The strength of the Wisconsin dairy industry depends on its diversity and its capacity to adapt to new situations.

Some farmers may elect to expand their dairy herd as an strategy of sustainability.

Providing adequate Extension support to this diverse and changing community of farmers is a challenge.

It is important then to characterize and detect educational needs that better serve the clientele of farmers that have decided to expand their dairy herds.

A 10-page questionnaire was developed, tested and mailed to a group of 1,000 Wisconsin registered dairy farmers.

300 farmers completed and the questionnaire.

Answers were analyzed segregating farmers who are expanding and farmers who do not plan to expand.

1) 26% of Wisconsin dairy farmers are intending to expand their operations

2) Farmers planning to expand are younger, have already larger herds, more land, and more infrastructure than their counterparts.

3) Extension programming for expanding farmers should emphasize nutrient and reproductive management, facility improvement, investment acquisition, and cash flow planning.