



WISCONSIN FARMERS UNION NEWS

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Dairy Together

Hundreds gather for meetings exploring supply management



Photos by Danielle Endvick

Left: One hundred farmers gathered for a Dairy Together meeting in Eau Claire March 15; below: Ralph Dietrich, left, and Murray Sherk of the Dairy Farmers of Ontario shared how supply management has worked in Canada.



Danielle Endvick
WFU Communications
Director

Hundreds of dairy farmers crowded in for five Dairy Together meetings held around the state March 13-15. The gatherings in Eau Claire, Edgar, Fond du Lac, Dodgeville and Westby generated cautious optimism about how farmers, farm organizations and processors can work together toward a more stable dairy industry.

The draw was a chance to hear about Canadian supply management straight from Murray Sherk and Ralph Dietrich, vice-chair and chair, respectively, of the Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO).

“Certainly we’re not going to say we have all the answers,” Sherk said. “We have found success with

the supply management system we’ve had in place for over 50 years, though, and hopefully it can get you thinking about some things that may be helpful for your situation here in the United States.”

In the 1960s, Canadian farmers and government officials agreed that production discipline was key to avoid unstable market conditions. To ensure the sustainable development of their dairy industry, the federal and provincial governments implemented a supply management system based on **See p. 7 ▶ DAIRY**

Edelburg elected VP

Danielle Endvick
WFU Communications
Director



KANSAS CITY
– Amherst farmer Patty Edelburg was elected vice president of the National Farmers Union

March 5 during the family farm organization's 116th Anniversary Convention. Five hundred farmers gathered in Kansas City, Missouri for the event.

“Patty is a passionate advocate for family agriculture, and she brings with her a wealth of on-farm, cooperative, government, and policy experience,” said National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson. “She's going to be an excellent representative of our national organization, and I look forward to working with her to advance the interests of family farmers and rural communities.”

Edelburg milks 120 cows with her husband, Gary, and their children, Angela and Lucas, on their 350-acre Portage County farm, Front-Page Holsteins. She is a past state executive director for the Farm Service Agency, having served in that role from April 2016 through January 2017. She also has been active on the FSA State Committee for many years.

Edelburg is active with the Wood-Portage-Waupaca Farmers Union and has attended numerous NFU Conventions and fly-ins to Washington, D.C. in her two decades of membership. She served on the WFU Board of Directors for 12 years.

“Over the last 20 years, I have taken on leadership roles on **See p. 5 ▶ VP**

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History in the making



Darin Von Ruden
WFU President

Looking back over the past month, I don't know whether to just say "wow" or "whew." As you flip through the pages of this month's *Wisconsin Farmers Union*

News, you'll see what I mean.

For starters, WFU had overwhelming but encouraging turnouts in mid-March at a series of Dairy Together meetings, which featured guests from the Dairy Farmers of Ontario and got farmers thinking about how we can better manage our milk supply and keep family farmers on the land. I've been to a lot of farmer meetings lamenting poor prices, but these events had a different feel to them. There was an energy and sense of hope among the farmers who attended. WFU is looking forward to building on that energy as we move forward in efforts to bring the dairy industry together to address continued loss of dairy farms and work for sustainable prices.

WFU couldn't do the work that we do without strong leaders spread across the state. In early March, I was pleased to see several deserving leaders honored during the National Farmers Union 116th Anniversary Convention in Kansas City. Janet Nelson and Sue Carlson, who both have strong backgrounds in WFU, received the prestigious Meritorious Award (see more details on page 5). Both of these women have done incredible work for Farmers Union and have been heavily involved in activities at the local, state and national level. I'd

like to say congratulations to both of them again on their accomplishments. We'll hopefully continue to see great things from them with their continued involvement.

A major highlight of the national convention was the election of Wisconsin dairy farmer and past WFU board member Patty Edelburg to the role of Vice President for NFU. Patty ran a good campaign that was strongly rooted in her family farm values. She will represent Farmers Union members well in her new capacity.

Looking ahead, WFU isn't slowing down anytime soon. Building upon our dairy work, we're partnering with grazing networks across the state to host several workshops looking at financial and managerial benefits to grazing for dairy farms (see more on page 3).

We also filmed one of the Dairy Together events and will be hosting viewings of the film and continuing to move that important conversation ahead.

Also on the calendar are produce growers trainings related to FSMA compliance (page 14). To top it off, we're seeing a lot of exciting happenings within local Farmers Union chapters (check out the Chapter Chatter on pages 10-11).

Sometimes in this whirlwind of activity I like to pause and think about the founders of Farmers Union and their foresight in bringing farmers together to strengthen our voice. I can't help but feel Wisconsin agriculture is at a pivotal point today — one where, like those early visionaries, the decisions we make and the work we do will shape the future of our farms and rural communities. History is in the making.

Wilson officially joins Government Relations team

Bobbi Wilson has signed on as Government Relations Associate for Wisconsin Farmers Union. Wilson replaces outgoing associate Nick Levendofsky, who recently accepted a position with Rocky Mountain Farmers Union.



Wilson

"Bobbi brings a strong commitment to WFU values and an understanding of the importance of connecting our members to policy making," said WFU Executive Director Tom Quinn. "In her short time with us, she has already built strong connections with members around the Lobby Day and Dairy Together projects. Bobbi brings sincere energy and intelligence, and we are excited to have her on our team."

Wilson served as Government Relations intern this winter for Farmers Union and recently organized a successful Farm & Rural Lobby Day.

Originally from the Willamette Valley of Oregon, Wilson grew up with an appreciation for small towns and rural landscapes. She spent four years in Northern Arizona where she worked on a vegetable, poultry, and goat farm before earning her Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Studies from Northern Arizona University.

After college, Wilson worked as a campaign organizer where she advocated for increased solar energy at the state and local level. She was drawn to Wisconsin to focus on issues affecting our food system and is excited to merge her passions for farming and policy in her new role with Wisconsin Farmers Union.

Improving Dairy Profitability through Managed Grazing

"I've been looking into grazing, but now that I see these numbers, my fencing is a huge priority. I can't afford not to do this!" - Recent Participant

**How can grazing reduce input costs and increase profitability?
Would managed grazing be a good fit for your dairy farm?**

Attend one of these FREE events & consider the possibilities!

10AM-2:30 PM Agency Staff Track

10:30AM-2:30PM Farmer Track

MINERAL POINT: April 6, Quality Inn, 1345 Business Park Rd., Mineral Point

CHILTON: April 10, Calumet County Court House, 206 Court St., Chilton

BALDWIN: April 23, Ag Services Building, 1960 8th Ave., Baldwin

ABBOTSFORD: May 7, Abbotsford City Hall, 203 N. First St., Abbotsford

Wisconsin Farmers Union and the regional RC&D grazing networks invite dairy farmers to come learn about the financial and managerial benefits grazing can provide. Farmers who are not presently using managed grazing and current dairy grazers who want to improve their management skills and share ideas are welcome. Each meeting has a separate track for area farm agency and conservation staff to learn effective ways to promote grazing. This portion of the program is funded by GrassWorks with support from a North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education grant. Both tracks will join in a panel discussion with local dairy graziers to close the day.

PRESENTERS:

Bill Kolodziej, Marathon County Grazing Specialist

Paul Dietmann, Compeer Financial Senior Lending Officer

Serge Koenig, Sauk County Soil Conservation Technician

Gene Schriefer, Iowa County Agriculture Agent

Free to attend. RSVP at least a week in advance by calling Deb at 715-590-2130 or click on the corresponding event at www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com/upcoming-events.



One for the record books



2018 proving to be milestone year for WFU

The 116th Anniversary National Farmers Union Convention in Kansas City March 4-6 proved to be one to remember for Wisconsin Farmers Union. Longtime WFU member Patty Edelburg was elected Vice President of the NFU board; members Janet Nelson and Sue Carlson were recognized for their impact on agriculture in Wisconsin and beyond; and several counties received leadership awards.

