

Summer 2025

the
Voice of Milk

A leading force in dairy advocacy.

Connector



Edge members Joan and John Maxwell at their farm, Cinnamon Ridge Farm in Donahue, Iowa.

What's Inside

Eliminating outdated stigmas and showcasing modern, progressive farming practices

Breaking down the latest federal policy updates impacting dairy farmers

Summer building season: Don't forget these permit requirements for your farm

The 2025 scholarship recipients

In this Issue

Welcome.....	3	Member Spotlight.....	8	Scholarship Recipients.....	20
Dairy Strong.....	4	Policy Update	10	Meet Our Board	22
Upcoming Events.....	6	Permitting	18		

Boards of Directors

Edge

Heidi Fischer – President
Michael Crinion – Vice-President
Josh Meissner – Secretary
Jamie Witcpalek – Treasurer
Christina Zuiderveen
Jay Stauffacher
Justin Peterson
Brady Janzen
Brody Stapel - President Emeritus

DBA

Greg Siegenthaler – President
Travis Speirs – Vice-President
Steve Schalla – Secretary
Christopher Schneider – Treasurer
Spencer Frost
Duane Ducat
Jesse Dvorachek
Amy Penterman
Lee Kinnard – President Emeritus

MN Milk

Garrett Luthens – President
Anthony Anderson – Vice-President
Tom Walsh – Secretary
Rick Smith – Treasurer
Sadie Frericks
Dean Smith

Minnesota Milk Producers Association Sponsors

Elite

Edge
American Foods Group
Compeer Financial

Gold

Magnifi Financial Credit Union
Minnesota Dairy Initiative

Select Sires Member Cooperative

Contact Us

The Voice of Milk

2763 Manitowoc Rd Ste B
Green Bay, WI 54311
920-883-0020
voiceofmilk.com

Dairy Business Association Sponsors

Prestigious



Elite

AgCountry Farm Credit Services
Agropur, Inc.
BMO
GLC Minerals, LLC
Grande Cheese Co.
GreenStone Farm Credit Services
Nicolet National Bank
Pivot Bio, Inc.
Syngenta
VAS

Platinum

American Foods Group
Bank First
Bayland Buildings, Inc.
CP Feeds, LLC
Focus on Energy
Forest Construction Co, Inc.
Houston Engineering, Inc.
Michael Best
Quality Liquid Feeds, Inc.
Ruder Ware
Vita Plus & Cornette Farm Supply
Walbec Group
Zoetis

Gold

ABS Global, Inc.
AgSource

Alliant Energy
Calf-Tel by Hampel Animal Care
CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen LLP)
Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, LLC
Ever.Ag
Family Insurance Center
GEA Farm Technologies, Inc.
J & D Manufacturing, Inc.
McLanahan Corporation
MSA Professional Services, Inc.
ProAGtive Dairy Nutrition
Quality Roasting, Inc.
RP Nutrients
Standard Dairy Consultants, LLC
TechMix, LLC
Vaxxinova
Wisconsin Custom Operators, Inc.

Raising a glass to dairy farmers this month

We traditionally set aside time in June to celebrate the good work and deep contributions our members make to their local communities, their state and the dairy community as a whole. And this year is no exception. We have witnessed the tenacity and commitment of all our members over the past year. Navigating challenges in animal health, environmental concerns and the impact of rapidly implemented policies at both the state and federal level has made for difficult times. You remain resilient and committed to our businesses, our lifestyles and our families.

As the leadership of the Voice of the Milk organizations, we appreciate the dedication and support you bring to our organization. With over 1,400 dairy farmers among us, we remain strong in advocating for the right policies in the right place for the dairy community. Our efforts at state and national levels ensure that those writing policies that impact our livelihoods understand the consequences, often times unintended, that result from those making decisions not working close with farms. We also continue to work to help build strong connections and relationships with policy makers and other influential stakeholders.

As spring planting resumes and summer field work lies ahead, we hope you can take a moment to reflect on the positive difference you are making. We appreciate your efforts and are here to support you in any way possible.

Best wishes for a safe and productive cropping season.

Heidi Fischer, *President, Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative*

Greg Siegenthaler, *President, Dairy Business Association*

Garrett Luthens, *President, Minnesota Milk Producers Association*



HAPPY JUNE DAIRY MONTH!

Thank you to our dedicated members for your hard work, passion, and commitment to producing wholesome dairy for our communities. This month — and every month — we celebrate you and the vital role you play in nourishing families and sustaining our industry.



Dairy Forward: Celebrating 25 Years!

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Dairy Business Association, a remarkable milestone for an association built on the connection and collaboration of farmers, allied businesses and industry stakeholders. Much has been accomplished in these past 25 years, but even more lies ahead! This milestone is not just a testament to the longevity of our organization but also to the profound impact it has had on shaping a stronger, more resilient dairy community in the state of Wisconsin.

Since its inception, DBA has been at the forefront of advocacy, driving political initiatives that have enhanced infrastructure, fostered innovation and ensured

a thriving future for dairy farmers. By collaborating closely with regulatory officials and lawmakers, DBA has diligently sought to establish sensible policies and regulations for the dairy industry. These accomplishments highlight DBA's position as a reliable voice and a strong advocate for the entire dairy community.

Over the past 25 years, DBA has cultivated a legacy of leadership and partnership by building a robust network of members, sponsors and partners who share the vision of a productive and leading dairy community. Together, DBA has championed initiatives that have strengthened Wisconsin's economy, empowered dairy farmers and cemented our state's reputation as a global

leader in dairy excellence. The association's dedication to oversight and continued engagement with policymakers has not only addressed challenges but also created opportunities for growth and innovation within the community.

The progress celebrated on this 25th year is due to the collective efforts of everyone who has contributed to DBA's mission over the years. DBA honors its past achievements but remains committed to looking ahead. It is prepared to expand upon its legacy, taking on new challenges and seizing opportunities as it continues to drive important dairy policy matters. 🔄



Save the Date for Dairy Strong 2026

Leading with purpose – one person, one policy and one farm at a time

DBA's annual Dairy Strong conference will return to Green Bay on Jan 14-15 for their premier dairy event.

