

**WISCONSIN STATE ASSEMBLY**  
**COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**  
**REPORT ON THE CRISIS IN WISCONSIN AGRICULTURE**

Prepared by:

Office of Representative Al Ott  
Chairperson, Assembly Committee on Agriculture  
With Assistance From Legislative Council Staff

October 6, 2000

*Wisconsin State Assembly  
Committee on Agriculture*

*Report on the Crisis in Wisconsin Agriculture*

*October 6, 2000*

The agricultural industry in Wisconsin is in a crisis. At a time when most of the nation is benefiting from a growing economy, the farming community is not sharing in this growth. While many Americans are seeing current prosperity and future security, the people who work the land and provide food to this booming economy are seeing shrinking incomes and uncertain futures.

The problems faced by the agricultural community are numerous and multifaceted. Commodity prices are depressed at the same time that production costs are increasing. Multiple agricultural sectors are being affected simultaneously, including dairy, beef and hog production. Producers are facing mounting competition, from overseas where production is subsidized by national governments and from other states that benefit from federal pricing systems that discriminate against midwest producers. Increasing consolidation of agricultural operations is placing greater competitive pressure on small producers, as well. Environmental regulation of farming is becoming prescriptive and more expensive, adding costs that farmers cannot afford.

The number of family farms in operation is steadily declining, continuing a decades-long trend. Discouraged dairy farmers abandon dairy for other farming options or leave farming altogether. As older farmers retire, farms go out of production or are bought for consolidation because young people are not willing to take on the burdens of operating a farm in the current economy. The declining number of farm operations in turn threatens the economy of the support community. An economically weakened support community further stresses the producers, contributing to a vicious spiral of declining viability in our rural community. These trends threaten the tradition of the family farm in Wisconsin.

### **Action by Assembly Committee on Agriculture**

Wisconsin State Representative Al Ott, Chairperson of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture, was determined to respond to the farm economy crisis. He scheduled a statewide series of listening sessions/public hearings to hear the concerns of the farming community. He wanted to hear directly from the affected individuals, in their own words, the nature and extent of the problems they are facing. He also wanted to seek their views on state and federal agricultural policy. In addition, he used the hearings as an opportunity for resource personnel of state and federal agencies to answer farmers' questions and to direct participants to sources of assistance.

The specific goals of the hearings were the following:

- Collect information and report what is happening in the state to Wisconsin's congressional delegation and to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.
- Offer the opportunity for members of the agricultural 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 agricultural industry.
- Generate ideas on possible ways to alleviate the hardship faced by Wisconsin agriculture.
- Bring the media and the agricultural industry together.

In undertaking these hearings, Chairperson Ott acknowledged the important reality that the current agricultural crisis is larger in scope than the directive of the State Assembly Committee on Agriculture. In and of themselves, the hearings could not be expected to produce solutions, either immediately or even in the long term, to the underlying problems. Accordingly, the purpose of the hearings was not to solve the problems or even to recommend specific solutions. Rather, they were intended as a means to channel the views of the Wisconsin agricultural community to policy makers.

Four public hearings were held in August of 2000 at locations around the state. They were structured as hearings of four separate subcommittees to accommodate the schedules of committee members. For the convenience of farmers, three of the four sessions were held in livestock sales barns, while the fourth location was a dairy farm. At each location, participants had unique issues of concern. Together the four locations were representative of the entire state.

Members of the public were invited to contribute testimony to the subcommittees and those who did not testify were asked to register their presence. Agency resource personnel and members of the media were assembled to interact with the subcommittees and with the public. Several area legislators also attended the hearings.

The subcommittees heard testimony on a wide range of topics of concern to the farming community. Many speakers described the hardships caused by current low commodity prices; many also made very specific statements regarding the directions that should be taken in state and federal agricultural policy; and many shared ideas for local and farm-based actions that should be pursued to address the agricultural crisis.

## **Committee Report**

The final results of these listening sessions are presented in this report. Documented in outline form, Appendix 1 presents a summary of the statements and suggestions that were made in oral and written testimony before the four subcommittees. The suggestions are presented in the outline as stated in the hearings, without further elaboration or refinement.

The design of Appendix 1 recognizes that the various aspects of the farmers' predicament must be addressed at the appropriate level. The suggestions collected at the hearings were separated into four categories based on area of jurisdiction. Matters of federal jurisdiction, especially those that are addressed in current federal programs, include the issues of pricing, competition, certain environmental regulations, and food production and distribution. Comments relating to these issues will be forwarded to federal policy makers for use in improving the existing programs and in developing future policies. On matters of state jurisdiction, the report addresses financial and technical assistance programs, taxes, food quality, animal health issues and certain other environmental regulations. These suggestions will be made available to state legislators for consideration in evaluating current programs affecting Wisconsin agriculture and developing future policy. Issues such as zoning laws, development rights and problems related to local agricultural marketing cooperatives would be best addressed at the local level or even at the level of the individual farmer; the report identifies these as suggestions for action by local governments and individual farmers.

Appendix 2 shows the dates and locations of the hearings. It lists the names of the participating committee members, committee staff, members of the public who testified or who observed, resource people and media representatives who were present. The table in Appendix 2 shows the numbers of individuals who participated in each hearing.

The ideas generated during the hearings in Wisconsin and compiled into this report serve as a voice for Wisconsin agriculture. This report will be forwarded to the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, in addition to state and local policy makers.

APPENDIX 1:

SUGGESTIONS MADE TO SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS BY  
THE WISCONSIN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY

## **I. Federal**

### **A. Prices and competition**

1. General federal policies
  - a) Reconsider the current low price/high production national food policy
  - b) Declare a federal state of emergency regarding agricultural commodity prices
  - c) Set higher support prices
  - d) Redirect federal spending to support agriculture
  - e) Provide an adequate safety net for farmers
  - f) Manage the supply of agricultural products, including controls on production
  - g) Declare food to be a critical national resource
  - h) Open all foreign markets to US produce, including China and Cuba
  - i) Address the issue of subsidies for foreign competitors
2. Milk and cheese pricing
  - a) Improve the reporting of milk prices paid by processors, for example, monthly reporting
  - b) Consider a northwest dairy coalition instead of the Midwest dairy compact
  - c) Bring California into the milk pricing system
  - d) Investigate the prices charged for cheese
  - e) Improve inventory reporting for butter and cheese
  - f) Investigate inequities in volume pricing
  - g) Consider environmental compliance costs in determining prices
  - h) Ask the Attorney General to investigate agricultural commodity pricing
  - i) Use anti-trust laws to address noncompetitive practices of buyers and suppliers
3. Reporting of production
  - a) Require full reporting of all cheese produced
  - b) Require reporting of whey produced, especially in connection with nonfat dry milk
4. The farm-consumer price gap
  - a) Investigate how food prices are affected by "middlemen"
  - b) Audit factors that determine the price of cheese
  - c) Impose quotas on milk solid proteins
5. Impose quotas on agricultural commodities
  - a) Cease the importation of milk protein concentrate (MPC) until prices are higher
  - b) Determine when to impose quotas based on farmers receiving cost of production and cost of living

### **B. Food production and distribution issues**

1. Use of MPC in cheese
  - a) Investigate inappropriate use of MPC
  - b) Test MPC in cheese and enforce restrictions
2. Labeling
  - a) Require country of origin labels for agricultural products
  - b) Require labeling of products to highlight differences between US and foreign products
  - c) Use labels to identify practices used to produce food
  - d) Establish a "family farm" label for agricultural products
3. Inspection of meat
  - a) Allow state inspection of meat shipped in interstate commerce
  - b) Prevent use of the US inspection label to imply that meat is produced in the US
4. Surplus food
  - a) Use US food surpluses in overseas disaster relief and local nutrition programs
  - b) Use oversupply of milk to make powdered milk and do research
  - c) Place surpluses in state-controlled "welfare warehouses"

**C. Environmental regulations**

1. Adopt reasonable regulations in the coastal zone management and similar programs
2. Have the EPA develop manure storage regulations that are specific to individual states

**D. Programs to assist farmers**

1. Create a separate program to support dairy grazing
2. Allow subordinations in agricultural loan guarantees to reduce costs of refinancing
3. Create a program of direct payments to farmers based on a farmer's prior year gross income (i.e., farmer's "unemployment compensation")
4. Provide access to affordable health insurance
5. Increase the amount of land entered in conservation reserve

**E. Miscellaneous**

1. Eliminate block voting by cooperatives
2. Review whether the benefits to farmers under Social Security will be adequate in light of low farm income during a farmer's earning years
3. Keep the Mississippi River open as a transportation route

**II. State**

**A. Financial programs to assist farmers**

1. Develop programs to assist direct marketing by small and medium sized farms; connect farmer and consumer directly

2. Involve the Department of Commerce in the agricultural industry
3. Provide loans for farmers to develop niche markets
4. Change the WHEDA CROP program to provide assistance for more than a one-year period
5. Ask the Governor to request emergency funding from the President
6. Create a buyout program for Johne's disease to remove cattle and reduce milk supply
7. Provide access to affordable health insurance
  - a) Fund BadgerCare
  - b) Address preexisting medical conditions
8. Marketing
  - a) Allow the milk marketing board to set the base price for milk and to lobby congress on behalf of WI milk producers
  - b) Market WI cheese nationwide

**B. Technical assistance programs to assist farmers**

1. Give PSC authority to order electric coops to address stray voltage

**C. Taxes**

1. Use value assessment
  - a) Expand use value assessment to include forested land on a farm
  - b) Differentiate between agricultural and recreational woodlands in use value assessment
  - c) Make use value assessment available only to land that is permanently in agricultural use
  - d) Evaluate the program to determine benefits to farmers; report on the effects on farms
  - e) Consider applicability of use value assessment to farm improvements
2. Eliminate sales taxes paid by farmers

**D. Food quality**

1. Implement quality checks on imported agricultural commodities

**E. Animal health**

1. Address tuberculosis concerns, especially in relation to white-tailed deer
2. Johne's tests
  - a) Speed up results
  - b) Lower costs
3. Change implied warranty law to exclude Johne's and pseudorabies
4. Reimburse for TB testing

**F. Environmental regulations**

1. Ensure adequate staffing at DNR
2. Reduce the costs of manure storage regulations
3. Nonpoint source pollution
  - a) Adopt standards that recognize differences in terrain throughout the state
  - b) Provide funding to install facilities
  - c) Review navigable waters regulations as applied to farms
  - d) Provide that all farms are eligible for payments, not just ones that are expanding
4. Do not require improvement of drainage ditches unless farmers choose to
5. Speed up decisions by DNR on permits
6. Provide similar enforcement of discharge regulations in rural areas as in urban areas

**G. Crop and livestock damage**

1. Sandhill cranes and wild turkeys
  - a) Pay crop damage
2. Coyotes
  - a) Impose a bounty
  - b) Pay for damages to livestock
  - c) Ease hunting restrictions
3. Generally, reduce wildlife populations
  - a) Set up programs to match hunters and farmers who need deer herd thinned

