



Dairy's

BOTTOM LINE

Sharing ideas, solutions, resources and experiences that help dairy producers succeed.

Adding Passion, Multiplying Profits

At the PDPW Annual Business Conference



Gather perspectives from dairy operations across the country.

Greetings Fellow Dairy Producers and Industry,

Do you have more questions than you do answers? More uncertainty than security? It's tough to feel confident about your decisions when you can't see around the corner.

Now more than ever before, you need to invest in a business conference and spend two days off the farm to collect the information and inspiration necessary to better manage your business in 2009 and beyond.

Join us, other dairy producers and industry at the PDPW Annual Business Conference – dairy's premier educational event – March 17-18 at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison!

We invite you to register now for this energizing event that combines the best business education and valuable networking opportunities available in the industry. This is the conference – regardless of your management style or dairy size – you can't afford to miss! It was developed by dairy producers to meet the needs of our industry.



Get a sneak peak at the diverse conference specialty sessions.



Producers share their personal experiences and advice.

Enjoy two days of premier educational sessions, time to network with fellow producers and the opportunity to learn trade secrets from industry partners in the Hall of Ideas tradeshow.

PDPW is dedicated to providing the resources you need. Created by a handful of visionary dairy producers in 1992, we have built PDPW into the strong, grassroots organization that today touches thousands of individuals and businesses and continues to positively shape the future of our industry.

The PDPW Annual Business Conference is the go-to place to learn new information and innovative ideas for improving your bottom line. You can count on this event to prepare you to thrive in 2009, by "Adding Passion and Multiplying Profits."

Sincerely,

PDPW Annual Business Conference Chairpersons



Adding Passion, Multiplying Profits
PDPW Annual Business Conference
March 17-18, 2009 in Madison

The Annual Business Conference is the place to find:

- Two days packed with educational sessions
- More than 35 world-renowned experts and producer panelists
- 18 specialty sessions
- Multiple producer panels with the best firsthand advice you can find
- Networking opportunities with fellow producers
- The one-of-a-kind Hall of Ideas tradeshow where industry's preferred suppliers showcase the most innovative products and services

Also In This Issue:

Genomics

Growing your middle managers

Complete lineup of conference sessions

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Producers From Michigan, Colorado, California to Share Insights At the PDPW Annual Business Conference

Three dairy producers from across the U.S. will present a panel discussion at the PDPW Annual Business Conference. The trio – from Michigan, Colorado and California – will talk about “Sharing Insight From Across America.” The PDPW conference is set for March 17 and 18 in Madison.

GREEN MEADOW FARMS

Lower milk prices have prompted changes in how the cows are managed at Green Meadow Farms. The operation near Elsie, Mich., milks slightly more than 3,000. Herd manager Dwight “Ike” Hunt will talk about this 87-year-old, family owned farm.

“We’re trying to get a little more milk out of the cows by tinkering with the ration,” says Hunt. “We went off rBST a year ago in Michigan. When we went off, we thought it was just about a break-even for us. We’ve gained some of the (lost) milk back through our management.”

The Green Meadow herd average is approximately 26,000 pounds. Hunt says they “can’t quite” get all the cows milked three times a day with the farm’s double-20 and double-30 parlors. He figures production fell seven to eight pounds per cow, per day when Michigan farmers stopped using rBST.

To boost production, the farm is feeding more corn. The 6,000-acre farm grew all its own grain corn last year, figuring that route was cheaper than buying it.

Hunt has been employed by the Green family 22 years. In all, the farm employs 70. Hunt acknowledges that the number of cows does not justify that many employees, but he explains that the amount of crops grown accounts for the rest.

Besides corn, alfalfa and soybeans, Green Meadow Farms contracts 450 acres of sugar beets. The beets go to a farmer-

owned co-op.

As might be expected, the farm uses a by-product of the sugar industry in its ration. Beet pulp is “good cow feed,” Hunt confirms.

Hunt points out another positive aspect of growing sugar beets. “They help us in our nutrient management because they take a fair amount of phosphorous out of the ground,” he says.



Ike Hunt

Ninety-eight percent of the Green Meadow herd is Holsteins, and they’re all registered. The cattle are shown at the state and district show in Michigan, but their travel is somewhat restricted, due to the state’s tuberculosis status, Hunt points out.

In a typical year the farm sells some 250 to 300 head as breeding stock. In addition, last year the farm sold 750 bulls, Hunt reports.

Besides the usual complement of freestall barns and bunker silos, this dairy uses

an anaerobic manure digester. The device is in its second winter.

Situated 35 miles north of the Michigan capital of Lansing, Green Meadow Farms is in an area of gently rolling ground. Hunt says there are not a lot of dairy farms close by, but neither is there much urban encroachment.

“In our area it’s pretty good. We’re far enough away from the city so that people haven’t been moving out terribly bad, especially now, with the economy,” the herd manager comments.

The farm is in Clinton County, which is the Wolverine State’s second-largest dairy county, according to Hunt. “We have quite a few thousand-cow dairies,” he says.

As for something that’s on the minds of all dairy farmers – milk prices – Hunt says the farm’s January “mailbox” price was close to \$16, but is probably headed lower. The Class III price was \$15.50, he reports.

“It’s going to be tougher than last year,” Hunt says. “We’re at the point now where we’re not

See Hunt on page 8

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Attend the premier
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dairy producers & leaders!

PROFESSIONAL DAIRY PRODUCERS OF WISCONSIN
ANNUAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

MARCH 17 - 18, 2009

ALLIANT ENERGY CENTER

MADISON, WISCONSIN



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800.947.7379 www.pdpw.org

PDPW Annual Business Conference Schedule

Day 1 – Tuesday – March 17

9 a.m. Hall of Ideas – This tradeshow is the place to find the latest technologies, ideas, solutions and information. Your visit to the tradeshow equals innovation and profit potential for your business. The **Hall of Ideas** will be open for you during the entire conference.

9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. Morning Sessions (select one)

1) Gain Insight from Under the Hide with Calf Necropsy – Get an inside look, see and learn the reality of calf health and take home a new understanding of calf care. This session will give you a high-level, hands-on look at what's happening under the hide and why. Not your typical anatomy class, we will use calf cadavers to see, learn and understand more about treatment protocols and their impact on the animal. You'll learn to optimize the potential of each calf, ensuring that she'll multiply your herd, add white gold to your bulk tank and increase green to bolster your bottom line.

2) Dairy Producers Share Dollars and 'Sense' from On-Farm Herd-Health Study – Nine dairy herds participated in a Johne's disease field trial. A description of the control program and the summary results of this 7-year study will be presented by **Dr. Mike Collins**, UW School of Veterinary Medicine. Hear directly from dairy producers involved in the project, what they learned and how the findings will impact their management. **Producer Panelists:** **Mark Breunig** from A-OK Dairy, Sheboygan Falls, Wis.; **Ken Verhasselt** from Verhasselt Farms, Kaukauna, Wis., and **Chuck Ripp** from Ripp Valley Farms, Dane, Wis.

3) Gain a 360 Degree Perspective on Protecting Productive Farmland – Wisconsin loses over 30,000 acres of agricultural land each year. While many agree we need a plan to save these special lands, not everyone agrees on how. Glean a full perspective update from this dynamic panel of stakeholders about how the state should implement the Wisconsin Working Lands Initiative. Panelists: **Dave Jelinski** from Wis. Department of Ag Trade and Consumer Protection Agency; **Pat Stevens** from Wisconsin Builders Association; **Karl Klessig**, dairy producers from Cleveland, Wis. and **Mike Koles** from the Waupaca County Extension, who has studied other programs across the US. **Rick Stadelman**, Executive Director, Wisconsin Towns Association will moderate.

4) Develop Individuals within Your Hispanic Workforce – If you have experience working with and managing a Hispanic workforce, but are challenged with optimizing and further developing talented and skilled individuals, this 90-minute crash course will give you the equation to unlock your team's potential. This engaging session, led by **Jorge Estrada**, founder and CEO of Leadership Coaching International, Inc., will help you develop your team of Hispanic workers into a Varsity-level team of high performers.

5) Understand Laws Regarding Your Trucks, Trailers and more – Wisconsin State Patrol Inspector will discuss how

to legally license farm vehicles, trailers, transport equipment and more. This session allows you to hear firsthand the "black and white" of laws that sometimes appear a little gray. This is your time to get into step with Wisconsin law, saving you time, frustration and dollars.

6) Producer panel: How to Build Non-Family Business Partnerships that Work - **Kevin Krentz** from K & D Dairy, Inc., Berlin, Wis., and **Brian Gerrits** from Lake Breeze Dairy, LLC Malone, Wis., will share an inside perspective of what it takes to make, shape and maintain non-family business partnerships. Learn from these dairy producers' experiences and hear what they recommend others do and don't do when forming similar business relationships. **George Twohig**, the senior member of the agricultural law firm of Twohig, Rietbrock & Schneider, Chilton, Wis., will moderate.

