



WISCONSIN FARMERS UNION NEWS

October 2016

Volume 73 | No. 8

From fields to Hill

WFU members travel to D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Seventeen Wisconsin Farmers Union members were among 275 farmers and ranchers from across the country who met in Washington, D.C. Sept. 11-14 for the National Farmers Union Fall Legislative Fly-In. The annual event allows Farmers Union members to meet directly with lawmakers, U.S. Department of Agriculture leaders and other administration officials to discuss issues important to fami-

ly farmers and ranchers. “As a farmer-led organization, grassroots advocacy and education are a big part of Farmers Union,” said WFU President Darin Von Ruden. “The fly-in is an opportunity for members to meet with their representatives in Congress and put a face to the issues impacting rural America. Given the state of the farm economy, we need to ensure policies are supporting family farmers and ranchers, and their rural communities.”

Members met with lawmakers to discuss legislative priorities that will affect their farms and communities, including Farm Bill programs and the farm safety net, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Renewable Fuel Standard and corporate consolidation in agriculture.

In addition, Farmers Union members attended a briefing at the USDA. Secretary Tom Vilsack, Chief Economist Robert Johnson, National Resources Conservation Service Chief Jason Weller and Risk Management Agency Administrator Brandon Willis spoke about farm programs. NFU President Roger Johnson and the government relations team also provided remarks.

“The annual legislative fly-in is an important part of NFU’s ongoing grassroots advocacy efforts,”



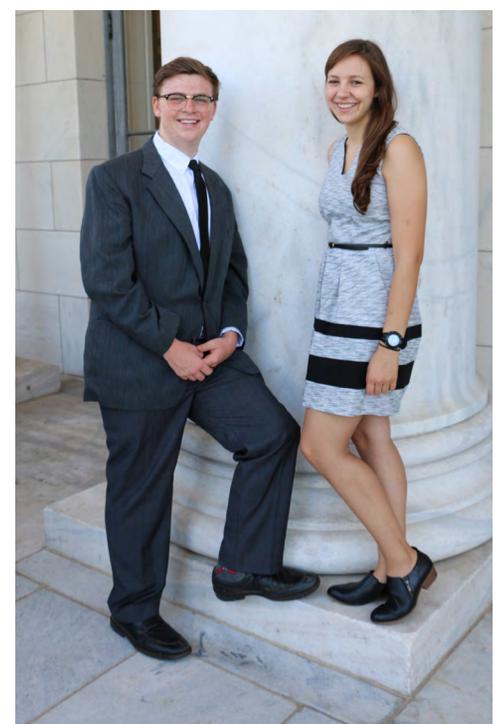
Above: Representing Wisconsin Farmers Union at the NFU Fall Fly-In were, from left, (front row), Kara O’Connor, Madison; Cathy Statz, Chippewa Falls; Miriam Valley, Sun Prairie; Betty Anderson, Brodhead; Kristi Gorell, Eleva; Kriss Marion, Blanchardville; Danielle Endvick, Holcombe; Vicki Dunnum, Westby; (back row) Nial Murray, Prairie Farm; Kipp Hinz, Ellsworth; Tommy Enright, Amherst; Killian Harnish, La Crosse; Nick Levendofsky, Madison; Darin Von Ruden, Westby; Max Hart, Black River Falls; Chris Holman, Custer; and Craig Dunnum, Westby.

Johnson said. “Family farmers and ranchers are the best advocates we have for agriculture, and the fly-in is a good opportunity for our members to follow up on the conversations they’ve had with their elected officials during the August congressional work period.”

For more about the Fall Fly-In, see first-time participant Max Hart’s column on page five. Hart, from Black River Falls, raises beef cattle and works at a local bank. On page three, new WFU Communications Associate Tommy Enright shares insights from the kickoff of this year’s Beginning Farmers Institute, held in conjunction with the fly-in.

Interested in attending next year’s fly-in? Several scholarships will be available.

Contact the WFU State Office at 715-723-5561 for more details or to learn how to apply.



Above: Killian Harnish of La Crosse and Miriam Valley of Sun Prairie, two of six youth from across the nation who were elected to the National Farmers Union Senior Youth Advisory Council this summer, also took part in the fly-in.

NON-PROFIT
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit No. 203
Eau Claire, WI

WISCONSIN FARMERS UNION
117 W. Spring St.
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Return Service Requested

WISCONSIN FARMERS UNION NEWS

A publication of
Wisconsin Farmers Union
117 W. Spring St.
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

ph: 715-723-5561 • 800-272-5531 • fx: 715-723-7011
www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com

WFU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Darin Von Ruden
President
District 5
608-634-4695

Craig Myhre
Vice President
District 4
715-983-2167

Dennis Rosen
Secretary
District 2
715-265-4519

Mark Liebaert
Treasurer
At-Large
715-398-5234

Janet Nelson
District 1
715-455-1755

Ed Gorell
District 3
715-287-3383

Chris Holman
District 6
715-498-3276

Tina Hinchley
District 7
608-764-5090

Rick Adamski
District 8
920-833-6704

WFU STATE OFFICE STAFF

Tom Quinn

Executive Director

715-723-5561 • tqquinn@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Diane Tiry

Administrative Assistant

715-723-5561 • dtiry@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Cathy Statz

Education Director

715-723-5561 • cstatz@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Amanda Kollwitz

Accounting/Member Services

715-723-5561 • akollwitz@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Danielle Endvick

Communications Director

715-471-0398 • dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Tommy Enright

Communications Associate

715-513-0460 • tenright@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Deb Jakubek

Regional Membership Coordinator

715-590-2130 • djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Kirsten Slaughter

Program & Membership Organizer

608-514-2031 • kslaughter@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Kara O'Connor

Government Relations Director

608-514-4541 • koconnor@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Nick Levendofsky

Government Relations Associate

608-234-3741 • nickl@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Brad Henderson

Facilities Manager, WFU Kamp Kenwood

715-214-7244 • bhenderson@wisconsinfarmersunion.com

Newsletter Editor, Layout & Design: Danielle Endvick
Printed by: Leader Printing, Eau Claire, WI
Bulk Rate postage paid in Eau Claire, WI

Our Water: What's in it for future generations?



Darin Von Ruden
WFU President

Over the years we have watched the debate on water come and go, from the drought years in the 70's and 80's to more recently the drought of 2012 here in the upper Midwest and the drought that gripped the Northeast this summer. On the flip side are the 500-year floods experienced in 2007-08 and the current flooding from northern Wisconsin to Louisiana.

Water has been on the minds of WFU members in many ways over the years, from quantity to quality and most recently high-capacity well monitoring.

Through the years there have been working groups pulled together to look at these issues in different parts of the state. In the last year or so a very diverse group known as Food, Land, & Water Project has come together. On Aug. 23, four WFU members attended a Stevens Point meeting to examine both groundwater quantity and quality issues along with surface water quality and working lands. I participated in the groundwater quantity group where we had potato farmers, dairy farmers, a few hydrologists, a representative from DNR, and members from citizen groups from the Central Sands area of Wisconsin.

During the discussion there was talk about the role agriculture plays in the quantity debate. The agricultural community in Wisconsin has been

on the defense in the past on this issue, and it was good to have the diverse ag representation in the room to help the conservation groups and others in attendance understand how water is used and what farmers can do to help mitigate over-use.

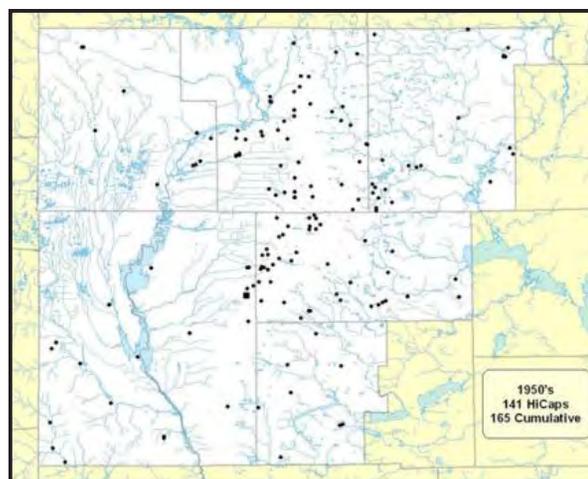
The issue of feeding the world came up and how we need to increase production. My first thought was that 40 percent of food in the USA is wasted, so when you look at feeding the world we can do that with current production if we can find ways to utilize the food we currently produce. As consumers of water through the everyday foods that we eat, maybe we need to question if our foods need to all look perfect or can we accept the fact that nature is what it is?