**H. Miscellaneous**

1. Provide full funding for the morning milk program
2. Replace soda machines with milk machines in schools
3. Investigate progress in addressing stray voltage
4. Incentives for meat packers to buy from small producers

**III. Local**

**A. Purchase of development rights (PDR) programs**

1. Ensure that PDR assists farmers rather than those who remove land from agricultural use
2. Administer PDR through an elected body
3. Review restrictions placed on farms with land affected by PDR

**B. Zoning**

1. Allow and facilitate the placement of large scale animal agriculture in areas zoned for exclusive agricultural use

**IV. Farmers**

**A. Production**

1. Adopt more efficient practices
2. Use caution in adopting biotechnology, which will increase production and reduce prices

**B. Marketing**

1. Increase use of futures markets
2. Focus on national and international markets
3. Educate the public regarding animal rights issues

**C. Coops**

1. Increase the use of cooperative marketing
2. Participate directly in marketing coops
3. Limit imports to coops and limit processing only to member's products
4. Attend annual meetings and participate

**D. Use the state insurance pool**

**E. Work to attract a new generation into farming**

**APPENDIX 2:**  
**PARTICIPANTS IN SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS**

This appendix presents information regarding the hearings. The table below identifies the location and date of each hearing and summarizes participation in the hearings; the following pages list the participants. The appendix identifies only those people who registered at the hearings or otherwise made themselves known to the committee clerk. The total number of individuals who participated in the four hearings is slightly less than the sum of the totals for the individual hearings because of committee members, staff and resource people who attended more than one hearing. However, the total participation was greater than is shown here since some members of the public did not register. In particular, it is estimated that 20 to 30 members of the public were present but did not register at the August 28 hearing in Durand. We acknowledge the potential concerning errors and omissions and apologize for any that may have occurred.

*Participants in Committee Hearings*

<i>Hearing Location and Date</i>	<i>Committee Members and Staff</i>	<i>Members of the Public Testifying</i>	<i>Members of the Public Observing</i>	<i>Resource People and Media</i>	<i>Total</i>
Equity Livestock, Richland Center, August 24, 2000	7	15	15	13	50
Spindler Dairy, Durand, August 28, 2000	8	24	36	13	81
Equity Livestock, Johnson Creek, August 29, 2000	7	14	15	15	51
Equity Livestock, Reedsville, August 31, 2000	9	15	10	16	50

**Subcommittee on the State of Agriculture**

**Richland Center, WI**

**Thursday, August 24, 2000**

**Committee Members**

Rep. Al Ott, Chair  
Rep. Joan Spillner  
Rep. John Ainsworth  
Rep. John Steinbrink

**Committee Staff**

Mark Patronsky, Attorney, Legislative Council  
Beata Kalies, Committee Clerk, Office of Rep. Al Ott  
Joe Malkasian, Page, Office of Assembly Sergeant  
at Arms

**Members of the Public Testifying**

Martin Tollofsen, Fennimore, banker; member of the Wisconsin Bankers Association Board  
Chuck Stevenson, Viola, raises sheep in Richland County  
Dan Deneen, Black Earth, worked as a crop consultant for 20 years, has grown organic vegetables for 10 years  
Randy Jasper, Muscoda, operates a dairy farm; has a full-time off-farm job  
Jerry Lehman, Reedsburg, member of the Sauk County Soil and Water Conservation Committee  
Norman Fruit, Viola, owner of an 80-cow dairy  
Joe Schaitel, Richland Center, owner of a 400-acre farm, raises heifers, but is not involved in dairy production  
Sheryl Albers, Representative, 50<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Robert Franke, Bloom City  
Raymond Schmitz, Richland Center  
John Oncken, Oncken Communications  
Eric Drachenberg, Arena, Wisconsin Pork Producers, employee of a feed company; cash crop farmer  
Dick Hauser, Richland Center, formerly with the Cattlemen's Association, now a farm supply representative  
Ron Lund, Sun Prairie, representing Farmland Industries  
Michael Myers, Platteville, VP of Ag Lending, First National Bank of Platteville

**Members of the Public Observing**

Rick Burknumer, Richland Center  
Pete Christianson, Madison, Kraft  
Albert Greenheck, Lone Rock

Ann Greenheck, Lone Rock  
Harold Huffman, Richland Center, farmer  
Lynn Jasper, Muscoda  
W.A. Johnson, Portage, representing Alliant Energy  
Russell Koch, Muscoda, farmer  
Paul Larsen, Viroqua, representing WI Ag Bankers Assc.  
Jim Myers, Madison  
Dan Redington, Wonewoc, dairy farmer  
Shawn Redington, Wonewoc  
Mary Stadele, Richland Center  
Leo Stoltz, Hillpoint  
Jennifer Vogt, Madison, Ag Technology Studies  
UW-Madison

**Resource People**

Ron Touchen, Deputy State Statistician, DATCP  
Dr. Clarence Siroky, State Veterinarian, DATCP  
Barbara Tock, District Director, Farm Service Agency  
USDA  
Grant Loy, Richland Center Ex. Dir., FSA USDA  
Jeanne Meier, Farm Center, DATCP  
James Langdon, WHEDA  
Bruce Jones, UW Center for Dairy Profitability  
Steve Kohlstedt, UW Extension Richland County  
Tim Leonard, manager, Equity Livestock Co-op  
Richland Center  
Mike Burke, Equity Livestock Co-op  
Greg Beck, Equity Livestock Co-op

**Media Representatives**

Lorry Erickson, Regional Editor, The Country Today  
Stacy Kleist, WRCO Radio, Richland Center

**Subcommittee on Agricultural Issues**

**Durand, WI**

**Monday, August 28, 2000**

**Committee Members**

Rep. Al Ott, Chair  
Rep. Tom Sykora  
Rep. Barbara Gronemus  
Rep. Joe Plouff

**Committee Staff**

David Lovell, Senior Analyst, Legislative Council  
Beata Kalies, Committee Clerk, Office of Rep. Al Ott  
Erin Napralla, Legislative Assistant, Office of Rep. Al Ott  
Steve Krieser, Executive Assistant, Office of Sargeant at Arms

**Members of the Public Testifying**

Mel Pittman, Plum City, dairy farmer  
Jan Morrow, Cornell, dairy farmer, candidate for State Assembly  
Arnie Weisenbeck, Durand, dairy farmer  
Arnold Spindler, Pepin County, dairy farmer  
Tom Rotering, Fountain City, dairy farmer  
Steve Haines, Arcadia, dairy farmer  
Nancy Iverson, Plum City, dairy farmer  
Jamie Voelker, Rice Lake, dairy farmer  
Jay Richardson, Spring Valley, dairy farmer  
Mary Anderson, Whitehall, beef farmer  
Willard Haigh, Eleva, retired dairy farmer  
Dennis Iverson, Plum City, farmer  
Ron Huppert, Arkansaw, dairy farmer  
Sam Danzinger, Durand, dairy farmer  
Steven Kling, Taylor  
Jeff Jackson, Clayton  
Jill Lucht, Chippewa Falls, dairy farmer; representative of the Wisconsin Farmers Union  
Corliss Handrickson, Beldenville, dairy farmer  
Joe Bragger, Independence, dairy farmer  
Andy Huppert, River Falls, dairy farmer  
Marty Hallock, Mondovi, farmer  
Pat Kling, Taylor  
Jonathan Wayne, Durand  
Bob Swenson, River Falls

**Members of the Public Observing**

Ted Baier, Eau Galle  
Bernard A. Bauer, Durand  
Lorraine Brunner, Durand, Pepin County Farmers Union  
James W. Brunner, Arkansaw  
John Caturia, Arkansaw

Pete Christianson, Madison, Kraft  
Jim Connolly, Mondovi, Countryside Co-op  
Cory Cutsforth, Rice Lake, dairy farmer  
Donald Danzinger, Durand, farmer  
Jackie Danzinger, Durand, dairy farmer  
Gary Evans, Mondovi  
Ed Gunderson, Durand, Countryside Co-op  
George Hayden, Mondovi  
Sally Hayden, Mondovi  
John Heck, Mondovi  
Leroy Heck, Mondovi  
Keith Hullopeter, Pepin  
Robert Ickler, Jr., Roberts  
Robert Ickler, Sr., Roberts  
Lynn Johnson, Pepin  
Douglas E. Knoepke, Durand  
Bernard Luebker, Plum City  
Kurt D. Manore, Pepin  
John Meixner, Durand  
Terry Mesch, Arkansaw  
Ken C. Olson, Menomonie  
Dave Prissel, Durand, Lone Oak Dairy, Inc.  
Matt Radle, Mondovi  
Jeff Schlosser, Durand  
Charles Spindler, Durand, Spindler Dairy  
Rod Spindler, Durand  
Kerry Suchla, Arcadia  
Sandy Sheets, Durand  
Robert Sheets, Durand  
Paul Wayne, Durand  
Dell Whelan, Mondovi

**Resource People**

Bob Battaglia, Statistician, DATCP  
Bob Cropp, UW Extension Agent, Pepin Cty  
James Langdon, WHEDA  
Ken McMahon, Elsworth, Co-op  
Jeanne Meier, Farm Center, DATCP  
Dr. Clarence Siroky, State Veterinarian, DATCP  
Joe Tregoning, Deputy Secretary, DATCP  
Julie Dokkestfull, Pepin Co. Exec. Dir., FSA

**Media Representative**

Gene Kirschner, Durand, WRDN Radio  
Mary Trettin, Durand, WRDN Radio  
Dan Lyksett, Leader-Telegram  
Rep. of Courier-Wedge (local paper)  
Bob Bosold, Eau Claire radio

**Subcommittee on the Agricultural Industry**  
**Johnson Creek, WI**  
**Tuesday, August 29, 2000**

**Committee Members**

Rep. Al Ott, Chair  
Rep. Steve Kestell  
Rep. John Ainsworth  
Rep. John Steinbrink

**Committee Staff**

David Lovell, Senior Analyst, Legislative Council  
Beata Kalies, Committee Clerk, Office of Rep. Al Ott  
Pat McKee, Page, Office of Assembly Sergeant  
at Arms

**Members of the Public Testifying**

Mark Christenson, Lake Mills, member of the  
Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board  
Mike Martin, Hayward, member of the Wisconsin  
Milk Marketing Board  
Sue Schaefer, Watertown, dairy farmer  
Norman Bartel, Watertown, retired farmer  
Charles Untz, dairy farmer  
Vern Newhouse, Kaukauna, farmer  
Dave Matthes, Viola, Wisconsin Livestock Dealers  
Association  
Harold Schoessow, Mequon, farmer  
George Roemer, Hartford  
Gail Goehring, buyer for Equity Livestock Sales  
Sue Marx, Helenville  
Peter Haakenson, Evansville  
Raymond Ireland, retired farmer  
Rodell L. Singert, Mukwonago, Waukesha County  
Board Supervisor

