

Al Ott

State Representative • 3rd Assembly District

**Assembly Agriculture Committee
MEMO**

TO: Members of the Assembly Agriculture Committee

FROM: Beata Kalies, Committee Clerk

DATE: May 25th, 2001 *BK*

At our last hearing, several members of the committee expressed interest in obtaining a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding between DNR and DATCP relating to the regulation of fish farming. The following informative packet contains the proposed amendment to AB 361 by the DNR as well as a copy of the MOU agreement.

In addition, some members requested more information regarding the Clearinghouse Rule 01-015 on Ethanol and the Ethanol Bill AB 237. I am enclosing a memo created for that purpose by our Legislative Council Attorney, Mark Patronsky.

The last item is a handout from Integrated Dairy Facilities which members may find informative.

If you have any questions or comments, please give me a call 6-5831. Thank you.

Kalies, Beata

From: Staggs, Mike D
Sent: Thursday, May 24, 2001 3:53 PM
To: Sykora, Tom; Ott, Alvin; 'bullfrog@eatmyfish.com'; 'Gollon, Dave Jr.'; Fennessy, Franc
Cc: Lamb, Les F DATCP; Moll, Keeley A DATCP; Kluesner, Elizabeth M; Andryk, Tim A; Heinen, Paul H; Rodenberg, Jerry R; OBrien, John; Tradewell, Becky; Hewett, Steve W; Siroky, Clarence J DATCP; Hughes, Will H DATCP; Heike, Ruth E DATCP; Ehlenfeldt, Robert G DATCP; Kibus, Myron J DATCP; Kalies, Beata; Hardinger, Marlin
Subject: Follow Up to AB361 Hearing Today

Per discussions at the Assembly Agriculture Committee hearing on AB361 and with the DNR Secretary's Office - the Department of Natural Resources will support an amended version of AB361 that includes our suggested addition (in bold below):

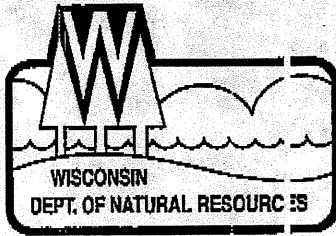
"95.60 (3) The department [DATCP] shall promulgate rules, applicable to person who operate fish farms, that require any evidence of fish health that the department determines is necessary. **The department shall consult with the department of natural resources on the portion of the rules relating to stocking and discharge into public waters.**"

and we will also support an amended version that makes it clear that DATCP fish health rules passed under 95.60(3) also apply to state fish hatcheries as suggested by Dave Gollon.

If you have any questions or would like us to review additional language, please do not hesitate to contact me or Deputy Secretary Franc Fennessy.

Also, I will FAX a copy of the current MOU to Rep. Ott's office for distribution to interested committee members and follow through on informing the Secretary's office of Rep. Ainsworth's concerns about DNR working closely with DATCP on wildlife related issues.

Michael Staggs
Bureau of Fisheries Management and Habitat Protection
PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921
608-267-0796
608-266-2244 (FAX)



State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Scott McCallum, Governor
Darrell Bazzell, Secretary

Department of Natural Resources

FAX TRANSMITTAL COVER SHEET

Fax #608-266-2244

To: Rep. Al. Ott.

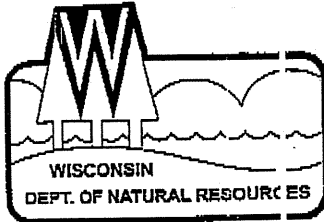
FAX: 282 - 3603

From: Mike Staggs, DNR Date 5-24-01

Number of Pages 7

Comments: Per your request at the
AB 361 hearing today. Copy of the
DNR-DATCP MOW relating to fish farms.





State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Tommy G. Thompson, Governor
 George E. Meyer, Secretary

101 S. Webster St.
 Box 7921
 Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7921
 Telephone 608-266-2621
 FAX 608-267-3579
 TDD 608-267-6897

August 4, 2000

Mr. Joe Tregonig,
 Deputy Secretary
 Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
 PO Box 8911
 Madison, WI 53708-8911

RECEIVED

AUG 10 2000

**OFFICE OF THE
 SECRETARY**

Subject: Fish Farm MOU

Dear Mr. Tregonig: *Joe*

Please find enclosed the signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection relating to the regulation of fish farming. We were very pleased to see that the final version adequately addressed most of our comments transmitted in Mike Staggs' June 22nd memorandum, and I was able to recommend that our Department Secretary sign the document. I trust that the aquaculture industry and interested legislators and Natural Resources Board members will also be satisfied with the final agreement. By copy of this memorandum we will also send copies to those interested parties. By terms of the MOU, the effective date of the agreement will be August 4, 2000. Each of us should take responsibility to ensure that the MOU is distributed and implemented in our respective agencies.

I, too, am pleased that our agencies were finally able to work through the issues and reach agreement on this difficult topic. I know that we have much work ahead to ensure customer and environmentally friendly regulation of aquaculture, but am confident that our agencies can work together to make this happen.

Sincerely,

Franc Fennessy
 Franc Fennessy
 Executive Assistant

cc: Governor Tommy Thompson
 Sen. Alice Clausing
 Sen. Roger Breske
 Rep. Barbara Gronemus
 David Collon, Jr, WAA
 Scott Barnes, WAA

Natural Resources Board Members
 Sen. Dale Schultz
 Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud
 Gordon Anderson, Leg. Council
 Mac Graham, WAA
 Peter Fritsch, WAA

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
And
THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

SUBJECT: Cooperation between the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) relating to the regulation of fish farming.

PURPOSE: This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes a framework for DATCP and DNR to cooperate to effectively regulate and promote fish farming while protecting the natural resources of this state.

SCOPE: The agencies intend that this MOU memorialize agreements reached between the agencies relating to regulating fish farming. Any issue which is not addressed in this MOU is not to be read into this MOU by implication.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: The agencies enter this MOU under the authority of ss. 20.901 and 23.06(11), Wis. Stats., and non-statutory provisions in 97 Wis. Act 27.

AGENCIES INVOLVED:

- The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection with offices located at 2811 Agriculture Drive, Madison, WI.
- The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources with offices located at 101 S. Webster Street, Madison, WI.

THE AGENCIES AGREE THAT:

1. It is the intention of DNR and DATCP that the staff of both agencies should cooperate in promoting the interests of the State of Wisconsin and of the citizens of the State of Wisconsin relating to protecting the waters of the state and the fish population of the state while promoting fish health among both the state owned fish population and the fish owned by registered fish farmers and promoting the fish farming industry and development of markets for products of the fish farming industry. The agencies encourage their staff to cooperate within statutory limits in the following:
 - Promoting early inter-agency communication regarding policy changes or initiatives, administrative rules changes, and legislative changes that an agency will seek that might affect our mutual customers.
 - Promoting efficient law enforcement activities in areas of mutual concern.
 - Promoting opportunities for inter-agency attendance at staff meetings or training sessions relating to matters of mutual interest or concern.
 - Promoting clarity of communications between agency staff by utilizing consistent names for species of fish in inter-agency communications. The agencies agree to

use the American Fisheries Society Common and Scientific Names of Fishes to establish consistent species names.

2. Sections ATCP 10.68, 11.58 and 11.59, Wis. Adm. Code, contain provisions which DNR is required to comply with, and in some instances different provisions which private fish farmers are required to comply with. The agencies agree that persons or not-for-profit groups who have formal cooperative agreements with the DNR for raising fish will be considered DNR facilities and will be required to meet the same requirements as DNR is required to meet for its fish hatcheries, rearing stations, and ponds used for fish rearing facilities.
3. Section ATCP 11.59, Wis. Adm. Code, requires persons who are stocking fish in the waters of the state to obtain a health certificate before the fish are stocked. Section 29.736, Wis. Stats. requires persons who stock fish to obtain a permit from DNR. DNR agrees that it will not issue a stocking permit until the applicant has provided a copy of the appropriate health certificate to the DNR.
4. DNR agrees that it will report all instances of reportable diseases that are reported or confirmed in waters of this state to DATCP within 10 days.
5. DATCP agrees that it will report to DNR confirmed cases of reportable fish disease in this state. If the disease is confirmed at a fish farm, DATCP will identify the name, address and location of the fish farm.
6. Persons who import fish into Wisconsin are required to obtain an import permit from DATCP. If the person is importing "non-native" fish, the person is also required to obtain a permit from DNR. DATCP agrees not to issue an import permit for "non-native" fish until the person has a DNR permit. Since identification of "non-native" fish is within DNR's expertise, DATCP will rely on DNR's identification. DNR will provide DATCP with a written list identifying all species of fish it believes need a permit from DNR before it can be imported to Wisconsin. DNR may change the list at any time by simply providing a written list to DATCP which incorporates the changes. The "non-native" fish list may include any species DNR issues a permit for prior to import, including rough fish. DATCP will treat all species on the "non-native" fish list the same with regard to withholding a DATCP import permit until the person obtains a DNR permit. At the present time, DNR has provided DATCP with a table from DNR's Fish Management Handbook. The table is identified as Table 1. Fishes reliably reported to occur (or to have occurred in the past) in Wisconsin waters. Unless DATCP receives a replacement "non-native" species list, DATCP will utilize this list to determine which import permit applications need to be referred to DNR in the following manner:
 - A. DATCP will refer an import permit application to DNR for any species which is not identified in Table 1.
 - B. If the species is identified in Table 1 and is not identified with an *, DATCP will not refer the import permit application to DNR.
 - C. If the species is identified in Table 1 and is identified with an *, DATCP will not refer the import permit application to DNR, unless DNR has made a

written request to DATCP to receive notification of import permit requests for the particular species at issue.

When DATCP refers the import permit application, DATCP will advise the applicant that the application has been referred to DNR, and that DATCP will not consider the application until the DNR permit is issued.

Within 10 days of receiving the permit, DNR will send an acknowledgement letter to the applicant containing the following information:

- A. Name and contact information for the DNR person who will be handling the permit review.
- B. An estimated time when the review will be completed.

The DNR will keep the applicant informed if the estimated time of completion changes significantly.

7. DNR will advise DATCP when it issues a permit under paragraph 6. DATCP will then consider the permit application.
8. Under s. 95.60(2), Wis. Stats., DNR is exempt from the requirement to obtain an import permit for fish or fish eggs it imports. Under the same statutory section, DNR is required to certify the health status of any fish of the family salmonidae that it imports for stocking in the waters of this state. The same statutory section authorizes DATCP to require a person, who is required to either obtain an import permit or to certify health status of fish of the family salmonidae, to notify the department before bringing fish or fish eggs into this state. DATCP is requiring DNR to notify the department before bringing fish or fish eggs into the state. The agencies agree that this requirement will be met if DNR provides DATCP with a list of proposed and actual DNR imports in January and July each year.
9. Under s. 95.60(4s) DATCP is required to consult with DNR regarding labeling and identifying fish reared on fish farms, promulgating rules for health standards, establishing standards for non-veterinarians to issue fish health certificates and dealing with diseases of salmonids. DATCP agrees to consult with DNR on the statutorily mandated subjects. In this context, consult means to seek advice or information, or to take into account or consider.
10. DATCP agrees that if it creates a list of ornamental fish in addition to those identified in s. ATCP 11.58(1)(g), it will consult with DNR regarding the fish to be included on that list.
11. DATCP agrees that if DNR provides DATCP with a listing of people in DNR who should be contacted by a person interested in becoming a registered fish farmer so the person may determine what that person needs to do to comply with DNR requirements, DATCP will include that contact list in the fish farm starter kits.
12. The agencies agree that they may share staff or equipment to address specific incidents relating to fish farming. If staff or equipment are shared, the agency that wants to use the staff or equipment shall be the "receiving agency." The agency that is providing the staff or equipment shall be the "sending agency." Each agency agrees that if it is the receiving agency, it will reimburse the sending agency for the use of its

equipment or staff if the sending agency requests payment. Each agency agrees that if it seeks reimbursement it will charge the other agency at the same rate it would charge internally for the use of that equipment or staff if it charged internally for the use of equipment or staff. If an agency desires to use equipment or staff of the other agency, the following procedure will be used:

