



Telling Your Story: Connect with Your Community

Creating a public relations plan for your operation

February 2009

DMS DAIRY MANAGEMENT INC.

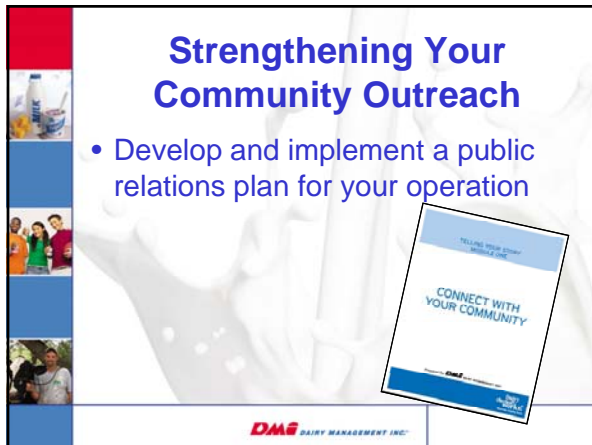


Community Outreach

- What does community outreach mean to you?
- What the dairy industry is doing
 - Dairy promotion's role
 - Communications
 - Market research
 - Spokesperson Network
 - Web site (dairyfarmingtoday.org)
 - Planning, counsel, training





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Strengthening Your Community Outreach

- Develop and implement a public relations plan for your operation



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Why Community Outreach is Important

- Puts a face on Ag
- Leads to better community relations
- Improves understanding of Ag and increases consumer confidence
- Helps gain support from opinion leaders



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Twin Birch Dairy

- Dirk Young, NY dairy producer
- Involved in his community



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Twin Birch Dairy Web Site



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Twin Birch Dairy Mission Statement

Twin Birch Dairy will strive to operate an environmentally friendly dairy farm business that will provide a good livelihood for its principals as well as its employees



Twin Birch Dairy EPA News Conference

- Initial announcement – EPA national air emissions study
- Local & national media




Twin Birch Dairy Manure Spill

- “We’ve been here 50 years now. We’ve got a lot of equity built up there. A disaster would clean us out. It’s not what we want.”
- “We’ve got it minimized to the best of anybody’s ability.”
- “This is our first incident. We feel sick about it, but I’m hopeful that this is almost past us now and it’s not a life-changing event for anybody.”



Public Relations

“Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed.”
– Abe Lincoln




Public Relations

A planned and sustained effort to establish credibility and understanding between an organization (your operation) and its audiences

PR is the art of earning and leveraging the trust of your operation’s stakeholders.





The Purpose of Public Relations

- Better community relationships
- Increased consumer confidence
- Improved understanding of Ag
- Support from opinion leaders

Limits of Public Relations



- Can't make large deposits in the credibility bank on demand
- Can't control reporters
- Can't stop a problem from happening
- Can't correct bad practices

Case Studies

- What can we learn from them?

Dairy Manure Spill New York, 2005

- 3 million gallons of manure spilled into Black River
- Killed 250,000 fish

The New York Times

Workers Trying to Contain Effects of Big Spill Upstate

By MICHELLE YORK
Published: August 15, 2005

CARTHAGE, N.Y. — Three million gallons of liquid cow manure poured into the Black River sometime around Thursday morning. The spill occurred when a wall of the reservoir at Milk's Farm, one of New York's largest dairy farms, gave way.

Workers' efforts to contain the spill failed and in the end the contamination was roughly a fourth the size of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

The spill has already affected several communities in the Adirondack region, especially those in the tourist industry who rely on the river. But perhaps the largest and most lingering effect will come to the occupants of the river itself. Experts are estimating millions of trout, bass, pickerel, pike and walleye will be lost before the incident is over.



What Did They Do Wrong?

- No deposits in the credibility bank
- Didn't cooperate with local organizations or media
- "No comment"



The New York Times



Investigators said they did not yet know whether XXXX negligent or the victim of some kind of industrial accident. XXXX, a 3,000 and 55 employees, the sprawling farming complex is one of the larger employers in the region, which depends on agriculture and tourism to survive.


Much of the product is used for kosher milk, residents said, shipped to outlets in New York City. Mr. XXXX said he had no previous spills from the farm.

The farm's manager declined to comment, saying, "I'm too busy cleaning up the mess to talk now."




Repercussions

- \$2.2M in fines and projects
- \$1.5M in environmental projects
- A loss of credibility for their business and the industry



What Should They Have Done?

