

# Increasing the nutritionist's chances of success

## Working along with employees at the farm



Felix Soriano, MS, PAS  
215-738-9130  
[felix@apndairy.com](mailto:felix@apndairy.com)  
apndairy.com

# Why should I care about labor management?

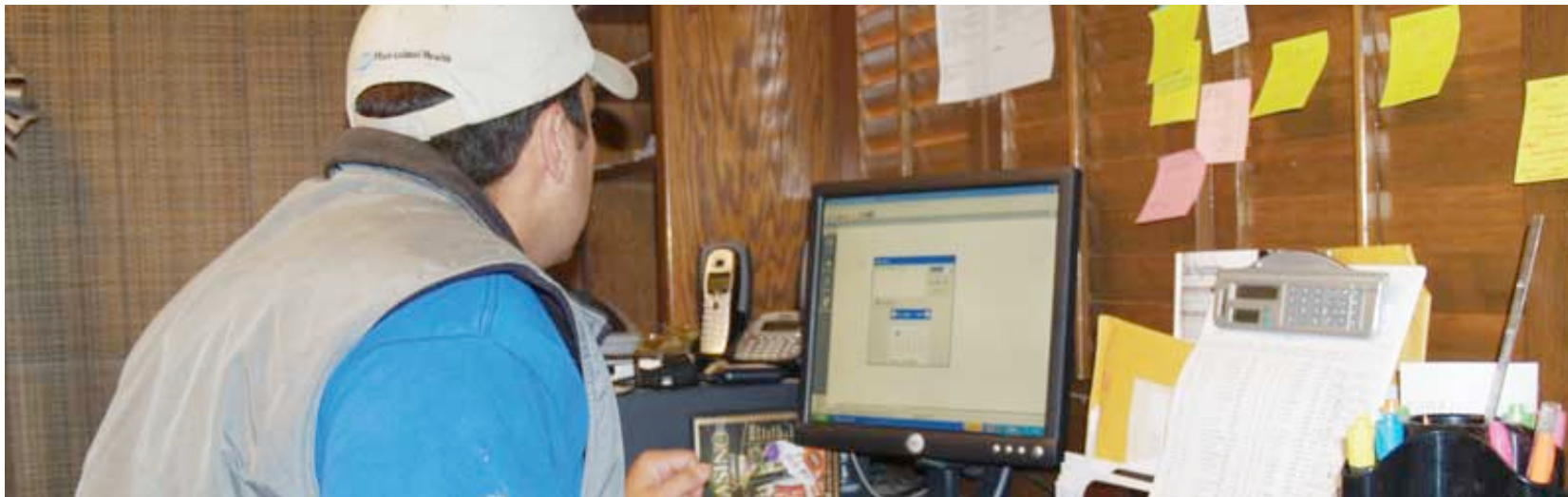
- Because it can make your life easier as a nutritionist!
- Because you can spend more time focusing on how to improve your customer's profitability
- Because it makes it easier to set up better risk management and monitoring systems
- Because you can get less variations and better day-to-day consistency in your feeding program



