



# Agriculture Dairy Programming: July to September 2025



## Extension Dairy

### Educator Manuel Peña

Contributes to the structure and processes of dairy producers, conservation and financial groups and other dairy professionals.

Supports informed decision making by providing research-based information to achieve their objectives.

## Ongoing Needs Assessment

While the educator has built strong relationships and keeps building trust with the county's dairy farmers, the needs assessment remains an ongoing process. The objective is to develop a comprehensive, well-rounded understanding of the current state of the county's dairy sector

Main topics to focus on:

- Communication/language
- Safety/good practices training
- Calving and Nutrition
- Tractor safety Training
- Research on milk quality

As the needs assessment progresses, valuable connections are also formed with non-farming stakeholders such as nutritionists, veterinarians, and other industry professionals. These relationships often lead to meaningful conversations, collaborative opportunities, and sponsorships for our events

## Projects and collaborations for Dodge County

### ▪ Bovi-News. Bilingual newsletter

Although still new, the bilingual newsletter has been well received by dairy farmers across the region. It aims to improve understanding of daily practices, support employee engagement, and strengthen communication within dairy teams. Content is shaped by ongoing conversations with farmers, ensuring it remains relevant and useful. The newsletter also serves as a practical resource during team meetings and problem-solving discussions between managers and staff.

- **Evaluating strategies utilized in dairy farms to mitigate language barriers and their impact on workforce management, recruitment and retention**

In collaboration with Michigan State University and the Michigan Alliance for Animal Agriculture, UW-Madison Extension is conducting a research survey of both dairy farm employees and employers to examine strategies used to overcome language barriers.

### ▪ **Hometown Today – Radio Invitation**

The educator was featured on 95.3 WBEV's *Hometown Today* program, hosted by Daily Dodge, to discuss current Extension programming and initiatives. This media appearance offered a valuable opportunity to introduce himself to a broader regional audience and share Extension's mission.

### ▪ **Calving Management Bilingual Workshop**

With support from Zoetis, we developed a bilingual workshop aimed at bringing together farms primarily from Dodge and Jefferson counties. The workshop was offered on separate days, one in English and one in Spanish, drawing 13 and 30 attendees, respectively. Beyond the valuable content shared by the experts, these programs play a key role in bridging language gaps and strengthening communication across diverse dairy teams.

### ▪ **Nutrition at its basics (Bilingual articles)**

While farmers are highly knowledgeable, certain topics fall outside their core expertise. That's why we've been focusing on the basic nutrients in forages and their impact on dairy performance. So far, we've covered key concepts such as dry matter and fiber. The objective of these articles is to provide tools for the people involved in diet mixing, feeding and pushing.

## Forward Farm Safety Toolbox

A collaboration between Dairy, Farm Management, and Agricultural Safety and Health is developing a training program for workers. The goal is to create practical materials that farms can use to train personnel on a range of agricultural topics, from tractor operation to milking procedures.