



VPP Beef Niche Market Cow earns a premium - BCS #3



BEEF TRIM



Unworthy of selling into the VPP Beef Niche Market - BCS #1

January 2014

Southwest Region

Who Fills Your Bucket?

A popular approach to raising children is based on the idea of filling a young person's 'bucket' with positive messages. It is believed that supportive comments and 'atta boys' guide and shape their attitudes and inspire learning. This is true for grown-ups too...wouldn't you rather collect positive remarks than negative comments? How many negative comments do you think it takes to sway your attitude and influence your day? It's true that a person with a disgruntled attitude approaches tasks differently triggering actions based on emotions not knowledge. Who should fill your employees' bucket? You know the answer, it must start with you!

Communication is key...we've all heard this - when was the last time that you looked each of your employees in the eye, smiled or laughed with them? Cultivating conversations with employees builds trust and opens them up to accomplishing your goals for milk and beef production, calving, animal care, etc. An encouraging and heart-felt approach builds confidence, strengthens commitment and influences job performance. It will become second nature for employees to meet expectations and do what's right at your dairy.

Are training sessions an enthusiastic approach to renewing techniques and protocols? Do employees understand the reasons for following a process in a specific order to maintain proper routines? The investment in time and effort to connect with your employees could be priceless. The ramifications from inaccurate or aggressive actions by employees can be devastating to you and your dairy's reputation.

"A well-trained, motivated workforce is a huge asset in contrast to a workforce only there for a paycheck. Constant training is needed to maximize the ability of employees to do their job at the highest level."

Progressive Dairyman
September 21, 2013

What about the consumer, who is filling their bucket with information related to food production, processing and animal care from birth to market? The likelihood of their buckets remaining empty until a truthful image of milk and beef production drops into it is slim. Consumers' buckets have the potential to be filled to the brim with inaccurate information from groups wanting to discriminate against raising animals for food. Once full, it is a difficult task to remove and replace the negative images and ideas from the bucket.

So how can you fill buckets? One approach starts with you and your dairy employees, the messages that go out into your community from them and you do make impressions. What about your industry contacts? Your relationship with milk and beef markets, your co-op, and interaction with any local services such as equipment dealers, schools, support of community events, etc. can leave lasting impressions. Is the effect one that speaks highly of people, actions and addressing challenges? Or is it one of blame and irritation resulting from the need to be more transparent for consumers?

Filling buckets can be a rewarding experience. The everyday management of your dairy and employees could be measured by the buckets being filled...what are in the buckets leaving your dairy?

