

10th Mid-Atlantic Dairy Grazing Conference

Barriers to Adoption of Pasture-Based Dairying in the Southeast

Pasture-Based Grazing Systems in the US-Southeast-Survey Results

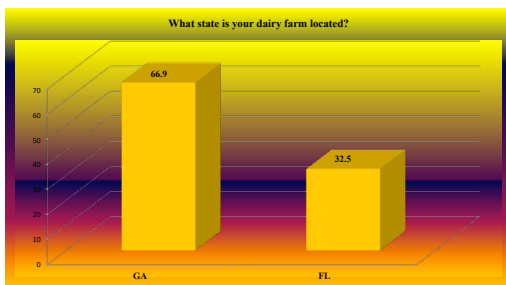
Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim
Fort Valley State University



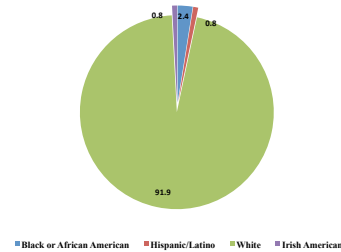
Introduction

- In spite of the perceived benefits to pasture-based dairying, adoption of this production method has been slower in the Southeastern US than many have hoped.
- In 2013, a survey was conducted in Georgia and Florida by FVSU to determine how many farms were utilizing pasture-based dairying in the region and to determine the barriers to adoption of pasture-based dairying.
- Approximately 120 responses

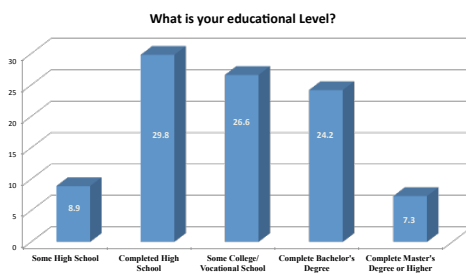
Q42: Which state is your dairy farm located?



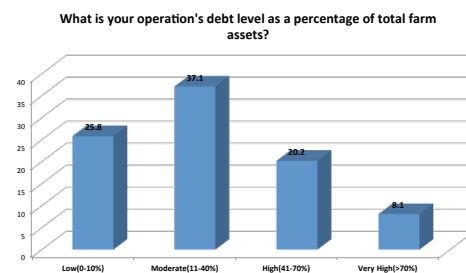
Race



Q33: What is the highest education level you have attained



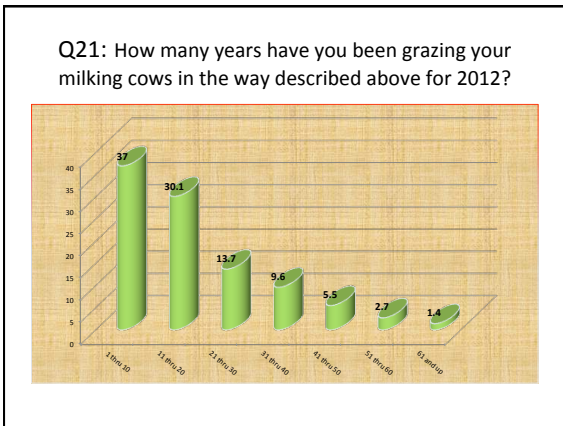
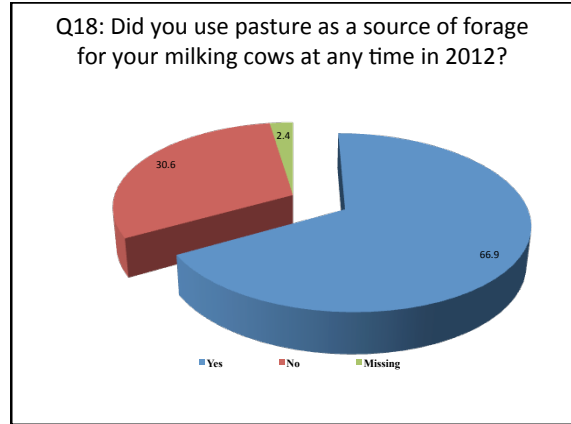
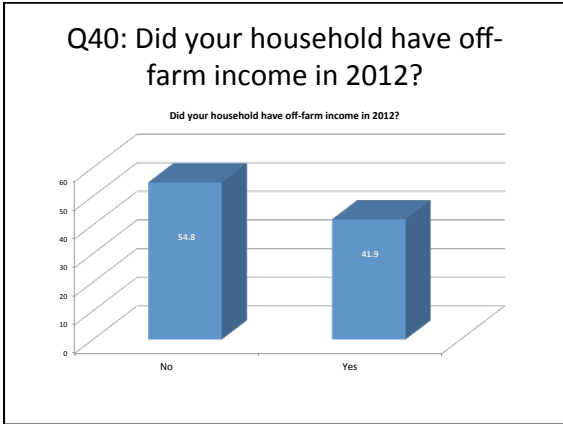
Q39: What is your operation's debt level as a percentage of total farm assets (land, buildings, cows, machinery, and feed inventories)?



