLC

I recently attended the Western Dairy Management Conference held from March 12-14th in Reno, Nevada. This was my first experience with an event where farmers and companies from all over the country come together and talk about large-scale dairies. The conference was sponsored by large companies that work with dairies.

During the day, participants could attend sessions on a wide variety of dairy topics including:

- Ways to improve your dairy management skills
- Mastitis: what causes the problems and how to avoid it

- Reproduction: Causes of poor reproduction management
- Cow cooling strategies

Besides attending these meetings, I met a lot of people from different states. It is always interesting to talk with people who are in the same business, but work under different circumstances.

All of us have to operate with a low milk price and everybody has his or her own opinion about what causes the current milk price and how to best run their dairy in this economic environment. I also noticed that a

lot of people see this conference as a social event where they meet every two years and share their concerns with colleagues.

And if you were tired of talking about farming and you want to spend some money you could go to the multiple casinos that are located in Reno. I didn't spend too much money on gambling. I think milking cows in this economy is enough gambling for me.



More information on the dairy conference can be found at: [www.wdmc.org](http://www.wdmc.org)

### *New World News*

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### **New Arrival**

Congratulation to  
Marjolein and Mario van  
der Hulst on the birth  
of their son, Luc. Luc was born on  
March 7, 2003.

### **Welcome Family van Erk**

Jaap and Alma van Erk and  
their two sons, Corne and  
Johan, relocated from  
Zeewolde, Netherlands in  
March 2003. The family will  
build a dairy in Paulding  
County, Ohio and currently  
resides at:

3479 Rd 79  
Haviland, OH 45851-9523

Phone: 419.263.0278

### **Address Change**



### **Ard van Dongen**

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## **Announcements**

### Staff Changes

Kimberly Badtke is now working out of the Wauseon, Ohio office. Kimberly grew up on a hog and cash crop farm in Rosendale, Wisconsin and has worked for Vreba-Hoff Dairy Development out of her home the past two years.

She will work with the business plan financing, tours, newsletter, Web site, and permits.

### Upcoming Meeting:

#### Tri-State Dairy Nutrition Conference

The annual nutrition conference will feature speakers on nutrition and animal health, carbohydrates, and effective fiber sources. Here's the event details:

Date: April 8 & 9, 2003

Place: Grand Wayne Center  
120 W. Jefferson Boulevard  
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Cost: \$130/person

Contact: Amanda Hargett  
at 614.688.3143

### Background Check Letters

Ohio dairy producers planning to expand to over 700 cows need to obtain a letter about their livestock operation history in Europe.

Vreba-Hoff Dairy Development has received permission from the Ohio Department of Agriculture to translate these letters from Dutch to English. If you have questions on this letter, please contact Cecilia at 419.337.5000.

### Milk Income Loss Contracts

Dairy producers can receive assistance by entering into a USDA agreement intended to supplement low milk prices under the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC).

If milk is to be sold in different

names(s) than stated on the original CCC-580 contract, change to the contract must be made by signing CCC-580M, MILK Contract Modification. Final monthly milk marketing statements need to reflect the same name(s) as noted on CCC-580 agreement.

The process to make such change requires only a brief investment of time at your local Farm Service Agency office. If you need assistance in locating this office, please call Kimberly at 419.337.5000.