



DAIRY STAR

Volume 27, No. 17

"All dairy, all the time"™

October 25, 2025

It started with pansies



AMY KYLLO/DAIRY STAR

Kay Siewert kneels next to the garden in front of her home Oct. 10 near Lake City, Minnesota. Siewert does flower, vegetable and fruit gardening and helps to feed approximately 180 milk calves every evening at Hyde Park Holsteins, operated by her husband, Kevin, and his family near Zumbro Falls.

Siewert aims to keep fresh flowers at her local church

By Amy Kylo
amy.k@star-pub.com

LAKE CITY, Minn. — Kay Siewert's gardening joy is cut flowers — specifically keeping fresh flowers on the altar at her local congregation, Trinity Lutheran Church-Lincoln.

"No matter what you are doing, you can be giving thanks to God, and you can show your appreciation to God and show your appreciation to others," Siewert said. "This is just one small way of giving back to the church."

Siewert donates three bouquets from her rural Lake City garden to her church each Sunday: one large bouquet for the altar and two for the sides of the sanctuary. For special events such as a pie social or a funeral, Siewert will also bring bouquets for the tables in the fellowship hall.

"It's ... an artistic thing that I can arrange these flowers, enjoy that artistic part, give them away, or use them for a week and then do it again next week," Siewert said. "It's not something you keep for a long time."

In early October, Siewert brought 25 bouquets to an area local church for a funeral, just a few days after a frost.

"I think the Lord knew I needed these," Siewert said.

Turn to **SIEWERT** | Page 6

Kimm Dairy transitions to next generation

By Tiffany Klaphake
tiffany.k@dairystar.com

PELICAN RAPIDS, Minn. — Brian Kimm knows he is a lucky man to have not one, but two of his sons return to the farm and carry it into the future.

"I feel good about having something for them to come back home to," Brian said.

Brian and his wife, Barb, and their two sons, Dan and Ben, milk 85 registered Brown Swiss cows in a tiestall barn at Kimm Dairy near Pelican Rapids. Together they farm around 400 acres of land, raising corn and alfalfa.

Brian said he wants to



TIFFANY KLAPHAKE/DAIRY STAR

Dan (from left), Ben, Brian and Barb Kimm gather Oct. 15 at their farm, Kimm Dairy, near Pelican Rapids, Minnesota. The farm is being transferred to Ben and Dan, who represent the fourth generation.

be done milking cows every day by the end of the year, but he will still help his sons

as needed around the farm. "I started milking every day when I was 12, so I fig-

ured 50 years was enough,"

Turn to **KIMMS** | Page 2

A walking miracle



STACEY SMART/DAIRY STAR

Ron (from left), Kristi, Myrna and Tom Snodgrass look over their herd Oct. 7 on their farm near Oregon, Illinois. Kristi and Ron's parents kept the farm running last December when Ron suffered a double brain aneurysm.

Snodgrass survives double brain aneurysm, robots provide chore relief

By Stacey Smart
stacey.s@dairystar.com

OREGON, Ill. — For the past two years, the Snodgrass family's Jersey herd at Valley-View Dairy has been milked by robots. The cows gravitated towards the technology when it was installed, quick to leave behind the parlor for a new, independent way of milking.

Turn to **SNODGRASS FAMILY** | Page 8

DAIRY STAR

www.dairystar.com

ISSN Print: 2834-619X • Online: 2834-6203
522 Sinclair Lewis Ave.
Sauk Centre, MN 56378
Phone: 320-352-6303
Fax: 320-352-5647

Published by Star Publications LLC
General Manager/Editor

Mark Klaphake - mark.k@dairystar.com
320-352-6303 (office)
320-248-3196 (cell)
320-352-0062 (home)

Ad Composition - 320-352-6303
Production Manager - Nancy Powell
nancy.p@dairystar.com

Assistant Production Manager
Annika Gunderson • annika@star-pub.com
Karen Knoblach • karen.k@star-pub.com

Editorial Staff

Stacey Smart - Assistant Editor
262-442-6666 • stacey.s@dairystar.com
Danielle Nauman - Staff Writer
608-487-1101 • danielle.n@dairystar.com
Dan Wacker - Staff Writer
608-487-3858 • dan.w@dairystar.com
Tiffany Klaphake - Staff Writer
320-352-6303 • tiffany.k@dairystar.com
Jenna Buyck - Staff Writer
507-531-6009 • jenna.b@dairystar.com
Amy Kylo - Staff Writer
amy.k@star-pub.com
Sarah Young - Staff Writer
sarah.y@star-pub.com

Advertising Sales

Main Office: 320-352-6303
Fax: 320-352-5647

Deadline is 5 p.m. of the Friday
the week before publication

Sales Manager - Joyce Frericks
320-352-6303 • joyce@saukherald.com
National Sales Manager - Laura Seljan
(National Advertising, SE MN)
507-250-2217 • fax: 507-634-4413
laura.s@dairystar.com

Assistant Sales Manager - Kati Schafer
(Northeast WI and Upper MI)
920-979-5284 • kati.s@dairystar.com

Jenna Buyck
(SW MN, NW Iowa, SD, Nebraska)
507-531-6009 • Jenna.b@dairystar.com

Mike Schafer
(Central, South Central MN)
320-894-7825 • mike.s@dairystar.com

Hannah Ullom
(Western Wisconsin)
715-933-4045 • hannah.u@dairystar.com

Keya Sleister
(Eastern IA, Southwest WI, IL)
563-608-5988 • keya.s@dairystar.com

Julia Merten
(Southeast MN and Northeast IA)
507-438-7739 • julia.m@star-pub.com

Bob Leukam
(Northern MN, East Central MN)
320-260-1248 (cell)
bob.l@star-pub.com

Mark Klaphake (Western MN)
320-352-6303 (office) • 320-248-3196 (cell)

Deadlines

The deadline for news and advertising in
the Dairy Star is 5 p.m. Friday the week
before publication.

Subscriptions

One year subscription \$42.00, outside
the U.S. \$200.00. Send check along with
mailing address to Dairy Star, 522 Sinclair
Lewis Ave., Sauk Centre, MN 56378.

Advertising

Our ad takers have no authority to bind
this newspaper and only publication of
an advertisement shall constitute final
acceptance of the advertiser's order.

Letters

Letters and articles of opinion are
welcomed. Letters must be signed and
include address and phone number. We
reserve the right to edit lengthy letters.

The views and opinions expressed by Dairy Star
columnists and writers are not necessarily those of
the Dairy Star / Star Publications LLC.

The Dairy Star is published semi-monthly by Star
Publications LLC, 522 Sinclair Lewis Ave., Sauk
Centre, MN 56378-1246. Periodicals Postage Paid
at Sauk Centre, MN and additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Dairy Star,
522 Sinclair Lewis Ave., Sauk Centre, MN 56378-1246.
© 2025 Star Publications LLC

Continued from KIMMS | Page 1

Brian said. "I liked doing it, but I am at the point I want to quit while my body is still in good shape so I can still do other things."

Dan has been full time on the farm since 2013, when Brian's dad died.

"I always planned on coming back to the farm," Dan said. "I like cows and driving a tractor to do field work."

Ben joined the family operation earlier this year after working off the farm for 17 years.

"It was alright, but I always wanted to come back to the farm," Ben said. "I think it is good to bring back experience from off the farm to the farm."

Ben is still an active member of the Army National Guard.

"Everyone is still finding where they fit in, but I like the cattle and Dan is more of the crops guy," Ben said. "I am gone enough with the Guard, and everyone needs to know how to do everything in case someone needs to take off."

Previously, Ben worked as a road and field mechanic and worked his way up to service manager with a company in Fargo. He would often come to the farm to help out with various projects as time allowed.

"Ben brings back a skillset of working with equipment, and that



TIFFANY KLAPHAKE/DAIRY STAR

Ben Kimm pulls a miking unit Oct. 15 on his family's farm, Kimm Dairy, near Pelican Rapids, Minnesota. Kimm returned full time to the family farm earlier this year.

was never my strongest skillset," Brian said. "Mine was the genetics and cattle."

For the past few years, Ben and

his family lived on the farm while he was working in town.

Turn to KIMMS | Page 5

VT 200 SERIES VERTICAL MAXX® | Twin-Auger Mixers

320 – 760 ft³ mixing capacities • truck & trailer models



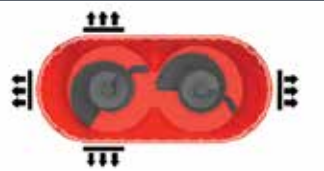
FAST, COMPLETE MIXING AND PROCESSING



Advanced auger design for superior feed movement and auger clean off



Efficient mixing chamber promotes a fast, complete mix



Front, side and rear discharge options offer maximum versatility



Feed off both incline or flat side for ultimate feeding flexibility

Isaacson Sales & Service
Lafayette, MN

Adkins Equipment
Detroit Lakes, MN

Blue Hilltop
Lake Wilson, MN

Dairyland Supply
Sauk Centre, MN

Northland Farm Systems
Owatonna, MN

Fluegge's Ag
Mora, MN

Lake Henry Implement
Paynesville, MN

Woller Equipment
Swanville, MN

Anderson Bros
Edeley, ND

Duppong's
Glen Ullin, ND

Kunau Implement Company
Preston, IA

Helmuth Repair
Kalona, IA

Graber Services
Lockridge, IA

Kromminga Motors
Monticello, IA
Vinton, IA

Roeder Bros. Incorporated
Maquoka, IA
Bellevue, IA

Invest in Quality®
www.kuhn.com
Invest in Quality

Visit your local KUHN TMR Mixer dealer today!



All dairy, all the time.



Rice, MN

Schmitt family sells herd
First Section: Pages 9, 12 - 13



Sauk Rapids, MN

Scapanski milks cows at family farm
First Section: Pages 26 - 27



Spring Grove, MN

Semi-retirement equals a barn full of cows for Wistes
First Section: Pages 32 - 33



Utica, MN

Yoder family back milking three weeks after blaze destroys barn
Second Section: Pages 3 - 4



Norwood Young America, MN

Paddling the way to cleanliness
Second Section: Pages 11 - 13



Freeport, MN

Trio of Klaphakes tackle busy day
Second Section: Pages 14, 16 - 17



Hancock, MN

Barn Full of Memories: Dave Joos
Second Section: Page 20



Freeman, SD

FFA: Behind the Emblem
Third Section: Pages 8 - 9



New Prague, MN

Kids Corner: The Pieper Family
Third Section: Pages 10 - 11

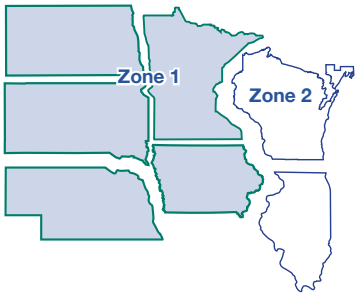
Zone 1
Zone 2
Zone 3
Zone 4
Zone 5
Zone 6
Zone 7
Zone 8
Zone 9
Zone 10
Zone 11
Zone 12
Zone 13
Zone 14
Zone 15
Zone 16
Zone 17
Zone 18
Zone 19
Zone 20
Zone 21
Zone 22
Zone 23
Zone 24
Zone 25
Zone 26
Zone 27
Zone 28
Zone 29
Zone 30
Zone 31
Zone 32
Zone 33
Zone 34
Zone 35
Zone 36
Zone 37
Zone 38
Zone 39
Zone 40
Zone 41
Zone 42
Zone 43
Zone 44
Zone 45
Zone 46
Zone 47
Zone 48
Zone 49
Zone 50
Zone 51
Zone 52
Zone 53
Zone 54
Zone 55
Zone 56
Zone 57
Zone 58
Zone 59
Zone 60
Zone 61
Zone 62
Zone 63
Zone 64
Zone 65
Zone 66
Zone 67
Zone 68
Zone 69
Zone 70
Zone 71
Zone 72
Zone 73
Zone 74
Zone 75
Zone 76
Zone 77
Zone 78
Zone 79
Zone 80
Zone 81
Zone 82
Zone 83
Zone 84
Zone 85
Zone 86
Zone 87
Zone 88
Zone 89
Zone 90
Zone 91
Zone 92
Zone 93
Zone 94
Zone 95
Zone 96
Zone 97
Zone 98
Zone 99
Zone 100

FROM OUR SIDE OF THE FENCE:

Amongst your fleet of tractors, which is your favorite and why?

First Section: Pages 15 - 16

For additional stories from our other zone, log on to www.dairystar.com



Columnists



Ag Insider
Page 10- 11
First Section



Dear County Agent Guy
Page 36
First Section



Something to Ruminare On
Page 37
First Section



Just Thinking Out Loud
Page 38
First Section



Dairy Good Life
Page 39
First Section



The "Mielke" Market Weekly
Pages 6 - 7
Second Section

Your Waste Systems Specialists



GEA

Engineering for a better world.



Hull, Iowa (712) 439-2081 • (866)-918-2081
Watertown, SD (605) 753-0300 • (844)-863-6554

www.automatedwastesystems.com

In Stock, Available to Install on Your Farm Today!



Control Center Assembly Pasteurizer

For larger dairies we offer
120,150, 250 or 250 gallon capacity.
Call for details!



20, 30,
40, 60
and
90
gallons



Owen Murphy
Murphy Dairy Farms
Farley, IA

WESTWAARD
FABRICATORS for DARTITECH

"We began looking at a bottle washer to keep bottles cleaner and eliminate an extra job. After seeing the option to purchase the bottle washer and pasteurizer combination, we started to look at its benefits. Once we calculated what we would save by not buying bags of milk replacers, it was an easy decision to add the pasteurizer. Since installing the new system of the bottle washer and pasteurizer combination the calves drink better and are healthier."

Fuller's MILKER CENTER, LLC.

Proudly Serving Dairy Farmers Since 1953

423 US Hwy 61 N
Lancaster, WI 53813

900 US Hwy 14 W
Richland Center, WI 53581

(800) 887-4634

DUAL GERMICIDE CHLORINE DIOXIDE

THE PREMIER GERMICIDE ON THE MARKET

Valiant Express[®]

PRIME



More
economical and
more effective
than iodine!

Max
Protection
until the next
milking

- 9 EMOLLIENTS - Ultimate teat conditioning
- USE PRE & POST
- GREEN COLOR for High-Vis Marking

SAVE UP TO \$1/GALLON over Iodine!

FOR MORE INFO - CONTACT ONE OF THESE DEALERS...

Advanced Dairy LLC
9 State Rd. 29 • Spring Valley, WI 54767
(715) 772-3201
913 W. Main St. • Mondovi, WI 54755
(715) 926-5777
967 West Ave. N • West Salem, WI 54669
(608) 633-6690
2195 Hwy. 23 • Mora, MN 55051
(715) 772-3201
117 West Circle Dr. • St. Charles, MN 55972
(507) 932-4288
1449 Homecrest Ave SE • Wadena, MN 56482
(218) 632-5416

Bob's Dairy Supply
540 E. County Rd. A • Dorchester, WI 54425
(715) 654-5252
Eastern Iowa Dairy Systems
105 3rd Ave. NW • Epworth, IA 52045
(563) 876-3087
Farm Systems
58 Interstate Drive • Melrose, MN 56352
Brookings SD • (320) 256-3276

Fuller's Milker Center, LLC
423 U.S. 61 • Lancaster, WI 53813
900 US Hwy. 14 West • Richland Center, WI 53581
(800) 887-4634
Gorter's Clay & Dairy Equipment
1400- 7th St. SE • Pipestone, MN 56164
(507) 825-3271
Redeker Dairy Equipment
W12287 Liner Rd. • Brandon, WI 53919
(920) 346-5576

Lang's Dairy Equipment, Inc.
2337 Millennium Rd. • Decorah, IA 52101
(563) 382-8722
295 East Main Street • Lewiston, MN 55952
(507) 452-5532
Precision Dairy Equipment
24548 IA-13 • Elkader, IA 52043
(563) 245-2560
Tri-County Dairy Supply, Inc.
4107 N US HWY 51 • Janesville, WI 53545
608-757-2697

Leedstone
222 E Co Rd 173 SE, Melrose, MN 56352
(877) 608-3877
24260 Cty. Rd. 27 • Plainview, MN 55964
(800) 548-2540
1720 Freitag Dr. • Menomonie, WI 54751
(866) 467-4717
2580 9th St. E. • Glencoe, MN 55336
(877) 864-5575

United Dairy Systems
210 N. Industrial Pkwy • West Union, IA 52175
(563) 422-5355
132 W 11th St. • Monticello, IA 52310
(319) 465-5931

USE RECYCLED MANURE SOLIDS WITHOUT SACRIFICING COW HEALTH



BEDDING
TREATMENT

POWERED BY CERTILLUS

What if you could use RMS as a
sustainable manure outlet
without the trade-offs?

Premium Protection

Reduce the threat of high SCC and lost milk quality premiums and deductions.

Avoid Mastitis

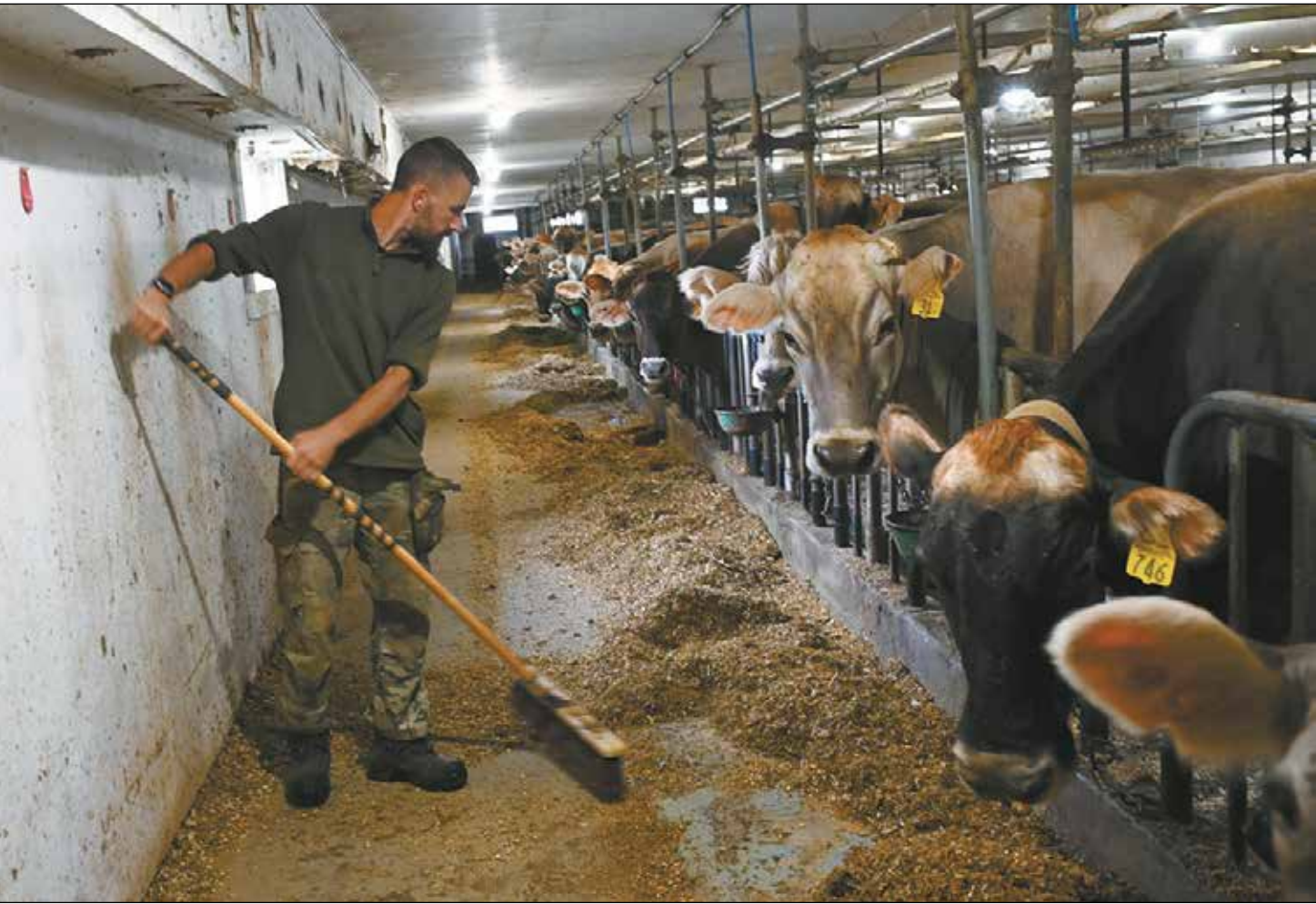
24/7 targeting of environmental pathogens to reduce risk of
environmental mastitis.

Employee Productivity

Employees waste less time treating infected cows and retreating solids
from intermittent bedding treatments



www.chemstarworks.com



Dan Kimm sweeps mangers Oct. 15 at his family’s farm, Kimm Dairy, near Pelican Rapids, Minnesota. The Kimms milk 85 registered Brown Swiss cows.

TIFFANY KLAPHAKE/DAIRY STAR

“Part of the reason I stayed working in town as long as I did was to save up enough money to build a house on the farm for my family,” Ben said. Ben is married and has two children, and Dan is married with three children. Some of their children start-

ed showing cattle at the county fair this past summer through 4-H. “I love being able to see my grandkids every day,” Brian said. “I have friends who only see their grandkids a couple of times a year.” On the farm, the brothers, who

represent the fourth generation on the farm, are finding a new routine to get chores and projects accomplished. Ben is also learning how to do the A.I. work for their farm. “We got to check off a lot of the to-do list this summer with Ben being

back full time,” Brian said. The Kimms were able to finish and cement the inside of a shop and put up a new grain bin. “We have different strengths and we work according to those and that seems to work pretty well,” Ben said. Dan agreed. “We have a lot of the same mentality of what we want to do and what project to work on next,” he said. Brian has instilled the same values he was taught growing up on the farm. “On the farm you have to be able to make the decision and take responsibility for those decisions,” Brian said. The brothers take their father’s words of wisdom as they transition into ownership of the farm that has been in the family since 1955. “We are on the same page as far as what we want to modernize next,” Ben said. “The nice thing is that we are coming to a farm that is built to be sustainable, and everything here is designed to keep going.” Brian’s goal was to progressively modernize the farm so his sons would have the option to come back if they wanted to, without having to take on too much debt. “From the time I was young, I knew dairy farming was what I wanted to do,” Brian said. “I wanted to build something here, not just to survive, but to make improvements to what I had so we can keep going. That is what I am most proud of, that I have something here that the boys want to come back to.”



SIoux DAIRY EQUIPMENT, INC.

Complete Dairy Facilities



GENERAL CONTRACTING

Since 1987, Sioux Dairy Equipment, Inc. has been an industry leader in the design, construction, and support of customized turnkey dairy facilities. From concept to completion, we provide expert dairy design and construction services, backed by 24/7 service, preventative maintenance, and route supplies. With experience on projects ranging from 100 to 10,000 cows, we have the knowledge and resources to make your operation a success. Contact us today to start your project.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

DAIRY DESIGN

800.962.4346

 @siouxdairy

NEW!