7) Hall of Ideas - Time with Industry's Preferred Suppliers

11 a.m. - Noon Delicious lunch served in the Hall of Ideas – "Add" some fuel and "Multiply" your industry network in the **Hall of Ideas**. Visit our industry's preferred suppliers and meet dairy producers as you enjoy a tasty meal.

Noon Annual Business Conference Kicks off with a Green Light!

Emcee, **Pete Giacomini**, shares the common thread that brings the passion and enthusiasm together session by session. Humbled by his dairy-farm background and intricately involved with the industry, including his role as AgSource Cooperative Chief Operating Officer, Giacomini's thoughtful commentary and delightful humor will factor in to make this conference unforgettable.



Pete Giacomini

12:15 p.m. Weird, Wacky Economic Times – What in the World is Happening? Not sure if you want to laugh or cry? This dynamic keynote will make you laugh and help you understand the driving forces impacting the marketplace.

You'll learn about the global equation and the impact of consumer trends, population movements, land values, ag policy issues, world markets, stock markets, farm markets, war and other intrinsic forces. He tackles the realities and leaves you with manageable insights.

This keynote is the famous economist **Mark Pearson**, who hosts the nationally syndicated public television program, *Market to Market*, and the highly successful daily farm program, *The Big Show*. One of the most astute agricultural speakers in the country today, Pearson will share cutting-edge information that your bottom line can't afford to miss.



Mark Pearson

1:50 - 3:30 p.m. Producer Panel: Sharing Insight from Across America

Regardless of your dairy's size, style, preferred color of cow or

time zone, this producer panel will strike a chord with all dairy producers. Three dairy producers talk openly about the biggest mistakes and the best business moves that they have made. The most intriguing part of this roundtable will undoubtedly be their perspectives of what is next for their businesses and the industry.

Producers Panelists:

Jim Docheff, Jr. from Diamond D Dairy from Longmont, Colo.

Jim Docheff, Jr. is the fourth generation on his family dairy operation that consists of the milking herd and an on-farm milk bottling and yogurt plant. The farm has grown from 65 head to the present size of 600 cows. The herd is comprised of 240 Registered Jerseys, 450 Holsteins and 35 Registered Brown Swiss. Docheff started a new venture by building a milk processing plant in April of 2008.



Jim Docheff

Steve Maddox from Maddox Dairy, Ltd., Riverdale, Calif.

Since 1980, Steve Maddox has been a managing partner in his family's dairy, Maddox Dairy, Ltd. The dairy includes 4,100 cows and their young stock, for a total of 10,000 head. Their operation is one of California's most innovative dairies and one of the nation's most well known registered Holstein herds. Maddox serves on both the National Dairy Board and the U.S. Dairy Export Council Board.



Steve Maddox

Dwight Hunt from Green Meadows Farm, Elsie, Mich.

Dwight "Ike" Hunt shares what this 3,000-cow dairy sees as the great challenges and opportunities for this diversified operation. Founded in 1922, Green Meadow Farms is one of the country's largest herds of registered Holsteins. Hunt has been with the dairy since 1987, and he currently is in charge of all replacements, genetics and bull sales.



Dwight Hunt

3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Ice Cream Break in the Hall of Ideas

4:30 p.m. - 6:40 p.m. Specialty Sessions

Select the breakout sessions that interest you most – attend two, one-hour sessions, one two-hour session or spend the entire afternoon with our industry's preferred suppliers in the *Hall of Ideas*.

1) What Can You Control and Manage Regarding Markets

Mark Pearson, who will also serve as the conferences' lead keynote, will answer the top three questions that every dairy producer will ask about the markets. Engaging in this lively discussion will send you home with a better understanding and sense of direction for your dairy business. **(one-hour session)**

2) Evaluating Reproduction Synchronization Programs

This interactive session led by **Dr. John Fetrow**, professor of dairy production medicine, college of veterinary medicine, University of Minnesota, helps you consider important options and factors when managing your herd's reproductive returns. Nothing multiples your

profits faster than cows that breed back faster. Dr. Fetrow's session sharpens your management mind. He'll get you thinking about available tools and your herd's potential performance, and this session will help you multiply offspring and income. **(one-hour session)**

3) Immigration Liability: What You Need to Know to Protect Your Business

Dairies across the US have witnessed worksite raids and some have even experienced enforcement actions. During this session, **María Andrade**, an immigration attorney from Boise, Idaho, will make protecting your business completely manageable. You will learn about policies and practices that will help you avoid immigration-related employment law violations. **(two-hour session)**

4) Utilizing Genomic Sire Information to Cut the Bull!

Just when you thought cattle breeding was becoming an old hat, groundbreaking technology revolutionizes how you select sires and develop the next generation of cash cows. **Roy Wilson**, associate vice president of the Large Herd Business Center with Genex Cooperative, Inc., translates what this new technology means to your future bottom line. If you are interested in breeding profitable cows, this session is a must. **(one-hour session)**

5) How Does the Credit Crunch Add Up for You?

Hear from a panel of agricultural lenders as they share how the economy and the state of credit impacts the decisions they make, and what this means to you. This session will help you prepare for working with your lender and tapping into available resources. Panelists: **Greg Steele**, AgStar Financial Services, **Brad Guse**, M&I Marshall & Ilsley Bank and **Doug Hein**, State Bank of Newburg. **Gary Sellen**, Badgerland Financial will moderate. **(one-hour session)**

6) Get the Skinny on Feeding Fat to Improve Breeding Successes

Dr. Roy Ax, professor of animal sciences and adjunct professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Arizona, shares what he learned about feeding essential fatty acids for two weeks before and 60 days after calving and how these fats may beef up your pocketbook and propagate your herd's conception rate. **(one-hour session)**

7) Hall of Ideas - Time with Industry's Preferred Suppliers

6:45 p.m. Go for the Green! The evening festivities are designed around you enjoying tons of food and fun, while interacting with an unforgettable keynote speaker and **former Green Bay Packers player, Adam Timmerman**.

This Iowa farm boy shares his entertaining and heart-warming story that goes far beyond the NFL and will take you to what he believes empowered his Godgiven talent. He tells why he invested his first \$15,000 from the NFL in his home farm and what his roots have meant to his success and the success of his teams. This evening event in itself may be the single most important thing that you do for yourself during 2009 – making your time and investment of this business conference worth every dollar.



Adam Timmerman

9 p.m. - Midnight Enjoy an Irish Celebration in the Hall of Ideas. It's time to mingle with friends, colleagues, industry partners and fellow producers.

Day 2 – Wednesday – March 18

7 - 10:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast Served in the Hall of Ideas Graze on knowledge and energy ALL morning. This is a great time for industry and producers to share ideas and learn from one another.

8 - 9 a.m. PDPW and PDPW Education Foundation Annual Business Meetings – Hear from your elected leaders, gather updates, give input and elect the leaders who you want to represent both PDPW and the PDPW Education Foundation.

9:15 a.m. - 12:30 a.m. Specialty Sessions

Select the breakout sessions that interest you most – attend two, one-hour sessions, one, two-hour session or spend your morning interacting with our industry's preferred suppliers in the **Hall of Ideas**.

1) "Watt" Does Tomorrow's Energy Look Like? This session will make your light bulb flash with new, bright ideas as **Neal Verfuert**, president and CEO of Orion Energy Systems, shares what other industries are doing that can also save dairy producers money with reduced energy costs. Beam ahead to the next wave of innovation and energy savings with this high-tech presentation that includes a discussion on carbon credits, curbing electric usage and reducing energy costs. **(one-hour session)**

2) Multiply Heftier Returns with Decisions that Add Up – Bring your calculator as **Dr. John Fetrow**, professor of dairy production medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Minnesota dives into margin and management analysis. He'll walk through financial analysis, including the value of adding cows and consideration of overcrowding, value of marginal milk and the up and down sides of modifying heifer rearing programs. **(two-hour session)**

3) Byproduct Bargain or Cow Burner? Take control of feed costs and learn what to consider with alternative feedstuffs. This session highlights byproducts and how to calculate the best alternatives for your feeding program. Using his 25-plus years of field and academic experience, **Dr. Normand St-Pierre**, professor of animal sciences at Ohio State University, helps you put a pencil to alternative feedstuffs while erasing herd health concerns. **(one-hour session)**

4) Producer Panel: How Growing Middle Managers Multiplies Management Muscle – These dairy producers share what they've learned about identifying the right people to promote to middle managers, growing their skills and adding their talents to your business success formula.

