

Innovative Sources of Labor for Dairies Panel

The panel members will be:

Richard Greaves
Dairy Manager
T & K Red River Dairy
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T&K Red River Dairy in Arizona is a modern dry lot facility using Saudi-style housing. It currently milks 10,000 cows with another 17,500 head of replacements and steers on a feed yard operation. The company farms about 10,000 acres and produces all the forage requirements for both operations and part of its grain. They also do custom harvesting, manure hauling and have a fleet of semis. They employ about 160 people between the dairy and feed yard operations with the rest of the company adding up to 230. They employ a multination work force from Europeans, like Richard, to Africans, Asians and Hispanics.

Richard came to T&K 17 years ago as an assistant manager when it was milking 3,600 cows. Since then, they have continued to expand building in 2006 the world's first double 77 parallel parlor. Prior to that, Richard had worked in the Middle East for 10 years on various sizes of operation, the largest of which has now grown to 30,000 cows. He is originally from the UK and started out on a typical grassland Dairy farm milking about 200 cows.

Bob and Joanne LaSalle
Owners, LaSalle Dairy
10663 Avenue 7 1/2
Firebaugh, CA 93622
boblasalle@aol.com

La Salle Dairy of Firebaugh, California has utilized interns through J-1 visa programs since 1986. Over 185 interns from over 49 countries have gained experience on Bob and Joanne La Salle's 660 milking cow herd of mostly Registered Holsteins. In addition to milking, feeding, and caring for the herd, interns gain experience by helping with the genomic testing and embryo transfer program. Weekly meetings are held with the interns to discuss management practices at La Salle Dairy, educational topics, and exchange of ideas with the interns.

Bob and JoAnne La Salle have worked with numerous programs that have provided interns over the years. These include CAEP, MAST, The Global Cow, and Experience International. The programs pre-screen the interns and arrange for the proper documents including the J-1 visa for the interns to work in the United States.

La Salle Dairy maintains a rolling herd of 27,000 lbs. of milk and 950 lbs. of fat on 3 times a day milking. La Salle's also grow wheat and corn silage on their 160 acres of farmland.

Jose Rojas
Vice President, Farm Operations
PFFJ, LLC
P.O. Box 398
Split Rock Falls, Suite B
Taylor, AZ 85939
jlrojas@pffjfarm.com

Jose was born in Mexico and attended ITESM (Tec de Monterrey) graduating with an Animal Science degree. He also attended ISU (Iowa State) obtained an MS in Animal Production. He started with Murphy-Brown (Murphy Family Farms at the time) in 1994. He worked in North Carolina for nine years mainly in the multiplication area raising replacement breeding stock and overseeing semen production for AI.

He started assisting with International recruiting from Mexico and employed folks from Poland and UK. He moved to Colorado in 2003 as Operations Manager for the business. Yuma operations have 30,000 sows and produced over 600,000 pigs to mainly source Murphy-Brown finishing operations in the Midwest. He started recruiting internationally for Murphy-Brown Western Operations in 2004. He recently took a new challenge with Hormel Foods and started on December 3rd as Vice President of Farm Operations based at Taylor, AZ

Panel moderator:
Steve Larson
Consultant
Hoard's Dairyman
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Some contact information

Here is a sampling of organizations or agencies involved with placing people from other countries on U.S. agricultural operations either as trainees or conventional employees. They have all had experience with dairy owners and managers.

J-1 Visa trainee programs

The Exchange Visitor Program (J-1 visa) fosters global understanding through educational and cultural exchanges. All exchange visitors are expected to return to their home country upon completion of their program in order to share their exchange experiences.

Experience International

P.O. Box 680
Everson, WA 98247
360-966-3876 Phone
Email: info@expint.org
Web: www.expint.org

Experience International invites trainees to experience the U.S. through a unique practical training program within their career or academic field. It will match trainees with a host in either the public or private sector to work alongside and learn from as they conduct their 3-18 month program.

MAST International

Sue Riesgraf
135 Skok Hall
2003 Upper Buford Circle
St. Paul, MN 55108
612-624-3740 Phone; 800-346-6278 Toll Free
Email: mast@umn.edu
Web: <http://mast.cfans.umn.edu>

MAST International is an international agricultural exchange program at the University of Minnesota providing practical and academic training in American agriculture. MAST is one of the oldest ag exchange programs having operated since 1949. It brings in 200 to 250 farm and horticulture trainees each year, with 25 to 40 of them on dairies ranging in size from 50 cows up to 5,000.

Communicating for Agriculture Education Program (CAEP)

Stephanie Sternhagen
112 E. Lincoln Ave.
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
218-739-3241 Phone; 800-432-3276 Toll Free
Email: steph@caep.org
Web: <http://us.caep.org>

CAEP Dairy Training Program participants get involved in most aspects of operation-milking, feeding, cleaning, record keeping, harvesting forage and grain, treatment of sick animals, and waste disposal/sanitation. Dairy Training Program participants may be involved with the hosts' breeding and nutrition program as well. Dairy set-ups have either a tie-stall/stanchion barn or a free stall or dry lot and parlor arrangement.

The Ohio Program (TOP)

Michael Chrisman
700 Ackerman Road. Suite 360
Columbus, OH 43202
614 292 7720 Phone; 614 688 8611 Fax
Email: chrisman.1@osu.edu

Web: www.ohioprogram.org

Under TOP's Program B, interns are scheduled to arrive at various times throughout the year for a twelve-month on-the-job training period. These interns are involved mainly in living and working on a farm or horticultural enterprise. There is no academic training. A vital part of the program is the attraction of training closely with a farming family. Daily life revolves around the farm business, varying with seasonal changes as to the training and activities required. Interns can expect long hours.

Other programs

International Rescue Committee

Stephen Allen
5227 N. 7th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85014
602-361-5351 Phone

Web: http://www.refugeeworks.org/about/links_refugee_agencies_local.html

(This site provides links to cooperating agencies in each state.)

The International Rescue Committee responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helps people to survive and rebuild their lives. Founded in 1933 at the request of Albert Einstein, the IRC offers lifesaving care and life-changing assistance to refugees forced to flee from war or disaster.

At work today in over 40 countries and in 22 U.S. cities, the IRC restores safety, dignity and hope to millions who are uprooted and struggling to endure. The IRC leads the way from harm to home. Recipients of IRC efforts have become employed on a number of dairies in the Pacific Northwest and Southwest, as well as other areas.

NAFTA TN Visa Program

For information: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1274.html

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) creates special economic and trade relationships for the United States (U.S.), Canada and Mexico. The nonimmigrant NAFTA Professional (TN) visa allows citizens of Canada and Mexico, as NAFTA professionals, to work in the U.S. in a prearranged business activity for a U.S. or foreign employer. North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) creates special economic and trade relationships for the United States (U.S.), Canada and Mexico. The nonimmigrant NAFTA Professional (TN) visa allows citizens of Canada and Mexico, as NAFTA professionals, to work in the U.S. in a prearranged business activity for a U.S. or foreign employer. Approved job titles include labels such as "agriculturalist", "animal breeder", "animal scientist" and "dairy scientist".