- A. The Secretary of the receiving agency will make a written request to the Secretary of the sending agency identifying what equipment or personnel the agency seeks to use and the facts relating to the incident which creates the need for the use of the equipment or staff.
 - B. The Secretary of the sending agency will consider the request and will provide a written response to the Secretary of the receiving department. The written response will either authorize the requested use, deny the requested use, or offer an alternative which may serve the interests of both agencies.
13. DATCP will annually provide DNR with a list of all registered fish farms.
 14. DATCP and DNR agree that each agency will have access to records maintained by the other agency. Neither agency is required to create or gather records not already kept for the benefit of the other agency. This provision does not authorize either agency to attempt to use the authority of the other agency to gain access to records kept by someone else.
 15. If DNR obtains records from DATCP which are subject to the confidentiality provisions of s. 95.60, Wis. Stats., DNR will maintain the confidentiality of those records. DNR will refer any open records request for the confidential records to DATCP.
 16. If DNR needs to contact DATCP regarding fish farming, DNR should contact the State Aquaculture Veterinarian at (608) 224-4876. If the State Aquaculture Veterinarian is unavailable, DNR may contact the Veterinarian Supervisor at (608) 224-4880.
 17. If DATCP needs to contact DNR regarding fish farming, DATCP should contact the Aquaculture Sector Specialist at (608) 266-7715. If the Aquaculture Sector Specialist is unavailable, DATCP may contact the Chief of the Fisheries Policy and Operations Section in the Bureau of Fisheries Management and Habitat Protection at (608) 267-7501.
 18. This agreement is effective on the latest date on which a Secretary of one of the agencies signs the agreement. This agreement may be amended or revoked at any time by written agreement of the parties. The agencies agree that they will advise WAIAC and WAA of changes made to the agreement.
 19. The agencies agree that the agencies will meet to review effectiveness of the MOU, and possible amendments two years after the date on which this MOU is effective. Thereafter, the reviews will take place 3 years after the prior review. Either agency may request an earlier review by providing 30 days written notice of the request.
 20. Any problems or complaints regarding non-compliance with this agreement should initially be worked out or resolved at the lowest management level with responsibility

in the contested area. If the matter is not resolved at the lowest management level, the discussion may be moved to the next higher management level and ultimately may be resolved at the Secretarial level.

Dated this 3rd day of August, 2000.

Dated this 19 day of July, 2000.

By: George E. Meyer
George E. Meyer, Secretary
Wisconsin Department of
Natural Resources

P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921

By: Ben Brancel
Ben Brancel, Secretary
Wisconsin Department of
Agriculture, Trade and
Consumer Protection
P.O. Box 8911
Madison, WI 53708-8911



**WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
STAFF MEMORANDUM**

TO: REPRESENTATIVE ALVIN OTT

FROM: Mark C. Patronsky, Senior Staff Attorney *MP*

RE: Legislation and Administrative Rule Proposal Regarding the Ethanol Payment Program

DATE: May 21, 2001

Members of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture have raised questions regarding the relationship between rules proposed by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and 2001 Assembly Bill 237, relating to payments to ethanol producers. You have asked for a summary of any potential inconsistencies between the proposed rule and Assembly Bill 237, if the bill is adopted, and the effect of the bill on those inconsistencies.

Current Statute

The ethanol payment program is established under s. 93.75, Stats., as created by 1999 Wisconsin Act 55. DATCP is directed to make payments to ethanol producers in this state, but funding has not yet been provided for the program. The Governor's 2001 budget proposes funding of \$3 million in the second year of the biennium.

The current statute establishes the basic eligibility requirements, payment amounts and provides for termination of the payment program. The provisions of the statute are as follows:

- An ethanol producer must produce over 10 million gallons of ethanol within a 12-month period. DATCP is authorized to make the payment to a producer who produces less than 10 million gallons of ethanol during the first 12 months of production.
- Payments to producers are for up to 60 months of production.
- The producer must purchase the raw materials for ethanol production from a local source, as defined by DATCP rule.
- DATCP must pay an eligible producer \$0.20 per gallon for not more than 15 million gallons of ethanol produced in this state in a 12-month period.

- The requirement for a DOT report on the effect of ethanol sales on the amount of federal moneys received by the state for highway and other surface transportation purposes is extended to 2012, but the bill eliminates the requirement for DATCP to terminate ethanol payments if such federal money is decreased due to ethanol sales.

Effect of Assembly Bill 237 on the Proposed Rule

If Assembly Bill 237 is enacted, it will supersede several provisions in the proposed rule. However, this will not affect the ability of DATCP to administer the program. DATCP will administer the program based on the statutory provisions rather than the inconsistent provisions in the rule. DATCP may later modify the rule to reflect the change in statutory requirements. The two rule provisions that are superseded by Assembly Bill 237 are the 60-month limit on the program (changed to 120 months) and the prorating system (eliminated by the bill).

If I can provide further information on this subject, please feel free to contact me.

MCP:tlu:ksm

Frequently asked questions:

Q: Why don't university researchers do this research & teaching on real farms?

A: We do! Field research is, and will remain, an important part of our effort, but it cannot replace the high risk, controlled research we do in our own herds. Many of our trials require procedures and data gathering impossible to do on a commercial farm. Our teaching program uses commercial farms but we need cows on campus to teach basic cow skills and biology.

Q: Why are they building tie-stalls at Arlington?

A: Measurements on individual animals are essential for many experiments and are often required in industry or federally sponsored research. Our new facilities will be one of the world's best for research on groups of cows, but that does not eliminate the need for individually housed animals.



Q: How does this project relate to other UW Dairy facilities?

A: The integrated Dairy Facilities and the Platteville Pioneer farm are part of the Governor's Ag initiative. The integrated dairy will provide controlled research on the various components of the dairy system, including those that determine environmental impact. The Platteville, River Falls and Madison Campus dairies all are essential to the teaching programs of each campus.

Contacts:

Lou Armentano, Chair of Dairy Science,
1675 Observatory Dr, Madison WI 53706,
(608) 263-3308, learnent@facstaff.wisc.edu

Dwaine Sievers, Chair of Integrated Dairy
Facilities

Advisory Council, (608) 423-7171,
ABC@agribus.com

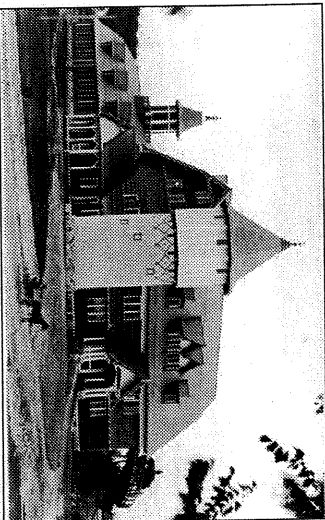
Elton Aberle,
Dean of College of Agricultural and Life
Sciences,

(608) 262-4930,
elton.aberle@ccmail.adp.wisc.edu

Neal Jorgensen, Special Assistant to the Dean &
Fund-Raising Coordinator for Integrated Dairy
Facilities, (608) 262-9135,
neal.jorgensen@ccmail.adp.wisc.edu

Integrated Dairy Facilities Advisory Council:

Tom Anderson, Shawano; Ralph Bredl, Stratford;
Barb Drewry-Zimmerman, Plymouth; Dean
Doornink, Baldwin; Robert Walton, DeForest;
Pete Giacomini, Verona; Pete Kappelman,
Manitowoc; Alan Krause, Stratford; Lawrie Kull,
Arden Hills; Shelly Mayer, Slinger; Chet Rawson,
Hazel Green; John Rosnow, Cochrane; Gary
Ruesegger, Stratford; Allan Schultz, Madison;
Gary Siporski, Loyal; Paul Thompson, Madison



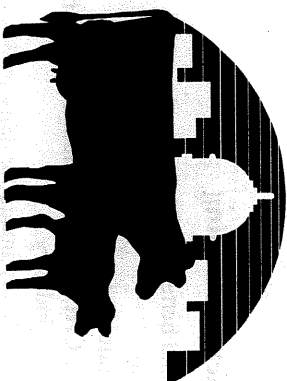
Donations:

Personal financial contributions for this project will help us build dairy facilities that Wisconsin can be proud of. Your contribution should be made out to: UW-Foundation Integrated Dairy Facilities, 1848 University Avenue, P. O. Box 8860, Madison, WI 53708-8806.

Integrated Dairy Facilities



Supporting the dairy research
and teaching programs of the
University of Wisconsin-Madison
College of Agricultural and Life
Sciences on campus, at Arlington and
at Marshfield.



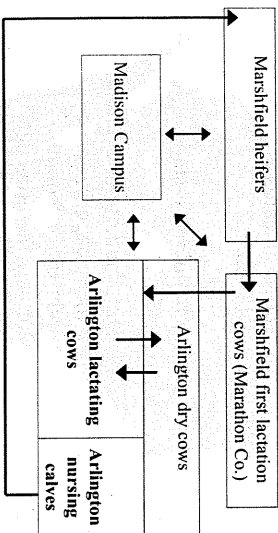
Visit us at

www.wisc.edu/dysci

What does the project do?

Creates an integrated dairy to serve the teaching needs at Madison and the research needs of the state's dairy industry. The improved facilities will expand the herds from 300 to 600 cows milking; plus replacements and dry cows.

Integrated animal management



Goals for the Integrated Dairy

- Reduce cost of production in Wisconsin's dairy industry to increase profitability.
- Enhance the well-being of dairy animals.
- Enhance dairy farming's contribution to Wisconsin's soil, water, and air quality.
- Improve the quality, safety, value and marketability of Wisconsin's milk supply.
- Contribute to a safe working environment on Wisconsin dairies.
- Keep dairy production an important part of the Wisconsin economy.

Impact of Building

- Faster and better answers to producer's questions.
- Better training for students at all levels.
- Commits CALS and UW-Madison to the future of the dairy industry.
- Creates a positive image for dairy in Wisconsin and Upper Midwest.
- Most of the research done at these facilities will apply to progressive dairy operators of all kinds, and the facilities are flexible enough to address specific requirements of different farming systems.



Marshfield Dairy Center

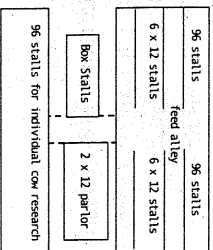
A world-class facility focused on dairy replacements

- Heifer barn #1 320 head
 - office/animal handling
- Heifer barn #2 280 head
 - 2 x 8 Parlor
 - Lactation barn 128 cows
- Phase 1 (2001-03)
 - heifer barn #1
 - office/animal handling
 - \$1.8 million
- Phase 2 (2003-05)
 - Second heifer barn
 - Milking facilities for 1st calf heifers
 - \$2.3 million
- Each phase includes feed storage & manure handling

Arlington Research & Teaching Center

To support research and teaching with dairy cows and nursing calves

- 336 stall 4-row free-stall
 - includes replicated group research
- Individual cow research
 - 96 tie stalls
 - specialized facility
- \$4.3 million with calf barn, manure handling, feed storage etc
- 2003-05 biennium.



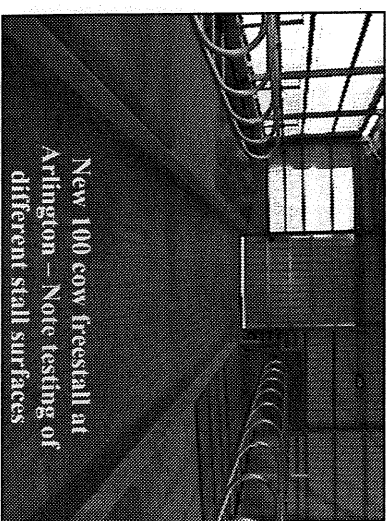
Campus Dairy Cattle Teaching and Research Center

- Hands-on teaching and intensive research
- \$400,000 in improvements (2003-05).