Cory Craig from Herrema Dairy in Indiana and **Steve Maddox**, Maddox Dairy, Riverdale, Calif., will share the tried, tested and true secrets they've discovered while developing managers at their dairies. Session is moderated by **Jorge Estrada**, founder and CEO of Leadership Coaching International, Inc. **(one-hour session)**

5) Producer Panel: Getting the Green Light on Your Expansion – Dairy producers, **Randy Roecker** from Roecker's Rolling Acres, Loganville, Wis., and **Keith York** from Merry Water Farm, Lake Geneva, Wis., share their experiences in working with their communities since they expanded. They'll provide three things that have worked well and three things that they would do different. **Rick Stadelman**, executive director Wisconsin Towns Association, will moderate. **(one-hour session)**

6) Changes on the Horizon – This session is about proposed legislative and administrative rule changes that will affect your business. Learn the latest developments on both a state and federal level, including climate change legislation, water quality initiatives and air pollution proposals related to agriculture. Led by **Jordan Lamb**, partner and attorney at DeWitt Ross & Stevens. **(one-hour session)**

7) Hall of Ideas - Time with Industry's Preferred Suppliers

12:35 - 1:45 p.m. Lunch served in the Hall of Ideas

1:45 - 2:45 p.m. Keynote: Feeding the World without Robbing the Planet – It's ethically vital to produce enough food to feed our global population, which is expected to increase by 2.7 billion people by 2050. **Bryan Weech** from the **World Wildlife Fund** will talk about the importance of producing more with less. He will challenge us to meet our moral obligation to feed the world while conserving resources and protecting all creatures.



Bryan Weech

Weech will stir your emotions while opening your eyes to new possibilities for partnering with others who care as much as you do about land, water and food production. While the facts appear sobering, the possibilities are exciting and endless.

2:45 p.m. PDPW Trip Drawing – Dairy producers, sign-up during the conference to win the \$2,000 trip voucher (redeemable for any trip anywhere you want to go!). You must be present to win.

3 - 4 p.m. Keynote: Take a Setback and Turn it into a Comeback – You've surely experienced setbacks sometime in your life, but few will compare to the challenges **Ron "Gus" Gustafson** has faced. This farm boy from Nebraska truly took negatives and made them positives, by adding his passion and keeping a positive outlook on life.



Ron Gustafson

This keynote is a remarkable motivator, a humble gentleman with a big sense of humor and an example for all of us as we struggle with challenges. In Gustafson's story, you'll find the inspiration to rise above your own limits - whether they're imposed by circumstances, other people or yourself.

PDPW Annual Business Conference Registration

• *Adding Passion, Multiplying Profits* •

Name _____
Business/Dairy Name _____
Address _____
City State Zip _____
Telephone Number _____ Email Address _____
Names of others attending with you _____

Conference Rates Per Person (two days)

Member \$200 X # attending = _____

Non-members \$300 X # attending = _____

Students* \$ 150 X # attending = _____

Name of School: _____

* Applies to full-time students from high school and secondary schools only

Single Day Rates Per Person

March 17 OR March 18 (please circle one)

Member \$125 X # attending = _____

Non-members \$175 X # attending = _____

Students* \$ 75 X # attending = _____

Name of School: _____

* Applies to full-time students from high school and secondary schools only

PDPW Membership - Please select a membership option if you would like to become a PDPW member or renew your membership.

_____ Producer Member – \$100

_____ Associate Individual Member – \$150

_____ Corporate Member – \$300

Credit Card Info: VISA, MasterCard or Discover Card (circle one) Card # _____

Expires _____ 3-digit security code (3 digit on back of card) _____

Total Due _____

* 3 Ways to REGISTER – online at www.pdpw.org; call 800-947-7379

or send your check to: PDPW, N5776 County Road D, Suite 1 - Fond du Lac, WI 54937.

Registrations due March 10.

** \$20 charge for registrations received after March 10 or walk-ins

Hunt

Continued from page 1

losing money but we're not making a lot, either. The next three or four months will be the worst."

DIAMOND D DAIRY

Near Longmont, Colo., Diamond D Dairy made a move last year that has better positioned it to weather weaker milk prices. Last April the farm began bottling much of its own milk.

"Basically, it's always been in the back of our minds that we wanted to have a value-added product," says farm owner Jim Docheff, Jr. "We put a lot of time and effort into making a quality product – our milk.



Jim Docheff

And I finally decided I wanted to get that direct to the consumer rather than going into the general pool of milk through Dairy Farmers of America (DFA)."

About 60 percent of the milk from Diamond D Dairy's 525 milking cows goes through the processing plant. The rest goes to DFA.

The herd consists of 325 Holsteins and 200 Jerseys, with a daily production average of 74 to 75 pounds on three-time-a-day milking. Docheff reports the butterfat test at 4.1 percent and the protein test at 3.4 percent.

"We added the Jerseys about 18 years ago," Docheff recalls. "The kids got them as 4-H projects and we found out how efficient these animals are and what good animals they are."

In all, Diamond D Dairy, about 20 miles north of Denver, employs 12 people for milking and tending the cows, along with several more in the processing plant, delivering milk, making sales calls and handling the office work. Last spring the bottling effort got under way with "no customers and two

salespeople," Docheff says. "We just started knocking on doors. Currently we've got about 1,400 home delivery customers and about 200 wholesale customers."

Diamond D milk is packaged in plastic containers, from eight ounces on up to a gallon. It's sold in the Denver area and north to Fort Collins, a region about 60 miles long. The dairy's home delivery area is smaller, about 10 miles wide.

Docheff says they thought about using glass bottles instead of plastic. But, "...there's just one supplier of glass bottles, out in Canada. And the washer for those bottles - there's virtually nothing used out there. A new machine runs almost \$600,000."

Milk the farm sells to DFA was recently bringing a bit more than \$13 per hundredweight. Docheff expected it to drop to around \$10.50 once the February numbers were in.

By contrast, he has been selling bottled milk for the equivalent of \$42 per hundredweight. Docheff says it costs about \$28 to produce, process and deliver the milk. That leaves a margin of \$14.

"I am very happy," Docheff admits. "We need to get more going through the bottling plant. We're hopeful that by the end of this summer we'll have 100 percent of our production going through that facility."

Diamond D Dairy has been operating since 1987. Docheff is the fourth generation to milk. His father milks 800 cows three miles away. The Diamond D farm includes Docheff's wife and three children. A son, Joshua, a recent graduate of Colorado State University, is the herd manager.

The 80-acre dairy does not grow any crops. It buys its feed and sells manure to its neighbors.

Buying all the feed can be costly. Last fall, corn silage cost the farm \$58 per ton, delivered and stored, Docheff reports.

But, he says, "I think, over a 10-year period, we're better off buying it versus raising it. But there is that occasional year where you're going to get stung on it."

Besides processing its milk, the dairy is doing other things to deal with softer milk prices.

"You know, across the dairy, on the management of it, we're just really looking at all our costs – semen costs, drug costs - to see if there's anywhere we can pare something down. If we can save a hundred dollars, we're doing it right now," Docheff says. "We're just looking at every cost. If there's a way we can cut it down, we're doing it."

One thing he says he will not do is scrimp on the cows' rations.

"We want to keep feeding the cows good," says Docheff. "A lot of people look at their feeds costs and we really don't want to do that. We want to keep the best production we can."

MADDOX DAIRY LTD.

Near Riverdale, Calif., Steve Maddox, managing partner of Maddox Dairy Ltd., is dealing with two problems. Of course, the first one is low milk prices. But the second one is a quarantine imposed because of bovine tuberculosis.

"Our female herd is still under quarantine at least until May. May is our next test," Maddox says.

Tuberculosis was found at RuAnn Dairy, about 10 miles away. It's the original operation of Doug Maddox, Steve's father, where 1,300 milking and dry cows are housed.

"We're under the same quarantine, mainly because we're raising their calves," Maddox explains.

Maddox Dairy has 4,100 dry and milking cows. It was formed

in 1982 and has registered Holsteins, just like RuAnn Dairy.

"It (the quarantine) kind of stymies your bull sales. We probably sell half the breeding bulls in the state of California - close to 3,000 a year," Maddox estimates.

Maddox Dairy also exports semen and embryos, mainly to South America. Some nations allow them in even if they are from a TB-quarantined herd, while some do not, Maddox points out.

As for milk, his January price was approximately \$10.41 per hundredweight, Maddox reports. He adds that projections had the February price at \$9.38.

"I don't think the \$9.38 number covers feed costs for almost all the dairymen in California," says the dairyman. "Most of them did buy their feed – all their feed. You shouldn't have any expansions in California... because typically, the rule of thumb is if you can cover feed costs you can afford to add cows. We're not covering feed costs."

Maddox dairy has a herd average of about 24,600 pounds of milk, with 894 pounds of fat per cow. The herd is milked three times a day and BST is not used, Maddox describes.

Four, double-13, "pregnant" herringbone parlors are used. These parlors are so named because they bow out in the middle, Maddox explains.

"They have good visibility and are a little friendlier to work in," he says. "It's open. You can see all 26 units when you're in the parlor from any spot."

The operation has 64 full-time employees. Maddox comments, "The cows are the easy part."