**Members of the Public Observing**

Dennis Bries, Johnson Creek  
Richard Brye, Middleton  
Richard W. Fink, Mayville, WMMB and self  
Floyd Froelich, Sullivan  
James P. Furlong, Sr., Watertown  
Ronald Griebenow, Watertown, dairy farmer  
Phil Humphrey, Helenville  
Russell Horst, Rubicon  
Aaron Kutz, Jefferson, Kutz Dairy  
Ron Kutz, Jefferson, Kutz Dairy  
Joe Reising, Watertown  
B. Weisensel, Watertown  
A.C. Weisensel, Iron Ridge, Horicon State Bank

John W. Winkelman, Watertown  
Mike Wollner, Neosho, Horicon State Bank

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Peter M. Overlien, USDA FSA  
Jerry Doll, UW-Extension Agronomy  
Ron Touchen, Deputy State Statistician, DATCP  
Gene Weittenhiller, Loan Officer, WHEDA  
Dr. Clarence Siroky, State Veterinarian, DATCP  
Jeanne Meier, Farm Center, DATCP  
Prof. Ken Bolton, Cooperative Extension Southern  
County and Area  
Tim Griswald, Dairy 2020  
Bruce Jones, UW Center for Dairy Profitability  
Sen. Scott Fitzgerald, 13th Senate District  
Rep. David Ward, 37th Assembly District  
Matt Hauser, Governor's Office Staff  
Neale Jones, Manager, Equity Livestock Co-op  
Johnson Creek  
Mike Burke, Equity Livestock Co-op

**Media Representative**

Gloria Hafemeister, Wisconsin State Farmer

**Subcommittee on the Agricultural Economy**  
**Reedsville, WI**  
**Thursday, August 31, 2000**

**Committee Members**

Rep. Al Ott, Chair  
Rep. Steve Kestell  
Rep. Joan Spillner  
Rep. John Steinbrink  
Rep. Sarah Waukau

**Committee Staff**

Mark Patronsky, Attorney, Legislative Council  
Beata Kalies, Committee Clerk, Office of Rep. Al Ott  
Erin Napralla, Legislative Assistant, Office of Rep. Al Ott  
Sherab Phunki, Page, Office of Assembly Sergeant at Arms

**Members of the Public Testifying**

Gerald Jaeger, Campbellsport, farmer  
Randy Geiger, dairy farmer, Reedsville; member of the Wisconsin Agri-Business Council  
Dr. Clarence Siroky, Wisconsin State Veterinarian  
Don Cooper, Glenbeulah, farmer  
Norb Van de Hei, DePere, Van de Hei, dairy farmer  
Dale Behnke, Reedsville, veal grower, Wisconsin Veal Grower Association Member  
Wayne Craig, New Holstein, farmer  
Wayne Mueller, St. Cloud: Investors Community Bank, Manitowoc  
Gerald Vande-Heiden, Seymour  
Allen Kracht, Newton, dairy farmer  
Willard Krueger, Brillion  
Rosalie Geiger, Reedsville, Ran-Rose Farms  
Norm Alsum, Brandon, Alsum Veal Farm  
Paul Huisenga, Brandon

**Member of the Public Observing**

Pete Christianson, Madison, Kraft  
Dave DuBois, Greenleaf, Quality Veal  
Lee Engelbrecht, Two Rivers  
Martin Huizenga, Jr., Brandon  
Gary Leick, Jr., Greenleaf, Gary Leick Veal  
Bill Parkinson, Chilton  
Ron Redig, Chilton, Reedsville Equity  
Mike Salter, Black Creek  
Ervin Sinkula, Two Rivers, Irish Acres  
Bernard Vander Heiden, Kaukauna

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Joe Jankowski, Manitowoc, County Executive Dir. USDA-FSA  
Jennifer Kreuning, Kewaunee, UW-Extension  
Keith Schultz, Manitowoc, Farm Loan Manager USDA-FSA  
Gerald Campbell, Prof. Agricultural and Applied Economics  
Jim Langdon, WHEDA  
Bob Battaglia, State Statistician, DATCP  
Dr. Clarence Siroky, State Veterinarian, DATCP  
Will Turba, State Ag. Board  
Matt Glewen, Calumet County Extension  
Greg Cummings, Manager, Equity Livestock Co-op Reedsville  
Mike Burke, Equity Livestock

**Media Representatives**

Ray Mueller, Chilton, Wisconsin State Farmer Press  
Judy Brown, The Country Today  
Pat Pankratz, Herald Times Reporter  
Bill Shogren, Seymour Times

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- 98) Schindler Dairy ✓
- 99) Chris Wolff of Wauzeka ✓
- 100) Gary Siporski for Jenny Heaton of DATCP inter-d ✓
- 101) Roger King of Holman High/ag instructor ✓
- 102) Cleo Paulman of DeForest ✓
- 103-107) UW Extension office of Chancellor inter-d ✓
- 108) Kathy Markeland of Wisconsin Catholic Conference ✓
- 109) *Tom Paslow UW Extension* ✓
- 110) *John Freitag W. Cattlemen Assn* ✓
- 111) }
- 112) } *given away at Farm Bureau Mtg*
- 113) }
- 114) } *to all for speech / Dairy Producers Assn.* ✓
- 115) } *Jan Morrow*
- 116) } *Tree Miskal Rural Health* ✓
- 117) } *Jo Ann Maedke* ✓
- 118) }
- 119) }
- 120) }

Phone call from Mr. Chris Wolff  
58510 Towns Lane  
Wauzeka WI 53826

**Wants copy of Committee Hearings Report from August\***

He is a hog producer and feels the swine industry is diminishing.  
The state needs to do something to keep it going.  
The packing plants are all gone.

The sustainable/ organic type crops are fine but not an answer for everyone.

In his business for example, he is too big to be considered in the niche market. He can not sell one hog at a time so he does it on consignment except that limits his business.

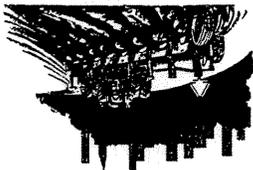
Direct marketing is great and he feels he should get more involved but again that alone is not going to help an industry survive.

The "mid-size" farms need help. The big ones seem to be doing ok and the little ones seem to find a way to survive with specialty products.

Was happy to hear that the issues in the report were being passed on to the federal level.

Chairman: Agriculture Committee

Member:  
Consumer Affairs  
Government Operations  
Natural Resources



Al Ott

State Representative • 3rd Assembly District

Roger King

608/ 526-3372

R. Forstner  
Hilman HI

1001 McHugh Rd.

P.O. 430

Hilman, WI

57636

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Home: P.O. Box 112 • Forest Junction, WI 54123-0112 • (920) 989-1240

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Office of the  
Chancellor  
5 Copies of the  
Report

Attn:  
Jennifer Gordin  
483 Lake Street  
Room 533

Inter - D

243-7478

Cleo Paulman  
8801 Hwy. V.  
De Forest, WI  
53539

\*1 Copy of Report  
Saw Article in  
Apri-View

Told her we'd mail  
it next week.

John Mackie  
14449 Northview Rd.  
Eleva, WI  
53019-1301

(920) 477-2804  
Call for report 1/14/11

# UW Extension

Cooperative Extension

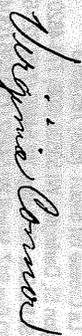
Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension  
432 North Lake St., Rm 633  
Madison, WI 53706-1498  
Phone: (608) 263-7320  
FAX: (608) 262-9166  
vconnor@facstaff.wisc.edu

Cooperative Extension's Agriculture and Natural Resources program area provides access to the resources of the University of Wisconsin to work with people in solving problems. Cooperative Extension is located in all 72 counties of Wisconsin to provide local access for all people to the University's resources and research.

If you need additional information or assistance, please contact your nearest county extension office or our program area office.

Please visit our Ag & Natural Resources homepage at this address:  
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/>

Sincerely,



Virginia Connor  
Program Assistant

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 BAYFIELD County Admin Bldg, 117 E 5th, Washburn WI 54891 (715) 373-6104  
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 CALLMET 206 Court St, Chilton WI 53014-1198 (920) 849-1450  
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 CLARK 517 Court St., PO Box 68, Neilsville WI 54456 (715) 743-5121  
 COLUMBIA 120 W Conant St, PO Box 567, Portage WI 53901 (608) 742-9680  
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 DANE 1 Fen Oak Ct, Rim 138, Madison WI 53718 (608) 224-3700  
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 EAU CLAIRE 227 First St W, Altoona WI 54720 (715) 839-4712  
 FLORENCE Florence Natural Resource Ctr, HC1, Box 82A,  
 Florence WI 54121 (715) 528-4480  
 FOND DU LAC 112 Classroom Bldg 400 Campus Dr Fond du Lac WI 54635  
 (920) 929-3170  
 FOREST 200 E Madison St, Crandon WI 54520 (715) 478-2212  
 GRANT Youth & Ag Center, 916 E Elm St, Fairgrounds, Box 31,  
 Lancaster WI 53813 (608) 723-2125  
 GREEN 3160B Hwy 81, Monroe WI 53566 (608) 328-9440  
 GREEN LAKE Courthouse, 492 Hill St, Box 3189, Green Lake WI 54941  
 (920) 294-4032  
 IOWA Courthouse, 222 N Iowa St, Dodgeville WI 53533 (608) 935-0391  
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 KENOSHA 19600 75th St, Box 550, Bristol WI 53104 (414) 857-1945  
 KEWAUNEE Courthouse 613 Dodge St Kewaunee WI 54216 (920) 388-7191  
 LA CROSSE 300 N 4th St, La Crosse WI 54601 (608) 785-5693  
 LAFAYETTE 627 Washington St, Darlington WI 53530 (608) 776-4820  
 LANGLADE 837 Clemont St, PO Box 460 Arlino WI 54409 (715) 627-6236  
 LINCOLN 1106 E 8th St, PO Box 917, Merrill WI 54452 (715) 536-0304  
 MANITOWOC 4319 Expo Dr, Box 1150, Manitowoc WI 54221 (920) 683-4170  
 MARATHON Courthouse, 500 Forest, Wausau WI 54403 (715) 261-1230  
 MARINETTE Courthouse, 1926 Hall Ave, Marinette WI 54143  
 (715) 732-7510  
 MARQUETTE 480 Underwood Ave, Montello WI 53949 (608) 297-9153  
 MENOMINEE Courthouse, Box 279, Keshena WI 54136 (715) 799-4654  
 MILWAUKEE State Fair Youth Ctr, 640 S 84th St, West Allis WI 53214  
 (414) 920-2400  
 MONROE 112 S Court St, Rm 107, Sparta WI 54656 (608) 269-8722  
 OCCONTO Courthouse, 301 Washington St, Oconto WI 54153 (920) 834-8845  
 ONEIDA 3375 Airport Rd, Box 1208, Rhinelander WI 54501 (715) 365-2750  
 OUTAGAMIE 3365 W Brewster St, Appleton WI 54914 (920) 832-5121

