

## Dairy Management



Dairy marketing topics headlined the 2016 Minnesota Milk Dairy Management Workshops

### WINTER WORKSHOPS BEGIN JANUARY 24

#### Tuesday, January 24 – Good Times, Caledonia

(sponsored in cooperation with the Southeast Minnesota Ag Alliance)  
7:00 p.m.

- “Preparing for the Next \$12 Milk” – Gary Sipiorski, Vita Plus

#### Wednesday, January 25 – Rochester International Events Center, Rochester

(sponsored in cooperation with the Southeast Minnesota Ag Alliance)  
10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

- “Preparing for the Next \$12 Milk” – Gary Sipiorski, Vita Plus
- “Selective Dry Cow Therapy – We Can Do this!” – Dr. Erin Royster
- Workshop for Spanish-speaking employees (sponsored by Elanco)

#### Tuesday, February 7 – The Cactus, Perham

(sponsored in cooperation with Midwest Dairy)  
10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

- “Selective Dry Cow Therapy – We Can Do this!” – Dr. Erin Royster
- “2017 Dairy Outlook/Margin Protection Program” – Dr. Marin Bozic

#### Thursday, February 9 – Crow Wing Winery, Hutchinson

(sponsored in cooperation with Midwest Dairy)  
10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

- “Selective Dry Cow Therapy – We Can Do This!” – Dr. Erin Royster
- “2017 Dairy Outlook/Margin Protection Program” – Dr. Marin Bozic
- Workshop for Spanish-speaking employees (sponsored by Zoetis)

#### Thursday, March 2 – Cabela’s, Owatonna

(sponsored in cooperation with Midwest Dairy and Minnesota Dairy Initiatives)  
10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

- “Forage Planning for the Whole Year” – Pam Uhlenkamp, Farm Business Management
- “Dairy Marketing” – Jason Vavra, AMPI



Gary Sipiorski  
Vita Plus



Dr. Erin Royster, DVM, MS  
University of Minnesota



Dr. Marin Bozic  
University of Minnesota



## Minnesota Milk's 2017 Board of Directors

*Front: Bob Dombeck, Marianne Peterson, Kristine Spadgenske, Shelly DePestel, Dave Buck, Kindra Carlson; Back: Roger Peters, Pat Lunemann, Garrett Luthens, Craig Roerick, Michael White, Jerry Jennissen, Rick Smith. Not pictured: Cassie Czech.*

All Directors and their contact information are published at MnMilk.org. Please contact them anytime to learn more about your association and how we're working to advance the success of Minnesota dairy producers.



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## 2016: A year of great change for Minnesota Milk

I find myself writing this column for the first time for some of the best reasons. First, we had a nine-year president in Pat Lunemann, Clarissa, who nobly stepped down as he became president of the Minnesota AgriGrowth Council.

Pat's leadership through a time of building Minnesota Milk to a position of relevance and prominence among the state's legislators and regulators cannot be understated. Also, his desire to remain on the board as a past president will pay huge dividends to me as the board transitions to new leadership. Thank you, Pat.

Second, we lost our longest-serving board member, with Greg Jans, Grove City, stepping down. Like Pat, Greg is retired from the board by choice after leading our Policy Committee for the past 12 years. It will be hard imagining a board meeting without Greg, but both of these gentlemen identified now as the time to find a new crop of leaders for Minnesota Milk.

The body of membership at the annual meeting added Kindra Carlson, Pennock, to our board. Kindra has served previously on our Education Committee, and works as CFO of her family's dairy while simultaneously working for Bollig, an engineering firm in Willmar. It's great to be part of an organization that can cultivate top producer leaders like Kindra.

Pat and I were re-elected at the annual meeting, as well as Kristine Spadgenske, Menahga, and Bob Dombeck, Perham. At our reorganizational meeting, the board chose to elect me as president; Shelly DePestel, Lewiston, vice president; Marianne Peterson, Pine City, secretary; and Kristine Spadgenske, Menahga, treasurer. I am honored and humbled to be your president.

Looking ahead to 2017, our board and staff will be thinking both about the day-to-day things that could help your farm, and also look into long-term planning within our organization. We continue to be a public policy organization,

but where does Minnesota Milk fit within our state's dairy farm educational, financial and consumer information needs? A study completed in 2016 will help guide us, and more improvements to Minnesota Milk will follow.



