

## 2014 Florida Dairy Production Conference Summary, Part II

Mary Sowerby

The April 9, 2014 Dairy Production Conference contained more great information than could be summarized in the last Dairy Update (see <http://dairy.ifas.ufl.edu/dairyupdate>, Summer 2014 issue). Here is more of the information shared during the DPC, starting with a speaker from Cornell University, Dr. Mike Van Amburgh. His presentation was entitled: **What does mom want to tell me? Colostrum and milk as a communication vehicle from the dam to the calf.**

Dr. Van Amburgh suggested that mom wants to tell the calf more than just, "Here, dear, are the antibodies I've created to help you avoid diseases" from her colostrum. Besides higher levels of immunoglobulins (antibodies) and other components normally found in milk (i.e. lactose, protein, etc.), it has been found that colostrum is high in a variety of other molecules. Looking at the ratio of colostrum composition to mature milk composition, cow colostrum has an 18:1 ratio for prolactin, 65:1 ratio for insulin, 155:1 ratio for IGF-1 and 7:1 ratio for IGF-2.

How these hormones and growth factors totally affect the calf is not known, but it is known glucose (the sugar used for energy) absorption is enhanced in colostrum-fed calves versus milk-replacer fed calves and that in piglets there is an increased rate of protein synthesis in skeletal and intestinal tissues of colostrum-fed versus mature milk feeding. In cattle, there is significant mammary development prior to weaning which does not occur after weaning, which added protein from milk has been shown to enhance.

Dr. Van Amburgh cited numerous studies which have shown benefits ranging from 1000 to 3000 additional pounds of milk produced by first lactation cows who received increased liquid nutrient intake prior to weaning (either by approximately doubling normal milk replacer feeding rates (two pounds per day instead of only one) or adding supplemental protein to whole milk).

At Cornell researchers found the strongest relationship associated with first lactation milk production was growth rate prior to weaning. For every one pound of average daily gain prior to weaning (or at least 42 to 56 days of age) the heifers produced approximately 937 pounds more milk.

Dr. Van Amburgh suggested a minimum goal of doubling birth weight by 56 days. For instance a calf weighing 85 pounds at birth should be 170 pounds at 56-days-old. Some Jersey herds have achieved three times the birth weight in 60 days. In addition he recommended keeping calf mortality less

than 5% and morbidity (sickness requiring treatment) less than 10%. Why?

1. To capture feed efficiency in early life.
2. To achieve optimal breeding weight at an earlier age and therefore an earlier calving age.
3. Potentially increase milk yield and herd life.

**Management Opportunities for Improving Profitability of SE Dairies: Where are the Real Dollars?** Dr. Bruno do Amaral, now with Purina Feeds, made several practical suggestions for increasing revenue on Florida dairy farms, starting with increasing TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More) work. As he put it, "Owner, nutritionist, veterinarian, herd manager, feeder, pusher, milker . . . everyone at the farm is equally important to the success and profitability of the business. All employees should have training, know what is expected of them, what they are accountable for and the farm goals which should be discussed at team meetings."

Next area to make real \$\$: Abating heat stress on dry cows. Yes, they are not producing milk while they are dry, but if they are hot, their calves end up with lower birth weight and long term, those calves actually produce less milk if their mother was too hot while dry. Cooler cows while dry produce more milk themselves the following lactation too, they peak higher and their lactation curves stay higher throughout their lactation.

Dr. do Amaral suggested SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound) goals for producers to strive for, including:

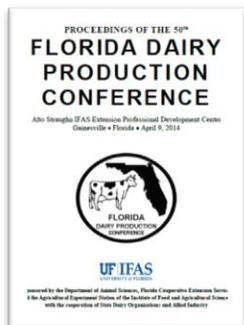
1. Optimizing feed efficiency to a range of 1.4 to 1.8 pounds of milk per pounds of dry matter consumed. He noted, "Forage quality, days in milk, age, growth, changes in body condition score, body weight, feed additives, and environmental factors will impact feed efficiency."
2. Grouping cattle for more precise ration formulation by:
  - a. Fresh heifers
  - b. Fresh cows
  - c. High group
  - d. Middle-low pregnant
  - e. Far off
  - f. Close up
3. Striving for first lactation cows to peak at 85% of mature cows' peak.