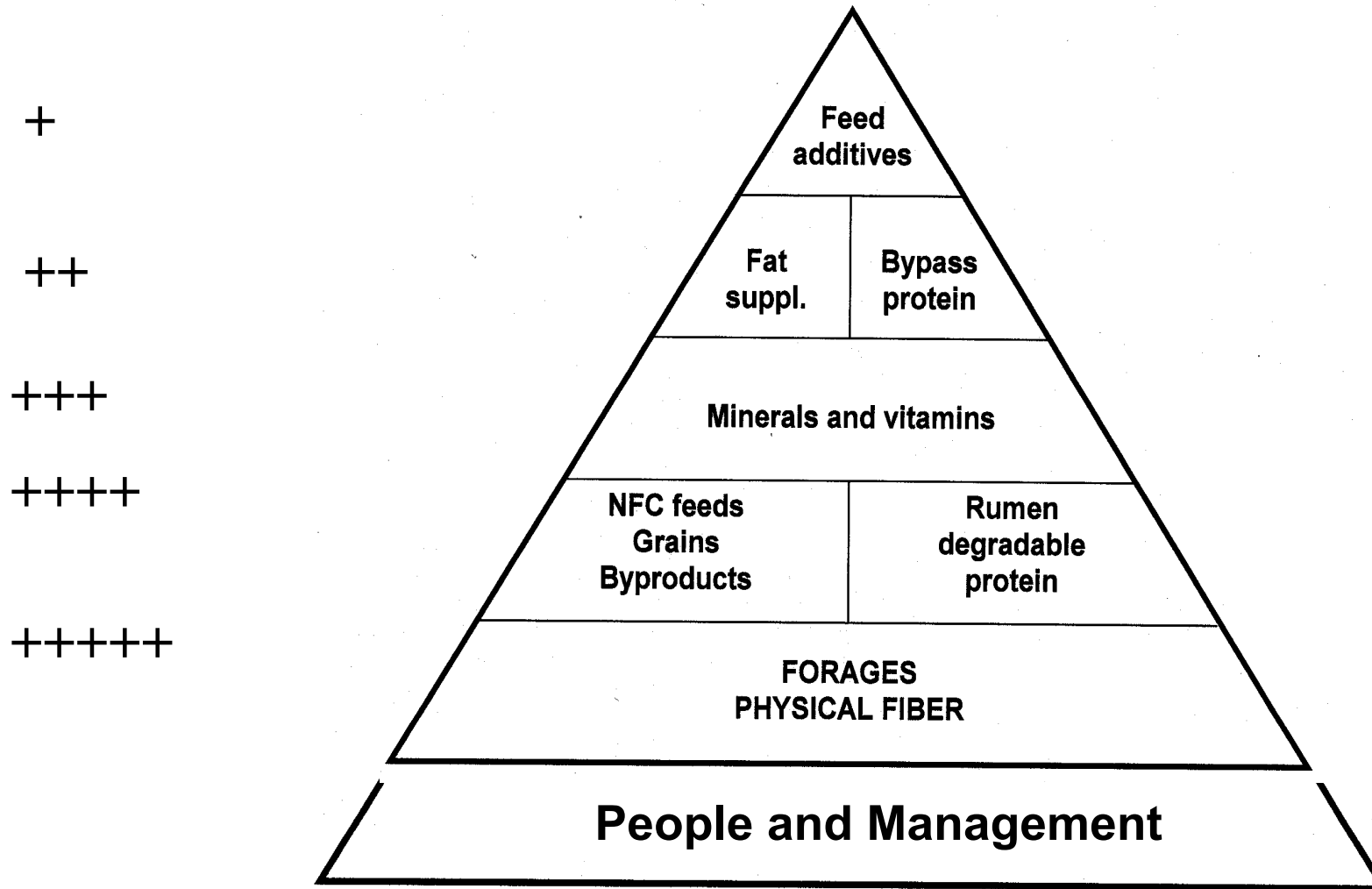
**Because it makes you look better as a nutritionist!**

# What is the nutritionist's job?

Cows will make lot's of milk with this diet!



# Foundation for success



\*Pyramid by Rick Lundquist, 1995

# Have you experienced this with any of your herds?

- Daily milk fat variations of 1 or more points?
- Milk protein variations of ½ a point or more?
- MUN Variations?
- Manure inconsistency
- TMR variability
- Big variations in milk production



# Control the outcome of your feeding program!

**Your goal: Consistent feeding. Cows should eat the same ration every day.**



**RATION 1**



**RATION 2**



**RATION 3**

# Ask your customer or prospect...

- Is there a feeding protocol?
- Does every person that feeds the cows know about it?
- Do they always follow the protocol?
- Has the feeder been properly trained?



# Things to include in the feeding protocol

- Feeding time
- Loading sequence
- Mixing time
- Mixing accuracy
- Time of preparation before feeding to the cows
- Mixer maintenance (eg: scales)