OZAUKEE Administration Ctr, 121 W Main St, Box 994, Port Washington WI  
 53074 (414) 238-8288  
 PEPIN Pepin Co Govt Ctr, 740 7th Ave W, Box 39, Durand WI 54736  
 (715) 672-5214  
 PIERCE Pierce Office Bldg, 412 W Kirme St, Box 69, Ellsworth WI 54011  
 (715) 273-3531 ext 663  
 POLK Agricultural Ctr, 215 Main St, Box 160, Balsam Lake WI 54810  
 (715) 465-8600  
 PORTAGE Courthouse Bldg 1462 Strongms Ave Stevens Point WI 54481  
 (715) 346-1316  
 PRICE Normal Bldg, 104 S Eyder Ave, Phillips WI 54555  
 (715) 398-2555  
 RACINE 14200 Washington Ave, Sturtevant WI 53177  
 (414) 886-8460  
 RICHLAND 1100 Hwy 14 W, Richland Center WI 53581  
 (608) 647-6148  
 ROCK Courthouse, 51 S Main St, Janesville WI 53545 (608) 757-5696  
 RUSK Courthouse, 311 Miner Ave E, Ladysmith WI 54948 (715) 532-2151  
 ST CROIX Ag Services & Education Ctr 1960 8th Ave Baldwin WI 54002  
 (715) 684-3301 ext 204  
 SAUK W Sq Admin Bldg 505 Broadway, Baraboo WI 53913 (608) 355-3250  
 SAWYER 406 Main St, Box 351, Hayward WI 54843 (715) 634-4839  
 SHAWANO Courthouse 311 N Main St, Shawano WI 54166 (715) 526-6136  
 SHEBOYGAN 650 Forest Ave, Sheboygan Falls WI 53085 (920) 467-5740  
 TAYLOR Co-USDA Service Ctr, 925 Donald St, Medford WI 54451  
 (715) 748-3327  
 TREMPALEAU 1720 Main St, PO Box 67, Whitehall WI 54773  
 (715) 538-2311 ext 206  
 VERNON Etlandson Office Bldg, Rt 3, Box 392, Viroqua WI 54655  
 (608) 637-2165  
 VILAS Courthouse 330 Court St Eagle River WI 54521 (715) 479-3648  
 WALWORTH W3929 Cty Rd NN, Elkhorn WI 53121 (414) 741-3190  
 WASHBURN 850 W Beaver Brook Ave, Ste 1, Spooner WI 54801  
 (715) 636-4444  
 WASHINGTON 333 E Washington St, Ste 1200, West Bend WI 53095  
 (414) 336-4477  
 WAUKESHA Administration Center, 1320 Pewaukee Rd, Waukesha WI  
 53188 (414) 548-7770  
 WAUPACA Courthouse, 811 Harding St, Waupaca WI 54981  
 (715) 258-6230  
 WAUSHARA Courthouse, 209 S St Marie, Box 487, Waubesa WI 54982  
 (920) 787-0416  
 WINNEBAGO 625 E County Rd Y, Ste 600, Oshkosh WI 54901  
 (920) 232-1970  
 WOOD Courthouse, 400 Market St, Box 8095, Wisconsin Rapids WI 54494  
 (715) 421-8440

*letter*

*sent*

COPIES OF REPORT GIVEN TO: (as part of the original 50)

- ✓ 26) Mark Christensen of WMMB, Lake Mills area ✓
- ✓ 27) Dan Nankee of Southwest Tach, Highland WI area ✓
- ✓ 28) Angie Molkentin of the Governor's Taskforce on Growing Agriculture ✓
- 29) Cliff Miller of Post Crescent *picked up*
- ✓ 30) Gloria Hafemeister of Wisconsin State Farmer ✓
- ✓ 31) Lorry Erickson of The Country Today ✓
- ✓ 32) Ray Mueller of the Chilton Times ✓
- ✓ 33) Dan Lyksett of the Leader-Telegram ✓
- ✓ 34) Pat Pankratz of the Herald Times Reporter ✓
- ✓ 35) Bill Shogren of Seymour Times ✓
- ✓ 36) Ben DATCP ✓
- ✓ 37) Caucus - Jason ✓
- ✓ 38) Governor's office - Jeff ✓
- ✓ 39) FSA Doug Caruso ✓
- ✓ 40) WHEDA James Langdon ✓
- ✓ 41) Equity ✓
- 42) John Powell of WI Public Radio *picked up*
- 43) William Walker of Executive Policy and Budget Office *delivered by page*
- 44) LRB State documents library *delivered by page*
- 45) Roger Cliff of the Farm Bureau *picked up*
- 46) Joan Sanstadt of Agriview ✓
- 47) Wisconsin Taxpayer Alliance *delivered by page*
- 48) Sierra Club of Madison Caryl Terrell *delivered by page*
- 49) Joanna of Atty. General's Office *delivered by page*
- 50) Sue Saeger of WI Farmers Union ✓

Dairy 2020 Mtg. Al's original was copied and distributed by the Commerce Dept to: *name list.*

- Tim Griswald
- Bruce Jones
- John Oncken
- Jane Schoepel of State Farmer
- As well as all the members of the Dairy 2020 council

**Napralla, Erin**

**From:** Walker, William  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 19, 2000 11:12 AM  
**To:** Rep.Ott

Representative Ott or staff,

May I have a copy of the report on the agricultural crisis referenced in the attached press release? Direct it to my attention at the address below. Thank you.



1019ottagriculture.pdf

**William D. Walker**

Executive Policy and Budget Analyst  
Division of Executive Budget and Finance  
State of Wisconsin  
Department of Administration

(608) 266-7329 Phone

(608) 267-0372 Fax

[william.walker@doa.state.wi.us](mailto:william.walker@doa.state.wi.us)

101 East Wilson St, 10th Floor

PO Box 7864

Madison, WI 53707-7864

Chairman:  
Agriculture Committee

Member:  
Consumer Affairs  
Government Operations  
Natural Resources



Al Ott

State Representative • 3rd Assembly District

*Our copy*

October 16, 2000

Mr. Mike Burke and Mr. Greg Beck  
Equity Cooperative Livestock Sales Association  
Corporate Office  
E 10890 Penny Lane  
Baraboo, WI 53913

Dear Mike and Greg:

First, let me say thank you for your willingness to participate in the series of listening sessions held in August. The purpose was to channel the information gathered to appropriate policy makers (federal, state and local) that might be able to address the problems.

From the personal testimonials heard at the hearings, we can all attest to the fact that almost everyone associated with agriculture has felt an impact. A wide variety of issues were brought forth in the testimony expressed to the subcommittee members. With over 230 people participating in the hearings, the effort was successful. But the work has only just begun.

Along with this letter please find a finalized copy of the subcommittees' work effort. We hope that these ideas generate improvements to existing programs and help develop policy to address future issues. Please, help keep Wisconsin "America's Dairyland" for future generations. Again, thanks for your help and support.

Sincerely and together for agriculture,

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

Enc.

**Napralla, Erin**

**From:** Jon and Angie Molkentin [jamolk@execpc.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 02, 2000 1:02 PM  
**To:** Rep.Ott  
**Subject:** Statewide Agriculture Hearings

Representative Ott:

I am serving on the Governor's Taskforce on Growing Agriculture. You may have been contacted by some of my fellow taskforce members for information regarding your perspectives on Growing Wisconsin Agriculture.

I'm wondering if you have any official summaries of your Statewide Agriculture Hearings that we could refer to in our work. Due to some conflicts, I was unable to attend, but would like to include any input you may wish to share from these hearings (or any other appropriate input).

If you have already passed along this info to another taskforce member, I apologize for any duplication. Thank you for your commitment to Wisconsin agriculture!

Angie Molkentin, APR  
Free-lance Public Relations Writing and Counseling  
123 Gamekeeper Court  
Oconomowoc, WI 53066  
(262) 646-3505  
[jamolk@execpc.com](mailto:jamolk@execpc.com)

Chairman:  
Agriculture Committee

*copy for our file*



Member:  
Consumer Affairs  
Government Operations  
Natural Resources

Al Ott

State Representative • 3rd Assembly District

October 16, 2000

Ms. Angie Molquentin, APR  
Governor's Taskforce on Growing Agriculture  
123 Gamekeeper Court  
Oconomowoc, WI 63066

Dear Ms. Molquentin:

As Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture for the State of Wisconsin, I appointed bipartisan subcommittees from the Agriculture Committee membership. Then I arranged four statewide public listening sessions in response to the devastating crisis faced by those involved in agriculture in Wisconsin. The purpose was to channel the information gathered to the appropriate policy makers (federal, state and local) that might be able to address the problems.

As you are aware, the low milk price has particularly affected many farmers and dairy producers. In addition almost everyone associated with the agricultural community has felt an impact. From the testimony, it is obvious that agribusinesses are struggling to survive. A wide variety of serious issues were brought forth in the testimony expressed to the subcommittee members. With over 230 people participating in the hearings, the effort was successful. Since the agricultural crisis needs to be addressed nationally as well as locally, I wanted to bring to your attention Wisconsin's situation in particular.

The attached report contains the summary in outline form of the suggestions presented at the listening sessions this past August. I am forwarding this report to you in the hope that it may be useful in creating future proposals as well as evaluating current agriculture related programs. Please, help us keep agriculture strong in Wisconsin and America.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance as you give consideration to these ideas. These issues are vitally important to the current economy and the future of agriculture in the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

Enc.

*Copy for our files*

October 16, 2000

Mr. Dan Mankee  
5705 County Road P  
Highland, WI 53543

Dear Mr. Mankee:

As Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture for the State of Wisconsin, I appointed bipartisan subcommittees from the Agriculture Committee membership. Then I arranged four statewide public listening sessions in response to the devastating crisis faced by those involved in agriculture in Wisconsin. The purpose was to channel the information gathered to the appropriate policy makers (federal, state and local) that might be able to address the problems.

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Sincerely,

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

Enc.

9:09 am

MARK CHRISTIENSON OF LAKE  
MILLS. WMMG Member

SPOKE AT JOHNSON'S GREAT HEARING  
MORNING

051 231 4014 4005 W

WANTS TO SEE THE REPORT

12782 W 211 W  
AND WANTS TO RETURN AT

ABOUT ANOTHER PRICING PROGRAM.

920 / 648 - 2224

---

All in district, call to acknowledge message

Report will call back later today.

What's best time to call?

---

11:30 am

Chairman:  
Agriculture Committee

*copy for our file*



Member:  
Consumer Affairs  
Government Operations  
Natural Resources

Al Ott

State Representative • 3rd Assembly District

October 16, 2000

Mr. Mark Christenson  
W7004 Manske Rd.  
Lake Mills, WI 53551

Dear Mr. Christenson:

As Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture for the State of Wisconsin, I appointed bipartisan subcommittees from the Agriculture Committee membership. Then I arranged four statewide public listening sessions in response to the devastating crisis faced by those involved in agriculture in Wisconsin. The purpose was to channel the information gathered to the appropriate policy makers (federal, state and local) that might be able to address the problems.

