

SUDIA elects new leaders during annual meeting

Forging New Roads for Dairy Sales” was the theme of SUDIA’s 38th annual meeting held recently in Atlanta, Ga. More than 75 producers from nine Southeast states attended the two-day meeting, where directors and delegates conducted elections, seated the new Board and heard about innovative ways to grow dairy demand.

New officers elected were: Bob Strasser (Nashville, Tenn.), president; Mickey Childers (Somerville, Ala.), vice president; Zach Myers (Jonesville, N.C.), secretary; and Larry Jagers (Glendale, Ky.), treasurer.

Strasser first joined the SUDIA Board in 1991 and was president of the American Dairy Association of Tennessee for 18 years. He and his wife Deborah live on the only dairy farm in Davidson County, an urban county that includes Nashville. They milk 90 cows and grow crops on a second farm in Robertson County.

Strasser welcomed new Board members Jack Bentley, Jr. (Ga.), Glen Easter (S.C.), Patty Leonard (Va.), and Billy Rowe (Ky.).

“My philosophy is to get Board members and other dairy farmers more involved in their promotion programs,” he said. “I welcome questions and input from all dairy producers.”

As Board president, Strasser serves SUDIA nationally on the United Dairy Industry Association (UDIA) Board of Directors. Others elected to represent SUDIA on the UDIA board include Bobby Combs (Va.), Michael Ferguson (Miss.) and Billy Travis (Ky.).

“It’s important that SUDIA has a strong voice nationally,” said Billy Travis, a former SUDIA president. “As production declines and the population increases, we need to continue to advocate for promotion dollars following milk into the Southeast.”

The Dairy Farmer Spokesperson Network also conducted media training at its annual meeting on March 10. The meeting featured a crisis-training session with media consultant Joan Horbiak, who helped prepare producers to handle interviews in the event of a dairy crisis.



SUDIA’s 2009 officers (l-r) Mickey Childers, vice president; Zach Myers, secretary; Bob Strasser, president; and Larry Jagers, treasurer.