

AIMS AND GOALS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
DAIRY SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

by H. H. (Jack) Van Horn, Chairman

Like dairymen, the faculty of the Dairy Science Department are working to improve the efficiency of the food production. This involves conducting research for new information and distributing this information through teaching and Extension Programs so that it might be used. Our immediate and long range goals might briefly be summarized by the one word - excellence. More than any other thing we need to excell in the things that do so that we know we are contributing to new information and at the same time providing the kind of educational program so that students and producers can benefit from them.

The 13 faculty in the Dairy Science Department are the key people of this unit. These 13 include five faculty in our Dairy Foods section, seven faculty in the Dairy Production section and the Chairman. Of the total faculty time that is spent in the department, approximately 55% is spent on research, 25% Extension, and 20% teaching. This number of 13 includes two new faculty that will be joining the department during the summer of 1971. Dr. Dan Webb has been hired as an Extension Dairy Specialist and will assume many of the duties previously handled by Clarence Reaves. He is from Mississippi and obtained a M.S. degree from the University of Florida and a Ph.D. degree from Kansas State University. His responsibilities will be primarily in the area of dairy cattle management including the use of records in managing cows and the overall dairy enterprise, and reproductive physiology.

The other new faculty member will be Dr. Kermit Bachman who will be in the Dairy Foods section of the department and will lead a research program in a new area for us, protein chemistry. The other members of the faculty are:

Dr. Charles Wilcox - Dairy Genetics
Dr. Sidney Marshall, Dr. Jim Wing - Nutrition
Dr. Herb Head - Animal Physiology (Nutrient Metabolism)
Dr. Bill Thatcher - Animal Physiology (Reproduction)
Dr. Ken Smith, Dr. Leon Mull - Dairy Microbiology (Dairy Foods)
Professor Walt Krienke - Dairy Chemistry (Dairy Foods)
Dr. Barney Harris - Dairy Production Extension
Dr. Bronson Lane - Dairy Foods Extension

This is a group of dedicated people that have had much to do with many excellent dairy programs in Florida. However, none of us are really satisfied with where we now are. We think improvements are needed at all levels in order to keep pace with expanding and improving dairy industry in Florida.

In research, we feel we have to develop a strong basic research program that produces new information on the principles of how animals function and principles of food product development and distribution. Applications from this information can be developed quite rapidly once a new principle is understood. Research is also needed that applies directly to producer problems. Our research herd at the University of Florida is a good herd but we expect to improve the performance so that our research can be done at a level performance more nearly at that being strived for by Florida's dairymen rather than at a level many are already achieving. Much of the research will be

designed to help improve the environment or overcome environmental handicaps that currently limit milk production.

One of the main goals of the Dairy Science Department is to improve our undergraduate program. There is an excellent future for an undergraduate student in Dairy Science. This is true primarily because there has not been enough students available to fill positions that people would like to fill with Dairy Science graduates if they were available. Florida is fairly unique in having its dairy industry completely centered around large herds that function primarily with hired labor. Thus, the capable students that are able to manage people as well as cows should be able to find very profitable employment in managerial positions within the herd. We have made some advancements in this area. We currently have a nucleus of about ten students that have been quite active in the revitalization of the Dairy Science Club starting in January of 1971. This represents a great increase in student interest over previous years and makes us all feel optimistic about the potential for the Dairy Science Department obtaining a more realistic share of the Agricultural students and also of Agriculture getting a more realistic share of the total student population.

Extension programs also will be looked to for advancement. For example, Florida has had a strong dairy records program but one of the challenges we have give Dr. Webb as he comes into his new position in Extension, is to work with dairymen until we are satisfied that we have a record keeping that is helpful to them in cow selection and management then work to expand participation in this program in order to bring the benefits to as many dairymen as possible.

All of the programs of the Dairy Science Department center around people. There are many people besides the faculty that are vitally involved in the programs we offer. For example, John Boggs, Herdsmen at the Dairy Research Unit, is a key person in all of our production programs. The secretaries, research technicians and all of the rest of the help contribute to this effort.

In addition to the goals already mentioned, there are a few long range goals that directly affect all of us. We feel that one of the main needs of Dairy Production programs in Florida is in the area of improving environmental conditions that affect large dairy herds. Thus, we have proposed that a new research position be added to the Dairy Science Department that would work in the area of Environmental Physiology. Some of the areas that might be worked on through this position would be such things as heat stress for lactating cows, etc. Other needs for faculty exist in Dairy Production Extension and Dairy Marketing. IFAS is continually requesting new positions and if IFAS is granted new positions, we hope we will be fortunate enough to gain one or more of them in the Dairy Science Department.

Another long range goal is an addition to the Dairy Science building. Currently four of our faculty are housed at the Dairy Research Unit. They function very efficiently in this setting. However, there would be much to be gained in having all faculty housed together. We are also without any classroom space that is available in our own building. Thus, we do not get the student traffic through our area that might be beneficial. We know that justification for such a building will depend upon our own productivity. However, advancements are being made. We feel we are planning the kind of programs that will help in the justification to this addition to the Dairy Science Building in the future.