**Dave Buck**  
President

If you have thoughts or ideas on how Minnesota Milk can better serve its members, please reach out to our board members or staff. We have a great team working to make our state better for dairy farmers.

**Have a great 2017!**



**Pat Lunemann, right, presented a retirement gift to Greg Jans.**

## FREE Ag Plastic Recycling Begins in Minnesota

Dairy farmers are urged to register for a new plastics recycling opportunity in Minnesota. In December, Revolution Plastics began its first dumpster dispersal in Minnesota for a new recycling program designed to collect, at no cost to farmers, certain types of used agricultural film plastics like those used for silage, haylage and other livestock feeds. The program also allows for the collection of boat wrap and horticultural film plastics.

In order to bring the program further into the state, dairy farmers need to sign up by calling (844) 490-7873 or emailing [collections@revolutionplastics.com](mailto:collections@revolutionplastics.com) or go to [RevolutionPlastics.com](http://RevolutionPlastics.com) to indicate their interest in receiving a dumpster.

The plastics have become a challenge for farmers, recycling facilities and landfills because of their size and contamination levels. Minnesota Milk has joined a core group of central Minnesota counties, the Recycling Association of Minnesota and other partners to work with companies like Revolution Plastics to help resolve the problem.

In Winona County, farmers were able to pick up the 134 white dumpsters that Revolution Plastics and Winona County made available. The company had placed dumpsters on the ground and had specialized equipment on site with which to load the dumpsters onto farm vehicles and trailers.

"Having worked on getting ag plastic recycling to happen in our county for nearly 15 years, I could not be happier to see this program starting today! Revolution Plastics and Price Murphy did a great job," said Anne Morse, Winona County sustainability coordinator.

The Winona County effort is part of the larger Recycling and Sustainable Management of Agricultural/Marine Plastics Project. The Recycling Association of Minnesota is working with a group of central Minnesota partners: Tri-County Solid Waste Administration, serving Stearns, Benton and Sherburne Counties; Pope-Douglas Solid Waste Management; Otter Tail County Solid Waste; and Tri-County Solid Waste, serving Nicollet, Le Sueur and Sibley Counties. The project is also supported by a grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Other major partners in addition to Minnesota Milk include Winona County, McLeod County and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Additional collection programs are in planning stages now, with the second dumpster dispersal planned for February or March based out of the Sauk Centre area.

**For more information, contact Brita Sailer, Recycling Association of Minnesota: [brita@recycleminnesota.org](mailto:brita@recycleminnesota.org) (651) 641-4560.**

## Square Deal Dairy is Producer of the Year

As fourth-generation dairy producers, Blake and Christine Otte work with their son, Tyler, and his wife, Kelsey. Their son, Bret, and his fiancé, Kayla, assist while also holding off-farm jobs. The youngest son, Eric, is attending college. Twelve employees assist the family in running the 500-cow dairy and 1,500 acres of owned and rented land. The Ottes also operate a custom bale wrapping and chopping business.

"We have always believed that we are dairy producers, not just cow milkers," says Blake Otte. "We are constantly looking into and improving the facilities for cow comfort, as well as investing in new technology." Square Deal Dairy built a new double-10 parallel parlor in 1997, upgrading from a barn originally built by Blake Otte's grandfather. The parlor and free stalls were improved again within the last three years.

In addition, the Ottes have recently invested in electrical upgrades to address the challenges presented by stray current. A new manure system allows them to separate manure solids and re-use them for bedding.

The Ottes provide their community with access to the farm regularly, hosting tours for area schools, commodity groups and businesses. Last year, they began sharing presentations and chatting with a school in New York City.

"Our favorite event to date was a tour for the entire educational staff from an area school for one of their August prep workshops," adds Christine.

In addition, the Ottes have been involved in 4-H, FFA, school and church activities. "Representing a family farm that has been in the local community for more than 120 years, we have always felt the importance of being active and giving back," Blake says. "We've raised our sons to follow that same path."

***The Blake and Christine Otte family of Square Deal Dairy at Randolph, Minnesota, was named 2016 Producer of the Year by the Minnesota Milk Producers Association.***



## Supporters Honored at Minnesota Milk Expo

State Senator Lyle Koenen of Clara City, who served in the legislature for 14 years, was recognized as the Minnesota Milk Legislator of the Year during the 2016 Minnesota Milk Conference and Expo. Koenen, who served as a state representative for eight years, won his Senate seat in 2012. A former dairy farmer, bus driver and milk truck driver, he offered valuable assistance to Minnesota Milk priorities.