Harvestore Unloader Motor

- Plug & Play Replacement for existing motor
- No Contactors or Capacitors
- Soft start, easy on belts, chains & gearboxes
- Variable speed, ideal for slow hammermills
- Hour meter for service counter
- Easy forward/ reverse switching
- 1 yr warranty on all components

COUNTY LINE



MOTORS

5126 370th St.
Stanley WI 54768
715-645-2676
rayfoxclm@gmail.com

CALL



Lange

Ag Systems

Specializing in New/Used Bagging
Machines, Silage Bags, Bunker Covers, Grain
Storage, Livestock Equipment and Construction!

Willmar, MN • 320.231.1470
www.LangeAgSystems.com

☆

AP

A SPREADER FOR EVERY OPERATION



PS 200 Series
ProSpread®
Rear-Discharge
Spreaders



1200 Series EasySpread®
Rear-Discharge Spreaders



HP 160 ProPush®
Rear-Discharge Spreaders



SL 100 Series ProTwin® Slinger®
Side-Discharge Spreaders



PXL 100 Series ProSpread®
Rear-Discharge Spreaders

Our innovative,
high-quality
spreaders
provide superior
performance
with years of
low-maintenance
service.

SCHLAUDERAFF

Implement Co.

60240 US HWY 12, Litchfield, MN 55355

Monday- Friday: 7:30am - 5:30pm • Saturday: 8:00am - 12:00pm
www.schlauderaffimplement.com • (320) 693-7277

INVEST IN QUALITY™
www.kuhn.com



Continued from SIEWERT | Page 1

“There was frost on the grass, but it wasn’t enough to take the flowers.”

Besides flower gardening, vegetable gardening and fruit gardening, Siewert is a mom of four sons — most of whom are grown — and also helps part time on Hyde Park Holsteins, operated by her husband, Kevin, and his family near Zumbro Falls. The dairy milks 700 cows, and Siewert helps feed the approximately 180 calves on milk every evening.

“I like raising the boys on the farm,” Siewert said. “That’s been a blessing, and they’re very involved with the farm. ... (However) my husband knows I’m part time.”

Gardening has been her passion. It started at 2 years old, when her mom gave her a little plot of garden edged by rocks to tend. Each year, she would grow pansies.

“I still like pansies,” Siewert said.

Her mom is still alive and gardening today, and Siewert will look at seed catalogs together with her mom. Her mother-in-law is also a gardener so Siewert has gardening buddies on both sides.

“I share plants in both directions, (with) both moms,” Siewert said.

When planning her flower garden, Siewert looks to have flowers at their peak throughout the season.

“I want things to be blooming really early, all the way till really late,” Siewert said. “Then I have some flowers like these hydrangeas, they will dry well, so I can use them in the fall after it freezes.”

For winter flowers at church, Siewert has 35 amaryllis bulbs. She will bring five up from the basement each week.

“I’ll have two or three blooming for church every week,” Siewert said. “It’s hit and miss, because they don’t all grow at the same rate. ... But whatever, it’s always fun in the middle of winter to have some fresh flowers.”

A new recent cut flower favorite has been dahlias. Siewert has eight varieties and plans to expand. This year, she cut flowers off them for about three months.

“If I can have something that will bloom for several months that’s really valuable for me,” Siewert said.

Siewert also grows a large vegetable garden for her family. Some of the vegetables include lettuce, spinach, kale, onions, cauliflower, broccoli, onions, tomatoes, peppers, beans, zucchini, cucumbers, squash and pumpkins. She also grows fruit including strawberries, blackberries, apricots, cherries, raspberries, plums, apples and pears.

AMY KYLLO/DAIRY STAR

A bouquet of fresh flowers stands on the counter Oct. 10 at Kay Siewert’s home near Lake City, Minnesota. The bouquet was one of 25 that Siewert brought to a church for a funeral earlier that day.

In summer, Siewert will bring entries to the Wabasha County Fair. She enters categories for floral arrangements, fresh fruits and vegetables, and canned or baked goods. In 2023, she was the Wabasha County open class premier exhibitor.

“(I take) whatever I can grab pretty fast,” Siewert said. “I just walk out to the garden, (and) whatever looks good I pick and take. ... We have such a small county fair, so they need people to bring things. I feel like, well if people don’t bring, it’s not fun.”

Siewert cans and freezes and gives away fresh produce to friends and employees at the dairy. Her gardens are weeded by hand, although those close to the house have mulch for aesthetics.

“I like to dig in the dirt,” Siewert said. “I don’t use any plastic, and I don’t use any sprays. I just hoe and get down on my hands and knees.”

She spends time a few days a week in the gardens. The other days are generally spent doing yard work.

Her husband’s gardening contribution is manuring the garden each year. Over the 20 years they have been at their current farm, Siewert said the soil has improved significantly. Her kids, while at home, have mainly focused on the dairy and other activities.

“If I want time alone, I can definitely go to the garden and get time alone,” Siewert said.

Throughout her gardening endeavors, Siewert keeps focused on her faith.

“I feel like I plant the seeds, (and) the Lord waters it and makes things grow,” Siewert said.

AMY KYLLO/DAIRY STAR

Light gleams off canned goods Oct. 10 at Kay Siewert’s home near Lake City, Minnesota. Siewert cans and freezes her garden produce and gives away fresh produce to friends and employees at Hyde Park Holsteins.



SHADY LANE
Curtains LLC

**Curtains,
It's All We Do**



**Proudly
Partnering
With**



**Serving
Wisconsin
With Fast
Lead Times**



shadylanecurtains.com | 715-255-2355 | Owen, Wisconsin

The Snodgrass family milks 120 cows with two DeLaval V300 robots and farms 1,700 acres near Oregon. Ron Snodgrass and his wife, Kristi, farm with his parents, Tom and Myrna. Kristi also works at Vita Plus as a financial resource specialist.

The family’s robotic milking system would become more than convenient when Ron Snodgrass suffered a double brain aneurysm Dec. 15, 2024.

“You think you have everything all planned out, but from one day to the next, you just never know,” Ron said. “The robots helped a lot when I was in the hospital and laid up. They were a blessing.”

Tom agreed. “Everything just fell into place,” he said. “The good Lord had everything planned.”

Ron began that day with vomiting and body chills.

“I wasn’t with it, so Kristi went and did chores for me,” he said. “I thought I had the flu. I was so cold, and then I would get really hot, and I kept throwing up.”

Ron stayed in bed all day and said his head felt like it was going to explode.

“It was the worst headache I’ve ever had,” he said.

When his skin tone became white as an egg, Kristi told Ron she was taking him to the doctor when she got back from evening chores.

“We went to the hospital, and we were not there very long at all when they did an MRI and said, ‘We need to get you up to Rockford, and we’re going to fly you there via helicopter,’” Kristi said. “But, it was so foggy that they had to take him by ambulance instead.”

By 6 a.m. the next day, Ron was in surgery, where they found he had not only one aneurysm, but two aneurysms, and one had ruptured causing bleeding on the brain. Doctors successfully repaired the aneurysms during a 6-hour surgery.

“He had one of the best doctors there are,” Tom said.

Ron agreed.

“He saved my life,” he said.

Kristi took leave from her job so she could take over for Ron back at the farm.

“When Ron was admitted to the hospital, Craig Spangler from Scharine Group that put in the robots was the very first person I called,” Kristi said. “I needed somebody in my back pocket, and he was my person.”

Spangler is Ron’s go-to guy if problems arise with the robots.

“My wife got thrown at the robots, but she had great support and help,” Ron said. “Scott Casto from Scharine Group and Kristi’s brother-in-law, Tom Visser, were a big

help too.”

The Snodgrasses had retrofitted the robots into the holding area in their freestall barn. They are positioned in a straight line with a free-flow system.

“The cows are doing really well,” Ron said. “We’re very proud of them. We have cows giving over 100 pounds of milk per day. It’s been fun to watch.”

As Ron recovered in the intensive care unit, he said he was referred to as a “walkie talkie” because he could walk and talk.

“Nobody else in the ICU could do that,” Ron said. “Every day was better than the day before. It was incredible. I would walk; I would make my own bed. They said with blood on the brain, the best thing to get that out is to move, so that’s what I did.”

Ron was told he would be in the hospital for 21 days no matter what, however, he was out on day 13.

“I was the first one at that hospital to ever make it out that early,” he said.

Ron’s recovery was nothing short of miraculous as doctors called him a walking phenomenon.

“I was the lucky one,” Ron said. “One-third of people who get an aneurysm don’t make it to the hospital. Another third don’t make it out of the hospital because of complications

from surgery, etc. Of the third that survive surgery, one-third are a vegetable, one-third can function somewhat in life, and one-third are normal, and I’m normal.”

Ron was released from the ICU on a Saturday night, and by Sunday night, he was back in the barn, but for two weeks, he was not allowed to lift anything over 5 pounds.

“I missed the cows,” he said. “The farm was my main concern.”

Tom grew up on a beef and hog farm that was transformed into the Snodgrass dairy operation in 2003. The Snodgrasses were milking 42 cows when they moved the herd from Myrna’s home farm, known as Smiley Farm, to its current location. The Snodgrasses continue to operate both farms.

“We thought we died and went to heaven when we went from a stanchion barn to a parlor,” Tom said. “Now, we really are in heaven. With robots, it seems like we get an extra 4-5 hours a day.”

In 2005, the Snodgrasses turned the hog barn into a heifer barn. Two hog pens remain for feeder pigs that consume the farm’s waste milk. Calves on milk and other youngstock are housed at Smiley Farm. That farm is also home to a steer yard as the family fattens all their bull calves. In addition, they run a

beef cow/calf operation.

Before installing robots, cows were milked in a double-8 parallel parlor that is still used to milk treated, fresh and dry-off cows.

“The robots can do that, but I want to know if I have a hot quarter or a hard quarter,” Ron said. “You can look at all the statistics coming out of the robot, but you still have to physically look at your cows.”

The Snodgrass herd average is 58 pounds of milk per cow per day with a butterfat test of 4.8% on three milkings per day.

“That’s good for us,” Ron said. “We never pushed our cows super hard. ... We changed the feed table a little and adjusted some permissions, and now we’re about 10 pounds higher in milk than in the parlor.”

Today, Ron is functioning at 100% with no lasting setbacks from the trauma his brain endured.

“He didn’t lose any memory; he didn’t lose anything,” Kristi said.

Tom and Myrna said they are grateful for the gift of continuing to farm with their only child.

“He’s a miracle guy,” Tom said. “We didn’t know if he was going to be here anymore. We’ve been blessed, in a lot more ways than one.”

THE SHIELD OF

IBA

QUALITY AND VALUE

[About](#) [Products](#) [Services](#) [Events](#) [Resources](#)

CONTACT US

IBA DAIRY SUPPLIES

Providing You With the Very Best Products and Support for Your Herd to Produce Top Quality Milk

Visit IBA’s website www.ibadairy.com to learn about our history, our extensive product line and the services we provide.

THE SHIELD OF

IBA

QUALITY AND VALUE

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DEALER:

WISCONSIN
Bill’s Dairy Supply, Inc. Spring Valley, WI • 715-505-2607
IBA Fahrney, Inc. Monroe, WI • 608-325-4248
Innovative IBA Oconomowoc, WI • 608-347-4948
Johnson Dairy Supply Viroqua, WI • 608-606-2388
LakeView IBA Malone, WI • 920-378-2924
Manitowoc IBA Whitelaw, WI • 920-732-4680

IOWA River Divide IBA Epworth, IA • 563-543-7710
MINNESOTA
Balzer IBA Owatonna, MN • 507-456-1617
Dairyland Equipment Menahga, MN • 218-564-4958
Pettit IBA Farm Supply Lewiston, MN • 507-269-5714
Zumbro Ag Solutions Zumbrota, MN • 651-380-2856
SOUTH DAKOTA Valley Dairy Supply Corona, SD • 605-432-5224

Ready for the next chapter

Schmitt family sells herd

By Tiffany Klaphake
tiffany.k@dairystar.com

RICE, Minn. — It takes multiple bovine generations to develop a barn full of quality dairy animals, a feat that the Schmitt family achieved and have now shared with the world.

Mark and his wife, Natalie, and their son, Austin, had milked 80 registered Holstein cows in a tiestall barn near Rice. But Oct. 17, that changed when the herd was dispersed.

“I thought (the sale) went really nice,” Mark said. “We had good weather, good people and the cows are going to good homes. That’s what we really wanted, that way other people can use our genetics in their herds.”

Austin has intentions of taking over the family farm, but his plans do not include milking cows. As Mark and Natalie looked to transition the farm, the family decided it was time to sell the cows.

“Mark said, ‘If we sell the cows, we won’t be a farm anymore,’ and I said,



Austin (from left), Natalie and Mark Schmitt take a break Oct. 17 during the dispersal herd sale at their farm near Rice, Minnesota. The Schmitts milked 80 registered cows.

“No, we just won’t be a dairy farm anymore.” Natalie said. “There will always be jobs to do on the farm so we will continue to stay busy.”

Mark and his brother, Al, started their herd of registered Holsteins with one cow, Jaque, purchased in 1977 while they were still in high school.

“I was able to develop

this herd with one animal, so our hope is that other people that bought our cows can build their herd like we did,” Mark said.

After carefully selecting service sires for Jaque, the Schmitt brothers were able to build their dream herd of registered animals. Jaque classified Excellent 90. Five generations later Ralma Juror

Faith was born.

“She was an exceptional cow right from the start,” Mark said. “We knew she was going to be a foundation animal in our herd. She had all the conformation and production, so we started doing embryo work with her.

Before long, the Schmitts gained recognition for their high genetic herd at cattle

shows such as World Dairy Expo. Using embryo transfer, they were able to sell genetics from their farm around the world.

“Faith is on every pedigree on our farm,” Mark said. “She also had a lot of daughters that were very successful. She has to date, 133 Excellent descendants that carry the Ralma prefix.”

Faith was nominated for Global Cow of the Year in 2009 and her daughter, Ralma Christmas Fudge (Durham daughter), won Global Cow of the Year in 2011. Global Cow of the Year is a cow that produces a number of great offspring in type and production, which members around the world of Holstein International vote on, Mark said.

The Schmitts’ prefix, Ralma, comes from a combination of the names of Mark, Al and their parents, Ralph and Mary Lou. While the farm was an established dairy farm, Mark and Al officially started their registered herd in 1974.

“It’s been 51 years and it is amazing how the dairy cow has improved in type and production over those years,” Mark said.

Turn to SCHMITTS | Page 12

USED RELIABLE EQUIPMENT



**2023
KIOTI
CK3510
(2)**

Under 300 hrs, fits many Kioti attachments

CALL FOR PRICE



**2012
N-TECH
MANURE
TANKER**

3350 gal., good used condition

\$16,000



**2014 JOHN DEERE
326E SKID STEER**

Used on location for loading/unloading equipment, 3061 hrs, runs great

\$27,500



**2022
KUHN
SPEEDRAKE
SR50-10**

Hyd. rake wheel lift, well taken care of unit

\$5,000



**PATZ
2400
SERIES 2
810
MIXER**

Excellent, twin screw vertical mixer

\$30,000



**PATZ 1200
SERIES 420
MIXER**

Scale head reconditioned

\$23,000



(715) 285-5317

Ken Anibas • www.anibassilo.com
N6423 Commerce Lane, Arkansaw, WI
siloman@nelson-tel.net • kevinatanibassilo@yahoo.com
“Your Complete Farm Service Company”
Serving You Since 1973

**PIPPING CONCRETE
INC.**

AGRICULTURAL CONCRETE
EST. 1985 | U.S. NAVY
VETERAN OWNED

**THE TANK
BUILDER**



**NRCS
PRE-APPROVED**

**DENNIS PIPPING
920.948.9661**



SUPER SPECIALS

TRACTORS

Massey Ferguson GC1715 Fwa Sub Compact Tractor, 60" Deck, 715 Hrs.....	\$12,500
Massey Ferguson 5711D Dyna-4 FWA Cab, 3 Remotes, F13819 Level Loader.....	\$89,600
'10 Case IH Farmall 75A Platform Tractor, 2wd w/830 Hrs	\$21,000

COMBINES & HEADS

'12 Massey Ferguson 9540 Combine, Duals, 1772 Sep Hrs, 2,566 E. Hrs	\$85,000
23 Gleaner S98 Combine, 20.8R42 Duals, 689 Sep Hrs	\$355,000
'18 Gleaner S97 Combine, Duals, 1938 Sep Hrs, 2689 Eng Hrs.....	In Shop
23 Gleaner 3312C 12-Row 30" Chopping Corn Head	\$118,000
Gleaner 3000 6row 30" Corn Head.....	\$11,000
'12 Geringhoff RD630 Elite Corn Head, Stalk Stompers.....	In Shop
'10 Gleaner 8200-30 Flex Head W. Cray Air Reel Serial #AHW08230.....	\$22,000
Gleaner 8200-30 Flex Head	\$9,000
Gleaner 800 25' Flex Head	\$4,000
'14 Harvestec 6308C 8-Row 30" Cutter Corn Head, Gleaner Mounts	\$39,000
'14 Harvestec 6308C 8-Row 30" Cutter Corn Head, Gleaner Mounts	\$36,000
'08 Harvestec 4312C 12 Row 30" Cutter Corn Head, Gleaner Mounts	\$12,000
'06 Case IH 2208 8-Row 30" Corn Head.....	\$6,000
Gleaner 313 Pick-Up Header	\$2,500

SKIDS, TRACK LOADERS, TELE-HANDLERS, WHEEL LOADERS & EXCAVATORS

'17 Bobcat E50 Excavator, Cab, Clamp, X-Change, Angle Blade, w/1918 Hrs.....	\$49,000
Bobcat S150 Skid Steer, Cab, 4,520 Hrs, 2 Speed	In Shop
'03 Bobcat S185 Skid Steer, HVAC, 4316 hrs.....	Coming In
'22 Bobcat S62 Skid Steer, Cab, H/F Controls, 8,076 Hrs	\$21,000
'22 Bobcat S64 Skid Steer Cab Hvac H/F Controls, 5,900 Hrs	In Shop
23 Bobcat S770 Skid Steer, Cab Hvac, 1,128 Hrs, SJC	\$53,500
'94 Bobcat 853 Skid Loader. 4344 Hrs Cab, Heat, Tires 35-40% Led Lights,	\$12,900
Bobcat T870 Track Loader, Cab, Hvac, 2014, High Flow, 2,681 Hrs, 2 Speed	\$46,000
'19 Bobcat T770 Track Loader Cab, Hvac, 2,635 Hours	\$44,000
23 Bobcat T86 Track Loader Cab, Hvac, 380 Hrs	\$91,000
'21 Bobcat T66 Track Loader Cab, Hvac.....	\$46,700

'09 Bobcat 5600 Toolcat, 3,168 Hrs	\$31,000
'17 Bobcat 5600 Toolcat, 658 Hrs.	\$55,000
John Deere 326E Skid Steer, 3,355 Hrs.....	\$27,000
'12 Mustang 3300v Skid Stee, Cab w/heat, 2,579 Hrs, DH Controls.....	\$29,000

TILLAGE/FIELD CULTIVATORS

Kent 6320D Soil Finisher 21" w/A 5-Spike Harrow.....	\$4,900
Salford 870 Disc 25'	\$19,000

HAY & FORAGE, STALK CHOPPERS

'21 Mchale V6750 4x5.5 Round Baler, 5,584 Bales, Sold New 22'	\$41,000
'10 Vermeer 605SM 5x6 Round Baler, 22,194 Bales.....	\$11,000
'20 Vermeer 504R Classic Round Baler, 1,926 Bales.....	\$23,900
Vermeer MC2800 Mower Conditioner 9' Side Pull,	\$19,000
Pottinger 352 disc mower, very little use.....	Coming In
'15 Massey Ferguson 1840 Sm. Sq. Baler, Thrower	\$26,000
'13 Case IH DC132 Mower Conditioner	Coming In
Tonutti RCS 8 Wheel Rake	\$2,700
Loftness 15' Stalk Chopper	Coming In
'20 Rotogrind 760 Bale Processor, Low Bale Usage.....	\$15,900

ROW CROP, DRILL & SPRAYERS

Hardi NP 1100 80' Boom, Foam, 463 Pump, 2500 Rate Controller,	\$7,900
Hardi Ranger 2000 Sprayer, 550 Gallon, 60' Eagle Boom	\$13,500
'14 Great Plains YP1625a 16R30" Center Fill, Lq Fert, (Never Been In The Dirt)	\$90,000
Massey Ferguson 9106 2014 Planter 6row30" Dry Fert, 540 PTO Pump, SM300 Monitor.....	\$32,000
White 6100 Planter 6row 30" W. Lq. Fert, Insecticide	\$5,900

GRAIN CARTS, RUNNING-GEARS & WAGONS

Kinze 640 Grain Cart	\$15,000
Ez Trail 510 Grain Cart, 2013 Very Nice., 20.8 R42 Tires & Drop Axle	\$11,000
'20 Demco 1150 Grain Cart, 1050 Tires, Scale, Tarp, Green.	\$57,000
Parker CHC32' Head Hauler Tandem Axle Brakes, Lights	\$7,900

MANURE SPREADERS

'17 H&S 3143 Manure Spreader, Dual Beater, Hyd. Drive,	\$24,000
'22 Bush Hog 2208 Rotary Cutter, Very Little Use,	Coming In
'16 Rockvac RV24H, 4" X15' Hose w/Rockvac Nozzle.....	\$17,500
Topcon X14 Guidance	\$500
Bison NHV 240 8' Blade 80hp New Condition.....	\$2,500
New Agri Cover Roll Tarp End Caps Bows Tarp 90" Wide X 144" Long	\$1,200
'19 Cat BR272 6' Rotary Cutter	\$4,500

•Implement

•Grain Equipment

•Buildings

LODERMEIER'S

38241 County 6 Blvd.
Goodhue, MN 55027
(651) 923-4441

 **MASSEY FERGUSON**

 **Bobcat.**

 **Great Plains**

 **HESSTON**
by MASSEY FERGUSON

 **GLEANER**

Searching for answers

The current downturn in milk prices has experts scratching their head, looking for a reason. “I wish I were smart enough to explain the milk markets,” said **Mick Homb**, general manager, Farm First Dairy Cooperative. “It’s going to take somebody smarter than me to figure out why the milk (supply) is tight and the milk prices are so low.” With Class III milk below \$17 per hundred-weight for the foreseeable future, Homb said, “it is difficult for farmers who are not getting the price for their milk that I think they deserve.”

Ag Insider



By Don Wick
Columnist

Lack of dairy data

The government shutdown has created a domino effect of challenges across the agriculture industry, and dairy is no exception. **Chris Galen**, senior vice president of member services and strategic initiatives with the National Milk Producers Federation, said the lack of federal dairy reports is impacting market transparency and overall dairy economics. “If this goes on for weeks, and we don’t have USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) data to look at, then the marketplace is going to be even more volatile because there won’t be any good information out there about supply and demand.”