Another Florida Dairy Production Conference will be planned for the spring of 2015. More information? Contact Mary Sowerby at [meso@ufl.edu](mailto:meso@ufl.edu)

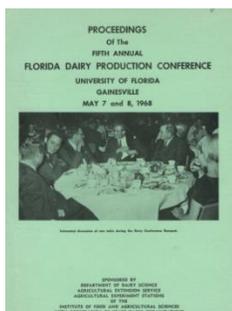
## New and Old Florida Dairy Production Conference Proceedings Online

Albert De Vries

The proceedings articles of the 2014 Florida Dairy Production Conference are now online at <http://dairy.ifas.ufl.edu/dpc>. You can read, download and distribute these articles freely.



The first Florida Dairy Production Conference took place in 1964. The proceedings of all conferences since 1990 were already available at <http://dairy.ifas.ufl.edu/dpc>. Now we have added the proceedings of the conferences prior to 1990, at least the ones we could find. Often only one copy could be found somewhere in a closet buried



among other older printed materials. The oldest conference proceedings found so far is the one from 1968. Various other proceedings from the 1970s and 1980s are available too. Take a look at these old proceedings to see what the issues of the day were.

## General Farm Information

Data summarized from eight Florida dairies located across Florida showed that the farms averaged 2343 cows (ranging from 200 to 5800). These herds were raising from 300 to 6000 heifers.

The eight herds averaged 2.5 milking shifts with 4 milking 3 times a day (3X), 3 milking 2X and 1 milking some cows 2X and others 3X. These herds averaged 461 acres in hay production, generally ranging from 100 to 400 acres. They also averaged 795 acres in row crop production. Four herds did not raise crops, other farms ranged from 100 to 4000 acres in row crops.

The eight herds ranged from 4 to 140 full-time employees, averaging 45.5. Full-time family employees averaged 1.25, ranging from 0 to 4. Part-time family employees averaged 0.57, ranging from 0 to 2.

## Wages Summary

Table 1 summarizes the combined 8-farm survey data noting how many herds hired each category of employee, and the average and range of number of employees hired, minimum and maximum pay per hour and how many hours per day and days per week employees worked.

All herds hired between 4 and 50 milkers who milked between 6.6 to 10 hours per day for 5.5 to 6 days a week. Average minimum pay was \$8.36 and maximum \$11.12 with an overall range of \$7.44 to \$15.15 per hour.

Generally, supervisors were paid the most with maintenance workers, herd health employees, feeders, milkers and calf raisers receiving consecutively less pay.

Employees generally worked between 8.5 and 9.5 hours per day although at least one dairy had 12 hour shifts for all jobs except milking and maintenance. Most employees worked a 5.5 to 6 day work week.

Two of the eight farms had salary caps for various positions. Two farms paid a \$1 per hour extra for night shifts. Advancement in pay was based on varying factors which included time on the job, merit and established steps.

## Benefits, Etc.

Benefits given to employees are summarized in Table 2. Seven of the eight dairies provided paid vacations of 7 to 14 days for all employees except supervisors who in some cases received up to 28 days.

Three farms provided medical insurance to supervisors only and three provided basic life insurance to all employees. Six dairies provided housing for some employees.

Several dairies gave performance (for weaned heifers, Al-bred cows and milk quality) and/or attendance bonuses. Some gave bonuses mid-year and Christmas.

Performance reviews were highly variable from farm to farm ranging from never to annually. They were giving an average of 6 months to a year apart.

Overall the largest employee labor problems noted were retention and turn over (with two farms noting an employee quality problem).

