



Food Security Evaluation in Illinois Dairy Farms: A Dairy Focus Team Approach

Urbana, Ill. – In the last several years, consumers have become increasingly interested in not only the nutritional value of their food sources, but also the standards by which it is grown or raised. It is more important than ever to inform the public that their food comes from safe, reliable sources that meet animal welfare and human consumption safety standards.

The University of Illinois Dairy Focus Team, led by Dr. Phil Cardoso, has decided to issue a survey to all dairy farmers in the state of Illinois to assess this issue of food safety. “Every farmer in the state of Illinois will be mailed a 21-page survey addressing questions on farmer demographics, milk quality, facility conditions, feed, and field to allow the Dairy Focus Team some insight on producer practices regarding food quality,” says Maegan Weatherly, Dairy Focus Team president. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete and return mailing will be included in each package.

“The results of the survey may help ensure that future research on the best practices of dairy farms in Illinois is relevant to producers in the Midwest and throughout the country,” Weatherly states. Responses to the survey will remain confidential. The Dairy Focus Team emphasizes that while producers’ participation in the survey may benefit their farms directly by potentially helping to increase profitability and sustainability, their identities will never be revealed in research results.

Each farm or family returning the survey to the Dairy Focus Team by November 1 will be entered to win one of ten \$100 gift cards to Nasco. Illinois dairy producers who are interested in taking the survey online can find it at: http://qeasttrial.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4lrNI0ST67sUPY1. For more information, contact Dairy Focus Team president Maegan Weatherly at wethrly2@illinois.edu or Dr. Phil Cardoso at cardoso2@illinois.edu.