I believe high-capacity wells are one of the main contributors to quantity issues. During the debate there was good discussion on possible monitoring and cumulative impact of wells in a given area. WFU has been asking for both of these to be addressed during the last few legislative sessions.

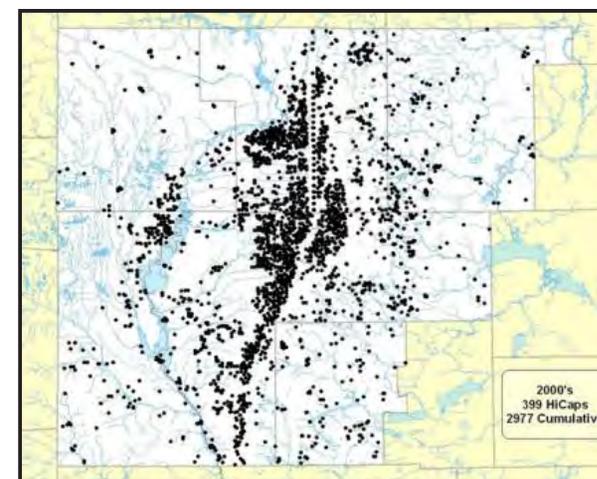
Looking at the maps below, you can see how rapidly the number of high-cap wells has grown in the last 50 years. I do think we need to be mindful of our on-farm water use. At this growth rate, how long will our groundwater supply hold out?

This election cycle is a chance to make water an issue. It's a natural resource that the people of Wisconsin have the right to an adequate supply of for generations to come. Ask the candidates that are running for Assembly and Senate in Wisconsin if they are willing to protect our most vital resource that we have in this great state.

Growth of High-Capacity Wells in Wisconsin



1950s



2000s

Beginning Farmer Institute kicks off at Fly-In

Tommy Enright
Communications Associate

Land access. Equipment access. Financing. Risk management. In a time of great challenges in agriculture such as the one we are experiencing now, these subjects can be daunting for even the most seasoned farmers. Commodity prices are low, costs of production are high, and here in Wisconsin we are losing family farms every day. The current state of agriculture has left an aging demographic worried about cultivating the next generation of farmers.

Fortunately, there is a new generation of farmers ready to step in. Many of us are first generation, and others grew up on a farm but left before getting into the business side of things and are now returning. This next generation possesses the desire to farm but lacks experience. In response to the need to educate them, National Farmers Union (NFU) started the Beginning Farmer Institute, a program designed to equip beginning farmers with the knowledge, connections, and business skills they need to be successful. The program includes three sessions, the first of which kicked off prior to the National Farmers Union Legislative Fly-in in Washington, D.C. earlier this month.

The majority of the session took place at NFU's headquarters in D.C. Throughout the day people from various organizations addressed a wide range of topics. Representatives from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, American Farmland Trust, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Credit, University of Maryland Legal, National Farmers Union, and others all took the time to address the class. All of their presentations seemed to share a common thread: the desire to help beginning farmers.

Of the 17 selected to participate in the program, six of them were from Wisconsin, myself included. The other participants were Betty Anderson, Brodhead; Jaime Baker, New Glarus; Brittany Ann Bula, Plainfield; Layne Cozzolino and Josh Stolzenburg, both of Stevens Point. To me, this strong presence says something. It's a reflection of Wisconsin agriculture's resilience, its passion, its commitment to an industry that has been the backbone of our state.

Our group had the opportunity to tour Common Good City Farm, an urban farm that produces 5000 pounds of food a year. In addition to following the Community Supported Agriculture model, Common Good also started several community outreach programs. With a vision to promote healthy eating and provide hands-on training in food production, the farm boasts educational workshops, apprenticeships, a composting program and a successful volunteer program. Many of their volunteers hadn't known about where their food comes from prior to coming to Common Good. Likewise, many of the BFI class had never been to a small-scale farm, much less an urban farm. We also visited the USDA Farmers Market.

The most interesting (and perhaps important) aspect of the group was the breadth of operations from which the participant farmers came. Attendees ranged from urban farmers working on a quarter-acre to ranchers tending several thousand acres, from organic to conventional farms, direct-market farmers to commodity growers, and everything in between.



Above: During their first meeting, the Beginning Farmer Institute participants had the chance to tour Common Good City Farm, an urban farm that produces 5,000 pounds of food per year.

“A large part of the Beginning Farmer Institute’s success is the collaborative learning experience the program provides,” said NFU President Roger Johnson. “The beginning farmers and ranchers not only learn from Farmers Union and industry experts, but they learn a lot from each other by asking questions and sharing their individual experiences.”

I look forward to our next session in Salinas, California this November. Prior to my involvement with Wisconsin Farmers Union, my exposure to farming was mostly through direct-market operations. That’s not to say I have anything against other producers, but we tend to seek advice from operations similar to our own. While this approach is understandable, it can also limit our overall scope. I’ve always believed that one needs to leave their comfort zone in order to grow as a person, and BFI afforded the access to connect with farmers from all types of agriculture on a personal level. When the subject of land access and farm transition came up, it didn’t take long to realize that we had a lot more in common than we thought.

Interested in applying for the Beginning Farmer Institute next year? Contact WFU Membership Coordinator Deb Jakubek at 715-590-2130 or djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com to learn more.

Right: Tommy Enright, who farms in Amherst, recently signed on as Wisconsin Farmers Union Communications Associate and is one of six BFI participants from Wisconsin this year.



Broadband law could force rural folks off information superhighway



Harry Pulliam
WFU member

The New York Times ran an article in September about laws in a few states “that curb municipal broadband efforts and favor traditional cable and telecom firms.” It occurred to me that this is yet another effort on the part of the country’s landed gentry to stifle competition and line its pockets at the expense of the rest of us. Read on.

For a while now, I’ve been working with a group of concerned citizens who seek to bring broadband service to all of Green County. We would like to help rural residents, companies and farmers in our county acquire Internet service fast enough to allow them to truly prosper. Unfortunately, there’s already a law on the books in Wisconsin that is similar to those mentioned in the article. According to a recent Wisconsin Farmers Union bulletin, in 2003 “the state legislature effectively prohibited most other municipal governments from competing in the marketplace to offer broadband service (State Statute 66.0422).”

How does this happen? Why do Wisconsin legislators enact laws that intentionally stifle competition? Why do they pass legislation that makes it increasingly difficult (and expensive) for folks in rural areas to have the

same services that are enjoyed by city dwellers? The answer (SURPRISE!) is money. The campaign funding watchdog Wisconsin Democracy Campaign reports that between January, 2000 and December, 2003 — the year that our legislature passed the above bill — the telecommunications industry donated over \$586,000 to the campaigns of Wisconsin legislators. No doubt hoping to keep the 2003 law in place, Big Telecom has from January, 2004 until present contributed almost \$3 million more to Wisconsin legislators’ war chests.

No matter where you live or what you do for a living, it should be easy to see that this sort of legalized bribery hurts everyone. Without good access to the Internet, children can’t get a proper education; farmers have trouble bidding in real time in online livestock auctions, maintaining a farm website or managing online sales; employers can’t move to rural areas. Lastly, people in more urban areas experience the economic fallout from all of this.

It’s time to pull the plug on unlimited campaign expenditures. Like Wisconsin Farmers Union, Green County United to Amend is working to get Big Money out of politics. Check out the website GCUTA.org — or, if your Internet connection is too slow, call me at (608) 228-5439.