Is anything happening?

Yes! In the current biennium (99-01) we have built the first 100 cow free-stall barn at Arlington that has also become the site for a robotic milker. The land for the Marshfield heifer facility has been purchased and planning money allocated. The total value of expenditure in this biennium is in excess of \$1.5 million with no allocation from general state funds.

The regents included the entire 01-03 and 03-05 plans as part of the Governor's Initiative in Agriculture. The request is for \$5.1 million in state funding. A fundraising drive is under way to raise the remaining \$3.7 million required.

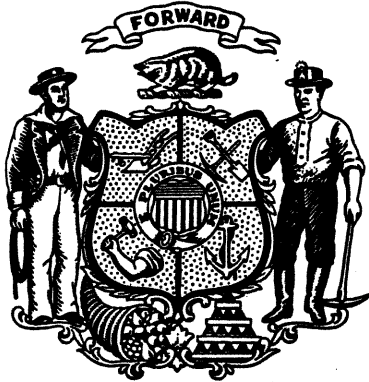


New 100 cow freestall at Arlington - Note testing of different stall surfaces

Some Recent Impacts from UW-Madison Dairy Research Herds:

- Genetic markers now used to select superior AI sires for subsequent proving.
- Discovery of the metabolic limitation that causes fatty liver in dairy cows.
- Diagnostic tests for ruminal acidosis.
- Effectiveness of anionic salts to reduce milk fever.
- Improved value of corn silage by correct harvesting time and processing.
- Usefulness of high fiber by-products.
- Establishment of NIR test for protein degradability in hay crop forages.
- Development of the Ov-Synch protocol.

END



END



WISCONSIN FARMERS UNION NEWS



Volume 58, Number 6

only invited speakers
- Union Group - premed June, 2000

Farmers Union Asks Clinton To Help Dairy Farmers

The Farmers Union this month asked U.S. President Bill Clinton to take a series of actions to provide immediate economic help to U.S. dairy producers who are suffering from dairy prices that have hit a 30-year low.

The requested actions were included in two separate letters sent to the White House from National Farmers Union President Leland Swenson and Wisconsin Farmers Union President Bill Brey.

In a June 19 letter to Clinton, Swenson asked the president to support Congressional efforts to increase the dairy support price as well as support congressional efforts to provide emergency supplemental income supports for dairy farmers.

Other actions suggested in NFU's letter were increased dairy product purchases for domestic and international food programs, an increase in the Commodity Credit Corps. purchase price for cheese and a Food and Drug Administration investigation on whether imported, ultra-filtered milk concentrate was being used illegally in the production of cheese.

"In my conversations with dairy farmers across the country, it is becoming clear that in some regions we could lose as many as 30 per cent of our (dairy) producers this year," Swenson said in his letter. "Dairy farmers continue to struggle as a result of low prices. What we need are real solutions that provide fair, open, competitive and profitable markets for our dairy producers."

WFU President Brey also supported the various actions suggested by NFU, in a letter Brey wrote to Clinton on June 28, expanding on the NFU's requests.

In his letter, Brey also asked Clinton to make sure the FDA maintained existing product standards for cheese and did not approve a food processing petition to alter the definition of milk to allow the use of milk concentrates in the production of cheese.

"This change would allow other countries to use the United States as a dumping ground for their surplus dairy production.

It would increase the cost of the U.S. dairy support price program, while at the same time lowering the price to U.S. dairy farmers. It is crucial that FDA disallow the petition," Brey wrote.

Brey also asked for an investigation of whether some processors are illegally using dry UF milk in the production of cheese.

"Dry UF milk concentrate, which is not produced in the U.S., is not subject to dairy import quotas because it is not allowed under U.S. product standards to be used in cheese. However, import levels of UF milk concentrate have increased six-fold over the past two years. An investigation should be done to determine whether UF-milk concentrate is being used as a cheese ingredient," Brey said.

Brey also asked the president to strengthen antitrust scrutiny of the dairy industry and enforce U.S. antitrust law in regards to industry mergers. "I am concerned that the high number of agricultural mergers, which includes numerous mergers and acquisitions involving dairy plants and firms, has severely reduced competition for dairy markets," Brey said.



Wisconsin Farmers Union President Bill Brey, left, visits with Wisconsin State Sen. Gary George, right, during a hearing held by the Wisconsin Senate Judiciary and Consumer Affairs Committee in Eau Claire about the future of the Wisconsin dairy industry. Also pictured, center, is committee member State Sen. Alice Clausing, who took part in the hearing on June 23. For a story on the hearing, turn to Page 4.

Don't Miss It!

*WFU Torchbearer Reunion
Kemp Kenwood -- July 21-22
For Details, See Page 7*

June Dairy Month!

WHY is Wisconsin proud of its dairy producers?
does Wisconsin celebrate June Dairy Month?
are the following co-ops proud of dairy farmers?



BECAUSE WISCONSIN'S
first cheesemakers were farm wives!
fame as America's Dairyland began in the 1930's!
Colby Cheese was invented in Colby!
annual milk production is over 23 billion lbs. annually!
dairy school in Madison was the first in the U.S.!

**THE FOLLOWING CO-OPS ARE VERY PLEASED TO
SUPPORT OUR STATE'S DAIRY PRODUCERS!**

ALMA FARMERS UNION CO-OP
Alma

FAIRCHILD FARMERS UNION CO-OP
Fairchild

AUGUSTA FARMERS UNION
Augusta-Fall Creek-Foster

FARMERS UNION CO-OP SERVICES
Adams

BLOOMER FARMERS UNION CO-OP
Bloomer

GREENVILLE COOPERATIVE
Greenville-Fox Cities Area

BURNETT DAIRY CO-OP
Grantsburg

MAUSTON FARMERS CO-OP ASS'N
Mauston-Wi. Dells-Wonewoc

CHIPPEWA VALLEY ELECTRIC
Cornell

MENOMONIE FARMERS UNION CO-OP
Menomonie-Boyceville

CONSUMERS CO-OP OIL COMPANY
Sauk City-Plain

POLK BURNETT ELECTRIC
Centuria

COUNTRY PRIDE CO-OP
*Almena-Cumberland-Turtle Lake
Frederic-Barronett*

RICE LAKE FARMERS UNION CO-OP
Rice Lake

COLFAX FARMERS UNION
Colfax

RIDGELAND-CHETEK CO-OP
Ridgeland-Chetek-Sand Creek

CO-OP COUNTRY PARTNERS
Baraboo-Reedsburg-Sauk Prairie-Poynette

EAU CLAIRE COOPERATIVE
Eau Claire

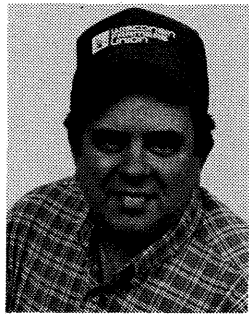
RIVER COUNTRY CO-OP
*Chippewa Falls-Boyd-Bloomer
Cadott-Cornell- Jim Falls*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Milk Price Crisis -- a Leadership Crisis

By: William "Bill" Brey

As the dairy crisis continues to deepen because of the prolonged drought in milk prices a lot of people have engaged in a lot of finger pointing, blaming first one thing and then another for the price and income crisis gripping our nation's dairy producers.



Bill Brey

Some blame the outdated federal pricing system based out of the city of Eau Claire. Others point the finger at the Northeast Dairy Compact. Other simply throw up their hands and say nothing can be done because the dairy industry is split apart into regional factions.

The problem is that they are all right to a degree. But the real reason is there has been a vacuum of leadership in trying to bring all the various elements together to forge a solution to bringing milk prices up to levels where producers throughout the U.S. can receive a fair and profitable return for their work.

That is why as president of the Wisconsin Farmers Union I have been working with producers from all the regions concerned to fight against proposals to change the definition of milk and food identity standards in ways that would allow a further flood of imported products to replace milk produced in the U.S. under our rigid food safety standards.

That is why I have been working with those same producers from other regions to craft a proposal to repair the dairy safety net, and even met with the Governor of Vermont when he was in Wisconsin to speak at the State Democratic Convention, exploring with him ways in which we could cooperate to rebuild a solid foundation for federal dairy policy.

We have seen some success with those efforts to date.

The food processing industry has backed off in part from its original proposal to change the definition of milk to allow both dried and fluid ultra-filtered milk to be used in the production of cheese, although their amended effort still would displace a lot of fluid milk produced by Wisconsin dairy farmers.

U.S. Reps. Dave Obey, Tammy Baldwin and others from Wisconsin have introduced H.R. 3864, which would help rebuild a dairy safety net for producers, and another bill that partially addresses the identity standards threat.

Recently, National Farmers Union President Leland Swenson and I wrote letters to President Bill Clinton, asking him to take a variety of steps to address the dairy crisis.

Still, much remains to be done and we need to see stronger, more effective leadership demonstrated at the state level here in Wisconsin from the Governor's office on down.

The answer to getting the Wisconsin dairy industry growing again is simple. Restore profitability to Wisconsin dairy farmers' ledgers and they will make the needed investments in their farms to grow and the dairy processing industry will have the milk they need to grow as well.

On a lighter note, I hope that all of you and your families enjoy a happy 4th of July celebration with good food and fellowship and all the things which make our national birthday so special.

WFU Asks USDA To Make Silage Bunkers Eligible for New On-Farm Storage Program

Wisconsin Farmers Union President William "Bill" Brey recently urged the U.S. Department of Agriculture to add permanent silage storage structures, such as concrete bunkers, to the list of on-farm storage facilities eligible to receive USDA loans for new construction and upgrading.

Brey made the request in a June 12 letter to USDA in response to USDA's request for public comments on the on-farm grain storage loan program it announced on May 11.

In his letter Brey said WFU believes the proposed program to provide new seven-year, low interest loans for the construction and upgrading of such structures would be of value to farmers involved in the project and provide for the overall upgrading of the nation's capacity to store and handle the crops produced here in the U.S.

"While the WFU supports the basic program outlined by USDA in its announcement, the WFU believes the program needs to be modified to make additional crop storage structures eligible for the financing. In particular, the WFU believes it would be wise to include permanent storage structures, such as open concrete bunkers, etc., that have been developed for the storage of crops such as grain silage and haylage," Brey said.

The program as announced by USDA would apply only to facilities used to store grain and oilseed crops.

"In parts of the U.S., the weather and other factors make the production and use of silage and other forage based crops a better choice for many farmers for storage for future, long-term use. Recent changes in dairy farming practices, make concrete silage bunkers a better choice for use than the traditional covered silos which were built on many farms," Brey said. "It is for those reasons that the WFU urges the above modification in the USDA proposal and also recommends that USDA make silage crops eligible for government programs on a sustained basis."

The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program will provide seven-year financing for on-farm storage of eligible crops including corn, oats, barley, wheat, grain sorghum, soybeans, and minor oilseeds. To remain eligible, it is important that no materials are delivered and no work is done on the site until after the loan is approved.

Eligible storage and handling facilities must be designed and engineered for whole grain storage, must be permanent structures, and must have a useful life of at least 10 years.

WFU Board of Directors

Craig Myhre District 1 (715) 983-2167	William Brey, President District 4 (920) 743-9015	Sue Beitlich District 7 (608) 483-2664
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Dennis Rosen District 3 (715) 263-2941	Janet Nelson, Vice-President District 6 (715) 455-1755	Gerald Jaeger District 9 (920) 533-4725

MEMBERSHIP

Jill Lucht Joins Wisconsin Farmers Union as Membership Services Coordinator

By: Jill Lucht

Greetings to Wisconsin Farmers Union members, and thank you for the warm welcome I have received from board members and others.

As many of you know, I started in the position of membership services coordinator on May 30. I am fortunate to be following in the very capable footsteps of Patty Edelburg, who has created an excellent base for increasing membership and improving the services we provide to our members. I look forward to meeting many more of you in the next month while I am on the road promoting WFU and its message at Farm Progress Days and the fairs in Polk and Barron counties.

