



ISDA NEWS

President's Report

Hope springs eternal after devastating barn fire



Our 110 year old barn was totally destroyed the night of April 10, 2018 by a fire that began in

our relatively new shop. Four fire departments came quickly and worked hard but were unable to keep a strong south wind from spreading the blaze to the barn.

Within an hour of discovering the fire, we had gotten all but one cow to safety, and the main barn was totally engulfed in flames.

Nearly three weeks later, the changes in that hour still seem almost unreal and impossible to comprehend.

During my life, I too often took for granted that stately barn, the main shell still the same even with the changes that occurred inside and the additions made to it through the years. The barn and the shop have

been replaced by piles of rubble and tangled sheet steel. The stave silo, built in 1947, is charred and leaning, perhaps symbolically, slightly away from the fire. All will need to be removed to at least clear the view of the damage done that night.

Despite the shock and hurt of the loss, we feel thankful for:

- The countless memories of working with family, friends, employees, business people, support people and guests in the barn.
- The fine cattle we worked with, cared for and watched develop.
- My mother's constant reminder when facing challenges in the barn: *"As long as it stays out of the house..."* Thankfully, no one was hurt (or worse) in the fire.
- Current employees who work hard keeping our cows as comfortable and cared for as possible.
- The work of the volunteer firemen. Several firemen were employees

continued on page 2 →

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 8, 2018

Iowa State University
Open House, Ames, IA

JUNE 23, 2018

Breakfast on the Farm and
Dairy Iowa Meeting, Calmar, IA

JUNE 24, 2018

Lunch on the Farm, DeWitt, IA

JUNE 28, 2018

Western Iowa Dairy Alliance
June Dairy Open House,
Lester, IA

*For more information about Open Houses,
please contact Mitch Schulte at (319) 775-3451.*

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President's Report (cont.)

during their school years. They milked cows and moved hay in the barn. Their compassion for us that night was genuine and sincere.

- Former employees who have gone out of their way to support us.
- One current employee, an Iowa State University student, who drove back that night and stayed the rest of the week to help.
- Our vacant dairy barn $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away.
- Loans of equipment until we can secure replacements and support of our local businesses in helping to keep us operational.
- Friends and neighbors gathering to move the cows to their next home, to get its inactive equipment moving, gates and waterers organized.
- An overwhelming amount of food and water to sustain the firemen during the fire, workers afterward, visitors and our family.
- Hugs, prayers, phone calls, cards, texts and emails.

The support from our friends and family, from our local community, our coop and the wider dairy family has been wonderful and almost overwhelming. Thank you all very much! I ask for your continued prayers for strength and guidance as we move ahead.

"We pray for good health, a good crop and improved prices."

As I write this, April 30th, spring work is jumping to a start. We all need to work on crops while still balancing the needs of our herds and, especially, our families and ourselves. They, and you, are your farm's most important asset!

All of us, in planning for the future, need to remember that prices are cyclical. Family farms do have certain inherent advantages. We need to be thankful for the many blessings that we have. In light of our recent experience, I would suggest, when possible, to update your inventories and review your insurance with your agent. Replacement values are preferable to depreciated ones.

We pray for good health, a good crop and improved prices. Again, thank you for the outpouring of support we've been shown!

Sincerely,

Larry Shover
President

Iowa State Dairy Association

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2018 DAIRY IOWA MEETING • JUNE 23, 12 P.M. - 2 P.M.

Following Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation
9th Annual Breakfast on the Farm
1527 Highway 150 South, Calmar, IA 52132

Invited Key Speaker:



Iowa Secretary
of Agriculture,
Mike Naig

**Producer Panel
Will Discuss:**

Labor saving and
value-added
technology



Highlights:

- Scholarship Presentation
- Ralph Keeling Award Presentation

Questions? Contact Mitch Schulte at 319-775-3451 or mschulte@midwestdairy.com

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Executive Director Report



The Iowa
State Dairy
Association
is dedicated
to building
a strong
communication

link between producers, processors, consumers, legislators and environmental organizations — representing you at all dairy supply chain levels, from dairy farm to consumer tables.

ISDA serves as a cohesive voice on legislative issues and reports the latest industry-relevant information to our members. To succeed, it takes a commitment by those who are truly passionate about Iowa's dairy industry and our future.

ISDA is our unified voice taking stand on statewide dairy issues. ISDA works as a liaison between Iowa's dairy producers and organizations such as: Environmental Protection Agency, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa State University, and all Iowa farm organizations.

ISDA is a grass-roots organization by the members and for the members — each member strengthens our voice and increases impact. The goal of ISDA is to be the premier dairy organization in Iowa and expand

upon legislative work while educating on farm practices.

