

Ohio Study Charts Economic Effects Of Large Dairies

COLUMBUS, Ohio — An economic analysis of seven new large dairy farms in the Ohio counties of Paulding and Van Wert shows they have overall positive economic impacts in the local area, but the effect they will likely have on local government funds is vastly different between the two counties.

Brian Roe, an Ohio State University Extension agricultural economist who led the study, said he hopes the information helps communities throughout Ohio in the decision-making process as new dairy operations express interest in an area and when existing dairies decide to expand.

"When I arrived in Ohio in 1998, this issue was just on the horizon, and there were some very heated public meetings about possible impacts of the new dairies," said Roe, who is also a livestock economics researcher with the university's Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. "It was clear to me that some good, solid information could have helped these communities as they decided their future relative to large dairy facilities."

The seven dairies included in this study began operations between August 2000 and September 2002. They average 568 milking cows and 97 dry cows per operation.

The study, conducted with the assistance of local

agricultural and community development specialists with Ohio State University Extension, the dairy operators, and local county, township and school officials, examined two areas of impact.

"Economic impacts" are how the dairies affect

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Does High Production

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In addition, "there's not a single difference in the culling rate between high-producing herds and lower-producing herds," he said.

For high-producing cows "we'll try longer, so it may seem like it is harder to get them bred," he said.

In summary, "with good stockmanship the cow will reward you by staying healthy."

Also during the luncheon Kenneth Bailey, associate professor of dairy markets and policy, Penn State, discussed the dairy outlook for 2003.

H. Louis Moore, professor of agricultural economics, Penn State, gave the agricultural forecast for 2003.

Alvin Stoltzfus gave a report on Sowing Seeds in Romania to end the day's events.

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