My first month at the Wisconsin Farmers Union has been spent at Kamp Kenwood as a member of the camp staff. As a camp counselor I have been helping campers have fun while they learn about cooperatives and the Farmers Union. This has proven to be an excellent opportunity to prepare myself for work as your membership services coordinator.

After Kamp Kenwood closes its season on July 7, I look forward to working with you and your county and local organizations to better meet your membership goals. As I mentioned earlier, I will be representing WFU at Farm Progress Days and county fairs during the month of July. In August, preparation will be underway for Rural Unity Day, which is scheduled for August 27. I will also continue my training with Patty by working on a membership drive with one of our county organizations.

Before moving to Chippewa Falls and starting my position with WFU, I was a student in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, majoring in rural sociology and political science.

I am very excited to be working for the Farmers Union, as it has given me the opportunity to work for an organization that shares my concern for family farmers and rural communities.

Like many of you, my concern for agriculture and the

farming profession began when I was a child working on my family's dairy farm. This concern prompted me to concentrate on agriculture in my school, work and extra-curricular activities during my time in Madison. Through this education and experience I have developed the necessary skills to turn my concern into action. I look forward to working with you to promote and preserve our family farms and rural communities!

Three from WFU Testify on Dairy Situation at Wisconsin Senate Hearing

Wisconsin's political leadership needs to take the lead in forging a national coalition in support for federal legislation establishing a strong foundation dairy prices, Wisconsin Farmers Union President Bill Brey told the Wisconsin State Senate Judiciary and Consumer Affairs Committee during a hearing in Eau Claire on June 23.

Brey told the committee, chaired by State Sen. Gary George, that such legislation has been introduced in Congress by U.S. Reps. Dave Obey, Tammy Baldwin and others in the Wisconsin delegation but that they have not received strong support for their effort from the Governor's office on down.

Brey was one of three WFU members who testified at the state senate committee hearing on the current state of the Wisconsin dairy economy and what needed to be done to help it during the current economic crisis it is undergoing.

WFU Vice President Janet Nelson warned of the consequences to Wisconsin rural communities if nothing was done to strengthen the market for dairy farmers.

"The impact that (doing nothing) will have on our local rural communities will be devastating here in Wisconsin," Nelson said. "We have been lucky to date in that Wisconsin's tradition of family farm agriculture with its great number of medium-size farms has sustained our rural communities so that they have not become ghost towns like those that exist in other states to the west...the same thing can happen in Wisconsin as well, if dairy farming heads down the road to large corporate-style dairies."

WFU member Greg Blaska of Sun Prairie also testified for the need for a foundation price under dairy prices. He also outlined a proposal for a producer-financed, supply management program for milk, which included an exemption for dairy farmers who produced less than 1.5 million pounds of milk each year.



WFU's new Membership Services Coordinator Jill Lucht shows off "Suzette" her mother's favorite cow from the Lucht family's 70-cow dairy herd the family milks on their farm just outside of Antigo, WI.

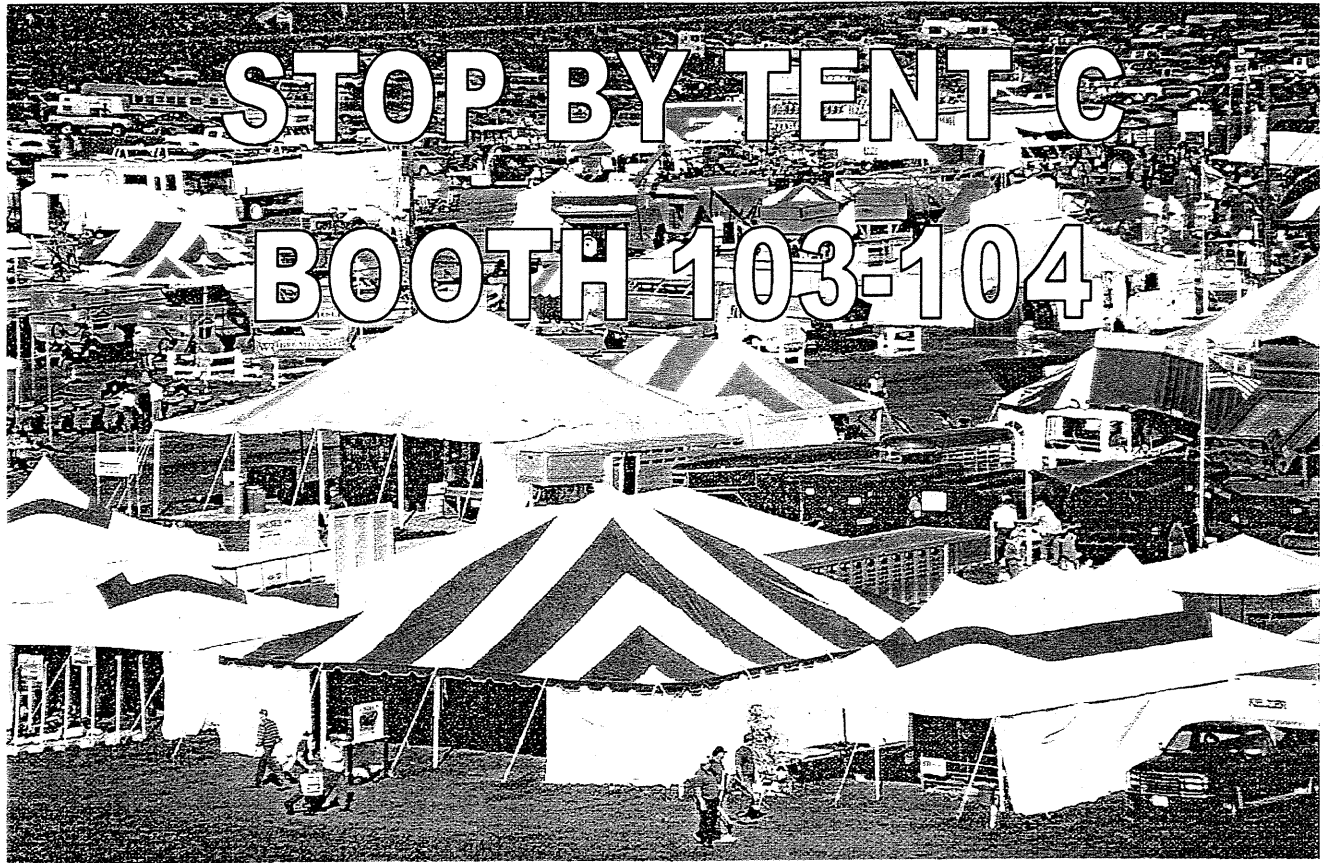
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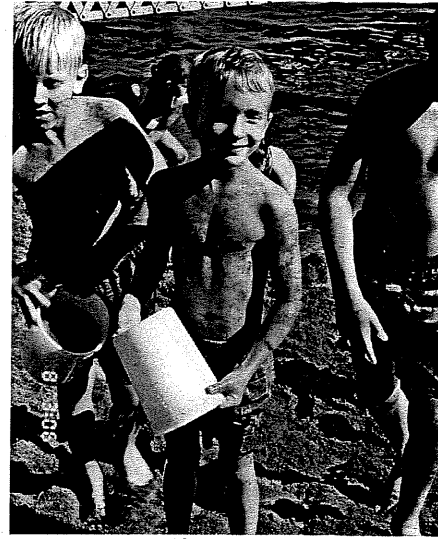
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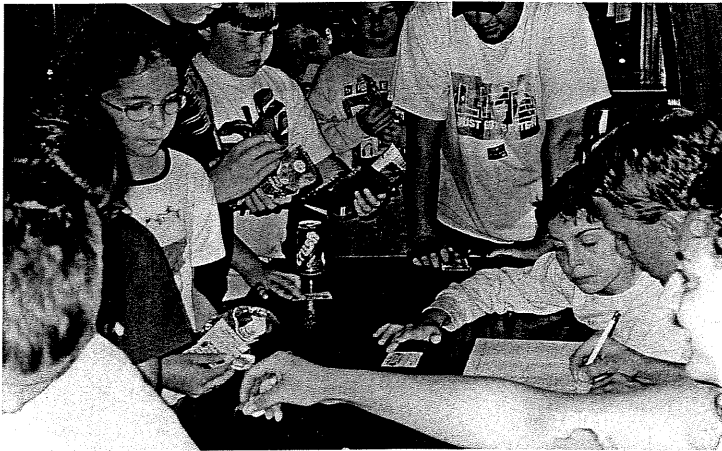
WFU Summer Camp Fun at Kamp Kenwood



Adults, children and Wisconsin Farmers Union summer camp staff enjoy a spin around Lake Wissota on the WFU's pontoon boat during their stay at the Intergenerational Camp held at Kamp Kenwood earlier this summer.



Junior I campers (left to right) Tyrel Danielson, Matthew Holub and Nick Zimbrich enjoys the sun and sand during one of the day time activities held during summer camp at WFU's Kamp Kenwood.



Junior I campers at the Wisconsin Farmers Union's summer camp program at Kamp Kenwood take a break to shop at the Co-op Store, which is organized for each of the youth camps to give hands on experience in cooperative principles as well as furnish the kids a place to buy ice cream, pop, T-Shirts, etc.



"They're off to see the Wizard of Co-oz." Taking part in a Junior High I camp skits at Kamp Kenwood were (left to right) Monty Leiser, Melissa Hartl, camp counselor Corey Tomesh and Zach Tiry.



Junior High I campers spell out Co-op during a Secret Agent night skit during the WFU camp held on Lake Wissota. Taking part (left to right) were Amanda Livingston, Melissa Hartl, Jessica Trainor, Courtney James and Casey Danielso



WFU Junior I campers work together and learn about cooperation during one of the many skits and games used to teach cooperative principles at the WFU Kamp Kenwood facility on Lake Wissota.

EDUCATION

Learning and Fun With Co-ops Highlights Season at WFU Kamp Kenwood

By: Cathy Statz

Greetings from Kamp Kenwood! In spite of an overabundance of rain, campers and staff alike have been enjoying summer fun at our camp facility on Lake Wissota, near Chippewa Falls.

All WFU camps feature a unique mix of education about Farmers Union, leadership and cooperation. Campers learn about the history and philosophy of cooperation, play a wide variety of co-op games and set up their own camp co-op store. Profits from the store are donated to a variety of causes, including recreation equipment for the camp, with a portion of the profits going back to campers in the form of a dividend.

Our Junior Campers have been learning about the Spirit of Community in their afternoon program, and enjoying Harry Potter Night and Desert Island Night activities. They are discovering the basics of cooperatives through demonstrations, games, and hands-on small group activities.

Junior High Campers experienced "The Wizard of Co-Oz" skit as a means of finding out how people around the world cooperate to bring about positive social change. They also created skits to express positive change they thought was possible in their own lives and communities.

Junior High evening themes included Fashion Night, Gladiator Night and Secret Agent Night. Junior High campers also learned about the interconnectedness of cooperatives in the economy and in our communities.

As this is an election year, Senior Campers learned about the process of nominating a candidate for the U.S. Senate seat. Their afternoon program featured a hands-on approach, with various platforms represented and "the press" on hand to interview the candidates and poll the constituents. Evening themes for Senior campers were chosen by the 2000 Senior Youth Advisory Council (elected at last year's camp), and included Do-It-Yourself Night and Murder Mystery Night, and a special Medieval banquet. In keeping with the closing night's

theme, Senior Campers created a co-op fair with co-ops that could have existed in medieval times.

Our camper numbers are up from last year, due in large part to increased promotion on the part of local cooperatives who agreed to post and distribute camp information and registration forms. Thanks for your support!

WFU Foundation To Sponsor PBS TV's "Market to Market" Program

The Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation, Inc. will begin sponsoring Wisconsin Public Television's weekly broadcast of "Market to Market," a national show produced by Iowa Public Television devoted to covering agriculture and news on rural America.

