

Are You Controlling the Controllables In Your Dairy Business?



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Recently, I was reminded of an article entitled “Control the Controllable”. These three words really resonated with me as they relate to both my professional and personal life. Often times, way too much energy is spent worrying about or tackling issues we have no or very little control over or those which will not have a major impact. Our time, financial, and other resources would be better spent on issues or practices that have a positive impact on our personal and professional lives.



When it comes to managing a dairy operation, one must juggle many balls at once. Decisions need to be made as to those issues or areas which are important to devote resources to completing or exploring. Some issues are just not worth the energy to worry about “fixing” or altering. Probably one of the timeless examples of “controlling the controllable” relates to worrying about if and when it is going to rain. Obviously, the amount and timeliness of rain impacts future feeding programs and potential profitability of a dairy operation, but we have very little direct “control” over getting it to rain on command, other than irrigating the crop.

Many day-to-day management practices in a dairy business are under your “control” and impact a dairy’s profitability. Sometimes the end result is beyond our “control”, but incorporating tried-and-true and research-based practices and checking to see that they are actually being practiced are not outside our realm of influence and, thus, control. At least you have control over the path toward achieving a beneficial outcome. In this issue, several of these day-to-day controllable management practices are discussed. Many of these practices may seem mundane, common sense, and part of every-day chores, but are easily forgotten as to their role in “controlling the controllable”.