This legislative session has come with many challenges. The session started off with some Raw Milk bills. These bills (HF 2055, HF 2056, and HF 2057) would have allowed for the sale of labeled unpasteurized and ungraded milk and other dairy products. This would have caused a negative effect on the Iowa dairy industry. Putting an early stop to the legislation was a top priority, and we couldn't have stopped these bills without the support of the Iowa dairy farmers.

Some other issues ISDA has been working on included funding for the building and renovation of the Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, funding for Foreign Animal Disease readiness, labor issues within the agriculture industry, and the tax bill.

I believe that our job is not done. We still need to take the time to talk to our legislators and help them understand the dairy industry. This will help us be better prepared for the next dairy issue that may arise. Iowa

dairy producers work very hard to produce a safe, high quality product, and it is important that we confront bills that could have adverse effects on the industry. Please take the time to reach out to your representatives and remind them of the importance of the Dairy Industry in Iowa.

I will close by welcoming Jenna Finch to the Iowa State Dairy Association as the Associate Director.

Jenna was most recently an Executive Assistant for Summit Agricultural Group. Prior to Summit Agricultural Group, Jenna was the Executive

“I believe that our job is not done. We still need to take the time to talk to our legislators and help them understand the dairy industry. This will help us be better prepared for the next dairy issue that may arise.”

Director for WIDA (Western Iowa Dairy Association). Jenna has a Master's of Science degree in Agricultural Education from Iowa State University. Please welcome Jenna to the ISDA!

Mitch Schulte
Executive Director

Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation & NICC News

Warmer weather sets stage for upcoming events at Iowa's Dairy Center

Though we didn't think it would ever come, spring is finally here and we're enjoying the warmer temperatures. Before we know it, summer will be here and it will be time to host our annual Breakfast on the Farm event. This year, Breakfast on the Farm will be held on Saturday, June 23 at Iowa's Dairy Center south of Calmar. We'll be serving up a wholesome breakfast complete with Dad's Belgian Waffles, sausage and of course delicious dairy products including milk, cheese, yogurt and ice cream that's all been produced and processed right here in Northeast Iowa. There will be plenty of activities to keep you busy on the

farm including guided tram tours, hand milking a cow, petting zoo, story time with the dairy princess, corn pools, cow bounce house and more!

This event would not be possible without our dairy farmer and industry volunteers, so if you're interested in helping out, please call Mariah at (563) 534-9957 ext. 107 or email schmittma@nicc.edu.

Iowa's Dairy Story is well underway at the Dairy Center. This year, over 1,000 elementary students from nearly 25 Northeast Iowa schools will attend the Iowa's Dairy Story program. Students visiting the

Dairy Center learn about dairy nutrition, history, breeds and the digestive system of a cow in the morning and spend the afternoon touring the Dairy Center's farm and making homemade ice cream. Our strong partnership with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach makes this program possible for students to enjoy every year.



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With the warmer weather, Iowa's Dairy Center is beginning to become a more popular tourist destination. Visitors from all over the world are stopping by to see our one-of-a-kind facilities. This April, we hosted about 50 Japanese dairy farmers and nutritionists to the Dairy Center. They were fascinated with the dairy museum, milking parlor and robots and sand-bedded freestalls.

Remember, Iowa's Dairy Center is also a center for tourism and public education, so encourage your friends and family to visit the Dairy Center to learn about dairy farming. Viewing areas to watch cows being milked in the parlor and by the robots are open 24 hours a day while guided tours can be arranged during the week. For more information, visit www.iowadairycenter.com.

In April, the Winneshiek County

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Soil and Water Conservation District honored the Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation and Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) with the Roy Schultz Memorial Award for the organizations' collaborative environmental sustainability efforts. NICC and the Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation began implementing sustainable practices on the campus and surrounding land in 2011. Working in partnership with the Winneshiek County Soil and Water Conservation District, the College planted native forbs and grasses that assist in conservation efforts and soil retention.

Subsequent projects enabled the campus and Iowa's Dairy Center to implement new initiatives to address water management, soil health and a reduction of the campus's and the Dairy Center's environmental impact. Visit our website to learn more about our commitment to sustainability and ongoing projects at the Dairy Center and NICC.

As the semester wraps up for NICC students, we reflect on all of their accomplishments. This February, 30 NICC students participated in the state Postsecondary Agriculture Students (PAS) competitions where all 30 students qualified for the National PAS competition in Louisville, KY. There, Nick Bagge, Bret Kluesner and Thomas Lehmann earned second place in the dairy team contest. Additionally, four

NICC students participated in the Midwest Regional Dairy Challenge in Madison, WI, where they were split into teams with students from other colleges and universities. There, they looked at records, evaluated dairy farms and made recommendations for areas of opportunity and improvement. Nick Bagge was on the first place team at the contest. This year, 22 students will graduate from the NICC Dairy Science Technology program. Following graduation, students are returning to their family's farm, finding a job out in the dairy industry or continuing their

education. Congratulations to the 2018 graduates!

