

THE DAIRY CULTURE COACH

Helping You Manage Your Multicultural Team for Success



Improve Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management is a strategic approach to managing people, and it's becoming more and more of a hot topic. A lot of us are working on improving HR on the farm, not only because of increased regulatory compliance requirements, but because it's the right thing to do. As labor becomes tighter, focusing on HR is a great way to create a workplace where employees will stay and thrive, thus decreasing the need for new employees.

Yet improving HR on the farm can be a tall order. Where do you even start? Check out the [Human Resource Management Self-Assessment](#), a tool developed to help you prioritize areas for improvement. It looks at nineteen different HR practices asks you to answer three questions:

How **effective** is your farm at this practice currently?

How **important** is this to the business?

How **easy/fast** will it be to implement?

Through a simple scoring system, you'll end up with a prioritized list of HR practices to work on improving or implementing.

Listed here, in no particular order, are five human resource management tools that I think every farm should have in place.

A System for Onboarding Employees-

How do you get a new employee up to speed? Often we throw the new employee in the milking parlor and have whoever is working train them. A better approach is to have a plan! Onboarding includes not only job training, but also completing employment paperwork, familiarizing the employee with the farm's mission, organization, and facilities, discussing pay & benefits, safety considerations, and more.

The goal of onboarding is not just to train a new employee to do a task, but to set the employee up to succeed in the long run. Investing time early on shows the employee that you care and goes a long ways towards preventing misunderstandings. Preparing a checklist for yourself will help you make sure you get everything done. If you're interested in improving Onboarding on your farm, contact Libby (geg24@cornell.edu) or Richard Stup (res396@cornell.edu).

A System for Keeping in Touch-

After spending a considerable amount of time getting a new employee trained and up to speed, it can be easy for a manager to direct their attention elsewhere. However, it's important to stay in touch, encourage the employee to ask questions, and provide them with feedback on their job

In this issue:

The Corn Plant/ <i>La Mata de Milpa</i>	2
The Importance of Corn	3
<i>La Importancia del Maíz</i>	4
Consulate Updates	4

Vocabulary

the harvest— la cosecha

to harvest —cosechar

truck—el camión

silage—el ensilage

silo—el silo

to cover—cubrir, tapar

tires— las llantas

plastic— el plástico

be careful —tenga cuidado

watch out!—¡jojo!

performance. If this is something you have a hard time remembering to do regularly, set a reminder on your phone, or set aside 10 minutes at the beginning and end of each day to chat with employees.

Job Descriptions- A job description details an employee's major responsibilities and explains the work schedule, work relationships, pay and benefits, and required experience for all the positions on your farm. These documents can be particularly helpful when hiring new employees, but are also great to help avoid disputes between employees about who is responsible for what.

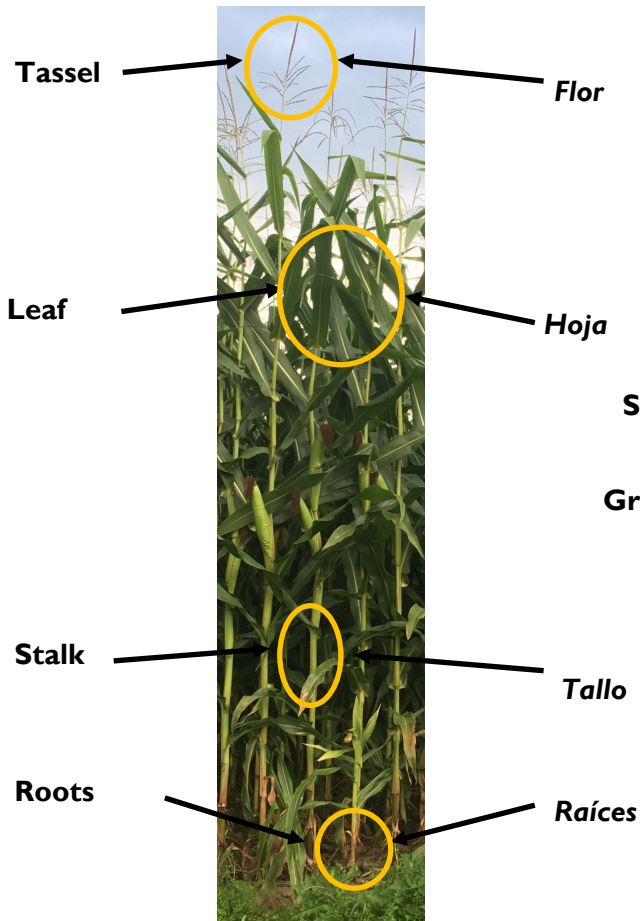
Standard Operating Procedures- While the job description outlines all the tasks an employee is responsible for, the standard operating procedure (SOP) breaks one task down into steps. While some can be stored in a notebook for reference, others should be

laminated and posted in the work area so that they can be referred to regularly. They're helpful for training new employees and preventing protocol drift. Include pictures where appropriate.