The 2026 conference, to be held at the KI Convention Center, will focus on how the dairy community continues to lead with purpose—one person, one policy and one farm at a time. Dairy Strong programming will feature timely political updates, insights into the dynamics of producer-processor relationships and strategies to continue to grow a stronger future

for dairy through innovation and collaboration.

The 2025 conference brought together more than 400 attendees, representing over 150,000 cows. The 2026 event will be the third year that Dairy Strong will take place in Green Bay, kicking off at one of the city's greatest attractions: the historic Lambeau Field stadium.

“At the Dairy Business Association, we’re focused on the future of dairy and strive to lead with

purpose through collaboration and connection,” Tim Trotter, DBA CEO, said. “Shaping the future takes one action at a time—whether it’s one person, one policy or one farm. Together, we can truly make an impact.”

Sponsorship and exhibitor information, speaker updates and other announcements about the 2026 Dairy Strong conference are available at dairystrong.org.



DAIRYSTRONG
Leading with purpose

January 14 & 15, 2026
Green Bay, WI



Minnesota Milk hosts annual Ice Cream Day at the Capitol

Minnesota Milk Producers Association held its annual Ice Cream Day at the Capitol event in St. Paul on May 7. During this event, farmer members of the state’s dairy advocacy group shared ice cream with legislators and their staff while engaging in meaningful discussions about current policy priorities.

“I volunteered to help at Ice Cream Day to be a voice for dairy farmers in Minnesota and share our story,” said Anthony Anderson, a dairy farmer from Stone Dairy in Henning.

Farmers spoke with policymakers, sharing the role dairy plays in Minnesota and their personal experiences on their farms. The event was held inside the Capitol’s popular Vault room, directly below the rotunda.

“Ice Cream Day at the Capitol is always one of my favorite events, and this year was a huge success,” said Lucas Sjostrom, Executive Director of Minnesota Milk. “We distributed over 400 ice cream treats to attendees and participated in many positive conversations, sharing our love for dairy.” 🍦



Wednesday, August 13 Mount Frontenac Golf Course

Join Minnesota’s dairy community at the Minnesota Milk Cup this August! This event offers fantastic opportunities for networking and building relationships among farmers, businesses and those who aren’t members. It’s not just about spending a day on the golf course; it’s an opportunity to unite and advance our state’s dairy community through connection and collaboration.

SAVE THE DATE!



DBA

DAIRY GOLF CLASSIC

Tuesday, July 29
Thornberry Creek
Oneida, WI

REGISTER TODAY!



You're invited!

Member Appreciation Reception at World Dairy Expo

Wednesday, Oct 1 | 5:00 - 7:00pm



Spark by Hilton Madison Central

Eliminating outdated stigmas and showcasing modern, progressive farming practices



At Cinnamon Ridge Farm in Donahue, Iowa, the Maxwells have been practicing regenerative agriculture before it was cool. Joan Maxwell and her husband, John, operate a modern, state-of-the-art dairy farm with 220 Jersey cows, robotic milking and an on-farm cheese processing facility. Their family-run centennial farm has held a legacy of excellence for five generations.

One key factor that has set their farm apart for many years is their openness to trying new farming practices and technologies. The Maxwells are not afraid to be trailblazers in this regard.

“In the 1980s, we began growing cover crops to produce more feed for our cows, since we needed more feed for our growing herd,” Joan said. “After a few years, we discovered how the soil was improving, showing less erosion and a return of earthworms.”

In addition to implementing cover crops, the farm utilizes various

other sustainable farming practices, including no-till, reduced-till and split nitrogen applications.

“We are continuously evolving and improving our farm by challenging ourselves to think outside the box,” she said. “Thinking creatively and defying the status quo is what helps us figure out successful, sustainable solutions for problems that arise on the farm.”

Joan and her family share their passion for sustainable farming with the community by offering on-farm tours to the public. This allows community members to experience sustainable farming and see the impact these practices are having on creating a more sustainable food system for future generations.

“On our farm tours, our visitors are eager to learn what’s happening in agriculture,” she said. “Many people come with a bias, but very few people come with an agenda. They genuinely want to learn the reasoning behind why we do what we do.”

Farm visitors are often surprised by what they see, how different farms are from what they might’ve looked like 50 years ago and how transparent we are, she explains.

“Some people are surprised to learn that we operate our farm like a business and are amazed at how well we take care of our cows,” she said.

Questions like these reveal just how removed many people are

from agriculture, including our policymakers, who have the potential to impact day-to-day farming operations.

Joan is enthusiastic about sharing her knowledge of modern agriculture with lawmakers and recently took part in a visit to Washington, D.C. with Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative.

“Politicians need to hear directly from farmers about how policies impact our farms,” she said. “They hear general information all the time, but they want to know the specifics.”

To Joan, it is critical to be united on priorities that support farms of all sizes and those down the supply chain.

“I appreciate all that Edge does in Washington, D.C. by bringing together the voices of farmers and processors and sharing our messages with legislators and their staff,” she said. “It’s crucial for them to see that we are unified in our support of initiatives that will improve agriculture and the entire food supply chain.” 





Thank



JUNE DAIRY MONTH

Join Us In Celebrating the Dairy Industry

Your dairy business depends on your dedication around the clock. We share in your passion and are honored to partner with the hard-working dairy farmers, processors and others who drive the dairy industry forward. As the dairy sector evolves, we're here to provide cutting-edge ag finance technology, innovative lending solutions and expert guidance to help your business thrive.



Ag & Rural Community Financing & Support



Breaking down the latest federal policy updates impacting dairy farmers



Karen Gefvert
Director of
government affairs

Washington, D.C. continues to be a buzz with activity as Congress continues its efforts to move the One Big Beautiful Bill Act through each step of the

reconciliation process. At the same time, federal agencies continue implementing reductions in force through size, scope and refocus to core missions.