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Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance as you give consideration to these ideas. These issues are vitally important to the current economy and the future of agriculture in the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

Enc.

**Agri-View:**  
P.O. Box 44182  
Madison, WI 53711

**The Country Today:**  
P.O. Box 570  
Eau Claire, WI 54701

**Wisconsin State Farmer:**  
P.O. Box 152  
Waupaca, WI 54981

**Watertown Daily Times:**  
P.O. Box 140  
Watertown, WI 53094

**Chilton Times:**  
P.O. Box 227  
Chilton, WI 53014

**Herald Times Reporter:**  
P.O. Box 790  
Manitowoc, WI 54220

**Times-Press:**  
P.O. Box 128  
Seymour, WI 54165

Wisconsin State FSA office  
Doug Caruso  
State Exec Dir.  
6515 Watts Rd  
Suite 100  
Mad 53719

James Langdon/ Wheeler  
201 W. Washington Ave Suite 700  
P.O. Box 1728 Mad 53701-1728

Leader - Telegraph  
PO Box 570

Eau Claire 54702-  
0570

Mike Burke Greg Beck  
Corporate Office  
Equity Cooperative Unstrick  
Sales Ass.  
10890 Penny Lane  
Baraboo WI 53913

Datcp PO Box 8911  
Mad 53708-8511

Asst. Rep. Caucus  
175 Fairchild  
Suite 601  
James Kratchowill

Gork office - Jeff  
125 5000

Bruce Jones  
Ag + Applied Economics  
422 Taylor Hall  
427 Lorck St.  
Madison 53706-  
Thompson  
2015 2020

COPIES OF THE REPORT GIVEN TO:  
Congressional delegation:

*Letters*

*your  
Sent*

- ✓ 1) Sec. Glickman ✓
- ✓ 2) Sen. Feingold ✓
- ✓ 3) Sen. Kohl ✓
- ✓ 4) Congressman Ryan ✓
- ✓ 5) Congresswoman Baldwin ✓
- ✓ 6) Congressman Kind ✓
- ✓ 7) Congressman Keczka ✓
- ✓ 8) Congressman Barrett ✓
- ✓ 9) Congressman Petri ✓
- ✓ 10) Congressman Obey ✓
- ✓ 11) Congressman Green ✓
- ✓ 12) Congressman Sensenbrenner ✓

---

- ✓ 13) Spillner ✓
- ✓ 14) Ainsworth ✓
- ✓ 15) Steinbrink ✓
- ✓ 16) Sykora ✓
- ✓ 17) Gronemus ✓
- ✓ 18) Plouff ✓
- ✓ 19) Kestell ✓
- ✓ 20) Waukau ✓
- ✓ 21) Petrowski ✓
- ✓ 22) Hahn ✓
- ✓ 23) Suder ✓
- ✓ 24) Lassa ✓
- ✓ 25) Reynolds ✓

Ag committee members:

Draft 3- to Agriculture committee members  
invited news resources

October 16, 2000

Representative Tom Sykora  
8 North State Capitol  
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Agriculture Committee/Subcommittee Members:

First, let me say thank you for your willingness to participate in the series of listening sessions held in August. The purpose was to channel the information gathered to appropriate policy makers (federal, state and local) that might be able to address the problems.

From the personal testimonials heard at the hearings, we can all attest to the fact that almost everyone associated with agriculture has felt an impact. A wide variety of issues were brought forth in the testimony expressed to the subcommittee members. With over 230 people participating in the hearings, the effort was successful. But the work has only just begun.

Along with this letter please find a finalized copy of the subcommittees' work effort. We hope that these ideas generate improvements to existing programs and help develop policy to address future issues. Please, help keep Wisconsin "America's Dairyland" for future generations. Again, thanks for your help and support.

Sincerely and together for agriculture,

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

Enc.

10/13/00 13:48

320 N CAPITOL

003/009

*AI's contribution draft 2*

October 13, 2000

.....  
.....  
.....

Dear Agriculture <sup>Committee</sup> Subcommittee Members:

~~As the Chair of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture, I have arranged for statewide public listening sessions during August in response to the devastating crisis faced by those involved in agriculture. The purpose was to collect the statements from those in the agricultural community in Wisconsin and pass the information along to appropriate policy makers that can address the situation. Many members of the Agriculture Committee participated in this effort.~~

*(add state word)*

From the personal testimonials heard at the hearings, ~~it~~ <sup>we can all attest</sup> that almost everyone associated with agriculture has felt an impact. The individuals present informed the subcommittee of many varied concerns facing farmers today. With over 230 people participating in the hearings, the response was positive. But the work has only just begun.

*A wide variety of issues were brought forth in the testimony expressed to the subcommittee members*

~~The attached report contains the summary in outline form of the suggestions presented at the listening sessions. We hope that these ideas generate improvements to existing programs and help develop policy to address these issues. In particular, as state legislators we can consider these comments when drafting, evaluating, and supporting agricultural proposals. Please, help keep Wisconsin "America's Dairyland" for future generations.~~

Sincerely,

*and together for Agriculture*

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

*First may I say Thank You for your willingness to participate in the series of listening sessions we held in August.*

*Along with this letter please find a finalized copy of the subcommittee work effort.*

*Bento duft 1*

October 13, 2000

.....  
.....  
.....

Dear Agriculture Subcommittee Member:

As the Chair of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture, I have arranged for statewide public listening sessions during August in response to the devastating crisis faced by those involved in agriculture. The purpose was to collect the statements from those in the agricultural community in Wisconsin and pass the information along to appropriate policy makers that can address the situation. Many members of the Agriculture Committee participated in this effort.

From the personal testimonials heard at the hearings, I can attest that almost everyone associated with agriculture has felt an impact. The individuals present informed the subcommittee of many varied concerns facing farmers today. With over 230 people participating in the hearings, the response was positive. But the work has only just begun.

The attached report contains the summary in outline form of the suggestions presented at the listening sessions. We hope that these ideas generate improvements to existing programs and help develop policy to address these issues. In particular, as state legislators we can consider these comments when drafting, evaluating, and supporting agricultural proposals. Please, help keep Wisconsin "America's Dairyland" for future generations.

Sincerely,

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

to Wisconsin Congressional Delegation - Draft 3

Chairman:  
Agriculture Committee

*Sec. Glickman*  
*Sec. Brancel*

*specific requirements*



Member:  
Consumer Affairs  
Government Operations  
Natural Resources

**Al Ott**

State Representative • 3rd Assembly District

October 16, 2000

The Honorable Russell Feingold  
United States Senate  
716 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-4903

Dear Senator Feingold:

As Chairman of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture for the State of Wisconsin, I appointed bipartisan subcommittees from the Agriculture Committee membership. Then I arranged four statewide public listening sessions in response to the devastating crisis faced by those involved in agriculture in Wisconsin. The purpose was to channel the information gathered to the appropriate policy makers (federal, state and local) that might be able to address the problems.

As you are aware, the low milk price has particularly affected many farmers and dairy producers. In addition almost everyone associated with the agricultural community has felt an impact. From the testimony, it is obvious that agribusinesses are struggling to survive. A wide variety of serious issues were brought forth in the testimony expressed to the subcommittee members. With over 230 people participating in the hearings, the effort was successful. Since the agricultural crisis needs to be addressed nationally as well as locally, I wanted to bring to your attention Wisconsin's situation in particular.

The attached report contains the summary in outline form of the suggestions presented at the listening sessions this past August. I am forwarding this report to you in the hope that it may be useful in creating future proposals as well as evaluating current agriculture related programs. Please, help us keep agriculture strong in Wisconsin and America.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance as you give consideration to these ideas. These issues are vitally important to the current economy and the future of agriculture in the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

*Enc.*

Al's contribution Congressman letter - draft 2

Dear Congressman:

<sup>man of the</sup> Assembly Comm. on Ag for the State of WI,  
As ~~the~~ Chair of the State of Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Agriculture,  
~~I have~~ arranged for statewide public listening sessions in response to the  
devastating crisis faced by those involved in agriculture in Wisconsin. The  
purpose was to channel the information gathered ~~locally~~ to the  
appropriate policy makers ~~able~~ to address the problems.

As you are aware, the low milk price has especially affected our dairy  
producers. In addition almost everyone associated with the agricultural  
community has felt an impact. From the testimony, it is ~~obvious~~ that the  
~~farmers~~ are struggling to survive. ~~Many~~ <sup>issues</sup> were brought  
forth in the testimony expressed to the subcommittee members. With over  
230 people participating in the hearings, the ~~report~~ <sup>message</sup> was ~~clear~~ since  
the agricultural crisis needs to be addressed nationally as well as locally. I  
wanted to bring to your attention Wisconsin's situation in particular.

The attached report contains the summary in outline form of the  
suggestions presented at the listening sessions this past August here in our  
state. I am forwarding ~~these~~ <sup>reports</sup> to you in the hope that they  
may be useful in creating future proposals as well as evaluating current  
agriculture related programs. Please, help us keep agriculture strong.

Please <sup>do not hesitate to</sup> contact me if I can be of assistance <sup>as you give</sup> your consideration <sup>to</sup> these  
ideas. These issues are <sup>very</sup> important to the economy and agricultural  
future of the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

I think we may  
be repetitive.

many farmers and  
agribusiness

appointing Wisconsin  
Agriculture Committee  
membership and

Dear Congressman:

As the Chair of the State of Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Agriculture, I have arranged for statewide public listening sessions in response to the devastating crisis faced by those involved in agriculture in Wisconsin. The purpose was to channel the information gathered locally to the appropriate policy makers able to address the problems.

As you are aware, the low milk price has especially affected our dairy producers. In addition almost everyone associated with the agricultural community has felt an impact. From the testimony, it is apparent that the farmers are struggling to survive. Many varied concerns were brought forth in the testimony expressed to the subcommittee members. With over 230 people participating in the hearings, the response was positive. Since the agricultural crisis needs to be addressed nationally as well as locally, I wanted to bring to your attention Wisconsin's situation in particular.

The attached report contains the summary in outline form of the suggestions presented at the listening sessions this past August here in our state. I am forwarding these comments to you in the hope that they may be useful in creating future proposals as well as evaluating current agriculture related programs. Please, help us keep agriculture strong.

Please contact me if I can be of assistance in your consideration of these ideas. These issues are very important to the economy and agricultural future of the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Al Ott  
Chair, Agriculture Committee  
State Representative  
3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

*END*



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# Wisconsin Non-Point Pollution Administrative Rules

## Final Proposed Redesign Rules

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation has provided this summary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' proposed nonpoint source pollution administrative rules to keep you informed of these far-reaching rules.



**Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation**

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1-800-261-FARM (3276) www.wfbf.com

### PUBLIC HEARINGS ON PROPOSED FINAL RULES

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is once again holding a series of public hearings on the proposed nonpoint source pollution administrative rules. DNR held eleven public hearings in March of 2000. Approximately 1000 farmers attended these hearings. Because of the many comments DNR received from those hearings, DNR has made numerous changes to the rule package. DNR has scheduled six public hearings across the state to allow for citizen input one more time on the proposed final rules.

**March 12: Richland Center**, Richland Community Center, 600 West Seminary Street

**March 13: Eau Claire**, Best Western Midway Hotel, 2851 Hendrickson Drive

**March 14: Madison**, Fitchburg Community Center, 5520 Lacy Road

**March 19: Wausau**, UW-Wausau Marathon Center, Room 233, 518 South 7th Avenue

**March 20: Green Bay**, UW-Green Bay Union, Christie Theater, 2420 Nicolet Drive

**March 22: Pewaukee**, Waukesha County Technical College, 800 Main Street, Room BO201/202

There will be two hearings at each site. The first begins at 1:00 p.m. and the second begins at 6:00 p.m. Each hearing will begin with a DNR informational presentation followed by public testimony.

### SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS

Written comments can be submitted at the hearings or sent to Wisconsin DNR, Attn: Carol Holden, DNR-WT/2, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707. The deadline for written comments is April 6th. Please note that comments cannot be submitted via e-mail. If you have any questions or require further information, the DNR contact person is Carol Holden at 608-266-0141.

At these public hearings, DNR will be taking comments of eight different proposed administrative rules. The newly created NR 151 - Runoff Management, is the rule that most significantly affects agriculture.

### SEVEN PERFORMANCE STANDARDS IN NR 151

WFBF's Nonpoint Advisory Committee has reviewed the proposed seven performance standards contained in NR 151 and has made the following comments.

**1) Sheet, rill and wind erosion.** (1) All crop producers shall comply with this section. (2) All land where crops or feed are grown shall be cropped to achieve a soil erosion rate equal to, or less than, the tolerable rate "T" established for that soil.

DNR then proposes three options for determining "T". They are as follows:

Option 1 states that soil loss is to be calculated according

to locally selected formulas, tools or models and the agricultural operator is only required to use a single appropriate formula, tool or model.

Option 2 includes the same provisions as option 1, adding that the agricultural owner/operator may make the appropriate choice if a combination of municipalities or federal government agencies require different formulas, tools or models.

Option 3 requires the use of one formula statewide, but selection of the formula that will ultimately be used will be based on public input. The formulas include the Universal Soil Loss Equation (USLE), Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE), or Revised Uniform Soil Loss Equation II (RUSLE II).

**WFBF comment:** WFBF supports meeting "T" provided that it's determined in a uniform manner. It's WFBF's understanding that NRCS will be implementing RUSLE II (revised uniform soil loss equation) starting in January of 2002. WFBF supports establishing RUSLE II as the state model for predicting soil erosion so producers will not be subject to conflicting regulations.

**2) Concentrated flow channels:** (1) All crop producers shall comply with this section where channels of concentrated flow exist, either natural or engineered, that carry water from cropland areas and that have a significant potential for sediment delivery to navigable surface waters. (2) Grass vegetation shall be established and maintained in concentrated flow channels within cropland areas where runoff would otherwise cause erosion or sediment delivery to navigable surface waters. (3) Actions taken by the crop producer after the effective date of the rule to comply with this section may not result in the concentrated flow channel being designated as a navigable waterway.

DNR has added a provision stating that if the concentrated flow channel was a navigable waterway to start with (prior to the remedial action of the crop producer), the channel cannot be declared non-navigable once it is brought into compliance. This reflects current law.

**WFBF comment:** The intent is to eliminate gully erosion. However, there is no process or method for making this determination. It would be a field-by-field decision. This may create a consistency problem, especially when one of the criteria is "significant potential." What does this mean? It makes a lot of sense to install grass waterways. Producers have been doing it on their own for years. But we need to make sure the rule allows for producers either to lift up the plow, cultivator, disk etc. or to have an engineered system put in place when deemed necessary. Obviously, the performance standard goes hand-in-hand with a soil erosion rate of "T" or less.

**3) Water Quality Corridor.** (1) All crop producers and all livestock producers shall comply with this section. (2) All cropped fields, pastures or woodlots located within water quality management areas enrolled in CRP and CREP are considered to be in compliance with this section. (3) All cropped fields, pastures or woodlots located within water



quality management areas (i.e. within 300 feet of a river or stream or within 1000 feet of a lake or pond) shall have a minimum water quality corridor that conforms to one of the following options.

- a) 10 feet permanent cover with the next 90 feet with at least 50% crop residue;
- b) 20 feet permanent cover with the next 30 feet with at least 30% crop residue;
- c) 20 feet permanent cover with no additional crop residue if the slope is less than 2% for at least 100 feet beyond the 20 foot buffer;
- d) 35 feet permanent cover no additional crop residue requirements.

WFBF comments: WFBF supports this mandatory buffer approach provided that producers are provided appropriate funding for taking land out of production and that this land does not get taxed at a higher rate than cropland.

**4) Manure storage facilities.** (1) All livestock producers building new manure storage facilities, substantially altering storage facilities or choosing to abandon their manure storage facilities shall meet NRCS standards.

WFBF comment: This has been a non controversial item and makes sense.

**5) Clean water diversions.** (1) All livestock producers within a water quality management area shall comply with this section. (2) Runoff shall be diverted away from contacting feedlots, manure storage areas and barnyard areas within water quality management areas.

WFBF comment: Basically producers near surface waters will be required to install gutters or clean water diversions to keep runoff from coming in contact with feedlots and barnyards. However, once installed, if these best management practices are damaged or wiped out due to acts of nature, 100% of the replacement costs should be at the state's expense, not the producer's. It makes sense to keep clean water clean, but we need to be practical in the ability for some operations to install these practices. It might not be the best use of state funds versus the results.

**6) Nutrient management.** (1) All crop producers and livestock producers dealing with the application of nutrients to agricultural fields shall comply with this section. (2) This performance standard does not apply to industrial or municipal sludge regulated by other DNR rules. (3) Any application of manure or commercial fertilizer or other nutrients shall be done according to a nitrogen based nutrient management plan (i.e. NRCS 590 plans). This performance standard will apply to existing croplands located within watersheds containing outstanding or exceptional resource waters, 303(d) impaired waters and source water protection areas effective January 1, 2005. The performance standard will apply to all other existing cropland areas effective January 1, 2008.

WFBF comment: WFBF supports nitrogen based nutrient management planning and the phased-in approach proposed by DNR. However, WFBF is concerned that DNR may require phosphorous based nutrient management as part of a targeted program. WFBF believes that this is putting the cart ahead of the horse. DNR should not be doing a targeted program in a subwatershed until it is proven that these uniform standards will not meet water quality goals.

**7) Manure management prohibitions.** (1) All livestock producers shall comply with the four AWAC prohibitions.

- (a) A livestock operation shall have no overflow of manure storage facilities.
- (b) A livestock operation shall have no unconfined manure pile in a water quality management area.
- (c) A livestock operation shall have no direct runoff from a feedlot or stored manure into the waters of the state.
- (d) A livestock operation may not allow unlimited access by livestock to waters of the state in a location where high concentrations of animals prevent the maintenance of adequate sod or self-sustaining vegetative cover.

WFBF comment: WFBF has always been supportive of the AWAC prohibitions.

#### CONCLUSION

In general, DNR has listened to the concerns raised by producers at last year's public hearings. DNR proposed performance standards seem practical and doable. However, it is important for each farmer to review the proposed performance standards to see how they effect your operation and make comments to the DNR on what changes may need to be made.

There are many more items of concern contained in the other proposed administrative rules that WFBF will be submitting written comments on. These include increasing cost share rates, the length of time producers are eligible to receive cost sharing, urban requirements, local authority and so on.

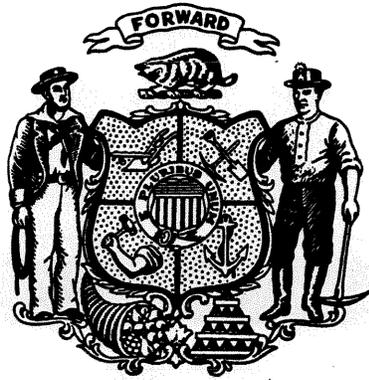
#### CONTACT US

If you have any questions, comments, or find items that need to be addressed, please contact WFBF staff person Paul Zimmerman at 608-828-5708 or email at [pzimmerman@wfbf.com](mailto:pzimmerman@wfbf.com).

#### BRIEFINGS FOR FARMERS BEING SCHEDULED

The WFBF is scheduling briefings for farmers starting at 12:00 noon prior to each hearing, in the same city and location of the DNR hearings. Please watch for additional details and confirmation of these farmer briefings.

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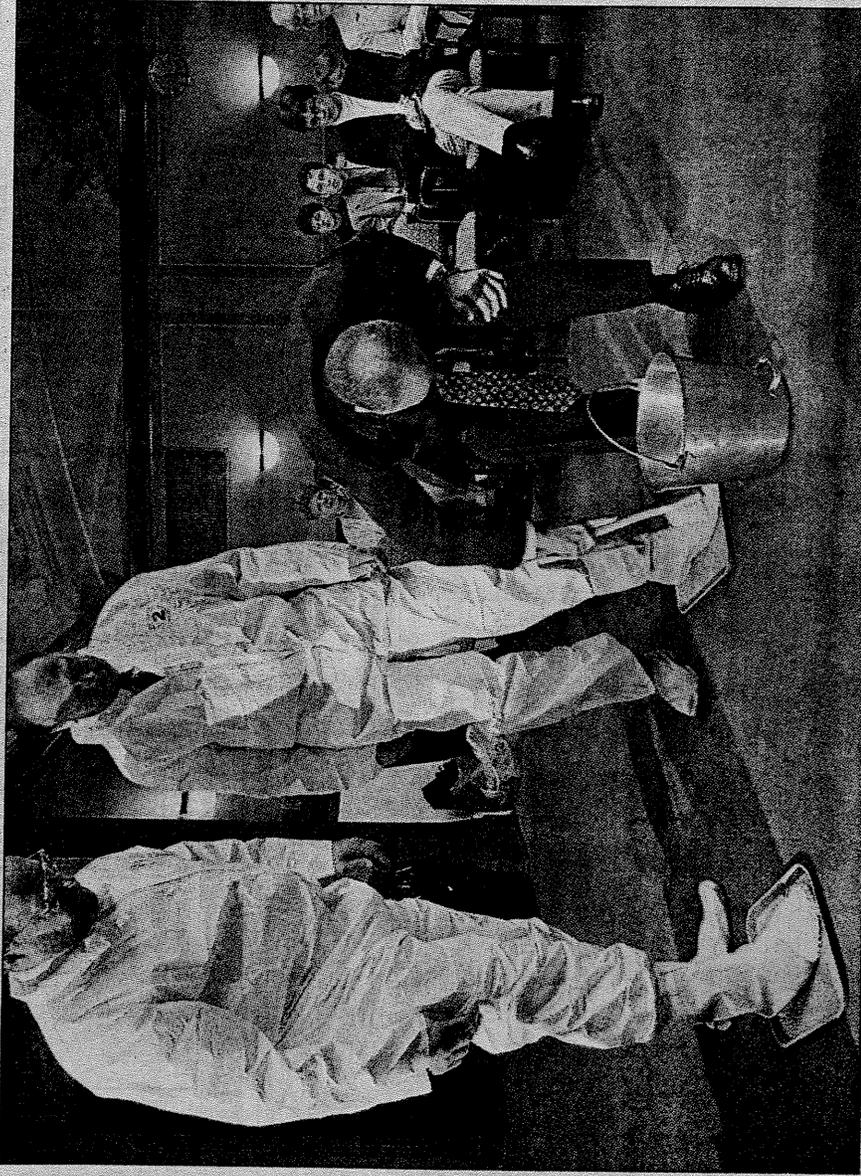


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# Disinfection demonstration

6/30/01 WIS  
Business Section

Clarence Siroky, state veterinarian, right, shows the proper method for scrubbing boots to prevent the spread of foot-and-mouth disease, the virus that is sweeping across Europe. State Rep. Al Ott, R-Forest Junction, chairman of the Assembly Agriculture Committee, left, and James Harsdorf, Wisconsin's secretary of agriculture, center, are wearing the kind of protective clothing that farmers should ask visitors to wear, who have traveled to countries where foot-and-mouth disease exists. About 400,000 animals have been slaughtered in England alone in an effort to contain the disease.



