

Overview of the OSU Dairy Farm Tour



When you arrive, the tour guide will welcome you to the OSU dairy and show you how to put on your biosecurity boots. Our facility has two full time managers and our objectives are focused on teaching, research, and outreach (hosting tours like yours).

As you walk into our corridor, you will be presented general information about the farm, the cattle, and how milk is processed from the farm to the grocery.

From there, the group will advance to the milk house with a discussion about our bulk tank. Various dairy products will also be on display, and you will be reminded of the nutritional importance of dairy in your daily diet.

A walk through the milk house door and you will enter the “milking parlor” where cattle are milked 2x daily, 365 days a year! The design, the equipment, and the questions about cow comfort will be many!

Into our “cow kitchen”, students will observe cows eating in a feed alley. We will examine the texture and smell the fresh scent of forages. A computer formulates all of the rations so that they are fed a balanced diet.

We will also walk through many barns observing animals of various ages and stages of development. You will learn about their bedding material, feeding strategies for each group, identification, health practices, and how a heifer becomes a cow.

The most liked area is where the baby calves are housed in individual hutches. Upon birth, the farm has a very careful routine on the care of newborns. Young calves are not born with a natural immunity and the timely feeding of quality colostrum is essential to their future well-being.

Anyone is permitted to touch the calves and cows. They love attention and are naturally curious. However, we will provide instructions for your safety. A sanitizing area to wash your hands will also be available.

We will take photos of your tour. If you have some limitations on this, please let us know. When you leave, we will also have some free promotional items that the kids will enjoy.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you would like more information about dairy farms, please visit www.dairyfarmingtoday.org.

BUTTER MAKING

If you would like to experience this, the additional charge is \$2 per person over and above the initial fees. This covers the expense of our supplies. We re-locate to another building where there is more space to work with everyone more efficiently. It is enjoyable, science based, and offers a hands-on activity that will demonstrate a simple ritual that has become a thing of the past in our 21st century homes.

Contact information: Bonnie Ayars, (614) 688-3143, ayars.5@osu.edu