The Dairy Center Connection print newsletter is moving to a digital format and we encourage you to subscribe to receive the latest events and happenings at Iowa's Dairy Center. To sign up for our e-newsletter, please visit our website at www.iowadairycenter.com. Be sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for all of the latest updates. From all of us at the Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation, we wish you safe planting and a prosperous growing season.

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News from Midwest Dairy

Midwest Dairy Unveils New Logo

Midwest Dairy unveiled a new logo in April as part of the organization's new vision, mission and strategic plan focused on bringing dairy to life for the consumer and giving them an excellent dairy experience.

"Under our new strategic plan, our goal is to sit beside consumers and have conversations that demonstrate our openness, transparency and willingness to listen first and then share the farm to table journey," says Midwest Dairy CEO Lucas Lentsch. "We also want our new logo to convey the strong traditions of our dairy farmers and their ongoing commitment to producing quality, nutritious dairy products for today's consumers."

Serving as a visual connection between farmers and consumers, the new, more simple design is not only intended to convey the goodness of products Midwest dairy farmers so proudly produce but also, for the first time, to represent Midwest Dairy as one entity, no longer including the words Association or Council,

to more prominently showcase the values that both organizations bring to consumers.

"Our new approach and logo will help us work with partners to develop stronger relationships with



consumers to better understand what is important to them," says Lentsch. "We will be working even more collaboratively with our farmers, wellness, manufacturing, retail and co-op partners to provide valuable resources and new product innovations that meet emerging trends and consumer demands."

Don't Miss Out on the Midwest Dairy Experience Forum

Dairy farmers, industry experts, and manufacturing and retail partners

will have the opportunity to learn more about emerging trends and consumer demands at the inaugural gathering of the Midwest Dairy Experience Forum, which will take place on July 24-26 in Bloomington, Minnesota. Attendees will explore why it's more critical than ever to make a strong connection with today's consumer to build dairy demand. Under the theme *The Critical Connection: Engaging Today's Consumer to Build Dairy Demand*, the meeting will provide participants with tools and training to help ensure a successful future for the dairy industry.

Experience Forum Topics

- Interaction with a consumer focus group panel to identify what values are important as they make dairy purchasing decisions;
- Insights from product development professionals about how consumers affect the dairy foods development journey;
- A look at how dairy can benefit from consumer food marketing trends, including clean labels and free-from claims; and
- An interactive Taste and Learn experience to build excitement about new dairy products available to today's consumers.

A save the date postcard was recently sent to all Midwest Dairy farmers to share the news about this exciting event. Watch your email for additional information about the event's agenda, how to register, and details about hotel and travel accommodations.

If you have questions about the event or need more information, please call (763) 355-9697.

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Upcoming Webinars Will Focus on Financial Issues

The current, protracted combination of low milk prices and the glut of milk products in the market place have stressed producers. The stress has built to the point that families are often at a loss to know what to say to each other, to their bankers and suppliers. At that point, it's hard to know where to turn.

Farmers are taught to "cowboy up, tough it out" and are scripted to be afraid to reach out for help. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, farmers, as a group, have a higher suicide rate than any other occupation, even twice as high as veterans.

Communication skills not only help de-fuse the situation when farm family members live and work side-by-side, but are essential when seeking help from professionals

outside the family.

The Iowa Extension Dairy Team recognizes the need to communicate with producers on several topics that can help find the right answers during this "perfect storm" of financial pressure, a sense of powerlessness in the milk market, and social isolation. Plus, their self-reliant spirit often makes them uncomfortable in seeking help.

These initial conversations will start with a series of webinars where producers can collect basic information on economic questions and how to use the information to make better decisions.

The first webinar will be from 12 noon to 1 p.m. on July 10. Larry Tranel, ISU Extension, and Megan Roberts, MN Extension, will discuss:

- Knowing your costs of production
- Cash flow versus profitability
- Using 2017 Millionaire Model Farm Data to benchmark profits and costs
- What does FINBIN tell us

There will be time after the presentations to ask questions.

Over the noon hour on July 17, Jim Salfer, MN Extension and Jennifer Bentley, ISU Extension, will discuss the production economics. A continuation from the early program will include what FINBIN says about production costs and capital efficiency.

More information will be coming out in the next few weeks on how to access the webinar and how to register.

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Western Iowa Dairy Alliance (WIDA) Update

It's been a busy year so far with Western Iowa Dairy Alliance (WIDA) holding our annual meeting, attending numerous trade shows, planning for the June Dairy month events, and designing a new website. By participating in these events, WIDA continues to fulfill its mission of supporting our farm families,



advocating for this industry, engaging with consumers, and building the next generation of leaders.