Pulliam lives in New Glarus and is a member of the South Central chapter of Wisconsin Farmers Union.

‘Growing for the Future’ registration open

NFU has opened registration for Growing for the Future, an online conference for beginning farmers and ranchers. This interactive, virtual conference will be held from 5 to 8pm EST December 5-8, and the resources from the conference will be available for a month following the conference. It will focus on all sorts of beginning farmer and rancher issues, including: mentorship, business planning, USDA programs, student loans, land tenure, food safety, women and veterans in farming, conservation and more.

Growing for the Future will feature a number of top speakers in agriculture, farmer-to-farmer webinars, live Q & A, a discussion board, a resource center and free giveaways!

Registration is free, so sign up now and invite your friends to join us in December. For more information and to register visit <http://nfu.org/growing-for-the-future>.

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

Raising our voice

A Farmers Union fly-in story

Max Hart

*Trempealeau-Jackson County
Farmers Union member*

I recently made the trek from western Wisconsin to our Nations' Capitol in Washington D.C.

I went because I wanted to be a part of the voice that spoke up for America's farmers and rural residents. As farmers become fewer and fewer as days go by, we need to speak even louder to have our voices heard. We as farmers need to be sure that our issues don't get passed over because we don't speak up or are too few in numbers. We provide food, energy, clothing, recreation and many other articles to the American people and are vitally important to the economy as a whole. We do make a difference, a fact I wanted to voice during my time at the fly-in.

Although the flight to Washington D.C. was short, the differences from western Wisconsin were many. The forests, rolling farmland and small towns turned into marvelous buildings, statues and memorials amongst the thousands

of residents of our Capital. All eloquent in their places. In Washington D.C. everything is larger than life. The buildings are huge, the memorials honoring the many heroes of our nation are spectacular, and the sheer size of the city is grand. I was impressed with the craftsmanship and the meticulous details that went into many of the government buildings, monuments and memorials. It is fitting for a nation of our size and importance.

On the first full day of the trip we went to the U.S. Department of Agriculture building to hear from the Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack. He appeared to be attentive on what was going on in the countryside and was intent on listening to what we had to say. In the afternoon we had the opportunity to hear from the House and Senate Agriculture Committees. It was nice to see where the committees stand on some of the agricultural issues.

The next two days of the journey were filled with meeting and educating our elected officials or their staff about agricultural issues.

I found that senators and representatives with a large agricultural presence in their districts were more intent on listening to us than those representatives who didn't.

It was interesting to talk with the elected officials to learn where they stand on certain issues. Some of them concurred with our stance while others were opposed to where we stand. I found it ironic how frivolous the reasons some of the elected officials explained on why they opposed our stance on some issues, especial-



Above: Max Hart, a beef farmer and banker from Black River Falls, was among a group of 17 Wisconsin Farmers Union members who took part in the National Farmers Union Fly-In Sept. 11-14. Here he posed a question to the Senate Agriculture Committee.

ly when it came to the Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS).

I enjoyed meeting with the representatives or their staff members. It was comforting to know that some of the staff members are very aware of issues facing farmers, and they are working to correct them. It was interesting that most of the senators and representatives work in office buildings and not in the actual Capitol building.

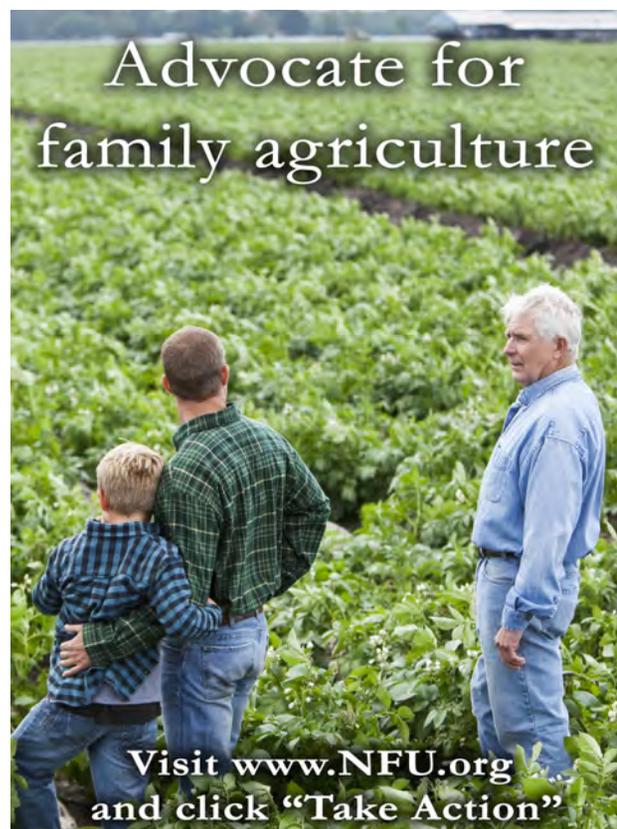
Through this trip I learned how big the government is and how busy our elected officials are. There are many topics and issues that need to be addressed every day, ranging from health care, infrastructure, consumer protection, military, agriculture and many other issues. Our elected officials lean on many staff members to educate them on issues that are affecting their district and ways to correct them. It was also interesting that in many conversations with the elected officials or their staff, when we talked about money and funding it was often in billions of dollars and not millions. It just give a sense on how much money it takes to fund projects.

Through this whole experience

I learned that farmers need to do more to speak up and talk about our issues. We need to have our voices heard. Farmers Union is a great avenue to accomplish this. There are many corporations and other industries that can hire many professional lobbyists and have huge budgets to donate to campaign funds. This type of action can sway the tide in their favor.

As small farmers, rural residents and members of Wisconsin Farmers Union, we don't have access to these resources. But what we do have is authenticity. When we speak or write to our elected officials we can tell them the genuine truth. We can explain in detail how certain policies affect our operation. We're real, sincere and passionate. The congressmen and women can see the passion in our voice and the fire in our eyes. They can feel the emotions. These are non-verbal communication abilities that money can't buy, and it speaks volumes to how we care about farming and our way of life.

I encourage you to fly out to Washington, D.C. with Farmers Union to tell our story. It's an experience you'll never forget.



Keeping it real

Hinchley strives to tell agriculture's story

Editor's note: This article is part of a series highlighting Wisconsin Farmers Union board members.

CAMBRIDGE — If there is a common core among all farmers, no matter the type of commodity they raise or the number of acres they own, it is their passion, says Tina Hinchley, Dane County dairy farmer and Wisconsin Farmers Union District 7 Director.

“All farmers have passion for what they are doing,” Hinchley said. “No one is above the other at the end of the day — we are all tired, often dirty, and looking forward to the next sunrise.”

Hinchley shares her passion for farming with thousands of visitors each year on her family's Cambridge dairy farm. Hinchley's Dairy Farm Tours welcomes up to 10,000 visitors annually.

The idea of hosting farm tours came to Hinchley in the 1990s, during a son's field trip to an agritainment farm.

“They were showing the kids what they said was a cow, but my son said, ‘Mom, that's a steer’ — and he was right,” she recalled. “There were live deer, and in the play area they had a firetruck, and I remember my son questioning why we didn't have a firetruck on our farm.”

Hinchley departed the field trip with an urge to show the genuine side of dairy farming. Then, when she became pregnant with twin daughters, she was

faced with two options: find a job and send the kids to daycare or childproof the farm.

“I didn't want to be the wife that had to go off the farm to work,” Hinchley said. “The fabric of our whole family revolved around farming together.”

So she chose the latter and decided to host a tour or two while she was at it. Little did she know how the idea would grow.

Her first tours were for her boys' elementary classes, and word spread from there. Since their start in 1998, the focus of the tours has been on showing real life on a dairy farm.

“Every kid gets to hand milk a cow, and we bottle-feed the goats and lambs; it's very hands-on,” Hinchley said.