Many of the topics in the crosshairs in D.C. align with the current Edge policy priorities: the Farm Bill, Rural Workforce, Climate and Environmental Sustainability, and Trade and Supply Chain. There has been movement on all these issues lately. The following overview provides a high-level picture of where things currently sit on these policy items in Washington, D.C.

Reconciliation, or the One Big Beautiful Bill Act narrowly passed the House of Representatives on May 22 with a one-vote margin. For agriculture, significant portions of the farm bill were included in the package including: increasing reference prices for commodities, updates to the Dairy Margin Coverage program, enhance funding for trade programs like the Foreign Market Development (FMD) and Market Access Programs (MAP), create sweeping changes

to the SNAP program, changes to AGI exemptions, amend crop insurance coverage levels and increase the conservation baseline by permanently tying in funding from the Inflation Reduction Act in addition to many other changes.

In addition to farm bill provisions, there was a significant effort to reform taxes through the extension and expansion of the 2017 Tax Cuts & Jobs Act. Included in the House version is permanent expansion of the estate tax exemption, increased small business expensing, including 100 percent immediate depreciation for capital investments, and increasing the Section 179 small business expensing limits and raising the phase-out threshold. Key biofuel and renewable energy credits were also included in the package.

The package is now being taken up in the Senate. Based on Senate rules for reconciliation, the Senate only needs a majority vote to pass the package, but they are bound by the Byrd rule, which narrows the eligible provisions to only budget-related items. Any “extraneous” provisions are expected to be removed with the final decision made by the Senate Parliamentarian.

Immigration continues to be at the forefront of issues facing many of our member farms. Edge continues to focus on a two-pronged effort regarding immigration reform; changes to the H-2A program to

allow for year-round access for dairy, as well as a pathway forward for a new visa focused on entry-level workforce for dairy and other job sectors.

The Farm Workforce Modernization Act was reintroduced for the fourth time earlier this session in the House and is identical to the legislation that passed out of the House but stalled in the Senate last session. This legislation would reform the H-2A program to allow for year-round access for dairy, with a specified number of visas available for dairy each year.

Trade and tariff negotiations continue to be a priority for the Trump administration. The administration is focused on seeking ‘reciprocal’ trade deals with around 40 countries, focused on reducing tariffs and non-tariff barriers for U.S. goods. These include the countries that the U.S. sought to put a higher reciprocal tariff on but ultimately paused for a 90-day period to allow for negotiations. Progress has been made with a framework for ongoing negotiations between the United States and the United Kingdom. Further, the U.S. and China have agreed to de-escalate efforts to impose higher tariffs and have restarted talks. As these negotiations continue, Edge has representation on the Technical Advisory Committee for Trade in Animals and Animal Products through Cassandra Kuball, vice president at Torrey Advisory Group.

The administration continues to review and refine climate and environmental sustainability. The Edge Partnership for Climate Smart Commodities grant has been terminated, and at this time, the Edge team is assessing and gathering information regarding the scope and requirements for the Advancing Markets for Producers program that the USDA announced as an alternative, farmer-focused program.

Edge policy priorities continue to be at the forefront in Washington, D.C. Issues continue to be rapidly evolving and volatile, with significant implications for agriculture. As Congress works through the reconciliation process and agencies reshape their focus, Edge remains actively engaged to ensure the interests of our members are represented. From farm bill advancements and tax reform to immigration and climate policy, Edge is committed to advocating for practical, forward-thinking solutions that support the long-term viability of our dairy farms

and rural communities. Continued engagement and collaboration will be essential as these discussions progress in the months ahead.

*Disclaimer: This information is accurate and up-to-date as of the time of sending to print. Edge recommends members review the e-newsletters sent out on Tuesdays, check our Facebook page, or join us for coffee chats to receive additional and timely policy updates. [🔗](#)



Wisconsin's 2025-27 budget debate: A pivotal moment for dairy and rural communities



Chad Zuleger
Director of
government affairs

As Wisconsin lawmakers navigate the 2025-27 biennial budget, the Dairy Business Association is actively advocating for programs that support

Wisconsin's dairy farmers and rural communities. With a projected \$4.3 billion surplus and a politically divided government, the budget discussions present both opportunities and challenges for advancing key agricultural priorities.

Budget landscape: Surplus amidst division

The state concluded the 2024 fiscal year with a \$4.3 billion surplus, exceeding earlier projections and marking a significant financial milestone. This surplus provides a unique opportunity to invest in critical areas, including agriculture and infrastructure.

However, the political landscape remains divided. Democratic Governor Tony Evers and the Republican-controlled Legislature have differing visions for utilizing the surplus. While Republicans advocate for substantial tax cuts, Democrats emphasize targeted investments in public services and education. This division

has led to the removal of over 600 policy provisions from the budget, including initiatives related to healthcare, education and infrastructure.

DBA's Budget Priorities: Strengthening Wisconsin's dairy industry

In this complex budget environment, DBA is focused on advancing priorities that ensure the vitality and sustainability of Wisconsin's dairy sector.

Economic development and farm viability

To bolster the dairy economy, DBA supports:

- Doubling funding for the Dairy Processing Grant Program to \$1 million annually.
- Increasing the Wisconsin Agriculture Exports Program from \$1 million to \$2 million annually.
- Creating tax credits and low-interest loan programs to support beginning farmers.
- Improving the Nutrient Trading Clearinghouse for better access to sustainability incentives.

These measures aim to enhance innovation, profitability and resilience against market fluctuations.

Improving water quality

DBA is committed to practical, science-driven solutions that

protect water resources while supporting farm resilience. Key initiatives DBA is advocating for include:

- Maintaining funding for the Nitrogen Optimization Pilot Program at \$1 million annually.
- Increasing the Cover Crop Insurance Rebate Program to \$1 million annually.
- Permanently funding the Producer-Led Watershed Grant Program at \$3 million and raising the grant cap from \$40,000 to \$50,000.
- Launching a Managed Grazing Pilot Program with \$500,000 in annual funding.
- Increasing County Conservation staffing grants.