"Market to Market" airs in most Wisconsin PBS markets at 1 p.m. on Sunday. The WFU Foundation sponsorship of the program is expected to start about July 1 and will continue for the next year.

The focus of "Market to Market" is the concerns of the 60 million people who populate rural America. Much of the coverage is devoted to agriculture but it also dedicates considerable effort to reporting main street issues ranging from healthcare and education, to environment and economic development. It is uplinked each Friday to more than 80 subscribing PBS stations in 25 states.

"The WFU Foundation is delighted to sponsor this important weekly program as it also reaches into many urban and suburban homes as well," said WFU Foundation President Heidi Hong. "It will help educate the consuming public about the reality of what is happening in rural America -- our problems and our successes."

TORCHBEARER REUNION 2000

Kamp Kenwood

Friday & Saturday, July 21-22

Past Torchbearers and their families are invited to join us for fun and fond memories!

Join us for one or both days!

Cost: \$30 per person (\$20 for kids 12 & under)

ACTIVITIES TO INCLUDE:

- * 6th Annual Larry Sorenson Memorial Golf Tournament (9 holes) Cost is \$20
- * Cookout Supper at Kamp Kenwood
- * Folk Dancing and Campfire
- * Camp out or stay in our cabins

- * Saturday Brunch
- * Speakers & Activities
- * Fun for the Kids!
- * Kick-off for Kamp Kenwood's 50th Anniversary in Summer 2001

TO REGISTER: Please call the WFU State Office at 1-800-272-5531 by July 13th, 2000.

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

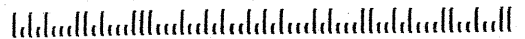
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INSURANCE

Look at an "Umbrella" Policy As Possible Additional Protection

By: Dan Richardson

No, it's not insurance on your umbrella. It's a form of insurance that "umbrellas" your vehicle, farm or home, and other liability insurance with an additional million dollars or more.

When accidents happen, attorneys look for money. It is difficult to explain your feelings when a sheriff delivers a summons to you. I know of an individual that was delivered a summons on an accident that happened more than two years earlier without his knowledge. It appears the reason he was brought into the litigation was because the attorney felt he could find a "deep pocket" of money through this person. Fortunately, there was proper insurance in place.

An umbrella over your auto, home or farm, and other insurance encourages your insurance company to vigorously defend you. If there is more than a million dollars involved, insurance companies start to pay attention.

I hear from time to time this statement: "I don't have much so what are they going to get?"

The answer is: everything you have and hope to have in the future.

Another good reason to have a good umbrella in place is to pay for the defense costs even if it doesn't get to court. The above case involved defense costs in the thousands to get the

court to dismiss the person from the suit.

I encourage you to look at protecting yourself and your family by reviewing what an umbrella can do for you. You may find the premium is less than you expect.

Call Greater Insurance Services at 1-800-747-4472 or me directly at 1-888-488-5488.

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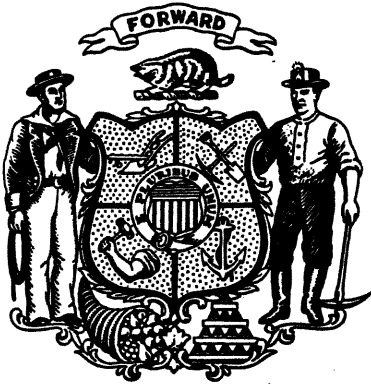
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QUALITY INTEGRITY

DEPENDABILITY

**Division of Farmers Union
Marketing & Processing Association
Redwood Falls, MN**

END



END

SEP 05 2000

Dell Whelan
PO Box 87
Mondovi, WI 54755

Dear Mr. Ott,

I attended your meeting at DeLand, but was not able to testify.

Enclosed is the article about Minnesota where they are reducing the farmers real estate taxes

At the annual meeting of the Farmers Union; ~~the~~ representative from Vermont said they now pay 50% of real estate taxes for dairy farmers. They are down to 400 dairy farmers left.

Thank you.

Dell Whelan

GOP wants \$75 million for rural Minnesota

House Republicans
make special aim at
rural property taxes

CHELLE OLSON STAFF WRITER

Steve Sviggum, R-Kenyon, called the GOP approach a comprehensive one.

The proposal is merely the opening offer from the GOP. The Democratic-Farmer-Labor party likely will suggest some initiatives, which differ greatly from the GOP. Both parties will attempt to persuade Gov. Jesse Ventura of the need for the programs. He has taken a hard line against spending in the 2000 session because the state's two-year budget is put together in off-years.

The GOP caucus would spend \$4.3 million for full payments to ethanol producers, \$11.2 million to

restore funding for 192 high school-level vocational agriculture programs and \$10 million to give additional money to rural districts to compensate for declining student enrollment.

The GOP also would spend \$10 million to equalize reimbursement rates to nursing homes. Currently, nursing homes in Hennepin County receive more money under the Prepaid Medical Assistance Program.

A smaller part of the plan would seek to increase access to technology through grants and an e-business institute.

But Sviggum repeatedly

stressed where the emphasis would be.

"The most appropriate thing we can do for farmers is to permanently cut high property taxes on agricultural land to help with their bottom line," he said.

Republicans would model the tax relief package on last year's, allowing farmers to exempt a higher percentage of their land from the education portion of their property taxes.

Last year the Legislature included more than \$50 million in farm property relief in the tax bill

to give farmers a break of at least 20 percent on their bills.

In 2000, Republicans also want to establish a \$14 million, three-year "agricultural set-aside program." The program would be for land severely damaged due to floods or other troubles. The plan would be to provide short-term assistance for the agricultural economy.

The GOP didn't provide many specifics, but included in the agenda a plan to cut "burdensome regulations," specifically at nursing homes so administrators can spend more time with patients

rather than on paperwork.

Rep. Doug Peterson, DFL-Madison, called the GOP proposals merely a "Band-Aid" to get through an election year.

"There's really nothing here of substance," he said.

Peterson said the regulatory changes seemed designed to usher in an era of industrialized feedlots.

He thinks the problem for farmers is commodity prices, something the DFL plans to attempt to address in a proposal to be released Wednesday.

Dr. Donald L. Rothbauer, DVM

9/25/00

He could not make it to the 1st Hearing
This is what the State could do:

cheap imported milk is being sold here with the Wisconsin Seal.

- our "quality" reputation is tarnished.
- if we don't do something about it - we lose our special market.
- Can't measure some of the stuff in milk - we don't know what some cows are fed elsewhere. Taste is different.
- "trucking" of milk makes the fatty acids break down + it has an "off" flavor ...

He will talk to Al next time ...

Testimony *called in* for the agriculture subcommittee hearings August 2000

ANDY SOKOLOWSKI of Whitewater

Address: N510 Hwy D Whitewater, WI 53190 and phone:1-262-473-2647

Has been farming all his life, now a senior citizen.

Encouraged his two sons to go elsewhere and not farm.

Give a detailed description of prices then and now:

1956 corn sold for \$1.32 a bushel
 diesel fuel 10-12 cents a gallon
 fertilizer \$30-35 ton
 milk \$3.00 per hundred
 load of hogs = brand new tractor and leftover too
 best land \$15-20 /acre to rent

today 1 bushel of corn does not even buy a gallon of diesel fuel
 bushel of corn is \$1.10
 \$200.00 a ton for fertilizer
 Pork roast \$7.00

What can be done? Look at the costs of today!

Farmers working for nothing. Profit in middleman.

Nobody to take over the operation.

"Bigness" is not the answer.

Got to pay for commodities.

Set floor for prices so we can live.

**John C. Lader, President
Wisconsin Pork Producers Association
3909 Wyoming Court
Janesville, WI 53546**

My name is John Lader. Currently I am President of the Wisconsin Pork Producers Association and am involved in several agribusiness ventures. As a producer, seller of products on the wholesale level, and a retailer, providing goods and services at a retail level I have witnessed the economic crisis facing agriculture on many levels. I believe that is why the governor asked me to serve on the Growing Agriculture Task Force. On behalf of WPPA I want to thank chairman Ott and the committee for taking the initiative of holding these hearings.

For those of us in the hog industry this appears to be deja vu. Many of us attended your hearings in late 1998 during the hog price crisis. It was a time when our producers were receiving record low prices. Our industry lost 50% of its equity -- not profits, but equity which took years to build up.

Here we are again, less than two years later. What has changed? Only the fact that other sectors of agriculture are now feeling the pain we felt. Hog production is now the shining light of agriculture, and most hog producers are still in deep financial trouble with no margin for error.

Some facts today are startling. A bushel of corn won't buy a gallon of gas. 100 pounds of pig won't fill up a gas tank. 100 pounds of milk won't buy a pizza for a family of four. Farmers have always dealt with low prices. Unfortunately today's lows are lower and last longer than in the past. Input costs

closings and with the same fervor in attempting to bring new high tech industries to our state. We must never lose sight of the fact that agriculture is our number one industry.

Specifically what can be done? Many of our agencies do a good job providing grant money for feasibility studies. Niche markets have helped keep some of our producers on the farm. But we must do more.

Wisconsin needs to become more aggressive in efforts to recruit new processing plants for our ag products and to keep the current processing plants in the state here. We need to invest dollars and make incentives available for agribusinesses like we do other new businesses. We all need to think outside the box to generate new ag businesses in the state. This investment will put more dollars in our producers pockets and in main street businesses.

The full implementation of use value assessment will help. Unfortunately the many court battles it has faced show how little regard our city administrators and some of our legislators have for agriculture. We must all do a better job of educating them as to the importance of our number one industry.

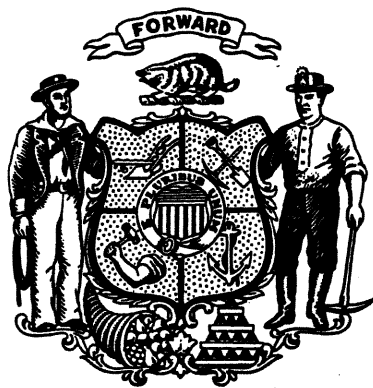
Even with full implementation of use value assessment our total tax rate is not competitive. Our farm land tax rates are still some of the highest in the country. Income tax rates on both businesses and individuals send a message for people to invest outside of Wisconsin. We must find a way to reduce our overall tax burden while maintaining the quality of services we provide.

The climate for farm and agribusiness expansion must be made better. The rules/regulations imposed by the DNR are very detrimental. I believe many people at DNR would like to see agriculture leave the state. They are unwilling to work with our producers who need to expand the family farm to remain profitable. With the cooperation and help of the DNR our producers could show they are good stewards of the land and that agriculture and good environmental practices can coexist. Better cooperation from the DNR must become a priority if we are to see growth in our state's number one industry.

Agriculture and agribusinesses are the backbone of our state. They are the engine that churns our economy. Now is the time for the state to add more fuel to the engine. The fuel must come in the form of a better tax climate, additional startup dollars, a more cooperative DNR and an attitude by legislators and city leaders that what is good for Wisconsin agriculture is good for Wisconsin.

As president of WPPA and as an agribusiness man I implore you to do all you can to help Wisconsin's ag climate survive and then thrive. Thank you for the opportunity to address you. I will be happy to answer any questions you have.

