

The latest news from Minnesota Milk Producers Association

Turning dreams into reality: Anthony Anderson's journey to dairy farm ownership



Anthony Anderson with his family.

From a young age, Anthony Anderson always knew he wanted to own a farm, but he never thought he'd have the opportunity to do so. He started his career in agriculture at the large-animal teaching and research facility at the University of Minnesota and went on to help manage

various other dairy operations until he connected with Bruce Stone in 2013, and his dream of owning his own dairy farm started coming to fruition.

Bruce was ready to retire but had no one to take over the farm, so they spent the following years developing a plan to transition it to Anthony. Anthony started working on the farm for Bruce in January 2015 and officially took over ownership in June of that year.

At the time, W. B. Stone in Henning, Minn., consisted of a little over 400 cows. Through a series of improvements and investments, Anthony has grown the farm into what it is today. Currently, Anthony and his son, Derek, manage over 1,000 acres of land and milk about 550 cows. They also have 9 other full-time employees who help run the day-to-day operations on the farm.

Over the last 10 years, Anthony has put a large emphasis on improving animal health. The first major change he made after buying the farm was installing cross-ventilation in the barns to improve airflow and create more favorable temperatures for the cows. He also installed cow-monitoring collars to better track health and reproduction and renovated the milking parlor.

"We've made a bunch of little improvements over the years, focusing on creating optimal cow care and comfortable living conditions to help the cows do what they do best," he said.

The farm is also in the process of building a new calf barn and dry-cow heifer facility, which will eliminate the need to truck heifers to another site.

"The growth we've seen on our farm over the last decade has also made a valuable economic impact on our surrounding community," Anthony said. "From providing employment, to working with numerous local vendors and suppliers, our farm and many others in the state, make an important contribution to our rural communities and are essential to our state's economy."

Anthony serves on the boards of directors for Minnesota Milk Producers Association and Midwest Dairy. He's also an advisor to the Midwest Dairy Foods Research Center.

"The organizations I'm a part of sometimes take me away from the farm, but it's for good reasons," he said. "The dairy industry has given me so much, and it's important for me to give back to help the next generation succeed."

Now that Anthony has achieved his dream of owning a dairy farm, he hopes to help others do the same.

"As the dairy industry ages, we are seeing fewer and fewer small dairies in our rural communities, and part of that is because the industry doesn't have a well-defined pathway for the younger generation to get involved," Anthony said. "We need to establish a better way for young, aspiring individuals in the industry to connect with those who are looking to retire, similar to my own story."



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