These investments support the implementation of proven practices that improve water quality and farm operations.

Transportation infrastructure

Efficient transportation is vital for dairy product distribution. DBA supports:

- Continuing the Agriculture Road Improvement Program (ARIP) with \$150 million over the biennium.
- Maintaining CDL Training Grants to address workforce gaps.
- Launching an \$8 million biofuels infrastructure grant program.

Amplify Your Voice... support DairyPAC!



Another way to make a meaningful impact is by contributing to DairyPAC, DBA's political action committee.

DairyPAC enables us to support candidates who champion policies that align with our priorities. By pooling our resources, we can ensure that the voices of dairy farmers are heard loud and clear in Madison.

Every dollar contributed to DairyPAC strengthens our ability to advocate for sensible regulations, sustainable practices, and the infrastructure investments we need to succeed. Your support helps elect leaders who understand and value the contributions of Wisconsin's dairy community.

These initiatives aim to reduce costs, increase efficiency and move dairy products across the supply chains to family dinner tables.

Research and education

Investing in research and education is crucial for the dairy industry's future. DBA supports:

- Continued investment in the UW Dairy Innovation Hub.
- Annual funding of \$300,000 to bolster the UW–River Falls' Farm & Industry Short Course (FISC).
- New positions at DATCP to strengthen animal health and food safety programs.

These investments drive innovation and prepare Wisconsin dairy for future challenges.

Engaging in the budget process

As the budget process unfolds, DBA encourages farmers to actively participate:

- Contact your state representative and senator to express support for DBA's legislative and budget priorities.

Visit www.legis.wisconsin.gov. Enter your home address under "WHO ARE MY LEGISLATORS", then click "Find Your Legislator

- Invite legislators to your farm to provide firsthand insight into dairy operations.
- Contribute to DairyPAC to support candidates who understand and champion dairy priorities.

Your engagement ensures that the voices of dairy farmers are heard and considered in policymaking.

June Dairy Month

In June Dairy Month, we welcome visitors from across the state to our dairy farms. This annual celebration highlights the importance of dairy to Wisconsin's economy and culture. It's an opportunity to showcase our commitment to quality, sustainability and community.

Together, let's continue to advocate for policies that support our dairy community and ensure a prosperous future for Wisconsin's farmers. 🐄



DairyStream
Brought to you by the Voice of Milk

Engage in talks on policy, sustainability, market trends, new technology, industry news and more with dairy leaders.

Minnesota session rolls to compromise, complicated end



Lucas Sjostrom
Executive director of
MN Milk

It's a weird year. We started with a 67-67 House, temporarily had a 33-33 Senate, and somehow we have, as of this writing, Timberwolves in the Western Conference Finals and

the Twins put together a 13-game winning streak. I fear what might happen as I tout these results.

Getting weirder – we have a compromise. I started writing this article the morning of May 15. I expected to write about the unknowns ahead by the time you read this in June. We knew all four Minnesota caucuses (Senate Republicans, Senate DFL, House Republicans and House DFL) were meeting this morning after a few weeks of stalemate. We also knew that time was too short for work to be finished by the Monday, May 19, session deadline.

But at 10 a.m. on May 15, Governor Walz, Speaker DeMuth (R-Rockville) and Leader Murphy (DFL-Maplewood), surprised us with a compromise. They had agreed upon financial targets by the committee and would proceed forward writing bills to merge together the spending. They now expect to finish on time or a day or two late. I'll quickly cover the high-level compromises and then focus on agriculture.

There are some top-level headlines of interest to all Minnesota citizens to close the deal:

- The legislature spent all but \$1.8 million of the current surplus, leaving a \$2.1 million structural imbalance to be solved next year.
- The deal removes undocumented adults (but not children) from MinnesotaCare
- Stillwater prison will close in a phased process

Dairy priorities take hits

Zooming into agriculture, the compromise provided mixed news. The 2025-2027 budget will spend an additional \$9 million for agriculture and add \$3 million to the 2028-2029 budget. Those amounts are significant compared to the reductions seen in many areas, but necessary due to the biosecurity, emergency and disease pressures across agriculture with H5N1, New World Screwworm, hoof and mouth disease, African Swine Fever and avian metapneumovirus striking in new ways in the past 24 months.

Due to the small dollars available and looming animal health issues, it became clear early in session that some leaders wanted to erode the \$4 million DAIRI dollars we had secured for Dairy Margin Coverage rebates once the next farm bill is passed. Minnesota Milk fought to keep the balance on the ledger, but ultimately it was cut to \$3

million for next year. We pledge to work with legislative leaders, with a goal to return one year's DMC premiums or \$0.15/cwt, to dairy farmers in Minnesota.

With the budget surplus vanishing, our hopes of obtaining a new milk processing tax credit to enhance existing and procure new \$100+ million processing plants and thus spur dairy farmer demand were not met.

Permit reform appears likely

As of this writing, we await a special session to cement the 2024 work of the legislature. Within it, we expect that Minnesota Milk will have achieved long-time permit reform needs, with counties and townships now allowed to begin preliminary permits simultaneously with the state environmental review and EAW (environmental assessment worksheet process). This law was already in place, but due to wording, Minnesota Pollution Control Authority and other agencies would advise counties and townships not to begin on conditional use permits and other local permits. This law clarifies that both can run simultaneously, potentially taking months and years off the regulatory length of projects.

We also advocated for First District Association to receive funds for working with the city of Litchfield on infrastructure for their cheese plant expansion. They received

\$3 million in the agriculture bill but obtained another \$3.5 million in the special session bonding bill, totaling \$6.5 million for their wastewater treatment and renewable energy project. We were proud to advocate for this project. As a reminder, Minnesota Milk supports improving infrastructure and incentives for all milk processing projects in the state, so long as we are made aware of them. We are also working on proactive approaches for a dairy processing fund or tax credit.