Labor seen as dairy industry’s big- est issue

According to National Milk Producers Federation Chairman **Randy Mooney**, labor is the No. 1 challenge for the dairy industry. “We’ve got the H-2A visas that don’t really fit dairy because they’re seasonal workers,” Mooney said. “We’ve got now the Trump administration closing the border and the ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) raids that we’re seeing around the country and I’m not speaking against any of that, but what we need as a U.S. dairy industry is we need some clear immigration policies.” Mooney, who is also chair of Dairy Farmers of Amer-

ica, will step down from his NMFP leadership role next month. In the Dairy Defined podcast, Mooney said it has been an honor to lead National Milk for the past 17 years. “I’m not leaving because I’m getting out of the industry; I’m going to stay as chairman of DFA, but it’s time for somebody different and somebody younger and new ideas.”

Farm aid package planned once government reopens

Once the government reopens, Agriculture Secretary **Brooke Rollins** said a farm assistance package will be created, using tariff revenues to compensate farmers. She said it is also important to eventually move away

from the hamster wheel of farm bailout programs. “They don’t want these checks, they want to be able to sell their products,” Rollins said. “Every time I travel around the country, this is what I’m hearing.”

Government shutdown continues

The government shutdown in Washington shows little hope for a resolution. Policy Solutions President **Jay Truitt** said lawmakers are waiting for key events before taking further action. “Democrats are waiting to take any steps until after the No Kings protest; I think that does give us some timeframe after that. I don’t think this thing drags on much more.” Until lawmakers find common ground, several critical priorities remain stalled, including the ag package. “We’re just at a standoff. While we may see the administration try to do something creative, honestly, that really almost never works out the way we think it’s going to.”

Turn to AG INSIDER | Page 11

Do you want a career in the dairy industry impacting the success of local family dairies?

Join us at
Minnesota DHIA as a Field Technician!
Current openings:

- Full Time in Owatonna area
- Part-Time in Detroit Lakes area



This great career involves flexible scheduling and working within the dairy community.
(Competitive pay and benefits, including pension and health)

DHIA: Now MORE than ever

Minnesota DHIA

Sauk Centre, MN
Buffalo, MN
763.682.1091
www.mndhia.org

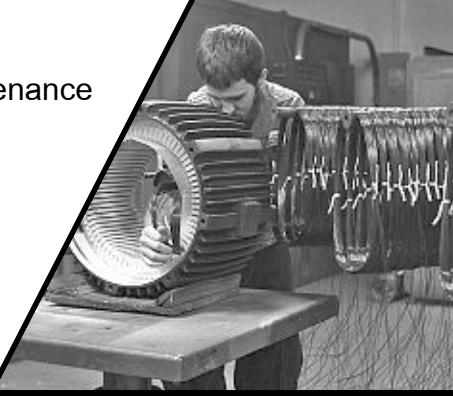
COST SAVINGS TO STREAMLINE YOUR OPERATIONS

We are sourcing experts find those hard to find items including:

- Electric motors
- Fan parts (blades, bearings, belts and pulleys)
- Gearboxes
- Submersible pumps
- PPE - hoof trimming and maintenance
- Camlock fittings
- Hose & Tubing
- Push to connect fittings
- Air compressors
- Waterer parts
- Parlor items



Scan to find out more!



 **ELECTRIC MOTOR COMPANY**

4343 Hwy. 12 East
Willmar, MN
320-235-4747

1620 East Bridge Street
Redwood Falls, MN
507-644-2727

www.electricmotor.company

‘Stronger Together’

During a visit to the Oval Office, Canadian Prime Minister **Mark Carney** stressed that the United States and Canada are neighbors and have common interests. “There are areas where we compete: it’s in those areas where we have to come to an agreement that works, but there are more areas where we are stronger together and that’s what we’re focused on,” Carney said. “We’re going to get the right deal, right deal for America and right deal, obviously, from my perspective, for Canada.”

White House has plan to reduce consumer beef prices

In the final minutes of a media briefing, President Trump said energy and food prices are coming down. The one exception has been beef prices. “I think we have a deal on beef that would bring the price of beef (down); that would be the one product that we would say is a little bit higher than we’d want it, maybe higher than we want it,” Trump said. “That’s going to be coming down pretty soon. We worked our magic.” Trump offered no details on how the government would intervene. There was recent speculation the USDA would pay farmers and ranchers to retain heifers, but Agriculture Secretary **Brooke Rollins** said that was not under consideration.

Farm expenses remain high

While most commodity prices are in the tank, a new report from the American Farm Bureau Federation outlines the expense side of the ledger. It says production expenses this year are forecast to be record high at \$467 billion. That’s nearly \$12 billion higher than one year ago. Cash rents and farmland values are at record highs. Fertilizers represent one of the single largest costs for row crop operations. Those prices are down from their peak in 2022, but well above pre-coronavirus pandemic levels. The report says big yields will not be enough to guarantee profitability this fall, especially with expenses holding firm.

Top 50 dairy co-op list updated

Dairy Farmers of America remains the largest dairy cooperative nationwide. Milk volume totaled 55.7 billion pounds, down 6 million pounds from 2024. According to the Hoard’s Dairyman list of the top 50 dairy co-ops, Edge Dairy Farm Cooperative moved up to the No. 2 spot. Edge Dairy has members in nine states, including Minnesota and South Dakota. Midwest co-ops on the list include Land O’Lakes at No. 4, FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative at No. 7, Foremost Farms USDA at No. 8 and Associated Milk Producers, Inc. at No. 10.

Newton returns to AFBF

The American Farm Bureau Federation has announced Dr. **John Newton**’s return to the organization. Newton will serve as vice president of public policy and economic analysis. He previously served as Farm Bureau’s chief economist from 2018 to 2021. Newton also spent time as chief economist for the Senate Agriculture Committee, the National Milk Producers Federation and the past year as the executive head of Terrain. Newton succeeds **Sam Kieffer**, who was named the CEO of the National Association of Wheat Growers.

Trivia question

Johne’s disease is the chronic, contagious bacterial disease found in the intestinal tract of cattle. That answers our last trivia question. For this week’s trivia, what is the term for a Greek, brined, crumbly cheese? We’ll have the answer in our next edition of the Dairy Star.

Don Wick is owner/broadcaster for the Red River Farm Network of Grand Forks, North Dakota. Wick has been recognized as the National Farm Broadcaster of the Year and served as president of the National Association of Farm Broadcasting. Don and his wife, Kolleen, have two sons, Tony and Sam, and five grandchildren, Aiden, Piper, Adrienne, Aurora and Sterling.



IT'S SIMPLE

If you expect your cows to milk at high levels, you need to feed them the best roasted soybean.

- Energy • Protein
- Amino acids • Bypass protein

KLC Farms

Roasting, Inc.

Preferred By Bovines Everywhere

320-352-3326

Visit www.roastedbeans.com

Quality

Consistency

KOMMAND GUARDIAN

Ready-to-use winter teat dip with 55% glycerin



Maintain your herd’s teat health through harsh weather conditions. Kommand Guardian contains GEA’s exclusive LactiFusion™ technology, providing excellent protection against mastitis causing organisms.

With proper housing management, Kommand Guardian will help reduce teat chapping and lessen the chance of frostbite due to the inclusion of 55% glycerin, keeping your herd healthy throughout the toughest winter conditions.

Country Ag Parts

715-512-1794 • Fax 715-669-3706

Many Types of Lubricants in Stock

SCHAEFER’S	SHELL	LEGACY JOHN DEERE	PURUS
• 15W-40	• 15W-40	• 15W40	• Hydraulic
• 10W-30	• 10W-30	• Hydraulic Oil	• 80W-90
• 80W-90	• 80W-90	• High Quality Grease	
• Hydraulic Oil & Grease	• Hydraulic Oil	• Accessible to John Deere filters	
• Roller Chain Lube	• Grease		
• Variety of Fuel Additives			
• Plus much more!			

We Stock Batteries!

Timken Roller Chain!

(Now also available in boxes of 10ft.)

• #35	• #40	• #41	• #50
• #50H	• #60	• #60H	• #80H
• #100	• #550	• #2040	
• #2050	• CL	• Off Links	

Many Types of Bearings

• Ball Bearings	• Roller Bearings
• Ag Bearings	• And Much More!

Also In Stock:

- Hydraulic Hoses & Fittings
- V-Belts (Gates)
- Tillage Wear Parts
- O-Rings & Snap Rings
- Implement Jacks
- Haying Parts
- Fasteners
- Hitch Pins
- & More!

FREE Next-Day Shipping on orders of \$200 or more!

If you don’t see what you need, WE CAN ORDER IT!

N14271 Bruce Mound Ave., Thorp, WI
1 mile south of Hwy. 29 on Bruce Mound Ave.

8.25.25

EXCELLENT VISIBILITY

Product is easy to apply and provides a bright blue color for visible confirmation that teats have been properly dipped and protected from the elements.

100% CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

All GEA hygiene products have a 100% customer satisfaction guarantee.

VERY COST-EFFECTIVE



Engineering for a better world.



Jon Stein 320-352-5762 • 1-800-342-2697
Henning Area 218-849-0211

CENTRE DAIRY EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLY INC.

40625 State Hwy. 28 • Just West of Hwy. 71 • Sauk Centre, MN



TIFFANY KLAPHAKE/DAIRY STAR
The audience listens as a cow is auctioned off Oct. 17 at the Schmitt farm near Rice, Minnesota. Mark and Natalie Schmitt's son, Austin, is taking over the farm and will be taking the farm in a different direction.

After high school, Mark attended the University of Minnesota, Waseca for dairy production but remained involved with the farm.

"I came home on all weekends and continued to make the mating decisions while in college," Mark said. "I had all the semen bought and continued to develop our breeding program while I was away, just had to hire a technician to breed the cow."

Mark and Al formed an official partnership in 1988 purchasing the herd from their parents.

Austin graduated from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities in 2018 and returned to the home farm.

He briefly took a job off the farm at a dairy farm in South Dakota to gain a different perspective. He has been back farming with his parents since 2021.

"The life skills that our farm and parents have taught (my siblings and me) over the years is what I am most proud of," Austin said. "We are all working in agriculture and use those skillsets every day."

Although the dairy farming chapter is ending at Ralma farm, the farm itself and their cows will continue.



HANS LAMMEMAN/DAIRY STAR
Mark Schmitt milks a cow for the last time Oct. 17 at his farm near Rice, Minnesota. Schmitt purchased his first cow in 1977.

Turn to SCHMITTS | Page 13

Concrete Solutions for Your Farm!



Workshop & Storage Buildings



Water Storage Tanks



Calf Barn

Over 15 years experience in all phases of the project

We are your deep pit cattle confinement specialist!

Let us make your dream a reality



Lagoon Ramps & Paving



Commodity Sheds



Calf Barn



Round Manure Storage Pit



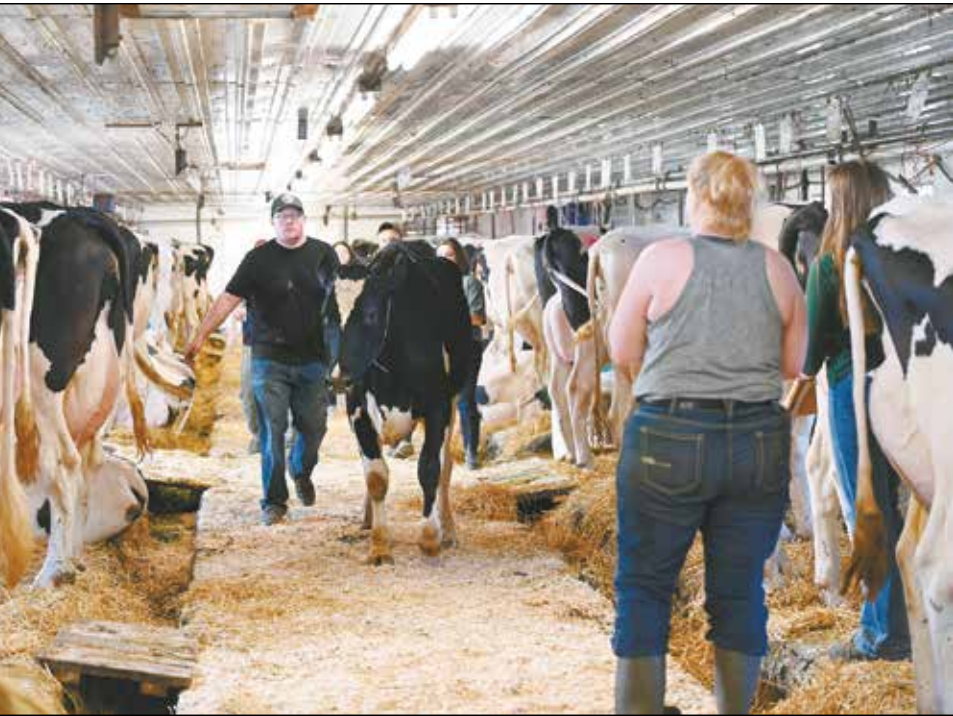
Silage Bunker & Feed Storage Pad



TR Concrete & General Contracting
2472 320th St. • Rock Valley, IA 51247
712-441-2921- Rick Koedam (Owner)
712-470-2505 – Dave Koedam (Sales and Estimating)
Email – trconcrete2018@gamil.com
www.facebook.com/TRCONCRETE2018

Serving the upper Midwest!

FREE QUOTES!



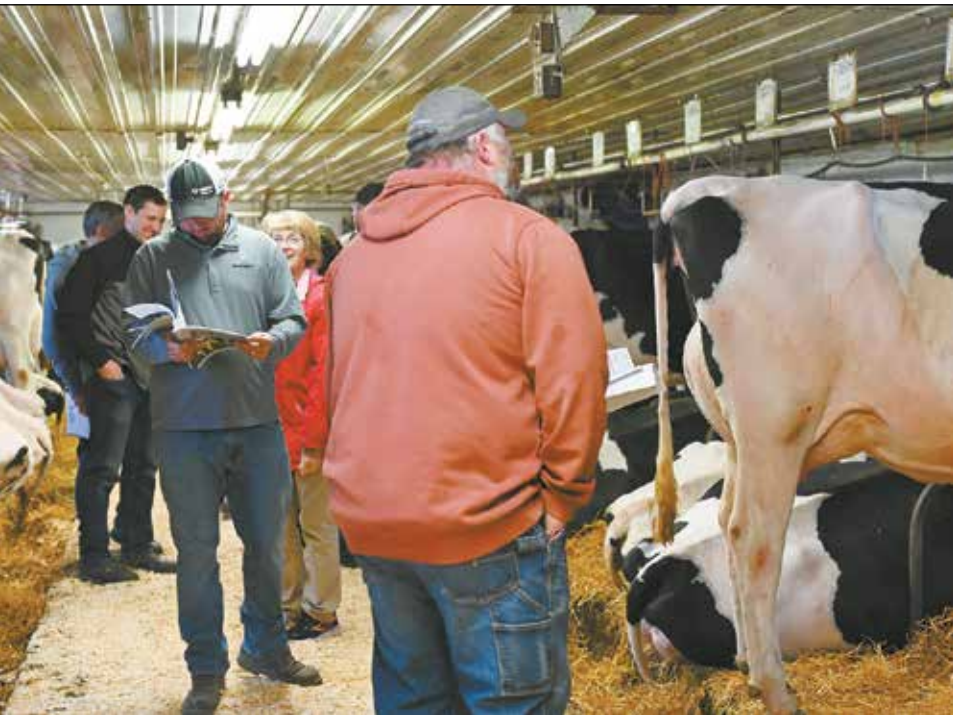
TIFFANY KLAPHAKE/DAIRY STAR

Family and friends of the Schmitt family assist in bringing cows in and out of the sale ring Oct. 17 at Ralma Holsteins near Rice, Minnesota. The Schmitts leased animals to area youth to show.

“I am most proud of the kids, not only because they all stepped up and came home to help with the sale but helped us a lot through the years,” Natalie said. “(I am proud) seeing our children work well together and enjoy what they are doing in their own careers.”

Mark agreed.

“I am also very proud of our family,” Mark said. “Over the years with the success of our cow families and the people we have met, we have made many friends. We wanted to work with honest people and to be treated honestly and that has worked very well for us.”



TIFFANY KLAPHAKE/DAIRY STAR

Potential buyers evaluate the Schmitt family’s herd Oct. 17 at their farm near Rice, Minnesota. At the time of the sale, all the cattle on the Schmitt farm could trace their ancestry back to one cow, Ralma Juror Faith.

Prepare for Colder Days Ahead!



State-of-the-art ventilation for high sidewall dairy barns:

- Top curtains rolls up and down for weather ventilation
- Both curtains roll up for storage
- Complete automation with temperature sensors
- Minimum air restrictions. Maximum air flow.

Ask us about our Norbco Autovent Curtain Systems today!

ARNZEN

CONSTRUCTION, INC.

AGRICULTURE • COMMERCIAL • RESIDENTIAL

320-836-2284 • 1-888-276-1751

29033 Co. Rd. 17, Freeport, MN In St. Rosa

www.arnzenconstructioninc.com

Sales and Rentals



608-325-3810
1-888-811-2525



2023 WACKER NEUSON WL38

450 Hours, 74.3Hp, High-Flow, Deutz Diesel, Heat and A/C, Radio, Articulated and Telescoping, Hydr. Quick Attach, 9,480# Operating Weight
\$69,500



2023 WACKER NEUSON 8085T

245 Hours, Enclosed Cab, A/C, 74Hp, Deutz Diesel, 15' Telescoping Boom, Bucket, Hyd. Skid steer Coupler, Standard Flow.
\$81,500



2025 WACKER NEUSON 5055

Only 2 Hours! 47Hp Yanmar, High Flow, 4,762# Max Tipping Load, 7,937# Operating Weight, All Wheel Loader offers excellent maneuverability with 0.85 yd³ Bucket Cap.
Call For Pricing



2025 WACKER NEUSON WL52

Only 1.4 Hours! EROPS w/Air, 75Hp, Deutz Diesel, 2 Speed, Aux. Hydraulics, Universal Skid Steer Hydr. Detach
Call For Pricing



2024 WACKER NEUSON ST27

Only 2 Hours! 74Hp, Kohler Diesel, 7,350#, 60" Wide, Camera, Radio, Weights, 5,600# Tipping Load, 94.3" Max Dump Height
Call For Pricing



2025 WACKER NEUSON ST45

Only 3 Hours! 74Hp Deutz Diesel, Hydr. Coupler Power Chassis, Quick Attach., Bucket Leveling
Call For Pricing

0% Financing Available

201 N 29th Ave. Monroe, WI 53566

WE ARE OPEN MONDAY - FRIDAY 8 - 5 | SATURDAY 8 - NOON



www.mdtruckequip.com



SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER



DAIRY STAR MILK BREAK

Visit www.dairystar.com to sign up!

VALMETAL

**SAVE TIME
& MONEY!**



**SB600
SPREADERS**

**In
Stock**

**Parts In
Stock**



Fair
MANUFACTURING, INC.

**7800 Series
Bale Processors**



**Parts
In Stock**

**In
Stock**

**ANY BALE,
ANY
CONDITION!**

Flat, Frozen,
Wet, Hard or
Soft, no
problem, no
matter
what
condition



Parts In Stock



SUPERIOR QUALITY MIXERS.
DESIGNED TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS

**Barn Systems For All Areas Of
Livestock Management**



NORBCO

**In
Stock**



PENTA

5290V

Norbco offers a complete
range of barn equipment
to ensure you have the
products you need to
ensure the long-term
success of your
dairy farm.



**Parts In
Stock**

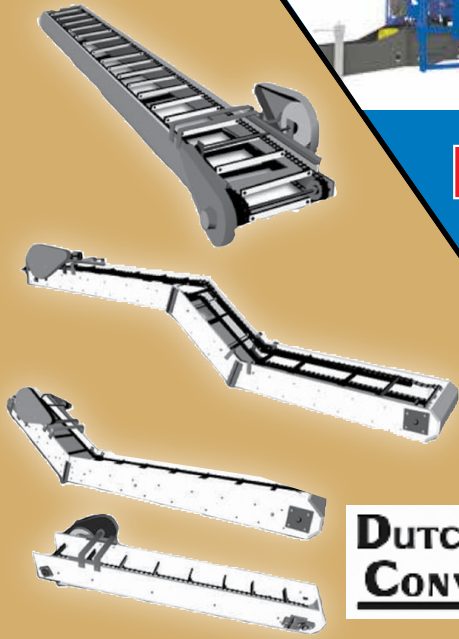
PENTA



**New 40 Series
TMRS!**

**Parts In
Stock**

**In
Stock**



**DUTCH PRAIRIE
CONVEYORS**
Manufactured in Illinois

- All Poly & Wooden Conveyors
- Taper Board Feeders
- All Poly Conversions
for bottom unloader

Minnesota's Largest Feeding and Manure Handling Dealer

**Dairyland
Supply**

SAUK CENTRE

320-352-3987
1-800-338-6455

"In the Middle of Minnesota"

If you have a barn, we have a solution.
www.dairylandsupply.com

from our side OF THE FENCE

Amongst your fleet of tractors, which is your favorite and why?



Jared Capko
Swanville, Minnesota
Morrison County
410 Holstein and 3 Brown Swiss

What is your favorite brand of tractor and why? John Deere, because that is the brand we had while I was growing up. We seem to have good parts and service in the area, which is important during our busy seasons.

What annual maintenance do you do on your tractors? We change oil, fuel filters and hydraulic filters and inspect for any damage that occurred throughout the year.

Amongst your fleet of tractors, which is your favorite and why? The 8260r, because it is the newest and most reliable tractor we have. I enjoy using this tractor for planting. We also use this tractor on our grain cart during harvest.

What is your favorite chore to do with that tractor? Planting, it works great on our planter, I've had other tractors on our planter, but none handles it as well as the 8260r.

What is the most unique experience you have ever had with a tractor? I had taken our 8420 to the prom many years ago. My wife and I also drove the 8235r to and from our wedding ceremony.

Tell us about your farm. I farm with my dad, Jerry, uncle, Larry, and my wife, Renee, and our two little boys, JJ and AJ. We milk 410 cows three times a day in a double-9 herringbone parlor. We ship our milk to Land O'Lakes Inc. and it is processed in Melrose. We grow corn, soybeans and alfalfa on over 1,600 acres. We raise all our bull calves as steers on our steer facility roughly 5 miles from our dairy. We also raise our heifers there until they are about 10 months old in an old tie stall barn we just renovated this year. We have 90 cow/calf pairs of Red and Black Angus beef. Each year we keep replacement heifers and the bulls are raised as steers.



Kevin (left) and Leo Hemmesch
Lake Henry, Minnesota
Stearns County
63 cows

What is your favorite brand of tractor and why? International. That's what we have always had and works well for us.

