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Request for Discontinuation of the Dairy Herdsman Program
Department of Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences
College of Agriculture
Utah State University

Section I: The Request

The Department of Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences in the College of Agriculture at Utah State University requests approval to discontinue the Dairy Herdsman Program (DHP). The Dairy Herdsman Program is a one-year course of study in practical dairy knowledge and skills offered by the Department of Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences (ADVS). Through lectures, laboratory exercises and on-the-farm experiences, students are taught to be a dairy herdsman with immediate employable skills upon completion of the program. The DHP initially was jointly administered with Bridgerland Applied Technology College (BATC). About one-half of the enrollees were USU students and one-half BATC students. On July 1, 2002, BATC withdrew financial support for DHP (approximately \$84,000 annually), due to budgetary constraints. This left the Department of Animal, Dairy, and Veterinary Sciences to develop a financial plan whereby DHP would have to become financially self-sufficient if the program was to survive. During the short term, the Department of ADVS made temporary financial adjustments from 2002 through 2004 by using one-time funds from other sources. In 2005, ADVS entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost that resulted in a joint contract effective July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2010. The MOU stipulated that the Provost's Office would contribute \$30,000 to the instructor's salary, and that the funding from the Provost's office would be stepped-down by \$6,000 intervals per year for five years, with the ending year being 2009. After this time, the DHP would need to be fiscally self sufficient.

The plan whereby DHP would remain financially solvent required 21 students to consistently be enrolled in the program, however the 21 student-enrollment criterion was never achieved. The student base of 40 – 45 students per year during the 1980s and early 1990s has dwindled to approximately 12 students per year (calculated from years 2000 – 2010).

A major reason for the low student enrollment was the decline in family-run dairy farms. Beginning in the early 1990s the small family farm of 50 – 70 dairy cows started to decline. Today there are 70% fewer family-run dairies than there were in 1990. Most of the students that had interest in DHP were coming from the small, family-run dairy. While the number of smaller dairies was on the decline, the larger dairies with more than 150 cows were on the increase. Today dairies with over 1,000 cows are common. The larger dairies are more efficient and utilize a smaller work force, thus the demand for the dairy herdsman is much less.

Section II: Need

DHP was an important program for USU and BATC at an earlier time. Originally BATC entered into DHP with USU because it was mutually beneficial. USU had the dairy facilities and cows where the herdsman students could be trained, whereas BATC paid most of the instructor's salary and some of the operational costs. As enrollment numbers began to decline, BATC withdrew from the partnership. As mentioned above, the student enrollment in the program in the early 1980s of 40 or more students declined to an average of 12 students/year by 2000. The Department of ADVS does not anticipate the enrollment numbers to increase to sustain DHP; on the contrary, expectations are that enrollment numbers will continue to drop to 8 students per year. The continued low enrollment numbers indicate that it is time for

the Department of ADVS to discontinue the DHP program.

Section III: Institutional Impact

Eliminating the DHP program will have a positive effect on the Department of ADVS. The person holding the lectureship position for DHP will be reassigned to lower division animal and dairy science courses that are required for the Baccalaureate degree. The last students to enroll in DHP began fall semester 2010 and will have completed their program of study by the end of spring semester 2011. No new students have been accepted into DHP for fall semester 2011.

Section IV: Finances

The elimination of DHP will be a cost savings for the Department of ADVS. The program has been losing an average of \$20,316 per year since FY 2006.