



NYAAC 2010 Consumer Attitudes Survey

an update from **Julie Berry, Agricultural Outreach Coordinator**

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New York Animal Agriculture Coalition 2010 Consumer Campaign

The New York Animal Agriculture Coalition continues to focus on educating consumers about agriculture and as part of this effort has conducted a survey to understand key consumer concerns and perceptions of agriculture. The over 600 respondents surveyed live within 10 miles of an active dairy farm in six key communities: Auburn/Cayuga County, Avon/Batavia, Rochester/Ontario County, Black River/Watertown, Potsdam/St. Lawrence County and the Hudson Valley.

- The majority of respondents (81%) maintain a favorable perception of dairy farming, which is a slight decline (4%) from 2009.
- The majority of respondent (87%) still agree that dairy farms have a positive impact on NYS and provide residents with many benefits. This is also a slight (4%) decline from 2009.
- Respondents continue to cite availability of milk, providing milk and other dairy products. as specific benefits of dairy farming in NYS.



- Respondents have mixed perceptions of other types of farming in NYS (poultry, veal, turkey and swine), with only 37 to 49% very favorable. Many respondents (33 to 42%) are unsure why they have his impression, but cite these farms are “dirty, not well run and have a foul odor.”
- To the extent concerns emerge with dairy farming, they are mainly ground water contamination/pollution, odor/air quality and air pollution. More respondents ranked animal welfare/quality of care as a concern in 2010.
- Dairy farming practices such as dehorning, tail docking, the use of antibiotics, and growth hormones, do not appear to be high levels of concern for these respondents. Support for increased farm management legislation is also mixed, with 39% supportive. Auburn/Cayuga County had the highest level of support (46 %). Responses include: “I am concerned about the health implications of introducing hormones/ antibiotics into the human food chain” and “ensure quality standards so people can be confident about the products they buy.”
- Dairy farmers continue to be the preferred and most effective person to communicate messages about dairy farming in NYS. Featuring active farmers and farmland in the Coalition’s public service announcements increased their favorable impression and believability.

NYAAC Success Story

Watertown was identified as an area of emerging concern in the 2009 NYAAC consumer attitude benchmark survey. NYAAC worked closely with agriculture groups in this region to develop strategies to connect with and educate consumers. The Jefferson County Agriculture Development Corporation in Watertown used NYAAC’s public service announcements (PSA’s) as part of their education campaign. And, in 2010, this region’s overall image of dairy farming increased by 11% to 85% of respondents indicating they have a favorable impression of dairy farming. Also, in 2010 no respondents in Watertown indicated they believe that dairy farms are causing a number of problems for NYS or are detracting from residents quality of life, compared to 4% in 2009.

NYAAC at the New York State Fair

NYAAC used multisensory kiosks to educate consumers outside of the Pride of NY Marketplace near Gate 2 and in the dairy barn during state fair. The 7.5 foot tall kiosks were wrapped in the Family Tradition graphics and featured the Coalition’s PSA’s. While the videos played, trivia questions with multiple choice answers appeared on a touch screen at the bottom. A mister on the top and scents attracted fair goers to the kiosk.

Visit www.farmskeepnygreen.org for more information.

NYAAC 2010 Billboard Campaign

NYAAC, with grant support from the United Soybean Board, placed 40 hay wagon billboards across the state with the above messages that address common concerns about farms. The Family Tradition billboard continues to have the most resonance because of the emotional appeal. The 2010 campaign was updated from the 2009 “Dairy Farmers Love” to a “NY Farmers Love” campaign.