

The Automatic Feeling With Robotic Milking

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I recently attended the North American Conference on Robotic Milking in Toronto, Canada. Over 320 people from 21 countries gathered to discuss this radical change in dairy farm organization,

Hiring Custom Operators

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through the use of a custom operator can improve performance in areas other than what the operator was hired for. So, if a custom operator is hired to harvest forage and forage quality is thus improved, milk production and healthcare costs may also improve.

Therefore, these improvements should be included in the partial budget analysis under increased revenues and decreased expenses.

Following the six steps outlined above can assist producers in making the decision of whether to hire the services of a custom operator. Thorough analysis can demonstrate that hiring custom operators to achieve production goals can be a low cost method of improving profitability.

management, and equipment. An Automatic Milking System (AMS) is not just substituting a manipulator and computer for a human being attaching milking machines. It's an alternative method for approaching the production of milk.

This technology was developed in Europe to allow family farms (less than 100 cows) to improve their profitability and lifestyle without the cost and complexity of hiring labor. The more I study these systems the more I am convinced that one has to approach use of automatic milking (milking robots) from a whole new perspective. Just like our successful freestall operations of today are more than "just letting the cows wander around a modified tie stall barn," AMS are more than just placing an automatic milking box in the old milking parlor and going to the golf course. To be successful, the entire dairy management system, including the operator, must be appropriate for the situation.

What's your "automatic feeling" when you hear about these automatic milking (AM) systems? Following are some observations, including some multiple-choice answers. Where do you fit?

- "Too expensive." Automatic milking systems

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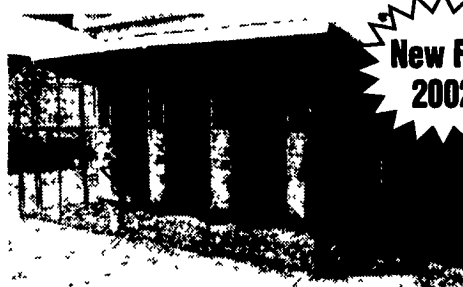
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