

[Indian Dairy Farmer Uses U.S. Genetics Training to Improve His Business](#)

Posted by [Katie Gorscak, Foreign Agricultural Service](#), on March 1, 2011 at 2:12 PM



Mr. Rode is pictured here with Thom Wright, a FAS agricultural attaché in India, and one of Mr. Rode's American-origin Holstein crosses which won a milk production award at the Progressive Dairy Farmers Association show. Halfway around the world, a farmer in India stands proudly in the winner's circle with his cow. Mr. S. Sukharpreet Singh Rode, the farmer, is a 2008 graduate of the [Cochran Fellowship Program](#), an educational exchange program administered by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).

As a Cochran fellow, Mr. Rode spent two weeks at the University of Wisconsin learning about innovative techniques on animal husbandry, improved feeding practices, animal diseases and treatments, and calf rearing. With this background, Mr. Rode returned to India, where he used high-quality American dairy cattle genetics to improve his dairy business in the Punjab region, one of the most fertile areas in India. The cow in the winner's circle with Mr. Rode is one of his American-origin Holstein crosses (crossed with a local Indian cow), and in February it won a milk production award at the Progressive Dairy Farmers Association show near Ludhiana. India is the world's largest dairy producer and maintains the world's largest dairy herd. Given population and income growth in India, Indian farmers are now looking for new management tools and technologies to increase local production and meet growing demand. U.S. cattle genetics are well adapted to Indian farming practices and are already providing significant milk yield increases for Indian farmers. Working closely with the FAS office in New Delhi, India, American genetics companies are helping India build its genetics technology. At the same time, the United States will benefit from a new market for American cattle genetics exports, which holds potential for significant growth.

The FAS Cochran Program, which gave Mr. Rode the training he needed to improve his business, provides U.S.-based agricultural training opportunities for agriculture professionals like Mr. Rode from foreign countries. To be selected for the program, fellows must be senior or mid-level specialists and administrators from public and private sectors concerned with agricultural trade, agribusiness development, management, policy, and marketing. In the end, the Cochran Fellowship Program helps to support U.S. exports and build long-term relationships with trading partners.

Mr. Rode's story is an example of how USDA and FAS work to promote U.S. exports through a variety of programs which benefit the United States and other countries around the world.

To learn more about the Cochran Fellowship program and eligibility requirements, [visit our website](#).