



Iowa

**Paying it Forward with a Successful
Transition Cow Program**

Dairy producers throughout much of Iowa were the beneficiaries of an impactful program, assisting small and beginning traditional and commercial producers to re-evaluate best management practices for their transition cow program. Project Director, Jennifer Bentley notes that while transition cow management encompasses only 20-30% of a herd, it ultimately influences the milk production and health of 100% of the cows.

Focused topic areas in this project included; facilities, nutrition, health, records, and financial and production variables. Over 100 producers took part in face-to-face activities varying from risk management surveys, on-farm workshops, demonstrations of monitoring tools, and individual on-farm visits. 600 producers

took part in three on-line learning modules which were developed to increase awareness and understanding, eventually assisting them in their decision-making and implementation.

Ultimately, 48 producers developed and implemented the transition cow program best suited for their management, labor force and financial structure. Producers reported that with a long-term application of these management changes to their transition cow period they are seeing reduced stress, reduced fresh cow problems, and improved milk production and animal health. Overall they are seeing a reduced incidence of metabolic disorders by 60%, less metritis, 20% less calf mortality, and over 2,000 lbs. **more** milk.

3,165 cows were represented by producers taking part in this program, which is nearly 20% of the milking cows in Iowa. One producer noted they will reduce their calving cost by \$400, which equals a \$1.2 million total potential in reduced cost or increased profitability for this group of producers.



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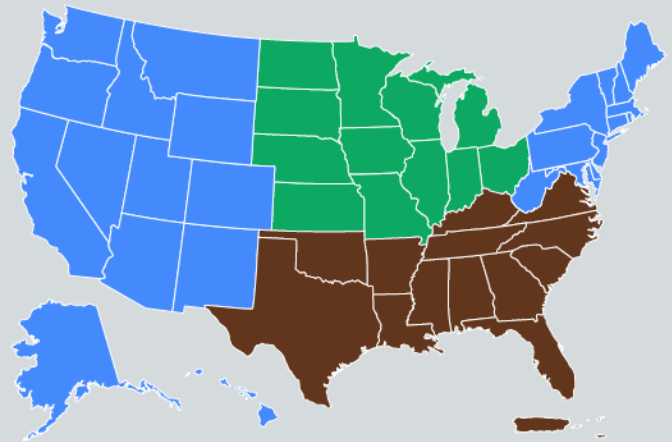
National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture

**“Educating America’s farmers and ranchers
to manage the unique risks of producing food
for the world’s table.”**

Extension Risk Management Education (ERME) is delivered through four regional centers that provide grant funding and leadership within their regions.

Projects are producer-focused, results-based and encourage public-private partnerships. Funded projects must identify targeted results that will help producers manage risk and then describe how the project will measure those results.

Extension Risk Management Education has funded innovative programs that have generated tangible results for producers in every state. ERME is committed to funding results, providing transparent accountability, and encouraging collaboration. View the accomplishments of all funded projects on our website.
<http://ExtensionRME.org>



ERME Regional Centers



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