Using Social Media to Advocate for Agriculture
Today’s Presentation

• WHY?
  – do we have to advocate for dairy
  – public perception of dairy industry
• WHAT?
  – is social media?
• WHO?
  – Is doing it and who SHOULD be doing it?
• HOW?
  – Do you get involved?
Dairy Consumption

![Bar chart showing dairy consumption per capita in gallons for the years 2000, 2004, and 2010 for Bottled Water, Soda, Fruit Juice, and Milk.]
Consumer Confidence
Consumer Confidence

![Chart showing consumer confidence levels for 2000 and 2009 by month. The bars show a general trend where 2000 consistently has higher values compared to 2009 throughout the year.](chart.png)
Public Perception of Dairy

The Truth Behind Dairy - Milk by UnBeeLeafables

WARNING: Disturbing Content. Viewer Discretion is Advised.

Ohio Dairy Farm Brutality
by mercyforanimals

Uploaded on May 25, 2010
Hidden camera video secretly shot by an investigator with Mercy For Animals at an Ohio dairy farm reveals shocking, malicious cruelty to calves and cows. The video, recorded between April and

Still drinking coca cola? Watch this!
by claydorman8
10,453 views

Investigation Reveals Cruelty at Pig Farm
by mercyforanimals
87,986 views

No Mercy - Calf Farm Cruelty Exposed
by mercyforanimals

Too late, dairy farmer. There's no way we can be sure the same cruelty isn't going on everywhere. **This is a wake up call.** Stop using animals for money. How about growing some nice crops, fruits and vegetables for the growing number of vegans in this country instead of ABUSING ANIMALS FOR PROFIT??

Every purchase you make is a vote for it and the system that brought it to you. Every refusal to buy a product is a vote against it and the system that brought it to you. Permanently boycott this cruel industry, everyone, please. . . .

Heart disease, asthma, osteoporosis, diabetes, allergies, Yeah MILK DOES A BODY BAD!!!!!

That is good to hear, however what happens to the cows when they can no longer produce healthy yields of milk? Are they able to live out the rest of their natural lives on the farm?
Public Perception of Dairy
Factory Farming

Cruel! Bad odors!

Progress and Efficiency

Feeding 7 billion people

Where’s the grass?
Positive Perception

- Dairy Farming Today – Over 300,000 views
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The Book of Faces

• Put the ‘social’ in social media
• Personal profiles, Groups, Events
• Share pictures
• Update your status
  – Based on ‘likes’
• Through the Lens of a Farm Girl
YouTube

• Mostly for:
  – Sharing videos
  – Wasting time

• Very little verification
  – Anyone can add a video
  – Topics are open ended

• Good tool for teaching
  – Demonstration videos in class
Twitter

• Short communication media
  – Add pictures, videos, etc.

• Limited characters in updates

• Easy to share information from ‘followers’
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Will Gilmer, Gilmer Dairy Farms, Sulligent, AL

- Graduate Mississippi State
- Advocate on many social media sites
- Heavily involved in young farmers and dairy organizations
- Nominee for Faces of Farming & Ranching
Dairy Organizations

• **myDairy Social Media Program**
  
  − Dairy Management Inc.™ launched myDairy in 2009 to help producers and dairy enthusiasts use social media to tell dairy’s story and counter misinformation.

• **The myDairy social media program provides you with information about:**
  
  − Why social media is an important communications tool
  − How to navigate and use popular social media sites
  − How to use key messages to effectively communicate with consumers about modern dairy farming
Dairy Organizations

Telling Your Story

Telling Your Story is a producer training initiative, comprised of five modules, that provides messages, communication tools and other resources to help you share your dairy’s story with consumers and the media. Read more >>

Connect with Your Community

The Connect with Your Community training session will teach you how to best communicate with your neighbors and the surrounding community about how you care for your animals and the environment. Read more >>

Capture the Crowd

The Capture the Crowd training session will help you develop effective presentation skills and become a trustworthy source of information. Read more >>

Control the Questions

The Control the Questions training session will provide you with the techniques and messaging to share your story with the media. Read more >>

myDairy

The myDairy social media program will teach you how to use various social media outlets to tell your story to consumers. Read more >>

myStory

The myStory training program will teach you how to connect with consumers, build trust and make an impact with storytelling. Read more >>

When the Media Calls

Learn what questions to ask and whom to contact for support if you receive calls from the media. Read more >>

Producers in Action

Hastings believes in social media’s power to reach consumers. Read more >>

Communication Resources

The dairy checkoff provides many tools to help producers tell their story. View a list of resources you can download. Read more >>
Students

• Peterson brothers
• Kansas State Students
• Viral video with over 8 million views
Universities

- **There’s a Heifer in Your Tank**
  - Program started by professors at U of Alberta
  - Animal Science 101
- Use knowledge of ag to answer questions
  - Turned into community performance and fundraiser for class
Everyday People

- The Truth About Agriculture- blog
  - Also on Facebook
  - Watchdog group
  - Encourage non-ag people to post questions and comments
  - Keep conversations healthy
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Social Media

• Tune in
• Monitor sites and share good information
• Consider establishing a professional account
  – In addition to personal account
• Even simple, daily tasks can be informative
  – Not always the case!
Social Media

• Share:
  – Information from livestock shows
  – 4H and FFA events
  – Meetings and conferences
  – Visits to farms and farm stores

• Blogs and Websites
  – Wordpress, Blogger, Blogspot
  – Host your own farm’s website
Show me your teats!
Educate and Advocate

• Biggest impact?
• Help producers implement stewardship and welfare practices
• Teach farmers how to interact with media and the public
• Support Agri-tourism
Questions?

Contact Info

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• @dr_steph_ward