



# Quality Watch

By Gary Trimmer

MMPA Director Member Services/Quality Control

## Transitions within MMPA Member Services

Transition is a normal function in all businesses. It can be viewed as both moving the business from one ownership to another or moving individuals within a business from one position to another.

MMPA members are well aware of the transitions that take place on a dairy farm. As employees or owners leave the business individuals must be trained to perform jobs and/or manage the business. On dairy farms, transition is thought of as moving from one generation to another rather than hiring or promoting within a farm. At MMPA, transition means hiring, training and promoting employees to take the place of individuals that retire or leave the cooperative.

Feedback from the recent study conducted by our MSU Food Systems Fellowship Intern indicated members are concerned about maintaining their current member representative. Members have also voiced concerns over the years when MMPA member representatives' areas have changed. We are extremely sensitive to these concerns and will attempt to maintain consistency in the member representatives' work areas. However, there are some changes on the horizon that will certainly result in many MMPA members having a different member representative in the future.

While no one has set a firm date, we have several MMPA member representatives who are

likely to retire within the next few years, given their age and years of service. In order to make the transition process effective and seamless, we plan to promote, hire and train new member representatives. This process will not happen overnight, since the expertise our member representatives need in many areas requires significant training. Training takes time and we ask for your patience and understanding during this transition process.

A change already taking place is Dean Letter's promotion to "Manager of Producer Testing and Herd Health Programs." Dean will be working out of the Novi office starting this month. He is now responsible for administering and leading our herd health programs and testing, and will work under my direct supervision. As a result, we are replacing Dean in the field by re-assigning work and farm workloads to other member representatives.

Dean's promotion is just the first transition that will occur in the Member Services Department. As retirements occur and our Milking Systems Performance Assurance Program and demand for other specialists and services continues to grow, we will also need to make additional changes to other MMPA member representatives' workloads.

I believe these transitions will lead to a member services department that will be able to better serve our members by offering enhanced

and new programs by qualified and well-trained staff. MMPA is committed to making sure our member representatives are the best trained and qualified anywhere. Our members expect and deserve nothing less.

We look forward to working with our members as our transition process begins.

**Producers scoring 95 percent or more on Grade A Surveys and Federal Check Ratings**

**MMPA Defiance Ohio BTU**

*December 2008*

- Amos & Mary Stoll Jr.
- Hermans's Holsteins LLC
- Terry Norden
- Emmons Farms LLC
- Henricks & Krieger LLC