



DAIRY PROFIT TEAM APPLICATION

The Dairy Profit Team program provides financial support for farmers to encourage them to use a team-based approach to evaluate their operations and identify areas to improve performance and profits. Farmers select their own facilitator and team members.

If you are interested in participating complete the information below and email, fax or mail it to **Profit Teams** at:

profitteam@nyfvi.org; (315) 453-3827; 159 Dwight Park Circle Suite 104, Syracuse, NY 13209.

PLEASE PRINT:

Producer's Name _____ Farm Name _____

Address _____ Town/City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

County _____ E-mail _____ Phone Number _____

Number of dairy animals _____ Number of lactating cows (today) _____ Number of heifers under 12 Months _____

Number of heifers 12 months or older _____ Number of dairy animals sold in past 12 months _____

Average monthly pounds of milk shipped over the past six months _____

Number of acres cropped - Owned _____ Rented _____

Crops grown & acres of each _____

Operational information (check all that apply): Tiestall _____ Parlor _____ Robotics _____ Organic _____ Grazing _____

What record-keeping systems/programs do you currently use for your farm? (financial, production, crops, CAFO, other) _____

Have you used consultants on your farm? _____ If so, who? _____

What have been the major improvements or accomplishments at your dairy farm the past two years?

What are your long term goals for your farm?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

If you were selected for this program, we would be interested in monitoring your progress to evaluate the program and to promote it. Would you be willing to provide us with an annual self-audit/assessment of your progress for the next 3 years? YES _____ NO _____

Would you allow us to use your farm's performance information (would be listed as a farm number only) to demonstrate the results being achieved through use of the program? YES _____ NO _____

Please provide the name and phone number of an agri-business professional (veterinarian, lender, nutritionist, extension agent, etc.) you have worked with in the past two years who can help us assess the potential impact of the Profit Team on your farm.

_____ Phone Number _____

Team Facilitator (if none, NYFVI will suggest) _____ Facilitator's email _____

Anticipated Team Start Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____



Dairy Profit Teams: It's as Easy as 1, 2, 3!

At the New York Farm Viability Institute (NYFVI) we believe that bringing the right people together as a team to discuss a farm's operations and propose solutions can help a farm operate more profitably. The Dairy Profit Team program is designed to help you, as a farm owner and leader bring your advisors together and establish the routine of regular team meetings.

The Requirements

- **Commitment.** Identify your team members and commit to using a profit team for one year to help your farm identify and prioritize opportunities for improvement. You'll be committing to holding and reporting on 6 meetings over 12 months.
- **Start Holding the Meetings and then check-in.** After three meetings, the farm will need to tell us how it's going and email the minutes of meetings held. A simple template for minutes is provided upon enrollment. A W-9 for participating farms is also submitted at this point.
- **Finish 6 meetings and bookkeeping.** At 12 months, and no later than 15 months, the farm will need to send us the balance of the meeting minutes and a single reimbursement request using an excel sheet that is provided. NYFVI will reimburse up to \$3,000 dollars of the cost associated with the meetings.

1) Making the Commitment

- **Think about your farm.** What are its challenges, where are the opportunities? Who are its advisors? Talk to these people and learn how they feel a team approach might work on your farm. Many farms use the profit team approach to bring together their nutritionist, field crop advisor, veterinarian, extension educator and banker. Any employee with managerial responsibilities on the farm may also be included as well as anyone else you think would be appropriate.
- **Identify a facilitator.** The extension agent is often the facilitator, but does not need to be. The facilitator is responsible for working with the farm owner to make sure the meetings get scheduled, that an agenda is developed and circulated in advance and that meeting minutes are completed and shared with all attendees. Depending on the farm, the facilitator might "run" the meeting, keeping it focused and on track.
- **Commit to the program and complete the application form.** Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis as long as funds are available. Within a few weeks of submitting your application, you will receive a response.

2) Start Holding Meetings: *Plan the work. Work the plan. Hold individuals accountable for their progress.*

Some farms enter the program understanding where they want the team to focus, while other farms may use their team to help them prioritize the farm's goals and identify the steps to help them get there. Either approach is fine, what's important is that the meetings are effective forums for sharing information, discussing ideas and reaching decisions that create action. That means every meeting should have an agenda that is circulated in advance so that all team members come to the meeting fully prepared. Minutes should be circulated after the meeting, and should include action item assignments. Listed below is a simple way to think about how the meetings might work.

- **Meeting 1:** Share information about the farm and its long term goals to allow all team members to have a clear understanding of the operation and how the farm is doing. This is likely to trigger some follow-up for the next meeting.
- **Meeting 2:** By the end of the second meeting there should be clear agreement on the near term goals for the farm and the role of the individuals on the team to help you get there. This is a critical point. If you don't establish near term goals, you can easily get caught in a cycle of holding the same meeting over and over again. And that's the type of meeting that everyone hates.

- **Meeting 3:** Confirm the goal. Break it down into steps—a plan. Assign responsibilities. Leave the meeting, start working the plan. **Email meeting minutes from the first three meetings to NYFVI at profitteam@nyfvi.org.**
- **Meeting 4:** What happened as a result of the last meeting? Is it working? What are the obstacles in the way? Who will remove them? What's to be done between now and the next meeting?
- **Meeting 5:** What happened as a result of the last meeting? Is it working? What are the obstacles in the way? Who will remove them? What's to be done between now and the next meeting?
- **Meeting 6:** What happened as a result of the last meeting? Is it working? What are the obstacles in the way? Who will remove them? Where are we going from here?

3) **Finish and Bookkeeping:** The reporting requirements for the program are simple. After your third meeting, you should send us the minutes from the first three meetings. If you're holding effective meetings, these minutes should already exist. You'll also be asked to provide us a quick recap of how you think the team is going. These can be emailed to profitteam@nyfvi.org

After you have completed six meetings then you'll need to send in the rest of the meeting minutes and a simple excel sheet documenting the costs of bringing your team together. Farm Viability will reimburse up to \$3,000 of these costs. Many farms are able to hold these meetings within this budget, while others spend less and a few spend more. In any instance we reimburse up to \$3,000 of documented costs after all 6 meetings are completed. Reimbursement takes approximately 8 to 10 weeks.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please call Aileen Randolph at NYFVI. 315-453-3823, extension 102, or send her an email at profitteam@nyfvi.org