Six dairies noted no change in difficulty in finding employees, while two indicated it was more difficult. Word of word was the primary mode of finding new employees used by 6 of the 8 dairies surveyed.

## 2014 Florida Ruminant Nutrition Symposium Proceedings Online

The 2014 Florida Ruminant Nutrition Symposium was held for almost 200 people in attendance in Gainesville on February 4 and 5. The proceedings are now available at <http://dairy.ifas.ufl.edu/rns>

## 2014 Florida Dairy Wage Survey

Mary E. Sowerby and Keegan Gay

*Eight dairies with owner/managers present at the Florida Dairy Business Conference held on August 6, 2014, completed a dairy wage survey. Their data are summarized here as an "across Florida average", but obviously with so few dairies participating this not a true Florida average. If your dairy has not contributed data to this survey, we request your participation by filling out the survey attached to the e-mailed Dairy Update and returning it to Mary Sowerby, 1302 11<sup>th</sup> Street SW, Live Oak, FL 32064 or [meso@ufl.edu](mailto:meso@ufl.edu) or fax to (386) 364-1698. Another option is to fill out the survey directly on-line at <http://suwannee.ifas.ufl.edu/dairy.shtml>*

*Thanks in advance to making these survey results more meaningful. With your help, we hope to have over 50 returned surveys to analyze (looking at North and South Florida and herd size variations) and report results back to you. All farm survey data will be kept confidential and reported only in combined groups.*

**Table 1.** Average and range of 6 categories of employees hired by 8 participating dairy farms for number of employees in each category hired, minimum and maximum pay/hour, and how many hours a day and days a week these employees worked.

Position		# of Farms Hiring	# of Employees	Minimum Pay/Hour	Maximum Pay/Hour	Hours/Day	Days/Week
Milkers	Average	8	17.25	\$8.36	\$11.12	8.45	5.7
	Range		4-50	\$7.44-9.00	\$9.00-15.15	6.6-10	5.5-6
Herd Health	Average	5	8.25	\$9.22	\$12.14	9.4	5.9
	Range		0-35	\$8.00-10.00	\$10.00-13.77	8-12	5.5-6
Feeders	Average	6	3	\$8.86	\$11.93	9.67	5.9
	Range		0-9	\$7.78-10.00	\$10.00-14.20	9-12	5.5-6
Maintenance	Average	5	3.375	\$9.07	\$13.68	9	5.9
	Range		0-15	\$7.78-10.00	\$9.00-20.28	8-10	5.5-6
Calf Raisers	Average	4	2.88	\$8.19	\$10.96	9.5	5.788
	Range		0-13	\$7.78-9.00	\$8.33-14.50	8-12	5.5-6
Supervisors	Average	5	3.63	\$9.86	\$17.62	9.5	6.1
	Range		0-15	\$9-11	\$11.00-30.51	8-12	5.5-7

**Table 2.** Benefits the 8 participating dairy farms surveyed used to compensate their employees.

Benefit	Number of Farms
Paid Vacation	7 (7-14 days for normal employees, up to 28 for supervisors)
Medical Insurance	3 (to supervisors)
Housing	6 (some employees)
Basic Life Insurance	3 (to all employees)

The authors would like to thank Nancy Anheier from American Dairyco for providing the survey format and the 8 dairies who have supplied the data just presented. Again, we would appreciate if other producers would take 15 minutes in the next 2 weeks to fill out the survey to make the data more valuable for everyone. Contact Mary Sowerby, [meso@ufl.edu](mailto:meso@ufl.edu) or call 386-362-2771 (office), 865-250-7761 (cell).

*The UF/IFAS Department of Animal Sciences continues to hire more new faculty members. What follows are 5 more introductions of new hires. Their involvement with the Florida dairy industry will vary but they all have a passion for the animal sciences.*

**Dr. Phillip Lancaster Joined UF Animal Sciences in the Area of Beef Cattle Nutrition and Management**

Dr. Phillip Lancaster joined the Department of Animal Sciences at UF as an Assistant Professor of Beef Cattle Nutrition and Management in April 2013. He was born and raised in west central Illinois, on a highly diversified family farm with row crop and alfalfa production, beef cattle, swine, sheep, poultry and even one milk cow. He received his BS in Agriculture Science at Western Illinois University, MS in Animal Science at the University of Missouri, and PhD in Animal Science at Texas A&M University. Prior to starting his current position, he spent five years as a postdoctoral fellow at Oklahoma State University.