Above: Thirty Wisconsin Farmers Union members and staff were in Kansas City, Mo. March 3-6 for the National Farmers Union Convention. They included, left to right: (front row) Nick Levendofsky, Madison; Lisa and Jim Soyring, Maple; Patty Edelburg, Amherst; Janet Nelson, Prairie Farm; Darin Von Ruden, Westby; Kara O'Connor, Madison; Sarah River, Iola; Danielle Endvick, Holcombe; Chris Holman, Custer; (middle row) Rick Adamski, Seymour; Alexis Dunnun, Westby; Kirsten Slaughter, Madison; Deb Jakubek; Bruce Miller, Hayward; Tom Quinn, Menomonie; Brad Henderson, Chippewa Falls; (back row) Lauren Langworthy, Wheeler; Craig Myhre, Osseo; Jessica Jurcek, Jefferson; Tommy Enright, Amherst; Jacob Marty, Monticello; Cathy Statz, Chippewa Falls; Alicia Razvi, Stevens Point; and Dennis Rosen, Emerald. Not pictured but also in attendance were Michael Slatery, Maribel; Caleb Langworthy, Wheeler; Linda Ceylor, Catawba; Mark Liebaert, South Range; and Gary, Lucas and Angela Edelburg, all of Amherst.



Above left: American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall and National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson (center) joined together on a panel addressing the opioid crisis impacting rural America. Joining them were USDA Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Anne Hazlett, left, and moderator Sarah Tyree, Vice President of Government Relations at CoBank. **Above right:** WFU board member Rick Adamski and Executive Director Tom Quinn enjoyed a rousing game of Tenzi during the NFU Foundation Fundraiser. **Below:** Serving as delegates for WFU during the policy discussion were, from right, Darin Von Ruden, Chris Holman, Patty Edelburg, Lisa Soyring, and Mark Liebaert.





Above: Edelburg's family looked on as she gave her candidacy speech at the NFU Convention. Pictured are, from left, daughter Angela, husband Gary, and son Lucas.

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the county, state and national levels of Farmers Union with great pride and energy," Edelburg said in her election speech. "These positions confirmed my natural desire to continue the hard work of fighting for family farmers across the country."

Edelburg says she knows firsthand the challenges farmers face and has also endured the struggles of being a beginning farmer. She looks forward to engaging with young farmers and offering a fresh perspective.

Members also re-elected Roger Johnson to another term as president of the organization.

"We're very eager to have Patty's input at the national level, helping to guide the organization through what we expect will be another very difficult year for family farmers," said WFU President Darin Von Ruden. "I think we're experiencing exciting momentum that is not only moving Farmers Union ahead at the state level but also at the national level, and our members are feeling like we're on the cusp of creating some important changes in the policy realm and across the countryside."



Above: Mentor and long-time fellow board member Dennis Rosen was among the first to congratulate Edelburg in the moments after her election was announced.



Left: Three strong leaders within WFU were recognized during the National Farmers Union Convention, including, from left, Janet Nelson, Patty Edelburg (new NFU vice president) and Sue Carlson.

Carlson and Nelson honored with Meritorious Awards in Kansas City

KANSAS CITY — Two women with Wisconsin roots were recognized with Meritorious Service Awards at the NFU Convention. Janet Nelson of Prairie Farm was honored for her service to Farmers Union and American Agriculture, while Sue Carlson, former Wisconsin Farmers Union president, was recognized for her service to World Agriculture.

As she stepped forward to accept her award, Nelson earned a boisterous round of applause when she turned to NFU President Roger Johnson and confessed with a wink, "I have to tell ya, Roger, I have an addiction, and it's not drugs or alcohol – it's Farmers Union."

Nelson has been a pillar within Farmers Union for many years, having served on the WFU Board of Directors for 36 years before stepping down in 2017. The Barron County native has been married to Julian Nelson for nearly 60 years. They own a 360-acre dairy farm where Julian continues to milk cows with help from the Nelsons' granddaughters. Nelson is well-known for crafting and donating her quilts at Farmers Union fundraisers, which have helped raise thousands of dollars for education programs through the years.

Nelson strongly believes in American family farm agriculture and recalls being asked to attend her first NFU Fly-In in the 1970s. She has played a significant role in Farmers Union and American agriculture ever since. As she parted the stage, Nelson encouraged her fellow members, saying, "Stay active, and keep fighting. I know I will."

Carlson's Meritorious Award paid tribute to her dedication to amplifying the voice of women farmers in her work with the World Farmers' Organisation. She played a key role in developing the WFO Women's Committee and worked tirelessly to expand participation by women farmers. Her work raised the visibility of WFO, helped build understanding of its mission and established enduring partnerships around the essential role of women in agriculture.

As he presented Carlson with the award, WFU President Darin Von Ruden credited Carlson with also contributing a great deal to the Dairy State in her time overseeing WFU as president. "Sue saw our organization through some very difficult times and has set us on a path forward to success," he said.

"Sue has done so much to grow this organization in her state, around this country and most recently, across the world," said NFU President Roger Johnson. "I know that women all around the world continue to benefit greatly from the work she has done."

"Sue has been a true mentor to so many women across the globe, including myself," Edelburg added.

Matt Birgen of South Dakota Farmers Union was also recognized with the Meritorious Service award.

"This was an incredible convention for Wisconsin Farmers Union," Von Ruden noted. "The farmers back home should be very proud of the good reputation and respect Wisconsin has earned within Farmers Union, thanks in no small part to these strong farm women."

Thirty WFU members and staff attended the convention, where Farmers Union members from 33 states joined together to approve the family farm organization's grassroots policy and nine special orders of business touching on cooperatives, crop insurance enhancement, dairy, E30, farm bills, immigration, climate change, livestock production and trade policy.

Beginning Farmer Institute inspires farm journey

Applications for next class are due April 30

Alicia Razvi
Wood-Portage-Waupaca Farmers Union

I was inspired to apply for the National Farmers Union's Beginning Farmer Institute after meeting some past graduates at a conference last spring. The group spoke openly and frankly about their place in the profession. We shared a mutual love of the land and a fervent desire to make a difference in the agricultural landscape. Their enthusiasm for the BFI program and their appearing to be far and away ahead of me in my farming journey inspired me to apply to the program.

Being accepted into BFI and experiencing it with my class of fellow farmers was a major highlight of the past year.

The BFI application consists of a few parts. It requires a resume, a letter of recommendation, a personal essay and a short application. In total the application takes a few hours to compile so don't leave it till the last minute. And the application deadline is drawing near (April 30, 2018) for next year's program. If accepted, you embark on a six-month course with all expenses paid by the National Farmers Union and your program culminates with a special program

with some BFI alumnus and the NFU Board.

The program consists of three trips. An introduction session in Washington, D.C. focused on the scaffolding afforded new farmers to help build them up; a session in California focused heavily on farm tours including a farm incubator and large scale organic fruit and vegetable production; and a wrap up session (in Seattle, WA for 2019) which focuses on the fiscal struggles that farmers face and overcome. As a bonus, the first and last session coincide with National Farmers Union events (Fly-In and National Convention).

This past year, the Beginning Farmers Institute accepted 20 farmers. This was the biggest and most diverse class. We hailed from several states including New York, Colorado, Indiana, Hawaii, Minnesota, Texas and Wisconsin. Wisconsin represented a quarter of the entire group this year. Growers of tropical fruit, organic grain, seed, grassfed beef, silvopasture, CSA farmers, dairy farmers and diversified market farmers made up our demographic.

For me, the highlight of the program was the support network that the BFI group formed as we traveled and learned together over the



Above: The 2017-2018 Beginning Farmers Institute Class were recognized with a graduation ceremony at the National Farmers Union Convention in Kansas City in March. Here, Razvi is pictured with NFU President Roger Johnson.

last several months. We shared our dreams for our farms, our struggles and the realities we were facing each day. We leaned on one another as life happened, as business plans were formed, as succession plans were laid out.

Another personal highlight was the growth of my micro farm as I advanced in and applied my coursework. With the resources provided me in small group meetings with USDA, insurance specialists, cash flow and farm tax advisors, I feel that my farm goals have hit a springboard. I built a business plan. I cleaned up

my personal vision of growth, set short and long term goals and reverse-engineered my plans to

achieve the growth targets I set for this year. And I feel like I have a clearer vision for what I can achieve in 3 years, 5 years and 10 years.

The past year has been nothing short of amazing. I took a chance on applying for BFI. This chance application resulted in an education and travel I hadn't expected to have such an impact on me.

I leave this program yearning for more. More involvement in NFU and WFU. More education to fine tune and grow the vision I have set for my farm journey. More opportunity for networking — to be in the company of the inspiring farmers I have met in the last year.

I also leave this program ready to share. To share with my local chapter and state, the energy to keep improving, to grow, to support one another as we face challenges and victories in the road ahead.

Farms of all types and sizes are needed to build a strong and varied program. If you have been considering this wonderful program, I encourage you to apply. Learn more about the program at www.nfu.org/education/beginning-farmer-institute/

Razvi is president of the Wood-Portage-Waupaca Farmers Union and runs Woolly Thyme Micro Farm near Stevens Point with her family.