Maddox dairy farms about 9,000 acres, growing alfalfa, corn for silage, almonds, and wine grapes. Its growing season is approximately 260 days, letting him double crop. "I've green-chopped some alfalfa on



Steve Maddox

Internship Program Benefits Intern, Producer Through Hands-On Approach

Gaining experience and knowledge in the dairy industry is key to being a successful producer in the future, and Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin's Enhanced Internship Program is one such way to expand knowledge and understanding.

The internship program consists of college students connecting with dairy producers for an on-farm summer internship. Through this partnership, interns are involved in the day-to-day operation of the farm and are exposed to a diverse range of duties. This may include gaining new knowledge about management practices, exploring feeding plans and animal health treatment procedures.

Amber Zeamer, a senior at UW-Platteville, heard about another PDPW program, the Mentor Program at a Pioneer Dairy Club meeting and decided to apply.

"After I filled out an application for the Mentor Program, I went to PDPW's website," says Zeamer, "and that's where I found out they had an internship program that matched interns with farms."

Zeamer decided that since she only had a year left of school, she wanted to gain more experience by interning on a dairy operation. She hoped to see how other farms were run and took interest in the herd manager position and duties.

"Each dairy farm has their own routine and way of doing things and I wanted to learn and observe some different management practices that other operations find to be successful," notes Zeamer.

She says she also knew that

PDPW's dedication to giving youth hands-on opportunities and learning experiences would lead to being paired with a farmer who would be willing to teach her what she hoped to learn and much more.

Amber was hired by Kinnard Farms, Inc. this past summer, which is located near Casco. Kinnard Farms, Inc. is a family run operation owned by Rod and Lee Kinnard and Mildred Kinnard. They milk around 1,600 Holstein cows and raise their own heifers after four months of age. Their state of the art facility includes four freestall barns that are all connected with covered alleyways and a double-24 parallel milking parlor.

Over the summer, Zeamer had the opportunity to dig her hands into a wide variety of tasks. When she first began her internship, she shadowed Barry Pavlat, the head herd manager at the time, to learn the general routine of operation at Kinnard Farms, Inc. As time went on, Pavlat and the other herd managers taught Zeamer how to do many everyday tasks and then expanded on them.

"On a farm as big as Kinnard's, I got the chance to really expand on my skills, especially in the area of animal health," says Zeamer.

Zeamer worked with fresh cows where she took temperatures daily for the first ten days after freshening, checked rumen function and examined the uterus for infection. She did all this under Pavlat's watchful eye. Through this opportunity, she learned Kinnard Farms' system of chalking and grouping cows, and also how important it is to keep proper

and accurate records.

"Along with checking the fresh cows, I was always reminded to 'read the cow'," says Zeamer, "this was important because certain metabolic disorders can occur within the first few days. It was something new for me to learn."

From working side by side with the herd managers, Zeamer gained an understanding of how much work and attention to detail is required when you have that kind of responsibility. She credits the management's ability to direct the team by having them know what is expected of each of them. It keeps things running smoothly on an operation of that size and also assures everyone that the job is done and done right.

Zeamer says her favorite part of the experience was learning how to give an IV to a sick cow which is something that is done by a vet anytime an animal needs one on her home farm.

"I received a great deal of satisfaction when treating cows and knowing I was helping an

animal feel better was a very enjoyable aspect of my job," reflects Zeamer.

Zeamer's overall opinion of the internship program received high marks.

"I liked the way PDPW acted as facilitators, opening an avenue for producers and interns to find and match up with each other," says Zeamer.

After a summer filled with teamwork, hands on learning, and exploring new management practices, both Zeamer and the staff at Kinnard Farms, Inc. enjoyed their experiences with the PDPW Enhanced Internship Program.

"We feel if you work with people who are as passionate about farming, eager to learn and do what is best for the dairy as Amber was, it is a win-win situation for everybody," says Brent Isly, current head herd manager at Kinnard Farms, "Through participating in the internship program, we hope to continue to find good individuals that would like to grow with us in the future."

By Brianna Ditzenberger

PDPW Enhanced Internship Program

College and veterinary students from across the nation are seeking summer internships on Wisconsin dairy operations. Take this opportunity to hire a talented student and make this a positive learning experience for him or her.

The PDPW Enhanced Internship Program connects college students to dairy producers who would like to host a summer intern and invest in the next generation of dairy producers.

For more information, to apply to host an intern or to apply as an intern, please call 800-947-7379 or visit www.pdpw.org.

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Maddox

Continued from page 7

Christmas Day before," Maddox points out.

Like other California farmers, Maddox Dairy relies on each spring's melting snow. He explains, "We irrigate, so we can apply water when we wish – which is going to be a little endangered this year because of the dry conditions."

Overseeing the cattle end of things is his main responsibility, but he is taking on others.

"I'm just starting to take over the farming from my father," Maddox says. "My heart's still with the cows."

All tallied, Maddox Dairy has more than 10,000 head – everything from baby calves to mature cows. The farm raises all its bull calves to a year old, along with all its heifers.

"That's not typical for large dairies out in California," Maddox says. "A lot of them will send their calves out to be raised elsewhere. Their heifers

will be raised and they'll sell their bull calves a day old. But because they're purebred, we raise them all. And I don't believe in sending them out to be raised."

What's he doing to trim costs?

"The main thing is just cutting out all the unnecessary stuff," Maddox says. "The problem is you're cutting around the edges and trying not to diminish the milk flow. We were prepared for the milk price dropping into the \$11-or-\$12 range. We started laying some of the maintenance crew off – things like that. But labor is not a major expense. What we really started doing is getting in on some of the byproduct feeds that are available to us."

He's in an area with a variety of alternative feed ingredients. The farm is feeding pasta noodles – a bakery waste. Citrus pulp and pomegranate pulp are also available.

Maddox has also consolidated

some of the routes of the farm's feed trucks. And he has gone back to some of the older mastitis treatments that he says are almost as effective as the more modern ones, but less costly.

In addition, he reduced the amount of minerals being fed by 15 percent, since, he says, they're "usually" overfed to begin with.

"There's a way you like to dairy and there's a way that's absolutely necessary," Maddox says. "Maybe we've got to give up some of the things we'd like to do, or the way in which we'd like to do them, for more-practical and cost-effective ways, at least temporarily."

"These (the measures he has put into practice) in themselves, are not going to save your hide for the month," Maddox admits. "But they will accumulate. Assuming you survive and aren't too anemic afterward, you'll recover that much faster."

"The Annual Business Conference continues to be the highlight of our PDPW experience. We come home from the conference rejuvenated and reenergized. We return to the dairy armed with new information and ideas. The speakers are thought-provoking. The networking opportunities are very important to us. It is a time to see old friends."

~ Dave Geiser & Deb Reinhart, Gold Star Farm, New Holstein, Wis.

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Surviving Low Milk Prices with Ken Reiners, Badgerland Financial

Let's start with the obvious – dairy producers are not making money at these milk prices. A producer's short-term objective should be to minimize the financial loss and preserve as much equity as possible, allowing you to live to fight another day and maintain you and your family's physical and mental health. So where do you start?

First, write down a list of the near term issues you're facing, including social and family issues that need to be addressed or kept in mind going forward. Involve your key business partners (lender and financial services, input suppliers, veterinarians, consultants and marketing advisors, and other key business partners) in getting their perspective. Involve family members who are involved in the business as well. The process of talking out and writing down issues and concerns helps to reduce stress and can provide amazing clarity for keeping your priorities straight and giving you insight as to what next steps make sense for your family and business.

Also, don't internalize and stew on the issues you're facing – this only makes matters worse. Ongoing and open communication with your key business partners and family is always important; however, today it is critical. Too frequently we see customers coming in who have issues of crisis proportion that need immediate attention. In many cases, they were aware of these looming problems months before they brought it to our attention. No lender or

key business partner wants to be put in a situation where prior identification and communication of problems should have happened, but didn't, and now the customer is in crisis mode.

With this in mind and your "issues list" written down, your next step is to prioritize them into immediate (next 30 to 90 days), intermediate (next 12 to 18 months) and longer term. With your priorities identified, together with the appropriate business partner(s) and family members involved in the operation, you can identify action steps needed to address the issues.

One of the things we are looking for is your cash flow breakeven cost per hundredweight of milk produced. From the most recent data we have, we see a range from a low of \$14 to a high of \$18 per cwt. for 90 percent of our dairy producers. What is your cash flow breakeven cost? If you don't have a good handle on this, you need to implement a quality records program as soon as possible. This is so important to know because the range of options to take action on change considerably depending on your breakeven cost.

For example, someone who is at \$15 breakeven might only need to make a few minor adjustments, while someone who is at \$18 might need to have a strategy focused on preserving as much equity as possible. This could mean planning an exit strategy or taking other major steps like selling real estate. There is no one-size-fits-all package of possible solutions. However, there can be a few very simple steps that all producers can take. For example, are you signed up at the FSA office for the Milk Income Loss Contract

program? Not all the tools in the toolbox have to be painful or complicated.

