



# Exploring Vermont Dairy

## Farm Business Management and Decision Making on Vermont Dairy Farms

### Lesson 4 Pre- Assignment

Instructions: For this lesson you will be looking at how Vermont dairy farmers make decisions each day. Some decisions are straight-forward while others are challenging and require research and time before the decision can be made.

For this activity you will divide into groups of three. Each of the members of the group represents one of the partners on a dairy farm. Each of the members must present their point of view and then the group must come to a consensus on how to solve the problem.

#### Scenario 1:

Blue Bell is a 7 year old Holstein dairy cow. She produces below the herd average for the farm and is starting to have health problems. Should the cow be culled from the herd and sold for beef?

	Point 1	Point 2	
Farmer 1	Farmer 1's daughter raised this calf and it is her pet	Maybe next year she will be more productive	
Farmer 2	Farmer 2 says this cow is always kicking the milking machine off and that she is grumpy and not liked by the milking crew	This cow recently kicked off the milking machine and it cost over \$250 to repair the damages	
Farmer 3	The cost of grain just increased \$20 per ton and this cow is not pulling her weight	She is a nice-looking cow	

After each person presents their points what decision was reached?

Within your group make a list of decisions that you think farmers must make. Mark the decisions from easy to most difficult. Do you think that farmers can sometimes be stressed by the decisions they must make? What would be a good stress reliever for a farmer?