Left: The 2017-2018 Beginning Farmers Institute Class attended a training in California last fall. The program features three trainings held around the country including a fly-in to Washington, D.C. and a trip to the annual NFU Convention.

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collective marketing and production that is adjusted to meet the needs of the Canadian market. DFO, which represents nearly 4,000 dairy farmers in Ontario, purchases all the milk produced in the province and coordinates sales to processors and transportation logistics for milk hauling. The organization is overseen by the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission, which ensures the system is filling Canadian dairy needs.

The objectives of this system are three-fold, Murray noted: ensure farmers receive a fair return, provide processors with a stable supply of milk, and give consumers a consistent supply of dairy products at a fair price.

“What we’re seeing with dairy in Ontario are prices fairly close to what we had three or four years ago – pretty stable,” Murray said, as he showed a graph charting average milk prices back to the mid-1990s. “This wildly fluctuating line here represents U.S. prices – which have been in the trough the last three years.”

Dietrich raised the question of whether U.S. farmers are relying too heavily on exports as their salvation, noting “Daily excess production of Wisconsin, New York and Michigan equates to more milk than the daily production of Ontario.”

Canadian milk is marketed through two pools that help stabilize the system. The Eastern Canadian Milk Pooling Agreement (P5) includes Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario while the Western Milk Pooling Agreement (WMP) include Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia). In its role as a national industry facilitator, the Canadian Dairy Commission administers these pooling agreements.

“We take a blend price of all that pooled milk,” Dietrich said. “With what’s happening here in the U.S. with Dean Foods dropping farmers in several states — that would never happen in Canada,” he added. “If we had a processor quit, we would all share that loss at the same percent.”

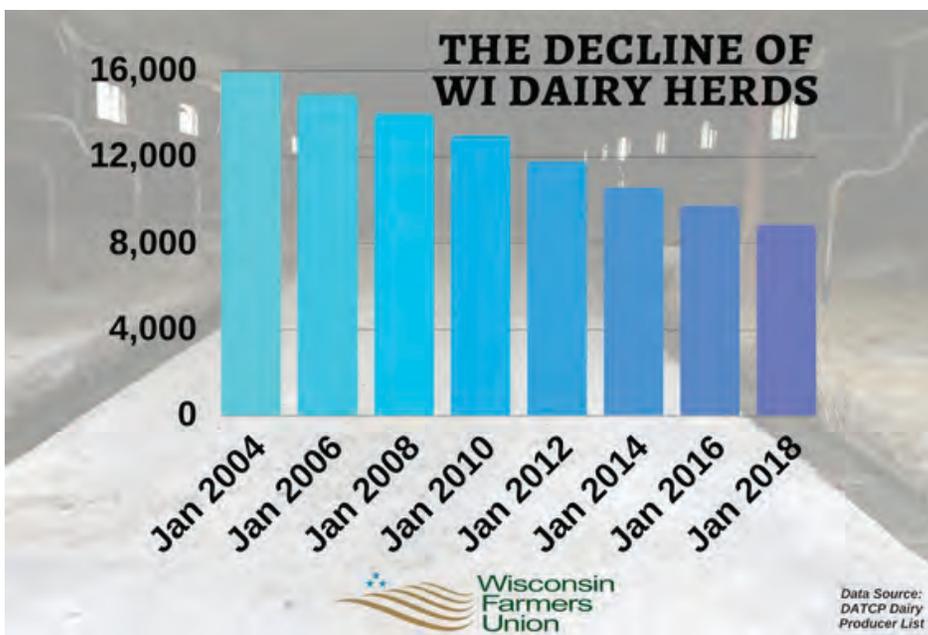
A fair price for farmers

There are about 450 dairy processors in Canada. “We work closely with our processors and view them as partners,” Dietrich said.

Dairy pricing is reviewed annually and may fluctuate, based on a formula that takes into account the cost of production and changes in the Consumer Price Index. “Our average blend price today is equivalent to about \$27 per hundred-weight,” Sherk said, adding that while



This graph tracks milk prices for the past two decades for dairy producers in New York State (blue line) and Ontario Province (red line). Read the NYS price off the US\$/Cwt. legend on the left side the graph. The Canadian milk prices are reported in Canadian dollars per kilo-liter. The extreme volatility of U.S. farm milk prices is evident.



the price Canadian farmers receive is much higher than that of their U.S. counterparts, consumer prices are relatively comparable or slightly higher for Canadian dairy products.

“There are challenges with our system for sure, but all in all, we have a fairly stable, predictable system at the farm level that allows farmers at any size to make a profit,” Sherk said.

The result of those family farmers’ success reaches well beyond the farm gate. “What supply management has done is allow our rural economy to survive,” Sherk said. “Maintaining family farms keeps kids in our schools and keeps rural communities vibrant.”

Access for beginning farmers

Attendees were curious to know if supply management inhibited beginning farmers. They also questioned how Canada’s dairy industry discouraged corporate or foreign investment in agriculture.

“All licenses have to be approved by

the board which is made up of farmers,” Dietrich said. Sherk added, “In order to have a license you also have to live on the farm or [about 8 miles].”

The cost of quota has inflated beyond what the founders of the Canadian system ever expected, a fact Sherk cautioned U.S. farmers about, saying, “Over time quota accumulated value to a price that people were willing to pay in a stable environment. Some check to prevent that cost from getting exorbitant may be something you need to address as you look at how this system could work.”

When markets are favorable, more quota is made available to farmers. “We’ve had significant growth due to resurgence in the demand for butter,” Dietrich said. “In the last three years, we added 24 percent of quota at the farm level.”

To encourage beginning farmers, DFO administers a New Producer Program, which allows one new producer applicant per month to participate on the

quota exchange. There is also a New Entrant Program that is designed to assist those with an interest in dairy farming who may not otherwise have the financial means to get started in the industry.

What's Next?

“Who here has heard it said that ‘Supply management would never work here in the United States?’” Wisconsin Farmers Union Government Relations Director Kara O’Connor asked the farmers who overflowed the room for the Edgar Dairy Together meeting on March 15. Hands shot skyward and heads nodded knowingly at the phrase.

“Okay, well let me ask you this,” O’Connor said. “Who thinks the status quo is working?”

Not a hand lifted.

One need look no further than their local auction barn or drive down a neighborhood lane to see the direness of our situation here in America’s Dairyland. Wisconsin lost another 500 dairy farms last year, and we’ve dropped from over 16,000 herds in 2003 to 8,719 in March 2018, according to DATCP reporting of dairy producer licenses.

Farmers Union believes we can’t settle for more of the same. We believe that family dairy farms are worth fighting for – and that notion is what has spurred us to consider all the options. We look forward to continuing to work with farmers and organizations across the state to address dairy prices. We know the time to act is now, before another year has passed and more family farms are lost.

Watch for more events and ways to participate in Dairy Together with WFU in the coming weeks. Here are a few ways to move the conversation forward:

- Check out and share the resources at www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com/dairy including the Dairy Together meeting film.
- Join other farmers to view the Dairy Together meeting film. A viewing will be held at Pioneer Farm, UW-Platteville, 29200 College Farm Road at 7:30pm April 12. Or host a viewing in your area!
- Check out the Dairy Together group on Facebook and use #DairyTogether to keep this issue trending!
- Write a letter to the editor – or reach out to me for help on how to do so.

The future of Wisconsin dairy depends on farmers, farm organizations and processors working collaboratively — let us Dairy Together!

Endvick can be reached at dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com or 715-471-0398.



Long Live Summer Camp!

*Days spent at camp are short,
but that only makes them sweeter*

Tom Pamperin
WFU Summer Staff

I never attended a summer camp program as a camper, but after more than 10 years as a camp counselor, lifeguard, and assistant camp director for Wisconsin Farmers Union Kamp Kenwood, I've begun to understand why camp matters so much. And make no mistake about that: To those who have been part of it, camp matters more than almost anything else.

What makes summer camp so powerful? For one thing, camp is a deeply shared experience, and shared experiences are the foundation of lasting friendships. From quirky traditions and group singing to outdoor games and activities, there is no "us" and "them" at camp. Instead, the camp experience is built on "we," creating a strong sense of empathy and acceptance.

At Farmers Union Camp, the heart of the "we" is the Co-op Store, which sells treats and T-shirts. An actual working co-op, the Co-op Store is run by a camper-elected board of directors. Membership is voluntary, but members get a 5 percent dividend on their spending, so every camper usually ends up being a member. At the end of camp, members vote on whether to use the profits for camp improvements or to make a charitable donation.