One of the things we have seen in terms of the magnitude of issues customers are dealing with is how they managed their financial affairs when milk prices and profits were good. Did they aggressively pay down debt or did they take on more debt without acquiring sufficient additional income from the assets acquired? Did they keep a lid on capital purchases or does their operation look like an equipment dealer's dream customer? Did they build working capital/liquidity and have adequate cash reserves going into this downturn or are they dependent now on either selling assets or having their lender advance all of their current operating losses because there are no or little cash reserves? We can't change past decisions made, but we can learn from them going forward.

In conclusion, work with your key business partners and family members involved in the business in identifying and prioritizing the list of issues you need to address. Proactively manage your communication channels and don't surprise your business partners. And perhaps most importantly, don't forget about you and your family's physical and emotional health. Keep a good perspective on what really is important in life.

Ken Reiners is a senior vice president at Badgerland Financial, headquartered in Baraboo, Wis. Badgerland Financial is committed to supporting the state's dairy industry and is a proud PDPW Mission Sponsor.



Ken Reiners

"The PDPW Annual Business Conference is always a highlight for us."

*~ Linda & Doug Hodorff,
Second-Look Holsteins LLC,
Eden, Wis.*

"I'm amazed and overwhelmed with the booths at the PDPW Annual Business Conference. I like that the issues discussed in the sessions here are the same as we are experiencing in Minnesota."

*~Doug Popp, dairy producer
from Royalton, Minn.*

"PDPW has had a tremendous impact on our business and personal lives."

*~ Roger & Tammy Weiland,
Weiland Dairy,
Columbus, Wis.*



Value of Leadership with Dean Strauss, PDPW President

*"It is the capacity to develop and improve their skills that distinguishes leaders from followers."
~ Warren Bennis & Bert Nanus*

The value of leadership is one important lesson I've learned during my six years serving as a board member for Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (PDPW). I have learned that strong leadership is an important part of every successful organization or business. It's important for the entire dairy industry, for each of our businesses and for each of our lives.

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

It's interesting that there are over fifty definitions of "leadership". It is hard to imagine that we cannot agree upon one common definition for a relatively simple, yet very important, word. Leadership is much more than a word – it's a characteristic, a skill and a tool

for the future.

Leadership is intangible, actually invisible in itself, yet the impact is evident – in situations of both good and bad leadership. The ripple effect can be seen and felt throughout every organization or business. The role of positive leadership is vital to every organization's success.



Dean Strauss

WHO IS A LEADER?

Effective leaders are flexible and adapt to change. Change is everywhere and the target is always moving. Yet, leaders are steady. Leaders are accountable and willing to take the lead, even when the right decision isn't the most popular option. Leaders gain sincere

trust from peers. A leader is focused on the success of the team. A leader can never be self-serving. Ultimately, a leader wants to make a positive difference.

There are many benefits to being directly involved with and surrounding yourself with great minds and positive people. When you have strong leaders in your life, you just need to be patient, have an open mind, listen and learn. Your leadership skills will surely grow and develop.

STRENGTHEN THE STRONG LEADER IN YOU!

The towns and counties that surround our businesses, the agricultural organizations that support us, including PDPW, all have a need for good thinkers and positive role models who have the passion to get things done.

PDPW has been very fortunate to have had some of the best leaders in the industry. It's been a pleasure to work with current PDPW board members, and I thank all PDPW members for the opportunity to serve such a valuable organization.

I challenge you to capitalize on opportunities to grow and share your leadership skills. Get involved, stay motivated, listen and learn. The rewards will be worth the time.

Dean Strauss owns and operates Majestic Meadows Dairy with his father, brother and another partner in Sheboygan Falls, Wis. Today Majestic Meadows Dairy is milking 685 cows and working 1,500 acres. After attending UW-Platteville, Dean started his career as a nutritionist, and then followed his dream to become a dairy producer, joining the family operation in 1998.

PDPW: An Organization For Dairy Producers Like You

WHAT IS PDPW?

Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (PDPW) is the largest producer-led dairy organization in the nation. PDPW has grown from our humble beginnings in 1992 when a small group of dairy producers saw a need for education and information that would help Wisconsin producers improve profitability. Today we are a network with thousands of dairy businesses from throughout the nation who have the same passion for the future of the dairy industry. That passion helps us lead the success of the dairy industry through education.

WHO IS PDPW?

PDPW membership represents the gamut of dairy producers. Every type of dairy producer and every size operation is represented and welcomed in our membership. This breadth of our members is represented by the attendees at the PDPW Annual Business Conference, dairy's premier event. PDPW began as a Wisconsin-only organization. Today we have grown to a network of thousands of producers and industry leaders covering the country. In fact, we have producer members from fifteen states, representing dairies from coast-to-coast. These producers from across the nation seek business programming and resources only found at PDPW. We offer a wide variety of educational programming designed to meet your specific needs and present new, innovative information that is useful to you. One idea, solution and approach doesn't work for everyone – each is unique. We are dairy producers – just like you.

Different operations, unique businesses, one vision: to lead the success of the dairy industry. No matter the type of your dairy or the size of your herd, PDPW embraces the entire industry and lives its mission "to share ideas, solutions, resources and experiences that help dairy producers succeed."

PDPW is all about connections. Connecting you with:

- Resources to improve and grow your business
- Advice and answers
- Other dairy producers who share the same experiences you do
- Industry leaders and experts
- World class scientists and researchers
- The next generation of dairy producers who are excited about their role in the industry
- Industry's preferred suppliers

Face of the Future



Photo by Brianna Ditzenberger

UW-Madison senior, Annette Zwald, developed her passion for Wisconsin's dairy industry while growing up on her home farm near Hammond. Today, she is serving as PDPW's membership assistant intern and her drive and love for the industry hasn't changed. "For me, the dairy industry is an absolute staple of Wisconsin, not only do we depend on it economically, our way of life is centered around the ideals you see on a dairy farm," states Zwald, daughter of Bob and Kay Zwald.

On campus Zwald is actively involved in Sigma Alpha, National Agri-Marketing Association, Badger Dairy Club, and serves as a CALS Ambassador. Within her organizations she serves in several leadership roles and committees. She is enjoying her internship with PDPW, which she started in September, and is hoping to continue to build relationships and assist producers in their attempts to better educate themselves and the industry. "I am most looking forward to the Annual Business Conference and getting to see the interaction between producers and industry and speakers," says Zwald. After graduation, she hopes to work in a role that allows her to be a consulting and management resource for producers in the dairy industry.

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Producer Profile

Parrells Farm to Live, Not Live to Farm

Lafayette County dairy producers Robert and Donna Parrell farm to make a living. "We don't live to farm," states Donna of a philosophy and mission statement they adopted after attending their first PDPW meeting many years ago.

They belong to PDPW (attending educational seminars and the Annual Business Conference) because the organization treats farming as a business, "instead of trying to make it a life-style," says Donna.

Indeed, these Belmont producers come at dairy farming and life in general in the U.S. from a slightly different perspective – an international one. Very involved in the 4-H international

exchange program when their three children were growing up, they've hosted students from Japan, Sweden, Germany, Australia, Botswana and other countries, and their own children took advantage of 4-H programming for experiences abroad. Three of their children ended up in the Peace Corps, in Africa, while the fourth did volunteer work in Chicago. The Parrells have visited Africa three times themselves.

Their daughter Betsy is an immigration lawyer in Minneapolis. Their son, Douglas, is an industrial engineer. Another daughter, Virginia, is a physical therapist in Chicago. Their third daughter, Amanda, is in graduate school at Marquette University. The Parrells also



have two grandchildren. However, it's just the two of them continuing to farm. They have two developmentally disabled adults living with them to whom Donna's parents were formerly foster parents. The women have lived with the Parrells 24 years.

For the past five years, they've been hiring UW-Platteville students, who are going into agriculture or a related field but who lack practical on-farm experience. The Parrells provide them with hands-on milking experience and better understanding of production agriculture to "carry into the industry," says Donna.

Robert is a 1973 graduate from UW-Madison in wildlife management. He started farming out of college on their present operation, which they bought from his folks in 1980. Donna's parents were crop producers. She teases that she got a job milking cows before she married Robert to see if she could handle dairying. "I married him anyway," she grins.

The Parrells own 187 acres (180 tillable), growing hay and corn, and have 81 Holstein cows and 70 head of

replacements. They milk in a 1973-built barn with a combination of stanchions and tiestalls. They've used sand bedding for 10 years, keeping the sand in place with anchored three-inch PVC pipe at the back. Forages are component fed and a computerized rail grain feeder delivers a mix to the cows eight times a day.

They hire their corn custom-planted and harvested. While they chop haylage themselves, they have big square bales of hay custom baled and wrapped. Robert says they've gradually gone to more custom, not being able to justify the cost of some equipment with their size operation.

Besides getting off the farm for PDPW events, the Parrells are active in their church and continue to be involved in 4-H even though their children have long since graduated. They serve as chaperones for state and national trips. Robert also enjoys hunting big and small game and pheasants. He also competes in high-power and small-bore target shooting.

