

DAIRY INDUSTRY SURVEY RESULTS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Richard C. Maurer and Terry L. Lunsford

University of Kentucky

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In the spring and summer of 2007, the University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, Division of Regulatory Services and Department of Community and Leadership Development sponsored a survey of persons involved in the dairy industry. The purposes of the survey were to determine awareness and participation as well as assess quality and effectiveness of programs conducted by the Regulatory Services Milk Program. 199 completed surveys were returned for a response rate of 42 percent. Dairy industry occupation groups represented in the sample include laboratory managers (9%), laboratory technicians or “testers” (10%), milk transport company owner-operators (5%), milk haulers or “sampler-weighers” (45%), processor representatives (8%), producer organization or marketing agency representatives (8%), and others (15%).

Newsletters were the most frequently cited way that information from the milk program is received (35%), followed by letters and reports (28%) and personal contacts (15%). These methods of receiving information were rated according to importance as well. Newsletters were considered as an important or very important source of information by 90% of respondents. Eighty-seven percent of respondents felt that personal contact was important or very important, and email and the web site were rated as important or very important by two-thirds of the respondents. Overall, about three-fourths responded that they were mostly or completely satisfied with their ability to obtain information.

Survey results provided information on several other aspects of the milk program. A strong majority of respondents were aware of the various types of activities and services provided by the milk program. Over 70% answered that the milk program’s oversight of milk hauling procedures, milk hauling records, milk lab testing procedures, milk lab testing records, and milk payment and accounting records is a high priority. All of the topics included in milk program training and outreach seminars were rated as high priority topics.

Over 90% of survey respondents rated the milk program’s compliance methods of education and training, inspection and monitoring, and enforcement and regulatory action as very effective or effective. Also, over 90% rated the milk program as effective or very effective in carrying out its three primary missions of ensuring the accuracy of marketing raw farm milk in Kentucky, cooperating with other dairy groups to enhance Kentucky’s dairy industry, and providing services to dairy industry participants.

Respondents indicated that the five highest priorities for potential goals for future milk program emphasis are: emphasize the milk program’s lab efforts toward development of improved milk testing procedures; enhance Kentucky’s influence on dairy regulatory matters at the national level; increase the number of training programs offered for laboratories; conduct more dairy producer training programs; and structure the inspection program in a manner to provide producers more frequent test results.