

Profound productivity in Pennsylvania!

DeLaval, a leader in the dairy industry, organized a Profound Productivity Tour featuring Parlors and Herd Management in Pennsylvania, July 7-9th. The tour started out in Harrisburg, PA, where dairy producers gathered together to learn more about the equipment, herd management tools and aftermarket products they would see over the next two days. DeLaval sent Dr. Adam Jackanicz, Brady Catob and John Baker, three of their top Product Specialists, to present to the group on Herd Management, Animal Nutrition, Milk Quality, and the VMS (Voluntary Milking Systems).

The first day of touring dairies took the producers to see a 4 unit VMS barn, milking 240 cows – three times a day. In addition to adopting robotic milking technology with the VMS, the Garber family utilizes DeLaval's Alpro automated heat detection to find cows ready to breed. The touring dairy producers also saw how Smart Selection Gates automatically help to sort cows as they come to be milked; and how Cow Comfort has become a large part of Spring Lawn Farm's daily commitment to creating a better herd.

The next stop, Meadow Lane Dairy, features a double 16 Fastback All-Exit Herringbone Parlor which milks 475 cows – three times a day, and was built to use the minimum amount of labor necessary. The Rohrer's are proud of their high reproduction numbers which they attribute to the use of DeLaval's Germania Herd Management automated heat detection. The tour group also saw DeLaval sort gates, crowd gates and the heated floors that had been designed for cow comfort.

After a picnic by the Rohrer's pond, the tour group traveled to Gettysburg for an entertaining afternoon tour of Gettysburg, and the battlegrounds that surround the city. That evening, the tour ended with a delicious, authentic dinner at the Historical Fairfield Inn.

As the second day of touring dairies got underway, the producers anxiously awaited the first stop. Mason Dixon Farms, which is the largest VMS installation in the world, had everyone fascinated! With 20 VMS units milking 1000 cows, you can imagine how much detail goes into the care of this farm. The free stall barn is equipped with cooling misters to maintain a comfortable environment for the cows, and was a welcome break from the July heat, but that didn't stop the tour group from wanting to see more!

After leaving Mason Dixon Farms the tour headed west, towards Shippensburg to see the Musser family's double 8 Cascade Parallel parlor, and Locust Grove's double 8 Drop Rail Parlor. After lunch the group visited the final dairy, a double 16 GE/GI (Gang Exit/Gang Index) Parallel basement parlor – milking 500 cows. Hard Earned Acres uses DeLaval's Germania Herd Management system, boasting outstanding internal growth by breeding every cow solely with heat detection. The Keefer's use instant cooling, and are achieving approximately 90 lbs. of milk per cow without using rBST.

Each tour stop gave this group of dairy producers another view of how these Pennsylvania dairies are managing today's dairy environment. Many saw how these farms were able to generate the most efficiency and productivity out of their herd by using DeLaval's Herd Management tools. Others commented on the way DeLaval's VMS units gave the dairy owner the time and freedom to see to the other demands of daily life. As each owner spoke to the tour group, they gave insight as to how they had come to the decision of choosing DeLaval products, what they had success with, and what challenges they faced... and in some cases, what they would have done differently. As one dairy producer put it, "In order for us all to succeed, we must learn from the examples and mistakes of others."

If you would like to join a DeLaval Profound Productivity Tours, or for more information about upcoming tours, please visit www.profoundproductivity.com or call 816-891-1688 for details.