Phillip’s research focuses on enhancing nutrient use efficiency of beef production. He is evaluating feed efficiency of growing cattle as well as mature cows, and how efficiency of growing cattle correlates with efficiency as mature cows. Current selection traits for feed efficiency, namely residual feed intake, have a weak correlation when measured in mature cows compared to the same animals as growing heifers. This may be due to different metabolic processes

controlling nutrient use in mature cows versus growing heifers. The goal of this research is to develop additional selection traits that can be used to identify superior growing cattle and mature cows.



Another area of his research focuses on nutritional management of pregnant cows and the impact on fetal development and subsequent performance of the calf. It has been known for some time that severe nutrient restriction of the dam in late gestation negatively impacts calf birth

weight and growth, but recently it was demonstrated that minor restrictions in maternal nutrient intake during any stage of gestation can negatively impact performance of the calf. The goal of this research is to identify key nutrients and their role in fetal development such that diet formulation and nutritional management of the dam can be improved.

Even though Phillip’s primary focus is on beef cattle, some of his research is applicable to dairy producers as well. Contact Phillip Lancaster at [palancaster@ufl.edu](mailto:palancaster@ufl.edu).

### **Dr. Emily Miller-Cushon Joins UF Animal Sciences in the Area of Animal Behavior and Welfare**

Dr. Emily Miller-Cushon recently joined the Department of Animal Sciences in August, 2014, as Assistant Professor in the area of animal behavior and welfare.

Emily grew up in Eastern Ontario, Canada, spending her days surrounded by animals and working at a nearby horse farm. An interest in physics led her to obtain a B.Sc. in Mathematical Physics and Biophysics from the University of Waterloo in 2009, but she was continually drawn to research in the area of animal science. After several summers working as an undergraduate research student in the Department of Animal and Poultry Science, University of Guelph, she began graduate studies at the University of Guelph.

Emily completed her Ph.D. in Animal Behavior and Welfare at the University of Guelph in April, 2014. Under the mentorship of Dr. Trevor DeVries, she investigated how the development of feeding behavior patterns in dairy calves is influenced by a number of factors early in the life, including feeding strategy and social environment. During her graduate studies, Emily also spent a semester as a visiting researcher within the Department of Ruminant Production, IRTA (Institut de Recerca i Tecnologia Agroalimentàries), in Catalonia, Spain, working with Dr. Alex Bach and his research group to investigate diet selection behavior in dairy calves.

In her current position, Emily plans to further investigate the relationships between management, behavior, and welfare of farm animals. She maintains an interest in



behavior of dairy calves, focusing on how management strategies influence feeding and social behavior and, in turn, what behavior patterns can tell us about animal welfare. Given the diversity of management practices currently employed on-farm for rearing dairy calves and heifers, it is

important to assess which practices best meet the needs of the animal and are conducive to good welfare.

Alongside her research program, Emily will develop undergraduate and graduate level courses introducing students to concepts in animal behavior and animal welfare science. Overall, through her research and teaching programs, Emily is interested in both fundamental questions about animal behavior as well as applied questions of how to use understanding of animal behavior to assess and improve animal welfare. Contact Emily Miller-Cushon at [emillerc@ufl.edu](mailto:emillerc@ufl.edu).



