

National Dairy Board Reviews Research Spending

ARLINGTON, VA. — Dairy farmers checkoff dollars are used for lots of activities, all aimed at increasing the bottom line of income statements at the farm level. "After advertising, product and nutrition research sees the largest chunk of the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board's promotion dollars at \$10.9 million or 14.6 percent of the program budget," explains Harold Reiff, Indiana dairy farmer and chairman of the National Dairy Board's dairy foods and nutrition research committee.

Research falls into two categories: dairy foods which looks for new products, packages or technologies to make better products and nutrition which explores the nutrient content of dairy foods and the effects of their consumption on

human health. Dairy farmers fund research in various ways through NDB. Some research is carried out at six dairy food research centers or three nutrition institutes across the U.S. Other projects are funded through directed research and competitive grants programs, Reiff explains further.

In its competitive grants programs, NDB organizes an advisory committee of scientists to review and evaluate the scientific quality of research proposals. The panel of scientists commits its time twice a year to review proposals for NDB. It will meet Feb. 27-28 in Chicago to review 65 proposals and 22 letters of intent submitted by researchers from across the U.S. Proposals are thorough plans detailing exactly how the project will proceed and what the research

is expected to accomplish. Letters of intent are brief summaries to see if NDB might be interested in funding an area of research. Researchers submitting a letter of intent judged to have potential for helping dairy farmers are asked to prepare a full proposal on the idea.

"The committee helps rate the best proposals — the ones with the most scientific merit. The scientists determine of the objectives are realistic and if the methods outlined in the proposal will really accomplish what the researchers have set out to do. They also determine if the budget is adequate and if the researcher has a clear enough understanding to do the project and complete it with sound results," says Bob Bursey, head of NDFB's dairy foods and nutrition research program.

"After the scientists' results are tallied, the dairy farmers who serve on NDB's research committee review the proposals and ratings, recommending use of check-off dollars only to fund those projects most likely to eventually sell more dairy products," Reiff says.

This year's Science Advisory Committee consists of Bob Marshall, University of Missouri; Bob Bremel, University of Wisconsin; Harry Farrell, USDA; Floyd Schanbacher, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center; Mike Doyle, University of Georgia; Bruce Harte, Michigan State University; Mike Mangino, The Ohio State University; Don McMahon, Utah State University; Rich Hartel, University of Wisconsin; Bill Sandine, Oregon State University. Their areas of special-

ty include food processing, frozen desserts, milk composition, food chemistry, food safety, food packaging, dairy proteins and dairy starter cultures.

The National Dairy Board, composed of 36 dairy farmers, was established in 1938 to develop and administer a coordinated program of promotion, research and nutrition education to strengthen the dairy industry's position in the marketplace. This effort is financed by America's dairy farmers.

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