Families also enjoy seeing the menagerie of animals on the farm. The Hinchleys milk 120 registered Holsteins twice a day in their tie-stall barn. Their total herd numbers 290 head. They also have some dairy goats, Targhee sheep, ducks, geese and about 100 chickens. Peter rabbit and Jimmy the rooster are also barnyard favorites.

During a hayride through the farm's fields — pulled by one of the family's antique Oliver tractors — Hinchley delves into some of the tough topics in agriculture today.

“We talk about how we do use GMOs and hybrid genetics to protect our crops, sharing how yields have improved since the days when grandpa



Above: WFU District 7 Director Tina Hinchley and her family run a second-generation dairy farm in Dane County.

farmed,” she said. “There can be a lot of negativity surrounding some of these agricultural topics; we try to be a positive light.”

Tina handles the milking chores while Duane looks to the feeding, crops and other aspects of the farm. The farm sprawls over 2,800 acres on which the family grows corn, soybeans, alfalfa, soft red winter wheat — along with pumpkins for the visiting youth. This year, they put in a new grain bin with 375,000 bushel storage capacity. Any corn that doesn't go into feed for the cattle is marketed through local ethanol plants.

The couples' four children, Curtis, Spencer, Anna and Catherine, were all active on the farm. Their youngest, the twin girls, departed for college this fall. The Hinchleys have little time to fuss over their empty nest, however. Again this summer, their tours welcomed visitors from around the world.

“They're coming to our farm because they want to see American agriculture, and they want to see it with a family,” Hinchley said.

A family legacy

The Hinchley farm originally belonged to Duane's parents. His mother, Ruth, passed away in 1993. His father, Keith, was 80 years old and had continued to work alongside them until he passed in 2009. Keith and Ruth left a legacy in both the farm and in Farmers Union.

“Farmers Union has always been a part of the Hinchley family tradition,” Tina said. Her own first connection to Farmers Union was in taking her kids to Farmers Union Camp at Kamp Kenwood in Chippewa Falls.



Above: Tina Hinchley feels it is more important than ever for farmers to be open in sharing their farm's story. Her family opens their farm to thousands of visitors each year.

“As time went on, I got more involved, and as I sat in on the policy discussions at convention, I found a lot of issues that were important to us,” Hinchley recalled. She has served on the WFU Board of Directors since 2012, representing Dane, Jefferson, Kenosha, Racine, and Walworth Counties.

She also has represented WFU on the Wisconsin Beef Council, serves on the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board and is a 4-H leader for Cambridge 4-H and the secretary for the Cambridge FFA Alumni.

Duane was active in Farmers Union early on and recalls going to summer picnics that drew in up to 300 people.

“With shrinking farm numbers, it’s hard to bring in that kind of crowd these days,” Hinchley said. Yet Farmers Union remains as important as ever, she noted.

“Farmers are less than 2 percent of the population but we’re working to feed the 100 percent,” Hinchley said. “It’s important that we have a strong voice in educating the public about the issues surrounding agriculture.”

Misleading food labeling, affordable health care, and supplemental nutrition assistance for young families and the elderly are among the issues Hinchley is keeping an eye toward. She also is keenly aware of the animal welfare movement.

“I believe the animal welfare activists are increasing and will be looking for targets in all areas of agriculture,” she said. “There will be no stopping them when they can fly a drone over and check out the cows in the creek, the manure pit, the dead stock area or composting pile.”

With regular visitors on the farm, she works hard to educate the public on cow comfort and nutrition and to dispel any myths.

“Educate yourself and your employees about safe and proper animal handling,” is her advice to other farmers. “Treat every visitor as if they have a camera running.”

When she’s not educating the public, Hinchley is working to build bridges in the farming community.

“I would like to see the WFU membership and the agricultural community as a whole embrace each other and support each others’ farming practices,” Hinchley said. “We are all farming together and there isn’t a right way or wrong way to farm. Many different families are farming in many different ways to raise their families and hopefully be successful in passing the farm to the next generation.”

As long as there are still people with questions, Hinchley says she’ll continue to open her farm doors and show people her farming lifestyle and the passion behind her work.

“So many people wonder how farmers do what we do,” she said. “It is not an easy life, yet it is honest and good. We value the opportunity to work with these animals and the land while we are living to do so. With that opportunity comes great responsibility to take the best care of the animals and land, with proper

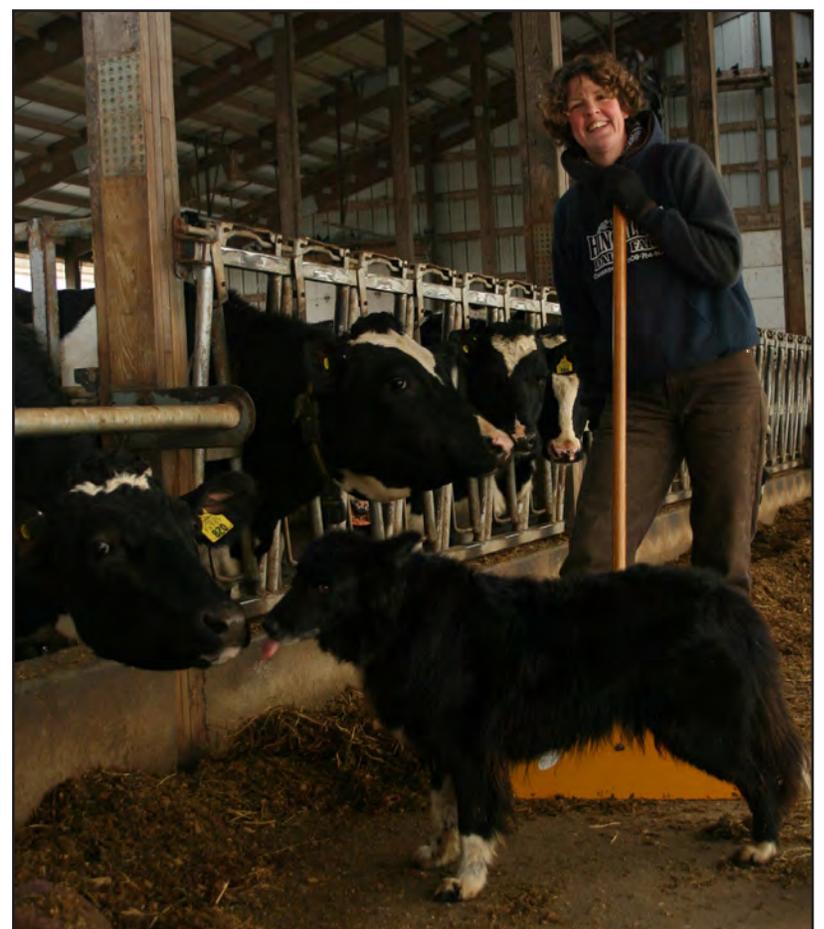
Story by Danielle Endvick
WFU Communications Director

Left: Hinchley visited the U.S. Capitol during a trip to the National Farmers Union Fly-In to Washington, D.C.

Interested in visiting Hinchley’s Dairy Farm? Reservations are required. To learn more call 608-764-5090 or email Tina@ dairyfarmtours.com.



Above: Visitors to Hinchley’s Dairy Farm experience life on a genuine farm, including the chance to milk a cow. Below: “There’s something to be said for being your own boss,” Hinchley said.



Chapter Chatter *Share it here!*

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



Pie party

Left: These energetic Vernon County Farmers Union members gathered at the home of Stephen and Jo Ann Humfeld Sept. 12 and made 35 apple pies and 10 cherry pies in a single afternoon. The pies were sold by the piece or whole at the Vernon County Farmers Union food stand at the Vernon County Fair September 14-18. Pictured are: Thea Von Ruden, Jim and Gloria Servais, Roland Hoff, Pam Seelow, Dale Von Ruden, Gordon and Joanne Dach, Carolyn Austin, and Steve and JoAnn Humfeld. Missing from the photo are Rachel and Larry Strangstalien. The photo was taken by Barb Laufenberg, who also helped.