### **Dr. Raluca Mateescu Joins UF Animal Sciences in the Area of Quantitative Genetics and Genomics**

Dr. Raluca Mateescu recently joined the faculty in the Department of Animal Sciences at University of Florida, after serving on the Animal Science faculty at Oklahoma State University for 7 years. She received a B.S. degree in Molecular Biology and Genetics from Bucharest University, Romania, and received her M.S and Ph.D. in Animal Breeding and Genetics from Cornell University. As an Associate Professor of Quantitative Genetics & Genomics, her research is motivated by recent advances in the animal genomics field, which hold great promise for improving animal production efficiency and enhancing animal products for improved human health.

Dr. Mateescu has developed several projects in pursuit of her overall goal of identifying the underlying genetic control of nutritional and health value of beef, milk production and breeding out-of-season in sheep. The ultimate goal in these



projects is developing genetic tools, which could be implemented in traditional selection programs for ensuring the economic viability and sustainability of the U.S. animal agriculture. Whether it is improving nutritional and health value of beef for better human health, increased milk production or ability to breed out-of-season in sheep, her research is directed at providing practical, industry applications.

Dr. Mateescu's research program complements many of the research programs within the Department of Animal Sciences and brings unique aspects to many of them. Her research contributes molecular genetics knowledge and tools, which can make a real impact in our understanding of gene regulation of biological functions, while keeping the research relevant to stakeholders and society at large.

Dr. Mateescu has also dedicated much of her time to incorporating the latest genomic discoveries in teaching, at both undergraduate and graduate level, to ensure that the student population is well prepared to become participants in the genetic revolution and informed users or consumers of biotechnology. Contact Raluca Mateescu at [raluca@ufl.edu](mailto:raluca@ufl.edu).

### **Dr. Tracy Scheffler Joins UF Animal Sciences in the Area of Muscle Biology**

Dr. Tracy Scheffler joined the Department of Animal Sciences in August 2014 as an Assistant Professor of Muscle Biology. Her research focuses on understanding the role of muscle metabolism in growth, composition, and meat quality.

Tracy is originally from southwestern Michigan and received a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science from Michigan State University. Experiences on the Meats Judging Team, internships, and meat science and muscle biology coursework sparked her interest in understanding factors influencing fresh meat quality. Subsequently, she attended

Purdue University and conducted research examining how two major genetic mutations in swine influence postmortem metabolism and fresh pork color and water-holding capacity.

After a stint in industry as a food scientist, Tracy pursued a PhD at Virginia Tech. She continued research in meat science, but extended her work to include the role of muscle metabolic phenotype in growth and whole body metabolism. To this end, she utilized genetic and nutritional approaches to manipulate metabolic properties and energy availability in muscle, and evaluated growth on cellular and whole-body levels.



Future research will incorporate various genetic, nutrition, and species models in order to better understand how muscle metabolic properties and signaling pathways influence fiber size, muscle and whole-body fat content, and development of meat quality attributes. Tracy is particularly interested in the interaction between energy signaling, nutrient-sensing, and protein synthesis/degradation pathways in muscle, and their relationship to production parameters, such as lean gain and feed efficiency. Muscle metabolic properties and energy signaling pathways are also highly relevant during the conversion of muscle to meat; thus, another focus will be determining how these factors impact color, tenderness, and other properties that dictate economic value of meat products. Contact Tracy Scheffler at [tscheffler@ufl.edu](mailto:tscheffler@ufl.edu).

#### **Dr. Jason Scheffler Joins UF Animal Sciences in the Area of Growth and Meat Science**

Dr. Jason M. Scheffler was recently hired as a Research Assistant Professor in the Animal Sciences Department. Jason grew up on a dairy farm in southeast Minnesota. He earned a bachelor's degree in biotechnology from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and graduate degrees in Animal Science from Michigan State University (MS) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (PhD). His graduate research focused on



how anabolic steroids and beta-adrenergic agonists stimulate muscle growth at the cellular level. During a Post Doc at Purdue University, Jason investigated signaling pathways important during disuse atrophy in skeletal muscle. Most recently, Jason was a Research Assistant Professor at Virginia Tech University. His research focused on

developing a model of metabolic syndrome using commercial pigs. Jason also served as the Meat Center coordinator and oversaw day to day operations and trained undergraduates in fabrication and processing techniques. In addition to his

research responsibilities, Jason advised several undergraduate students, and was the lead instructor for a junior level Animal Products class.

