
Iowa State University Dairy Farm

Joe Detrick, farm superintendent
Dairy Farm

History

At the end of WW II, Iowa State University purchased a tract of land on the south edge of Ankeny from the government for \$1.00 and dairy, beef, swine, and poultry were raised. The Ankeny dairy herd began when Holstein heifers were purchased from Iowa dairy producers. In 1974, land was provided for the establishment of Des Moines Area Community College. Today the farm has only dairy cattle and is focused on breeding research. When the ISU Dairy Farm in Ames closed in 2003, 200 dairy cattle were relocated to the Ankeny farm.

Mission

To conduct dairy research projects and communicate the results that impact the dairy industry activities directly and indirectly through businesses and organizations.

Farm Growth

Staff and employees at the ISU Ankeny Dairy Farm now manage over 600 head of dairy cattle, from bottle calves to lactating cows. Breeds of cattle on the farm today are Holstein primarily, along with Jersey, Guernsey, Brown Swiss, Ayrshire, and Milking Shorthorn. Along with the Farm Manager, there are 10 college students, 7 full-time and 10 part-time employees.

The lactating cows are housed in free stall metal or hoop buildings that bedded with sand. They are milked in a double 8 parallel parlor. Bottle fed calves are in 4X8 pens inside a barn. Weaned calves in larger pens also have access to the outside. All animals are rotated through pens according to their age development. The feed sources and amount is also dependent on their developmental stage and production as a lactating cow. Corn silage is produced on 160 acres of the 1200 acre farm and stored in bunker silos and bags. All other feed sources including whole cottonseed, grain, and hay are purchased from outside vendors.



Research

The main goal of Ankeny Dairy is to conduct research related to the dairy industry. The original Ankeny cattle are involved in an on-going genetic research project. Data collected on these animals are their complete health, growth, and production information. These cows are also researched on conception rates with hormone injections and on a treatment program to control mastitis after calving. All cows are bred through artificial insemination. Work continues to be done with the Brown Swiss Association on an embryo transfer program. The farm has completed feed trials with Pioneer/DuPont and e professors at Iowa State University. Pre- and post-milking teat dips are being tested.

Classes

Dr. Leuschen's services include confirmation of pregnancies in cows and overall health care of the cattle. Dr. Hopkins teaches VDPAM 416, a palpation class. For some animal science classes, students come to the farm, while other times the cattle are transported to Ames.



Outreach Activities

The Dairy Science Club members work with cattle for their Little North American show and their interactive milking showcase at the Iowa State Fair. Tours are available to interested groups. International guests, ISU students, and 4-H clubs have visited along with approximately 200 elementary students each year.

Future: Returning to Ames

South of Ames, a new site and facilities for the ISU Dairy Farm are under development with plans to move there by the fall of 2007. The herd continues to increase in size in preparation for the size of the new farm which will accommodate 450 lactating cows. Watch new farm develops through the online web cam located at <http://www.fpm.iastate.edu/webcam/dairy/>.