FARMERS UNION HAPPENINGS

Co-op Connection, Oct. 1, 8:30 am to noon, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Madison (next to the Farmers' Market)

Wormfarm Institute Fermentation Fest, Oct. 1-9, Reedsburg, www.fermentationfest.com

South Central Fall Kick-off Chapter Meeting, Oct. 3, 6:30pm, potluck at Pat Skogen's, 1913 12th Ave., Monroe

World Dairy Expo, Oct. 4-8, Alliant Energy Center, Madison, www.worlddairyexpo.com

Chapter Financial Reports due, Oct. 10

Wood-Portage-Waupaca County Farmers Union meeting and potluck, Oct. 16, noon, Nami Moon Farms, 600 Oak Rd. N., Custer. Info: Tommy Enright, 715-563-2169

Fall Frolic, Oct. 22, 10am to 4pm, WFU Kamp Kenwood, 19161 79th Ave., Chippewa Falls. Info: Brad Henderson, 715-214-7244

Election Day, Nov. 8, don't forget to vote!

Taylor-Price Farmers Union Annual Meeting, Nov. 10, 7pm, Happy Joes Pizza, 909 Casement Ct, Medford. Info: Linda Ceylor, 715-474-2271 or Pam Gebert, 715-748-6740

Green County Women in Sustainable Ag Potluck, Nov. 13, 4pm, Betty Anderson farm, 16136 W. Avon N. Townline Rd., Brodhead

Resolutions due to WFU, Dec. 1

Sauk County Farmers Union Annual Meeting and Cookie Exchange, Dec. 3, noon-3pm, Farm Kitchen Restaurant, S5718 State Road 123, Baraboo. Info: Erin Schneider, e.schneider.hilltopfarm@gmail.com or 608-257-6729

86th Wisconsin Farmers Union State Convention, Jan. 27-29, Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells. Watch for info at www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

Farmers Union members are welcome to submit chapter or farm events to Danielle Endvick at dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com or 715-471-0398.



**Wisconsin
Farmers
Union**

86th Annual State Convention
JANUARY 27-29, 2017
CHULA VISTA RESORT, WISCONSIN DELLS

CULTIVATING RURAL VALUES
NETWORKING WORKSHOPS LOCAL FOOD



**FAMILY
COMMUNITY
COOPERATION
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
SUSTAINABILITY
GRASSROOTS
FARMING**

Food stand a Barron County Farmers Union tradition

Carolyn Verhulst
Barron County Farmers Union President

Each year Barron County Farmers Union operates the Farmer's Cafe at the Barron County Fair. The fair stand is a tradition started at least 60-plus years ago.

We are blessed to have this annual source of income. Funds raised allow us to help pay for campers to WFU Kamp Kenwood, to help members and youth attend annual convention, to donate to local FFA programs, to make an occasional donation to WFU Kamp Kenwood, and cover other promotion or needs of the chapter.

Our fair runs five days, and since we try to stay open 12 hours a day, we cooperate with members of a local church to fill shifts. The proceeds shared with them, after the costs are



Above: Taking a turn helping out at the Barron County Farmers Union Farmer's Cafe were, from left, Marlys and Bruce Hanson, Jim Hare, Becky Glass, Carolyn Verhulst, and Amber Hare.

paid, go toward mission work.

We strive to buy from local businesses, with a few exceptions, and have a family friendly menu, keeping the prices as low as possi-

ble. Leftover product goes to a local soup kitchen.

Managing this stand has come with its challenges. We've had hot or rainy weather (this year we had both). Knowing how much

product to order can be guess work. Finding the workers, paying the bills, and cleaning, cleaning, cleaning before, during and after the fair are all time-consuming chores. But

the people we meet and the fun of working alongside our Farmers Union members, neighbors and friends make it a time we look forward to each year. Some of our repeat customers come back year after year and day after day. They say we have the best food but are selling it "too cheap." They reward us with their business, and we occasionally reward them with a freebie; it's all good!

We're cooperating in a pretty good way. We are, through the mission work of the church, helping to pay for pumps in Malawi so crops and gardens can be watered, we are getting kids to camp — a plus any way you look at it — and we are giving back to our community when we can and keeping a lookout for more. Next year, if you're in the area between July 19-23, stop in! You'll be glad you did!

Bayer/Monsanto merger a disappointment following fly-in efforts

News broke Sept. 14 of a confirmed Bayer/Monsanto merger, just hours after hundreds of Farmers Union members from around the country had been on Capitol Hill expressing concern over growing corporate consolidation. Seventeen Wisconsin Farmers Union members were among those lobbying, calling for better enforcement of federal anti-trust regulations.

German pharmaceutical and chemical giant Bayer announced plans to buy U.S. seed seller Monsanto for \$66 billion in an all-cash deal that will create the world's largest supplier of seeds and agricultural chemicals.

The deal comes as falling crop prices have caused a slide in farm profits, which cuts into the amount farmers can pay for inputs. Consolidation in agriculture also results in increased prices for consumers; less choice, competition, and innovation; and increased consolidation of farmland.

Currently, the top six agricultural input companies own 63 percent of the global seed market, 75 percent of the ag chemical market, and 95 percent of the trait acres for corn, soybeans, and cotton in the United States.

Meanwhile, the top four meat processing companies slaughter 85 percent of the cattle, 74 percent of the hogs, and 54 percent of the chicken in the U.S.

The merger between Bayer and Monsanto marks the fifth major deal in agriculture in the last year, preceded by an approval of the Syngenta/ChemChina acquisition and proposed mergers between Dow/DuPont, Potash Corp./Agrium and John Deere/Precision Planting LLC.

In response to the multi-billion merger deal, Wisconsin Farmers Union (WFU) President Darin Von Ruden issued the following statement:

"Consolidation of this magnitude cannot

be the standard for agriculture, and we should not allow it to determine the landscape for our future," Von Ruden said. "Our family farm and ranch members recently returned from Capitol Hill, where they asked Members of Congress to conduct hearings to review the staggering amount of pending merger deals in agriculture today. Mergers like this haven't helped farmers or consumers. CEOs receive big pay raises while everyone else pays in the end."

The Senate Judiciary Committee has pledged to review the alarming trend of consolidation in agriculture, which WFU believes has led to less competition, stifled innovation, higher prices and job loss in rural America.

"Farmers are the ones who bear the economic brunt of corporate consolidation and they are now feeling the effects of incredibly consolidated industries on just about every aspect of their operation," Von Ruden said.

Farmers Union honors champions of family farms

On Sept. 13, National Farmers Union announced 44 recipients of the Golden Triangle Award, the organization's highest legislative honor.

Among this year's honorees were Senator Tammy Baldwin and Congressman Mark Pocan from Wisconsin. The award is presented annually to policymakers who have demonstrated leadership and support for family farmers, ranchers and rural communities.

"We are proud of the work that Congressman Mark Pocan and Senator Tammy Baldwin have done on behalf of Wisconsin's family farmers," said Wisconsin Farmers Union President Von Ruden. "They recognize the importance of our agricultural community in Wisconsin and have been great allies in the past year."

This year's Golden Triangle recipients were selected for their leadership and contribution to several issues important to family farmers and ranchers.

Sen. Baldwin has been a champion of agricultural conservation programs and technical assistance



Left: Wisconsin Farmers Union members presented Congressman Mark Pocan with a Golden Triangle Award during the National Farmers Union Fly-In. Shown are: Nick Levendofsky, Madison; Kriss Marion, Blanchardville; Kara O'Connor, Madison; Darin Von Ruden, Westby; Congressman Mark Pocan, Tommy Enright, Amherst; Killian Harnish, La Crosse; and Cathy Statz, Chippewa Falls.

for farmers in her role on the Senate Appropriations Committee. She also stood up for the Renewable Fuel Standard, urging the EPA to increase renewable fuels in our gasoline supply in 2017. In late July, she joined a bipartisan coalition in sending a letter to the U.S. Department of Agriculture asking for emergency support for dairy farmers struggling with declining milk prices.