In addition, the former CEO of Midwest Dairy Association, Mike Kruger, who retired in July after 35 years of service to dairy farmers, was chosen as the recipient of the Bruce Cottingham Friend of Dairy award for 2016. His leadership continually placed Midwest dairy producer interests at the forefront of checkoff activities in the state and region, as well as nationally.



*Mike Kruger received the Bruce Cottingham award, presented by Pat Lunemann.*



*Senator Lyle Koenen accepts his award from Greg Jans.*

## Introducing Minnesota Milk's Newest Staff Member

Shannon Seifert, New Ulm, is the most recent addition to the Minnesota Milk staff. Shannon's first days of employment were during the Minnesota Milk Dairy Conference and Expo, and her activities since then have been numerous.

Raised on a Sleepy Eye dairy farm, Shannon graduated from South Dakota State University in 2004 and went to work in ag sales for River Region Co-op for several years. During that time and over a period of 10 years, she co-managed a dairy farm, then went to work for B & R Dairy Equipment for two years prior to joining Minnesota Milk and Midwest Dairy as producer relations manager.

Dairy advocacy has been one of Shannon's passions. Her blog and Facebook page, *Dairy Woman Strong*, allows her to share her perspective with others. She has also been engaged with the Dairy Girl Network and serves as its Minnesota Peer Group coordinator. In addition, Shannon spent 12 years as a member of the Brown County American Dairy Association board and its princess coordinator. A former Princess Kay of the Milky Way finalist, Shannon has also served on Midwest Dairy's Minnesota Division Princess Committee.

In her new role, she will reach out directly to both members and non-members of Minnesota Milk and assist with many of the

organization's initiatives. One of her upcoming roles will be accompanying the group participating in the Minnesota Milk Texas Dairy Tour in February.



**Shannon Seifert**  
*Producer Relations Manager*

# Minnesota Milk Conference and Expo Brings Crowd to St. Cloud

The 2016 Minnesota Milk Conference and Expo offered a range of new items but also familiar faces and events.

More than 100 people enjoyed the kickoff event, a pub crawl from the Green Mill, to Urban Moose Brewing Company and on to Beaver Island Brewing Company. They tried their hand at hammerschlagen or bean bag toss, and dealt with the hilarious bartenders at Beaver Island. It was a lighthearted way to begin the conference, with good food and fellowship. Prior to the evening, Midwest Dairy presented a communications workshop called "Tough Questions, Good Answers."

Day two began with a robust discussion led by Dr. Marin Bozic on the Margin Protection Program for Dairy, with legislative staff in the room learning about how the federal program works and about recommended changes developed through a study done by Bozic.

The rest of the day was filled with presentations from Peter Krawczel, Mary Keough Ledman, Lisa Leach, Ryan Bennett and Dr. Jeffrey Bewley, and then moved into the annual scholarship auction and awards banquet. More than \$11,000 was raised for scholarships in 2016. The night ended with Slap Happy Comedy and a hospitality suite sponsored by Elanco.

More than a dozen legislators and/or their staff members attended Minnesota Milk Expo's Wednesday events.

Thursday morning kicked off with Mike Max's inspirational talk, followed by presentations from Jeffrey Bewley, Steve Peterson and Dr. Gordie Jones.

While many of the 800 total attendees attended the educational sessions, others took in only the trade show. Most of the educational sessions were covered by regional and national publications like the *Dairy Star*, *Dairy Herd Management* and *Milk Business*.

While the 2016 Expo and Conference was a success, the Minnesota Milk Education Committee, board and staff are now working toward potential changes for 2017. Among the options under discussion are: pairing up with other events, reformatting the entire conference or even discontinuing the conference in favor of other events. Finding more value for both dairy farmers and our associate members is what will drive any change, and we appreciate and accept any feedback on the subject.

Thanks for making the 2016 Minnesota Milk Dairy Expo and Conference a great one! We look forward to an enhanced experience in 2017.



*Garrett Luthens provides sound effects for Slap Happy Comedy.*



*The scholarship auction made for great investment in dairy youth.*



*Karl Sorg contributes thoughts during the pre-conference communications workshop.*



*Dr. Gordie Jones entertains and informs as he provides advice on managing dairies.*



*Visits on the trade show floor were useful to both exhibitors and dairy farmers.*

# Join us for Dairy Day at the Capitol 2017 February 1

Minnesota Milk Producers welcomes everyone to our annual Dairy Day at the Capitol Wednesday, February 1, in St. Paul. The day is designed not only as a way to communicate individually and in groups with legislators, but to capture the vitality of the Minnesota dairy industry in a way that helps emphasize our critical importance to the state.