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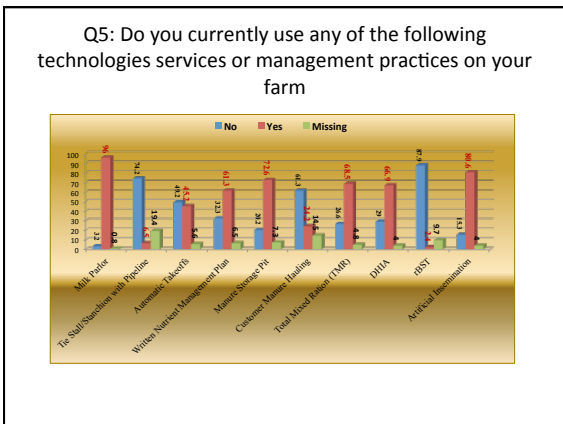
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Q4: List of crop acreage in 2012 for farming

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Corn, owned	35	24	2900	440.11	662.090
Corn, rented	19	30	700	155.05	148.860
Hay/Haylage, Only owned	55	1	1500	170.95	244.611
Hay/Haylage, Only, Rented	25	12	3000	291.68	654.302
Hay Pasture, Owned	59	20	2300	223.66	471.100
Hay Pasture, Rented	25	10	350	110.04	91.718
Permanent Pasture, Owned	79	7	2200	196.90	388.440
Permanent Pasture, Rented	25	20	1000	143.40	196.331
Other Crops, Owned	29	10	3000	414.60	734.581
Other Crops, Rented	9	20	600	155.00	179.583



Q11: How satisfied were you with the following aspects of your operation in 2012?

Question	Rating					Total
	Very Dissat	Dissat	Neutral	Satis	Very Satis	
1. How satisfied were you in 2012 with Hired Labor Availability?	6.8	11.9	37.3	24.6	19.5	100
2. How satisfied were you in 2012 with Hired Labor Performance?	3.4	9.2	28.6	36.1	22.7	100
3. How satisfied were you in 2012 with your Anxiety/Stress Level?	22.2	25.6	26.5	15.4	10.3	100
4. How satisfied were you in 2012 with the Amount of Time Away from the Farm?	19.7	11.1	41.9	16.2	11.1	100
5. How satisfied were you in 2012 with your Profit Level?	39.3	23.9	19.7	12.0	5.1	100
6. How satisfied were you in 2012 with your Financial Progress (past 5 years)?	30.7	19.3	21.9	20.2	7.9	100
7.						
8. How satisfied were you in 2012 with the Impact of Farm Practices on Water Quality		8	39.5	28.6	31.1	100

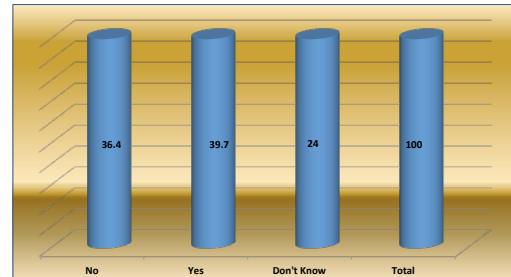
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Q12: Level of concern for the long-term survival of respondent's dairy farm

Question: Indicate your level of concern for the following for the long-term survival of your dairy farm's:	Rating					Total
	Not C'cern	C'cern Very little	Neutral	Very C'cern	Ex-tremely C'cern	
1. Milk Prices?	2.4	3.3	14.6	20.3	59.3	100
2. Milk Production Costs?	1.6	2.4	9.8	16.3	69.9	100
3. Farm Profitability?	8	3.3	12.3	18.9	64.8	100
4. Environmental Regulations	3.3	6.5	25.2	30.1	35.0	100
5. Continuing into the Next Generation?	17.5	10.7	18.9	23.0	30.3	100
6. Real Estate Taxes?	11.4	11.4	28.5	22.0	26.8	100
7. Development Pressure?	26.8	18.7	31.7	13.8	8.9	100
8. Current Herd Size?	19.5	9.8	39.0	21.1	10.6	100
9. Survival of farm land Availability?	24.6	13.9	32.0	20.5	9.0	100
10. Cost for Farm Expansion?	11.5	6.6	23.0	23.0	36.1	100
11. Taking on More Debt.	15.4	4.1	19.5	25.2	35.8	100
12. Labor Availability	12.4	8.3	25.6	31.4	22.3	100
Do you feel your farm will be viable in 5 Years at its current herd size?	No		Yes		D/K	Total
	36.4		39.7		24.0	100

Q13: Do you feel that your farm will be viable in 5 years at its current herd size