END



END

Napralla, Erin

From: Gibson, James L
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2000 4:42 PM
To: David Gavin (E-mail); Don Jaworski (E-mail); Doug Lindsey (E-mail); Jolly Michel (E-mail); Joy McMillan (E-mail); Lyle Mercer (E-mail); Mark Vornholt (E-mail); Milton Olson (E-mail); Nancy Lightfield (E-mail); Randy Deli (E-mail); Randy Tenpas (E-mail); Richard Westpfahl (E-mail); Walt Peters (E-mail)
Cc: Rep.Ott
Subject: Agenda for Statewide Agriculture Hearings

Colleagues:

FYI (per his news release dated August 21)

Representative Al Ott, Chair, Wisconsin Assembly Agriculture Committee, has announced statewide Agriculture subcommittee (listening session) meetings:

- August 24 at 9 a.m.-Richland Center - Equity Sales Auction Barn-26702 Co. Rd. O;
- August 28 at 10:30 a.m.- Durand-Spindler Dairy Inc.-W5127 US Hwy 10;
- August 29 at 9:00 a.m.- Johnson Creek-Equity Livestock - N6225 Co. Rd. Y;
- August 31 at 9:00 a.m. - Reedsville-Equity Livestock - 513 N. 6th St.

The agenda:

- Collect information and report what is happening in the state to Wisconsin's Federal Delegation and US Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman;
- Offer the opportunity for members of the agriculture community to express, in their own words, the impact of the current situation;
- Make the economic concerns of agriculture more visible to the general population;
- Generate ideas on possible ways to alleviate the hardships faced by Wisconsin Agriculture;
- Bring the media and the agricultural industry together.

You may wish to pass the dates and times to persons in your area and encourage them to participate. Rep. Ott has a reputation for acting on the genuine concerns that producers have about conditions that affect their livelihoods.

For more information or directions contact Rep. Ott's Madison office: 608-266-5831.

cc. Rep. Ott

*James L. Gibson, Ph.D.
Education Consultant-Agriculture/Environment
Wisconsin State Technical College System Board
310 Price Place
P.O. Box 7874
Madison, WI 53707-7874
608-266-2412
Fax: 608-266-1690
E-mail: gibsonj@board.tec.wi.us*

8/23/00

Napralla, Erin

From: Mary Brumm [mlb@dewittross.net]
Sent: Wednesday, August 23, 2000 11:34 AM
To: Rep.Ott
Subject: Message from Ron Kuehn



Card for Mary Brumm
for Ron Ku...

Al,

Thanks for holding the statewide listening sessions to address the current crisis within the agricultural community.

Ron

Agriculture Subcommittee Hearings Agenda

These listening sessions are being held in response to the silent economic crisis that is taking place throughout Wisconsin's agriculture industry.

Ultimately, the Purpose of the Four Subcommittee Hearings is to...

- ✓ **Collect information in order to compile a report to be sent to Wisconsin's Federal Delegation and to US Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman.**
 - What is happening in Wisconsin agriculture.
 - Have this information as they return to Washington to vote on appropriation bills that deal with agriculture.
 - Wisconsin Legislature's hands are tied when it comes to something like agriculture pricing. However, we want to offer Wisconsin agriculture a voice.
 - Easier for the Federal Delegation to respond to the problem if they are well informed as to what it is.

- ✓ **Generate "Ideas for Action."**
 - Generate ideas for action that **can** be taken at the local, state and federal level to alleviate the hardships throughout the industry.
 - May discover some action we can take to help Wisconsin agriculture.

- ✓ **Provide the opportunity to members of the agriculture community to express, in their own words, the impact of the current situation.**
 - Stress that these sessions are open to **EVERYONE** feeling the impact of the current crisis. *"From the Farmers to the Bankers."*

- ✓ **"Press Conference for Agriculture."**
 - We hope that the media present will take the opportunity to talk to farmers and members of the agriculture industry and vice versa.

- ✓ **Raise awareness on all fronts.**
 - Inform people that may not necessarily be aware of what is happening in agriculture.
 - Make the economic concerns of agriculture more visible to the general population.

- ✓ **Provide information and resources.**
 - Hope to have information and various resource people available to field questions and to comment.
 - Let members of the agricultural community know that there are resources available and make the link between providers and those in need.

REPRESENTATIVE AL OTT

State Representative
3rd Assembly District

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Representative Al Ott

August 16, 2000
(608) 266-5831

Assembly Agriculture Subcommittee Announces Statewide Listening Sessions

Madison... State Representative Al Ott (R- Forest Junction), Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair, announced today that an Agriculture Subcommittee will hold four listening sessions throughout the state during the end of August. These sessions will search out the crisis that is occurring within the agricultural community.

The goal of the listening sessions is to bring attention to the current agricultural price crisis and to allow the agriculture industry the opportunity to express their concerns. Additionally, the Subcommittee hopes that this effort will generate ideas and suggestions on how to deal with the mounting problems that the industry is facing.

“We understand that at the state level our hands are tied as to what we can officially do to alleviate the situation. However, as a committee we feel that it is important to go on the road to see for ourselves what is happening within Wisconsin’s agricultural community. To get a complete picture of what is going on, we hope to draw individuals from all spectrums of the industry including farmers, processors, suppliers, cooperatives, implement dealers, feed mills, bankers, etc. We want to listen to whoever is being affected,” said Ott.

The Subcommittee listening sessions will be held in the following locations:

- August 24th at 9:00 a.m. – Richland Center
Equity Cooperative Livestock Sales Auction Market Barn - 26702 County Road O
- August 28th at 10:30 a.m. – Durand
Spindler Dairy, Inc. – W5127 US Highway 10
- August 29th at 9:00 a.m. – Johnson Creek
Equity Cooperative Livestock Sales Auction Market Barn - N6225 County Road Y
- August 31st at 9:00 a.m. – Reedsville
Equity Cooperative Livestock Sales Auction Market Barn - 513 North 6th Street

For more information or directions to any of the locations, please contact the office of State Representative Al Ott. Madison office phone number: (608) 266-5831 or (888) 534-0003 toll free. E-mail address: Rep.Ott@legis.state.wi.us.

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REPRESENTATIVE AL OTT

State Representative
3rd Assembly District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Representative Al Ott

August 21, 2000
(608) 266-5831

Agenda for Statewide Agriculture Hearings

Madison... State Representative Al Ott (R- Forest Junction), Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair, released an agenda for the statewide Agriculture Subcommittee hearings that will be held throughout the next two weeks.

“ We are going out to the farming community with a specific set of goals. I am confident that we can make these sessions successful if we stick to this agenda. The hearings are not a forum for political candidates. We do not want to overshadow this serious issue. This is however, a forum for people in agriculture as well as a chance to explore what can be done to keep the industry strong in Wisconsin,” Ott said.

The Subcommittee agenda is as follows:

- **Collect information and report what is happening in the state to Wisconsin's Federal Delegation and US Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman.**
- **Offer the opportunity for members of the agriculture community to express, in their own words, the impact of the current situation.**
- **Make the economic concerns of agriculture more visible to the general population.**
- **Provide information on the various resources available to the agriculture industry.**
- **Generate ideas on possible ways to alleviate the hardships faced by Wisconsin agriculture.**
- **Bring the media and the agriculture industry together.**

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WISCONSIN FEDERATION OF COOPERATIVES • 30 West Mifflin Street, Suite 401 • Madison, WI 53703 • Phone (608) 258-4400

Date: 8/22/2000
To: WFC Members
From: Lori Weaver, Director of Communications &
John Manske, Director of Government Relations
RE: Assembly Agricultural Subcommittee Hearings

We want to make sure you are aware of the schedule of hearings that Assembly Agriculture Committee Chairman Al Ott has announced for four locations between the dates of August 24 and August 31. The announcement from Rep. Ott is located on the reverse of this memo. A key purpose of the meetings is to gather the comments of farmers and others involved in agriculture regarding current agricultural conditions. After those comments are gathered, Rep. Ott plans to relay to our Congressional Representatives those thoughts that relate to federal agricultural policy. As you may know, Congress will return to Washington D.C. after the Labor Day holiday to consider action on agricultural appropriation matters, among other items.

In addition, a number of individuals from state agencies will be present who can share information about resources that can be made available to people experiencing particular difficulty in the current economic environment.

If you have any questions concerning these opportunities for input regarding the current agricultural situation, please call either of us at (608)258-4400.

Rep. Al Ott Calls Statewide Agriculture Hearings

Four statewide Agriculture hearings begin Thursday, August 24 at 9 a.m. in Richland Center. A subcommittee of the Assembly Agriculture Committee, chaired by State Representative Al Ott (R-Forest Junction), will conduct the hearing at the Equity Cooperative Livestock sales Auction Market Barn at 26702 County Road O beginning at 9 a.m. The second hearing is set for Monday, August 28, at the Spindler Dairy, Inc., W5127 US Highway 10, Durand, starting at 10:30 a.m.

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"These listening sessions are in response to the silent economic crisis that is taking place throughout Wisconsin agriculture," Rep. Ott told Agri-View in a Monday interview. "This economic crisis is hitting both dairy and commodities, including cranberries. It's really an economic recession and it brings serious concerns that need to be addressed.

"We're going to be collecting information and send a report to Wisconsin's Congressional Delegation and to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman. We want them to have this information when they return to Washington after Labor Day and vote on appropriations.

"Our hands are tied when it comes to ag pricing. These listening sessions are meant to give Wisconsin agriculture a voice and a chance to exercise that voice," the rural lawmaker said.

Rep. Ott is hoping farmers and agribusinesses will turn out at these hearings much as they did at the Nonpoint Hearings conducted last spring. The most effective message to send to Washington D. C. is farmers' own real stories.

"These sessions are not finger-pointing opportunities. We want to give our Congressional Delegation real information so they can make the right decisions. We hope farmers and agribusiness owners will tell us what would help them most. We want some of their ideas to generate action in Washington D.C. We realize so much of the situation is out of our hands, but maybe something can be done with new ideas.

"I want farmers to come to these hearings to talk to us in their own words and tell us what is happening to them during these tough times," Rep. Ott said.

The ag subcommittee wants to hear from implement dealers, feed and fertilizer dealers and from a wide array of agribusinesses "because what is happening to farmers trickles down into other businesses. We want to know if related businesses are suffering lower sales and if they are having to lay off workers. This information is important for us to know."

The timing of these hearings, in the middle of campaigning for the upcoming election, is not to be construed as an opportunity for politicians to come and state their positions, Rep. Ott stressed. Rather, it can be an opportunity for candidates to come and listen to what is being said. Already John Gillespie, a Republican from New London, who is seeking the seat now held by Senator Herb Kohl, a Milwaukee Democrat, has called Rep. Ott to ask if he can sit in and listen.

"This is not a political rally for any party or candidate," Rep. Ott emphasized. The timing of these hearings may be unfortunate but we just can't wait until next January to get the issues out there and make ag issues more visible. We need to do all we can to expose the economic crisis in agriculture now, so we can deal with it as soon as possible.

"If candidates are at the hearings, I'll allow them to be introduced," Rep. Ott promises, "but I won't allow campaign speeches or positions. These hearings are being held so we can hear from the ag community and ag interests about what's happening to them."

The hearings are being held at sales barns or on farms "because folks are used to coming to these places and our goal is to make these sessions as close to farmers as we can. We want them to be constructive. We want farmers to tell us their real stories. We like to think of these hearings as an opportunity to hold a press conference for agriculture," Rep. Ott said. "We want this to be an opportunity to bring the media and the agriculture industry together."

For additional information or directions to any of the locations, please contact the office of Rep. Ott. The phone numbers for his Madison office are: 608-266-5831 or 888-534-0003, toll free. His e-mail address is: Rep.Ott@legis.state.wi.us.

WFBF roundtable Aug. 30

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau is holding an informational meeting for livestock and commodity organization leaders on Wednesday, August 30, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, East Washington Avenue, Madison, beginning at 10:45 a.m.

The Roundtable will offer information about the proposed manure and nutrient application and management standards.

"The purpose of the meeting is to get a baseline on research and proposed regulations in Wisconsin to provide producers with a better understanding of proposed changes so they can work with regulators who are writing new manure application standards," explains Paul Zimmerman, director of governmental relations at WFBF.

The phosphorus regulations are part of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) 590 rules that are being rewritten to move from nitrogen standard to phosphorus standard in manure application.

But NRCS is not alone in this issue. The state's redesign of the nonpoint pollution code is also considering the adoption of phosphorus standard. The effect of such a change would result in changes in the balance of manure application.