You can expect friendly, face-to-face conversations with legislators, with group leaders and resources on hand to assist you. We encourage you to stay all day, but you may also come and go according to your schedule.

**Pre-registration is required** and can be found online at [MnMilk.org/Policy/DairyDayattheCapitol](http://MnMilk.org/Policy/DairyDayattheCapitol). Minnesota Milk will also provide bus transportation from Melrose (Mayer's Bus Garage) and St. Cloud (Select Sires), departing at 6:30 a.m. and 7:10 a.m., respectively. The bus will depart St. Paul at 6:30 p.m. and arrive in St. Cloud and Melrose by 7:55 p.m. and 8:30 p.m., respectively.

## Your day ...

Go to the Welcome Center when you arrive for a detailed agenda.

### Welcome Center Open

8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Room 400N – Fourth Floor, State Office Building

Receive a welcome packet with everything you need for the day.

### House Ag Policy Committee Hearing

10:15 a.m. – 12 Noon

Room 5 - State Office Building

### Capitol Visits

8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Senate Office Building and State Office Building

Meet with legislative leaders from the House and Senate in small groups.

### Lunch

11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Cafeteria

Lunch vouchers will be provided for members.

### Governor Mark Dayton (meeting requested)

TBD

A private meeting with Governor Mark Dayton and Department of Agriculture staff has been requested.

### Senate Agricultural, Rural Development, and Housing Finance Committee

3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

1150 Minnesota Senate Building

### Private Meet & Greet Reception

5:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Minnesota History Center -

345 W. Kellogg Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55102

# 2017 Legislative Session: What We're Following

By Daryn McBeth, Gray Plant Mooty

On Wednesday, January 3, at noon, the Minnesota Legislature met for the 90th time. The 67 senators and governor are back in the State Capitol after a year hiatus due to construction. Also on hiatus were the passage of a tax bill, bonding bill and transportation bill in 2016, plus the legislature will need to find a way to fund the government past July to avoid a shutdown.

Each caucus formally voted on its leader on the session's opening day. House Republicans looked much the same as when they left in 2016, with several new members. The House Republicans picked up 12 of the 23 new seats to increase their majority to 76-57. One special election remains for February 14 to fill the body's final seat.

Speaker Kurt Daudt remains with the gavel in the House. After a series of off-season negotiations with Governor Dayton in regard to health insurance, taxes and bonding, no special session was called. The state's budget forecast read steady, providing a \$1.4 billion surplus to work with in 2017.

In the Senate, some shocking upsets created a 34-33 majority for Republicans, who named Senator Paul Gazelka their majority leader. Gazelka's district is home to the most Minnesota Milk members, nearly 150.

Democrats continue to be led in the Senate by Senator Tom Bakk, but changed leadership in the House from Rep. Paul Thissen to Rep. Melissa Hortman.

## Minnesota Milk Initiatives

The Minnesota Milk Board of Directors outlined seven priority areas of emphasis in 2017. Not all of them will necessarily be advanced legislatively if there are opportunities through administrative or private means. These priorities are on top of support for property tax changes proposed in 2016 that would have halved school levy costs for farmers, continual fine-tuning on the buffer law and beefing up transportation spending. The priorities include, in alphabetical order:

- Driver's licenses for unauthorized immigrant workers;
- Funding for roads and bridges;
- Health insurance reform;
- Infrastructure enhancements and increased processing capacity;
- Stray current research;
- Support for a new dairy facility on the University of Minnesota campus; and
- Support for new and beginning farmers; enhancement of the Minnesota Dairy Initiatives programming.

Continued on next page

# Membership Approves 2017 Minnesota Milk Resolutions with Changes

The Minnesota Milk annual meeting saw six changes to its draft resolutions, in addition to a total reformatting of the policy that drives the organization's work on both state- and federal-level issues.

