



Do you have an
interest in the
dairy industry?

Program Description

The Dairy Program is designed to give students a basic foundation of knowledge and skills about dairy cows, the dairy industry, and dairy farming as a business which they can continue to build upon after graduation from the program. Courses are practical in nature and focus on the basic knowledge and skills needed to be successful on all types of dairy operations as an owner, herdsman, or dairy farm employee. Students are also employed by agricultural businesses that support dairy operations.

Students are exposed to a wide range of topics, ideas, and most importantly, dairy industry leaders, including producers, during their education. Visits to farms and meeting successful dairy producers and managers are an important part of the program. The Dairy Program exposes students to the many exciting opportunities that are available in the dairy industry. The program attempts to create enthusiasm and passion for the dairy industry in each student.

Academics & Practical Learning

The coursework and experiences in the Dairy Program are designed to be practical in nature and focus on the “hows and whys” of successfully owning and operating a dairy herd. During the 3-semester program, students take courses in Dairy Cattle Nutrition, Lactation, Reproduction, Genetics, Farm Business Management and Marketing, as well as courses in Business Communication, including Spanish. All students must complete 48 credits and an internship to graduate.

While coursework is an important component of the program, the Dairy Farm Analysis Project allows students to put knowledge gained in the classroom and during the internship to work. Students work in teams during their final semester to evaluate the production practices of local dairy operations. Written reports and an oral presentation are prepared for the owners and management staff of the recommendations for improvement and an economic analysis of the impact of the recommended changes. All coursework taken during the Dairy Program is used to complete this project, which is a true test of what students have learned during their 3 semesters.

Facilities

Students have the opportunity to gain practical knowledge and experience on several cooperating dairy operations around MSU. Courses in dairy cattle health and evaluation are regularly conducted at Green Meadow Farms in Elsie, Michigan. Farms across Michigan are utilized in other courses. In addition, students have the opportunity to learn about dairy management and cutting edge research at the MSU Dairy Teaching and Research Center located south of campus in East Lansing.

Students interested in pasture based systems and robotic milking can become involved in teaching and research programs at the Kellogg Biological Station in Hickory Corners.

Internships

All students in the Dairy Program must complete an internship in order to graduate. The internship allows students to put the knowledge and skills gained in the classroom to work. The internship must be a minimum of 3 months long, and usually takes place between the second and third semesters of the program. Most students complete their internship on a dairy working directly with cows. However, past opportunities have included working with dairy- related businesses such as artificial insemination and dairy cattle nutrition. Paid internship opportunities are available across the United States with over 40% of all internships completed outside the state of Michigan. The coordinator of the Dairy Program maintains contact with internship employers and students throughout the internship, visits each student during the experience and maintains internship contacts for students.



Career Opportunities

Program graduates can work in many different areas within the Dairy Industry. Some of these options include; Herd Owner, Herd Manager, Herdsperson, Calf Raiser, Caring for Transition and Fresh Cows Feeder, Custom Heifer Raiser, Hoof Trimmer, AI Technician, Semen Sales, Dairy Nutritionist and Feed Sales, Employees on Large Dairies.

Student Clubs & Organizations

The MSU Dairy Club is one of the oldest student organizations on campus. Club members take part in many different activities designed to learn about and promote the dairy industry. The club takes several trips throughout the year, including one to World Dairy Expo. The Dairy Judging Team, which travels to farms throughout the Midwest and Canada, competes at World Dairy Expo in Wisconsin and the North American International Livestock Exposition in Kentucky. Students can also take part in the Midwest Dairy Challenge, an annual competition which tests their ability to analyze dairy operations.

Admission Requirements

To be admitted into the program, students must have a high school diploma or equivalent and at least a 2.0 GPA or higher. ACT or SAT scores are used as needed in the admission process. Experience in the dairy industry is recommended.

This is an excellent program for recent high school graduates, workers seeking to retrain or retool, and those seeking a career change or to explore new options.

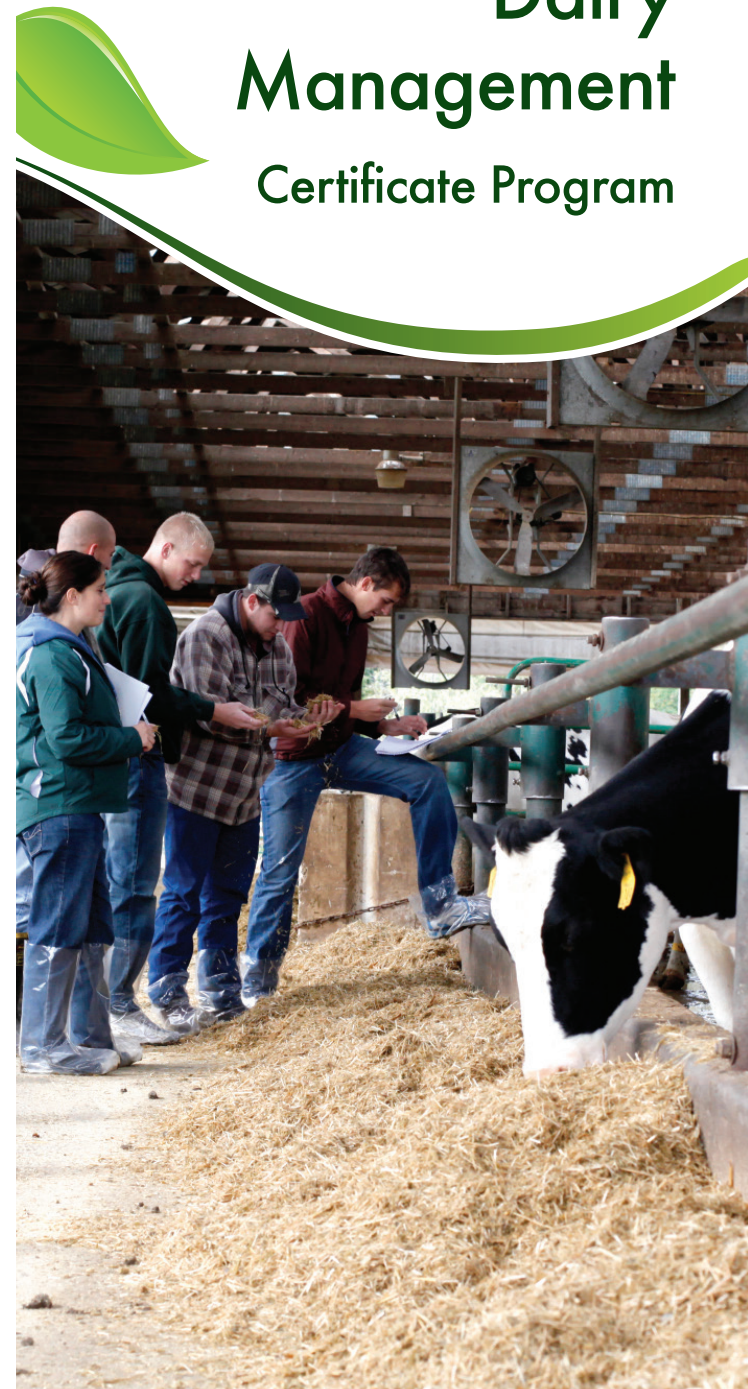
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Dairy Management Certificate Program



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