



On a Swivel

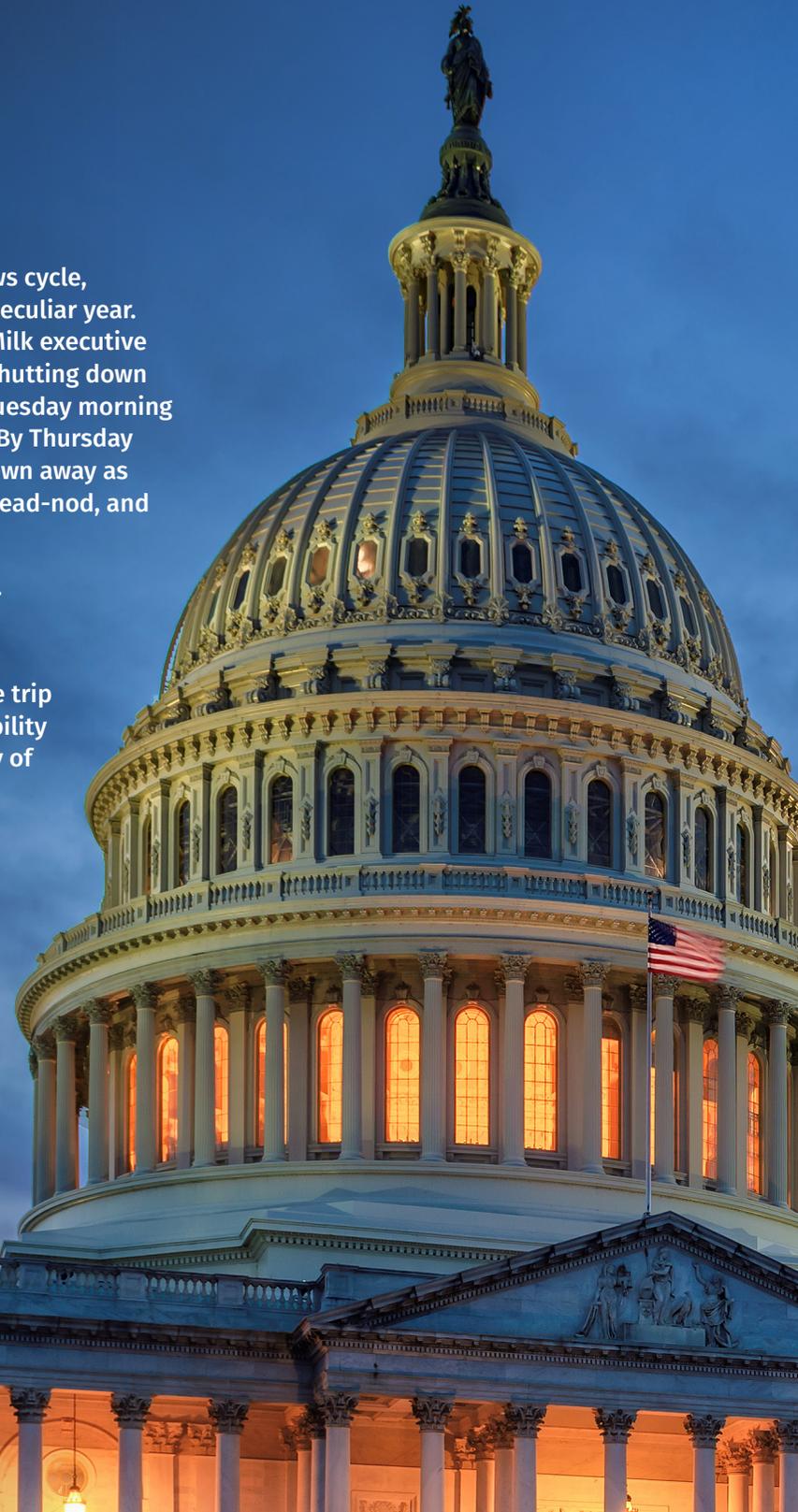
by Lucas Sjostrom

It doesn't matter if you measure it by milk price, news cycle, internet memes or panic buying – 2020 has been a peculiar year. As we wrote in our previous Insider, the Minnesota Milk executive committee and I were in Washington, D.C. as it was shutting down to prepare for the pandemic. We started the week Tuesday morning with normal procedures and the usual handshakes. By Thursday afternoon, we were supplied Zip-Loc bags to be thrown away as we went through security, greetings were done via head-nod, and everyone who could get out of town did.