What annual maintenance do you do on your tractors? We change oil, filters and antifreeze and whatever we can do ourselves. For major repairs, we take it to Greenwald Farm Center.

Amongst your fleet of tractors, which is your favorite and why? Our favorite is a 7110 International. It is a good strong, hardworking tractor and we can always rely on it to get the job done. It has yet to have any major mechanical problems.

What is your favorite chore to do with that tractor? We use it for the heavy tillage, chopping and bagging on the bagger and use smaller tractors for the smaller jobs.

What is the most unique experience you have ever had with a tractor? For one of the boys' wedding, they took the W4 international and used it for transporting the bridal party from Melrose to Freeport at the reception site as a hayride.

Tell us about your farm. Our farm is a century farm since 2005. We have 240 acres of corn, alfalfa, oats and meadow grass. We raise our own heifers for replacements and some steers. Bull calves go to the sales barn. We pasture our cows and heifers in the summer months. Kevin joined the operation in 2004 after high school graduation. Kevin and his wife, Jamie, have four kids. Leo's wife is Mary Lou.



Brandon Przybilla
Pierz, Minnesota
Morrison County
225 cows

What is your favorite brand of tractor and why? New Holland. Currently we have 13 of them. I grew up driving blue tractors, and they have always been a good reliable tractor.

What annual maintenance do you do on your tractors? Oil changes and general maintenance. We try to pressure wash and clean them as needed.

Amongst your fleet of tractors, which is your favorite and why? T8.320; it rides nice and has a spacious cab. We have had the current one for three years. Overall, we have five T8 tractors.

What is your favorite chore to do with that tractor? I enjoy most jobs with this tractor such as chopping hay, but I enjoy planting corn with it the most.

What is the most unique experience you have ever had with a tractor? When I was younger, I used to ride with my grandpa, Terry, chopping and he used to give me the control box for the chopper so I could run the spout on my own. A few years back we connected all 13 of our gravity boxes together and pulled them down the road as a "grain train."

Tell us about your farm. I farm with my parents, Brian and Heidi. We milk 225 cows in two separate tiestall barns. We farm around 900 acres of corn and alfalfa.

Turn to OUR SIDE | Page 16

SCAG

POWER EQUIPMENT

WINDSTORM

WHY RAKE LEAVES?
WHEN YOU CAN
BLOW
THEM!

SAVE YOUR BACK &
USE THE SCAG WINDSTORM!



Give us
a call for
a demo
today!

MILLER

IMPLEMENT CO., INC.

THE COMPACT EQUIPMENT SPECIALISTS
WITH A TRADITION OF QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE

St. Nazianz

500 E Main Street | St. Nazianz, WI 54232

920.773.2800

Fond du Lac

N7375 Mosher Drive | Fond du Lac, WI 54937

920.322.6549

www.MillerImplement.com



2023 Cloverdale 650T
\$61,500



2023 PATZ 615
\$43,000



2016 Supreme 600T
\$35,000



2008 GEA 8' 3 PT
\$9,000



2019 GEA 3 PT 8"
\$12,000



Puck 1708
\$122,500

Variety of Manure Pumps and Tanks
All on Hand!

GEA

Engineering
for a better
world

CLOVERDALE

VERTICAL TMRS LLC

ARTEX

B

BAZOOKA • FARMSTAR

BRYNSAAS

SALES & SERVICE INC.

1660 Jordan West Rd.,
Decorah, IA
563-382-4484

www.brynsaas.com

Matt Boese
Morristown, Minnesota
Rice County
60 cows

What is your favorite brand of tractor and why? That's a tough question, because we have all kinds of tractors on our farm. Every brand of tractor had its series that maybe wasn't the best, and every brand of tractors had a series that ran and ran and ran and was very good.

When my grandpa moved to Morristown in the '70s, his favorite brand was Massey Ferguson. If it wasn't Massey, it didn't show up on the farm. But since then, we've had multiple John Deere tractors, Case IH tractors, Massey tractors, and we have a White tractor now, which is AGCO. I don't have a favorite brand of tractor. It's just whatever works and whatever is affordable, runs and does what you need it to do without too much trouble.

What annual maintenance do you do on your tractors? We change the oil, clean the air filter, keep the hydraulic and fuel filters changed, and make sure the fluids are all full and good, to prevent any breakdowns. You try to eliminate the most unexpected things, and with regular maintenance and keeping everything clean, you usually don't have the unexpected breakdowns.

Amongst your fleet of tractors, which is your favorite and why? My favorite tractor is the first tractor that I bought by myself and owned by myself. I bought a 275 Massey Ferguson. It has a 75-horse and has a nice transmission in it. You can reach the PTO from the ground and turn it on. It's an independent PTO, so you don't need to step on the clutch to turn it on. It's good for many jobs, from raking hay to



grinding feed and feeding, to hauling manure and unloading silage and haylage wagons. It's heavy enough that it can pull wagons around and not have too much trouble. It's just an all-around handy yard tractor.

What is your favorite chore to do with that tractor? I like to unload silage with it in the fall. I like the smell of the fresh silage. We fill a bag of silage every year, and when you're going in the bag, you can start the PTO from the ground. Also, it's got a nice, big step on it, and it's easy to get up and on.

What is the most unique experience you have ever had with a tractor? We cut a lot of road ditch hay. I had a 5455 Massey Ferguson front wheel assist hooked to the disc mower. I was on a driveway going down into a ditch that I had cut for years. I knew there was a big cement culvert underneath this big driveway, and I thought I was straddling it, but apparently, I was a little bit off to the left. With the weight of the disc mower hanging off to the right, when I was slowly going down off the driveway, the front right wheel of the tractor fell off into the culvert wall. With front wheel assist, you don't have a lot of pivot in the front end. The right wheel went down, and it got to the stop on the left side, and just slowly, with the weight of the disc mower, I tipped the 5455 over on its side. It was pretty much slow motion. The only thing I wrecked was the right rear-view mirror, and the only thing hurt was my pride. I shut it off and crawled out the back window. The neighbors saw what was going on and actually brought a payload over and helped us tip it up. We let the tractor sit for a while, let all the fluids get back where they were supposed to be and fired it up. It ran fine.

Tell us about your farm. I farm in partnership with my cousin, Tim Boese. For years, Tim and I owned the cows and our dads used to farm land. In 2023, they decided that that was enough. 2024 was the first year that Tim and I were responsible for all the rented ground, and we took over basically for the older generation. They still help out immensely. My dad does maintenance and a lot of stuff in the shop. Tim's dad rakes a lot of hay and helps move bales in the summer and fall when we get really busy. Tim's kids are all getting older and helping more, too. In addition to the dairy, we also have a trucking business, and we have beef cow-calf pairs and steers. We sell our milk to Bongards.

Liza Schlintz
Bangor, Wisconsin
La Crosse County
55 cows

What is your favorite brand of tractor and why? Massey Ferguson: it's what I grew up with, and what my dad grew up with before me. They're what I'm most comfortable driving. My husband is a Ford man. When our son, Avery, wanted a tractor-themed birthday party at the age of 2, we split the cake right down the middle: half blue, half red. On his invitation, it read: Red paint or blue, he can't decide. He doesn't care, as long as he gets a ride.



What annual maintenance do you do on your tractors? I'll be honest, this is my husband, AJ's, department. My role in this process is not to break them while I'm using them.

Amongst your fleet of tractors, which is your favorite and why? After getting married in 2009, my husband's blue fleet of tractors was all I had access to. However, my favorite has always been my dad's Massey Ferguson 294. It's 4-wheel drive and sticks to our sidehills like it's nobody's business. It's dependable and predictable. She's had a rough life, but she's earned her place on my dad's farm, and now mine as well.

What is your favorite chore to do with that tractor? When growing up, I would have told you hauling round bales from the field was my favorite. We lived on a much flatter farm than I do now, and the front-end weight of the tractor was great. Plus the seat was much nicer than the Massey 275 that was the alternative. Today, however, I'd say that raking hay would be my favorite. The foot throttle makes shifting a breeze, and when you're in steep hills like we are, it helps to keep a nice pace

while navigating small fields. It's small enough to turn decently sharp, and the new seat we put on it helps me feel safer with a seatbelt to keep me in the seat where I belong. My next project will be a rollover protective structure, but that'll have to get in line behind all the other projects.

What is the most unique experience you have ever had with a tractor? My dad, Steve, purchased this Massey 294 from a farm liquidation auction in March of 1990. They also purchased a blower and a baler. At that time, it had 890 hours on it and we put it to work on the rented farm in Holmen, moving shortly after to Sparta. For years, it pulled a total mixed ration mixer, sat outside and was asked to do all sorts of side work. It was always dependable and started without grief. In 2018, my dad sold his cows, followed shortly after by the equipment. It broke my heart to let it go, but knowing the amount of work it needed at that time, the stars didn't align. My husband and I were focused on other projects, and fixing up another tired tractor wasn't something we had time to tackle. I watched it sell online and never forgave myself. I'd find myself scrolling Facebook Marketplace looking for it, but I never came across it. Fast forward to the fall of 2022, and I was sitting in a meeting and mentioned I was a farmer's daughter to someone I knew farmed. I knew very little about his operation. Lo and behold, the tractor was sitting in his brother's shed about 25 miles from where I grew up. I couldn't help but cry when he sent me photos to confirm, and the letters appearing on the rear rim - "NO" confirmed it was ours. My brother Adam, just learning how to write, put that word on every piece of farm equipment he could find with a livestock paint stick — and to my dad's chagrin, they never wore off. The new owners had made some much-needed repairs, and I said that if he was ever to sell it, to call me first. Less than three months later, we brought it home. My kids are learning to drive on it, and my dad took everyone for a ride on Easter Sunday. We're now up to 12,110 hours. I've been finding excuses to get outside and use it at every possible opportunity. My husband, who bleeds Ford Blue when injured, has even come around to having a little Massey red in his life. I guess I'll share, as long as he keeps fixing her up for me.

Tell us about your farm. AJ, our two children, and I live on our century-old dairy farm in La Crosse County. We milk between 50-70 cows, depending on the season, and are focused on modernizing and building efficiencies without hiring outside labor. I work off the farm full time and enjoy posting about the farm on social media. Follow us on Facebook under The Schlintz Family Dairy.



Lending from experts who live here too

Local lenders providing real results. Our local ag lenders bring personalized guidance and fast decisions to help your ag operation move forward with confidence.



MAGNIFI
FINANCIAL

mymagnifi.org/ag

Insured by NCUA

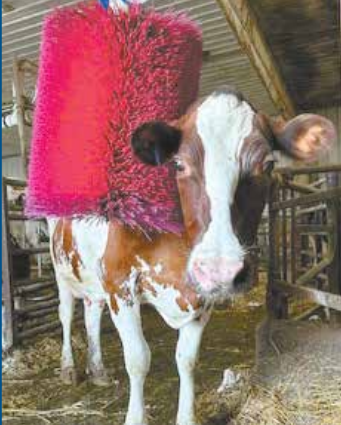


FIND THIS COW IN THE FARM SYSTEMS AD!

Congratulations to 3rd quarter
winner **Travis Welle!**

for your chance to win a \$100.00 gift card, \$50.00 credit on your account, and Farm Systems apparel!

SMALL BRUSH. BIG IMPACT.



**HAVE YOU
ORDERED YOUR
PINK SCB YET?**

DeLaval

From now until November 30th, for every pink DeLaval swinging cow brush SCB cylinder replacement sold, a portion of the proceeds will be donated to reputable breast cancer organizations that are spearheading efforts to eradicate this disease.

**Contact us
today to order
your pink SCB**

FIND THIS COW!



for your chance to win a
**\$100.00 GIFT CARD, \$50.00
CREDIT ON YOUR ACCOUNT, AND
FARM SYSTEMS APPAREL!**

****One entry per customer****
Winner will be notified
Cow must be identical to cow on
this form (size may vary).

**Q. ON WHICH PRODUCT IS
THE COW LOCATED?**

A. _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

**FARM
SYSTEMS** **DAIRY STAR**

Drop off/mail/email your entries to:
58 Interstate Drive N.W.
Melrose, MN 56352
or hand off to your service tech
jolene.nathe@farm-systems.com

CUT THIS OUT AND HAND IT TO A SERVICE REP!
NAME WILL BE DRAWN ONCE A QUARTER

WAREHOUSE ON WHEELS



**IF IT FITS IN OUR TRUCK,
WE CAN DELIVER IT:**



Give us a call the next time you need something delivered. We have a full line of dairy route supplies.

**Providing service from all 3 locations,
Melrose, St. Peter & Brookings.**

SCHEDULED SERVICE



**Three
Locations
to Serve You!**

**Now is the time to look at your complete
operation and set up a scheduled
preventative care and repair.**

Not only do you get peace of mind knowing that your equipment will be ready to work when you need it, but you also get an extra set of eyes monitoring your equipment looking to maximize efficiencies. With programs for all your manure & milking equipment, we have something to offer everybody.

Call to schedule your service.

URBAN ALMA PRO



**FEEDING CALVES IS
VERY EASY TODAY.**

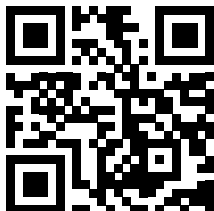
- Fully automated feeding
- Precise and predictable health management
- Permanently warm milk available for every calf
- User-friendly touch terminal
- Fully automatic rinsing system

Let us know you saw our ad in the Dairy Star!

**FARM
SYSTEMS**

POWERED BY **BLUE**
PERFORMANCE

Proudly serving you from Brookings, SD; St. Peter, MN; & Melrose, MN
58 Interstate Drive N.W., Melrose, MN 56352 | 800-636-5581



TOP PERFORMERS

Jason Lehman of Lehman Dairy Sherrill, Iowa | Dubuque County | 270 cows

How many times a day do you milk, and what is your current herd average, butterfat and protein? We switched to three times a day milking three weeks ago. Our current rolling herd average is 31,536 pounds of milk with a butterfat test of 4.5% and a protein test of 3.2%. Our current daily bulk tank average is 109 pounds of milk per cow. On an energy-corrected milk basis, we averaged 35,536 pounds of milk.

Describe your housing and milking facility. We have a 4-row, cross-ventilation, sand-bedded freestall barn with 30, 50-inch fans. Cows are in two groups, with older cows in one group and first- and second-lactation cows in the other. We have alley scrapers that scrape the barn out six times daily, along with a Lely feed pusher that pushes feed up every two hours. Our cows are milked in a double-8 parallel parlor.

Who is part of your farm team, and what are their roles? My wife, Megan, works full time as a nurse. We have two full-time people and four people who work for us part time. Our full-time and part-time employees are a huge asset to us. We treat them like family.

What is your herd health program? We pregnancy

check every two weeks with ultrasound between 33-40 days of carried calf. Cows are vaccinated with BoviShield and Endovac within the first 30 days of freshening. Endovac gets repeated when cows are verified pregnant, 60 days carried calf and dry off. Cows get a Lutalyse shot 10 days after freshening. Calves get InForce at day one and BoviShield and UltraBac-7 back at 4 months and repeated at pre-breeding.

What does your dry cow and transition program consist of? Dry cows are housed in loose bedding and fed the same total mixed ration through the dry period. Three weeks prior to calving, we move them to a calving pen next to the parlor. Their ration consists of low potassium baleage, corn silage and mineral mix. Currently fresh cows go into milk cow groups. We aim for a 50-day dry period.

What is the composition of your ration, and how has that changed in recent years? Milk cows currently receive a TMR consisting of corn silage, haylage and dry hay. This year, we increased corn silage in the ration to make it more consistent for several months at a time. We increased corn acres this year and decreased hay acres. We also add a protein mix, dry corn and gluten pellets



The Lehman family — Anna (front, from left) and Megan; (back, from left) Jason and Claire holding Ella — pauses for a photo in the feed alley at Lehman Dairy Oct. 10 near Sherrill, Iowa. Lehman Dairy focuses on producing high-quality feed, cow comfort and their breeding strategy.

in the ration. Our ration is balanced by Jordan Hunt through GPS Dairy Consulting.

Tell us about the forages you plant and detail your harvest strategies. We grow alfalfa, corn and new seeding. We are usually on a 5-cut schedule for making hay, with intervals between 26-30 days. This year, with all the rain we had, a couple of crops got over the target interval. For corn silage, we usually plant 112-day corn with tall plant height and great yielding traits so we get high starch levels. We seed down oats and annual rye grass with our alfalfa, which is used for dry cows and heifers. On our corn-on-corn acres, we seed down cover crops to help manage the soil, and when we take the alfalfa field out of production, we no-till into it with corn.

What is your average somatic cell count and how does that affect your production? Our average SCC usually runs between 90,000-120,000 annually. Last year, we only treated four cows for mastitis the entire year, which goes back to making sure we have proper milking procedures and stall management.

Turn to TOP PERFORMERS | Page 20

While you're out working hard, we're here working for you.



Dave Cebulla
VP/Chief Lending Officer



Dean Dirkes
Senior VP of Business Development



Tim Twardowski
Senior Ag Lender



Chad Van Beck
Senior Business Lender



Mike Mastey
Ag/Comm Loan Officer



Bailey Van Beck
Lender/Credit Analyst



Matt Dirkes
Ag Lender

**Pine Country Bank**
Member FDIC 
pinecountrybank.com

YOUR HOMETOWN BANK

LITTLE FALLS
1201 1st Ave NE | 320-632-9740
RICE
750 Cty Rd 21 | 320-393-4200
ROYALTON
412 N Hwy 10 | 320-584-5522
SAUK CENTRE
423 Main St S | 320-352-5771



We Offer Site Prep, Drainage
Tile, Land Clearing,
Excavation, Pump Stations
And So Much More!

Brad Herickhoff,
Owner
320-351-4872

EFFECTIVE DRAINAGE

PROFESSIONAL DESIGN. REASONABLE RATES.

UDDER COMFORT™

At shows or at home... Generations Trust It. Cows Love It.

Congratulations to the champions and to all breeders, exhibitors, caretakers, judges, staff, volunteers for showing the world a supreme WDExpo 2025!
Thank you to our customers. We are honored to be the #1 udder product in North America and beyond.

Stories of World Dairy Expo resonate across years and generations. A breeder's first Top 10 finish. A champion's pinnacle moment. Elite cows creating dynasties. Countless hours of care and preparation rewarded when a cow shows her heart out. The next generation taking the lead, or watching, learning, cheering from the stands. Dreams are made here. Excellence is pursued and achieved. Friendships endure alongside rivalry and camaraderie. In the trade show, it's the old-timers studying new innovations and the next generation learning, planning, leading...

Building relationships that move our industry forward. At the heart of it all is one constant: the dairy cow. In this industry, we love cows. It's all about the cow, and the people who care for her. That's our focus. Whether you're preparing your best for the showring, or preparing groups of fresh cows to get off to a strong, comfortable start for a successful lactation at home... We have the tools and team to help you reach your comfort and quality goals. Thank you for visiting and sharing your stories with us at WDExpo 2025!

(Photos from 2025 and before, thank you to the official WDE photographers Cowsmo and to Dairy Agenda Today, Randy Blodgett, Sherry Bunting, and our customers.)

UDDER COMFORT™

Helping reach their potential since 1998!

Softer udders ⇒ Faster milking ⇒ Better quality ⇒ MORE MILK

Her comfort is our passion!

1.888.773.7153 • uddercomfort.com • uddercomfort.blog

DAN WACKER/DAIRY STAR
(Right) Lehman Dairy sits atop a hill Oct. 10 near Sherrill, Iowa. Jason Lehman, a first-generation farmer, recently switched to three-times-a-day milking in a double-8 parallel parlor.

(Below) Cows at Lehman Dairy eat their total mixed ration Oct. 10 near Sherrill, Iowa. Lehman Dairy feeds their milking cows a mix of corn silage, haylage and dry hay, and adds a protein mix of dry corn and gluten pellets.



What change has created the biggest improvement in your herd average? Our biggest improvement was when we switched to deep-bedded sand in 2023. We gained 3,000 pounds of milk per cow. I know sand has its challenges, but cows love it. Before this, we had waterbeds, and when

we switched to sand, production and components went up quickly.

What technology do you use to monitor your herd? We use CowManager for heat detection and sick cow detection. Three of us have it on our

phones and have the main database in the office, so we have three people who have eyes on the cows and heifers. It's been a great tool to monitor fresh cows and heat detection on cows and heifers.

What is your breeding program, and what role does genetics play in your production level? Our milk cows are set up with a regular ovsynch with a double-Lutalyse shot 24 hours apart. We are currently running a 38% pregnancy rate on milk cows. For heifers, we use the CowManager system, and if the heifer doesn't have a heat by 13.5 months, we do an ultrasound to make sure she is cycling well and do controlled

internal drug release if we have to. We currently are running a 67% conception rate on heifers. We use sexed and beef semen. We make sure the bulls we use for sexed semen are high in Net Merit, fat, protein and milk.

List three management strategies that have helped you attain your production and component level. Our top management tool is making high-quality feed. If you are raising a healthy plant, you will have a healthy cow. Second is a focus on cow comfort. Cows need to be comfortable to make a high-quality product for the consumer. The third management strategy we em-

ploy is our breeding strategy with sexed and beef semen. We started using sexed semen six years ago, and it helps manage our heifer inventory. We currently breed for 30% over our replacement needs.

Tell us about your farm and your plans for the dairy in the next year. Lehman Dairy is a first-generation farm. In 2024, we expanded from 120 cows milking to 230-240 cows milking. We strive to produce a high-quality product for the consumer. Our plans for this year are to keep making high-quality milk and eventually we would like to build a new dry cow/post fresh barn.

TO ORDER, PLEASE CALL!

+1 844 - 952 - 0330

MON-FRI: 9:00-7:00

www.unionagener.com

UNION AGENER
ANIMAL HEALTH

IT'S TIME TO TAKE CARE OF FOOD SECURITY.

IT'S TIME TO TAKE CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

IT'S TIME FOR **Posilac** TO LEAD THE FUTURE OF DAIRY INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY.

FAIR FOOD

CARBON FOOTPRINT REDUCER

Posilac™

UNION AGENER
ANIMAL HEALTH



CHECK OUT OUR REDUCED PRICE STEEL
DEAL UNITS WITH ADDITIONAL OFFERS

FINANCING SUBJECT TO
PRE-APPROVAL THROUGH
JD FINANCIAL. SOME
RESTRICTIONS APPLY.
SEE DEALER FOR DETAILS.