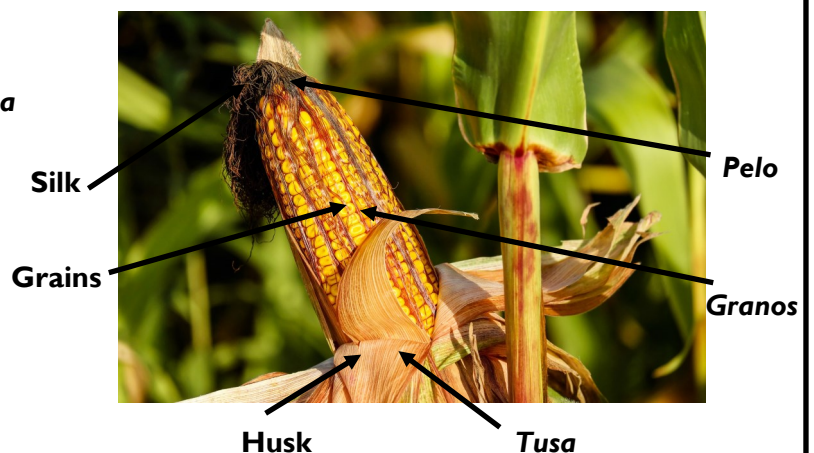
Employee Handbook- This one can be a bear! If you're not quite ready to take the plunge at a full employee handbook, consider at minimum a "Code of Conduct" or "How we do things around here" document. This is a place for you to explain what you expect of your employees- from showing up on time, to using the time clock, to dressing appropriately for work. It's much easier to enforce workplace behaviors when all the managers have taken the time to agree on what is acceptable and put it down on paper.

For more resources to help you get started on these and other HR practices, visit <https://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu/human-resource-management/>.

The Corn Plant — La Mata de Milpa



Ear — Mazorca



The Importance of Corn

September is here, and corn harvest is just underway! While corn is central to the lives of dairy farmers, it's also central to the lives of many people in Central America, whose diets are based on corn. Peace Corps volunteer Patrick Garrett explains the significance of corn to the daily life of Guatemalans in a short video aptly titled [“Home is Where the Corn Grows.”](#)

Corn was central to the diets of their ancestors as well. So much so that the origin story of life in Mayan religions is that the [first people were made from corn](#).

In the US, most of the corn planted is “field corn,” a hard yellow kernelled corn that is used primarily for animal feed. The corn takes about three months from planting to reach maturity. It is either harvested with the whole stalk and fermented (silage), or allowed to dry on the stalk, combined, dried in a grain dryer, and stored in grain bins. Another common crop is “sweet corn,” which is harvested fresh, either to be eaten right away or to be frozen or canned.

In Central America, much of the corn planted is a white corn that is mostly derived from varieties native to the area. With a longer growing season, these varieties take about seven months to mature and grow very tall. While some corn is grown commercially and harvested mechanically, much of the production is for subsistence farming through manual labor. Before harvest, the stalk or ear is bent downwards to encourage drying. After harvest, the corn is husked and laid out on tin roofs or in dirt



Drying corn (and clothes) in the sun.

yards to dry in the sun. It is shelled by hand and stored for later consumption.

Most corn is first boiled with lime (a process called nixtamalization), then cooled and rinsed before being ground into a dough. The dough can be used to make countless dishes.

What's for certain is that corn makes the table in many Central American homes at every meal.



Boiling corn w/ lime.

How Do You Eat Corn?

Central America

- Tortillas— a standard served with most meals
- Atol— a hot, thick sweetened beverage made of corn flour
- Tamales— corn dough stuffed with meat and sauce, then wrapped and steamed in corn husks or banana leaves
- Elote loco (crazy corn)- corn on the cob smothered with mayo, ketchup & hot sauce
- Pozole— a stew made with hominy

USA

- Corn on the cob w/ salt & butter
 - Cornbread
 - Corn chowder

La Importancia de Maíz

Ya llegó septiembre, y la cosecha de maíz ya está empezando. Mientras el maíz es central para las vidas de muchos ganaderos, también es fundamental para las vidas de muchas personas de Centro América, cuyos dietas son basados en el maíz. El voluntario del Cuerpo de Paz Patrick Garrett explica la importancia del maíz en las vidas diarias de los Guatemaltecos en un video corto llamado [“El hogar está donde crezca el maíz.”](#)

Maíz fue central a las dietas de sus ancestros también. Tanto que la historia del origen de vida de religiones Mayas es que [las primeras personas fueron formados de maíz.](#)

En los Estados Unidos, la mayoría de la maíz sembrada es “maíz de campo,” un maíz duro con granos amarillos que se utiliza más que nada para alimentar animales. El maíz lleva alrededor de tres meses desde la siembra hasta la cosecha. Se cosecha la milpa entera y la fermenta (ensilaje), o se deja secar el en tallo, cosecha con máquina, seca totalmente en una secadora de grano, y almacena en silos de grano. Otro cultivo común es “maíz dulce,” que se cosecha fresca para comer de una vez o para congelar o enlatar.