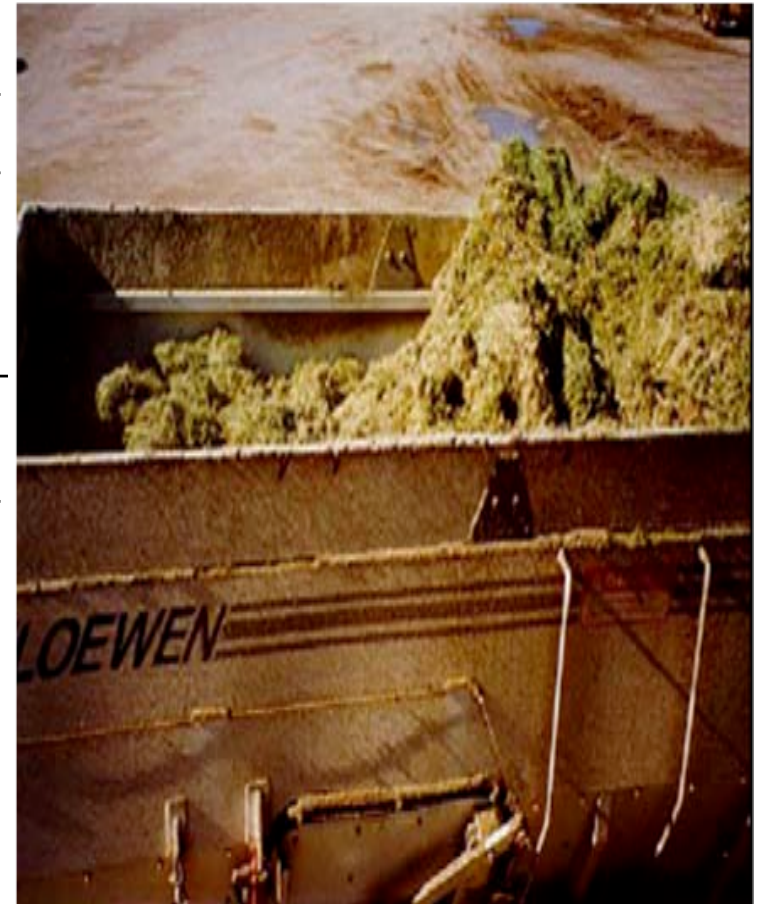
# Typical Mixing Errors

- Small size loads (pre-fresh, fresh, etc)
- Batch too big (overloading mixer)
- Too much hay in the mixer
- Incorrect loading sequence
- Not enough mixing
- Too much mixing
- Not accounting for forage moisture variations
- Inaccurate loading weights



# Effects of over mixing

	<u>% in top screen</u>
Farms mixing TMR > 15 min.	4.8 %
Farms mixing TMR < 15 min.	7.6 %
<u>Goal</u>	<u>8 - 10 %</u>
Herds with high incidence of laminitis (29%)	3.5 %
Herds with low incidence of laminitis (0%)	7.9 %