2020 John Deere 946
#598833 \$34,900



2021 John Deere R990R
#594682 \$51,500



2021 John Deere 460R
23,500 BC, # 599667 \$23,900



2023 John Deere 461R
3600 BC, #563916 \$74,900



2024 John Deere 7R 210 \$289,900
350 hrs., #588956



2024 John Deere 8R 250 \$364,900
250 hrs., #591742



2023 John Deere 6175M \$179,500
343 hrs., #550940



2023 John Deere 6135E \$89,500
297 hrs., #553481

EQUIPMENT AND PICTURES ADDED DAILY • GO TO WWW.MMCJD.COM

ARTICULATED 4WD TRACTORS

JD 9R 590 2024, 670 hrs., #591171	\$539,900
JD 9R 640 2024, 336 hrs., #592997	\$547,900
JD 9R 640 2024, 745 hrs., #590291	\$569,900
JD 9R 640 2024, 816 hrs., #594491	\$584,900
JD 9R 640 2023, 1081 hrs., #573305	\$539,900

TRACK TRACTORS

JD 8RX 370 2024, 395 hrs., #592708	\$509,900
JD 8RX 410 2024, 478 hrs., #594623	\$589,900
JD 8RX 410 2024, 480 hrs., #594028	\$592,900
JD 9RT 540 2024, 114 hrs., #590276	\$577,900
JD 9RT 590 2024, 657 hrs., #588939	\$574,500
JD 9RX 540 2024, 333 hrs., #588958	\$649,900
JD 9RX 640 2024, 500 hrs., #596802	\$689,900
JD 9RX 640 2024, 546 hrs., #591832	\$639,900
JD 9RX 640 2024, 779 hrs., #597531	\$659,900
JD 9RX 640 2023, 756 hrs., #583592	\$619,900

UTILITY TRACTORS

JD 6120E 2023, 282 hrs., #550279	\$82,500
JD 6135E 2024, 29 hrs., #570748	\$94,900
JD 6135E 2023, 297 hrs., #553481	\$89,500
JD 6135E 2023, 572 hrs., #550284	\$89,500
JD 6R 140 2024, 227 hrs., #562285	\$227,900
JD 6R 145 2024, 184 hrs., #591549	\$196,900
JD 6R 145 2024, 243 hrs., #591549	\$190,900
JD 6R 145 2024, 249 hrs., #591550	\$193,900
JD 6R 145 2023, 442 hrs., #553499	\$185,900

COMBINES

JD S760 2024, 158 hrs., 75 Sep hrs., #574173	\$465,900
JD S760 2023, 433 hrs., 253 Sep hrs., #584315	\$439,900
JD S780 2024, 139 hrs., 97 Sep hrs., #590194	\$649,900
JD S780 2024, 207 hrs., 138 Sep hrs., #590193	\$643,900
JD S780 2024, 233 hrs., 168 Sep hrs., #590195	\$638,900

JD S780 2024, 258 hrs., 194 Sep hrs., #589714	\$559,900
JD S780 2024, 267 hrs., 198 Sep hrs., #592313	\$559,900
JD S780 2024, 297 hrs., 231 Sep hrs., #589655	\$629,900
JD S780 2024, 420 hrs., 311 Sep hrs., #590196	\$539,900
JD S780 2023, 604 hrs., 426 Sep hrs., #585530	\$559,900
JD S780 2023, 619 hrs., 318 Sep hrs., #573365	\$519,900
JD S780 2022, 910 hrs., 665 Sep hrs., #591019	\$469,900
JD S790 2024, 291 hrs., 220 Sep hrs., #589386	\$589,900
JD S790 2023, 565 hrs., 395 Sep hrs., #590464	\$499,900
JD S790 2023, 660 hrs., 486 Sep hrs., #590986	\$489,900
JD S790 2020, 1250 hrs., 900 Sep hrs., #584899	\$339,900

CORN & ROW CROP HEADERS

JD C12F 2024, #589382	\$199,900
JD C12F 2022, #584940	\$154,900
JD C12R 2022, #581012	\$139,900
JD C12R 2021, #581299	\$99,900
JD C18R 2023, #573291	\$209,900
JD C18R 2023, #573290	\$209,900

MOWER CONDITIONERS

JD 946 2020, #598833	\$34,900
JD R990R 2021, #594682	\$51,500

INTEGRAL PLANTERS

JD 1725 CCS 2023, 1400 Est. Acres, #584332	\$189,900
--	-----------

ROUND BALERS

JD 460M 2020, 3500 BC, #593689	\$45,900
JD 460R 2021, 23500 BC, #599667	\$23,900
JD 461R 2023, 3600 BC, #563916	\$74,900
JD 560M 2023, 8500 BC, #590203	\$45,900
JD 560M 2022, 7324 BC, #587366	\$39,900
JD 560M 2022, 7420 BC, #587367	\$39,900
JD 560M 2020, 7500 BC, #591605	\$38,900

ROW CROP TRACTORS

JD 6155M 2023, 296 hrs., #276286	\$180,900
JD 6175M 2023, 343 hrs., #550940	\$179,500
JD 7R 210 2024, 350 hrs., #588956	\$289,900
JD 7R 210 2024, 512 hrs., #591530	\$271,900
JD 7R 210 2023, 400 hrs., #583431	\$274,900
JD 7R 270 2024, 194 hrs., #591539	\$349,900
JD 8R 230 2024, 315 hrs., #592603	\$334,900
JD 8R 250 2024, 250 hrs., #591742	\$364,900
JD 8R 250 2024, 335 hrs., #592707	\$354,900
JD 8R 250 2024, 481 hrs., #591741	\$354,900
JD 8R 280 2024, 522 hrs., #590427	\$379,900
JD 8R 280 2024, 834 hrs., #591405	\$345,900
JD 8R 310 2024, 588 hrs., #588953	\$409,900
JD 8R 340 2024, 489 hrs., #590290	\$434,900
JD 8R 340 2023, 560 hrs., #584020	\$389,900
JD 8R 340 2023, 791 hrs., #584021	\$379,900
JD 8R 370 2024, 260 hrs., #591366	\$452,500
JD 8R 370 2024, 298 hrs., #590771	\$464,900
JD 8R 370 2024, 434 hrs., #591365	\$447,500
JD 8R 370 2024, 437 hrs., #592999	\$446,500
JD 8R 370 2024, 538 hrs., #597790	\$439,900
JD 8R 370 2024, 568 hrs., #590774	\$447,500
JD 8R 370 2024, 735 hrs., #590773	\$439,900
JD 8R 370 2024, 998 hrs., #590829	\$434,900
JD 8R 370 2022, 1716 hrs., #598083	\$349,900
JD 8R 410 2024, 289 hrs., #592347	\$509,700
JD 8R 410 2023, 408 hrs., #591782	\$445,900

SELF-PROPELLED SPRAYERS

JD 410R 2024, 353 hrs., #584112	\$559,900
JD 410R 2024, 495 hrs., #589410	\$474,900
JD 412R 2022, 1051 hrs., #588546	\$399,900
JD 616R 2024, 583 hrs., #588149	\$659,900
JD R4038 2018, 2105 hrs., #572639	\$179,900
JD R4044 2021, 967 hrs., #589919	\$399,900

LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT MINNESOTA & WESTERN WISCONSIN! CALL TODAY! (320)365-1653

SEE OUR COMPLETE INVENTORY WITH PICTURES AND DESCRIPTIONS AT: WWW.MMCJD.COM



It all starts with you

Everything we do at DeLaval is about helping dairy farmers sustainably and profitably milk cows.

That is why we don't just have one type of system, but we have all types of systems, which means we can make sure you get the system that is right for you.

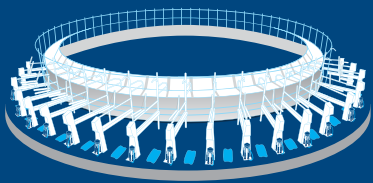
delaval.com



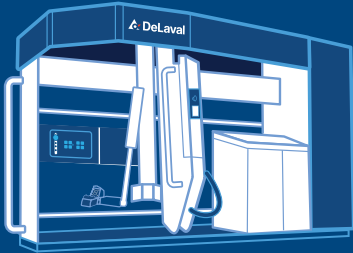
William Walleser
Wall-Stone Holsteins, Wisconsin, USA
1,200 cows, DeLaval Rotary E500 (50 bail)



Jeremy Haas
Haas Dairy, Wisconsin, USA
193 cows on 4 VMS V310



Take cow-flow to another level with the DeLaval E-Series Rotaries.



With DeLaval VMS V300 Series, we make your VMS, your way.

Δ is a registered trademark of Tetra Laval Holdings & Finance S.A. and "DeLaval" is a registered trade/service mark of DeLaval Holding AB © 2024 DeLaval Inc. DeLaval, 11100 North Congress Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri 64153-1296. Dairy producer testimonials reflect their real-life experience using DeLaval products. Results in testimonials have not been independently verified and DeLaval does not claim the results are typical. Actual performance and improvement will depend on a number of factors, including prior milking practices, type of cows, farm and herd maintenance practices. Testimonials do not constitute warranties or guarantees of service or performance. www.delaval.com

CONTACT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING DEALERS TO LEARN MORE:

IOWA

Prairie Land Ag Supply Inc.
Rock Valley, IA
712-476-9290

United Dairy Systems, Inc.
West Union, IA
563-422-5355
Monticello, IA
319-465-5931

WISCONSIN

Advanced Dairy
Spring Valley, WI
715-772-3201

Bob's Dairy Supply
Dorchester, WI
715-654-5252

Ederer Dairy Supply
Plain, WI
608-546-3713

DeLaval Dairy Service
Kaukauna, WI
866-335-2825

Joe's Refrigeration Inc.
Withee, WI
715-229-2321

Mlsna Dairy Supply Inc.
Cashton, WI
608-654-5106

Professional Dairy Services
Arlington, WI
608-635-0268

Redeker Dairy Equipment
Brandon, WI
920-346-5579

The Scharine Group Inc.
Whitewater, WI
800 472-2880
Mt Horeb, WI
800-872-3470

MINNESOTA & SOUTH DAKOTA

Farm Systems
Melrose, MN
320-256-3276
Brookings, SD
800-636-5581

Advanced Dairy
Mora, MN
320-679-1029
Pierz, MN
320-468-2494
St. Charles, MN
507-932-4288
Wadena, MN
218-632-5416



Consistency, communication drive calf-raising success

For 25 years, Busse's Barron Acres in Barron, Wisconsin, has been custom raising calves for dairy farms in Wisconsin and across the upper Midwest. Our goal has always been to return a healthy calf to the dairy. While that goal has never changed, the way we achieve it continues to evolve alongside the latest equipment, research, management practices and technologies.

After college, I began dairy farming in 1982 with my parents. In 1999, faced with an old stanchion barn that needed updates, we began considering what direction we wanted the farm to take. I had always enjoyed feeding and caring for calves, so the initial plan was to purchase bull calves and raise them as feeders. Around that time, a neighboring dairy was expanding and asked if we would custom raise heifers.

We started with 600 calves that first year. Today, we work with 25 different dairies and raise about 15,000 calves annually, from birth to 5 months of age.

We've moved from buying off-the-shelf milk replacer and feed mixes to creating our own custom-blend milk replacer and mixing feed on-site. As new disease challenges such as salmonella Dublin have emerged, we work closely with veterinarians and animal health representatives to stay on top of vaccination needs as diseases or pathogens evolve.

We've also seen trends in dairy production affect how calves are raised. With more use of sexed semen and calves from first-calf heifers, the calves coming to us are smaller.

That impacts even basic things, such as the size of feed buckets and whether smaller calves can reach inside them. In addition, we recognize there's an increased genetic value in every heifer calf in our care.

Several principles drive everything we do, chiefly regarding effective diagnostics, communication and team training.

Diagnostics, data

We carefully track rate of gain, treatment rates and death loss. If we see a spike, we immediately investigate where it's happening. We rely on diagnostic tools, necropsies and lab confirmations to quickly find answers. That data guides decisions about vaccination protocols or adjustments to milk replacer or feed.

Communication, teamwork

Communication is critical — with our dairy partners and among our team members. We regularly keep dairies informed of calf status and work together if an issue arises. We're partners in the true sense of the word; we know that when we raise healthy calves, we're helping build the future of their milking herds.

Among our team members, communication is just as important. We have about 45 employees at our main site and another eight at our second location. With two shifts, our protocols and communication systems must keep everyone aligned. Each shift uses checklists covering everything from tank temperatures to the number of bottles fed and washed. Crews record notes in logbooks so the next shift can continue without missing a beat.



By Sherry Arnold

We recently installed a 50-inch monitor in the break room that scrolls through daily messages in English and Spanish. It highlights tasks such as vaccinations, pen moves and special watch lists. Everyone sees the same information in real time, strengthening consistency and communication across crews.

Training, accountability

We also emphasize training and accountability. Every new employee starts with a detailed checklist — about 40 items long — covering everything from mixing milk to washing bottles. After mastering all the tasks, they earn a raise. It's a clear, motivating system that builds confidence and rewards learning.

Most of our team members are Spanish speaking, so all training materials and protocols are translated. We're always looking for ways to provide additional training and continuing education. That includes sending team members to programs like Professional Dairy Producer's Calf Care Connection, then having them share what they learned with others. We also bring in bilingual trainers for refresher sessions on calf illnesses or to review the basics of calf care.

Protocols naturally drift over time, so reinforcement is critical. Hearing the same message again is never wasted. In fact, it ensures everyone understands not just what to do, but why it matters.

We've grown to a scale I never imagined 25 years ago, but our core principles remain the same. They keep our team working together smoothly, our partners confident in our care and, most importantly, our calves healthy and growing.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

October 28-30; November 4-6, 11-13

The Dairy Signal®

Online, noon - 1 p.m.

Visit www.pdpw.org to participate in live-streamed event. Audio/video recordings also available free.

October 29-30

Business Management & Advanced Finance Workshop

Sun Prairie, WI

Visit www.pdpw.org for more details and to register.

November 12

Stride Youth Leadership Conference™

UW-River Falls, WI

Visit www.pdpw.org for more details and to register.

I still believe raising calves is the best job on the farm. It brings challenges every day, but the rewards of good communication and consistency are evident every time we return healthy, thriving calves to their home farms.

Sherry Arnold is co-owner of Busse's Barron Acres in Barron, Wisconsin, where they specialize in the care of calves from newborn through 5 months of age. They raise replacement heifer calves for dairies in Wisconsin and the upper Midwest with a priority on returning healthy, thriving calves to dairy herds.

Equipment to Help Improve Your Farm!

Calf Housing



Complete Line of Indoor and Outdoor Calf Housing

Cow Comfort



Soft, Yet Durable, European Cow Comfort

Buddy Hutch



Ideal for Pair-Raising Calves

Dependable Products • Designed for Everyday Use
Built to Last a Long Time!

Other Farm Improvement Products Available:
Poly Liner, Barn Scrapers, Vinyl Strip, Feed Carts and More!



Call: 1-800-472-2341
E-mail: info@loyal-roth.com
www.loyal-roth.com



MINNESOTA DAIRY INITIATIVE

Plan for a Vibrant Dairy Farm Future

MDI can help protect and strengthen your dairy farm for little or no cost.

Contact MDI today to get started!

mn-dairy-initiative.org





District Meetings

November 10th • 12 PM

District 3-5-6

Maple Lane Event Center • N3051 WI-81, Monroe, Wis

November 12th • 12 PM

District 4-5-8-7

Green Grove Fellowship Center • N12253 County Rd P, Owen, WI

November 17th • 12 PM

District 6-5-9

Pizza Ranch • 2020 Radford Road, Dubuque, IA

November 18th • 12 PM

District 5-7-8-9

Pizza Ranch • 3130 Chestnut Place, La Crosse, WI

November 19th • 12 PM

District 3-5-6-7-8

Pizza Ranch • 916 Gateway Dr., Baraboo, WI

November 20th • 12 PM

District 1-2

Branch Station • 8112 Village Dr, Whitelaw, WI

November 24th • 12 PM

District 7-8-9

Village Haus • 122 N Boyd St, Boyd, WI

November 25th • 12 PM

District 4-5-7-8

Ag Country Financial • 1207 N Central Ave, Marshfield, WI

November 25th • 7 PM

District 3

Iron Ridge Inn • 131 S Main St, Iron Ridge, WI

December 2nd • 12 PM

District 9

Pizza Ranch • 1815 6th Street, Brookings, SD

December 2nd • 7 PM

District 9

Pizza Ranch • 108 W Main Street, Pipestone, MN

December 3rd • 12 PM

District 9

Pooch's Corner Pub • 103 1st Ave N, Freeport, MN

December 9th • 12 PM

District 3

Pizza Ranch • 1235 West Johnson Street, Fond Du Lac, WI

December 10th • 12 PM

District 1-2-5

Pizza Ranch • 5450 W Integrity Way, Grand Chute, WI

December 11th • 12 PM

District 1

Belgiumtown Restaurant
W4346 Belgiumtown Rd. #22. 5 • Stephenson, MI

Why should you attend district meetings?

- › Stay Informed
- › Make Your Voice Count
- › Connect with fellow members
- › Meet your leaders
- › Strengthen our Collective Voice



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
in Onalaska, WI, February 13-14
at Stoney Creek Inn & Resort



FarmFirstDairyCooperative.com



www.farmfirstdairycooperative.com | Toll-Free: 1-800-525-7704 | Phone: 608-286-1909
4001 Nakoosa Trail, Suite 100 • Madison, WI 53714-1381 | info@FarmFirstCoop.com



Doubling down on dairy

Sparrgroves operate farm, restaurant

By Dan Wacker
dan.w@dairystar.com

BOSCOBEL, Wis. — In a small town next to the Wisconsin River, there is an undeniable landmark for those who travel down Elm Street. A cow statue invites potential customers to Udder Brothers Creamery, owned by Jason and Miranda Sparrgrove, in Boscobel. Along with the family's restaurant, Jason also farms with his twin brother, Justin, at Hi-Grove Holsteins.

"I grew up milking cows and we wanted to raise our kids that way," Jason said. "If you want to farm small-scale, you need to do something else to bring money in. That's why we opened Udder Brothers Creamery in 2017."

The two brothers opened a small store on the southern end of town. Today, the menu includes ice cream, frozen meats, cheeses and limited sandwich options.

Their original space did not have indoor seating which was a challenge. To diversify, the twins invested in mobile units, purchasing an enclosed trailer that would go to events. That one trailer has evolved into four, one which does farmers markets while the other three rotate as needed.

"We were there (at the original building) for almost three years," Jason said. "The trailers are great for events. We do tractor pulls, rodeos and now have four of those rigs."

The desire for indoor seating became more pressing as winters came and went and traffic at the original store slowed considerably. An opportunity on the main thoroughfare in town opened when the local Dairy Queen closed. Jason received a phone call about the potential move to a larger facility with more year-round feasibility in 2022.

"I did a walk-through of the facility," Jason said. "It was pretty rough, but with our old store, it was more of a summer attraction. ... During the winter, we'd have to open only on the weekends because there just wasn't any foot traffic. Here, we can stay open seven days a week, have a full food menu, and use the drive-through option."

The move allowed Jason and Miranda to dive into the restaurant scene full time, while continuing to work with Justin and his wife, Justine, on the farm.

The brothers grew up on farms together as their father, Charles Sparrgrove, worked as a herdsman for several dairies across the state. After gradu-



DAN WACKER/DAIRY STAR

Jason and Miranda Sparrgrove stand outside their restaurant Oct. 13 in Boscobel, Wisconsin. Along with running the restaurant with his wife, Jason farms with his twin brother, Justin, at Hi-Grove Holsteins.

ating from high school, the Sparrgrove twins took separate journeys. Justin went to Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, where he played football, and Jason joined the Navy.

"I was working construction with a former Marine, and he had me look into joining the military," Jason said. "I started researching and found the Navy Seabees, the construc-

tion side of the Navy. I knew I didn't want to be on a boat, and I wanted something that would transfer when I was finished."

Jason served two tours in Iraq in 2004 and 2005 as a crane operator. As his post-high school chapter was nearing an end, he wanted to get back to Wisconsin as his brother had done during the summer months.

Meanwhile, Justin began working on a dairy farm near Boscobel during his summer breaks from Loras. When the owner of the farm was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, the farmer asked if Justin was interested in taking over the farm.

Turn to **SPARRGROVES**
| Page 29

NOW AVAILABLE: Lely Astronaut A5 Upgrade Kits

Get more from your Lely Astronaut A5 robotic milking system with the new Lely A5 Upgrade Kits. Available for existing Lely A5 robots, systems currently in production and those on order, these kits are designed to boost performance, improve efficiency and keep your unit running at its best.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Select your upgrade kit package
2. Schedule the installation with your local Lely Center
3. Experience next-level performance

UPGRADE KITS AVAILABLE FOR ANY LELY A5 — PAST, PRESENT OR PENDING

Current Lely A5 owners can bring the latest innovations to robots already in the barn, on the production line, or on order with our new upgrade kits.



UpgradeD
(AOS-2 + GCB CorePro)
Foundation package with future-proof design, improved stability, remote technical support, agile updates and advanced cybersecurity



Upgrade A (TDS2+)
Faster milking starts and continuous performance improvements



Upgrade B (Milk for Use)
Separate and store milk by cow, reducing contamination risk and improving milk handling



Upgrade C (Automatic Milk Filter)
Automated filtering for consistent milk quality and reduced labor

Lely upgrade kits ensure your milking robots are ready for today's demands and tomorrow's opportunities.

Contact your Lely Center today for availability, pricing and installation details.
www.lelyna.com



Stocking a full lineup of Alpha Hydraulic Fluids... *AND MORE!*



ALPHA
LUBRICANTS
Pure Performance

Call to hear
our full lineup
as a certified
Alpha
Lubricants
Dealer

Ask about delivery options
DAILY SHIPPING WITH CWA AND UPS

Hoover Hydraulics
N14320 Catlin Ave.
Curtiss, WI 54422

★ Hydraulic Sales and Service ★

Ph. 715-223-7681 / fax 715-223-4031

Back up and running

Scapanski milks cows at family farm

By Tiffany Klaphake
tiffany.k@dairystar.com

SAUK RAPIDS, Minn. — It is in Adam Scapanski’s blood to be a dairy farmer. But when his dad passed away from cancer and the cows were sold, he was not sure that was going to happen.

However, today, Scapanski’s dream has come true as he is milking 30 cows in a step-up 8-stall parlor at his home farm near Sauk Rapids.

“It was always my dream to milk cows here,” Scapanski said. “I just didn’t know how long it would take to get going again since we sold the cows when I was 9.”

While the cows were sold, the youngstock were kept and the Scapanskis continued to breed and calve them in. Once a heifer calved, she was sold and the calf stayed behind so the Scapanski family could continue to raise cattle.

“Dad was really passionate about the Holsteins and that carried with me,” Scapanski said. “With showing cows, my passion really grew.”

As a freshman in high school, Scapanski had another formative experience.

“Probably the biggest thing that helped me decide to be a dairy farmer was milking cows for my uncle,” Scapanski said. “I did it every day and I just loved it.”

In 2017, a young dairyman, Mitch-



TIFFANY KLAPHAKE/DAIRY STAR

Adam Scapanski takes a break in his freestall barn Oct. 13 near Sauk Rapids, Minnesota. Scapanski milks 30 cows but is growing his herd to 60.

ell Mehrwerth, started renting and milking cows in the Scapanski barn. Then, the Scapanskis started keeping their heifers after they calved and Mehrwerth bought some of his own.