By Jane Fyksten

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Calf Sells At PDPW Annual Business Conference



Photo by Shellie Kappelman

This elite Holstein calf – Meado-Brook Pagewire 4114 – will be center of attention at the live auction being held at the Annual Business Conference, March 17-18. You'll have the opportunity to invest in the future by purchasing this calf. Boasting a PTPI of +1663, this October-born calf will be a valuable addition to your herd. To learn more, call 800-947-7379.

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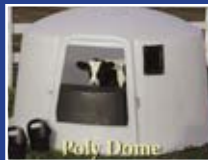
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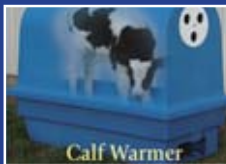
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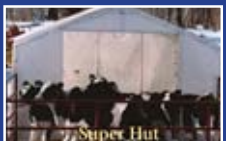
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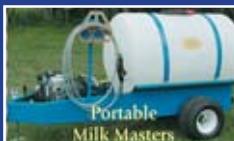
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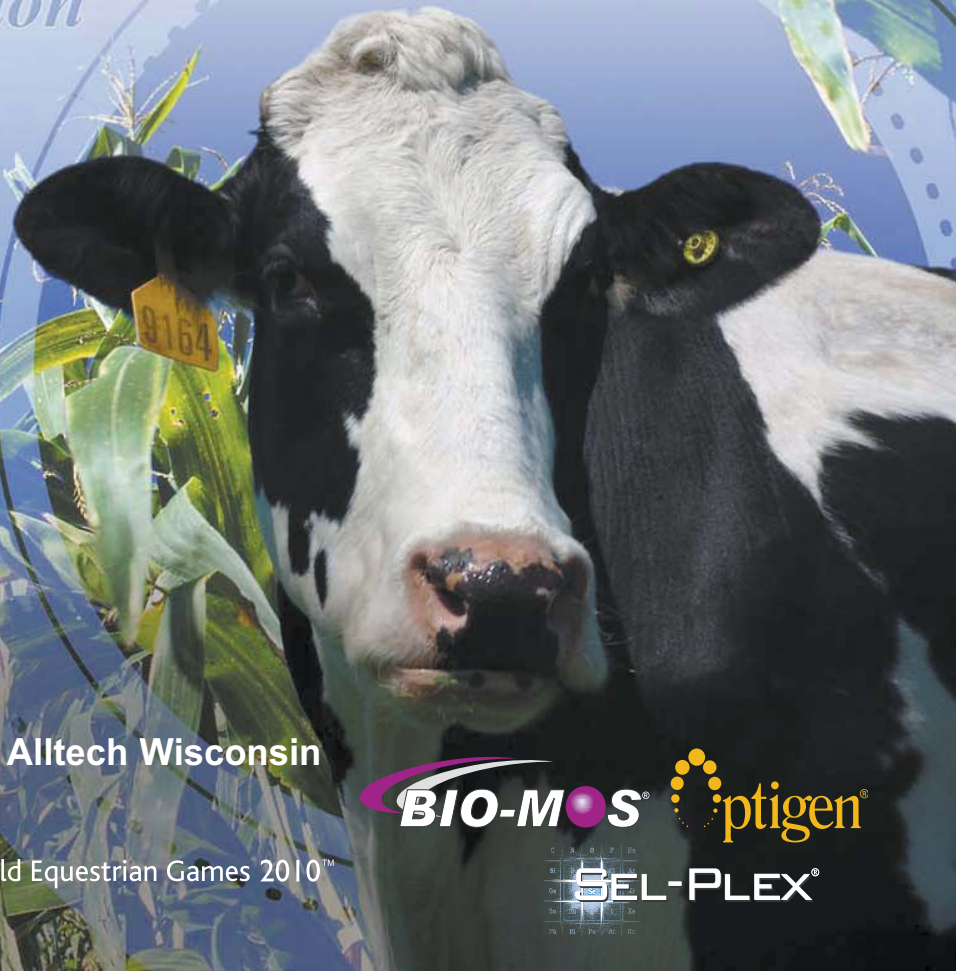
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Communication Key to Building Strong Management Team

Trust and verify. That is the common theme that runs through Cory Craig's management philosophy. And it is a part of his management style that has made him a successful leader in the dairy business.

Craig is the general manager at Herrema Dairy near Fair Oaks, Ind., where he has worked in that capacity since the dairy's beginning in 2002. Before that he was a milker, then herdsman, then manager at Sandhill Farms in Indiana. But from an early age Craig knew he wanted to run a dairy.

"I was born and raised on a dairy farm," says Craig. "My

father was a herd manager on a couple different farms when I was growing up. I've been around cattle as long as I could crawl."

Nowadays, Craig does anything but crawl, as he oversees five middle managers, and a total of 30 employees, all of whom support the milking of 3,500 Holsteins. He also will be a panelist on "How Growing Middle Managers Multiplies Management Muscle" at the PDPW Annual Business Conference.



Cory Craig

Craig's employees milk the cows in a 72-cow WestfaliaSurge rotary parlor. The cows not only produce milk but also enough methane to power the dairy during the winter months, says Craig, and supplemental power in the summer.

The dairy has an anaerobic digester, from which they use the manure solids for bedding. "We capture the methane and create our own power," he says, adding that each of the two G399 Caterpillar generators produces 400 kilowatts.

But it is the sense of ownership and responsibility that Craig generates amongst

his managers that really powers the dairy.

"How I run it is I get my management to buy into what I'm doing," says Craig. "Give them ownership, and let them make choices, and when they have that type of input then they have nothing to do but succeed because you know they put themselves on the line."

That is the trust part of Craig's philosophy. Then its time to verify.

"Trust but always verify is a big thing for me," says Craig. "I let my managers come up with their own plans as long

See Managers on page 24

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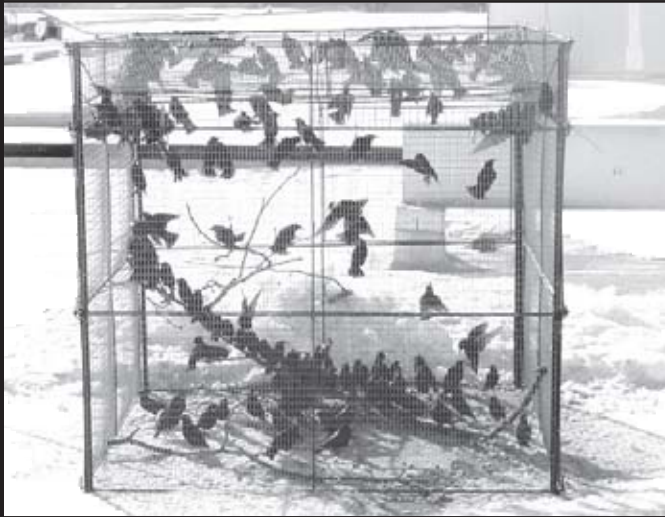
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Managers

Continued from page 22

as we can agree on it, then they put them in place and manage them. And then I oversee and make sure that they do what they say they're going to do and if we need to tweak it one way or the other then we'll do so."

A big part of the management process for Craig is staying in touch with his employees. "Communicate, communicate, communicate," he says.

In real world practice that comes down to weekly meetings with the entire staff.

"Every Tuesday each week I have everybody in. Milkers, all my outside guys, all my managers. Basically if you work on the dairy, you're in a meeting," says Craig. "Whether we're looking at video taped milking sessions, talking to my milkers or going through parlor reports, milk quality reports, calving reports or breeding reports, we're looking at every facet of the operation every week."

"So we are constantly tweaking and adjusting our system," he added.

The biggest challenge to Craig's system is the language barrier, he says. Most of his staff is Hispanic, including three of his managers. He says he relies on two individuals to translate so that at the end of a conversation, everybody is on the same page.

"I do know a little bit of Spanish," says Craig. "But I'm still working on trying to become fluent in it."

If other problems ever arise between managers on the farm, Craig says he deals with it directly.

In such a situation, Craig

will bring in the two managers in disagreement along with another manager not involved in the conflict to serve as a witness and to help mediate. This helps to prevent a meeting from turning into a shouting match or finger pointing session, he says.

"Basically give them the right and the opportunity to discuss it vocally between each other," says Craig. "Sit there and mediate and try to come up with a solution to the problem. And normally it's just a misunderstanding that get's blown out of proportion."

"Put them all in the same room so everybody hears the same thing," says Craig. "And that usually resolves the conflict really quick."

Craig says he likes to remind his managers that at the end of the day they are all on the dairy for the same reason. "We're here to be profitable and to make as much quality milk as possible as efficiently as possible. If it wasn't for cows, we wouldn't have jobs," says Craig. "Always think outside the box and always remember you're here because of a cow."

Craig had some final words of wisdom to share with his fellow dairymen in Wisconsin (whom he invited to visit Herrema Dairy at any time.)

