

## CASE STUDY

# SOUTHERN STATES COOPERATIVE

### CUSTOMER OVERVIEW

Southern States Cooperative is one of the nation's largest farmer-owned cooperatives. They encompass some 1,200 retail locations in 23 states. Southern States is a distributor of Land O' Lakes Animal Milk calf milk products, as well as their own line of calf and heifer feed programs and products.

### CLIENT OBJECTIVE

Southern States' objective was to improve calf and heifer product knowledge and sales skills needed by dealer employees. These employees need to be effective when:

- Interfacing with dairy producers.
- Responding to dairy producer questions and products and their usage.
- Making a product feeding recommendation.

A majority of the Southern States Cooperative field sales staff is comprised of a population that is not computer savvy.

"It was going to be our first time rolling out web-based training, so my biggest goal was to have a smooth roll-out, to make it user-friendly to those employees not comfortable on computers and not used to accessing employee development or training via computer."

- Carter Iseman, Manager, Southern States Cooperative Corporate Learning Services

### TARGET AUDIENCE

Southern States Cooperative retail sales people and dealer employees.

### RUSSELL ASSOCIATES' SOLUTION

Russell Associates customized the product knowledge and sales training portions of the Land O' Lakes ROI Training for Southern States Cooperative. This customized training was structured to include information on the Southern States Cooperative line of calf and heifer feed programs and products. The program also included a resource library, with links to product sell sheets, brochures, articles, and other useful sales tools.

The solution included a 20 question quiz, to test for understanding of the information presented in the module.

### TRAINING METHOD

Computer-Based Interactive Training (CBIT)

### PROGRAM LENGTH

Approximately 30 minutes.

### ADMINISTRATION

The training module is hosted on Russell Associates' IntRAtrain site. A Southern States Cooperative administrator is able to assign the training to dealer employees. After completing the module, students take the 20-question quiz. The results are recorded on the IntRAtrain site.

"We rolled it out to our dairy sales folk. There are a limited number of people that would target, so we also put it out there for our retail sales people to take if they have some interest..... some of our employees took it out of a personal desire."

- Carter Iseman

## **PROGRAM RESULTS**

"(Russell Associates was) great in helping us work with our customers – our Southern States employees, to work through the problems and get them resolved as soon as they came up."

"They've been very pleased with the material. It's well-presented and I think people have been excited and they feel it's definitely useful. It was definitely a hit."

- Carter Iseman