Jason currently conducts both applied and basic research impacting animal growth efficiency and meat quality. In particular, he has specific interests in cell signaling pathways regulating muscle atrophy and hypertrophy and nutritional effects on muscle growth and body composition. He uses a multi-faceted approach with cattle, pig, rodent, and cell culture models. The long-term goal is to identify management practices or intervention strategies that reduce the cost of meat production while maintaining or improving the quality of the end product. Contact Jason Scheffler at [jmscheff@ufl.edu](mailto:jmscheff@ufl.edu).

#### **Prediction of the Future Florida Mailbox Price and Future All Milk and Feed Prices: October 2014 - September 2015**

Using the Class III and Class IV futures settle prices of October 6, 2014, the University of Wisconsin predicts every day the future mailbox prices for most states, including Florida. Class III and IV milk futures contracts are traded at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) and are generally our best predictors of milk prices in the future. All available knowledge about factors that may affect dairy supply and demand, such as planting reports, rainfall, foreign markets etc. is considered by the traders at the CME who together than determine what milk is most likely worth in the future. Because new information becomes available every day, for example a new planting report, weather in the Mid-West or news of Russia boycotting European dairy products, these prices are updated every day that these futures contracts are traded at the CME.

Economists have frequently determined that the prices of CME futures contracts are at least as good a predictor of future commodity prices than say forecasts by people that are experts of dairy markets, or by comprehensive computer models used by economists that include inputs of number of milk cows, milk per cow, demand for milk products etc.

The Wisconsin formula is based on a regression of past Class III and IV milk prices and past Florida mailbox prices (from 2000 to current). They then plug in the futures settle prices for Class III and IV at the end of a trading day, and the quarter of the year, to obtain future Florida mailbox prices.

At least 2 observations can be made with price forecasts. First, the further out into the future the price forecast is, the more uncertainty there is. Price forecasts 1 month into the future will be more accurate than those 6 months into the future. In fact, predicting milk prices 6 months into the future is already so uncertain, you might as well predict the long term average. Secondly, future prices will be more like long term averages than current prices. That means that when milk prices are currently high, the predicted milk prices into the future are going to be lower. Similarly, when we have low milk prices, future prices are going to be higher. This can be seen in the table where predicted mailbox prices further into the future are more average than the relatively higher price predicted for next month.

Very similarly to the prediction of the future Florida mailbox price is the prediction of the "All-Milk" price that is

used in the Dairy Margin Protection program (MPP) in the 2014 Farm bill. The future All-Milk price is a value that applies to the US as a whole, not specifically to Florida. Future All-Milk prices are also forecast from Class III and IV futures contracts and a seasonal component using a regression equation developed by dairy economists.

Prediction of future prices is useful for investment analysis and risk management. In addition to prediction of milk prices, it may also be useful to predict feed prices. Feed prices are the largest cost item on dairy farms and feed prices vary quite a bit over time. Florida dairy farms depend more or less on purchased feeds grown in other states. Feed prices vary much from farm to farm and future feed price predictions for Florida are not generally available. But some idea about the course of future feed prices may be obtained from the future feed price calculation used in the MPP. The feed cost formula in the MPP is:

$$\text{Feed cost (\$/cwt milk)} = \text{NASS corn price (\$/bushel)} \times 1.0728 + \text{AMS soy bean meal price (\$/ton)} \times 0.00735 + \text{NASS alfalfa hay price (\$/ton)} \times 0.0137.$$

Here NASS is the USDA National Agricultural Statistical Service and AMS is the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. For example, when the NASS corn price is \$4.42/bushel, the AMS soybean meal price is \$467/ton and the NASS alfalfa hay price is \$185/ton, then the calculated feed price is \$10.71/cwt milk.