- Have a proactive PR/outreach plan in place
 - Credibility bank was empty
- Respond faster
- Designate a spokesperson
- Announce action steps



Dairy Promotion Stepped In

- Media-trained dairy producers who responded on behalf of industry
- Coordinated communications with agricultural organizations
 - Helped dairy organizations speak with one voice





What Happened Next?

- Two more spills in NY
- Media-trained dairy producers reached out to neighbors
- Outcome: No negative impact on industry



Vir-Clar Farms Fond du lac, WI

- Third generation
- 1,300 cows
- 12' manure pit beneath the barn
- 500' from lake
- Lake Association
- Newsletters, open house
- "Producing Milk & Power for America"

Cozy Cow Dairy Greeley, CO

- Farm tours
- Web site







Paul Fetzer Plum City, WI

- Post football game parties Paul served bottles of milk instead of soda
- Now order 100 bottles of milk/week; soda is left over
- Brings the community together




Gam Lake Dairy Petaluma, CA

A night to remember

Community Recognition Awards honor pride of Petaluma

By BRENDA ALLEN

A midweek crowd of cheering supporters welcomed recipients of the 2007 Petaluma Community Recognition Awards on Friday at the Sherman Hotel.

"Petaluma is known as the city that cares," said Carol Kitch, "so it's a privilege that we share our midweekers. So hundreds of audience individuals who show their support and memories to look their neighbors

might have a better life."

Kathy, president of the Petaluma Area Chapter of Consumers and John Burns, partner of the Petaluma Agricultural Center, officiated, representing the sponsors of the annual award.

Carol Ann Liborio, was announced as Citizen of the Year by Janet Riosola of the Petaluma Educational Foundation. Liborio is president of Alphabet (Inc), which serves

See BRENDA, page 11

Margaret Gambonini received the Excellence in Agriculture award from Twyny Tuscott.

"I entered into the industry 44 years ago and I've loved every minute of it," said Gambonini, whose 95-year-old mother was in the audience.

Dairy farming generates \$100 million in annual sales in Sonoma County and provides countless jobs to help our community thrive, she said.

"Because my family, my friends and business partners continue to support me and the dairy industry, you are all part of this award," she said.

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Commonalities

- Built relationships
- Demonstrated cooperative spirit
- Appeared honest and open
- Identified community self interest versus their own self interest

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Dairy Farm Expansion Message Testing

*Reactions to issues and messages in four dairy communities
May 2005*

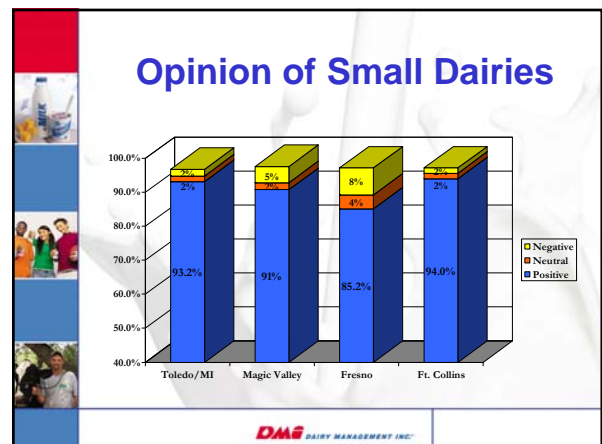
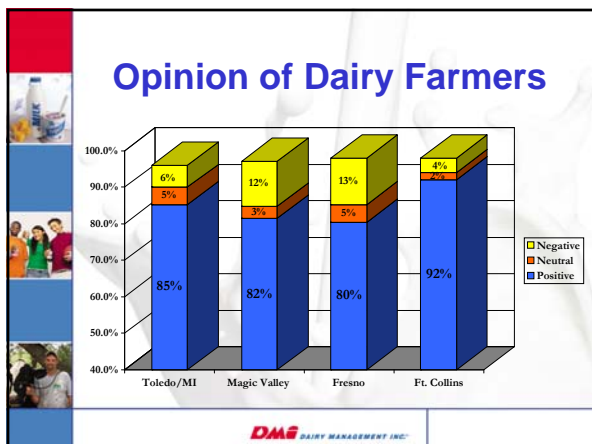
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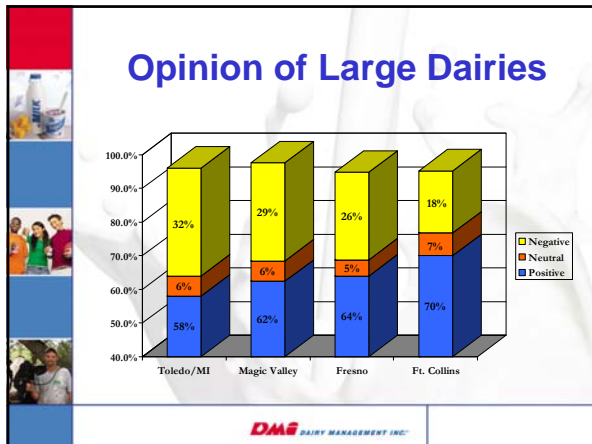
Goals

Help determine...