At the time, our presence seemed to be just another Washington, D.C. lobbying trip – this one focused on immigration. But, as the Minnesota Milk board contemplated the plusses and minuses of taking the trip in the first place, we never thought about the possibility that these may be the last in-person meetings many of these legislators and staff take for months.

That trip, like so many before it, has already paid dividends. Your staff and board members have been on the phone constantly with our D.C. officials. While in a typical year, Minnesota Milk focuses on state-level issues, 2020 is anything but typical.

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(Continued from front cover)

COVID-19 Meetings Stood Up

Early in the pandemic, rumors were flying. Your farmer leadership quickly suggested we establish a weekly meeting, and we've since held one, two or even three meetings per week. We also included our committee structure and the Minnesota Dairy Growth Alliance Steering Committee, which consists of cooperative leadership, representation from Midwest Dairy, Minnesota Milk and three at-large dairy farmers. I want to thank the 55+ leaders and guests who are invited to the weekly calls and help us form our next steps for policy.

Because of the safety measures, your Minnesota Milk board has met via GoToMeeting online, and taken several actions with national importance:

- **Minnesota Milk improved the federal discussion on direct payments** – There is not much question when it comes to dairy policy, the political heavyweights National Milk Producers Federation and International Dairy Foods Association often lead the way. However, the Minnesota Milk board of directors saw their initial supply management proposal with a \$3 payment if the milk price was under \$16/cwt had far too many holes. Your board and staff then developed the Dairy CORE (Coronavirus Recovery) Program, a simple approach that has essentially been enacted. The program was endorsed by Rep. Collin Peterson and when USDA unveiled their CFAP (Coronavirus Food Assistance Program), it looked much like ours.
 - Sign-up began at FSA offices on May 26. You will need an appointment by phone, and it is preferred if you can fill out your forms ahead of time.
 - Up to \$6.20 per cwt will be paid, with an initial payment of 80 percent, or \$4.96, on your first quarter 2020 production. All milk is eligible regardless of insurance (Livestock Gross Margin or Dairy Revenue Protection), forward contracting and or Dairy Margin Coverage participation.
 - Dairy farmers will have benefits with beef payments, but not dairy heifers or cows remaining in the herd.
 - All dairy cows, dairy heifers, bulls and steers sold between January 15 and April 15 are eligible for payments as follows –
 - Feeder Cattle: Less than 600 pounds - \$102/hd sold
 - Feeder Cattle: 600 pounds or more - \$139/hd sold
 - Slaughter Cattle: Fed Cattle: \$214/hd sold
 - Slaughter Cattle: Mature Cattle: \$92/hd sold
 - All Other Cattle (specifically not dairy cattle): \$102/hd sold
 - Additionally, \$33/hd payments are available for animals in inventory in the same categories from the Commodity Credit Corporation. In other words, average inventory of bulls and steers, but also average inventory of dairy cows and heifers sold during this time (but not the entire milking herd or replacement herd). If you sold 10 dairy cows for slaughter, those 10 would count in your dairy cow inventory during that time period.
 - Corn silage can be converted to bushels using tonnage times 7.94. High moisture shell corn is also eligible, but as of this writing we do not have an official conversion factor. Crop payments are equal to 50 percent of non-sold inventory as of January 15, or half of 2019 production, whichever is lower.

Minnesota Milk's 2019-2020 Board of Directors

Front (L to R):

Bob Dombeck, Marianne Peterson,
Shelly DePestel, Dave Buck,
Tom Sedgeman.