Possin et al., 1995

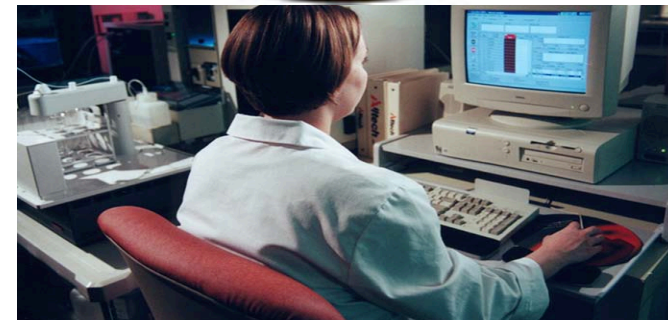
# Evaluating mixing uniformity

1. How do you and your customers evaluate TMR uniformity and quality ?
2. How often?
3. How is the sampling done?



# Mixing quality and uniformity evaluation & training

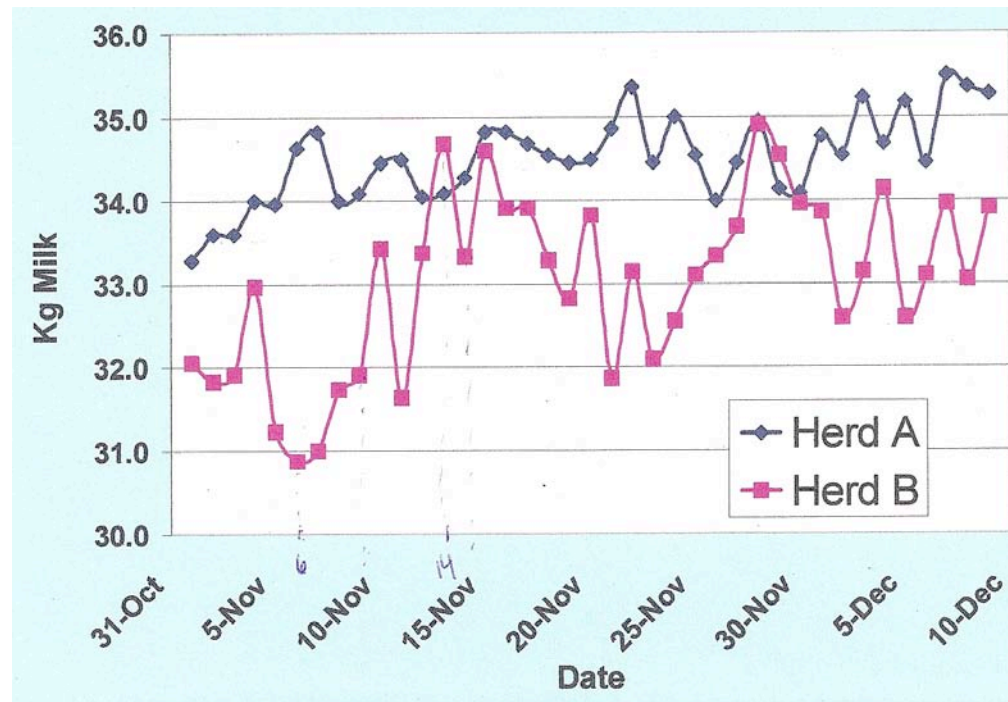
1. Use the Penn State particle separator
2. Also determine uniformity by using an ingredient easy to identify and in low inclusion rate (ie: WCS, pellets, etc)
3. TMR lab analysis



# Bunk management training and evaluation



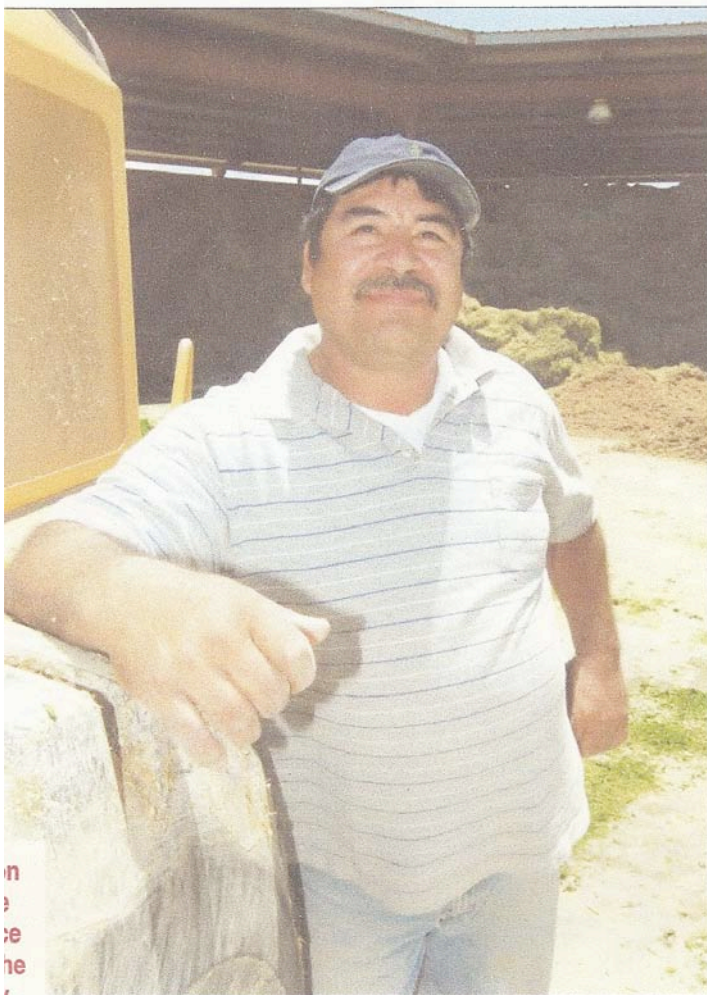
# Consistency – Key to feeder's success!