After high school, Scapanski went to Ridgewater College for dairy man-

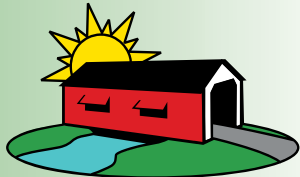
agement. During and after college, Scapanski helped Mehrwerth farm and worked for other farmers in the area.

“We worked together and I did some custom farm work for a number of years,” Scapanski said. “The farmer I worked for encouraged me

to buy my own wrapper and start doing custom wrapping. I have slowed down on my custom work this year because I have more to take care of here.

Turn to SCAPANSKI | Page 27

LEADERS IN FORAGE



Byron Seeds™



Helping you grow tons of highly digestible fiber for your livestock

- **KingFisher Silage Corn**
- **SynergyX Alfalfas**
- **Cool-Season Grasses**
- **BMR Forage Sorghum**
- **BMR Sorghum-Sudan**



For help with your forage program, contact your local Byron Seeds dealer or call 800-801-3596



TIFFANY KLAPHAKE/DAIRY STAR
Adam Scapanski pushes up feed Oct. 13 in his freestall barn near Sauk Rapids, Minnesota. Scapanski's herd is 90% registered, and he is using the same prefix that his dad used.

But it is nice to have additional income with the high cow prices and lower milk prices.”

Last year, Mehrwerth found a farm to buy and moved his cows to the new farm. On Nov. 4, 2024, Scapanski milked his own cows in his family’s farm in the parlor and freestall barn that his dad built.

“I love it,” Scapanski said. “I wish I could have started this right out of high school, but college was good.”

Scapanski purchased 23 cows from Mehrwerth and some from other local farmers.

“My herd is mostly registered,” Scapanski said. “The grade animals that I bought, I left as grades. But the ones that I bought that were registered, I kept up the paperwork. I especially love the Red & Whites, if I could fill my barn with Red & Whites, I would.”

Scapanski’s herd is 90% registered, and he is using the same prefix his dad did.

Scapanski has some friends who come out to help with field work during the busy seasons, but the cows are solely Scapanski’s responsibility.

The past year has not come without its share of challenges.

“I had a little stray voltage for a while,” Scapanski said. “Production went down drastically and I was noticing the cows were lapping up the water and not just drinking.”

Scapanski has been able to turn off all the breakers and cross the wires to

fix the issue. Although the issue has been recurring, Scapanski said he has been able to resolve the stray voltage problem each time it occurs.

The past year’s cattle prices has caused Scapanski’s herd to grow at a slower rate.

“I am milking 30 cows but want to get up to 60,” Scapanski said.

Going forward, Scapanski has plans to put up a new heifer shed and a manure pit.

“Right now, I haul daily and the heifer shed and manure pit will be big enough for me to go up to 120 cows,” Scapanski said.

Scapanski and his wife, Kayla, gave birth to a son in July, so he wants to build for the future.

“Dad put up this freestall barn and built it right when robots were hitting the markets and built it so that it would be easy to convert to a robot barn if we wanted to,” Scapanski said. “In 18 years, when my son is older, if he is interested in joining, we have room to expand and the option to put in robots.”

In the meantime, Scapanski is working on building his herd of registered cattle.

“I am most proud of milking here again,” Scapanski said. “Seeing my own breedings calve in and watching my herd grow has been great. I have been using sexed semen and have had almost exclusively heifer calves for the past three months so that I can grow my herd from within.”

Fritsch Equipment
And Services LLC
MACHINERY YOU CAN TRUST
**COW, CALF, EQUINE,
AND SHEEP SOLUTIONS**



**FRITSCH HYBRID
FLEX STALL WITH
MAYO MATTRESS**

Learn more about the Mayo Mattress! Scan the QR code!

**FRITSCH POWER
BEDDING GROOMER**



**WOODCHUCK®
BEDDING SPREADERS**

FRITSCH FORAGE FACER

Stationary Vertical TMR Mixer

**Increase Efficiency
By Feeding TMR!**

130-370 cu. ft. capacity
Two largest models will process whole round bales
Twin augers and nearly vertical sidewalls eliminate dead spots
All Stainless Steel mixing chamber for extremely long life
Input power options include electric motor or 540 PTO

Free Brochure!
1.800.436.5623

fritschequipment.com
sales@fritschequipment.com
(920) 532-6292 6229 Hwy 57, De Pere, WI



DM 3X+ ROTARY



PREMIUM PARLOR PERFORMANCE

APPROVED DAIRYMASTER DEALERS

TOTAL DAIRY SERVICE LLC
Kewaunee WI
(920) 680-4441

TRI COUNTY DAIRY SUPPLY INC
Janesville WI
(608) 751-1068

SOUTHWEST DAIRY SYSTEMS LTD
Cuba City WI
(608) 744-2661

BILL'S DAIRY SUPPLY INC
Baldwin WI
(715) 505-2607

LITTLE L FARM SUPPLY LLC
Ladysmith WI
(715) 609-9474

DAIRYLAND EQ OF MENAHGA INC
Menahga MN
(218) 522-2353

ZUMBRO AG SOLUTIONS LLC
Zumbrota MN
(320) 304-8655

LANGS DAIRY EQUIPMENT INC
Decorah IA
(563) 341-8608

W.G. DAIRY SUPPLY INC
Jonesville MI
(517) 526-0671

MJC PRECISION DAIRY SOLUTIONS LLC
New Paris IN
(574) 536-8805



Continued from SPARRGROVES | Page 25

“I was still in the Navy for another month, but we decided to buy the farm together,” Jason said. “We did all the paperwork through a fax machine. We were approved through (Farm Service Agency), bought the cows and started farming. I came home a month after the purchase.”

After farming at the original location, the brothers decided it was time to move to another farm and increase their herd numbers. They purchased their current farm in 2010 and have increased their herd size from 45 to 100.

“We bought the farm we’re on now and built it up,” Jason said. “Now we milk in a double-8 parallel parlor. We added a freestall barn and a few bunker silos and each of us built a house there, about 100 yards apart.”

Through it all, the two have continued to have off-farm jobs. Over the years, Jason worked in different settings, including another tour in Iraq as a civilian contractor. Currently, he farms, drives a bus for the Boscobel School District and operates Udder Brothers’ Creamery along with his wife. Justin works at United Cooperative.

“Some people have family they can arrange a transition with, but we started from scratch,” Jason said. “It’s been an uphill battle with the cost of everything, but that’s why we’ve continued our off-farm jobs. That way we didn’t have to take money from the milk check to survive and pay our personal bills. It adds some stability to the roller coaster of the milk market.”

The Sparrgroves milk twice a day. Jason and Justin work together in the morning, starting at 4:30, and work until each needs to begin their other job.

With the changing seasons, the workload of the farm changes. Jason adds more duties in the winter when Udder Brothers’ Creamery has fewer events, and Justin takes on more during the summer as business for Udder Brothers’ Creamery and its four food trucks increases.

“We always looked for jobs that were flexible enough that we could manage the farm at the same time,” Jason said. “We’ve had to balance things out and work out our schedules together. We try to plan a couple of days ahead, depending on what our kids have going on. And when you’re your own boss, you can be flexible.”

The farm ships milk to Meister Cheese in Muscoda. The cows at Hi-



DAN WACKER/DAIRY STAR
(Left) Miranda Sparrgrove works the till at Udder Brothers’ Creamery Oct. 13 in Boscobel, Wisconsin. Udder Brothers’ Creamery moved from a location on the southern edge of town to a location with indoor seating in 2022.

(Below) The Udder Brothers Creamery cow stands in the sun Oct. 20 in Boscobel, Wisconsin. The statue marks the restaurant’s location on Elm Street along Highway 61 south.

Grove Holsteins have been bred to Angus for the past decade. Replacements are purchased.

In the store, Meister Cheese is available for purchase, along with ice cream from WW Homestead Dairy in Iowa, beef from Driftless Area Direct Beef, pork from Wolf Farms in Lancaster, along with other locally sourced goods.

Driftless Area Direct Beef partners with Udder Brothers’ Creamery to both provide the beef for their burgers, in addition to having frozen meat available for purchase inside the store.

“We get a lot of compliments on our burgers,” Jason said. “Our meat is leaner than most patties, so it adds to the experience of our store.”

Jason’s history on the farm and in the Navy has helped prepare him to run his small business. He said lessons learned throughout his time have laid the foundation of principles that he and his brother rely on to keep the farm running, maintain another job and spend time with their families.

“From my time in the Navy, I learned to take care of things myself,” Jason said. “It forced me to do some things on my own. In the military, there’s no calling in sick. It’s the same as being self-employed. It taught me early on that people are counting on you and you have to show up.”





Call today to schedule an appointment to calculate the savings for your farm!

You have a farm. We have a solution.

GEA has always made its mark by designing efficient and long-lasting freestall manure cleaner systems. GEA Alley scrapers will return your investment in labor savings and cleaner barns. Whatever your barn condition is, we have the solutions to meet your needs.

Contact Field Silo & Equipment for more information on GEA Alley Scrapers.

Your Local GEA Manure Equipment Dealer

Field Silo & Equipment, Inc.
1310 Springdale St.
Mount Horeb, WI 53572
608-437-5561



FIELD'S
Your Material Handling Source
Trusted sales and service since 1966
gotofields.com



engineering for
a better world

gea.com

CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION!



2005 E-Z Trail 3400
400 Bushel, Extensions,
1384 Running Gear
\$4,595



1980 John Deere 2040
5775 Hrs., 45 HP, 8 Spd, 4WD,
1 SCV, 175 Loader w/72" Bucket
\$12,900



1987 John Deere 338
540 PTO, Twine Knotters,
Rear Hitch
\$8,495



1990 John Deere 4555
6110 Hr, 173 HP, Quad Range, 2WD, 3 Scv's, Large 1000 PTO,
A/C, 12 Front Weights - **\$51,900**



2013 John Deere 315
5910 Hr, Engine Block Heater, Manual Quick-Tatch, Foot Controls,
Cab w/Heat - **\$17,900**



JOHN DEERE



BALLWEG
IMPLEMENT



W7246 Hwy 68 Waupun, WI 53963 | **920-324-3537**
M - F: 7:30am - 7:00pm Sat.: 7:30am - 3:00pm Sun.: 11am-1pm

MORE INVENTORY AT WWW.BALLWEG.BIZ



U of M Dairy Connection

www.extension.umn.edu/dairy



Research roundup: beef-on-dairy calf projects

The American Association of Bovine Practitioners had its annual meeting in Omaha, Nebraska, Sept. 11-13. Cattle vets, veterinary students and researchers from around the U.S. and Canada met to share the newest research, recommendations and best practices to enhance cattle welfare and help producers improve the health of their cows and the profitability of their operations. In 2024, there were 3.2 million beef-on-dairy calves born in the U.S., so an understanding of the challenges and management practices associated with this population of the beef supply chain is important for dairy producers. The rest of this article will describe three recent studies that investigate the management and health of beef-on-dairy calves.

The first study, done by researchers at Kansas State University, investigated management practices of pre-weaned beef-on-dairy calves on commercial calf ranches. A total of 15 calf ranches were surveyed across three regions (High Plains, Midwest and West). Researchers found that all

operations received calves less than 4 days of age with pre-weaning housing consisting of individual (outdoor hutches or indoor pens) and group housing. All operations fed milk twice per day, with 60% reporting feeding four quarts of milk per day. Weaning age ranged from 42-72 days, with 53% of operations weaning calves at 60 days of age or greater.

The second study was completed by researchers at Texas Tech University and investigated the expression of genes important to intestinal integrity and inflammation in beef-on-dairy calves with and without colostrum. Calves were randomly assigned to either a colostrum-deprived (n=12) or colostrum treatment (2.8 liters of pooled colostrum fed via esophageal tube; n=12). Then, calves from both treatment groups were either inoculated with Salmonella typhimurium and harvested at 72 hours or not inoculated and harvested at 23 days of age. In both instances, researchers looked for genes associated with tight junction proteins, inflammatory markers

and anti-inflammatory properties. Calves that received colostrum had greater expression of proteins associated with inflammation and tight junction proteins, suggesting a positive relationship between colostrum consumption and intestinal health of beef-on-dairy calves.

The last study was conducted by researchers in Kansas, Ohio and Nebraska and investigated the effect of an additional supplement containing avian immunoglobulin on beef-on-dairy calf health. The researchers enrolled 346 beef-on-dairy calves from multiple sources upon arrival at a commercial production site and randomized them to two groups: a control and one receiving the IgY product. Calves were followed until weaning and health events were recorded. While the supplement did

reduce the cumulative incidence of scours, the more interesting finding in this study was the total number of calves that were treated for scours (greater than 50%, regardless of group).

The summary of results from these three studies suggests that beef-on-dairy calves have some significant challenges during the pre-weaning period (high treatment rates, low milk intakes, early weaning age). Producers who sell young beef-on-dairy calves should prioritize pre-conditioning practices (vaccination, colostrum intake, etc.) that set them up for success when they leave the farm. If you are interested in evaluating your beef-on-dairy calf protocols and procedures, reach out to your veterinarian or local extension educator for more information.



By Whitney Knauer
University of Minnesota



White 445
13 shank disc chisel
\$12,000



'01 CIH MX220
4030 hrs.
\$84,000



Used MK12 rake
\$13,000

USED TRACTORS

CIH Magnum 305, new rubber	\$150,000
CIH 8910, 1955 hrs., 2WD, like new	\$105,000
CIH 7120, 2WD, 6,100 hrs.	Coming In
CIH MX120, 2WD, 3,800 hrs.	\$69,000
CIH MX120 w/loader	\$75,000
CIH MX100, 2WD, open station w/dlr.	\$69,900
'82 IH 5088	\$22,000
'82 IH 3288, 3,157 hrs	\$40,000
IH 1466, 6800 one-owner hrs	\$21,000
IH 1086, 7,500 hrs.	\$21,000
IH 1066 w/cab	\$21,000
IH 986, 5,565 hrs.	\$30,000
IH 856, completely restored	\$40,000
IH 856, 5,500 hrs.	\$12,000

TILLAGE

DMI Tigermate 18' w/harrow	\$11,000
CIH Tigermate II, red, 34' rolling basket	\$26,500
CIH Tigermate 200, 28.5' w/crumbler	\$34,000
CIH RMX 370, 28' cushion gang	\$36,000
CIH RMX 340, 28' w/mulcher	\$35,000
CIH 530C Ripper, nice	\$31,000
CIH 527 5-shank ripper	\$21,000
DMI Tigermate, 28', 3-bar harrow	Coming In
DMI 2500, 5-shank	\$12,000
DMI 500 5-shank ripper	\$8,500
CIH 870 9-shank ripper	\$42,000
JD 714 11-shank disc chisel	
w/tandem	\$14,000
JD 714 9-shank w/Summers mulcher	\$16,000
Brillion XL32 32' packer	\$36,000
Brillion 36' packer	\$29,000

HAYING & FORAGE EQUIP.

Sitrex QR12, QR10, QRS rakes	New
MKE 14 rake	\$24,800
Many sizes of rakes available	
All Sizes of Sitrex Rakes	On Hand
NH 144	\$3,200
H&S V10 low wheel rake	\$4,300

GRAVITY BOXES & GRAIN CARTS

Many Sizes of Gravity Boxes	on Hand
Demco 450	\$9,800
Demco 450 gravity box, red	\$8,000
Brent 657 gravity box, red	\$20,500
Brent 657Q, green	\$19,500
Brent 644, tarp & fenders	\$22,500
Brent 644, green	\$17,500
Brent 644 gravity box, green	\$13,000
Brent 644, red	\$12,000
Brent 644, green w/roll tarp & fenders	\$17,000
Brent 557 gravity box, red	\$19,000
Brent 544 w/roll tarp & fenders	\$14,500
(2) Brent 440 gravity box, green	\$6,500 ea.
E-Z Trail 400	\$6,500

MISCELLANEOUS

Red Devil 6' & 8' snowblowers	On Hand
Hardi Sprayer	Coming In

**Twine, Wrap & Net Wrap
IN STOCK!**

Various Sizes of Rock Wagons On Hand



GREENWALD FARM CENTER



Greenwald, MN • 320-987-3177

WWW.GREENWALDFARMCENTER.COM

LAM-PLY TRUSS

THE TRUSS THAT WILL CARRY THE LOAD

Storage Building

Mono

Free Stall

Gambrel



- Spans up to 72 ft.
- Bird Nesting Control
- Better Ventilation & Visibility
- No Feed Alley Post Obstruction
- Additional Ceiling Height
- Can be spaced up to 12 ft. depending on the load you desire.

Starwood Rafter Uses:

- Pole Sheds • Free Stalls
- Pavilion Shelters • Machinery Storage
- Riding Arenas



CALL TOLL FREE

888-525-5878

www.starwoodrafters.com

Sign up for our newsletter...
Sign up at www.dairystar.com

DAIRY STAR
MILK BREAK



Cost of mastitis

The rapid decrease in somatic cell counts in milk, along with increased fat content, has been a major achievement in quality milk production over recent years. So, no matter what role you play in the dairy industry – dairy farmer, herd manager, equipment, genetics, veterinary services, nutrition – give yourself a well-deserved pat on the back.

The steep drop in weighted average somatic cell scores in the Upper Midwest Federal Order is shown in Figure 1 for February and August of each year since 2000. In typical years, February tends to have the lowest and August the highest monthly SCC. This is not always, but usually.

Note three things. First, the decline in SCC has been impressive. In summer 2000, milk on average for the entire order would barely have produced products eligible for the European Union (400,000 cells/ml limit). Second, until very recently, efforts to control mastitis and resulting lower SCC have been slightly more effective in summer than winter (less difference between August and February). Third, in the past five years or so, SCC has begun to decrease less in winter and even increase in summer. The same trends can be seen in data from the U.S. Council on Dairy Cattle Breeding (Figure 2) that shows an improving genetic trend for decreasing SCC scores nationally, but with a management trend toward increasing SCC scores since about 2012.

To be sure, these trends are likely not leading to problematic results yet, but ought to be monitored. I can only speculate that increased parlor automation of milking procedures may result in somewhat less adherence to milking protocols and to later mastitis detection and missed cases.

Is reducing SCC in milk still financially viable? Fully answering that question is beyond the scope of this article, but it clearly depends on the costs of mastitis, the benefits of reduced mastitis, and the cost of measures to reduce mastitis incidence.

In 1996, the National Mastitis Council estimated annual losses due to mastitis on a per cow basis. The overall estimate was \$184.40 per cow, or \$368.67 in 2025 inflation-adjusted terms. These are only intended to be ballpark numbers because costs vary greatly from farm to farm, and milk prices, for example, have not kept up with inflation. Most importantly,

on a percentage basis, the following contributed to those mastitis losses: reduced milk production (66%), discarded milk (5.7%), replacement costs (22.6%), extra labor (1%), treatment (4.1%) and veterinary services (1.5%). These numbers were intended to reflect the overall impact of clinical and subclinical mastitis in a herd divided by all cows, mastitic and healthy.

More recently, others have looked more specifically at either subclinical or clinical mastitis. The University of Wisconsin reported that a case of subclinical mastitis would cost \$110. Research at the University of Georgia showed that a case of clinical mastitis in the first 30 days of lactation had a total cost of \$444, consisting of \$128 in direct costs and \$316 in indirect costs. Direct costs included diagnostics (2%), therapeutics (8%), non-saleable milk (6%), veterinary service (1%), labor (5%) and death loss (7%). Indirect losses included future milk production loss (28%), premature culling and replacement (41%) and future reproductive loss (2%). Note that a whopping 41% of the cost was associated with culling and replacement. Those numbers were from 2015, and while cull cow prices were less than at present, the cost of replacement heifers was also not at the present \$3,000-plus for springing heifers.

Substantial efforts to reduce mastitis incidence and SCC in milk are still a wise investment. The sources above did not consider the cost of risk for foregone milk quality premiums paid by milk cooperatives. Furthermore, the on-farm values do not account for the processing costs of milk with higher SCC. Somatic cells are sent to the udder to attack invading bacteria; so, it is little wonder that somatic cells can also attack the beneficial bacteria cultures and reduce cheese yield. Somatic cells also have lipases and proteases that can break down milk fat and proteins, thereby reducing milk's shelf life. These are the real costs of milk with elevated SCC.

The take-home messages are that after many years of declining SCC in milk delivered to plants in the Upper Midwest, it appears that progress has slowed or stopped. The slowdown is in the environment (management) and has happened despite continuing positive progress in genetic selection for reduced SCC. Keep in mind



By Mike Schutz
University of Minnesota

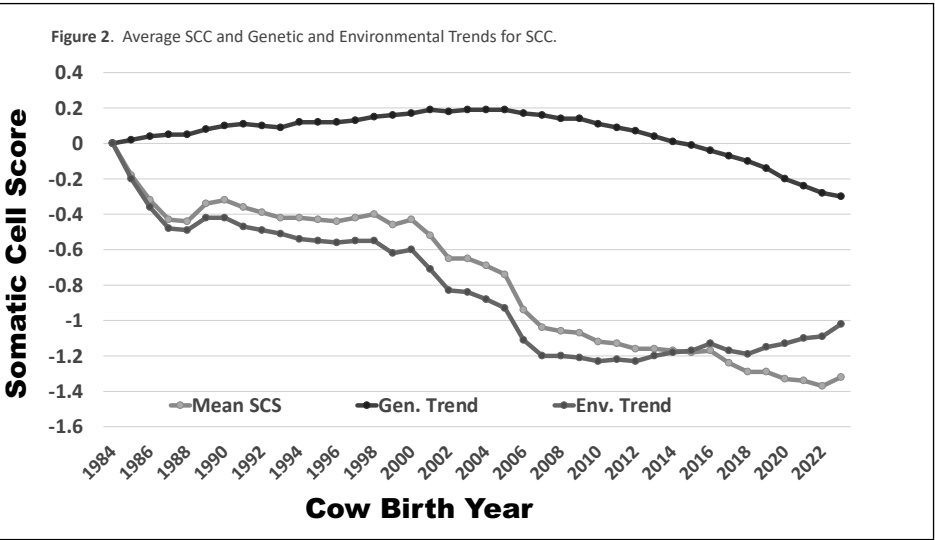


FIGURE SUBMITTED

In the past five years or so, somatic cell count has begun to decrease less in winter and even increase in summer. The same trends can be seen in data from the U.S. Council on Dairy Cattle Breeding.

that some 71% of the costs of clinical mastitis are indirect. While it may take time for those to impact the profit/loss statement, they eventually will,

so continue to work on strategies to reduce clinical and subclinical mastitis.

WE FIX ALL SILOS!

Who do you call?

It's 30 below zero and you break an auger.

Who do you call?

You're filling your silo and you blow up your distributor or fill pipe.

Who do you call?

You're running feed out and your gear box fails.

Are you going to fork the feed out?

It's chore time, you throw the power switch and nothing happens.

Who do you call?

An electrician will not climb up there or be out in a timely manner.

Osakis Silo will answer the call and handle these problems year round!

We will get you up and running anytime and under any conditions.

IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM CALL US TODAY!

