Workshop to Explore the Art and Science of Managing Pasture Forage Supply in Changing Weather Patterns

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Farmers, educators, and consultants are invited to attend an educational workshop entitled “Tools for Efficient Pasture Productivity on Dairy Farms” on Friday, July 26 2013 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Michigan State University’s W. K. Kellogg Biological Station (KBS) Pasture Dairy Center near Hickory Corners, MI.

Blending classroom and field instruction, the workshop will cover approaches to forage measurements, budgeting and management for dairy and livestock farmers, helping them to ensure a season-long supply of pasture-based forages even in dry years.

Information on how to measure and budget pasture forage supplies will be presented by Extension Educator Jeff McCutcheon from the Ohio State University Extension. Since 2005, McCutcheon has coordinated the Ohio Pasture Measurement Project helping grazing farmers across Ohio to better balance pasture forage supply with the need of grazing animals.

Forage specialist Dr. Kim Cassida from Michigan State University Extension will explain options to extend forage resources to maximize grazing days and minimize use of stored forages.

A pasture walk of the KBS Pasture Dairy will be led by Dr. Santiago Utsumi, Assistant Professor of Animal Science at Michigan State University and Jerry Lindquist, MSU Extension Grazing Educator. Throughout the walk key principles from classroom sessions will be exhibited.

In addition a panel of experienced grazing farmers from Indiana and Michigan will share their experiences with pasture forage inventory measurement and management in the face of highly variable weather events. Following these presentations an open dialogue on varying approaches to pasture management will be held, followed by focus group discussions.

Dr. Utsumi will conclude the workshop by reviewing grazing concepts and providing an overview of the resources, science and tools that are available for making grazing decisions.

Preregistration is required. The workshop fee of $25 includes all conference materials, refreshments and lunch. The final day to register is July 22, 2013. To register, contact Misty Klotz at klotzmis@msu.edu or 269-671-2402. To learn more about the KBS Dairy, visit pasturedairy.kbs.msu.edu.

*Sharing information is a vital step to developing stronger, stable, pasture-based systems.*