

Dairy Market Largest For Veterinarians

SCHAUMBURG, IL — Dairy producers spent \$93.3 million with veterinarians for animal health products and \$207.6 million for professional services in 1985 reports the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) in a major study.

The total of \$300.9 million is about 47% of the food animal veterinary market.

According to the results of a national mail survey, nearly all dairymen used a veterinarian in 1985, averaging \$1,090 per producer for services and products. Expenditures for just medical services are three times more per year than beef and hog producers and about five times more than sheep producers.

Surveyed dairy producers used a veterinarian about 20 times a year, four times the frequency of use by beef, hog, and sheep producers.

In U.S. Market for Food Animal Veterinary Medical Services, economist J. Karl Wise, PhD, reports that the average U.S. dairy producer spent 75% of his animal health budget with a local veterinarian, including \$680 for professional services and \$410 for products.

"Large producers spend more money with veterinarians than small producers," said Dr. Wise,

"but large producers spend proportionately less of their animal health dollar with veterinarians than small producers."

As dairy operations grow, producers spend relatively less money on veterinary services and more on animal health products.

Surveyed dairy producers with up to 49 head spent a median \$800 with veterinarians. Those with 50 to 90 head spent a median \$1,500, and those with more than 100 head spent a median \$3,050.

Fifty-seven percent of dairy producers' animal health product expenses was for medications, drugs, and implants, 20% for animal vaccines, 10% for parasite control products, 10% for medicated feed additives, and 2% for other products.

Dairy producers purchased 60% of their medications and 75% of their vaccines from veterinarians. Another 16% of the medications was bought at the feed store and 13% through a mail order distributor. Thirteen percent of their vaccines were purchased via mail order.

All U.S. livestock producers spent \$638 million in 1985 for veterinary services and products, about 47% of the total agricultural animal health market of \$1.35 billion.



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