

# *ILM Dairy Team*

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Six years ago the Integrated Livestock Management program was begun in order to focus on issues important to Colorado animal agriculture. At that time, changes both within and outside the university emphasized the need to develop a new organization for the way CSU works with the dairy industry and other livestock groups. The program was structured to incorporate the research, outreach, and teaching activities of multiple departments within the University.

ILM is a multidisciplinary program that aims to unite expertise already present at CSU to address the multifaceted problems facing modern agriculture. ILM was developed with a core structure of postgraduate studies, in order to integrate our activities around the education and projects of advanced livestock production specialist trainees. This unique model of university activities has been very successful to date, and we have tried to keep you apprised of ILM progress with reports in this newsletter.

ILM dairy projects have included studies of Johne's disease, coliform mastitis, bulk tank milk quality, newborn calf problems, salmonellosis, an emerging 'bloody gut syndrome' and Malignant Catarrhal Fever. The basic concept behind ILM has been to develop projects in the production environment. This has been very successful in working with the dairy industry, where projects have been conducted in cooperation with operating dairies. The graduate level trainees work with producers and help provide information back to producers resulting in a mutually beneficial partnership.

Over the years, Bill Wailes and Frank Garry have polled numerous dairy producers to determine their needs and, thus, the direction of ILM Dairy activities. Based on those conversations, we are in the process of structuring our activities into formalized programs in five critical areas:

1. News and information delivery
2. Milk quality/mastitis
3. Standard operating procedures for routine problems
4. Disease control programs
5. Herdsman training

Although we have made progress in each of these five program areas over the last years, we have recently gained new personnel and have formed an ILM Dairy Team. The ILM Dairy Team includes Bill Wailes, Frank Garry, Ragan Adams and Page Dinsmore, who have been working on this initiative since it began in 1996. We now welcome three new members onto the team: Drs. John Wenz, Heather Hirst, and Veena Khunkhun, who were previously involved with ILM as trainees, and now join the team to help advance program development. A summary of our goals in each area follows. Please feel free to discuss these programs with the team leader. A card with contact numbers will be included in the November newsletter for your convenience.

Our information delivery program will continue to center on the Colorado Dairy News, as it has since ILM was started. The CDN has proven a very useful means of informing producers about current issues in the Colorado dairy industry, and new developments in ILM projects. We have also used the newsletter to distribute information about national dairy studies and to disseminate standard operating procedure guidelines for a range of dairy activities. Dr. Ragan Adams remains in charge as the editor and welcomes

feedback and suggestions for future issues.

Development of the Colorado milk quality/mastitis program will be led by Dr. Page Dinsmore. While continuing to improve the current bulk tank culture program, Dr. Dinsmore will work with the Diagnostic Laboratory to assure the highest quality testing procedures and results. We also welcome JoAnn Hovland to the Diagnostic Lab staff. She will be working with Dr Doreene Hyatt as the microbiology specialist in charge of milk culture procedures and reporting. We are planning to expand the scope of this program to include additional services with the goal of providing more direct assistance to dairies looking to decrease mastitis and improve milk quality.

Guidelines for standard procedures and quality assurance approaches to routine dairy practices have been included as inserts in the Colorado Dairy News for the last couple years, and are available on the ILM website. We are planning to expand these efforts to assist producers and their veterinarians in on-farm implementation. This program will be headed by Dr. John Wenz, who has returned to CSU after 2 years in private dairy practice.

Disease control and monitoring efforts are becoming increasingly important to the dairy industry as we recognize the economic importance of certain herd disease problems. Dr. Heather Hirst has spent the last two years working with numerous Colorado dairy herds on Johne's disease testing and assessment. This disease will likely remain a high profile problem in the years to come, as will other infectious diseases such as salmonellosis, BVD, infectious lameness problems, etc. Dr. Hirst will now be working to help establish an ILM Dairy Team program designed to assist producers in disease risk assessment, monitoring and control.

Herdsmen training has been identified as a high priority need by virtually all of the producers we have polled. High quality dairy operations rely on well trained workers, but there are limited opportunities available for this training. Although we have engaged in herdsman training in the form of various seminars over the last couple years, we see the need for a more complete and structured program. We have begun the process of curriculum development and considered various means of delivering high quality herdsman training. We expect to begin herdsman training sessions in the new year. This program will be led by Drs. Frank Garry and Veena Khunkhun.

All of these program developments are targeted around the needs expressed by dairy producers over the last couple of years. Your input is important. If you have questions or comments to help us with these ILM Dairy Team initiatives, please feel free to call.