The SGPDC is organized to provide leadership, support and resources for the development and facilitation of education and research in large herd management, in coordination with industry, academia and government. The Consortium is able to enhance the dairy industry’s competitiveness as well as its ability to produce a safe, wholesome and competitively priced supply of milk and related products. This is achieved in an environmentally sound manner through expanded cooperative programs of the various universities, state agencies and federal agencies serving the Southern Great Plains.

The first accomplishment within the Teaching leg of the Consortium was the development of a 6 week hands-on training class in Large Herd Dairy Management. The objective of the 6 week class, divided into two sessions, is to cover all aspects of Large Dairy Herd Management in one week sessions, taught by nationally recognized faculty, augmented and illustrated by daily on-farm training and demonstration. Students can take Session I the first year and return for Session II during a subsequent year. Class credit for students of participating Universities is left to be decided by the home university.

It was decided in the planning phase that the SGPDC-Teaching program should be anchored in Clovis, NM due to its close and unique proximity to many large herd facilities and the presence of Clovis Community College. Dairy owners have been shown to be key partners in the development of the program in granting access to their dairies, parlors, cows and records in order to give the students real world experiences in commercial herds. Without the collaboration and active participation of these facilitators, the program would have no future. Producers now realize that through this program educational dairy programs are being rebuilt at Land Grant Universities. Participating Universities at this point are: New Mexico State, Texas A&M, West Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Abilene Christian, University of Arizona, Colorado State, Oklahoma State, Tarleton State, University of Florida, and Washington State.

The 2008 program hosted 18 students from 8 Universities while the 2009 program hosted 22 students from 10 universities. In 2010, 37 students from 11 universities travelled to Clovis, while the program in 2011 is hosting 52 students from 11 universities, proving that the program is starting to fill a niche in dairy education.