NASS and AMS announce these prices monthly based on realized prices. For predictions of future feed prices, however, economists have developed regression equations that depend on the CME traded futures contract prices for corn and soybean meal. Indeed, even the future alfalfa hay price depends on the corn and soybean meal prices. My intent is from now on to add the predicted All-Milk price and the MPP feed cost to the table. The MPP predicted feed costs, as well as Income over Feed Cost (= All-Milk price minus feed costs) can be found at:

<http://future.aae.wisc.edu/tab/costs.html#94>

Month	Predicted FL mailbox price (\$/cwt milk)	2014 Farm bill formulas	
		Predicted All-Milk price (\$/cwt)	Predicted feed cost (\$/cwt milk)
Oct-14	27.87	24.96	7.97
Nov-14	25.39	22.46	7.85
Dec-14	23.70	20.69	7.74
Jan-15	22.02	19.40	7.73
Feb-15	21.78	19.05	7.73
Mar-15	21.62	18.92	7.74
Apr-15	20.73	18.33	7.76
May-15	20.71	18.31	7.78
Jun-15	20.80	18.39	7.81
Jul-15	22.16	18.52	7.85
Aug-15	22.07	18.45	7.89
Sep-15	22.17	18.57	7.93

Based on futures prices as of October 7, 2014.

Daily updated Florida mailbox price predictions are found at [http://future.aae.wisc.edu/predicted\\_mailbox/?state=Florida](http://future.aae.wisc.edu/predicted_mailbox/?state=Florida)  
Feed cost are found at <http://future.aae.wisc.edu/tab/costs.html#94>.  
Contact Albert De Vries at [devries@ufl.edu](mailto:devries@ufl.edu)

For more information about the MPP program, see for example the announced meetings in the Dairy Extension Agenda in this newsletter.

### Dairy Extension Agenda

- Saturday **October 25**, 2014. 3<sup>rd</sup> Family Day at the Dairy Farm. <http://www.familydayatthedairyfarm.info>
- Thursday **October 30**, 2014. Calf Birth to Weaning Workshop at the UF Dairy Unit in Hague from 10 AM to 2:30 PM. Contact Mary Sowerby at [meso@ufl.edu](mailto:meso@ufl.edu)
- Wednesday + Thursday **November 12-13**, 2014. 10th Mid-Atlantic Dairy Grazing Conference in Moultrie, GA. <http://www.caes.uga.edu/commodities/fieldcrops/forages/events/GS14/MADGC14.html>. Contact Mary Sowerby at [meso@ufl.edu](mailto:meso@ufl.edu)
- Thursday **November 20**, 2014. South Georgia/North Florida Dairy Update meeting in Quitman, GA, from 11 AM to 1 PM with John Bernard, UGA speaking on Successfully Raising Heifers. Contact Mary Sowerby at [meso@ufl.edu](mailto:meso@ufl.edu)
- Wednesday **December 10**, 2014. Dairy Genomics Workshop, for dairy producers and allied industry at the Okeechobee Extension Office from 10 AM to 2 PM. Lunch is served. Contact Courtney Davis, [cbdavis@ufl.edu](mailto:cbdavis@ufl.edu), or Albert De Vries, [devries@ufl.edu](mailto:devries@ufl.edu), for more information.

UF/IFAS is organizing Dairy Margin Protection Plan meetings. Dairy producer training is from 1 – 3 PM at all 3 locations. Topics discussed are how to sign up and what level of coverage is best for your farm. Contact Drs. Joan Dusky, [jadu@ufl.edu](mailto:jadu@ufl.edu), or Mary Sowerby, [meso@ufl.edu](mailto:meso@ufl.edu) for more information. The tentative schedule is as follows.

- **October 14** Highlands County Extension Office, 4509 George Blvd., Sebring, FL
- **October 21** Suwannee Valley Agricultural Extension Center 7580 CR 136, Live Oak, FL
- **October 29** Jackson County Extension Office, 2741 Pennsylvania Ave, Marianna, FL

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