But it's not just the "we" – summer camp is a powerful experience partly because it is temporary. In fact, camp may be the one thing in a young person's life that has a perceptible end point. From the perspective of a child or teenager, life can seem like an endless non-progression of routine: school, family, friends, chores, homework, repeat. From today to tomorrow to next week, nothing changes.

Camp is different. We arrive on the first day and the end is already in sight. Knowing that camp won't last forever, we treasure it all the more. We value our time together. We engage more deeply with each other, and cheer each other on. We are present in a way that can be difficult to achieve in our day-to-day lives. (Leaving the phones and screens at home doesn't hurt!) The end, when it comes, is bittersweet – but the sadness is tempered by the knowledge that there's always next year.

But I think the real magic of summer camp – the magic that keeps me coming back year after year – is that camp offers an opportunity to reinvent yourself. Freed from the expectations of friends and family members who have known us our whole lives, we suddenly discover that the choice of who we want to be is ours. History becomes irrelevant; who we have been

“Knowing that camp won't last forever, we treasure it all the more. We value our time together We are present in a way that can be difficult to achieve in our day-to-day lives.”

- Tom Pamperin

in the past doesn't mean anything. What matters is who you are at camp. Summer camp is a clean slate, a fresh start. It is the freedom to be ourselves.

At Farmers Union Camp, we have our share of goofy traditions. There's Bruce the Penguin standing proudly on the main lodge's fireplace mantel dressed in his Kamp Kenwood T-shirt and headband. There's Lake Wissota's mythical duck-eating musky. There is the full-body fake-fur bear costume (with built-in paws inexplicably sewn with four fingers and no thumbs) that makes an appearance in almost every skit.

But my favorite camp tradition is Good Night Circle. Standing hand in hand with

campers and colleagues at the end of the day, it's hard not to get a bit teary-eyed as we sing the chorus of "Viva la Compagnie" together one more time:

*Viva la, viva la one and all,
Viva la, viva la large and small;*

*Viva la you, viva la me,
Viva la compagne!*

Viva la compagne. Viva la summer camp!

Tom Pamperin has served off and on as a camp counselor, lifeguard, and assistant camp director for Wisconsin Farmers Union Kamp Kenwood since 1996. His reputation for developing fiendishly elaborate games and activities for campers is all too well-deserved. Find out more about WFU Kamp Kenwood at wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

The Big Share shows support for Farmers Union Camps

Danielle Endvick
WFU Communications Director

On March 6, the Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation asked past WFU Kamp Kenwood campers, counselors, parents and other friends to consider giving back to a camp that for generations has given so much — lasting memories, lifelong friendships and lessons on the values of cooperation.

This was the fourth year of The Big Share, a day of online giving hosted by Community Shares of Wisconsin and dedicated to nonprofit groups. In an incredible 24-hour outpouring of support, Kamp Kenwood alumni and aficionados raised over \$3,500 to update security lighting at WFU Kamp Kenwood. For that we owe you a big thank you.

Old lighting fixtures will be updated and security lighting will be added to routes from the lodge to the bunk cabins before camp kicks off in June.

If you were among those who gave, thank you! If you weren't, it's not too late. Donations payable to the WFU Foundation can be sent to Wisconsin Farmers Union, 117 W. Spring St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729. You can use the form on the bottom of this page to contribute to the camp program or facility upgrade fund. Donations of food products are also welcome.

For the past several years, WFU Kamp Kenwood has seen an exciting jump in attendance, thanks largely to the support of camp alumni and area cooperatives and credit unions. Thank you for your continued support!

We'd like to acknowledge the following donation dedications from throughout The Big Share:

- "I'm proud to give to Wisconsin Farmers Union because of the amazing experience it has given me and because co-ops are the best," Jenna Chervin, Los Angeles, CA

- "Wisconsin Farmers Union is vital to addressing the challenges facing Wisconsin farmers and rural communities. If we are to have any hope of solving these issues, it will be through Wisconsin Farmers Union," Ryan Stockwell, Medford, WI

- "Kamp Kenwood was an extremely important part of our family growing up — from my father's role as WFU executive director to my sister, my brother and my years as campers and counselors. I want to see it do for others what it did for us," Steven Sorenson, Ripon, WI

- "I'm proud to give to WFU because they are an organization full of wonderful people dedicated to and succeeding at changing the world for the better. I also give so future counselors doesn't have to suffer from nightly picnic table attacks (to the shins)," Stephen Ruswick, Ithaca, New York

- "Cathy Statz and her staff do a phenomenal job of providing a place for young people to learn through cooperation and develop into leaders," Denise Mushitz, Geddes, South Dakota

- "It's been far too long since I've set foot at Kamp. I hope we can visit this summer!" Christine Peterson, Lewiston, MN

- "Happy to give to a worthy cause!!" Michelle Struebing, Plattsmouth, NE

- "A gathering place that builds friendships, builds community, and builds leaders is an investment in the future! Keep up the good work, Wisconsin Farmers Union!" Linda Larson, Rosemount, MN



Thank you to our generous donors!

With your help during The Big Share on March 6th, we raised over \$3,500 to update security lighting out at the camp!




- "Thanks to the Kamp Kenwood staff for making it a special place!" Mike & Sasha King, Eau Claire, WI

- "In memory of Tony Statz, Dane County Farmers Union" and "In honor of all our fabulous WFU summer staffers, past and present — we couldn't do it without you!" Cathy Statz, Chippewa Falls, WI

- "It is a pleasure to help support such a great organization. Our kids really enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to this summer!" Jason and Maryann Neton, New Glarus, WI

- In honor of Tony & Claire Statz and their dedication to WFU, Steve & Angie Statz, DeForest, WI

- "We've got that Farmers Union spirit!" Nick & Christine Hamele family, Fort Atkinson, WI

- "Always glad to support Kamp Kenwood when I can," Steve Hanson, Menomonie, WI

- "For the future co-operators of our world!" Alyssa Joachim, Madison, WI

- "In memory of Jim and MaryAnn Pattison," the Pattison Family, Urbana, IL

- "SOLIDARITY FOREVER!!!" Maddie Gehrig, Syracuse, New York



We'd like to contribute to the WFU Foundation's efforts to raise money for improved security lighting at WFU Kamp Kenwood. Enclosed please find: \$ _____

Contributions to the WFU Foundation are tax-deductible. A receipt will be mailed to you.

Optional: In honor of / In memory of: _____ To be used for: _____

Organization: _____ Contact Person: _____

Title: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Full Mailing Address: _____

MAIL CHECK PAYABLE TO: Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation, 117 W. Spring St, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Questions, contact Cathy at: 715-723-5561 or cstatz@wisconsinfarmersunion.com




REGISTER TODAY!

www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Chapter Chatter

Share it here!

Submit chatter to Danielle at 715-471-0398 or dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com



Farm & Rural Lobby Day

Farmers and family farm advocates from across the state gathered in Madison Feb. 21 for Wisconsin Farmers Union's Farm and Rural Lobby Day. Sixty participants connected with their legislators on issues impacting family farms and rural communities. Attendees shared perspectives on the importance of rural development, improving broadband access and protecting groundwater.

Deadline extended for Leadership Program

The deadline to apply for the Farmers Union Enterprise (FUE) Leadership Program has been extended to Wed., April 11. This program brings together farmers from the FUE states of Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

The FUE Leadership Program strengthens participants leadership roles in their communities, farm organizations and local, regional and state Farmers Union affiliates. The training helps participants become better communicators in order to share their experiences and encourage members and the general public to be involved in Farmers Union.

Participants may be an individual or couple and will experience activities throughout the region that enhance knowledge of cooperatives and the role of Farmers Union. This program requires a one-year commitment with attendance at:

- A group kickoff gathering in June or July, including immediate family members. (You'll attend a similar summer 2019 retreat as the experience ends.)

- Attend a state convention (between Nov. to Jan. depending on the host state.)
 - Join us at the WFU State Convention Jan. 25-27, 2019 in Appleton.
 - See grassroots democracy in action at the National Farmers Union Convention in March 2019 in Seattle.
 - Join hundreds of farmers for the National Farmers Union Fly-In in September in Washington, D.C.
 - Give a brief report at 2020 WFU State Convention.
- Applicants must write a one to two-page essay including the following information: a description of their farm, brief resume of each candidate and an explanation of why you would like to be considered for this leadership program.