Congressman Pocan has been a true leader in opposing the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade

deal that will increase the trade deficit by \$21.7 billion and open our borders to a flood of cheap dairy imports from New Zealand. Pocan also signed on to the coalition letter urging efforts to balance the dairy market. He supports the Renewable Fuel Standard and has been a strong voice for Country of Origin Labeling.

"The Golden Triangle Award represents outstanding leadership and tireless effort on the issues that are important to our industry and organization," said NFU

President Roger Johnson. "It is our honor to recognize the efforts of these Congressional champions and friends of family farming and ranching."

The Golden Triangle Award is based on NFU's symbol, a triangle with the three sides noting Farmers Union's three-fold efforts in legislation, cooperation and education. The prestigious awards have been presented every year since 1988.



Above: The Wisconsin Farmers Union delegation presented the Golden Triangle Award to Senator Tammy Baldwin during the NFU Fly-In to Washington, D.C. Sept. 13. Pictured, from left, are Chris Holman, Kriss Marion, WFU President Darin Von Ruden, WFU Education Director Cathy Statz, Craig and Vicki Dunnum, Kristi Gorell, WFU Government Relations Associate Nick Levendofsky, Sen. Tammy Baldwin, Nial Murray, Kipp Hinz, Killian Harnish, Betty Anderson, Tommy Enright, Miriam Valley, Max Hart and WFU Government Relations Director Kara O'Connor.



CHIPPEWA FALLS, WI

CABIN ON WISSOTA



The cozy Cabin on Lake Wissota at WFU Kamp Kenwood is available to rent from mid-October through April. A perfect getaway for the outdoor enthusiast, the cabin offers convenient access to hiking and cross-country trails in Lake Wissota State Park.



**Family Gatherings • Business Retreats
 Birthday & Holiday Parties • Winter Fun**

WFU Kamp Kenwood

19161 79th Avenue • Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

www.kampkenwood.com

www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com

BITS & PIECES

Annual meeting season approaches

Chapter officers, be sure to notify the WFU State Office at 715-723-5561 once you've set your annual meeting date. In order to be promoted in the next month's edition of *Wisconsin Farmers Union News*, meeting details must be submitted by the 15th of the month. Annual meetings must be held by Dec. 1, when bylaw changes and resolutions are due. The Resolutions Review Committee meets in December.

According to WFU Bylaws: "To be considered by the Resolutions Review Committee, all resolutions must be adopted and presented by the county, county-locals, and locals to the designated annual meeting of the Resolutions Review Committee."

Please be sure to submit any resolutions at your annual meeting, so they can be discussed at the local level before proceeding on to policy review.

Women Farmers to gather in Nebraska

WFU is exploring the possibility of organizing a car pool for women interested in attending the Women, Food and Agriculture Network Annual Conference Nov. 4-5 at Lied Lodge in Nebraska City.

Join 150 other women engaged in healthy food and farming as we gather on the grounds of the beautiful Arbor Day Farm. Bring your friends and colleagues! Early-bird registration ends Oct. 13 at midnight. Those interested in carpooling through WFU are encouraged to contact Deb Jakubek at djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com or 715-590-2130 ASAP.

Lied Lodge discounted room rates end Oct. 10. (Call 800-546-5433 to make your reservation and request a guest room under Women, Food and Agriculture Network.)

Visit <http://www.wfan.org/2016-wfan-annual-conference/> to view the agenda, learn about field tours, and find out about sponsorships.

Fermentation Fest expected to draw 25,000

REEDSBURG — Wormfarm Institute, working with farmers, landowners and communities of central Sauk County, announces the Sixth Annual Fermentation Fest: A Live Culture Convergence.

The festival, which runs Oct. 1-9, is a lively, multi-faceted opportunity for rural and urban visitors to experience the land that sustains us in new ways during the harvest season.

Come spend a day – or a few – exploring the unique temporary art displays and learning from 44 fermentation-focused classes ranging from bread to chocolate, yogurt to beer. This year's featured presenters include best-selling food writers Sandor Katz and Peter Reinhart.

Beginning in Reedsburg, the Fest's signature attraction is the Farm/Art DTour, which leads visitors through the agricultural landscapes and small towns of central Sauk County.

Last year 20,000 traveled the 50-mile self-guided DTour through working farm land punctuated by temporary art installations, pasture performances, educational Field Notes, local food vendors and roadside poetry.

Visitors are encouraged to begin their visit at the Reedsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, which serves as Fest headquarters.

Fermentation Fest classes require advance online registration. Sessions range from lacto-fermented vegetables to gluten-free baking to hands-on clay building your own steins and mugs, or making herbal beer. Learn more at www.fermentationfest.com.

Taking a Stand: Be a part of WFU's policy process

Kara O'Connor
Government Relations Director

Wisconsin Farmers Union is a grassroots, member-based organization that adheres to cooperative principles. One of those principles is "One Member, One Vote." Step inside the WFU policy process, and you will see this principle in action! Every WFU member is encouraged to take an active role in proposing, discussing, and voting on the policy positions that we then take to the Wisconsin State Legislature and the United States Congress.

How can you get involved? Some important opportunities are coming up.

Now through November: Get out your pen and paper! It's time to write up your policy resolutions. A resolution is a short statement that expresses your opinion about what the state or federal government should or shouldn't do. See the example at the end of this article.

Anyone can write a resolution! A resolution does not have to be long, complicated, or formal. If you have an idea for a resolution, feel free to contact Nick Levendofsky (608-234-3741 or nickl@wisconsinfarmersunion.com) or Kara Slaughter (608-514-4541 or koconnor@wisconsinfarmersunion.com) on the WFU policy staff. They are very happy to work with you to get your ideas down on paper.

Once you have your resolution written, send it to your county/local president. (If you need that person's contact information, let us know.) The ideal time to do this is prior to the county/local annual

meeting, so it can be discussed at that meeting. If the county/local annual meeting has already passed, your president can bring your resolution to the County Presidents' Meeting in January.

October to early December: County and local Farmers Union chapters hold their annual meetings, elect officers, and select delegates for the annual convention. Annual meetings are announced by postcard in the mail. Notices are also included in the WFU e-news updates. If you did not receive your postcard or are not receiving weekly email updates, please contact the state office: 715-723-5561.

Did you miss your annual meeting, but would like to attend convention as a delegate? Contact your chapter president to see if there are still delegate spots available for your county. Counties have until December 31 to submit their final list of delegates.

When you talk to your county/local president, be sure to ask about possible financial support for attending convention as a delegate. Some counties solicit donations from their local cooperatives to defray convention registration costs for delegates.

You can also attend convention as a non-delegate and vote your own vote as an individual. If you would like to attend the convention as a voting individual member, please contact Diane in the state office, 715-723-5561.

Early October: WFU staff seek volunteers to serve on the statewide Resolutions Review Committee. Serving on this committee entails helping to lead the policy discussion at the state convention in

January, and attending one or two daylong pre-convention meetings in November or December to develop a first draft of the revised policy handbook.

If you are interested in serving on the Resolutions Review Committee, contact me and I will add you to the list of potential policy committee members.

Mid-December: The Resolutions Review Committee meets to create a first draft of a new policy handbook. Last year's handbook serves as a starting point for this year's draft.

Early January: County Presidents refine the draft from the Resolutions Review Committee.

Late January: At the annual convention, county delegates and individual members discuss and vote on the final version of the WFU policy handbook for the coming year. The full handbook is available on our website under the "Policy" heading.

February through December: If unexpected issues arise throughout the year, staff seeks input from the WFU Board of Directors or a standing WFU committee (such as the dairy committee.)

Just as in a democracy, every WFU member has a voice in the policy process. If you have ideas about the positions that the organization should (or shouldn't) be taking, it's time to get involved!

What does a resolution look like? It does not have to be complicated. The critical parts include:

- 1) Explanation of the problem — what is the problem with the current state of affairs?
- 2) What you think the state or federal government should do or should refrain from doing in order to address the problem.

