**Situation:** The 2nd Annual WI Dairy & Beef Industry Animal Husbandry Conference was held on March 4, 2011 in Neillsville, WI. The Conference began in 2010 as a collaborative effort of UW-Extension and WI agricultural partners. It was our intent to offer an annual conference that seeks to:

- Increase knowledge or understanding of improved dairy and beef cattle animal handling practices.
- Expand awareness and improve understanding about the science and politics of farm animal care here in the Upper Midwest, throughout the United States and around the world.
- Build new or existing partnerships between dairy and beef producers, veterinarians, related agencies and organizations to address the emerging agriculture policy issue of animal welfare in Wisconsin.
- Identify and connect key individuals interested in addressing future educational/policy efforts related to animal care or welfare.

**Narrative:** The 2011 Conference received outstanding support from a broad group of sponsors⁽ⁱ⁾. Several UW-Extension educators contributed to the development and hosting of the 2011 Conference.⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The 2011 conference highlighted live dairy and beef cattle handling sessions with Curt Pate, instructor with the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association Stockmanship and Stewardship Program. A Producer/Consumer Panel discussed how they promote agricultural awareness to the public, telling their story. Additional speakers and discussion points were Naomi Botheras: Animal handling & Production Based Outcomes; Trevor DeVries: Knowledge of Dairy Cow Behavior to Improve Cow Comfort; Kurt Vogel: Measuring Animal Welfare.

**Results:** 150 attended the 2011 Conference. Of the 94 completing the post-conference written evaluation, 21% were producers, 22% veterinarians, 11% Agri-business, 11% Educators and 32% representing Government Agencies. As a whole, 57% indicated their primary area of interest concerned the dairy industry; 43% indicated beef industry.

A summary of the post-conference evaluations shows participants (73 completed the evaluation) significantly increased their knowledge from each of the presentations:

---

⁽ⁱ⁾Conference sponsors included: UW-Extension Livestock Team, WI Dept. of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection, WI Milk Marketing Board, Professional Dairy Producers of WI, Equity Livestock, WI Farm Bureau, Beef USA, Anamart.

⁽ⁱⁱ⁾Planning & facilitation by UW-Extension Agriculture Educators: Maria Bendixen, Clark Co; Sandy Stuttgen, Taylor Co; Ryan Sterry, St. Croix; Trisha Wagner, Jackson.
Participants were asked, “After attending this conference, what is the primary ‘take home message’ for you today?” Responses to this question included:

- Public perception is everything & producers & other handers need to better understand animal behavior & how to interact with them.
- Animal health is good husbandry. Also, be aware that consumer and public perception is reality whether it’s true or false.
- Excellent animal care is related to profitability.
- (This conference was a) benefit to industry, government and producers in good, useful, pertinent information.
- Need to expose city kids to what agriculture is about-need to reconnect people with the minority culture of rural farm communities.
- The livestock industry must take the lead with animal welfare w/ continued support of government and universities.

To the question, “Is more education on this topic needed in WI?” 63 attendees responded yes, 2 responded no