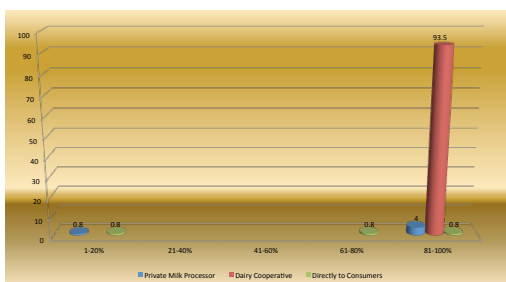
Question 14: How likely are you to make the following changes to your dairy farm in the next 5 years:

Question: How likely are you to make the following changes to your dairy farm in the next 5 years:	Rating					Total
	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely	
1. Transition your dairy arm to family members?	36.3	30.2	17.7	12.1	13.7	100
2. Go out of business?	35.0	14.6	23.6	17.9	8.9	100
3. To increase herd size?	15.4	13.0	25.2	22.8	23.6	100
4. To decrease herd size?	44.7	19.5	28.5	5.7	1.6	100
5. To go to on-farm processing?	57.6	16.9	14.4	5.9	5.1	100
6. To adopt pasture-based grazing	35.4	17.7	24.8	5.3	16.8	100
7. To stay the same?	20.3	8.5	26.3	23.7	21.2	100

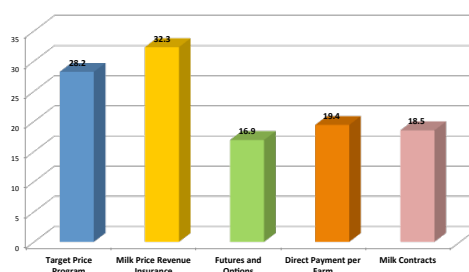
Q15: What are the most valuable sources of information for managing your farm? (Rank your top 3 by writing the numbers 1, 2 and 3 next to the appropriate sources)

Question	Ranking of Top Three			N
	1	2	3	
1. Is the Extension Agent your most valuable source of information?	25.6	20.9	53.5	43
2. Are the Formal Farmer Organizations/ Networks most valuable?	45.9	16.2	37.8	37
3. Is the Local Farmer the most valuable?	36.7	34.7	28.6	49
4. Are Publications most valuable?	32.2	39.0	28.8	59
5. Is the internet the most valuable source of information?	35.9	38.5	25.6	39
6. Is the veterinarian the most valuable source of information?	29.5	37.7	32.8	61
7. Are feed sales representative the most Valuable information source?	15.8	50.0	34.2	38
8. Are consultants the most information sources?	48.2	33.9	17.9	56
9. Is the milk truck driver the most valuable information source	57.1	35.7	7.1	14

Q16: Where do you sell your milk? (check all that apply and indicate the percent of total milk produced)



Q17: What price management strategies do you think the state or federal government should support? (check all that apply)



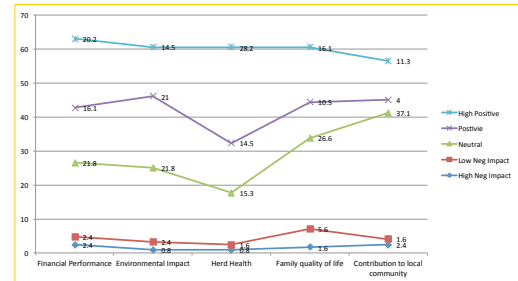
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Q23: Prior to adopting grazing, what did you expect the challenges would be?

	Not a challenge	Challenge a little	Neutral	Challenge	Significant Challenge	N=
1. Decrease in milk production	21.8	4.0	18.5	6.5	3.2	57
2. Decrease in farm profits	23.4	6.5	18.5	4.0	1.6	57
3. Decrease in cash flow	24.2	6.5	14.5	5.6	2.4	58
4. Lack of information on pasture management	17.7	7.3	15.3	4.0	8.9	58
5. Lack of on-farm technical assistance	18.5	4.0	16.1	4.8	8.9	59
6. Amount of work to start pasture management	16.1	8.1	15.3	9.7	4.0	58
7. Amount of work to manage pasture grazing	12.1	9.7	16.1	11.3	4.0	58
8. Skepticism from other farmers	25.8	4.0	12.9	4.8	4.8	59
9. Skepticism from family members	29.0	5.6	12.9	2.4	2.4	59
10. Difficulty producing enough winter feed	16.1	7.3	12.9	10.5	7.3	57
11. Other physical farm constraints	19.4	6.5	14.5	6.5	7.3	57

Q25: How has grazing affected the following aspects of your farm?



Results and Conclusions

- 2/3 of the dairies surveyed reported using pasture as a source of forage in 2012.
- Top concerns of all respondents were milk production costs, farm profitability and milk prices.
- Top perceived challenges before beginning grazing were growing winter feed, and pasture establishment and management.

Results and Conclusions

- Over 1/3 of respondents indicated grazing improved:
 - Financial performance
 - Environmental quality
 - Herd health
 - Family life
- For those that have adopted pasture based dairying the highest positive changes have been in financial performance and herd health.
- Very small percentage of respondents report a negative impact from using pasture-based dairying.