CRAIG SCHREINER/WIS



State of Wisconsin  
Scott McCallum, Governor

**Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection**  
James E. Harsdorf, Secretary

### **Wisconsin's Response to Foot-and-Mouth Disease: Briefing to the Assembly Agriculture Committee**

#### **Background**

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) strikes cloven-hoofed animals, causing blisters, fever, and appetite loss. Cattle, swine and sheep are the most economically important species that are subject to FMD, with swine being the most susceptible species. Young animals infected with FMD frequently die. Pregnant animals often abort. Weight and milk production drop dramatically, and animals that recover often remain debilitated. The virus that causes FMD is the single most contagious agent known to veterinary or human medicine.

FMD is not a human health threat, but humans can carry the virus in their nasal passages, and on their shoes and clothing, and pass it to animals.

Containing an outbreak in Wisconsin and eradicating the disease would be a joint effort of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP); Wisconsin Emergency Management; and the US Department of Agriculture. Other state agencies such as Military Affairs, Natural Resources, Transportation and Commerce may be involved in an emergency response.

#### **Status of FMD in Europe**

- As of Wednesday, March 28, FMD had been found on 723 farms in Europe: 715 in the United Kingdom, 1 in the Republic of Ireland, 2 in France, and 5 in Holland. *AND INDIA*
- So far, more than 500,000 animals have been slaughtered, with more than 277,000 more scheduled to be slaughtered.

#### **Prevention**

- Foot-and-mouth disease is one of the foreign animal diseases that veterinarians routinely monitor in Wisconsin. We have nine veterinarians trained in diagnosis of foreign animal diseases.
- We have sent a reminder to private practice veterinarians in the state that they are required to notify either the DATCP-Animal Health Division or the USDA-Veterinary Services office if they find any symptom that may be caused by foot-and-mouth disease. To date, we have scheduled plan two one-evening training sessions in early April as a refresher course for private practice veterinarians, as well as an informational session for UW-Extension agents.
- The USDA has prohibited importing live swine or ruminants and unprocessed meat from those animals, and restricted some other animal products depending on their risk of carrying the virus.
- Travelers entering the United States from FMD-infected areas are to be disinfected by USDA staff at customs stations. This is apparently not happening in many cases.
- DATCP has issued (via press release and web site) guidelines for travelers to FMD-infected areas, and an alert to farmers and visitors doing business on farms to be stringent in observing biosecurity measures. The Division is developing an outreach effort to other stakeholders to outline our plan of action and explain what they can do.

#### **Response**

A foot and mouth disease response could occur if we had a report of possibly infected animals, products or equipment entering the state, or if a private veterinarian found possible symptoms. The report comes either to the Animal Health Division or to the USDA Veterinary Services office. Here is what would happen:

- A foreign animal disease diagnostician is on the farm within 24 hours to draw samples and ship them to Plum Island, N.Y., the federal laboratory where FMD diagnoses are made. The farm is quarantined.
- Using current methods, laboratory results take 1 to 5 days. However, the USDA has just announced that a new test developed by its research arm is now being tried in the United Kingdom. This new test can yield results in 40 minutes.
- Assuming the test is positive, the Governor declares a state of emergency.
- The emergency operations center in Madison is activated under the joint command of the state veterinarian and the federal veterinarian-in-charge for Wisconsin.
- A field operations center is established near the farm.
- The field operations leader extends the quarantine area, with size depending on animal and human population density and weather conditions. A national response team from the USDA may also arrive.
- Within the quarantine area:
  - Local authorities, with assistance from National Guard if necessary, prevent movement of animals and animal products into or out of the quarantine area, and limit movement of people in the area.
  - Biosecurity measures are set up on the farm and in the quarantine area. This may include disinfecting vehicles on roadways in either direction.
  - Infected herd is killed and disposed of by burning or burial on site.
  - Diagnosis and inspection team examines all herds and flocks in the quarantine area.
  - Epidemiologist conducts study to trace source of infection and animal movements out of the area prior to infection.

### **Recovery**

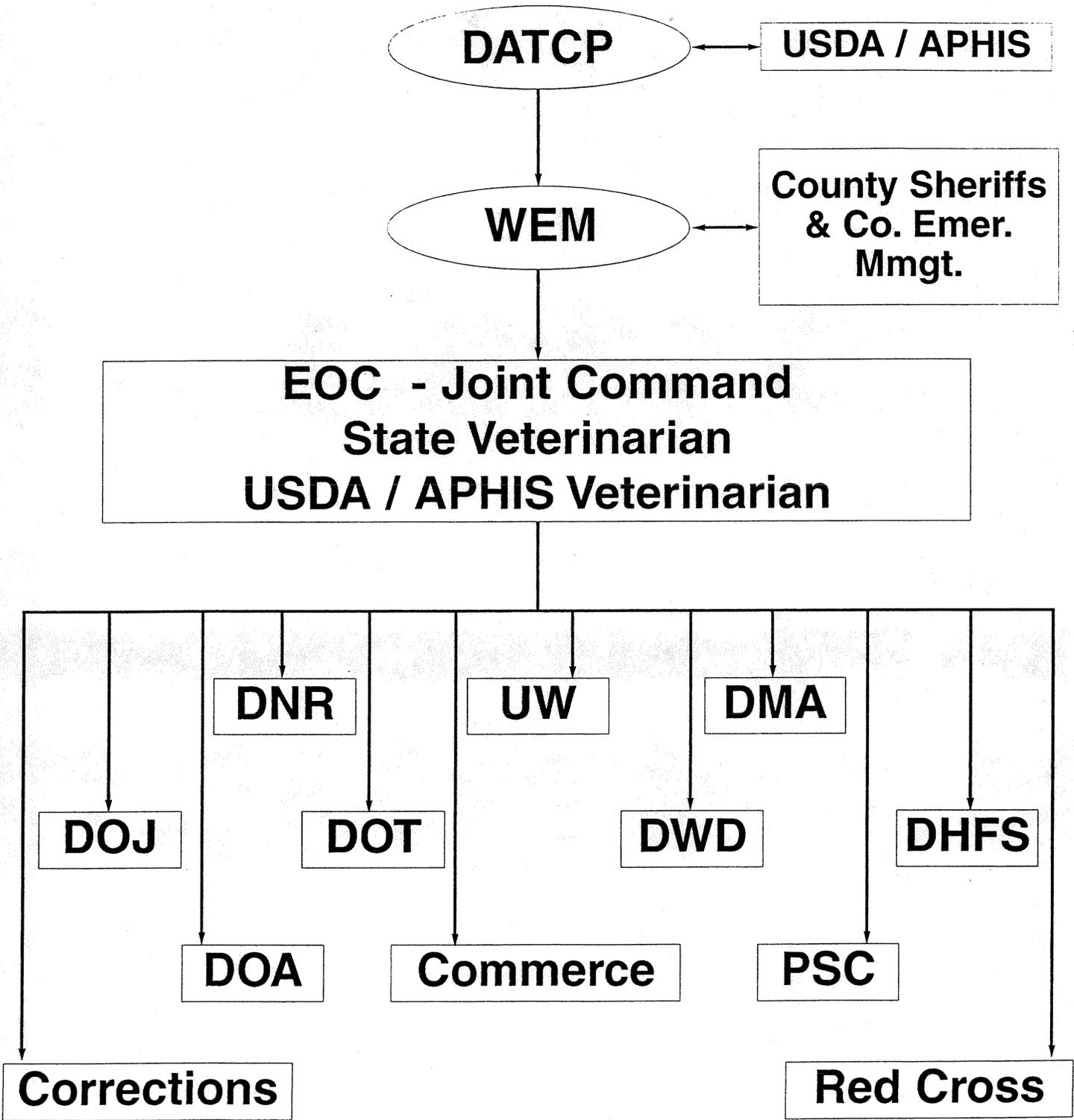
- Field operations leader submits appraisals of animals killed, to determine indemnity payments to owners.
- Epidemiological study and diagnosis continues until it is clear no additional cases are occurring
- Final cleanup and disinfection of farm. Animals cannot be brought back on the farm for six months.
- Quarantine is lifted.

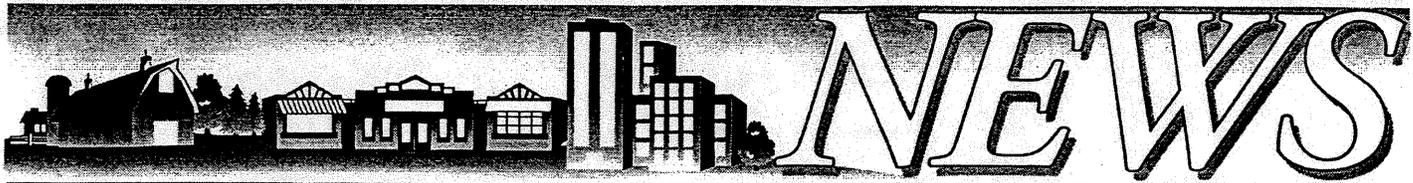
### **Challenges**

- If we have infection in more than one area of the state, we will run out of state and federal veterinarians very quickly. If other states are also experiencing outbreaks, mutual aid is a remote possibility.
- An FMD response is costly. Aside from indemnity payments to farmers, there are overtime costs, cleaning and disinfecting supplies, personal protective equipment, transportation and communication expenses.
- We are discussing with the Department of Natural Resources how we would handle milk disposal in quarantine areas, and burning or burial of carcasses.
- While conventional scientific wisdom says that infection in the wild deer herd stops in that herd and does not pass back to domestic animals, that theory has never been tested in an area with a deer herd as large as Wisconsin's.
- Other rural business and agriculture-dependent businesses would suffer. There is no provision for aid to these businesses.
- We estimate that full recovery from an FMD outbreak would take at least two years.

