

Impact of the Tri-State Dairy Nutrition Conference

Maurice L. Eastridge¹
Department of Animal Sciences
The Ohio State University.

~ CELEBRATING 25 YEARS ~

The Tri-State Dairy Nutrition Conference, Fort Wayne, IN is a yearly conference for feed industry personnel, nutrition consultants, university personnel, veterinarians, and interested dairy producers. The conference began in 1992 as a spin-off from the 1991 Ohio Dairy Nutrition Conference. In September 1991, a meeting to discuss planning a tri-state conference was held with faculty and Extension staff from Purdue, Michigan State, and The Ohio State Universities. The first Conference was held May 20 - 21, 1992 on the Purdue campus in Fort Wayne, IN. A Planning Committee was formed after the 1992 Conference. Due to a continuous expansion of attendance, the conference moved in 1996 from the Purdue campus to the Grand Wayne Convention Center. Because of renovation of the Grand Wayne Center, the Conference was held for one year (2005) at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum in Ft. Wayne. An abstract about the success of the Conference was presented at ADSA in 1999 (J. Dairy Sci. 82 (Suppl. 1):56) and was listed among successful dairy nutrition conferences in the special centennial issue of the Journal of Dairy Science published in 2006 (J. Dairy Sci. 89:1121-1368). The success of the Tri-State Dairy Nutrition Conference continues to be demonstrated by attendance (Figure 1) and citation or reprinting of proceedings manuscripts in the scientific, international, and popular press literature. The Proceedings are ordered by many people within and outside the U.S., placed on reserve in the USDA National Agricultural Library, and indexed by the Institute for Scientific Information.

Presentations and proceedings papers are oriented to timely, in-depth, and practical dairy nutrition topics to meet on-farm nutritionists' needs and provide the results of recent research findings. A tradeshow and rotating industry-sponsored pre-conference have been a part of the annual Conference for many years. In 2016, a hot topics breakfast was initiated and a post-conference program was offered. A workshop program was began in 2013 on Monday afternoon with the focus the first year on nutrition formulation computer programs and has been continued since (2014 – dairy records management software; 2015 – TMR management software; and 2016 – animal monitoring technology). A conference web page was launched in 1997, with the current site being <http://tristatedairy.org>. The attendance by students at the Conference has continued to grow, and we presently provide an undergraduate presentation program (original research or literature review) and separate MS and PhD research presentation categories. We offer free registration and lodging to all students attending the Conference. The Conference has been contributing annually \$1,000 to the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge because of its value to students and the dairy industry. Continuing education credit is offered to veterinarians and members of the American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists (ARPAS). ARPAS exams also are administered at the Conference.

The Planning Committee has consisted of five feed industry personnel, one nutrition consultant, one veterinarian, one Extension staff from one of the three host universities, and a faculty member from each of the three universities. An ad hoc member who represents the company hosting the pre-conference and an OSU conference assistant also met with the Planning Committee. The faculty from the three universities have provided continuous Committee membership, but the other eight members have served 3-year staggered terms. The Committee has been meeting twice each year; once in September to plan the next Conference and it meets during the Conference.

Another milestone for the Conference occurred in 2015 when it was removed for accounting purposes from The Ohio State University to a non-profit organization 501 (c) (3) status. The purpose of this was to sustain the future of the Conference through changing staff at universities and policy changes at universities. A constitution

¹Contact at: 2029 Fyffe Court, 221B Animal Science Building, Columbus, OH 43210-1095, (614) 688-3059, FAX (614) 292-1515, eastridge.1@osu.edu

and bylaws were developed and an outside firm is providing the accounting services. The Conference now operates with a Board of Directors, with a somewhat similar structure to the previous Planning Committee.

Multi-state programs similar to the Tri-State Dairy Nutrition Conference can serve a vital role in bringing research and Extension faculty from different universities and allied-industry professionals together to meet the educational needs of a rapidly changing dairy industry. The Conference has resulted in major impacts to the feed industry and dairy producers, and influenced students seeking careers in animal nutrition and the direction of some research programs. *Your continued support of this Conference is much appreciated.*

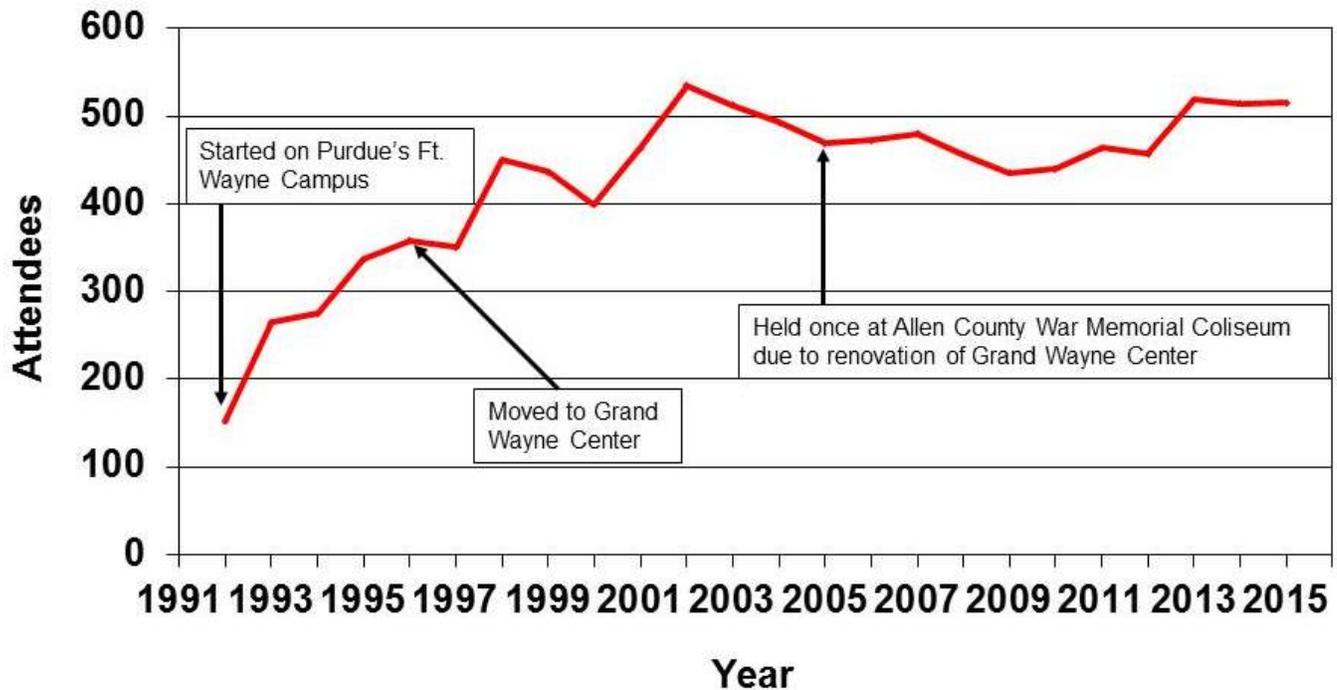


Figure 1. Attendance at the Tri-State Dairy Nutrition Conference.