Essays will be accepted until **April 11** at info@wisconsinfarmersunion.com or by mail to the WFU State Office, 117 W. Spring Street, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729. For more details please call the WFU State Office at 715-723-5561. A final decision will be made by the WFU Board of Directors in April 2018.

FARMERS UNION HAPPENINGS

APR 3, FSMA Training, 210 Museum Pl, Green Bay, \$60. Info: Robert Stanley, Phone: 608-224-4511.

APR 6, Improving Dairy Profitability Through Grazing, 10am-2:30pm, Quality Inn, 1345 Business Park Rd., Mineral Point. RSVP to Deb, 715-590-2130 or under events at www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

APR 10, Improving Dairy Profitability Through Grazing, 10am-2:30pm, Calumet County Court House, 206 Court St., Chilton. RSVP to Deb, 715-590-2130 or under events at www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

APR 12, FSMA Training, 8502 Mineral Point Rd., Verona, \$60. Info: Robert Stanley, Phone: 608-224-4511.

APR 12, Dairy Together Meeting, 7:30pm, UW- Platteville Ag Tech Center.

APR 15, Pepin-Pierce County Farmers Union Water Forum, 1-4pm, Plum City Senior Center, 51 Main St., Plum City. Info: Emmet, 651-380-6988.

APR 16, Farmer-Led Dairy Discussion, 12:30-3pm, Barron County Electric Meeting Room, Highway 25, Barron. Info: Dale Hanson, 715-537-9309.

APR 17, FSMA Training, 2703 Craig Rd., Eau Claire, \$60. Info: Robert Stanley, Phone: 608-224-4511.

APR 21, WFU Kamp Kenwood Spring Fling Clean-up & Volunteer Appreciation Day, 7am-2pm, 19161 79th Ave., Chippewa Falls, RSVP to Brad, 715-244-7244.

APR 23, Improving Dairy Profitability Through Grazing, 10am-2:30pm, Ag Services Building, 1960 8th Ave., Baldwin. RSVP to Deb, 715-590-2130 or under events at www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

APR 27, FSMA Training, Upham Woods, N194 Cty. Rd. N, Wisconsin Dells, \$50. Contact Information: MOSES <https://mosesorganic.wufoo.com/forms/z1gb86f21gerkr8/>

APRIL 30, National Farmers Union Beginning Farmers Institute application deadline, details on page 6 or www.nfu.org

MAY 7, Improving Dairy Profitability Through Grazing, 10am-2:30pm, Abbotsford City Hall, 203 N. First St., Abbotsford. RSVP to Deb, 715-590-2130 or under events at www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

AUG 16, Wisconsin Farmers Union annual Summer Conference, Kamp Kenwood, 19161 79th Ave., Chippewa Falls, details coming!

Submit events to 715-471-0398 or dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Amherst farmers earn Food Sovereignty Prize

BARABOO — Wood-Portage-Waupaca Farmers Union members Tommy and Samantha Enright of Black Rabbit Farm near Amherst have been chosen to receive the John Kinsman Beginning Farmer Food Sovereignty Prize. Also being honored with the award from Family Farm Defenders are Craig and Lauren Kreutzer of Meadowlark Farm in Wonewoc.



Photo by Tina Carlson

Farmers Union members Tommy and Samantha Enright of Black Rabbit Farm in Amherst are recipients of the 2018 Food Sovereignty Award.

An award dinner and ceremony will be held Sat., at 5:30pm April 7 at the River Arts Center, 323 Water St., Baraboo. The ceremony is held in conjunction with the FFD Annual Meeting and Community Forum held throughout the day and includes a 6:30pm Keynote Speech by George Naylor, longtime Iowa farmer and past president of the National Family Farm Coalition

Black Rabbit Farm specializes in rotationally grazed livestock and vegetable production for direct sale via farmers markets. The Enrights are very involved in grassroots organizing mostly through the Wisconsin Farmers Union, for which Tommy serves as the Communications Associate.

Another FFD meeting highlight will be an afternoon community forum focusing on migrant farmworker solidarity, water issues, and the ongoing dairy crisis.

Dinner tickets are \$30 per person and can be ordered in advance by mail (send check to FFD: P.O. Box 1772, Madison, WI 53701) or online via the Razoo donation link at: www.familyfarmdefenders.org If you plan to attend and pay at the door, please RSVP in advance.

Pepin-Pierce Farmers Union to host forum

PLUM CITY — On Sun., April 15, the Pepin-Pierce County Farmers Union will hold an educational event in Plum City with guest speakers to discuss the unique geology that impacts the water quality in the two counties.

Featured speakers will include Neil Koch, a retired geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, and Chase Cummings, Pepin County conservationist.

The event will be from 1 to 4pm at the Plum City Senior Center, 501 Main St, in Plum City. There will be lots of time for questions, and a raffle for free nitrate tests. Refreshments will be served.

For more information about the chapter or the water quality forum, contact Emmet Fisher at 651-380-6988 or oxheartfarm@gmail.com.

Stepping up in Farmers Union

Jurcek serves on National Youth Advisory Council

Jessica Jurcek
Kenosha-Racine-Walworth-Jefferson
Farmers Union

Like most farm kids, I have certainly had a fair share of life experiences. However, few aspects of my life thus far stand out as vividly as my involvement in the WFU youth program. From summers at Kamp Kenwood to serving on the National Youth Advisory Council, I have never encountered a dull moment throughout my Farmers Union endeavours. Rather, the sentiments and characteristics I have learned to associate with Farmers Union and the youth program are positive and exciting, and my involvement has lead to countless opportunities to improve as a leader and member of our agricultural community.

Like many youth before me, I welcomed these opportunities with open arms and could not be more proud of or excited by the results, nor could I encourage others to pursue these opportunities with any more enthusiasm.

My first large step into Farmers Union came by means of the Senior Youth Advisory Council (SYAC). The position of SYAC can be ex-

plained in detail by any senior camper at Kamp Kenwood. Known for their active participation at Kamp and the privilege of drinking coffee, the SYAC play an active role in camp planning, help at WFU State Convention, and are leaders at Kamp. Elected by their peers, SYAC are given a chance to both develop and showcase leadership skills, all within the fun, supportive atmosphere of Kamp Kenwood.

I served on SYAC in 2015, and doing so allowed me to bring my Farmers Union involvement to a new level. Not only did I develop closer ties to other campers, I met many adult members while helping at convention whom I continue to look up to and learn from today.

Furthermore, I became more informed regarding the policy that WFU supports, and discovered many parallels between my own views and WFU's policy that inspired me to look for more and more ways to involve myself with Farmers Union. Serving on SYAC was the perfect opportunity to learn more about WFU and grow my Farmers Union spirit.

While serving as a member of
See p.13 ► STEPPING UP



Photo by National Farmers Union
Wisconsin Farmers Union member Jessica Jurcek, second from right, is serving on the National Farmers Union's National Youth Advisory Council.

Instincts in the making

Editor's Note: Following are remarks shared by Art Cullen of the Storm Lake Times as he accepted the Milt Hakel Media Award for Ag Journalism at the National Farmers Union Convention March 5 in Kansas City.

An ethic may be regarded as a mode of guidance for meeting ecological situations so new or intricate, or involving such deferred reactions, that the path of social expediency is not discernible to the average individual," native Iowan Aldo Leopold wrote in *A Sand County Almanac* 70 years ago. "Animal instincts are modes of guidance for the individual in meeting such situations. Ethics are possibly a kind of community instinct in-the-making."

Instincts are in the making all over Rural America. People know something is not right when half of Iowa's children are born into Medicaid, when our rivers are choked with poison, and when farmers are going broke planting corn and soybeans on every available inch of land — even into the river and lake banks. Two thirds of Iowa's 99 counties have lost population every year since 1920.

We should be the richest state in the USA. But we are fast becoming poor.

Iowans know, instinctively, that something is amiss.

But their politics, government and universities are owned by the agri-chemical cabal headed by the Koch Brothers and supplemented by Monsanto, Dow DuPont and the oil companies that shape our chemical silver bullets that eventually lose their luster.

And now, it appears they have taken over the judicial process as well.

The Storm Lake Times, the county-seat newspaper in Northwest Iowa of which I am editor, won the Pulitzer Prize last April for a series of editorials probing surface water pollution and government secrecy.