Back (L to R):

Rod Schulze, Ron Miller,
Garrett Luthens, Aaron Vogt, Rick Smith,
Paul Daley.

All Directors and their contact information are published at MnMilk.org.



Minnesota Milk Producers Association
MnMilk.org • (877) 577-0741

Lucas Sjostrom
Executive Director
lucas@mnmilk.org

Shannon Seifert
Membership Director
shannon@mnmilk.org

Jenna Davis
Education Director
jenna@mnmilk.org

Morgan Krause
Program Assistant
krause.morgan@mnmilk.org

Alexandra Larson
Marketing Communications
larson.alex@mnmilk.org

- Corn - \$0.32/bu CFAP, \$0.35/bu CCC
- Soybeans - \$0.45/bu CFAP, \$0.50/bu CCC
- Wheat, Durum - \$0.19/bu CFAP, \$0.20/bu CCC

- **Minnesota Milk ensured risk management mattered** – With about 70 percent of the milk in Minnesota covered by margin or revenue insurance, and additional milk covered by forward contracts, Minnesota Milk ensured a proposal to remove any hedging or insured gains from CFAP payments was defeated, first in April, and again when the CFAP payment was unrolled in May.
- **Minnesota Milk stopped a Class I fixed price** – Several cooperatives suggested to fix via emergency FMMO hearing the Class I milk price at \$15.68 during the summer months, compelling more milk to Class I and raising milk prices across the country. Sending more milk to the market at a time we did not need it would have adversely affected later milk prices, trust in hedging of Class I, and caused regional disparities that were not necessary.

Your leadership has shown that Minnesota Milk will go to battle for Minnesota dairy farmers over and over (and over) again.

State Legislature Grinds to the End

The Minnesota legislature ended with an Ag Policy and Ag Finance bill supported by Minnesota Milk, with updates to farm safety, removing dairy from a wholesale produce dealers fee thanks to Minnesota Milk input, and funding for the Veterinary Diagnostic laboratory. We await a special session where they will take up a bonding bill and Section 179/Like Kind Tax Conformity.

Operating Procedures in COVID-19 Times

For those who did not see our previous notice, the Minnesota Milk office was vacated in fall 2019 as most of our staff time was already spent in home offices or on the road. In addition to the benefit of a cost savings, your staff had a smooth transition into the COVID-19 status in continuing business as usual. However, your staff will not be returning to farm visits until better guidance is available. At this point, Lucas, Jenna, Shannon, Alex and Morgan as Midwest Dairy employees are to remain working from their home offices. With the Governor lifting the stay-at-home order, we expect to slowly transition back to normal travel in coming months.

Finally, we know these are turbulent times and want to be there to help. The state of Minnesota has fantastic mental health resources, please call the Farm & Rural Helpline if you or a friend want to talk through anything at **(833) 600-2670 x 1**. Also, remember to think about safety. As we all work harder to try to find the margin, remember the cost

any safety issue could have to your farm or a life versus taking the time to do things the safer way. Minnesota Milk will be devoting more resources to farm safety in coming months.

Stay safe, and remember opportunity exists whether prices are low or high.



Lucas Sjostrom
Executive Director

Lucas Sjostrom
lucas@mnmilk.org
(320) 249-8701



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First District Association is proudly owned by over 700 family farms located across Minnesota and Wisconsin. We have a long standing history of producing high quality dairy products that return a strong, competitive price and unprecedented earnings to our member owners. We are currently expanding our state-of-the-art processing facility and are actively procuring milk. If you would like to learn more about our Cooperative, please reach out to us at 320-593-4223.

Learn more about us at www.firstdistrict.com or find us on Facebook.