# Foot & Mouth Disease Emergency

## Agency Coordination





## CONTROL TRAFFIC ON FARMS, HARSDORF CAUTIONS

For release: March 29, 2001  
Media contact: Donna Gilson  
608-224-5130

MADISON—We haven't seen foot-and-mouth disease in the United States, and strict on-farm biosecurity could help keep it that way, said Jim Harsdorf, Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

Farmers and the people who visit farms for business share responsibility for biosecurity – practices that help prevent introducing disease onto farms. Those business visitors include sales and delivery people, tradesmen such as carpenters, plumbers and electricians, meter readers, and inspectors.

"Farmers should be practicing good biosecurity routinely, and the people who visit farms on business should include disease prevention in their routines, too," Harsdorf said. "This should just be ratcheting it up a notch."

Biosecurity encompasses a wide range of practices, involving everything from introducing new animals to wearing clean clothing to disinfecting equipment to hauling away carcasses. But for purposes of preventing the highly contagious foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), controlling access to animals is particularly important, Harsdorf said. Farmers need to limit visitors' access to their farm animals, whether for business, educational, or social purposes, and be certain that anyone who does come in contact with animals has taken the necessary precautions.

"Farmers, don't be shy about asking anyone to do the right thing," Harsdorf said. "If you visit farms in your business, you need to respect farmers' need to protect their livelihood, and remember that it's your livelihood, too." His advice includes:

- Farmers should keep disinfectant readily available at entry points to their farms, and to barns and sheds that house animals. Business people going onto farms should carry disinfectant with them for those farms where none is available. You can buy disinfectants at farm supply stores that will kill a range of organisms. FMD is caused by a virus, so the disinfectant you buy will need to include a virucide. Be sure to follow label directions. You can also use a solution of one ounce of household bleach to one gallon of water or a 50/50 solution of white vinegar and water. If you use bleach solution, you'll need to refresh it every two hours.
- No one who has been in an FMD-infected nation within two weeks should be on a farm. If this isn't possible, those visitors should wear clothing that has been laundered since leaving the FMD-infected nation. They should stay away from animals or wear facemasks when near the animals. Farmers should keep a supply of disposable facemasks, available at hardware stores. Those who visit farms on business should keep a supply in their vehicles.
- Post – and heed – warning signs asking visitors to stay out of buildings where animals are housed. Meet visitors away from production areas. This may mean locking the barn or shed doors.
- Visitors should leave all food in their vehicles, remove manure and soil from their shoes or boots and disinfect them, or put on disposable boots. They should also put on clean protective clothing. Business visitors should keep a supply of clean protective clothing in their vehicles.
- Farmers should keep a record of visitors.
- Transporters should pick up sale animals or dead animals without entering barns or sheds housing animals.
- Farmers who haul their own animals need to wash the truck, clean and disinfect boots, and change coveralls before going back to their farms.

"We want to do everything we can to prevent foot-and-mouth from infecting our animals. These are simple, reasonable, inexpensive steps that you can take to augment the federal efforts to exclude the disease."

More information about foot-and-mouth disease and about biosecurity for dairy and swine farms is available by calling the Division of Animal Health, 608-224-4872, or by visiting the web site for the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: <http://datcp.state.wi.us/static/ah/>

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# WFC CONTACT

January 22, 2002

Volume 32, Number 1

30 WEST MIFFLIN STREET, SUITE 401, MADISON, WISCONSIN 53703, TELEPHONE (608)258-4400

## GOVERNOR CALLS SPECIAL SESSION

Governor *SCOTT MCCALLUM* has called for a special session to begin today. The sole purpose of the special session will be deliberation and passage of a measure to address the state's existing budgetary shortfall for the current biennium.

The Legislative Fiscal Bureau recently released numbers showing a \$1.17 billion deficit for the 2002-03 state budget. The governor is expected to present a fiscal solution when he addresses the Legislature today.

McCallum has already pledged to avoid new or increased general taxes to help bridge the projected gap between expected revenue and expenditures. Additionally, he has stated that he wants to exempt from budget cuts K-12 education funding, as well as several social programs like medical assistance, SeniorCare, Badger Care, and Family Care.

State shared revenue to local general purpose governments will be among the hardest hit of the categories of state spending under Governor McCallum's "Budget Reform Act." State agencies will lose some of their base funding support as well. Popular established programs such as Agricultural Development and Diversification (ADD) and new and promising efforts such as the Ethanol Producer Grant program will lose portions of their general purpose revenue based in the governor's budget proposal.

Solutions to the budget deficit already floated by various legislators include: cutting education funding, reducing aid to local governments, dipping into the tobacco settlement fund, and freezing state spending.

Some policy matters are also likely to be included in the budget mix, according to sources. Among them is a proposal to adopt the Uniform Electronic Transfers Act. This would set standards for e-signatures, to encourage business and consumer use. The signatures and e-records would gain the same status in state statutes as hard copy. And legislators will almost certainly choose to add more policy items to the budget "adjustment bill." Legislative reapportionment is one of the more controversial of the topics that come up when discussing possible amendments to the bill that will be introduced on behalf of the governor.

## WFC TESTIFIES ON DAIRY INDUSTRY

WFC President and CEO *ROD NILSESTUEN* and Senior Vice-president *BILL OEMICHEN* last week addressed members of the Assembly Committee on Agriculture on the problems and opportunities for Wisconsin's dairy industry. They were among several speakers invited by committee chair *AL OTT* (R-Forest Junction). Other speakers were invited from academia and the cheese industry.

Nilsestuen noted the loss of overall milk production and cow numbers in Wisconsin and suggested that there were things state government could and should do to stimulate more investment in dairy operations and strengthen the overall dairy industry here.

He complimented Rep. Ott for his work in drafting a dairy farm "renewal" investment tax credit proposal, and in considering other ideas that could help spur more modernization in facilities and equipment and lead to production gains.

Oemichen recommended a consolidation of Wisconsin's underutilized loan guarantee programs in one Wisconsin Rural Finance Authority. He also recommended the Legislature consider looking to Minnesota and Iowa's experience with their own rural finance authorities which have helped producers obtain below-market rate loans.

Minnesota and Iowa have helped many producers finance farm modernization programs, with Minnesota alone devoting more than \$116 million to such efforts. Many private lenders in Iowa and Minnesota work with their state governments on these loans, and loan defaults are less than 1.5 percent.

**GROUP WILL REVIEW  
TELEPHONE MARKETS**

**RICK VERGIN**, CEO of Chibardun Telephone Cooperative, is serving as WFC's representative on a new telecommunications task force formed by the state Senate. The task force, chaired by Senator **BOB JAUCH** (D-Poplar), was established to review telecommunications issues in Wisconsin. The task force will focus on consumer protection, service quality, and fair competition in both the residential and business telephone markets.

Two meetings have already been held, and the group plans to continue on an accelerated schedule so that a package of proposed legislative changes can be developed and drafted into a bill for consideration by the current Legislature. The 2001-2002 session is scheduled to adjourn on March 14. Chairman Jauch asked each task force member to submit a brief outlining problems that exist in current law and proposing legislative solutions. Mr. Vergin's brief outlined three matters that pose serious concerns for telephone cooperatives. Of primary concern is a recent decision by the Public Service Commission which not only encumbers a co-op from investing in new services, but also does not allow the co-op to classify patronage capital as retained earnings.

The Assembly also formed a Task Force on Telecommunications which is now nearing completion of its work after several months of meetings. While that task force has also concentrated on identifying existing roadblocks to competition, the telephone co-ops did not have their own seat at the table.

Meanwhile, separate legislation to exempt the telephone co-ops from the Cross-Subsidization and Affiliated Interest statutes was recently introduced with Senator **ROD MOEN** (D-Whitehall) as the major sponsor of SB 349, and Rep. **STEVE FREESE** (R-Dodgeville) as the major sponsor of AB 656. To date, neither bill has been scheduled for a public hearing.

**PROPOSALS WANTED  
FOR 2002 ADD GRANTS**

Applications for 2002 Agricultural Development and Diversification grants are now available and will be accepted from Jan. 15 through March 15, 2002, by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). The program funds projects that are likely to stimulate Wisconsin's farm economy with the development of new value-added products, production methods, marketing techniques, alternative crops, or enterprises. Applications must be in the DATCP office in Madison by 4 p.m., Friday, March 15, 2002. Applications can be submitted via hand delivery, mail, fax or e-mail, which is the preferred choice. ADD applications and guidelines can be obtained by contacting DATCP: call 608/224-5136; fax 608/224-5111; e-mail [mike.bandli@datcp.state.wi.us](mailto:mike.bandli@datcp.state.wi.us); or write DATCP Marketing Division-ADD, PO Box 8911, Madison, WI 53708-8911. Documents can be downloaded from the DATCP Web site at <http://datcp.state.wi.us> keyword ADD. Include your name, complete address and phone number with all requests.

**IN BRIEF ...**

**DAIRY COMMITTEE ELECTS OFFICERS**—WFC's Dairy Legislative & Regulatory Committee met Jan. 16 and elected officers for 2002. **ED WELCH** of AMPI was re-elected chairman. **JIM BIRD**, Milwaukee Milk Producers Cooperative, was elected vice-chairman. State Rep. **JOE PLOUFF** (D-Menomonie) met with the committee and discussed AB 678. Plouff introduced the bill which requires that school districts that provide exclusive contracts in the future with vendors to sell soft drinks, will have to allow milk to be sold in the school as well. The committee endorsed the measure, which was heard and advanced the next day by the Assembly Committee on Agriculture. . . **REP. HOVEN WILL NOT SEEK RE-ELECTION**—Rep. **TIM HOVEN** (R-Port Washington) has announced that he will not seek re-election. Hoven chairs the Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities. . . **SENATE COMMITTEE ADVANCES AB 584**—The Senate Utilities Committee voted 8-1 this week to advance AB 584, which provides additional shared revenues to communities as an incentive to site and locate electric generating plants. The Assembly passed the bill Nov. 6, 2001, by a 96-2 vote. . . **WFC E-MAIL AND WEBSITE SUFFIXES WILL CHANGE TO .COOP**—Beginning February 1, the suffix to access WFC's website and address e-mail will be .coop. For example, the WFC/Minnesota Association of Cooperatives website address will be [www.wfcmac.coop](http://www.wfcmac.coop) (instead of [www.wfcmac.org](http://www.wfcmac.org)). E-mail can be addressed the same way to the individual you wish to contact, i.e. [bridget.horn@wfcmac.coop](mailto:bridget.horn@wfcmac.coop).