



The Point



Another Record Year!

Gary Smith, General Manager

The final chapter for fiscal year 2006 has been written and we are well into writing a new one for fiscal 2007. We are currently closing the books for 2006 with the completion of our audit and are pleased to report that preliminary sales and profit results look good.

Our A.I. business saw growth of over 26,000 units; Ag Products experienced an increase of nearly 9 percent in revenues and DHI Services hit an all-time high of having 240,000 cows on test. Additionally, AntelBio experienced growth both through sample volume, as well as participating labs. Combined sample volume from AntelBio's lab, as well as the six participating milk labs across the United States accounts for an increase of 43,000 milk samples compared to the previous year.

To attain these sales and service milestones, we have added many new tools to our offering. Gender SELECTed™ semen and IGENITY® genetic testing are just a few of the industry leading products available at NorthStar. Finding "Reproductive Solutions" for your operation continues to be a major focus. Through record analysis, on-farm technical support and other means, we are committed to enhancing your herd's reproduction results. We have continued our expansion mode for DHI Services, and enhancements to PCDART now allow for the practical application of RFID technology on farm.

As we reflect on the past year we saw many challenges and opportunities within the dairy industry. Lower milk prices and rising input costs had an affect on every business that services the industry, including NorthStar Cooperative. We are fortunate that you realized the wide selection of tools available for you and the added value these products and services provide to enhance your results.

Thank you for your business this past year and for helping your Cooperative achieve another record year! Watch for complete sales and profit results in our annual report in the next newsletter. ☆



Research accelerating on bulk tank Johne's assay

Growing interest from milk marketers and processors has spurred a collaborative research effort to develop an organism based assay to detect *Mycobacterium Paratuberculosis* (Johne's) in bulk tanks and tanker loads. Initiated in June this year by AntelBio, Michigan State University and Marshfield Clinic of Wisconsin, the project began with screening fecal environmental samples from 100 herds in Michigan for the presence of Johne's. Bulk tank samples from these same herds are now being analyzed by various methodologies to optimize a working assay that correlates with the presence of the organism on dairy farms. Once optimized, the assay will be evaluated on 1,000 dairies across the United States in the USDA NAHMS 2007 Dairy Study.

Research results from both projects will be used to determine if environmental sampling for Johne's is a viable option for monitoring progress and determining herd-level prevalence. Creating an organism based assay will allow states to monitor progress of their Johne's control programs and ultimately help producers, processors and marketers establish greater quality control measures, assuring the highest quality milk is delivered to consumers.

"It is becoming increasingly clear that *Mycobacterium Paratuberculosis* is not just a threat to the cattle population, but to the perception of food quality as well," says Todd Byrem, Ph.D., AntelBio Technical Specialist. "Only through cooperative efforts will we be able to quickly answer the current demand for assays that can detect the organism in dairy and meat products." ☆

**Comprehensive solutions
for producer results.**