Making Farm Safety a Priority

By Emily Krekelberg

Growing up on Krekelberg Dairy, we had a mudroom area where we all kept our barn clothes. Work boots, ripped jeans, stained sweatshirts, dusty hats, and my dad's barn leg. There was just no way to get that barn smell out of a fiberglass prosthetic. My dad lost his leg in a farming accident when he was 19; walking into the mudroom and seeing a leg propped up against the wall was normal. My dad was like all the other dairy farmers I knew: hard working, dedicated, and smart. As I grew older, I started to understand

“Creating a culture of farm safety means safety is integrated into every task you perform. It’s not a separate duty, it’s simply part of the job.”

the true weight of the situation. My interest in and passion for farm safety started to take root.

Seven years ago, I started my career with University of Minnesota Extension as an Extension Educator. Farm safety was at the top of my list of programming priorities. The thing I learned

about farm safety is that not everyone possesses the same passion I do for it. That's okay. What do people possess a passion for? The legacy of their farms. Being able to go home and have supper with their family at night. Raising their kids the way they were raised. None of these are possible without farm safety.

Farm safety can seem like this big, boring, daunting thing. It doesn't need to be. I encourage the farmers I work with to think about the culture of their farm. Creating a culture of farm safety means safety is integrated into every task you perform. It's not a separate duty, it's simply part of the job. Putting guards on equipment, practicing proper animal handling, wearing safety gear. Sit down with your family and determine what safety measures you're already taking, chances are, there are quite a few. Also, decide what areas need more attention to safety and set some goals around that.

Not sure where to start? The Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center has a large selection of free resources related to animal handling, worker safety, confined spaces, and other farm safety topics on their website, umash.umn.edu. You can also find farm safety information from UMN Extension at extension.umn.edu. If you have specific questions, you can contact me at krek0033@umn.edu or (612) 756-3977. Farm safety is for every farm, including yours.



Emily Krekelberg with her father, Dale Krekelberg



Emily Krekelberg

University of Minnesota
Extension Educator
– Farm Safety & Health

Editor's Note:

Minnesota Milk is making farm safety a priority discussion this year. At Dairy Day at the Capitol this spring, Minnesota Milk board director Tom Sedgeman testified at the Minnesota Senate's Agriculture, Rural Development and Housing Policy Committee on the topic of grain bin and silo safety, sharing his own personal passion for total farm family safety. You can find his testimony at <https://bit.ly/2zMzqpH> (at the 59:45 mark).

Minnesota Milk Featured Member Farm: Carlson Dairy, LLP

Carlson family — Willmar, Minnesota



Tell us about your family and farm

Carlson Dairy, LLP is a century dairy farm near Willmar, Minn., owned and operated by the Carlson family – including brothers, Chad and Carl, wives Kindra and Kellie, 7 kids (ages ranging from 9 to 23), and parents Curtney and Louise. The farm has been in the Carlson family since 1891. The Carlsons currently milk 1,700 cows in a 60-stall robotic, rotary milking parlor with cross-ventilated, sand-bedded free-stall facilities and farm approximately 1,500 acres of corn and alfalfa. Our favorite family dairy treats include Dairy Queen Blizzards and Culver's Concrete Mixers, chocolate, of course.

How long have you been a Minnesota Milk Member?

Many years.

Why Minnesota Milk?

MMPA is a critical driver behind important initiatives that impact all Minnesota dairy farmers ranging from government policy to producer education and membership opportunities. MMPA's recent leadership and legislative influence throughout the Covid-19 crisis is a prime example of this.

What is your favorite Minnesota Milk event?

The Minnesota Milk Conference & Expo. It's a great place to reconnect with industry friends and explore new ideas to bring home to our farm.

Why should dairy farmers get involved with Minnesota Milk?

Our industry continues to undergo intense change and we are all challenged regardless of our individual farm scales and attributes. As Minnesota dairy farmers, we need a united voice and the ability to bring our expertise and resources together so that our stories are heard, and our needs met. MMPA creates a platform to do this.



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2015 Rice Street | St. Paul, MN 55113
(763) 355-9697 | mmpa@MnMilk.org
MnMilk.org

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Mark your calendars for December 1-2, 2020
for the Minnesota Milk Dairy Conference and Expo.
We're back in St. Cloud for the 2020 event. Watch
for more details at MnMilkExpo.com.