*The six changes are:*

- **Resolution A2** - Health Insurance and Affordability: A line was added to push for more possibilities that farms and farm groups can create health plans at an affordable cost like other employers.
- **Resolution B2** - Dairy Research, Teaching and Consumer Education Center: Minnesota Milk specifically noted the need for upgrades to the University of Minnesota's West Central Research and Outreach Center. This has been implied, but never was specifically stated until the 2017 resolutions package.
- **Resolution C3** - Dairy Development and Profitability Enhancement (DDPEP): Minnesota Milk is asking the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to return funding to \$1 million after DDPEP had been cut nearly 40 percent since its inception.
- **Resolution D4** - Remedy for Stray Current: Minnesota Milk agreed with the resolution implemented by Dairy Farmers of America to use a value of 125 ohms per cow instead of 500 as the definition of "stray current."
- **New Resolution D9** - Manure Hoses in Right of Ways: Minnesota Milk heralds the legislature's change to allow manure hoses in right of ways as a safe and environmentally beneficial way to transport manure in Minnesota.
- **New Resolution D10** - Implementing the FAST Act and Additional Non-Divisible Truck Provisions: Minnesota is asking for the state of Minnesota to match its neighbors in truck weight allowance for milk trucks, which can increase as result of a federal law change and will need local road weight changes to be legally allowed on non-federal roads.

*If you have any comments on these or other resolutions, contact Lucas Sjostrom at [lucas@mnmilk.org](mailto:lucas@mnmilk.org).*

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## Legislative Session, continued from previous page

One additional initiative added since these were approved by the board is milk truck weight reform. Haulers throughout Minnesota are being suddenly ticketed for driving with loads they have carried for decades. They are overweight, but Minnesota Milk has found our state to be one of only two major dairy states without an exemption for milk hauling.

You can help push these initiatives forward, or provide feedback on what is happening on your farm, by attending Dairy Day at the Capitol. Minnesota Milk would argue that this may be the best investment of time and money you can make for the profitability of your farm in 2017. (See full details on page 6.)

## GET ENGAGED!



## Minnesota Needs DAIRY CHAMPIONS

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Have you reached out to your community lately? And perhaps beyond?

We can never have enough outreach to our consumers, to help them understand what we do and why we do it. Most importantly, they need to know how it benefits them – through healthy food, stewardship of resources, responsible animal care and strong communities.

Two new resources have recently been made available by Midwest Dairy:

- The Online Farm Experience is a 10-stop video tour that shows not only where milk comes from, but is hosted by a farm family. Find it at [MidwestDairy.com/Farm-Life](http://MidwestDairy.com/Farm-Life).
- Discover Dairy is an interactive educational series of lessons that meets guidelines for schools. Visit [DiscoverDairy.com](http://DiscoverDairy.com) to view the resources available, and make sure your local teachers are aware of this new program.

Additional resources can be found at [MidwestDairy.com/ForFarmers/ProducerServiceCenter](http://MidwestDairy.com/ForFarmers/ProducerServiceCenter), email [PSC@MidwestDairy.com](mailto:PSC@MidwestDairy.com) or call 1-877-360-FARM (3276).



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## Congratulations to Our 2016 Scholarship Recipients



**Emily Annexstad**  
St. Peter, Minn.

(Rolf & Jean Annexstad)  
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities  
Animal Science or  
Ag Communications & Marketing



**Blake Berning**  
St. Michael, Minn.

(Paul & Stacy Berning)  
North Dakota State University  
Agriculture Economics



**Haley Hinrichs**  
Goodhue, Minn.

(Timothy Hinrichs)  
Iowa State University  
Animal Science



**Kyla Mauk**  
Howard Lake, Minn.

(Christina & Harlan Mauk)  
South Dakota State University  
Agricultural Education



**Maggie Mills**  
Lake City, Minn.

(Kent & Deborah Mills)  
University of Minnesota, Crookston  
Animal Science &  
Communication Studies



**Juliana Pederson**  
Westbrook, Minn.

(Bruce & Jane Pederson)  
South Dakota State University  
Microbiology



**Sabrina Portner**  
Sleepy Eye, Minn.

(Tom & Mary Portner)  
Iowa State University  
Dairy Science



**Kelly Schouviller**  
Callaway, Minn.

(John & Linda Schouviller)  
North Dakota State University  
Crop & Weed Science



**Rachel Selke**  
Dakota, Minn.

(Bill & Sue Selke)  
NE Iowa Community College  
Dairy Science



**Gavin Viland**  
Pipestone, Minn.

(Steve & Maria Viland)  
Lake Area Technical Institute  
Diesel Technology