Feedlot rules become a focus

Our state's feedlot rules (7020 feedlot law) will take center stage this summer. Minnesota Milk has entered with other Minnesota agricultural groups to become a party to intervene in a lawsuit that pits a few environmental organizations against MPCA and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Our intervention

allows agriculture to have a voice before any settlements or decisions are made. Related to this, MPCA has kicked off a series of meetings to re-write the feedlot rules over the next 5 or more years. We encourage Minnesota Milk leaders to engage at these meetings – we can share talking points to help you understand and convey messaging.

In the meantime, we will begin gearing up our policy efforts for 2026. See you at the Minnesota state fair or an event local to you! 📍



Scan here to sign up for one of the 13 meetings nearest you.

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative celebrates Senate Committee passage of Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act



Heidi Fischer,
Edge board
president

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, one of the largest dairy cooperatives in the country based on milk volume, celebrates the passage of the Whole Milk for

option that meets their students' nutritional needs.

Among the wider variety of options are whole milk and 2%, both of which are filled with nutrients children need to grow and develop.

“Milk, especially whole milk and 2% varieties, is packed with essential nutrients that our school children require for optimal developmental health,” Heidi Fischer, Edge board president, said. “We are encouraged by the passage of this bill from the Senate Agriculture Committee, as it presents an opportunity for school-age children to enhance their nutrient intake with dairy.”

Healthy Kids Act (S. 222) through the Senate Agriculture Committee with unanimous support.

The bill expands the milk and beverage options available to schools and strengthens the schools' ability to choose the best

Moving out of committee, the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act is one step closer to becoming law and providing a practical, bipartisan solution for school nutritional programs. 📍



Advocacy in action: A Door County success story



Erin Tomasik
Community relations
manager

At the beginning of the year, farmers and haulers in Door County received a letter from their Highway Commissioner about a new permit

process for frac and liquid manure distribution tanks. This new permit echoed the requirements in the county's "Right of Way" permit: a new application and a fee of \$200 for each tank placement in a county right-of-way.

Many farmers understood the reasons why a permit was required, because it could be a safety concern if proper signage

was not present or if the work impacted traffic. Nonetheless, farmers had concerns about the new requirements. Because farmers and haulers' schedules are dependent on weather conditions, predicting when they plan to spread manure weeks in advance is difficult. It is also burdensome to wait for permit approval before placing a tank, especially when the highway department needs to survey the land prior to placement. Additionally, a permit fee of \$200 per location is potentially a major cost to an operation and would become the most expensive permit in the state.

In April, Erin Tomasik, DBA community relations manager, and Door County dairy farmer Jacob Brey attended the county's Highway Committee meeting.

Jacob and Erin brought up concerns with the new permit requirements and the lack of stakeholder engagement throughout the process. After a lengthy discussion, the Highway Committee ultimately decided to modify the permit. The modified permit allows farmers to add multiple right-of-way tank locations with a single annual fee of \$200. The committee also discussed inviting stakeholders to their meeting in the fall when they discuss potential permit fee changes.

DBA extends sincere appreciation to the farmers and haulers who participated in this matter. Their active engagement allowed us to collaborate effectively with the county to identify a fair and reasonable resolution. 🙏

Making our voices heard: Advocating for Wisconsin's dairy community



DBA board member, Amy Penterman sharing her support for the Transition to Grazing Bill.

community, including the Transition to Grazing Bill.

DBA members and staff were busy this spring taking part in public hearings and expressing their support for important legislation impacting the dairy

On April 2, DBA attended the Joint Finance Committee's public hearing in Kaukauna to share its budget priorities. Gordon Speirs testified on DBA's behalf, highlighting key initiatives like ARIP and water quality.

Additionally, on Thursday, April 3, the Senate Agriculture and Revenue Committee met for a Public Hearing on Senate Bill 113 (SB 113), the Transition to Grazing Bill. Amy Penterman testified on behalf of DBA, and DBA Director

of Government Affairs Chad Zuleger testified alongside Clean Water Initiative (CWI) partners Sara Walling (Clean Wisconsin) and Alex Modorsky (TNC).

"As we continue to shape the future of our state's dairy community, we must make our voices heard," Zuleger said. "Together with members, supporters and collaborators, we have a stronger, louder voice in Madison." 🙏

Market Numbers

Federal Order Summary — April 2025

Federal Order No.	Federal Order Name	Producer Deliveries	Class I Producer Receipts	Class I Utilization	Class I Price	Producer Price Differential	Change From Previous Year
1	Northeast	2,326,497	641,812	27.6	22.8	\$2.24	(\$2.35)
5	Appalachian	452,717	301,094	66.5	\$22.97	*NA	*NA
6	Florida	214,215	168,837	78.8	\$24.97	*NA	*NA
7	Southeast	310,231	220,026	70.9	\$23.37	*NA	*NA
30	Upper Midwest	2,583,670	159,150	6.2	\$21.37	\$0.27	(\$0.18)
32	Central	1,366,156	341,237	25.0	\$21.57	\$0.79	(\$1.41)
33	Midwest	1,528,988	511,520	33.5	\$21.57	\$1.32	(\$1.45)
51	California	3,271,406	385,897	11.8	\$21.67	\$0.89	(\$0.95)
124	Pacific Northwest	683,318	118,734	17.4	\$21.47	\$0.72	(\$2.04)
126	Southwest	1,396,874	323,656	23.2	\$22.57	\$1.57	(\$1.15)
131	Arizona	388,200	112,397	29.0	\$21.92	*NA	*NA
All Market Average or Total		14,522,272	3,284,360	22.6%			

