Got PC? Manage Farm Information Using Your On-Farm Computer

Computers are underutilized on many farms. Consequently, the scope of Dairy One services you currently access via your computer are likely underutilized. Your on-farm computer can be a valuable resource when it comes to storing information and providing useful data that can help you make better, more timely decisions for your farm. Below are several ways to use your PC to better organize data, monitor efficiency, receive test results, and more.

DHI reports. When it comes to receiving your DHI results, you don't have to wait for paper copies to be mailed to you—simply opt for web reports, which you can view online and download at your convenience. Web reports look exactly like the reports you receive in the mail, but can be accessed easily on your computer. Ask your DHI technician to sign you up for this option on your next test day or go to www.drms.org. You can keep the option for mailed reports, or choose paperless reports only and save postage and handling charges.

Herd Management Software. Do you know which cows to breed today? To sell? To check for pregnancy? For comprehensive monitoring of production, reproduction, treatments, vaccinations, and more, choose herd management software that is right for your dairy. Dairy Comp 305 is the choice for large dairies, Dairy Comp LS is great for mid- to large-size dairies, and Scout is an excellent option for small- to mid-size dairies. We also sell and support PCDART herd management software. All of these programs allow you to monitor changes in your herd and allow you to make more timely decisions.

Most of the software works with daily milk meter interfaces, which automatically retrieve milk weights for each cow after each milking. Parlor performance can then be evaluated in Dairy Comp using some simple reports and criteria.

Dairy One also offers two handheld devices that work with herd management software: Pocket Dairy for PCDART, and Pocket Cow Card for Dairy Comp. You can take the handheld with you anywhere for easy access to herd information and quick, easy data entry when you're on the go. The devices sync back to the herd management software on your computer. Support for all of these products is available through amr@dairyone.com, or by calling our toll-free number at 1-800-496-3344.

Forage analysis results. The Dairy One Forage Lab is an industry leader in analzing feed, forage, manure, water and a host of other products. They also have a friendly, professional customer service team available to answer questions and provide results via phone or fax. When testing forage samples, turnaround time is often critical in order to make decisions regarding ration changes and optimal harvest times. Therefore, for even faster turnaround, choose to receive your results via e-mail. Be sure to include your e-mail address on lab submission forms to take advantage of this option. Contact forage@dairyone.com for more information.

Soil analysis results. The Agro One soils laboratory is a state-of-the-art lab and like the forage lab, they are also dedicated to providing fast, accurate results. Choose to receive your soil analysis results via e-mail to help you make timely, informed decisions regarding nutrient management. Fields and Crops Manager software users can store their soil data within the program for accurate record-keeping and easily accessible field history. By keeping good records of your test results, a grower or consultant can determine the effectiveness of an applied fertility program over time. Contact soil@dairyone.com for more information.

FeedWatch software. Take the guesswork out of feeding with FeedWatch software, which allows you to track progress with reports, including projected usage, dry matter intake, feed efficiency, and more. FeedWatch features wireless radio communication between the mixer and your office computer, and the software coordinates data transfer in real time for the most up-to-date information. Use FeedWatch to automatically schedule feed loads, as well as create and schedule loads to maximize mixer capacity.

TankWatch software. Would you like immediate notification when your bulk tank values reach certain levels? Monitor your bulk tank with web-based TankWatch software. You (or anyone else you designate) can receive alerts and text messages when values reach a certain level. TankWatch data is available to members of Dairylea, Dairylea's affiliated cooperatives, or DFA. Visit www.tankwatch.biz to register online, or contact the Agricultural Management Resources group at amr@dairyone.com.

Camera Systems. Have you ever wanted a better way to monitor your fresh cow and calving pens, milking parlor, and fuel tanks? Dairy One offers complete camera systems to meet all of these needs. Keep an eye on day-to-day operations with camera systems that allow you to monitor video feeds from cameras anywhere on your farm. Review and scan recorded video, and view cameras from other computers on the network, or via the Internet with remote access, allowing you to view operations even when you're on the go. Dairy One can provide complete network solutions for your barn computer and camera setup. Contact amr@dairyone.com for more information.

Fields and Crops Manager Software. Organize all of your crop information in one convenient location with Field and Crops Manager Software. Access field acres, history, manure records, soil lab test results, and more. Use the Rotation Planning tool to plan next year's crops by field, generate to-do lists, and produce FSA reports quickly and easily.

Gather more useful information that can be used with Fields and Crops Manager software with a weather station. WeatherLink software syncs with the station, which provides detailed analysis and graphing. Log weather data on a daily basis, including rainfall, wind speed, and wind direction.

Your on-farm computer is an indispensable tool that helps you manage your farm and make well-informed decisions for your operation. Learn more about these options and other ways to integrate computer techno-logy on your farm by contacting your DHI technician, or call Dairy One at 1-800-496-3344. You can also learn more about these services at www.dairyone.com.