Beginning at 10:45 a.m. Larry Bundy, UW-Madison Soil Science Department, and Peter Nowak, UW-Madison Rural Sociology, will detail the current status of phosphorus research. During the afternoon session, the emphasis will be on Wisconsin's phosphorus regulations. At 1 p.m. Dan Baloun of NRCS, Al Shea from the Department of Natural Resources and Dave Jelinski from the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection will discuss the issue.

Next, Dennis Frame, UW-Extension, will talk about his work in dealing with phosphorus on the farm. Before the 4 p.m. adjournment, there will be a question and answer period.

To register, contact Zimmerman at 608-828-5708. There is a \$10 fee for lunch.

More meetings coming up

A number of additional meetings are planned to fit in before harvest gets underway. Here's brief update:

- Work groups put together by the Department of Natural Resources are meeting in the upcoming weeks to work on revisions to the proposed nonpoint source pollution redesign. These meetings were detailed in last week's Agri-View. For more information call Jennifer Gihring at 608-264-6127 or log on to gihrij@dnr.state.wi.us.
- On Friday, Aug. 25, at 9 a.m. Reserve Judge Daniel LaRocque is holding a hearing in a Dane County Circuit Court on a petition to dismiss a lawsuit challenging an emergency rule to fully implement the use value assessment of farmland law. The Wisconsin Department of Revenue and ag groups are asking the suit be dismissed.
- The Wisconsin Farmers Union is holding its second annual Rural Unity Day on the Darin Von Ruden farm, S 1309A Clinton Ridge Road, outside of Westby on Sunday, Aug. 27. The event will open with a pot luck dinner at 12:30 p.m. Included in the event will be the Vernon County Farmers Union annual summer meeting and picnic. State Senator Gary George (D-Milwaukee) will be among the featured speakers who are expected to discuss the economic crisis facing Wisconsin farmers. Senator George's Committee on Judiciary and Consumer Affairs recently held a field hearing in Eau Claire on the farm situation. To register or for more information contact Von Ruden at 608-634-4695; Keith Bankes at 608-675-3942; or Chris Hanson at 608-483-2554.
- An informational public hearing will be held before the Committee on Public Health on Wednesday, Aug. 30 beginning at 9:30 a.m., Room 417, State Capitol. The committee, chaired by Rep. Frank Urban (R-Brookfield), will hear testimony regarding the E.Coli bacterial outbreaks in Wisconsin. Informational testimony will detail specific recent outbreaks as well as general information about the reporting and management process when outbreaks occur. Only invited speakers may give testimony, but the public is welcome to attend.

Media Requests
after Report out press release

2/19/00

✓ - John Powell w/ Public Radio 283-4358

10/20/00

✓ John Anderson WISC Radio Network 1800-261-3900
608/251-3900

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Furrowed brows reap no solutions for ailing dairy farmers

By Cliff Miller



Cliff Miller

MADISON -- Too many Wisconsin politicians seem to think there are more productive rows to hoe than plowing through agriculture issues in America's Dairyland.

Other than complaining that dairy farmers shouldn't be punished with low milk prices just because they farm near Eau Claire, it is difficult to find much constructive discussion about the host of very serious problems that are bringing down Wisconsin farmers every day.

Since much that ails Wisconsin farmers is part of a nationwide epidemic, it makes sense that candidates for the U.S. Senate and House should have articulate positions on farm policies and programs.

John Gillespie of Appleton, the Republican challenging Democratic Sen. Herb Kohl, has offered positions of his own and criticized his opponent in the Nov. 7 election. Kohl counter-punched Gillespie's allegations of failure to lead by announcing passage of his bill containing \$100 million in aid to small and medium Wisconsin farms.

They and other congressional candidates repeat the complaint that milk price policy unfairly short-changes Wisconsin farmers by setting prices lowest at Eau Claire and highest for those whose farms are farthest away.

Butting heads with congressional delegations from the Northeast and elsewhere has yielded nothing. The only solution that has not been proposed is to rename or maybe just dissolve Eau Claire as an incorporated spot on the map.

Never in history has there been unanimity over farm policy, at any level of government.

Perhaps the elusiveness - or is it the multiplicity? - of solutions is why politicians like to change the subject to taxes, health care and other stuff that they and most of us non-farmers understand at least a little better.

Another problem is that farmers are a small and dwindling segment of the population whose political clout shrivels with their numbers even when numbers of businesses and communities that depend on agriculture for a living are counted.

One lawmaker who took a stab at the subject is Al Ott, Republican Assembly rep from Forest Junction, who chairs the Agriculture Committee. He is unopposed for reelection so it was easier to brave the paranoia and pot-shots of an election year. He took his committee on the road for a series of those currently popular affairs known among politicians as "listening sessions."

Rather than the traditional public hearing on specific bills and predetermined issues, they are staged to let the public vent while the politicians absorb. It is a way for politicians who don't have answers anyway to be seen without being embarrassed.

Ott's committee went off to sessions in three in livestock sales barns and one at a dairy farm, and came back with three or four loads of complaints and suggestions from farmers, neighbors and agriculture-dependent business folk. They suggested how federal, state and local governments might improve life on the farm and how farmers themselves might even turn a few things around.

It is exceedingly easy to summarize the problem. Ott's report begins:

"The problems faced by the agricultural community are numerous and multifaceted.

Commodity prices are depressed at the same time that production costs are increasing." Dairy, beef, hog and other producers suffer at once, from government-subsidized foreign competitors, rivals in states that benefit from the discriminatory milk pricing system, large competitors formed by consolidating failed smaller farms and "prescriptive and more expensive" layers of environmental regulations.

Family farms continue to decline, dairy farmers quit entirely or quit dairying, young people refuse to move in when older farmers retire and supporting businesses dwindle in proportion to the declining numbers of farms, reducing competition and producing added economic disadvantage for remaining farmers.

Ott figures 250 to 300 people came to the hearings and many sounded off. They offered opinions ranging from declaring a "federal state of emergency" on prices and investigating how "middle-men" account for the gap between prices paid to farmers and paid by grocery shoppers to adjusting Social Security benefits to compensate for low farm income and creating a farmers' "unemployment compensation" plan for when income drops sharply.

Federal and state environmental regulations ought to fit costs to income and recognize differences between farms, some suggested. Could the state help farmers bypass middle-men to sell directly to consumers? Others asked.

Locally, zoning and purchase of development rights programs need improvement. Individual farmers must answer the animal rights activists with facts.

It was a good harvest of ideas. The trick is to get it on the table in Congress, the legislature and in the town hall back home before it spoils on some hidden shelf.

* Cliff Miller covers state government for The Post-Crescent. You can e-mail him at cmillerpc@aol.com.

cmillerpc@aol.com.

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capitol update

with Joan Sanstadt

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Assembly Agriculture Subcommittee announces statewide listening sessions

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NA State Farmer 8/18/00

Agenda set for statewide agriculture hearings

MADISON State Rep. Al Ott (R-Forest Junction), Assembly Agriculture Committee chair, has released an agenda for the statewide Agriculture Subcommittee hearings that will be held throughout the next two weeks.

"We are going out to the farming community with a specific set of goals. I am confident that we can make these sessions successful if we stick to this agenda. The hearings are not a forum for political candidates. We do not want to overshadow this serious issue. This is, however, a forum for people in agriculture as well as a chance to explore what can be done to keep the industry strong in Wisconsin," Ott said.

The subcommittee agenda is as follows: collect information and report what is happening in the state to Wisconsin's federal Delegation and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman; offer the opportunity for members of the agriculture community to express, in their own words, the impact of the current situation; make the economic concerns of agriculture more visible to the general population; provide information on the various resources available to the agriculture industry; generate ideas on possible ways to alleviate the hardships faced by Wisconsin agriculture; and bring the media and the agriculture industry together.

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8/25/00 State Farmer

Lawmakers hit the road to hear farmers' concerns

Ott's panel sets four listening sessions around the state

By Cliff Miller

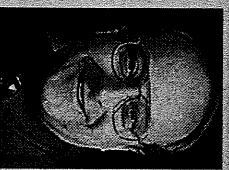
Post-Crescent/ Madison bureau

MADISON — State Assembly Agriculture Committee chairman Al Ott, R-Forest Junction, plans to tour Wisconsin farm country to find what is troubling farmers and agribusiness operators without stepping in election year distractions.

Ott has scheduled four listening sessions to collect complaints and ideas to pass along to the state's congressional dele-

gation and U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman.

The sessions are scheduled at Equity Live-stock auction barns in Richland Center on Thursday, Johnson Creek on Aug. 29 and Reedsville on Aug. 31 and at the Spindler Dairy plant at Durand on



OTT

Aug. 28.

"This is not a political rally but an opportunity to express what's going on in (participants') own words," said Ott.

"My goal is constructive dialog."

He said he expects to hear opinions and experiences arising from the current historic-low price of milk, similarly depressed prices of corn, soybeans and other commodities, the disappearance of small hog farms and the depressing effect of those problems on farm machinery manufacturing and sales and other agribusinesses including community banks.

Four of the committee's 14 members, two from each party including Ott, are unopposed for re-election this summer and each will chair one of the sessions. The others are state Reps. John Ainsworth, R-Shawano,

Barbara Gronemus, D-Whitehall and John Steinbrink, D-Pleasant Prairie.

Ott said he conducted lengthy discussions with Assembly leaders from both parties who worried that the opposition might somehow turn the sessions to their political advantage.

Choosing meeting sites to roughly fall in each of the four corners of the state was difficult, he said.

He hopes at least seven committee members will attend each session.

Ott said he doubts that beyond the agriculture community the public is aware how severe the farm economic crisis

has grown in the state.

Besides gathering suggestions for Congress and the administration to consider in preparing the next agriculture appropriations bill he said he hopes the news media pay attention.

"Hopefully, I can get enough press out of this that it can be a press conference for agriculture," he said.

"To get a complete picture of what is going on, we hope to draw individuals from all spectrums of the industry including farmers, processors, suppliers, cooperatives, implement dealers, feed mills, bankers and so forth. We want to listen to whoever is being affected."

Panel to seek solutions to state's 'silent' ag crisis

By Jim Massey

Editor

Committee chair. He said it is hoped the effort will generate ideas and suggestions on how to deal with the mounting problems the industry is facing.

MADISON — A subcommittee of the Agriculture Assembly will hold four listening sessions across the state during the next week, searching out solutions to the agricultural economic crisis that has embraced the nation.

The goal of the listening sessions is to bring attention to the "silent economic crisis" and to allow members of the agriculture community the opportunity to express their concerns, said state Rep. Al Ott, R-Forest Junction, Assembly Agriculture

Listening sessions will be held

Aug. 24 in Richland Center, Aug. 28 in Durand, Aug. 29 in Johnson Creek, and Aug. 31 in Reedsville.

complete picture of what is going on, we

See **AG CRISIS**, Page 2A

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AG CRISIS,

from Page 1A

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The hearings also may be helpful in making the economic concerns of agriculture more visible to the general population, Rep. Ott said.

The listening sessions will

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More information or directions to any of the locations is available by calling Rep. Ott's office at (608) 266-5831, or toll-free (888) 534-0003. His e-mail address is Rep.Ott@legis.state.wi.us.

Ott unveils report on farmer listening sessions

IAN SHEPPEL

MADISON State Rep. Al Ott (R-Forest Junction), chairman of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture, reported to the state Dairy 2020 board this week about hearings he held to talk with farmers about the current crisis in agriculture.

For the first time, at that meeting, his report on the hearings and the conclusions of his committee were made public. "Agriculture does not hold its own press conference often enough," Ott said. "That was part of this effort."

In the report, which is being forwarded to Wisconsin's congressional delegation, Ott enumerates the suggestions made by farmers at the listening sessions he held in four locations around the state. "I hope this communication to the federal delegation will be something they can take forward," he said.

