

that are stressed to participants in MMPA's Milker Training Schools (MTS). Nearly 192 people attended this past season of MTS, which concluded at the end of March.

This year, MMPA Mastitis Management Supervisors Tom Herremans and Gil Johnson hosted nine schools, two of which were taught in Spanish.

Since 1997 when the schools were started, we have had nearly 2,148 people attend the schools, some attending multiple times. This year, several producers attended the MTS for a second time because they wanted to reinforce their knowledge and learn more concepts they may have forgotten from their previous attendance. They were not disappointed and have said their learning experiences will help to further improve milk quality on their farms.

Many people who have attended the MTS in the past are those who are actually performing

the milking on the farms. This includes new employees and people who just want to brush up on their skills and learn more productive techniques.

Having the people who milk the cows attend the MTS is a good thing; however, while attending one of this year's schools, it became very evident to me that all MMPA members would benefit from attending the schools, not just the people milking.

MMPA's Milker Training Schools teach much more than just milking techniques. They also offer in-depth instructions on mastitis prevention, cow physiology and reaction to stimuli, bacteriology and milker system function. After implementing many of the philosophies and procedures taught in the classes, many MMPA members have reported increased milk production, lower SCC and shorter milking times.

We feel it is so important that farm owners and managers understand the concepts taught at MTS, that we are in the process of developing a training program geared toward them. We will be scheduling next year's schools in the fall and will continue to offer the Spanish-speaking classes in addition to the regular MTS and possibly the new owner/manager classes. To best fit the needs of MMPA members, we want your input to know when and where you would like the schools to occur. A survey is sent out each fall to all producers, and it is very important that you fill it out to let us know what works best for you, so we can benefit the greatest number of members.

We will keep you posted as to the status and progress of our new managers school and milker training schools. This spring and

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MMPA Quality Premium Program

Somatic Cell Count premiums and deductions (in addition to Federal Order SCC Adjustments computed in the producer pay price) will be paid at the following levels:

- 50,000 or below +45¢ / cwt.
- 51,000 - 75,000 +40¢ / cwt.
- 76,000 - 100,000 +35¢ / cwt.
- 101,000 - 125,000 +30¢ / cwt.
- 126,000 - 150,000 +25¢ / cwt.
- 151,000 - 175,000 +20¢ / cwt.
- 176,000 - 200,000 +15¢ / cwt.
- 201,000 - 225,000 +10¢ / cwt.
- 226,000 - 275,000 +05¢ / cwt.
- 600,001 - 750,000 -10¢ / cwt.
- Over 750,000 -50¢ / cwt.

A payment of 5¢ / cwt. will be added for each of the following, if the count is equal to or below:

- 10,000 Raw Bacteria Count
- 20,000 Pre-Incubated (PI) Count

There will be a deduction of 10¢ / cwt. for the following criteria:

- Greater than 100,000 Raw Bacteria Count

A high raw count deduction will be waived if the producer has received the quality premium the previous three months for raw bacteria count.

To qualify for Raw, PI and Somatic Cell Count premiums there must **not** be any of the following during the month:

- Positive drug residue
- Abnormal freeze points
- High load count shipment or rejected load shipment
- #3 or #4 sediment *
- Raw Bacteria count over 100,000 *

The count levels for raw and PI will be determined on one test run per month.

** Note: These do not affect the somatic cell count premium.*

To qualify for MMPA volume premiums there must be:

- No abnormal freeze points during the month
- An average somatic cell count of 750,000 or less.

Great Lakes Manure Expo Set for July 27

Farmers interested in learning efficient manure management strategies can attend the 2006 Great Lakes Manure Handling Expo: *Manure, Keep it in the Root Zone*, July 27 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Fowler, Mich.

The free expo will include educational presentations about manure management, including the economics of manure, nutrient management, conservation practices, manure handling and odor control.

Commercial vendors will offer displays and demonstrations on manure handling, treatment equipment, businesses and organizations offering manure services, and products related to manure management.

The expo will also feature innovative and practical manure application strategies that will help farmers place and keep manure in the root zone, where it most benefits growing crops.

"This would include anything and everything that affects land application, ranging from innovative and advanced manure treatment systems at the livestock facility to manure application equipment and systems," says Dann Bolinger, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension educator for dairy and manure management based in Clinton County.

No fee or registration is required. For more information, call (989) 224-5240 or visit www.rootzone.msu.edu.

The 2006 Great Lakes Manure Handling Expo is sponsored by MSU Extension, Ohio State University Extension and Purdue University Extension.

Call MISS DIG Before You Dig

Many on-farm construction projects kick off in the spring. The MISS DIG System reminds everyone that if you are digging in Michigan, you must call MISS DIG at 1-800-482-7171.

Within 3 business days of your call, utility companies will locate and mark the approximate location of underground lines at no charge.

When digging near underground lines, MISS DIG recommends hand-digging to expose precise location of underground lines.

If you do not call MISS DIG and you damage an underground utility line, you will likely be responsible for the cost of repairs.

The call to MISS DIG is free, fast and it's the law. For more information go to www.missdig.org.

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summer watch the *Messenger* for feature articles by Tom and Gil that will help you achieve higher quality milk and improve milking system performance.

I am proud that many MMPA producers have made the commitment to improve milk quality on their farms, many of which are using techniques learned at MMPA's MTS. Our members' commitment to quality milk is evident by the growing list of members who are receiving MMPA quality awards each year and the amount of quality premiums MMPA pays out each month. Keep up the great work!



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