Here is an example of a resolution that was submitted by a chapter and became WFU policy:

Whereas, the status of white and yellow sweet clover and other nectar-producing plants are defined by the Wisconsin DNR as "undesirable" species; and

Whereas these crops are a significant floral source for honey production in Wisconsin; and

Whereas, the Wisconsin DNR is in the process of changing the status to "invasive species," and

Whereas, the invasive status would prohibit purchase and planting of white and yellow sweet clover.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Wisconsin Farmers Union go on record as being in favor of retaining the current status of white and yellow sweet clover and other nectar-producing plants and take action to work with the Wisconsin DNR, USDA, and other government entities, as needed, to ensure that seed for these crops may continue to be purchased and planted.

Could you write a resolution like this? Sure! Could you vote on it? Absolutely! I hope that you will take an active role in the WFU policy process this year.

Thank you Associate Members!

**Does your organization
share the values of
Wisconsin Farmers Union?**

Contact WFU Membership Coordinator
Deb Jakubek at 715-590-2130 to learn how
being an Associate Member can benefit
you and further our efforts in protecting
family farms and rural communities.

**Barron Mutual Insurance Company
Cooperative Network
County of Marathon
Crawford Stewardship Project
Dallman Insurance Agency
Douglas County Land & Water
Conservation Dept.
Falls Silo Repair
Greenville Co-op
Hay River Pumpkin Seed Oil
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
Midwest Renewable Energy
Association
Natural Heritage Land Trust
North Wind Renewable Energy
Osseo Plastics & Supply
People's Food Co-op
Premier Co-op
Vernon Telephone Co-op
Viroqua Food Cooperative**

KAMP KENWOOD CORNER

WFU invests in future with beach project



Brad Henderson
Facilities Manager

Take a sandy, neglected appearing beach devoid of any vegetation with deep eroded furrows leading to the waters of the Yellow River, and in its place create a functional beach area, eliminate the erosion and, along the way, make it look beautiful. That was the challenge facing us when we examined the Kamp Kenwood beach last year.

To be sure, the problem we faced was more than aesthetic, we were beginning to risk undermining the foundation of the staff cabin, guests using the beach were being challenged to walk in areas with eroded edges, and with each rain storm our soil was being washed into the Yellow River. We needed a complete solution that improved the access to the water, eliminated the erosion and improved the aesthetic of the beach.

Our solution began with a meeting of the minds; Tom Quinn, Cathy Statz and I hashed out our needs (and wants) for the improved beach. Then we approached Chippewa County Zoning to find out what constraints we had to adhere to. After incorporating these inputs, our design was completed. Next, we required the assistance of a contractor capable of moving the earth and placing new plants and mulch. Add Down To Earth Landscaping, and our team was ready for action.

First, the berm was placed to restrict water from running over land to the beach. From this time on, the rainfall that landed on the soil would be forced to seep into the ground. Next, large granite boulders from near Thorp, WI were strategically placed in a horseshoe to keep back the soil and provide impromptu seating near the water. Mulch and plants including white and purple Veronica, Helenium,

Karl Forester and red Bergenia, were placed in the mulch to hold the surface in place. Lastly, at the beginning of each pier, a large flat stone was placed to stabilize the dock and make walking (and jumping from) the pier less wobbly.

A member of the Lake Wissota Improvement and Protection Association (LWIPA) recently visited Kamp Kenwood. Here's what they had to say after our project was completed: "What do we see now? Large beautiful rocks stabilize the sandy soil with plants anchoring. The movement of the grasses in the wind, colorful blooms and pollinators attracted to the plants catch our interest. Gorgeous wide stairs invite you down to the sandy beach from the camp and from the water invite you into the camp. Rock paths lead to the docks allowing easy and safe access to the water for campers and boaters. The erosion has been stopped and it's beautiful! Functional art at its best!"

Written in cooperation with Barb Barrickman, LWIPA member



Before & After

Above: Erosion was carrying away sand from the WFU Kamp Kenwood beach and putting the Cabin on Lake Wissota at risk until improvements were made to the beach area this summer. *Below:* Among improvements made to the beach were a landscaped berm and granite boulders that not only accent the swim area but also help keep the soil in place.



FALL FROLIC
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22

10am - 4pm
19161 79th Ave.
Chippewa Falls, WI

As summer comes to a close,
join us in winterizing the camp!

Furniture Moving in Youth Cabins
Cutting wood • Bringing in the docks

Once the work is done we'll
enjoy some games and a cookout!

RSVP to Brad Henderson at 715-214-7244
Find directions at www.KampKenwood.com



Farmers Union Camp a cooperative labor of love



Cathy Statz
Education
Director

October is Co-op Month and a great time to celebrate Farmers Union's cooperative heritage and thank our many cooperatives partners for working with us to improve family farms, strengthen rural communities and build a more democratic economy for all.

Check out the Wisconsin Farmers Union booth at cooperative events in New Auburn, Madison, Menomonie and Eau Claire in this month, and be sure to say "thanks" to the employees and leaders of the cooperatives and credit unions in your communities.

Youth Program sign-up

October 1 marks the official start of the Farmers Union Youth year, so now is a great time to sign up your children or grandchildren. The Farmers Union Youth Program teaches youth about cooperative principles and careers while also building leadership skills and educating kids about Farmers Union and the important issues affecting family farms and rural communities.

Contact your local or county Youth Leader or get in touch through the WFU state office to learn more: 800-272-5531 or cstatz@wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

Since 1930, the Farmers Union Youth Pro-

gram has been just one part of our activities for young people. The summer camp program at WFU Kamp Kenwood also reinforces our cooperative education mission.

Kids ages 8-18 learned cooperative principles, history and philosophy through lessons and activities this summer, just as they have since the 1930s. Campers at each session establish their own cooperative store to provide themselves with ice cream treats, beverages and Farmers Union Camp merchandise. Campers elect a board of directors, purchase shares to become members of the co-op and volunteer for the Co-op Store Advertising Committee to promote their co-op.

At the close of each Farmers Union Camp session, campers receive a dividend, or patronage refund, at the end of each camp session based on their use of the store (usually 5 cents back on every dollar spent). Campers then vote on the distribution of any remaining profits to a cause, project or charity of the camper members' choice, selected during the final meeting of the co-op on the last day of camp. Organizations like Gabe's My Heart/ChemoDuck receive donations from some of the camp sessions; campers also made contributions to their internal campaign for camp improvements.

Co-op camp supporters
A number of co-ops

and credit unions around the state generously support the camp program by sponsoring campers and/or donating products or funds.

Special thanks to the following co-op and credit union sponsors:

- CHS Foundation for supporting the overall camp program through a generous cooperative education grant
- Summit Credit Union for a contribution of \$500
- Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative – for donating over \$500 worth of organic food
- Chippewa Valley Energy (Eau Claire Co-op Oil) – for donating 1,000 gallons of LP
- Whole Foods Co-op (Duluth) for a contribution of \$200

- Simplicity Credit Union, River Country Co-op, Dunn Energy Co-op, FarmFirst Dairy Co-op, Cedar Country Co-op, Pierce Pepin Cooperatives Services and Eau Claire Energy Co-op for supporting camper registration fees.

- Westby Co-op Creamery – for donating 2 cases of butter

- Cooperative Partners Warehouse, Mississippi Market Food Co-op, Just Local Food Co-op, Viroqua Food Co-op and Willy Street Co-op for donating gift vouchers and/or food

- Hundreds of co-ops and credit unions statewide and beyond – for promoting the camp program by sharing brochures, inserts and posters with their members

and the general public,

Please reach out and give a special thank you all those co-ops and credit unions that support us in our work to teach young people about cooperatives, family farms and leadership all year long through our youth education programs. We are so grateful to our cooperative partners for helping us educate the next generation of cooperative members, employees and leaders!