En Centro América, la mayoría del maíz sembrada es un maíz blanco que está derivado de los variedades nativos al área. Con una temporada de cultivo más largo, estas variedades lleven alrededor de siete meses para madurar y crecen muy altos.

Algo de maíz está cultivado comercialmente y cosechada con máquinas, pero la mayoría de la producción es para agricultura de subsistencia por trabajo manual. Antes de la cosecha, el tallo o mazorca está doblada hacia abajo para ayudar que se seque. Después de la cosecha, des-

cascaran las mazorcas y los ponen encima de techos de lámina o en patios de tierra para secar en el sol. Se desgranar a mano y almacenan para consumir más después.

La mayoría del maíz se hierve con cal (en nixtamal), enfriado y lavado antes de molerlo para crear una masa. Se puede usar la masa para muchas comidas.

Lo que es seguro es que el maíz llega a la mesa de muchas casas en centro américa para las tres comidas.

¿Cómo comen el maíz?

Centro América

- Tortillas – servidas en casi cada comida
- Atol – una bebida caliente, espeso y dulce, hecho con harina de maíz
- Tamales – masa de maíz llenada con carne y salsa, envuelta en tucas o hojas de banano y cocido al vapor
- Elote loco - elote cocido y cubierto con mayonesa, salsa dulce y salsa picante
- Pozole– una sopa hecho con maíz

EEUU

- Elote con mantequilla y sal
 - Pan de maíz
 - Sopa con crema y maíz

Consulate Updates

The Guatemalan Consulate does not have any mobile consulates scheduled at this time.

The Mexican Consulate will visit Geneva October 16, 17, 18.

The Mexican Consulate also has plans to visit Geneseo in early November. Check their website for updates.



SRE SECRETARÍA DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES
CONSULADO GENERAL DE MÉXICO EN NUEVA YORK

PASAPORTES, MATRÍCULAS CONSULARES Y REGISTRO DE NACIMIENTO EN
GENEVA, NY
GENEVA COMMUNITY CENTER
160 CARTER ROAD
GENEVA, NY 14456
DEL MIÉRCOLES 16 AL VIERNES 18 DE OCTUBRE

AGRADECEMOS EL APOYO DE: FINGER LAKES COALITION OF FARMWORKERS AGENCIES Y CORNELL FARMWORKER PROGRAM

- ATENCIÓN AL PÚBLICO: MIÉRCOLES Y VIERNES: 10:30 A 14:00 HRS.
JUEVES: 15:00 A 19:00 HRS.
- FAVOR DE HACER TU CITA GRATUITA EN MEXITEL:
 - TELÉFONO: 1-877-639-4835
 - INTERNET: [HTTPS://MEXITEL.SRE.GOB.MX/CITAS.WEBPORTAL/](https://mexitel.sre.gob.mx/citas.webportal/)
 - CITAS DISPONIBLES APROXIMADAMENTE 2 SEMANAS ANTES DEL EVENTO.
- PARA MÁS INFORMACIÓN SOBRE REQUISITOS, PRECIOS Y OTRAS SEDES VISITA:

[HTTPS://CONSULMEX.SRE.GOB.MX/NUEVAYORK](https://CONSULMEX.SRE.GOB.MX/NUEVAYORK)

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Northwest NY Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops Program

Serving Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Orleans, Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates Counties.

Check out our website!

[https://
nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu](https://nwnyteam.cce.cornell.edu)



Stay tuned for the next issue of *The Dairy Culture Coach* in December! To sign up, email Libby.

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Through educational programs and other teaching opportunities, the **NWNY Team** seeks to build producers' capacities to:

- Enhance the sustainability of their businesses
- Enhance profitability and other aspects of economic performance of their businesses
- Practice environmental stewardship
- Enhance employee well-being and satisfaction
- Provide safe, healthy agricultural products in ways that are safe to farm owners and employees and their families and neighbors
- Provide leadership for enhancing relationships between the agricultural sector and the general public

We look forward to working with you in your farming and ag-related ventures in NWNY. Together we can keep the agricultural economy competitive, maintain a comfortable standard of living and be conscientious stewards of our natural environment.