Producer Milk by Class — April 2025

	Federal Order 30			Federal Order 33			Federal Order 126		
	%	Product Pounds	Price \$/cwt.	%	Product Pounds	Price \$/cwt.	%	Product Pounds	Price \$/cwt.
Class I	6.20	159,149,739	\$21.37	33.46	511,520,173	\$21.57	23.17	323,656,136	\$22.57
Class II	1.00	26,926,016	\$19.22	8.68	132,772,925	\$19.22	7.17	100,219,639	\$19.22
Class III	90.30	2,333,140,244	\$17.48	44.36	678,308,987	\$17.48	57.49	803,029,623	\$17.48
Class IV	2.50	64,453,722	\$17.92	13.50	206,385,712	\$17.92	12.17	169,968,857	\$17.92
Total* =		2,583,669,721			1,528,987,797			1,396,874,255	
Total Value =		\$540,206,531.87			\$332,537,312			\$303,907,731	

Producer Prices — Federal Orders 30, 33, & 126

Month/Year	FO 30 Producer Price Differential (\$ per cwt.)	FO 30 Statistical Uniform Price @ 3.50% (\$ per cwt.)	FO 33 Producer Price Differential (\$ per cwt.)	FO 33 Statistical Uniform Price @ 3.50% (\$ per cwt.)	FO 126 Producer Price Differential (\$ per cwt.)	FO 126 Statistical Uniform Price @ 3.50% (\$ per cwt.)	Butterfat Price (\$ per lb.)	Protein Price (\$ per lb.)	Other Solids Price (\$ per lb.)	SCC Adjustment Rate (\$ per cwt.)
Jan-24	\$0.42	\$15.59	\$2.73	\$17.90	\$2.56	\$17.73	2.9765	1.033	0.2417	0.00076
Feb-24	\$0.32	\$16.40	\$1.88	\$17.96	\$2.10	\$18.18	3.1031	1.0343	0.2738	0.0008
Mar-24	\$0.36	\$16.70	\$2.30	\$18.64	\$2.14	\$18.48	3.2385	1.0083	0.2881	0.0008
Apr-24	\$0.45	\$15.95	\$2.77	\$18.27	\$2.72	\$18.22	3.3309	0.973	0.2367	0.00077
May-24	\$0.19	\$18.74	\$0.90	\$19.45	\$1.34	\$19.89	3.4636	0.9647	0.2181	0.00094
Jun-24	\$0.18	\$20.05	\$0.96	\$20.83	\$1.33	\$21.20	3.5444	0.9991	0.2326	0.001
Jul-24	\$0.25	\$20.04	\$1.42	\$21.21	\$1.65	\$21.44	3.572	1.0149	0.2571	0.00099
Aug-24	\$0.20	\$20.86	\$1.06	\$21.72	\$1.41	\$22.07	3.5632	1.0484	0.2959	0.00102
Sep-24	(\$0.24)	\$23.10	(\$0.62)	\$22.72	(\$0.45)	\$22.89	3.6114	1.1109	0.343	0.00114
Oct-24	(\$0.47)	\$22.38	(\$0.67)	\$22.18	(\$0.83)	\$22.02	3.0851	1.1628	0.3705	0.00112
Nov-24	\$0.38	\$20.33	\$1.60	\$21.55	\$1.81	\$21.76	3.0623	1.1974	0.4049	0.00096
Dec-24	\$0.36	\$18.98	\$1.89	\$20.51	\$1.93	\$20.55	2.9104	1.2151	0.4493	0.00088
Jan-25	\$0.13	\$20.47	\$0.51	\$20.85	\$1.02	\$21.36	2.946	1.2002	0.5384	0.00094
Feb-25	\$0.13	\$20.31	\$0.64	\$20.82	\$0.92	\$21.10	2.8186	1.1552	0.4799	0.00095
Mar-25	\$0.20	\$18.82	\$1.10	\$19.72	\$1.20	\$19.82	2.6242	1.0393	0.3647	0.00091
Apr-25	\$0.27	\$17.75	\$1.32	\$18.80	\$1.57	\$19.05	2.6406	0.9994	0.3087	0.00087

Upcoming State Fairs

Ohio: July 23 – Aug. 3

<https://www.ohiostatefair.com/>

Wisconsin: July 31 – Aug. 10

<https://wistatefair.com/fair/home/>

Indiana: Aug. 1 – 17

<https://www.indianastatefair.com/p/state-fair>

Illinois: Aug. 7 – 17

<https://statefair.illinois.gov/>

Iowa: Aug. 7 – 17

<https://www.iowastatefair.org/>

Minnesota: Aug. 21 – Sept. 1

<https://www.mnstatefair.org/>

Nebraska: Aug. 22 – Sept. 1

<https://www.statefair.org/>

South Dakota: Aug. 27 – Sept. 1

<https://www.sdstatefair.com/home/>

Kansas: Sept. 5 – 14

<https://www.kansasstatefair.com/>



Summer building season: Don't forget these permit requirements for your farm



Tim Baumgartner
Director of
regulatory &
permitting services

Annual Reports and Nutrient Management Plan updates were due in January and March. For any farmer who might be looking for assistance in this area and to meet other requirements,

our Maestro program can help in streamlining this process so you can be in the best position for your permit to be renewed.

At the time I am writing this article, the spring manure hauling season is nearly complete, and we've experienced some warmer weather to allow some row crops to be planted. The new cropping season is off to a promising start. During late spring and summer,

there's a lot of activity on all our farms with planting, harvesting forages and various construction projects. It is important not to lose sight of the routine compliance and monitoring requirements for NPDES permits. It is important to keep up to date on the required daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly tracking and reporting. With more farms spreading manure over the summer months, updating hauling logs is also critical and sometimes easy to overlook amid busy summer schedules.

It's also important to emphasize the need for building plans and specifications to be submitted and approved by the environmental services department (DNR/MPCA/DANR, etc.) before starting construction projects. Beginning them before they have been formally approved is a violation, and could potentially bring about additional costs or delays,

especially if your submitted plan is not approved in its original form and modifications or changes are needed to proceed. The status of any plans that have been submitted for review can easily be determined from the DNR website or by contacting your farm's professional engineer.