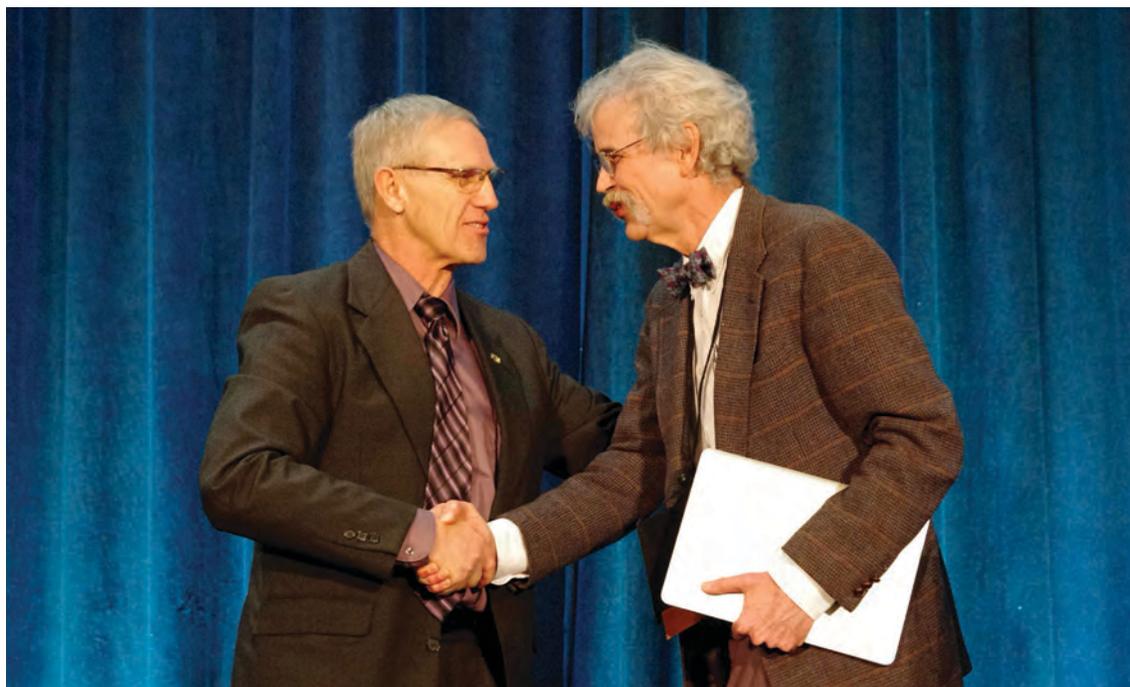
The Des Moines Water Works sued our county and two others in Northwest Iowa over drainage systems that are delivering ever-stronger concentrations of nitrate to the Raccoon River, which slakes the thirst of 500,000 central Iowans. Because of stray nitrogen from fields leaching to drainage tiles, Des Moines has had to install the largest nitrate-removal system in the world. The water works also has had to warn customers repeatedly over the past two years about alarming levels of cyanotoxins from phosphorous loads in the rivers that, if consumed, can cause severe neurological disorders. The three smartest and best thousand-acre chemical farmers I know suffer from Parkinson's Disease, MS and Lou Gehrig's disease. We buried one of them at age 69 last summer.

Since it was a lawsuit over pollution, the counties' insurer would not cover their defense costs. We asked the county supervisors who will pay their lawyer bills, which were sure to be huge.

"Our friends will take care of us," they said.

But they would not tell us who their friends were.

So we joined with the Iowa Freedom of Information Council to find out. We demanded to know who the defense donors were. The Agribusiness Asso-



Above: Pulitzer Prize winner Art Cullen, right, pictured with National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson, was honored with the Milt Hakel Award for Agricultural Journalism.

ciation of Iowa, we learned, had lured Monsanto, the Koch Brothers and the fertilizer industry to cover all the costs no matter how large. The counties entered into a secret, illegal agreement to take the money gathered up by AAI, assisted by the Farm Bureau, and that meant that the agri-chemical companies were calling the shots for the taxpayers of Buena Vista County, Iowa.

When we explained, backed up by case law, that the donations were public records, the supervisors realized they were liable for refusing to reveal the donors. But AAI refused to say who they were. So the counties divorced themselves from the illegal fund, after having raked in \$1.4 million in donations to cover blue-chip lawyers from Des Moines and Washington, DC.

We got the dirty money out of the federal court system, but the judge still threw out the case. The counties won, and there will be no limits on ag pollution of the Raccoon River.

We came to realize that the voters of Buena Vista County did not control the supervisors, the agri-chemical industry did.

We also realized that the increased drainage needs are caused by more moisture in Iowa since 1980. Climate

change is the proximate cause of the death of the Gulf of Mexico from our corn-ground fertilizer from Iowa and Illinois. It's not just me saying it — it is Dr. Gene Takle, a Noel laureate from Iowa State University who predicted this 22 years ago.

The people of Iowa have it figured out. Two-thirds of Iowans in The Des Moines Register's Iowa Poll said they agreed with the water works position — and that includes 60% of rural residents. They know what is in the water. The conversation is changing.

Thirty years ago the Practical Farmers of Iowa were thought of as freaks. This year, 1,000 people showed up at the Practical Farmers annual meeting. They hold field days across the state on sustainable and profitable agriculture that are drawing overflow crowds. Cover crops designed to cut nitrogen loss off season, have gone from 100,000 acres to 600,000 over the past three years in Iowa.

The crowd here is half the age of a typical Farm Bureau convention. I met a young man from Wisconsin who markets pasture lambs directly to consumers, an 18-year-old woman who tends 100 grass-fed cows and a calf herd on 300 acres in Wisconsin, and a young man

in his 40s raising beef in South Dakota. These people, your people, are the future of agriculture and rural communities.

"When land does well for its owner, and the owner does well by his land; when both end up better by reason of their partnership, we have conservation. When one or the other grows poorer, we do not," Leopold said in 1938.

It's taken us awhile, but we are finally getting his message and it is resonating throughout Iowa — not fast enough, perhaps, but soon enough to save us from ourselves.

It all starts with the Iowa Farmers Union and the National Farmers Union. I am proud to stand with you today and humbled to receive your honor.

Also, I hope you buy my book coming out Oct. 2 from Penguin Random House. Its title: *Storm Lake; A chronicle of change, resilience and hope.*

Hope is what I hear today.

Art Cullen is the editor of The Storm Lake Times in Storm Lake, Iowa. He won the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing covering the Des Moines Water Works lawsuit and the transparency of its funding. Cullen can be reached via email at times@stormlake.com.

From p.13 ▶ STEPPING UP

SYAC is an exciting and elevating experience, the potential for leadership positions within Farmers Union does not end there.

Each summer, at All-States Leadership Camp in Bailey, CO, six youth are elected to the National Youth Advisory Council (NYAC). NYAC members are invited to attend the NFU Fly-In in Washington, D.C., National Convention, and return to All-States the following summer to help lead and organize camp. I was elected to NYAC in the summer of 2017 and will be heading back to Bailey this summer to help at All-States.

The past year has been filled with incredible hands-on learning experiences that have opened my mind to new perspectives and helped prepare me for success as I head off to college and eventually my future career.

The most influential of these experiences was meeting with legislators in Washington, D.C. to discuss ag-related issues that are important to farmers across the country. I was able to play an active role in democracy and developed a much more complete understanding of government, knowledge that will serve me well down the road and make it easier to continue my participation in our democratic society.

While exceptional learning opportunities such as these are certainly prevailing, being a NYAC is not all work and no play. I have also been able to explore new cities and develop close friendships with the other youth on the leadership council, contributing to my development of new perspectives and a more open mindset. Thanks to the help and encouragement I received from Farmers Union as a member of NYAC, I have gained personal growth and leadership skills in the past year, and am ultimately more prepared as I head off to college and the next chapter of my life.

As my involvement with Farmers Union expanded over the years, I have come to associate the organization with far more than the exciting games, close friendships, and impactful lessons that guided my earlier years in the youth program. Today, it is opportunity that I most closely affiliate with Farmers Union, and I am incredibly thankful for the eye-opening experiences Farmers Union has provided me.

Farmers Union youth are uncommonly fortunate for the opportunities our organization provides us. I could not be more pleased that I took advantage of so many of these opportunities in the last several years, as I am resultedly a more well-rounded person and stronger leader.

It is with confidence that I extend the most heartfelt invitation to the present, incoming, and future WFU youth to jump headfirst into the opportunities presented them, especially those within Farmers Union, as there is truly no better way to learn about agriculture, the world, and ultimately, yourself.



Submit letters to the editor no longer than 500 words to Danielle Endvick - dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Farmers stuck on a treadmill

Forty years ago, you could count 39 dairy farms on the 20-mile route to the neighboring town. Of those farms, only three are left.