We are still crunching the numbers of how many co-ops and credit unions were represented by campers this year; tune into next month's WFU News to see who makes our "Ten-Campers-Or-More Champions" list!

Save a trip to the doctor's office or ER with Telemedicine!

Included with your Wellness Access Card!



Farmers Union members,

You don't have to travel far for professional medical assistance.

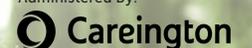
Get the Wellness Access Card and call a real doctor 24/7!

Physicians are available 24/7 to take your call for simple medical consultations, treatment recommendations and even write prescriptions right over the phone. It's a great option for when your regular doctor is not available or you need non-emergency care after normal hours.

Call For

- Cold or Flu
- Sinus infections
- Allergies
- Respiratory infections
- Poison ivy
- Other non-emergency medical issues

Administered By:



Sign up for the Wellness Access Card to receive access to Telemedicine, as well as discounts on dental care, vision care, prescriptions and more!

How to Join

www.careington.com/co/nisi/

(877) 376-8958

For additional information on how to join, please contact your Wellness Access Card representative.



Thank you to the following cooperative businesses!

Chippewa Valley Cooperative Alliance
Furthering cooperative awareness

Dunn Energy Cooperative
Energy Through Excellence

Oconto Electric Cooperative
Committed to Our Communities Since 1937

Taylor Credit Union
Where your money works as hard as you do!

Lakeland Cooperative
Proudly Serving Northwest Wisconsin

Vernon Electric Cooperative
Innovation, Accountability & Integrity

COUNTRYSIDE
COOPERATIVE
Creative Solutions. Exceptional Value.

715.672.8947 www.countrysidecoop.com

Rooted in Rural Values
United to Grow Family Agriculture

Wisconsin Farmers Union

Make a difference.
Join today.
800.272.5531
www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com

ProVision Partners
GROWING TOGETHER

Stratford ~ Auburndale ~ Colby ~ Unity
Marshfield ~ Pittsville ~ Arpin ~ Chili

BOVINE INSEMINATION ISN'T AS ROMANTIC AS IT SOUNDS.

ARTEX
ALMOST AS TOUGH AS FARMING.

THE TOUGHEST SPREADERS ON EARTH FOR THE TOUGHEST PEOPLE EVER. WWW.ARTEXMFG.COM

MADE IN MINNESOTA

Burning down the barn



Alan Guebert

If the prospect of either Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton as president scares you, put down the television remote and pick up “Global Material Flows and Resource Productivity,” a new report from the United Nations Environmental Program. It makes the dour debaters look positively sunny.

Sure, the report’s title suggests it will be as dull as dirt and it doesn’t disappoint—until its second sentence: “Overall, the global economy expanded more than threefold over the four decades since 1970, population almost doubled and global material extraction tripled.”

Even a math-challenged sentence slinger like me can see the black lining in that number cloud. If less than twice as many people used three times more “global material”—oil, coal, grain, minerals, water, soil, gravel, sand—in

the last 40 years, the next 40, with more people and more wealth, will push the world’s resources to their breaking point.

Then, in fact, past it.

For example, notes the UN report, “In 2010, more than 10 billion tons of materials were exported globally” but “... 30 billion tons of materials extracted globally were required to produce” those economy-fueling exports.

Now, 6 years later, “Globally, more material per unit of GDP is required” than that previous resource-gobbling, three-to-one ratio to fuel our growth-obsessed, always-more culture.

We in agriculture have our own upside down ratios. For example, it’s farming gospel that in adding two billion people to the world’s population by 2050—or about 30 percent more people in just 34 years—farmers and ranchers will need to grow 60 percent more food than today.

How on earth will we sustain that estimated 2:1 food-to-population ratio given today’s shrinking materials base?

The short answer, notes Alice Friedemann, a blogger who posts her writings at www.energyskeptic.com, is that we won’t. Not for long anyway.

Using the UN’s own numbers, Friedemann calculates “In order to accommodate an additional 2 billion people in 2050”—the exact target U.S. farmers have been told to focus on—“material consumption will need to nearly triple to 180 billion tons... (or) almost three times today’s amount.”

If that pace of consumption “grows in the future at 5% compound rate,” Friedemann adds, “in 497 years the entire earth will be consumed... all of it, and we’ll be floating in outer space.”

That can never happen, right? I mean, even if it could, that’s someone else’s worry, because, after all, 500 years is a long, long time from now and you and I will be long gone, baby.

Yes, we’ll be long gone but our actions, like those of a young Catholic monk named Luther 500 years ago or a daring Portuguese sailor named Magellan shortly thereafter, can and will affect the course of mankind.

Indeed, even the non-scientists among us suspect it won’t take any-

where near that long. As such, it’s a safe bet that young children today will be forced to deal with the personal and geopolitical consequences of our wasteful, thoughtless use of natural resources now.

Moreover, it doesn’t matter whether you or I or the neighbor’s dog believes in climate change because that belief or disbelief will not stop another world-changing 4 degrees Celsius increase in global temperatures by 2100. Our actions now might—but even that’s not certain.

What is certain is that we cannot continue on today’s deadly consumptive path. We need to change. And fast.

Maybe a good place to start is looking in our grandchildren’s eyes and tell ‘em the truth: We’re robbing your future to grow \$3 corn we don’t need, \$9 soybeans we can’t sell, and money-losing 60-cent cotton we’re dumping on world markets.

Hey, they need to grow up and face the future. What’s left of it anyway.

© 2016 *ag comm* The Farm and Food File is published weekly through the U.S. and Canada. Find out more at www.farmandfoodfile.com.

“In Nature there is abundance, with Nature there is success.”



Organic Certification

Crops, Wild Crops, Livestock, Processing & Handling
USDA Grassfed Verification

Nature’s International Certification Services is a USDA NOP accredited, farmer-owned organic certification agency founded upon 35 years of organic farming experience.

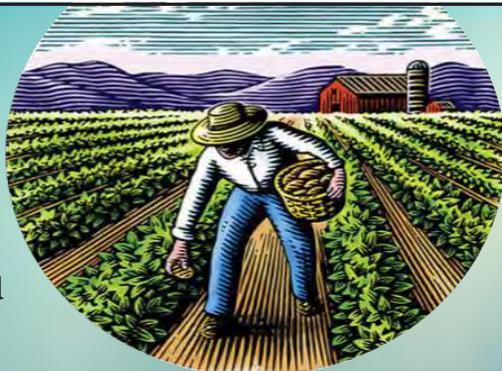
Farmer focused, Farmer-owned: *That’s* the Nature’s International difference.

Honest

Practical

Experienced

Personal



Nature’s International Certification Services
Phone: 608-637-7080 Fax: 608-637-7460
224 E. State Hwy 56, Viroqua, WI 54665
www.naturesinternational.com

Swheat Scoop®

Natural Wheat Litter

Eliminates litter box odors so well,
you’ll think you lost your cat!

Naturally effective.

Swheat Scoop litter’s natural wheat enzymes work to eliminate rather than mask litter box odors, no matter how many cats you own. Plus, natural wheat starches form solid clumps fast to make cleanups easy.

No clay, chemicals or fragrances.

Swheat Scoop litter doesn’t contain any silica, sodium bentonite, chemicals or flowery fragrances. It’s so safe, it’s vet-recommended for use with kittens. Wheat litter also tracks less and doesn’t raise clay dust clouds when poured.

Good for the Earth.

Unlike clay litters that are mined and never decompose, Swheat Scoop litter is made from wheat, a renewable resource, and is completely biodegradable. It’s also certified flushable and sewer/septic safe.

Multi cat formula.

Swheat Scoop makes an excellent multi cat formula, no ammonia odors, firm clumps which don’t break and you’ll use 10 lbs. per cat per month so it is economical as well.

You’ll find Swheat Scoop litter at local grocery and neighborhood pet stores, national pet chains and natural food stores. To learn more, visit www.swheatscoop.com or call 1-800-SWHEATS (794-3287).

Swheat Scoop®

Natural Wheat Litter

Make a natural change for the better.