If you are looking at doing some potential projects for 2026, summer is actually a good time to submit them from a workload standpoint for the DNR. Usually, department reviewers have less activity than they do in late fall, winter, or early spring, as these are the times most farms are submitting for upcoming projects.

Wishing you all a safe and successful cropping season.

Tim 🍷

**Maestro**
Permitting perfected.
Powered by the Voice of Milk.

The **only** program providing independent and complete permitting consultation to dairy farms.

Contact Us

Tim Baumgartner

Director of Regulatory & Permitting Services

tbaumgartner@voiceofmilk.com | (920) 527-0623

CannonBelle's brings the heat to artisan cheese



Partners Kathy Hupf and Deeann Lufkin have moved their cheesemaking from a kitchen counter to a modern processing plant.

The Minnesota dairy community would not be complete without the local artisan cheesemakers who add flair and creativity to a well-known commodity.

CannonBelle's Creamery, located on the outskirts of Cannon Falls, is one of the cheesemakers bringing new flavors and varieties of cheese to their community and beyond. Like many cottage or artisan businesses, CannonBelle's started with a homemade recipe loved by friends and neighbors. That homemade cheese, a Spanish Queso Fresco, is now an award-winning cheese sold throughout Minnesota.

CannonBelle's success is the result of several years of experimenting and learning the art of cheesemaking. Scaling the business from a kitchen to a full creamery also required creativity and patience.

"We started making cheese in a turkey roaster," says Deeann Lufkin one of the three owners and the cheesemaker. "Scaling from four gallons of milk in the

roaster to 5,000 pounds in a vat takes patience and creativity. It took us seven years to go from my kitchen to the creamery we have today."

CannonBelle's has been operational for two years. Before opening the cheese plant, Deeann and her partners, Kathy Hupf and Jackie Ohmann bought an ice cream and coffee shop in Cannon Falls. They used the storefront, also called CannonBelle to build brand recognition and begin building a customer base for their cheese by offering grilled cheese sandwiches made with their special cheeses.

"We opened the ice cream and coffee shop in April 2019 and were getting established when Covid shutdowns began in 2020," says Jackie Ohman, Deeann's business partner. "It was tough but we got through it."

Throughout their journey, the women tapped into resources and experiences from others, including the expertise of Ray Miller and the Joseph J. Warthesen Processing Center at the University of Minnesota.

"Ray Miller is the one who taught us how to make cheese, and we still reach out to him as we work on new recipes," Deeann says.

In addition to help from the university, the women also worked with local community leaders to set up their Grade A plant and also with state officials who helped get

them connected with the Farm to School program.

"The Farm to School program is a program that allows schools to use locally-sourced products, and to afford products they normally wouldn't," Deeann says. "We make a special Grim Reaper cheese curd that the kids love and we can offer it to them through the Farm to School program."



The special Grim Reaper cheese received notoriety this past summer, taking second place in the American Cheese Society Conference and also champion at the Minnesota State Fair. CannonBelle's

cheese was also featured at the Minnesota Wine country booth and the Minnesota Farmers Union Coffee Shop.

For the three friends and business owners, the success has been a labor of love and passion as they continue to develop and refine their cheese.

"It takes a village to do what we have done," Deeann says. "We have help from so many, including the other artisan cheesemakers in Minnesota. We are a tight group and work together to help each other succeed."

CannonBelle's cheese can be found in 80 stores and restaurants throughout the state. 

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative provides \$10,000 in secondary education scholarships

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative is investing in the future of the next generation through its annual scholarship program. Five young adults will receive \$2,000 scholarship awards to pursue higher education. Two scholarships will be awarded to students currently enrolled in college or an university, and three scholarships will be awarded to graduating high school seniors.

“At Edge, it’s a great honor to support our members’ families and students pursuing secondary education,” Tim Trotter, Edge CEO, said. “We hope that all students, whether attending a technical college, a four-year university or other educational programs, feel they have the chance to learn new skills and gain valuable experiences that they can carry with them throughout their lives and also bring back to the farm.”

The 2025 scholarship recipients:



Samia Gonzalez-Quizhpe of Waupaca, Wis, will be studying nursing.



Owen Klussendorf of Medford, Wis., will be attending the University of Wisconsin-River Falls for the Farm and Industry Short Course. He will be studying dairy herd management and agricultural business.



Jacob Trembl of Casco, Wis, will be attending Northeast Wisconsin Technical College to study heavy equipment diesel mechanics.



Chloe Breunig of Sheboygan Falls, Wis, will be a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Madison this fall. She is studying dairy science and plans to manage her family’s dairy farm after graduation.



Kate Pasanen of Exeland, Wis., is currently studying dairy science and agricultural business at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. She plans to return to her family’s dairy farm after completing her bachelor’s degree.

Each student is a dependent of an Edge member and has demonstrated outstanding academic achievement, leadership and participation in school and community activities, academic honors, goals and aspirations, recommendations and work experience.

Edge is proud to recognize these students who exemplify the voice of milk through their education, career goals and future endeavors. 🌱

Watch for the Fall issue to read about the Minnesota Milk scholarship recipients.

New Voice of Milk Strategic Account Managers

As the Voice of Milk continues to evolve to meet changing member needs, we have transitioned our Member Services Representatives to Strategic Account Managers to capture the full range of services they provide to members. Our SAMs are knowledgeable in all programs and offerings from Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, the Dairy Business Association and Minnesota Milk Producers Association, along with Farmers for Sustainable Food.

Meet the SAMs



Kaitlin Heusel is the lead on FMMO verifications and requirements. She is an experienced

cooperative representative, having nearly 10 years of milk marketing co-op experience before joining in 2023. She and her family live in eastern Minnesota. Kaitlin can be reached at kheusel@voiceofmilk.com.