Some of the grass-roots policy suggestions from farmers included general ones like reconsidering the current low price/high production national food policy and declaring a federal state of emergency regarding farm commodity prices. More specific ideas were to set higher support prices, redirect federal spending to support agriculture, and manage the supply of commodities.

Other farmers suggested opening all foreign markets to U.S. products and address the issue of subsidies to foreign competitors.

With regard to the dairy industry, farmers made the following suggestions to Ott and his committee: consider a northwest dairy coalition instead of the Midwest dairy compact; bring California into the milk pricing system; investigate the prices charged for cheese; consider environmental compliance costs in determining prices. Some wanted to get the attorney general to investigate agricultural commodity prices, and others suggested using antitrust laws to address non-competitive practices of buyers and suppliers.

As to state issues, Ott's report shows there are many issues among farmers that could be addressed in Madison. One suggestion was to develop programs to assist direct marketing by small- and medium-sized farms, help consumers connect directly and provide loans for farmers to develop niche markets.

Another suggestion was to create a buyout program for John's disease to remove cattle and reduce the milk supply. Farmers also suggested the state could help in providing access to affordable health insurance through funding in its BadgerCare program.

Farmers also wanted the Public Service Commission to have the authority to address stray voltage found in systems of electrical cooperatives.

Use-value tax assessment was another area of concern. Farmers wanted to see it expanded to include forested land on a farm as well as differentiate between agricultural and recreational use of woodland.

Some wanted to see use-value available only on land that is permanently in agricultural use and others wanted to see lawmakers consider the applicability of use-value tax assessment to farm improvements.

There were concerns about animal health. Farmers wanted faster results on their John's disease tests along with lower costs. They wanted the state to address tuberculosis concerns, especially in relation to white-tailed deer.

Environmental concerns were also mentioned at the listening sessions. Farmers wanted to see the nonpoint source pollution program adopt standards that recognize differences in terrain throughout the state and provide funding to install facilities. They wanted to see the "navigable waters" regulations reviewed as they apply to farms. Farmers were also concerned that only "expanding" farms would be eligible for payments and wanted to see money go to all farms.

Ott said that at all the hearings the meetings were opened up and farmers talked freely and asked questions. "I think people went home feeling like their voices had been heard," he said.

Bruce Jones, a UW ag economist who works with the Dairy 2020 board, said at the listening sessions the issue of size didn't seem to be a critical one to farmers. "If it did come up, another farmer would say he stayed with one size and type of technology but didn't have a problem with a neighbor making a different choice."

Dairy 2020 board members praised Ott for his work at brokering an informational session for the community surrounding the Wholesome Dairy farm now under construction in Calumet County. Ott brought together concerned citizens and the managers of the proposed farm to hold a meeting for information only. He said he didn't want to make it a forum for attorneys to build lawsuits.

Ott said there are a small number of folks who are vehemently opposed to construction of the 2,800-cow dairy, but he thinks Kern Buelow, the manager and part-owner, will be "fine."

Ott told the board that he faults Buelow a bit that he didn't make more of an informational effort to the people who would be neighbors to the operation. "I think he forgot to talk to the neighbors across the road," Ott said.

There are groups with "an agenda" who will follow the creation of large dairies around the state, he said. "It's obvious the dairy industry is not going to be able to hide."

Ott Report Sums Up Ag's Ideas For Change

By Jane Fyksen *1-1-79*
Crops/Livestock Editor

It's looking like U.S. agriculture will have a farm bill debate next year. Wisconsin farmers were recently given an opportunity to sound off and share their ideas for policy change at "listening sessions" held around the state by Wisconsin Assembly Ag Committee chairman Al Ott (R-Forest Junction).

More than 230 people participated in the four sessions, from which Ott has developed what he's titled a "Report on the Crisis in Wisconsin Agriculture." He intends to share it with Wisconsin's congressional delegation and the U.S. ag secretary, in addition to fellow state legislators. According to Ott, "the ideas generated during the hearings in Wisconsin and compiled into this report serve as a voice for Wisconsin agriculture."

Ott waved around a copy of this report at the Wisconsin Farmers Union fall conference last week. Although prohibited from passing out copies (due

Ott explained, to ethics prohibitions on legislative offices from making multiple copies of identical information during political races), Ott said he'd be happy to accommodate folks interested in a copy one-on-one. Call his Madison office toll-free (1-888-534-0003).

So what did Wisconsin agriculture have to say at these listening sessions? Topping the list is concern about prices and competition, which Ott noted are really federal-level issues. He admitted state legislators can't do much about price, and he was soundly criticized by some Farmers Union members who begged to differ.

Here, however, is the summary of federal price issues Ott says are important to Wisconsin farmers:

- Reconsider the current low price/high production national food policy
- Declare a federal "state of emergency" regarding ag commodity prices
- Set higher support prices
- Provide an adequate "safety net" for farmers

• Manage the supply of ag products, including controls on production

(Declare food to be a critical national resource

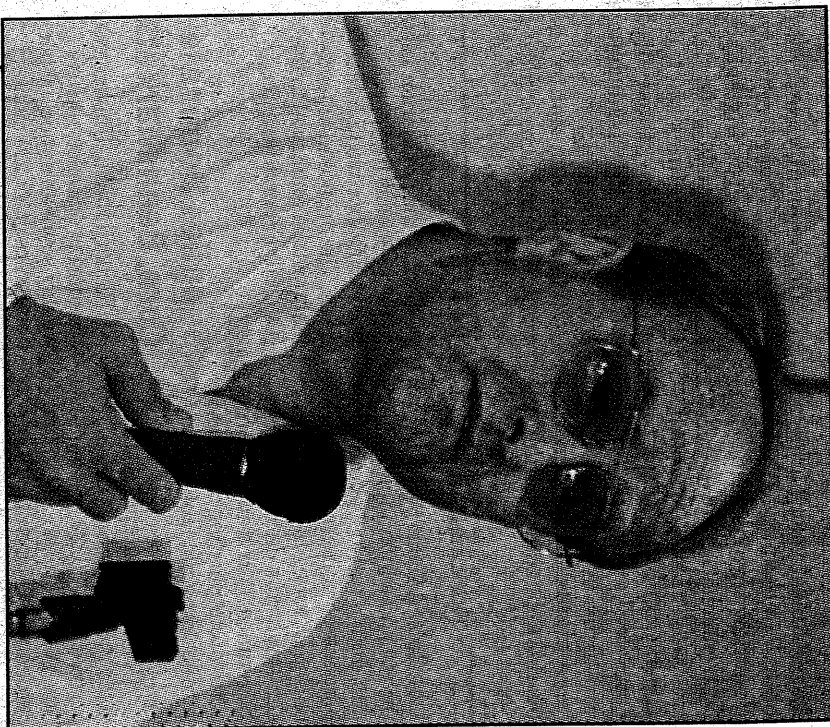
• Open all foreign markets to U.S. farm products (including China and Cuba, which, of course, has been done) and address subsidies for foreign competitors.

In fact, Ott said a straw poll taken at all but the Richard Center session showed pretty strong support among producers for supply management.

There's a long laundry list of proposals for dealing with dairy, including: A call for monthly reporting of milk prices paid by processors; a northwest dairy coalition since of a Midwest dairy compact; bringing California into the milk pricing system; investigating prices charged for cheese; improving inventory reporting for butter and cheese; investigating inequities in volume pricing.

Continuing the list are:

See Ott, on Page 6



Ag Committee Chair Al Ott

Continued from Page 1

Consideration of environmental compliance costs in determining prices; better use of anti-trust laws to address noncompetitive practices of buyers and suppliers; an attorney general investigation of milk pricing; require reporting of whey produced, especially in connection with nonfat dry milk; cease importation of milk protein concentrate until prices are higher; investigate inappropriate use of MPC in cheese; determine when to impose quotas based on farmers receiving cost of production and cost of living; eliminate bloc voting by co-ops; create a separate program to support dairy grazing; and many, many more.

Producers, Ott summarized, are also demanding country of origin labels on ag products. They want a "family farm" label established. They want surplus commodities put in state-controlled "welfare warehouses," used in overseas disaster relief and location nutrition programs, and the oversupply of milk turned into powdered milk and used for research.

Other innovative ideas include creating a program of direct payments to producers based on prior year gross income, i.e. "farmers' unemployment compensation." They want farmers' Social Security benefits reviewed for adequacy in light of low farm income during their earning years.

Ott, who is running unopposed in the upcoming election, said the "most talked about state issue" was the nonpoint redesign and what it's going to cost farmers. He told the WFU that "agriculture's voice was heard" at the nonpoint hearings and that's "what's made DNR's job more difficult now" in coming out with final regulations.

Topping the list of issues that can be worked on at the state level is development of programs to assist farmers in direct marketing. "I do think that's what we have to work hard on," said Ott, agreeing with farmers who proposed that idea at his listening sessions. Related is the idea of providing loans to producers to develop niche markets.

Wisconsin farmers, this report summarizes, also want:

- WHEDA CROP loans expanded beyond one year
- A buyout program for Johne's disease in dairy herds
- The milk marketing board to set the base price for milk and lobby Congress on behalf of the state's producers
- Give the Public Service Commission authority to order electric co-ops to address stray voltage
- Replace soda machines in schools with milk machines
- Expand use value assessment to include forested land on a farm and differentiate between agricultural and recreational woodlands
- Eliminate sales taxes paid by farmers
- Address TB in relation to white-tailed deer, and reimburse for TB testing
- Speed up Johne's test results and lower the cost of testing, as well as change the implied warranty law to exclude Johne's and pseudorabies.

The state's growers were very concerned about crop damage and livestock depredation. They want to be paid for damage done by sandhill cranes and wild turkeys. They want a bounty on coyotes, or at least ease hunting restrictions. They want wildlife populations in Wisconsin thinned. One idea is to set up a program to match hunters with farmers who need deer thinned out locally.

A few of the issues in Ott's summary of farmer-generated ideas for change are geared toward the local level. One is purchase of development rights - ensuring that this assists farmers rather than those who remove land from ag use, administering purchase of development rights through an elected body and reviewing restrictions placed on farms with land affected by PDR.

As for "zoning," the one idea notes is to: "allow and facilitate the placement of large-scale animal agriculture in areas zoned for exclusive agricultural use."

Finally, farmers wanted increasing use of futures markets, the public better educated in regards to animal rights issues, more cooperative marketing, and imports to co-ops limited and processing limited to only members' products. More work needs to be done

to attract a new generation into farming, too, they felt.

Where Ott was soundly criticized by some WFU members was in his philosophy that if Wisconsin seeks to limit expansion of its farms, it will lose its infrastructure. "Whether you like it or not, you have to play by the rules going on right now," he told WFU, referring to the growth mode in Wisconsin agriculture.

Ott said that so long as other states aren't limiting growth in farm size, to do so in Wisconsin doesn't make sense. The state will only be hurting itself. (Limiting farm size is one of the proposals put forth by the WFU's highly controversial Family Farm Protection Act.)

Much suspicion about the dealings of dairy co-ops was voiced at last week's WFU conference. Co-ops, some members said, are engaging in "a lot of backroom stuff" and "divorcing themselves from the farmer." Instead of paying farmers less for their product, co-ops should face the consumer and tell the consumer they'll need to pay more.

Ott, however, defended co-ops and milk processors, saying they're "trapped too" having to "compete in an international marketplace."

Ott was criticized at the WFU meeting for generating another report. Some members were mighty skeptical what will become of it.

Ott fired back with criticisms of the Family Farm Protection Act, one being the "Lack of ag interested in the coalition" proposing it. WFU is the only farm group signed on; others in the coalition are environmental groups like the Sierra Club and religious organizations.

Ott says legislatively limiting farmers from expanding "pits agriculture against itself." Farmers need to be united in these times, he believes. The "tone" of the FFPA "really doesn't bring agriculture together in Wisconsin; it separates us," he blasted.

He predicted that once debate on FFPA gets rolling there'll be "all kinds of blood, and it will be agriculture's blood." "Don't continue this attitude..." Ott pleaded.