"My part in management is constantly challenging my middle managers to grow through teaching and training their assistants," says Craig. "My management style is simple: lead by example and always be truthful and honest in your dealings. Never expect someone to do what you would not do."

By Adrian Crabt

Genomics – Another Tool in the Toolbox

Producers utilize many tools in their reproductive program. Genomics is now another tool that they can add to their reproductive toolbox to help increase their efficiency and bolster their bottom line.

As of January, genomics became the official evaluation for bulls and cows that have been genotyped. These evaluations were illustrated for the first time in the January Sire Summaries.

Genomics is now available and incorporated into genetic evaluations and virtually every AI bull in North America is genotyped.

With the genotyping service “you’re really buying more information than you would ever get before,” says Kent Weigel, UW-Madison dairy

geneticist.

“It’s going from knowing only the parent average for a calf and having 30 or 35 percent reliability,” says Weigel, adding “you’re going to jump up to 65 or 70 percent – that’s equivalent to having 10 or 15 daughters.”

And with genomics it “all comes down to reliability,” he states. “You’re getting farther and farther down that road at a younger age so that you can make decisions.”

“Reliability is not perfect,” cautions Weigel. “You can’t go out and say based on this DNA test I’m going to breed my whole herd to this bull.”

“It’s not as accurate as progeny testing at this point – time will tell,” he adds. “Maybe we over or underestimated how accurate

it is, but our best guess now is it’s a little less accurate than progeny testing but still accurate enough that you can look at a group of animals and say ‘these young bulls are the best of the ones I’m considering’ or ‘this heifer looks like the best one from this flush.’”

In addition to the reliability factor, genomics also allows producers to gain access to more good bulls that otherwise wouldn’t be marketed for a few years down the road, but are available to them now.

So they gain that “jump in genetic progress,” says Weigel.

“For a bull it’s useful just from a time perspective because you don’t have to wait (now we have to wait five

years) to know anything about that bull,” says Weigel. “And for a heifer calf or a yearling, or even a young cow, that’s more information than you’ll ever get, most likely.”

There are also more new families available to producers that weren’t in the past, adds Weigel. And sons of sons will come into the AI lineups much sooner.

Genomics extends beyond the use of genotyping of bulls. Producers can also utilize genomics as a marketing tool themselves.

“Many people are genotyping elite cows – that part will probably continue,” says Weigel.

While genomics can be a very valuable tool, especially

See Genomics on page 26

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~Terry Geau, Park Avenue Dairy LLC, Merrill, Wis.

Genomics

Continued from page 25

when it comes to marketing cattle, there is a downside – the cost.

"There are all sorts of tools or application we're imaging, but right now the cost is a little too expensive," says Weigel, adding "unless you're going to sell breeding stock, embryos or young bulls it's a little too expensive."

The cost currently is about \$225 per animal although it can vary from one lab to the next. So, its "hard to justify doing a commercial herd," says Weigel, who pictures genotyping being used on more of a broad scale down the road, not just on higher value cattle.

With this price, when producers are buying semen on genomic bulls, the pricing will be all over the board at the beginning, says Weigel,

but it will stabilize over time.

"Its important if you're buying or selling breeding stock or embryos that you have to realize this technology is available," says Weigel. "You may or may not choose to use it but other buyers and sellers might. So you need to be aware of it."

"Selling the first choice of a flush is a lot more valuable now than it was before this technology and the last is worth a lot less," he adds. "It can get you more information if you're going to pay thousands of dollars for a heifer that you plan to flush down the road. I think it's a pretty good insurance policy to invest in one of these tests."

Genomics are something that all producers should be aware of, whether they choose to use genomic bulls

or choose to genotype their animals for marketing. This tool will continue to be utilized in the future and will help to increase genetic progress as we move forward.

"The more interesting tools for farmers are still a couple of years down the road," says Weigel.

But for now, with genomics producers will gain the most from "the bump in genetic progress and availability of new elite bulls that are genetically better," says Weigel.

To learn more about utilizing genomic sire information, you'll want to attend the specialty session featuring this topic at the PDPW Annual Business Conference, March 17-18.

By Kelsi Hendrickson



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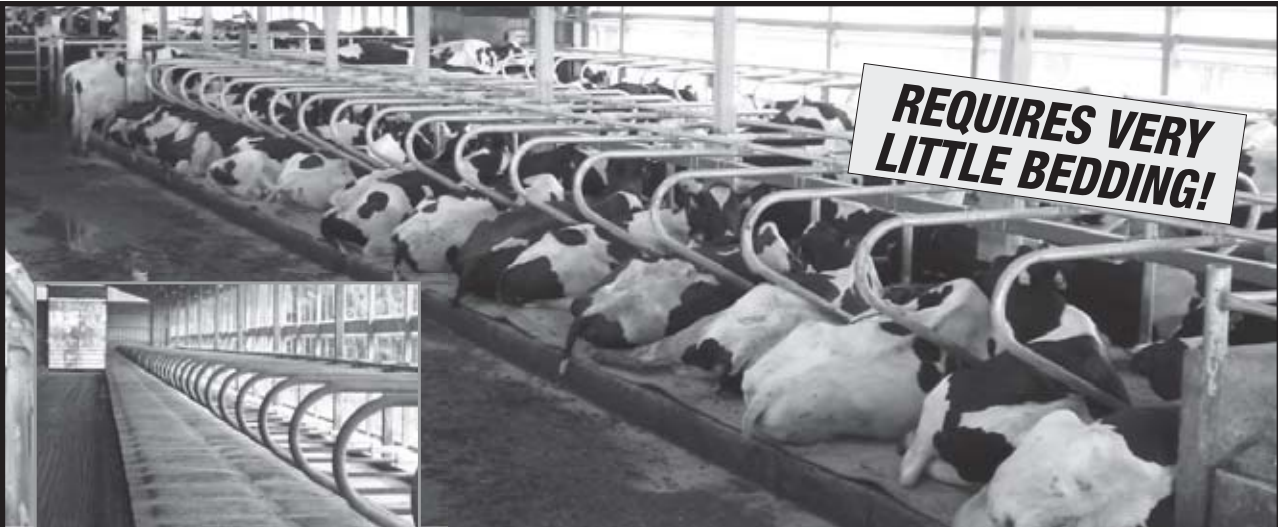
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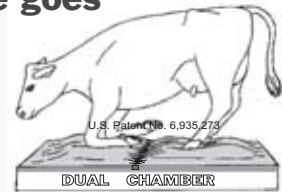


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career, this expert speaker and dynamic presenter owns and operates his own diversified grain and livestock farm in Madison County, Iowa and runs another successful local business.

Pearson jokes, "I don't play golf or cards, so I have to keep busy working. Besides, my wife is working on her doctorate, and two of our four kids are in college. My banker can't believe how poorly educated I am, in relation to the amount of tuition I pay each year."

To learn more about Mark Pearson and the stacked speaker line up at the Annual Business Conference, visit www.pdpw.org or call 800-947-7379.



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Producer Profile

PDPW member Hans Breitenmoser, Jr. is intent on making his Lincoln County dairy more energy efficient. His long-term aim is to not just reduce the amount of energy his operation consumes, but to ultimately become a net producer of energy.

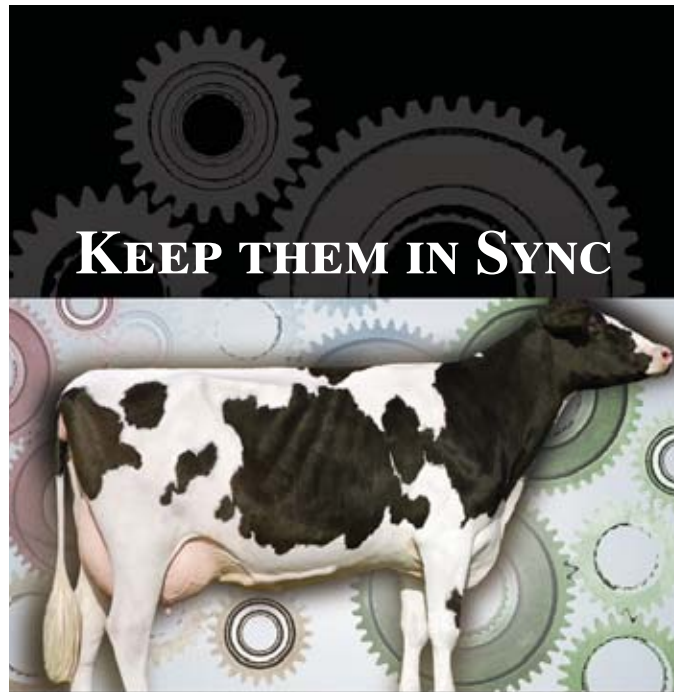
Breitenmoser dairy farms near Merrill with his wife, Katie, and their children, Maggie, 4 1/2, Abby, 3, and Charlie, 14 months. They took over from his parents Margrit and Hans Breitenmoser, Sr., who came to the U.S. from Switzerland in 1968 to farm. His folks are still actively involved day-to-day. The Breitenmosers have 11 employees (full and part-time).