OSAKIS
SILO REPAIR, INC.

call Anytime

320-808-3936

300 E Main St., Osakis, MN • 320-859-5340

Visit us online at www.osakissilo.com

*The Best Service Crews, The Best Replacement Parts, The Best Service...
That's The Osakis Silo Advantage To You!!!*

**24 Hours
7 Days
A Week**

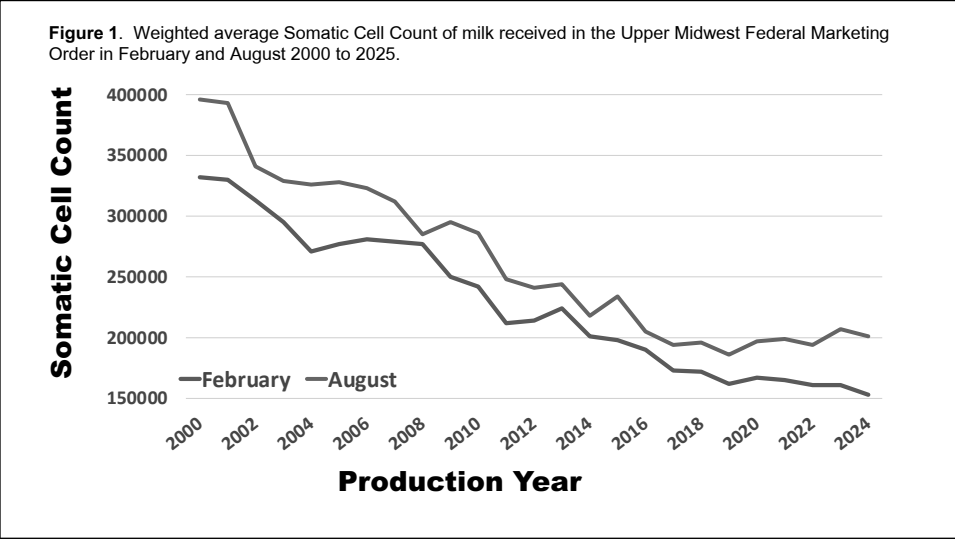


FIGURE SUBMITTED

The steep drop in weighted average somatic cell scores in the Upper Midwest Federal Order is shown in Figure 1 for February and August of each year since 2000. In typical years, February tends to have the lowest SCC.

Back home for Jersey enthusiast

Post-college shift leads Vos to reaffirm passion for dairy industry

By Michelle Stangler
Staff Writer

MARIBEL, Wis. — Returning home to the family farm to work full time was not the immediate plan for Emma Vos, a recent college graduate and Jersey enthusiast. But life had other ideas.

After graduating in the spring from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with degrees in agricultural and applied economics and agricultural business and management, Vos spent her summer traveling to cow shows, networking and helping on her family’s dairy farm near Maribel. She had hoped to begin a full-time career in the dairy industry by late summer.

Yet, when her father — one of two full-time family members on the farm — was injured in a four-wheeler accident in early August, Vos’ plan shifted. She stepped up to help more on the farm, Proud Heritage Jerseys, milking approximately 120 Jerseys and Holsteins.

“I can’t complain,” she said. “The farm is really important to me and my family, and the community has just been so supportive through this whole process. I love the cows and have always had a passion for dairy.”

Vos said she has been grateful for this extra time at home and has had a renewed appreciation for the farm and lifestyle she grew up with.

“It opened my eyes that you might have a plan, but your plan might change,” Vos said. “That just makes you a better person on the other side.”

Despite some challenges the past few weeks, Vos said she has found strength in the dairy community.

“I just know my passion is the dairy industry,” she said. “The farm has supported me through everything and has gotten me to where I am today. It’s where I learned my love for the Jersey cow. It’s where I built a work ethic, learned to think on my feet and provided me with the opportunity meet my best friends and coworkers.”

Farming now has solidified her desire to stay involved in the industry for the long term.

“It’s definitely made my connection to the farm stronger,” Vos said. “(It has) made me think about where I want to end up, and that’s definitely part of our farm or another farm, whatever, whenever that might be. I want to get industry experience because there’s so much to learn, but (this has) confirmed that I want to come back.”

Specifically, she is interested in looking into diversifying the farm, combining her business knowledge with hands-on experience planning to apply for some roles later this fall in the dairy industry.

“At the end of the day, we all want the farm to be successful; we all want the best for the cows,” Vos said.

Her commitment to the



PHOTO PROVIDED BY BACKROAD CREATIVE

Emma Vos sits with her family’s herd of mostly Jersey cows near Maribel, Wisconsin. Vos graduated from college in May and, for now, is working full time on the family’s dairy farm.

farm goes back to many dairy-centric opportunities, from dairy judging to showing at local, state and national shows.

“One of the most influential activities I did was the Jersey Youth Academy through the American Jersey Cattle Association,” she said. “It was by far one of the most fun experiences I’ve ever had.”

The Jersey You Academy’s mission is to attract, educate and retain young people for careers in the Jersey dairy business, and it has done just that for Vos. The weeklong experience in Ohio connected her to all facets of the breed from farm tours to ways of being involved with the association.

“The best part about it is the (association) really does try to provide opportunities for kids whether you come from a

production and high genomic herd genetic herd or you (have) just shown a couple cows,” Vos said. “It really doesn’t matter what your level of experience is, they will they have an opportunity for everyone.”

Her involvement has earned her national recognition as the 2023 winner of the National Jersey Youth Achievement Contest. She was also crowned Wisconsin Jersey Queen and was named second alternate in the national contest in 2023 and 2024. In 2022, she exhibited the premier performance cow of the All American Junior Jersey Show with a cow that also earned her a first All-American honor.

For Vos, though, it has never been about the awards, though she was also a Fred Stout experience winner for

2022.

“I never viewed the award as another plaque on the wall, but rather the knowledge that I gained from the experience that I had,” Vos said, “For me, when I applied, this obviously means a lot to the Jersey association and to countless breeders. This will definitely be something that I will learn from and come out better on the other side.”

While Vos has never met Stout, she often heard his name at shows and sales with his legacy inspiring the next generation, including herself.

As Vos looks ahead, she said she aspires to have a career within the industry to gain more knowledge, yet time on the farm will always be at her core.

**DEPENDABLE
LOW DISTURBANCE
MANURE INJECTION
SOLUTIONS**

ZIMMIL
Zimmerman Manufacturing LLC

RED VIPER
GEN 4

**3 PT BARS
PULL TYPE
TANK BARS
INJECTION UNITS**

INNOVATION TOGETHER

AVAILABLE AT:

MW
COLBY, WI
MARTIN WELDING LLC

102480 Cty Rd N
Colby, WI 54421
(715) 223-3211

Larry said the stanchion-style barn makes it easier to befriend the cows. Sharon said her calves are like pets to her and that the majority of their herd is very friendly.

“You could go out in the pasture, they all come up by you, (acting like) pet me, pet me,” Sharon said.

They calve seasonally, which Larry said has been one of their best decisions, with the herd calving throughout the fall.

“I like winter milking,” Larry said. “My hands are pretty well shot.”

A preference for winter is why the Wistes chose their calving window.

“Then they’re milking really well in the winter and then they can be comfortable in the barn,” Sharon said.

They dry up the majority of their herd in July, which gives them a break and helps with burnout.

“Summer is our vacation time,” Sharon said. “We milk the cows, they go outside all day, (we) milk them at night, (and) they go back outside. We don’t have so many chores, and the calves and the bred heifers all go down on pasture.”

They never completely dry up the herd, with late fall due dates waiting to be dried



Cows stand Oct. 13 at the Wistes’ dairy near Spring Grove, Minnesota. The Wistes have a variety of breeds in their herd.

AMY KYLLO/DAIRY STAR

up until the early fall due dates freshen.

“You have to hold on to having a little bit of milk in the tank,” Sharon said. “(That keeps) the milkman coming.”

The Wistes try to keep the 26 stalls full in their barn that was built in the 1950s. However, they avoid exceed-

ing 26.

“It takes as much time to switch that one and keep her bedded up and clean as it does for the 26 in the barn,” Sharon said.

Sharon is in charge of feeding calves. The calves are housed individually and are weaned at around 2 months of age when they are

doing well on starter consumption.

“I used to try to really be at 7-8 weeks, but it seems like if you go a little longer, they’re healthier,” she said.

In the past, the Wistes raised their bull calves as steers and sold them as feeders, but with the high price for calves, Sharon said they

have been selling them right away.

The Wistes use A.I. for most of their breeding with a live beef bull used for clean-up. Their barn is colorful. They have Holstein, Swedish Red, Norwegian Red and Jersey bloodlines scattered throughout the herd.

The Wistes’ farm is about 40 acres. This year all their land is devoted to hay or pasture. They rented 10 acres to grow corn for silage and their dry corn is purchased. Their cows are component fed.

The Wistes put up most of their hay into dry hay, both large squares as well as filling their mow with small squares. This year, they added baleage that their son-in-law put up for them. They purchase straw for bedding.

As they have gotten older, the Wistes have cut back on side hustles to semi-retire. Looking to the future, Larry would like to do more fishing and Sharon would like to spend more time preparing for and interacting with their children and grandchildren.

For farm goals, Sharon said they want to downsize the number of heifers kept.

“My goal is to have less animals around, milk the barn full, but just have less young stock,” she said.



Headlocks & Feed Bunk



Signature Series Cow Size

Functionality & Flexibility:

- Wide open design
- Precise mechanism
- Adjustable head width
- Cow, heifer and calf sizes
- Automatic down-cow release is standard
- Poly cushioned for quieter everyday operation

Strength:

- Heavy duty galvanized construction, will withstand years of feed bunk stress



Paragon Series - Calf Size

Request
FREE EQUIPMENT GUIDES
on our Entire Product Line!

Call 866-543-5116
sales@sturdybuiltmfg.net

260 S. Muddy Creek Rd. Denver, PA 17517

Easy Rake®

PATENT #7,588,203, #8,011,608, #8,336,795

SILAGE FACER

www.easyrakefacer.com



**NO MOVING PARTS
MAINTAIN CUT LENGTH
STAY IN THE HEATED CAB**

**CALL FOR YOUR
DEMO TODAY**





EST. 1916
HANSON
SILO COMPANY

Lake Lillian, MN
1-800-THE-SILO

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DEALER TODAY!

IOWA Post Equipment 712-476-4500
WISCONSIN
Dorner Equipment Green Bay • 920-655-3215
St. Joseph Equipment Lacrosse • 608-769-7796
Swiderski Equipment Wausau • 715-551-7893
Ritchie Equipment Cobb • 608-623-2331



easyrakefacer.com

Does genetic investment improve profitability?

By Becca Weir

Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics,
The Pennsylvania State University

Dairy farmers are constantly pushing the needle to improve efficiency within their operations. If a farmer can produce more milk with the same amount of inputs, then the farm is better off, financially speaking. Efficiency is especially important in today's economy with volatility in agricultural markets for inputs (feed) and outputs (milk). There are several management decisions producers are faced with on a daily basis. This article focuses on genetic selection and how these decisions impact farm profitability.

How do herd genetics contribute to profitability on a dairy farm? A cow with a higher genetic composition is expected to outperform a cow with a lower genetic composition, often defined by living longer, producing more milk and remaining healthy. Farmers can select genetics for preferred traits such as milk production, butterfat production, productive life and others. With these selections, it is important to consider several factors. Farmers might consider using sexed semen on heifers or beef-on-dairy for less productive cattle to derive an extra revenue stream for the operation. With each of these decisions, it is important to keep in mind that there is a cost associated

with genetics, but there is also the potential for more output and increased revenue from this investment.

How is genetic composition measured and what does the number crunching process display? We are able to measure the expected profitability of a dairy cow through the Net Merit index. Net Merit, a genetic selection index, is measured in dollars, and ranks U.S. dairy cattle based on their expected lifetime profitability. The index is comprised of several traits that vary by breed. For example, Holstein cattle have 39 traits included in the index.

Research completed at the University of Minnesota used genetic data from the Council on Dairy Cattle Breeding and farm financial data from FINBIN from 2012 to 2018 for Minnesota dairy farms to evaluate the relationship between investment in genetics and farm profitability by analyzing a genetic index, Net Merit, as well as the individual traits obtained in the data. Profitability is measured in four ways to fully capture the farm's financial standpoint. These include the rate of return on assets, operating profit margin, net farm income and net farm income per cow.

The RROA measures the return on all investments of the farm and is considered a long-term measure of profitability, whereas the OPM is a short-term measure of profitability, measuring the percentage of farm revenue that is retained as profit.

Net farm income is the difference between total revenues and expenses on the farm, and while it is included in the analysis, it is not a preferred measure of profitability as it is highly correlated with farm size, so we also include a standardized measure, net farm income per cow.

Our study found a positive association between Net Merit and profitability (RROA, NFI, NFI/cow), thus improving the herd genetics was related to higher profitability. A \$100 increase in the herd's sire Net Merit was associated with an 18% (0.6 percentage point) increase in RROA, \$12,100 increase in NFI, and \$87 increase in NFI per cow, all else equal. When analyzing specific traits (i.e. butterfat yield, Productive Life, Cow Conception Rate, milk fever resistance, etc.), most of the traits did not hold a significant relationship with profitability. Thus, as producers, when selecting genetics, it is most effective to select sires based on an economic index, rather than specific traits, and sire selection for Net Merit is an effective management strategy for dairy farmers to enhance their profitability.

There is no one-size-fits-all strategy for farm success, but identifying key characteristics can enhance the economic viability of dairy operations. Farming by the herd is becoming a strategy of the past as farming by the cow and understanding each cow's contribution within the herd is important for future production and decisions on-farm.

The Midwest's Largest Trioliet Dealer!

We have your next mixer on our lot!



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
P2-1800ZK
TMR MIXER**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-1800ZK VERTICAL
TMR MIXER**



**HIGHLINE BP663
TOP GUN BALE
PROCESSOR**



**ROTO GRIND 760T
BALE PROCESSOR**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-1600ZK VERTICAL
TMR MIXER**



**TRIOTRAC
2-2400**



**Trioliet SOLOMIX
2-2800ZK**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2400L VLX-K-T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2400L ZKX-T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2400ZK-T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2800ZKX-T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-1500ZK**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2800ZKX-T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
3-4000L VLX-K-T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-3200VLK T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2400ZK T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2000L ZK-T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2400L ZK**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2000**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
3-3600ZKX-T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
1-1300L ZK_2**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
3-4600VLX-K-T**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
3-4000L VLX-K-T_2**



**TRIOLET SOLOMIX
2-2400ZK T**

Check out our full inventory online at cliffsinc.com

We will buy your used mixer! Call to get a price, today!



408 S. Madison Street
Friesland, WI 53935
920-348-5153



Mike Barrett 920.296.1040 mikebarrett@cliffsinc.com
Eric Hughes 920.296.1034 erichughes@cliffsinc.com

Midwest Dairy tailgate promotions are a touchdown

Midwest Dairy focuses on key moments to promote dairy to consumers, layering multiple approaches to drive sales and build trust in the marketplace. One highlight in 2025 has been the “Back to Sports” season, which focuses on bringing dairy to tailgates across our 10-state region. By working with retail partners to deliver messages on multiple channels, we ensure that dairy’s story is seen and heard wherever people shop.



By Jen Schuster
Manager, Retail Business Development, Midwest Dairy

We know that consumers have a strong interest in the dairy category, with almost 97% of households purchasing cheese, making it a natural fit for game-day favorites. Must-have dairy products for a tailgate include classics like chips and queso dip, cheese for burgers, wings with buttermilk ranch dip, and, of course, meat, cheese, and cracker trays.

To encourage shoppers to add these products to their game-day grocery lists, Midwest Dairy is partnering with retailers to deliver inspiration through multiple touchpoints. In-store signage and videos, shoppable digital ads, themed promotions, social media campaigns and recipe content are all designed to help families and fans create the ultimate tailgate spread.

Throughout the fall, Midwest Dairy is teaming up with top grocery partners across our 10-state region, including Hy-Vee, Cub Foods, Fareway and Price Chopper, to make dairy the star of tailgating displays and weekly specials. Online activations extend that reach even further through platforms like Chicory and Instacart, where digital banners, recipe integrations and “Add to Cart” ads help shoppers bring dairy home with just one click.

These checkoff efforts emphasize flexibility and reach, ensuring that dairy remains present both digitally and in stores and is seasonally relevant. Each partnership features strong, consistent creative content, designed to connect with consumers’ passion for football, food and community. Dairy-forward messages like “Get in the Game with Dairy,” “Team Up with Dairy,” “Create the Ultimate Game Day Spread” and “Long Live Fall” remind shoppers that dairy belongs at every gathering, from the tailgate lot to the living-room couch. These themes not only drive purchase intent but also position dairy as fresh, local and nutritious, qualities that resonate with today’s consumers seeking both flavor and function.

Beyond the eye-catching creative, Midwest Dairy’s retail team helps stores stay ahead of consumer trends by sharing category insights and seasonal data on shopper behavior. This collaboration helps retailers plan displays and digital content that maximize sales while keeping dairy front and center in meal planning conversations. It’s a win-win. Consumers find relevant meal ideas, retailers see increased traffic and basket size, and farmers benefit from stronger category growth.

Midwest Dairy is dedicated to listening to consumers and bringing dairy to life at the retail level to increase the usage of dairy for the benefit of dairy farmers. Our objective is to grow the dairy category and support retail initiatives to increase consumer demand. Midwest Dairy capitalizes on key moments of the year, such as tailgating, to showcase

dairy products in unique and exciting ways to connect with consumers and drive incremental sales.

As fans fire up their grills and gather for game days, Midwest Dairy is ensuring dairy is in every cooler, cart and conversation. These efforts demonstrate the power of checkoff dollars at work. Driving consideration, awareness, and ultimately conversion to sales during these key time periods is a touchdown for dairy. As a result of these promotions, we aim to see dairy in every in-store and digital cart and in the hands of loyal fans at every tailgate. Highlighting dairy as a fresh, local and nutritious choice fuels fans and builds long-term

demand that supports farm families across the Midwest.

As you shop this fall, look for “Team Up with Dairy” signage at your local grocery store, explore tailgate recipes online and share the excitement with family and friends. Every block of cheese, carton of milk and tub of sour cream helps support the hardworking dairy farmers across the Midwest.

To learn more about how Midwest Dairy drives trust and sales through programs like these, visit MidwestDairy.com — and make dairy the MVP of your next tailgate.

Editorial disclaimer: The views expressed by our columnists are the opinions and thoughts of the author and do not reflect the opinions and views of Dairy Star staff and ownership.



ARE RESPIRATORY CHALLENGES HINDERING YOUR YOUNG CATTLE?

WINTER IS COMING, ARE YOUR CALVES READY?



AccelAIRate is designed to preserve and support respiratory health in young cattle while maximizing growth and development.

Contact your Select Sires Member Cooperative representative today to **BUILD A BETTER CALF**

SELECT SIRES MEMBER COOPERATIVE

Phone: (614) 878-5333 ♦ Web: www.ssmcoop.com

Buyer assumes all responsibility for use, storage and handling of this product. Select Sires Inc. makes no claims or warranties, expressed or implied.
®Build A Better Calf is a registered trademarks of Select Sires Inc., Plain City, Ohio. Manufactured for Select Sires Inc., 11740 U.S. 42 N, Plain City, OH 43064.



Used Parts • Replacement Parts
FREE NATIONWIDE PARTS LOCATING
We Buy Salvage Tractors
25060 651 Ave., Gibbon, MN
Toll Free: 1-800-635-0993

Harvest season stories

The frost is on the pumpkin, and fall harvest is underway. ‘Tis the season for crop price reports and other scary stories.

This past spring started out cold and wet, which made planting both a challenge and a chore. Seeding my garden was less a matter of making nice, straight rows and more like manufacturing mud pies. When I finally got it planted, my garden closely resembled a chewed-up construction site.

Unsurprisingly, a garden that was reluctant to receive seed was also reluctant to grow. Except for the weeds, of course. They seemed to be just fine with the cold, wet conditions.

After about a month of patience — and, like Toad, singing “Grow, grow” to my garden on a regular basis — I concluded that I was facing a germination annihilation. Some stuff was sprouting, but the bulk of the garden remained a lumpy black canvas.

In a panic, I rushed to a farm supply store and purchased a random selection of garden seeds. I then sowed the seeds without any thought regarding spacing and what went where.

Wouldn’t you know it? Every stupid seed that was so thoughtlessly and carelessly planted grew.

I was at first pleased, of course. But then some plants that belonged to the gourd family began to display megalomaniacal tendencies, commandeering large swathes of the planet. I wasn’t at all surprised when I stumbled upon a gourd out in the grass a quarter of a mile from the garden.

My pumpkins also grew like weeds, but I’ve always had good luck with raising those orange orbs. Not so with cantaloupes. I have never been able to grow one larger than a softball, and this year was no exception. Anyone up for a game of slow pitch?

Anyhow, I now find myself in possession of several dozen possible future jack-o-lanterns. I may

lobotomize and carve one or two of them, but the question remains as to what to do with the remainder.

Our youngest son, who is always up for adventure, suggested that we build a pumpkin chucker. I imagine this would be sort of like a potato gun, but on a much larger scale. Or maybe what he had in mind was a trebuchet, which is the same thing as a catapult. Except in this case, it would be a “pumpkinpult.”

But the whole idea was a non-starter for me. First off, there’s the waste of perfectly good, potential food items. Then there is the mental image of all those hapless pumpkins hurtling through the atmosphere and hitting the earth with a mighty splat. Oh, the humanity.

My wife purchased some pepper plants for me, some of which turned out to be of the habanero variety. Habanero peppers, I have discovered, can transform a bowl of “blah”

chili into a substance that can best be described as “weapons grade.”

Habanero peppers should only be handled by trained nuclear physicists. This became clear to me recently when I began to feel a strange burning sensation in my ear shortly after chopping a habanero. It then dawned on me that I had excavated earwax with the same hand that had just manhandled some chopped habanero peppers.

I won’t discuss what happened with some of my more intimate and sensitive body parts. Let’s just say that it will be some time before I’ll have to worry about nasal hair.

And now for the scary story. One fall, when our oldest son was about 10, he and his little brother and their cousin, Adam, decided to camp out in our front yard. A tent was pitched and as darkness descended, I was invited inside for an inspection.

Dear County Agent Guy



By Jerry Nelson
Columnist

The boys begged me to tell them a ghost story. On the spot, I concocted a tale about three boys who went camping in the woods only to find themselves being picked off one by one by a supernaturally smart and bloodthirsty wolf.

Precisely at the apex of the story, our farm dog began snuffling noisily at the outer perimeter of the tent. The three boys squealed and jumped up and ran for the house, having decided that camping outdoors at night wasn’t for them.

My wife was waiting for me at the door. “What sort of scary story did you tell them?” she demanded.

I told her that it wasn’t particularly creepy, but that the dog had contributed some highly effective sound effects at a very crucial moment.

