

# DairyCOP\$: Measure It, Manage It

ANDY ANDREWS  
Editor

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — When it comes to running a dairy farm, “you have to be able to measure it to manage it,” said Brad Hilty, senior extension associate with Penn State Dairy Alliance.

DairyCOP\$, or Dairy Cost of Production Analyzer, could be just the tool.

Hilty spoke to several dairy producers during a DairyCOP\$ Workshop for dairy owners and operators in early November at the Farm and Home Center.

The DairyCOP\$ program is simple: how much does it cost a dairy farmer to produce 100 pounds of milk?

Hilty noted that there are several key items to the program. A producer needs to look at the feed, a “big chunk of the production cost,” he noted, in addition to labor and overhead.

Those elements are inputted via computer to a spreadsheet. Producers can compare, through the DairyCOP\$ program, how they fare compared to other producers.

One spreadsheet example looked at how Lancas-



Brad Hilty, standing, instructs Diane and Sam Beller, Upperco, Md. at the recent DairyCOP\$ Workshop at the Farm and Home Center. Photo by Andy Andrews, editor

ter County dairy farmers were doing. “They can look at the weak spots in the operation, or the strong points, and see how they’re doing,” said Hilty.

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