

# Exporting Opportunities For The Dairy Farmer

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to alter their perspective of the export market.

While the United States agricultural industry exports large quantities of commodities and goods, for the most part, it has done so in a system that treats the export market as a secondary market to absorb domestic overproduction.

The message that export advisors have been promoting is for agriculture to treat its export markets as critical and worthy of investment in time, marketing dollars and relationship building.

Experts advise that those seeking to expand their businesses into the exporting arena need to develop relationships with competent people in other areas of the world.

But even more than that, those who wish to export must do some homework.

Essential information to seek includes knowing who will buy what, where, when and how, and for how much.

The effort is pretty much still in its infancy, though a major priority of state Gov. Tom Ridge and his administration, according to their statements.

The state Department of Commerce has an exporting agency, but it doesn't deal with agricultural products.

The state Department of Agriculture helps mostly with the exporting of processed agricultural products and foods, such as ice cream, chips, pretzels. (One official noted a sense of pride in the fact that Pennsylvania pretzels are being sold in Bavaria.)

For all the government programs designed to affect agriculture, exporting is largely described as a middle-man run industry, supported by some export enhancement, otherwise known as subsidies, and through assistance in negotiating and filing proper documents.

Individual dairy cattle breeders seeking to break into exporting can expect to discover that it requires luck, but as much studying and researching as possible to reduce the need for luck.

William C. Nichol, executive director of the Pennsylvania Holstein Association, State College, is considered a pioneer in exporting cattle from Pennsylvania.

Through his workings in the breed organization over the years, relationships have been developed, procedures have been learned and adopted, and a lot of Pennsylvania Holsteins have been

shipped to various and wide parts of the world.

For many family farm operations, offering to sell some stock that qualifies for a Pa. Holstein Association export order has been the extent of contact with exporting.

For others who have valuable stock, but don't wish to sell it directly, marketing fertilized embryos, bulls or semen through dealers, such as exists within the veterinary and artificial insemination industry, has been the path taken.

As far as exporting live animals, breed organizations and private concerns are important. The marketing of dairy cattle genetics is possible primarily through the solid reputation established by the breed organizations with the help of the USDA.

The equally strong aspects of testing through the Dairy Herd Improvement Association, and all the affiliates, the strength of the indexing, and classifying have all given dairy cattle breeders the resources with which to develop desirable lines of cattle and the ability to continue it.

For those wishing to sell cattle through the Pa. Holstein Association, understand that they constantly keep track of breeding decisions through registrations, or know of desirable combinations and have an idea of the value and overhead necessary to eventually get a deal made whereby a customer is satisfied as well as the supplier.

Of course, each breeder has his or her own theories of what is important to him, and makes decisions based on that.

But if exporting cattle is a desire, then it may require some changes or additions to the home operation.

Consultants may have to be used, higher veterinary costs associated with tighter biosecurity and health checks may come into play, as well as more record keeping and housekeeping, higher telephone bills and more hours describing the farm.

According to some, the added attention to detail is difficult because of other priorities or interests.

However, it almost seems as those who have been succeeding in exporting, even on an interstate basis, approach it with interest and desire to succeed and learn and grow.

William Allen is director of



In the yard of the Pa. Holstein Association Middletown farm, a representative (on the left) of buyers from the Republic of Korea (South Korea) makes last minute checks and selections of bred heifers that will fill his order while William Allen, director of sales for the PHA, helps with the process.



At the loading chutes at the Pa. Holstein Association Middletown Farm, a load of registered bred heifers is counted and loaded. Chuck Russow, a USDA veterinarian who checks paperwork and health records and overlooks the animals being shipped walks down the line on the right, while haulers monitor cattle movement onto the trailer.

sales for the Pennsylvania Holstein Association and works out of the PHA Middletown farm. The farm is located near the Harrisburg airport and cattle can be flown out of there or trucked to a port if ocean voyage is the passage.

It's also conveniently located for access to major state and interstate highways.

Allen has worked with Nichol for three years.

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Chuck Russow, a USDA veterinarian seals the trailer carrying registered bred Holstein heifers bound for South Korea.



The trailer loaded with registered bred heifers heads out of the Pa. Holstein Association Middletown Farm for export to the Republic of Korea (South Korea).