“Oh, sure,” she replied, “Blame the dog. You big meanie.”

They’re just lucky that I didn’t tell them a really frightening story. I’m thinking of something along the lines of a catapult attack by a group of mutant zombie habanero peppers.

Jerry Nelson is a recovering dairy farmer from Volga, South Dakota. He and his wife, Julie, have two sons and live on the farm where Jerry’s great-grandfather homesteaded over 110 years ago. Feel free to email him at jerry.n@dairystar.com.

Need an Electrician?

We Offer the Following Agricultural Services:
Barn Lighting, Sheds, Fans, Trenching, Irrigation, Homes & More!

B.E.A.M. ELECTRIC
Bob Meyer
Master Electrician, Owner
Lic. #CA03435

Cell: 320-761-1042
Serving Central Minnesota

Gruett's

Eden

EQUIPMENT

Waupun

Equipment

IF YOU WANT EFFICIENT YOU WANT H&S.

BUILT FOR PERFORMANCE • SUPERIOR SPREAD PATTERN

WHY H&S?

2024 TF6128 MERGER
28 ft. Continuous Merger
IN STOCK

(2) 2023 TS5234
3400 Gallon Side Delivery Spreaders
LEFTOVER PRICING! SAVE BIG

2024 TF6132
32 ft. Continuous Head Merger
IN STOCK

2024 UF6136 MERGER
36 ft. Continuous Triple Head Merger
IN STOCK

(2) HPV4255 SPREADER
550 Bushel, Hydra-Push, Vertical Beaters
IN STOCK

2024 LW1000 LINEWRAPPER
Ready to go!
IN STOCK

(2) 2023 BD1226 FORAGE BOX
26 ft., Rear Unload, Top Pivot Door w/ Gate Delay, Suspension Axles
IN STOCK

2024 HC7116 RAKE
High Capacity, Heavy Duty, 16 Wheels
Ready to go!
IN STOCK

NEW! 2024 BOX SPREADERS
S3231, S3237, S3243 On Hand!
310-430 Bushel, Heavy Duty Spreaders
READY TO GO

920-853-3516
Potter, WI

920-477-5292
Eden, WI

920-324-3597
Waupun, WI

920-261-5301
Watertown, WI

Starch digestibility in high moisture corn

Once again it has been an interesting and unique fall. Corn silage harvest extended a few extra weeks depending on plant health and soil moisture. The second half of September and early October brought several days of windy and warm temperatures causing standing corn to mature and dry rapidly. As a result, harvesting wet corn in the form of snaplage, earlage or high moisture shelled corn at ideal moisture was a challenge.

The factors affecting starch digestibility are similar across all wet corn sources, including corn silage. At this point, nearly all farms have completed harvest for fermented corn feeds, so the goal here is to share some of the factors impacting starch digestibility in HMSC as you incorporate these feeds into your feeding program.

Processing, particle size

Like corn grain, processing HMSC increases surface area so that microbial digestion can take place. The ideal particle size for HMSC is interdependent on moisture and storage time, which we will discuss next. A mean particle size of 1,200-1,500 microns is recommended for HMSC at 30% moisture. The drier the HMSC, the finer the grind needs to be.

The two most common HMSC processing methods available are hammer mills and roller mills. In a hammer mill, particle size is determined mostly by screen hole size. The screen prevents the ground feed from leaving the grinding chamber

until it reaches a given size. In a roller mill, feed passes between rolls and is sheared and compressed to reduce the particle size.

Both systems will do a great job of processing HMSC if they are set up properly and receive regular maintenance. Roller mills can handle high moisture levels a little better; a hammer mill is more effective at reducing particle size if moisture levels are lower than ideal as seen on several farms this growing season.

Something to Ruminant On



By Barry Visser
Nutritionist

Moisture

Experts at the University of Wisconsin recommend targeting 28%-32% moisture for HMSC. Storage structures may dictate this target value. For optimum starch digestibility, a little too wet is better than too dry. If you will start feeding HMSC immediately after harvest and have storage flexibility, you may want to consider

feeding your wettest sources first. This will provide a more immediate source of highly digestible starch.

Success at low moisture values is often dependent on the degree of processing and the integrity of the storage unit. In a perfectly maintained, oxygen-limiting unit with a bottom unloader, 20%-25% moisture may be acceptable, but is still a little on the dry side.

Storage time

Adequate storage time for wet corn is the greatest supporter of starch availability. Prolamin-zein

proteins encapsulate corn starch and act as a barrier to digestion. Over time, protease enzymes (produced by proteolytic bacteria) break down this protein matrix, making starch more available. The wetter the corn source, the quicker this process occurs and the sooner the feed will reach its full starch-digestibility potential.

For example, HMSC ensiled at 24% moisture will have less proteolytic lactic acid bacteria activity. Thus, it will take longer for prolamin proteins to degrade, and degradation will occur to a lesser extent. If it is also coarsely processed (greater than 2,000 microns), starch digestion will be very slow and the potential for excessive fecal starch will be high.

In contrast, HMSC ensiled at 35% moisture may ferment very rapidly with a robust growth of LAB and, if finely processed (less than 1,000 microns), may result in excessively fast ruminal starch digestion. This may lead to rumen acidosis or decreased milk component production.

There is no such thing as a universal HMSC. The digestion of HMSC is dynamic, dependent on processing and especially dependent on the intensity of LAB growth and length of storage. HMSC may feed poorly in the fall, feed well in the spring and become excessively digestible in the rumen the following summer. Because the digestibility of HMSC is a moving target, having enough carryover in your inventory will help you reduce this variation. Harvesting at the desired moisture and reducing particle size will also help you maximize starch digestibility of your feeds.

Barry Visser is a nutritionist for Vita Plus.

Do you have an upcoming auction? Advertise it in the Dairy Star - call 320-352-6303 for more information.



2023 John Deere 9500 498 hrs., #586492 **\$539,900**



2023 John Deere 9700 772 hrs., #601860 **\$529,900**



2019 John Deere 9800 1595 hrs., #585961 **\$326,500**

FLEXIBLE FINANCING OR CASH DISCOUNTS ON SPFH'S & HAY TOOLS

SELF-PROPELLED FORAGE HARVESTERS

JD 7300 2003, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 5094 hrs., 3402 CH hrs., #601414 **\$74,900**
JD 8200 2023, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 253 hrs., 165 CH hrs., #587443 **\$374,900**
JD 8400 2023, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 82 hrs., #560608 **\$531,000**
JD 9500 2023, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 498 hrs., 210 CH hrs., #586492 **\$539,900**
JD 9600 2022, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 892 hrs., 618 CH hrs., #593717 **\$459,900**
JD 9600 2021, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 1059 hrs., 490 CH hrs., #596140 **\$429,900**

JD 9700 2023, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 772 hrs., 528 CH hrs., #601860 **\$529,900**
JD 9700 2023, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 886 hrs., 480 CH hrs., #596148 **\$514,900**
JD 9700 2023, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 1192 hrs., 528 CH hrs., #596144 **\$524,900**
JD 9700 2021, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 1171 hrs., 730 CH hrs., #593716 **\$379,900**
JD 9800 2021, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 1518 hrs., 755 CH hrs., #586125 **\$409,900**
JD 9800 2020, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 1713 hrs., 1043 CH hrs., #593718 **\$369,900**
JD 9800 2020, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 2146 hrs., 1350 CH hrs., #585962 **\$315,900**

JD 9800 2019, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 1531 hrs., 1000 CH hrs., #601457 **\$359,900**
JD 9800 2019, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 1595 hrs., 1200 CH hrs., #585961 **\$326,500**
JD 9900 2023, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 530 hrs., 313 CH hrs., #597434 **\$650,000**
JD 9900 2023, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 567 hrs., 297 CH hrs., #596146 **\$599,900**
JD 9900 2022, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 988 hrs., 448 CH hrs., #596142 **\$539,900**
JD 9900 2021, Kernel Processor, PRWD, 1320 hrs., 770 CH hrs., #565397 **\$509,900**

LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT MINNESOTA & WESTERN WISCONSIN! CALL TODAY! (320)352-6511
SEE OUR COMPLETE INVENTORY WITH PICTURES AND DESCRIPTIONS AT: WWW.MMCJD.COM

The next step

Wow, we did it. We took the first step into a new chapter of our lives. It was a bold step, taken tentatively and tenderly. We are not sure where this road is heading, but at least we are still all family as we move forward.

Last Friday, we hosted the Families Built on Faith Sale as the final chapter we will write for Ralma Holsteins. The dust is starting to settle as the barn becomes empty. Barren stalls are bedded with scattered straw. Remnants of dry shavings and lime line the walkway. Feed mangers are licked clean. The cats now have a wide choice of snuggle spots without the chance of being flattened.

It is almost deja vu, except this time we know we won't be starting back up in the spring. I think because we went through a sale five years ago, this feels familiar even if it is very final. We kept back some younger cattle to breed and sell next year because we

still want to work with animals in some way. We have the facilities. We have the feed. We have the time, so why not? We just quit milking, not farming.

It was quite a day, though. Perfect fall weather welcomed neighbors, friends and buyers as they filled the circus tent outside our barn door. For the past week, the fitting crew and family have been prepping, clipping and cleaning every animal and inch of the farm, preparing for this day. It may take us a few days to find all the things we hid out of sight, but we have some extra time during the day now to have a scavenger hunt.

These past few weeks leading up to the sale, some might think we were receiving signs of being on the right path, a confirmation of our decision to sell the cows. It seems like the most unlikely things were breaking. The unloading auger in the Harvester decided to snap off again earlier in the month.

Luckily the neighbors were able to take out a load of high-moisture corn for us to feed off a grain wagon. It meant pouring pails of heavy corn into the roller mill by hand to be carried away to the mixer. I don't think the guys are sorry to see that job disappear with the cattle.

Fortunately for us, on Monday morning of sale week, a line to a water cup snapped and the barn flooded overnight. I say we were fortunate that it happened then instead of on sale day. Now that would have been a big mess. Mark and Austin both had a bad feeling that something like that might happen.

Mark had been keeping a close eye on potential problems. It's not like he was looking for trouble. He has preventative sight. Others might call it being proactive instead of reactive. This is a good thing, but you have to be careful not to always focus on what can go wrong. Sometimes you have to notice what goes right and be thankful, like when a rung in the silo chute breaks as you're climbing up but you can catch yourself before you fall too far.

We are going to have to shift our focus. We have always focused on the daily needs of the cows, their care and feeding. Now what do we focus on? Selling the cows didn't answer all our questions; it just created new ones.

With the extra time in the evening, I hope we can have a movie night without falling asleep. I really want to see the next Downton Abby movie. I saw a promo about the series, and it struck very close to home for me.

In Downton Abby, the first generation builds, the second generation preserves their father's legacy and ways and the third generation changes by either building up on the father's legacy or going in a different direction because of changing times, technology and markets. Even though the story takes place over 100 years ago, from the 1800s to the early 1900s, the changing times feel very familiar and relatable. It's as if they wrote the story about our lives on the farm as we head into the future.

I don't know what the hardest adjustment is: an empty barn or an empty house. Every bed in the house was full of family and friends. Sweets and treats were spread across the kitchen. The refrigerator was packed full. Laughter and tight hugs filled the space.

As we keep taking tender steps forward, we can't think about it being the last cow to milk, the last heifers to leave. It has to be just work as usual to keep moving forward. I can say that I did come up with a name for the last Ralma calf born on our farm. Her dam is Skittles, and our last calf is called Skedaddle. This brings a smile to my face and a silent tear to my eye.

What is it going to be like on the other side of dairying? I don't know yet, but the Dairy Star is giving me the chance to continue thinking out loud from outside the barn. There are so many thoughts and ideas swirling around in my head that I want to explore and share. I guess this will be one of my next steps forward.

As their four children pursue dairy careers off the family farm, Natalie and Mark Schmitt started an adventure of milking registered Holsteins just because they like good cows on their farm north of Rice, Minnesota.

Just Thinking Out Loud



By Natalie Schmitt
Columnist



EpriGard Pour-On

Powerful Parasite Protection

Simplify your deworming season with protection that pays off this winter.

FOR BEEF & DAIRY CATTLE

- Formulated with the same active ingredient as Eprinex Cattle Pour On, eprinomectin
- Broad-spectrum dewormer; treats internal & external parasites
- Supports & protects for better performing cattle
- Over 90% efficacy 28-days post treatment
- Safe for any age of cattle, including pregnant cows, calves, and bulls
- Weatherproof formulation—remains effective, even after rainfall
- No meat or milk withdrawal

Available in 5-liter & 10-liter sizes.

Buy it at Leedstone!

Stop in, Call, or Visit Our Website!

Customer Care: 877.608.3877 • www.Leedstone.com

Family & veterinarian owned since 1994 • **wedocows!**

Melrose, MN 56352 222 County Road 173 SE Office: 800.996.3303 Equipment: 888.267.2697	Glencoe, MN 55336 2580 9th St E 877.864.5575	Plainview, MN 55964 24260 Co Rd 27 800.548.2540	Menomonie, WI 54751 1720 Freitag Dr 866.467.4717	Sparta, WI 54656 1010 Hoeschler Dr 608.451.7240	Follow Leedstone on social media for the latest product & equipment news!    
---	---	--	---	--	--

Join OUR CO-OP!





Bongards Creameries has been maximizing value for many Minnesota dairy farmers since 1908. And we've built our reputation on crafting high-quality, value-added products. We believe strongly in paying a premium price for quality milk.

Celebrating
117 YEARS
OF QUALITY
FARMER-OWNED SINCE 1908

Learn more about our co-op, our products, and current job openings at www.bongards.com

Monahan HOOF TRIMMING

Since 1997

Cattle, Sheep, and Goat Hoof Trimming



We use a hydraulic upright chute for less stress.

“Our two man crew allows us to complete the job in a timely manner with less disruption of your herd’s daily routine.”

Covering the states of MN, IA, SD & WI

Call Dan at **507-272-3447**

Veteran Owned & Operated!

Charlie's chance

Off and on since Ozzy, our elderly standard Aussie, passed, we've considered adopting another adult dog. Our mini Aussie, Murky, seemed content being an only dog, but the lack of a playmate meant he wasn't as active as we knew he should be.

Back in June, I learned about a four-year-old Yellow Lab who needed a new home. Despite knowing that he wasn't the mellow adult dog we had been hoping for, we decided to give him a chance, as long as he could become a farm dog. His given name, Harley, turned into Charlie, because it was easier to say.

Charlie came to us with no exposure to cats, chickens, or cows. And no experience being allowed to run free; he had mostly been kept in the house or, occasionally, tied up outside.

The first several weeks were a challenging transition. Charlie didn't know how to be a free dog. He passed the first tests: Not eating our chickens or chasing the cats when we first let him off the leash. He didn't freak out around the cows. And he got along well with Murky. But Charlie had no concept of independence – he always needed to be where we were. Maybe that's a Labrador trait, but it's something we definitely weren't used to with Aussies. Seventy-five pounds of boundless energy was a lot to have underfoot.

We took Charlie running in the pasture to use up some of his pent-up energy. It seemed like he had four years of restrained life to make up for. He quickly learned to love swimming in the ponds and retrieving sticks. We played fetch with him in the yard. Dan, especially, felt that having a dog to play fetch with fulfilled something that had been previously missing. (Our Aussies have never been fetch dogs.)

For the first couple weeks, Monika slept with Charlie in the entryway, sharing his cushion, to help him calm down. If not, he very loudly let us know that we wasn't comfortable being alone at night.

In the past month, Charlie finally seemed to be settling in here.

He got into a dead skunk and I made him sleep outside. He found a cozy spot in our shavings bin. Sleeping outside a couple nights seemed to help Charlie find his own independence. Just like that, he didn't need to Velcro himself to us. And he took to doing zoomies around the yard to expend some of his energy all on his own. I was beginning to think maybe Charlie could be a farm dog after all.

But, that independence proved to be too much. Charlie found that there were enticing scents in the fields beyond our yard and in the ditches and fields on the other side of the road. Within minutes of catching a scent, his long-legged, ground-eating lope would have him leagues away from the yard. We'd call him back and hoped that eventually the

excitement of being free would subside. It didn't subside soon enough.

Late last night, after a long day of errands, appointments, and prepping to be gone several days for a board meeting, I walked past Charlie's dog dish on the patio and saw there was still some kibble in it. I knew Daphne had fed him earlier and Charlie always inhaled his kibble.

"Has anyone seen Charlie?" I asked as I set the grocery bags down in the kitchen. Then I realized he hadn't been there earlier that evening when we were rounding up the Holstein and Jersey who had stormed the front barn gate and went frolicking around the yard. And then Glen realized that Charlie hadn't been there when he shut the vacuum pump off, trying to lap up the milk

that drained from the jar before it could disappear into the catch pipe, a trick Charlie had recently developed.

I put the groceries away and headed back outside to look for Charlie, Monika close behind. With Monika swinging the spotlight, dread grew in my belly as we walked up the driveway to the road. This wasn't the first time I'd gone looking for missing pets. Living as close to a busy road as we do, the threat to our pets is real and constant.

The first set of larger-animal eyes our spotlight found, down the road near our ag bags, didn't come closer when we called, but didn't run away, either. Spooked, we scrambled back to the house and decided to continue the search from inside the safety of the van.

Daphne joined us and we started down the road, spotlight in one hand out the rolled-down window, steering wheel in the other. We drove north for a bit and didn't find Charlie. We turned around to check the ditches and fields south of our place.

And, then, there he was. A couple yards from our driveway. Half curled in the long ditch grass. Looking almost like he had lain down for a nap. But it was clear that we had only found the shell he'd left behind. Charlie was gone. And except for the abrasion on his forehead, he looked perfectly okay. We're choosing to believe that he was knocked unconscious and died painlessly. And we're trying to find comfort in knowing that Charlie had been living his best life these past couple weeks.

What we're struggling with, though, is why Charlie's collar was missing when we found him. Did somebody find Charlie before we did and take his collar? I don't believe Charlie could have removed his collar himself. Beyond that, how could someone hit him and not come tell us? You can't hit a 75-pound dog and not know it.

It's bad enough to tragically lose a pet. It's even worse when the accident leaves you questioning the humanity of your fellow humans.

Dairy Good Life



By Sadie Frericks
Columnist

Directional Drilling & Land Improvement



Career Opportunities

SEVEN OAKS

BENEFITS OF USING DIRECTIONAL DRILLING INSTALLATION INCLUDE:

- Continuation of Normal Operation
- Avoidance of identified Infrastructure Installation
- Maintain Integrity of Driveway, Roadways, Buildings, and Natural Features
- Little to No Disturbance to Wetlands or Other Sensitives Areas
- Many Unique Installation Capabilities vs. Open Cutting/Digging (Entering under Buildings or Tanks)
- Minimal Site Restoration



PRODUCT INSTALLATION

- Gas Lines
- Power Wire/ Lines
- Communication/ Fiber Optic
- Water Lines/Water Mains
- Drainage/ Tile Lines
- Forced/ On Grade Sewer
- Manure Transfer Lines



Land Improvements

DRAIN TILE DESIGN/ INSTALLATION
DITCH CLEANING & GRADING
FENCELINE CLEARING

Changing weather and higher inputs got you down?

Using Drain Tile to manage excess moisture in the soil profile is the foundation for increasing profitability per acre.

- Less compaction
- Better soil Structure
- Allows more days per year for field operations
- More Yields with same or less inputs

Thinking about building?

Contact us for more information on our site development team!

Chad Van Asten 920-450-2844
www.SevenOaksTeam.com

We can Supply your Bulk Feed and Bedding!

Animal Feed Products:

- Canola Meal
- Corn Gluten Pellets
- Dry Distillers Grain
- Feed Quality Wheat Straw
- Hominy
- Oat Hulls
- Soy Hull Pellets
- Soybean Meal
- Western Dry baled hay & Local dry baled hay
- Wet Corn Gluten Feed
- Wet Distillers Grain
- Whole Fuzzy Cottonseed

Animal Bedding Products:

- Bedding Straw
- Green Cut Sawdust
- Kiln Dried Sawdust
- Screened Freestall Sand

We understand that running out of product has a negative impact on your margins. We have developed a network of storage facilities to draw from in case of a supplier shortage or breakdown, with a large trucking base to ensure timely delivery.



Contact us today to see how we can improve your bottom line!

SEVEN OAKS

920-372-8549 ext: 1595

www.SevenOaksTeam.com

MIKE HAESE
MERCHANDISER



800-597-2394 or 605-338-6351
5301 West 12th St., Sioux Falls, SD

www.pfeifersonline.com

joewelcheq.com
507-724-3183

SKIDLOADERS
TRACTORS
BACKHOES
EXCAVATORS
& BULLDOZERS



Used H&S 5126
#5176 - **\$16,500**



Used H&S W3143
#7165 - **\$22,900**



Used Knight 1140
#6437 - **\$19,900**



Used Knight 1140
#6975 - **\$15,500**



Used Kuhn Knight 2054
#6459 - **\$52,900**



Used Kuhn Knight 8118
#6720 - **\$23,500**



Used Kuhn Knight 8118
#6880 - **\$19,500**



Used Kuhn Knight 8124
#6829 - **\$16,200**



Used Kuhn Knight 8124
#6146 - **\$32,900**



Used Kuhn Knight 8124
#6946 - **\$19,900**



Used Kuhn Knight 8124
#6450 - **\$32,900**



Used Kuhn Knight 8124
#6357 - **\$29,900**



Used Kuhn Knight 8124
#6766 - **\$16,500**



Used Kuhn Knight 8124
#6401 - **\$29,900**



Used Kuhn Knight 8124
#7151 - **\$11,500**



Used Kuhn Knight 8132
#6887 - **\$22,750**



Used Kuhn Knight 8132
#7020 - **\$30,500**



Used Kuhn Knight PS 160
#6896 - **\$45,500**



Used Kuhn Knight SL 118
#6828 - **\$32,500**



Used Kuhn Knight SL 118
#7079 - **\$29,200**



Used Kuhn Knight SL118
#6502 - **\$30,900**



Used Kuhn Knight SLC 126
#6609 - **\$39,900**



Used Kuhn Knight SLC 132
#7118 - **\$37,700**



Used Kuhn Knight SLC 141
#6568 - **\$79,900**



Used Kuhn Knight SLC 141
#6690 - **\$69,900**



Used Kuhn Knight SLC126
#6711 - **\$39,900**



Used Kuhn Knight SLC141
#6473 - **\$50,900**



New Kuhn Knight PS 242T
#7063 - **Call**



New Kuhn Knight SL 118
#7163 - **Call**



New Kuhn Knight SLC 126
#6976 - **Call**

FULL SERVICE & REPAIR | COMPLETE CUSTOMER CARE

Salesmen: Shawn Martin (608) 778-4554 or Jeremy Donar (608) 778-7557



4116 Hwy. 80 S.
Platteville, WI

Office: (608) 348-9401 or Toll Free: 1 (888) BUY-Patz
For updated inventory visit www.steinhartsfarmservice.com

4116 Hwy. 80 S.
Platteville, WI