W. Stone, Dept. of animal science, Cornell Univ., 2000

# How much time do you spend with the feeders?

Use the 80:20 rule!



Keep proper and accurate records of them, the training program

# Why is the feeder's role so important?

Training feeders can help...	100 cows	200 cows	500 cows	1000 cows
Reduce shrink by 2.5%	\$1,026	\$2,052	\$5,130	\$10,260
Reduce feed refusals from 5% to 3%	\$3,504	\$7,008	\$17,520	\$35,040
Reduce operator error by 20 lbs / load	\$4,161 (1 load)	\$8,322 (2 loads)	12,483 (3 loads)	\$24,966 (6 loads)
<b>Total savings</b>	<b>\$8,691</b>	<b>\$17,382</b>	<b>\$35,133</b>	<b>\$70,266</b>

# How much is your time worth?

- How often do you test forage DM at the farm?
- How often do you test for urine pH in close up cows?
- Do you screen manure?
- How often do you screen TMR's?
- How often do you do BCS?



# Why not train somebody at the farm to do it for you?



- It will save you time
- More reliable people working with you
- Catch problems on time
- Value added support to your customers
- You can focus more on how to make more money for you and your customers

# Don't focus only in nutrition and feeding!



# Improving parlor performance

Parlor performance goals & incentives			
Cows / hr	Milk / hr	Turns / hr	Incentive
195	4,500	4	\$20
205	5,500	5	\$30
225	6,000	5.5	\$40

- Training & refreshers
- Bonus program based on performance
- Keeping employees motivated

Saving more than ½ hour per milking!



# Economic impact of improving parlor performance

Parlor performance & milk production 1,100 cow herd			
Reduced time / milking	Additional resting time	Additional milk / day	Benefit per month
¼ hr	2/3 hr	2.25	\$12,622 (\$151,464)
½ hr	1.5 hrs	4.5	\$25,245 (\$302,940)

- Cows will spend more time lying down
- More milk and profits
- Improved labor efficiency
- More work can get done

Assuming milk price @ \$17

Assuming 3 extra # of milk for every extra hour of rest (Hill & Grant, JDS, 2007)

# How much is milk quality training worth?

Tests	\$0.75 Premium	\$0.60 Premium	\$0.50 Premium	\$0.40 Premium	\$0.30 Premium	\$0.20 Premium
<b>SPC</b>	<=5,000	<=5,000	<=5,000	<=10,000	<=10,000	<=10,000
<b>SCC</b>	<=75,000	<=100,000	<=125,000	<=150,000	<=225,000	<=300,000
<b>Inhibitor / Antibiotic</b>	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
<b>250 cow herd example</b>	<b>\$4,500</b>	<b>\$3,600</b>	<b>\$3,000</b> <b>(\$36,000)</b>	<b>\$2,400</b> <b>(\$28,800)</b>	<b>\$1,800</b> <b>(\$21,600)</b>	<b>\$1,200</b> <b>(\$14,400)</b>

Milk production = 80 lbs / cow per day

# How much is heat detection training worth?

Times Observed	% of Cows Observed in Heat		
	5	10	20
1	26	52	63
2	36	72	86
3	39	79	95
4	49	82	98

- The more people watching cows the better chances to catch cows in heat
- If each day open costs \$2.00, then each heat missed costs \$42.00
- Good training can be worth more than **\$24,000 / year**

# Summary

- Investment in development and human capital pushes productivity up by 8.5% (U Penn research)
- Avoid early and costly mistakes
- Better opportunities of reaching goals
- Improve labor efficiency and dairy profitability
- Reduce employee turnover

# Summary

- Key areas where you can have an impact:
  1. Feeding management
  2. Parlor management
  3. Heat detection training
- Small management and labor improvements will have a bigger impact than any feed additive in the market

# Summary

- By providing management support you will get a better insight about what is truly going on in the farm
- Become a true partner and a key member of their team
- Use your resources!
  1. Dr. Kirk
  2. Dual calling / twinning program
  3. Use external consultants
  4. Use those suppliers that will provide value added support in the field

# It's easier to fire the feed salesperson than the veterinarian! So...

1. Always think about ways to make the farmer's life easier
2. Think about ways to improve their profitability
3. Communicate and interact with all the employees!



# Thank you!