It's not hard to understand why. Dairy farmers were getting paid about the same price per hundred pounds of milk in 1978 as they are today in 2018. Over the same time period costs for dairy farmers' inputs – seed, fertilizer, building, energy, vet costs, hire labor, and machinery, to name a few – have multiplied in cost many times over. The price of cheese in the store has jumped from about \$1.69 per pound to \$3.99 per pound. The only thing that is standing still is the milk price being paid to farmers.

American dairy farmers are stuck on a runaway treadmill of over-production, and there are plenty of people out there to encourage us in this never-ending pursuit. Over-production causes financial adversity not only to dairy farmers but to their local rural communities as well. Many local businesses that support dairy farmers know they will not be able to stay in business either if we continue down this treadmill of over-producing.

I have always believed it is vitally important to promote and grow the market for wholesome milk and other dairy products. Without controlling our production, we are destroying markets with a flood of over-supply.

At some point, dairy farmers need to ask ourselves a different question: Not "how do we make more milk?" but instead "how do we make a living?" How do you get off the treadmill of over-production, and walk forward on a solid path to profitability?

This strategy clearly is not working. Just ask any of the 36 dairy farmers who are no longer farming in my neck of the woods today. What if instead of making more milk for less profit, we held milk production steady but earned more for each 100 pounds we produced? This is not unreachable, Canada has been doing it for years, with the result being that Canadian dairy farmers are being paid a fair price and do not have to deal with the wild price swings that we have here in the United States. The processors in Canada let farmers know in advance what their processing needs are, and the farmers produce to meet market demand, rather than flooding the market and driving milk prices down.

In mid-March, Wisconsin Farmers Union hosted a series of farmer-to-farmer meetings across the state to hear straight from Canadian dairy farmers about how the Canadian system works. I was glad to see good turnouts and open minds, with farmers

working together to consider solutions to our dairy crisis. I think I owe it to the three remaining dairy farms in my area to consider something different than the treadmill to nowhere we're currently on.

Dennis Rosen, Emerald, WI

Dairy industry is hemorrhaging

As dairy farmers, one of our top priorities is the health and well-being of our cows. A bovine disease many farmers are familiar with is Hemorrhagic Bowel Syndrome (HBS), a complex condition described simply as a cow bleeding to death due to hemorrhaging in the lower gastrointestinal tract. HBS has two forms, rapid death from acute blood loss and steady decline leading to death from a slow bleed. HBS manifests when the cow is stressed with high production and fed compromised feedstuffs. Treatment is fairly ineffective, and even cows that do survive usually end up culled from the herd. Preventing HBS is the only real option for success in dealing with this disease.

We're seeing a similar disease impacting our dairy industry. Financial viability is compromised, and we are hemorrhaging dairy farms at an average of over one Wisconsin dairy farm lost per day. Similar to HBS, dairy farmers are suffering a complex condition described simply as loss of income due to depressed markets that bleed the equity out of a dairy. Their hemorrhaging has two forms as well, financial strain from a slow bleed, and financial ruin from acute income disruption. This disease manifests when the market is stressed from depressed demand and subjected to oversupply. The similarity of the two diseases is staggering. Treatment options are sparse and ineffective leaving prevention as the only viable option for success.

One measure we can take in preventing this hemorrhaging of our dairy industry is supply management. A number of co-ops (maybe yours) have already implemented some sort of program designed to reduce supply. Markets in some countries currently enjoy stability and viability through supply management.

Wisconsin Farmers Union is leading an effort to bring dairy farmers together to investigate this option. Please join us on April 12 at the UW-Platteville Ag Tech Center at 7:30pm for an informational meeting on supply management. Together we can overcome this disease. Get together, get informed, get active, survive and thrive.

J.C. Volenec, Hardscrabble Farms, Montfort, WI

Food safety trainings offered for produce farmers

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), passed during the Obama administration, includes a number of food safety regulations aimed at preventing foodborne illness along the global food supply chain. Several upcoming trainings aim to educate farmers about the new regulations. Locations include:

• **GREEN BAY - APR 3**, 210 Museum Pl, \$60. Info: Robert Stanley, Phone: 608-224-4511.

• **VERONA - APR 12**, 8502 Mineral Point Rd., \$60. Info: Robert Stanley, Phone: 608-224-4511.

• **EAU CLAIRE - APR 17**, 2703 Craig Rd., \$60. Info: Robert Stanley, Phone: 608-224-4511.

• **WISCONSIN DELLS - APR 27**, Upham Woods, N194 Cty. Rd. N, \$50. Info: MOSES, learn more at <https://mosesorganic.wufoo.com/forms/z1gb86f21gerkr8/>

The Produce Safety Rule, one of seven rules part of FSMA, is the first federal regulation specifically for produce safety on the farm. It was enacted in 2011, but compliance dates start this year and continue for the next few years depending on the size of your business. This rule covers everything on-farm from field to harvest to distribution.

These full day trainings are being organized across the country by the Produce Safety Alliance (PSA). There are benefits for every produce farmer to take this training but it is not required for all farms. The rest of this article outlines the three different

Business Size	Compliance Dates for Sprouts	Compliance Dates For Most Produce	Water Related Compliance Dates ¹	Compliance Date for Qualified Exemption Labeling Requirement ²	Compliance Date for Retention of Records Supporting a Qualified Exemption
All other businesses (>\$500K)	1/26/17	1/26/18	1/26/22	1/1/2020	1/26/16
Small businesses (>\$250K-500K) ³	1/26/18	1/28/19	1/26/23		
Very small businesses (>\$25K-250K) ⁴	1/28/19	1/27/20	1/26/24		

Updated 10/09/17 - Produce Safety Alliance and the Southern Center

categories of farms that the Produce Safety Rule recognizes and where they fit within the new regulation.

How is your farm impacted?

Exempt Farms: To meet the requirements for exempt, your farm must have had less than \$25,000 in gross produce sales over the previous three years. Sales are based on 2011 inflation rates. If you are an exempt farm, you do not legally need to attend a PSA training.

Other reasons your farm may qualify as exempt is if you do not grow, harvest, pack, or hold produce; you are only growing produce for personal consumption; or all of your produce is in a rarely eaten raw category as defined by the rule.

Qualified Exempt (must meet both of the following qualifications)

- Under \$500,000 in food sales.
- More than 50% of your sales are made to a qualified end user.

If you meet both of these requirements for Qualified Exempt you do not legally need to attend a PSA training.

The qualified exempt status can be taken away if there is a foodborne illness linked to your farm. You will need to do two things to maintain your status of qualified exempt:

- Must keep at least three years of sales records to show you meet the qualifications
- At every point of sale you must display your farm's name and complete address

Covered Farm: A covered farm is subject to all of the requirements of the FSMA Produce Safety Rule. If you are not an exempt farm or a qualified exempt farm then you are a fully covered farm and are required to have someone at your operation who has taken the Produce Safety Alliance: Grower Training.

Trainings good for everyone

The Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) Grower Training is only required for farms that are fully covered under the FSMA Produce Safety Rule. Regardless of legality around who must attend and who does not, the

training has valuable information for everyone about produce food safety and provides farmers with the understanding of the different components of the new rule including worker training, water testing, soil amendments, and pack shed requirements.

The training can also be a valuable marketing tool for your farm or for you as a farm employee, as it can be used as a marketing tool to potential buyers. This is a one-time training and the certification of completion stays with the person who takes the training not with the farm. If you are a farm worker, having completed the training could be helpful on your application for a farm you are interested in working on. To learn about other upcoming trainings visit <https://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/training/grower-training-courses>.

For questions about the PSA Grower Training or where your farm fits within FSMA contact Kirsten Slaughter at kslaughter@wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

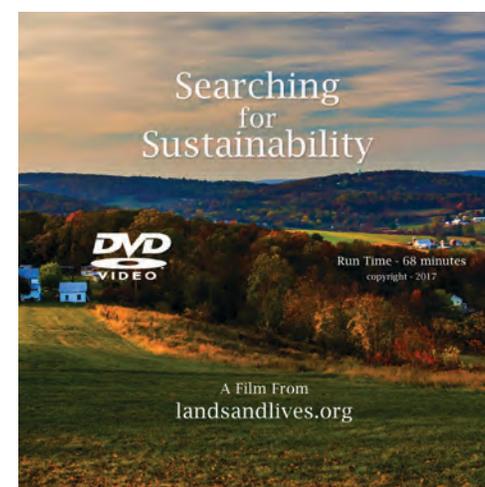
'Searching for Sustainability' airs on Earth Day

On Earth Day, April 22nd, PBS will nationally air *Searching for Sustainability*, a documentary exploring the relationships between people and resources in the food production chain.