- Community attitudes/concerns
- Impact on dairy consumption
- Best-tested messaging
- "Community-based" action plan

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“How Well are Dairy Farmers Doing in Terms of...”

All Markets
0 – 10 (Poor – excellent)

	Mean	Don't know
Protecting water quality	7.1	16%
Caring for their animals	7.8	13%
Using water responsibly	7.6	17%
Respecting their neighbors	7.4	10%
Protecting environment	6.9	8%

Concern with Larger Farms

“How concerned are you with the trend toward larger dairy farms in the dairy industry?”

	Toledo	Magic Valley	Fresno	Ft. Collins	Avg. (All Markets)
Mean	6.3	5.9	5.5	5.7	5.8

Using a scale from zero to ten, where zero means you are not at all concerned and ten means you are extremely concerned

- ### Key Message Summary
- Rural Neighbors Want ...
- Assurance that dairy producers care about their community, even as their farms grow larger
 - Assurance that government regulations are in place, and that producers are working cooperatively with government and civic groups
 - Facts and proof points, not rhetoric (e.g., caring for water quality makes good business sense)

- ### Social Responsibility
- Show the public you are conducting business responsibly
 - Show your employees, neighbors and visitors you care about the same things they care about

Starbucks


- Starbucks built entire brand on social responsibility



Ethics and Openness

- Consumers are skeptical of messages and images
- Consumers look “behind” the image for the truth
- **You** are the person behind the image

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Developing a Credo

- A statement about what your operations values and stands for
- Guiding principles on your animals, product, employees and family, environment, law, outside expertise, industry, community
- Place on display for others to see

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Developing a Social Responsibility Plan

- Guides the actions and decisions of all involved on the dairy
- Includes mission statement, tagline, logo, contact information
- Provides an overview of your business, history, focus, animal care, environmental practices, employees, product, community involvement, awards, etc.

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Consumer Expectations for Social Responsibility

- Clean air and water
- Safe food
- Good animal treatment
- Environmental sustainability
- Abide by laws and regulations
- Reasonable price
- Fair treatment of workers

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Top Five Talking Points About My Dairy

- How does your dairy benefit the community?
- How do you care for the environment?
- What do you provide to the world?
- How do you give back to your community?

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Mission Statement

- Communicate the value of your dairy
 - What you do
 - Vision of what you want to become
 - Philosophies and values
 - What distinguishes you

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What's Your Tagline?

- “Producing Milk & Power for America.”
— *Vir-Clar Dairy, Fond du lac, Wisconsin*
- “We are only borrowing the land.”
— *Gustafson's Dairy Farm, Green Cove Springs, Florida*
- “Nourishing the land that nourishes us all.” — *Traders Point Farm, Zionsville, Indiana*
- “Where the cream still rises to the top.”
— *Wright Dairy, Alexandria, Alabama*

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Word-of-Mouth Marketing

- Definition: Activities that generate personal recommendations
- Use conversation and the Internet to educate people about your dairy
- People who have a positive image of your dairy will “spread the word”
- More valuable than other forms of marketing/advertising

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Everyone is a Spokesperson

- Family members
- Employees
- Consultants

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Additional PR Tools

- Business Card
- Brochures, Fact Sheets, Newsletters
- PowerPoint Presentations
- Electronic marketing
– Web Site

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Choosing a Lead Spokesperson

- Is easy to get along with
- Rarely loses his/her cool
- Thinks well on his/her feet
- Shines under pressure
- Is good at following up on the details
- Is willing and has time to prepare for interviews
- Has experience with public speaking

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When Stuff Happens

- Manure spill
- EPA visit
- Community group opposition
- Media inquiries
- Odor or fly complaints
- Relocation plan
- Dairy farm worker issues
- Alleged mistreatment of animals

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Develop Community Outreach Goals

- What's realistic?



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Industry Resources

S/R name
Phone number

David Pelzer, Dairy Management Inc.
847-627-3233
Communityoutreach@rosedmi.com

Additional resources listed in your manual



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