Marti Viste is the lead in data collection and management for FSF sustainability programs on farms. Marti has experience working directly with farmers in her previous role as agronomist at Rio Creek Feed Mill in Algoma, Wis. She is the fifth generation on her family's farm, Vistren Farms, in Door County, Wis. Marti can be reached at mviste@voiceofmilk.com.



Andy Welti is the newest member of the SAM team, joining the team this May. Andy will work with members in the

western portion of the Edge territory, bringing services and programming to those members. Andy's career background includes teaching in the Milwaukee Public School District and also serving in the Minnesota state legislature. Andy's experience in policy development will be helpful in bridging our ongoing policy work with on-farm challenges and opportunities. Andy can be reached at awelti@voiceofmilk.com. 📞

Edge advances strategic growth with a new Director of Science and Innovation

Edge announces the appointment of Jim Eckberg as the new Director of Science and Innovation.

Edge is committed to advancing sustainability and creating value for its members by collaborating with farmers and dairy business partners. In this new role, Eckberg will enhance this mission through sustainability program offerings for members, focusing on farmer-led solutions to meet industry sustainability goals.

Eckberg was a Senior Research Scientist in agricultural and food solutions at General Mills in

Minneapolis, Minn., since 2019. While there he focused on dairy sustainability, water quality, and biodiversity conservation initiatives for the General Mills supply chain. He holds a Ph.D. in Applied Plant Sciences from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities and collaborates with teams of scientists and faculty to publish on various topics, including production agriculture, biodiversity and water conservation and sustainable food systems.

"The real solutions to sustainability will come from farmer-led

innovation. Science and data can help bring this value to the food industry and make sustainability a part of the way we do business," Eckberg said.

"Adding Jim to our team is a significant step forward for our organization and affiliates' sustainability services," Tim Trotter, Edge CEO, said. "With his scientific background and research experience, we are confident he will bring valuable strategic insights and technical expertise to our team." 📞

Board Member Spotlights



DBA Board

Steve Schalla | *Bomaz Farm - Hammond, WI*

Tell us a bit about yourself.

My wife Annette and I are partners in Bomaz Farms along with her parents, Bob and Kay Zwald, and her brother and his wife, Tom and Ashley Zwald. We farm in Hammond, Wis., where we milk 1,700 cows, raise most of our heifers and run about 2,200 acres of cropland.

Tell us why you are committed to the organization and what it means to you.

I believe we need a strong, active voice in Madison, along with our counties and townships, advocating for dairy. I believe I can help tell the positive story of our industry because most lawmakers are simply not familiar with today's dairy farming. Our farm's experience is that by actively and consistently participating in government relations, we can have a positive influence on lawmakers, which results in a better situation for us on the farm.

What are you looking forward to the most in your role on the DBA board?

I look forward to working with the other members of the board and the DBA team. It is a great group of people who are all committed to our industry. I also look forward to the opportunity to meet with our legislators, some old and some new, at events like Dairy Day at the Capitol. As usual, we have a list of things that could be done to strengthen our dairy community, and it is up to us as dairy farmers to be the voice of milk that spurs positive change for our future!



Edge Board

Jay Stauffacher | *Highway Dairy - Darlington, WI*

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I farm with my sister in Darlington, Wis., at our farm, Highway Dairy. We milk approximately 1,200 cows and manage about 2,000 acres of cropland. Sustainability is very important to us. We played a role in forming the Lafayette Ag Stewardship Alliance and have been actively involved with this farmer-led conservation group ever since. Over the years, we have participated in various sustainability projects, which have allowed us to continuously improve our sustainable farming practices.

Tell us why you are committed to the organization and what it means to you.

I joined Edge in 2015 when we began shipping to a private processor. Over the years, it's been encouraging to see what our organization has done in D.C. and what our members contributed to the FMMO hearings. The future of dairy is important to me, as we've had multiple generations working on our farm and want to continue to see a positive future for the longevity of our industry.

What are you looking forward to the most in your role on the Edge board?

I look forward to advocating for the dairy community in D.C. and collaborating with the other board members. I'm excited to learn from each other and share innovative ideas as we strive to create more opportunities in the future and add more value for Edge members.



MN Milk Board

Anthony Anderson | *WB Stone Dairy - Henning, MN*

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I'm a first-generation farmer on a fourth-generation dairy farm. I took over the farm from a former Minnesota Milk board member in 2015. My wife Sherry and I have been married for 30 years. My daughters, Justine and Sarah, work off the farm, and my son Derek is a member of the Minnesota National Guard and works with me on the farm full time. We are currently milking 515 Holsteins, and we raise the heifers until five months, when they move off-site to a grower. We run 1,000 acres, which provides all the forages for the farm. We are currently working on plans for a new calf barn and dry cow/heifer facility to allow us to raise all our animals on site.

Tell us why you are committed to the organization and what it means to you.

I'm committed to Minnesota Milk because the dairy farmers in Minnesota need to have a strong and passionate voice for them in St. Paul. Having a trusted advocate at the Capitol and fighting for policies important to our continued success brings me some peace of mind when I don't have extra time to spend at the Capitol.

What are you looking forward to the most in your role on the MN Milk board?

I'm excited to return to the board for another term and especially excited to take on the role of vice president. I enjoy the work that the board does and am thrilled to be facilitating the meetings in my new role. This industry has given me so much, and I hope to be able to give a little bit back to it with my involvement on the Minnesota Milk board.

We Are the Voice of Milk.

We are a force of independent dairy organizations, united across state lines to make sure dairy farmers are heard. From local communities to Congress to the supply chain, we speak up where it matters most.

We push for policies that are smart, science-driven and built to last—because the future of dairy depends on it.

This is dairy's voice. This is your voice.

Visit voiceofmilk.com to learn more.





2763 Manitowoc Rd Ste B
Green Bay, WI 54311

WEBINAR

The Voice of Milk Coffee Chats

May 30 | June 20 | July 11 | August 22

Featuring the Voice of Milk Government Affairs team



Karen Gefvert



Erin Tomasik



Lucas Sjostrom



Chad Zuleger