They farm 1,150 acres. They own 578 acres, of which 480 are tillable. They grow corn, alfalfa and soybeans as a cash crop. This year, their beans acres will drop because they're raising their heifers at home now. Prior to 2008, they relied on a custom raiser.

The Breitenmosers have 350 cows, housed in sand-bedded freestalls in six-row and four-row barns and milked in a step-up, double-six flat barn parlor. The parlor and first freestall barn were constructed in 1996 and the barn added onto in 2002. Cow numbers have been holding steady at 350 since '02. Eventually, this producer says he'd like to replace his flat barn parlor.

Breitenmoser, who was recently elected to the Lincoln/Langlade FSA Committee, wishes he could be more active in PDPW, but "350 cows and three small children" keep him pretty close to home.

"It's a good organization as far as the education information we get," he says, noting that he sends his employees to different PDPW seminars. "It's on the cutting edge of where our industry should be." He concludes that PDPW helps him stay "on top" of the "latest and greatest" technologies and trends in his business.



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Donated by GEA WestfaliaSurge, Inc.

10-person Pheasant Hunt

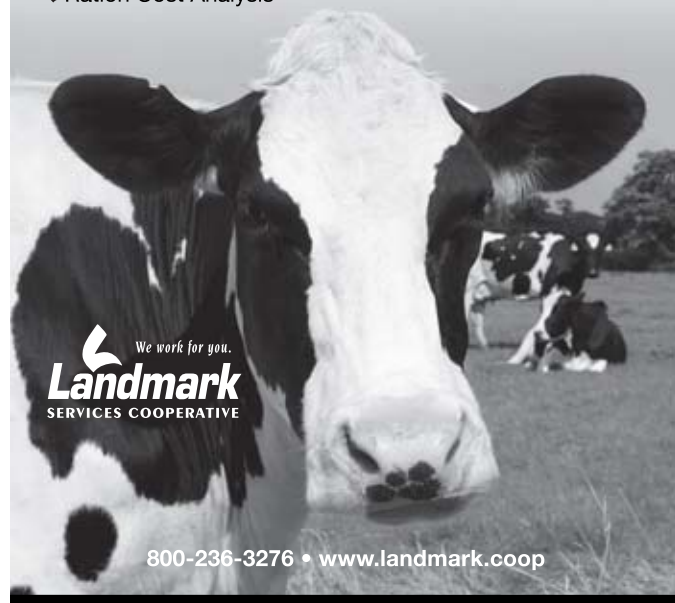
Package includes guide, dog and bird cleaning

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Silent Auction to Feature Variety of Items

Green Bay Packer 3rd Regular Season Tickets & Dinner Package

Donated by Twohig, Rietbrock & Schneider, S.C.

"Spring Calf" Print from Original Watercolor by Mary Heinze

Donated by Mary Heinze

10 Units of Shottel Semen

Donated by ABS Global

Makita Cordless Hand Tool Package

Donated by Cedar Valley Cheese, Inc. and Joe & Diane Thome

Badger Men's Hockey Package

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12 Ton Dried Distillers Grain Supplement

Donated by United Wisconsin Grain Producers

Red Wing Shoe Company Gift Certificate

Donated by Red Wing Shoe Company

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Amish-made Old Fashion Wooden Barn & Farm Toys

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4 Themed Cheese Baskets –Breakfast, Packers, Christmas & Super Bowl

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Hand Carved Swiss Cow Farm Scene

Donated by Second-Look Holsteins, LLC

Larry Schultz Print

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One hour of consulting with Spanish-speaking employees

Donated by Agriculture Dairy Business Consulting, Division of Silver Creek, Inc. International

Barnboard Shelves

Donated by Gold Star Farm

Pressure Washer – 1800 PSI, 1.5 GPM

Donated by Levzow Dairy

Green Bay Packers Party Package, featuring Tickets & Tailgate Party

Donated by Lake Breeze Dairy, LLC

Cheese & Wine Basket

Donated by Tauchen Harmony Valley, Inc.

CowParade Wisconsin "The Tank" Cow, Book and Poster

Donated by Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board

"Attitude is Everything" Bonnie Mohr Framed Print

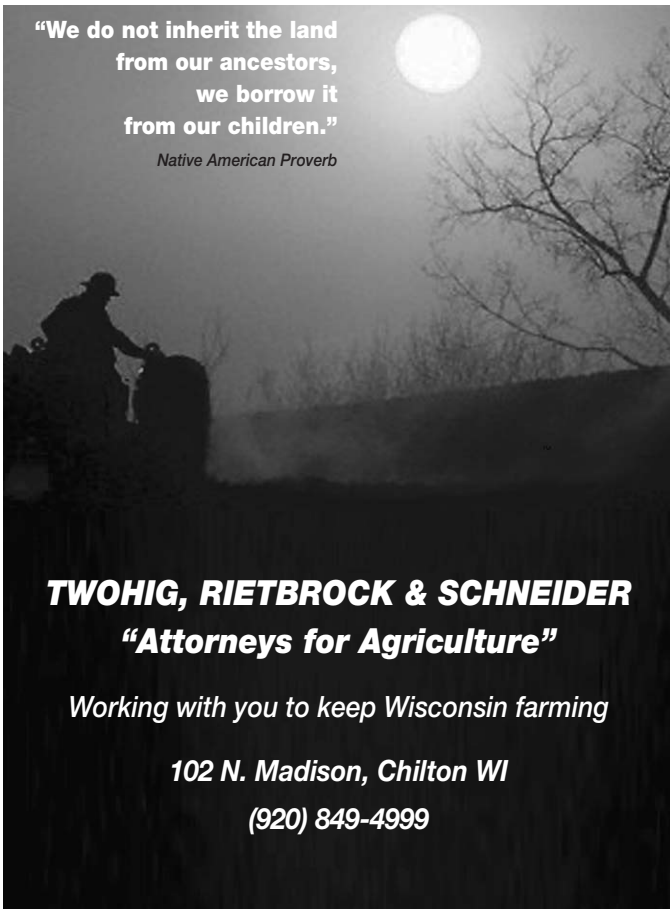
Donated by Maedex Tax & Farm Accounting, LLC

Cheese & Wine Basket

Donated by Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese

See Silent Auction on page 35

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Silent Auction

Continued from page 34

Handmade Baby Afghan

Donated by Joan Sanstadt

Intarsia Wood Art: Boy Splashing in a Puddle

Donated by Kim Brown Pokorny & Doyle Pokorny

Green Bay Packer Pre-Season Bishop's Charity Game Tickets & Dinner

Donated by Twohig, Rietbrock & Schneider, S.C.

Cheese & Crackers Basket

Donated by Cedar Valley Cheese Store

Organic Prairie Scrusher

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Hand-held DVD Camcorder

Donated by Quality Liquid Feeds, Inc.

Kwik Trip Gift Card

Donated by Angie Molkentin

Barnboard Lamp Table

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Two Cheese Baskets

Donated by Grande Milk Marketing, LLC

"This Business Called Agriculture" Print by Larry Schultz Framed

Donated by Wisconsin Agribusiness Council & Maedex Holsteins

Prince Fielder Jersey, Brewers Hat and Brewers chair

Donated by We Energies

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Green Bay Packer Pre-Season Gold Package

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"A Mother's Love" Print by Bonnie Mohr

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~ Joe Thome, Redtail Ridge Dairy, Malone, Wis.

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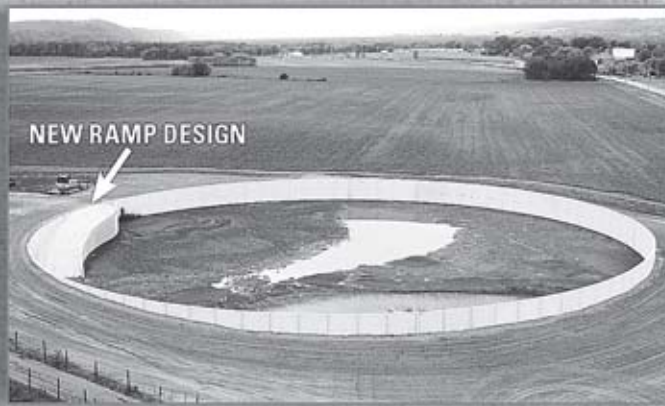
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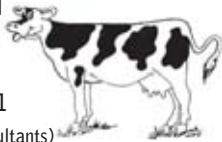


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Bid it on a forty dollar, will you gim-mie forty, Who'll-I bid it at a forty dollar bid?



Leroy Van Dyke, country music artist who sings "The Auctioneer" may not be at the PDPW Annual Business Conference, but NFL star and former Packer Adam Timmerman will be there.

We're rolling out the green and gold carpet on Tuesday evening of the Annual Business Conference with festivities that include a special keynote from Adam Timmerman and a fun live auction featuring incredible items.



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