The film features Wisconsin farmers' thoughts on sustainability. It was directed by Dan Bertalan and produced by Wisconsin Farmers Union member Valerie Dantoin. *Searching for Sustainability* was funded in part by the Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation and Organic Valley.

From our climate, to our waters, to our air, in our soils, throughout our food chains, and even within our bodies, sustainability affects every filament of life here on Earth. That is why everyone needs to know about and consciously consider "sustainability" when making decisions and navigating through life. It will determine our environmental legacy.

Be sure to tune in! Wisconsin Public Television will air the film on Tues., April 17th at 9pm, and Sun., April 22nd at 11am.



WHAT'S ON YOUR TABLE? *with Diane Tiry*



A Taste of Brazil

Many of you have heard an unfamiliar voice answer your phone at the WFU State Office or have even seen this mystery staff member at the WFU Convention. Neriarama Martins Dias or 'Nettie' as we call her, has been helping WFU for about three months as an office assistant.

Nettie was born in Jequitai, Brazil, a small town of 8,000 people. The houses are close together with no back yards and about 4,000 live in the town while the rest live on small farms around the countryside. Nettie's parents farm 110 acres with a little bit of everything from beef, chickens, eggs, a couple of pigs for Christmas dinner, and a crop of sugar cane. They sell to neighbors and to the local butcher as well as make sugar cane rum called "Cachaça," popular in Brazil and Europe. The drink is sold to bars in town where people really appreciate the home brewed flavor, which Nettie says taste like tequila. Nettie explained that Brazil has 26 states as well as a Federal District or capitol called Brasilia. Her family lives in the state of Minas Gerais just a bit north of Southeastern Brazil.

Nettie has a Biological Science teaching degree from Brazil, where she taught classes of 30 or more students for 5 years. She also has a B.S. in Agricultural Engineering. In 2013, she came to America to learn English and also took some Agricultural Engineering classes during her 18-month study.

Nettie is a newlywed. She married Tommy West, who has family near Cadott, WI, after a lengthy, distant courtship. She will be leaving us on May 4 to begin her master's program in Biological & Agricultural Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. We wish her all the best in her next chapter of life. Someday, she hopes to have a small farm to raise a few animals and grow vegetables.

I have asked her to share a favorite Brazilian recipe with you, which sounds very hearty and delicious.

BRAZILIAN FEIJOADA (Black Bean Stew)

Source: Neriarama Martins Dias
Serves: 6-8 Time: 2 1/2 hours

Feijoada, a flavorful stew of black beans and pork, is the national dish of Brazil. The rich, smoky stew is served with rice, vinaigrette, sautéed collard greens or kale, orange slices and topped with toasted cassava flour (farofa).

The dish is traditionally served on Saturday afternoons or Sunday lunch and intended to be a leisurely midday meal. It is meant to be enjoyed throughout the day and eaten among friends and extended family and paired with an event like watching a soccer game or other social event. Because of the dish's heavy ingredients and rich flavors, feijoada is viewed as Brazilian soul food.



Meet Nettie!



Ingredients

For the Rice, Beans, and Collard Greens

- 8 thick slices bacon, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1/2 lb. smoked pork chops, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1/2 lb. boneless pork shoulder, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1/2 lb. smoked sausage, cut into 2" pieces
- 1/2 lb. baby back spareribs, cut into individual ribs
- 1 lb. dried black beans, soaked overnight
- 1/2 cup minced garlic, plus 8 cloves crushed
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 3 bay leaves
- 5 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 cups jasmine rice, rinsed.
- 15 collard green leaves, very thinly sliced
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the Vinaigrette, Farofa, and Serving

- 1 ripe plum tomato, cored, seeded, and finely chopped
- 1/2 small white onion, finely chopped
- 1 cup finely chopped parsley
- 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- 1/3 cup plus 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 slices bacon, minced
- 1 cup cassava flour (available as Otto's Cassava Flour at Walmart)
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 3 oranges, peeled and sliced, for serving
- Hot sauce for serving
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Directions

Feijoada: In a large heavy-bottom saucepan, over medium-high heat, add the pieces of bacon and cook until fat renders, about 7 minutes. Add chops, shoulder, and ribs, and brown, 8-10 minutes. Add the sausage. Continue to cook for 4 minutes. Add drained beans, crushed garlic cloves, chopped onions, bay leaves, and 8 cups water, and bring to a boil. Season with salt and pepper. Lower the heat and simmer, partially covered, until beans are tender, at least 1 1/2 hour. Re-season with salt and pepper if needed. Keep warm.

Rice: Heat 2 tbsp. oil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add 1/2 of the minced garlic; cook for 2 minutes. Add rice, salt, pepper, and 4 cups hot water. Bring to a boil, lower heat to medium-low; cook, covered, until rice is tender, about 15 minutes. Keep warm.

Sautéed collard greens: Heat 3 tbsp. oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add remaining garlic; cook for 2 minutes. Add collards, salt, and pepper; cook until wilted, about 4 minutes. Keep warm.

Vinaigrette: Mix tomato, onion, 1/2 of the parsley, vinegar, 1/3 cup oil, and salt and pepper.

Farofa: Heat minced bacon in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat until fat is rendered, about 3 minutes. Add cassava flour, and cook until toasted, 3 to 5 minutes. Add remaining parsley, 1/4 cup oil, and raisins and cook 2 minutes more.

To serve: Spoon some of the greens, vinaigrette and rice onto each serving plate. Spoon the Feijoada over the rice. Shake some of the hot sauce over the entire plate. Garnish with the orange slices and farofa.



Happy and Healthy Eating to All!

WFU Foundation announces quarterly grant recipients

The Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation maintains a modest small grant program. This program supports programs that foster family farming, enhance the quality of rural life, provide opportunities for public education and dialogue on key issues, and encourage cooperative economic development.

The Foundation maintains a modest Small Grant Program to provide support to a variety of farm and rural organizations and projects. Grant amounts are generally under \$2,000 and typically \$200 to \$500.

Grant recipients this quarter include:

- Cornucopia Institute
- Wisconsin FFA Foundation Convention
- Wisconsin 4-H Foundation
- FAIR SHARE Bike the Barns
- June Dairy Day Dinner - Chippewa Area Chamber of Commerce
- School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers Ride to Farm
- Wisconsin Association of Agricultural Educators
- Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association
- Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance Conference
- Brown County Dairy Promotions - Breakfast on the Farm
- Cable Community Farm - Community Seed Starting Project
- Wisconsin Eye - Dairy Together
- Green Lake County Fair - Inga Witscher, Local Food Presentation
- Polk-Burnett County Farmers Union for Lien Elementary School Seed-In
- Taylor/Price County Farmers Union - Greenin' & Grazin' Project

The Foundation Grant Committee meets quarterly to consider applications. Quarterly deadlines are March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31. Applicants will be notified by the 15th day of the month after the deadline under which the application was made.

Successful applicants must, within a year of the grant's acceptance, submit a report demonstrating how the funding was used. Small Grant funds are made available from the donations of WFU members and partnering cooperative businesses. Grants are also available for local chapter initiatives. Learn more about grant opportunities at www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

**Give a Stronger Voice to Rural America
Join Wisconsin Farmers Union and
help preserve the economic health and
sustainability of our rural communities.**



Membership Application

Name: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

of Children under 21: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Household Type:

Farm Rural Small Town Urban

Type of Farm: Check all that apply.

Dairy Poultry Vegetables or Fruit

Beef Crops Organic

Hogs Horses Other

Membership: Fee includes family unless student or organization is checked.

New Member Renewing Member

1 Year (\$30)

2 Years (\$55)

4 Years (\$100)

Lifetime (\$2000)

Student (\$15)

Organization (\$50)

Join us today!

Mail this card to:

Wisconsin Farmers Union
117 W. Spring St. • Chippewa Falls, WI • 54729

Or sign up online:

www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com

For more information, call 800-272-5531

Wisconsin
Farmers Union
KAMP KENWOOD

SPRING FLING & VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DAY

Saturday, April 21st

7am-2pm (Rain or shine!)

19161 79th Ave., Chippewa Falls, WI

Friends and neighbors across Wisconsin are invited to come assist as we prepare for the camp season.

The day begins at 7 am with coffee and pastries. Bring a hat, water bottle, sturdy shoes, and your enthusiasm. Children are welcome. Bring your friends! Lunch will be served in the lodge at 11:30 am. Projects will continue until complete or 2 pm.