March began and ended with attending trade shows. At the Siouxland Home Show in Sioux City, WIDA joined forces with the Iowa Egg Council, NW Iowa Sheep Producer, Sioux Co. Cattlemen's,

Sioux Co. Pork Producers, and Iowa Corn commodity groups to provide information about each industry to attendees. Nearly 10,000 people came to the show and it was a great way to meet our everyday consumers. Central Plains Dairy Expo also provided an opportunity for WIDA to interact with producers and industry professionals. WIDA sponsored a meeting hosted by the American Dairy Coalition titled "Help is on the Way," which provided an update on the Ag Act legislation and the MPP program.

Looking ahead, our June Dairy Month events include Dairy Day at the Children's Museum and the 11th Annual Dairy Open House. Dairy Day at the Children's Museum is taking place on Wednesday, June 27th. The Children's Museum is home to a variety of hands-on activities

for kids, with a large focus on the farm to fork segment. During Dairy Day, WIDA brings baby calves, educational displays, and activities to the museum to further develop the dairy sector of the farm to fork exhibit for the kids and their parents.

This year's open house will take place at Summit Farms, north of Lester, Iowa, on Thursday, June 28th from 4-8 p.m. This annual event attracts nearly 1,500 people every year, educating consumers about the daily operations of a dairy farm. Attendees have the opportunity to tour the farm, view the milking parlor, meet baby calves, and speak with fellow dairy farmers about our industry.

WIDA also has a new website that will be up and running in the coming weeks. Our new site will better serve our members and the general public with up to date information

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about dairy events taking place in the region. WIDA will again host Dairy Day at the Clay County Fair in September, so make sure to check out our website often for the latest information about upcoming WIDA or dairy industry related events.

WIDA will continue to work hard to serve its members. 2018 will provide WIDA the opportunity to reach many consumers and educate the public about the dairy industry, and we look forward to making 2018 another successful year.

If you have any questions, want more information about Western Iowa Dairy Alliance, or want to volunteer at any of our events, please contact Scott Schroeder at 712-441-5308, email info@wiadairy.com, or visit our website wiadairy.com.



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Legislative Update

Through the policy process at the annual meeting in January, the Iowa State Dairy Association set their 2018 legislative priorities. The priorities consisted of two funding priorities and one policy priority.

Funding Priorities

1) Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) Funding:

Following the 2015 Avian Influenza outbreak in the Poultry and Turkey industries, the livestock groups came together to develop a dedicated position within the Iowa Department of Agriculture to focus on animal disease. The original funding request was for \$500,000. Last year the legislature gave the program \$100,000 to begin implementation, and this year the department budget request was for an additional \$150,000. The Governor put the full \$250,000 in her budget proposal and the legislators agreed. FAD funding was increased in the Agriculture Appropriation budget to \$250,000, for FY2019.

2) Veterinary Diagnostic Lab Funding:

The Iowa State Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (VDL) was built in the 1970s and is both obsolete and overcrowded. The regents have had VDL funding as their number one priority for two years. They requested \$20M for five years, for a total state appropriation of \$100M, recognizing the remaining \$25M will need to be raised from outside sources.

Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (VDL) Funding was included in the RIIF Appropriation. While the Governor recommended \$20M for five years starting in FY2020, the legislature set their appropriation amount at \$12.5M for five years starting in FY2020 with \$1M for planning money in FY2019. Legislators understood the importance of a new facility, but lacked the understanding of the high cost of building a comprehensive lab. Since the building money isn't appropriated until FY2020, coalition

members can use the time to better educate and explain the cost associated with the VDL in order to lobby for an increased appropriation going into next year.

Policy Priority

It is extremely important for ISDA to maintain a high standard of quality of its milk product within the industry. Therefore for years the association has been adamantly opposed to the introduction of raw milk in the state of Iowa, recognizing that the contaminated raw milk that causes harm to an individual could be a detriment to all milk production in the state.

ISDA was also heavily involved in defeating three raw milk bills that were introduced in the House Local Government Committee:

- HF 2055 related to unpasteurized milk being available for sale directly by the dairy operator.
- HF 2056 related to unpasteurized milk being available for consumption if the consumer had shared ownership in the dairy animal.
- HF 2057 related to unpasteurized milk being available for sale as commercial fee.

ISDA used facts and data to educate legislators about the seriousness of allowing raw milk sales in Iowa and it still took three weeks to defeat the bills. Most surprising were the legislators located in the middle of diary production areas in Iowa who were unconvinced that raw milk, and more specifically a raw milk illness, could harm the industry. Dairy farmers need to take time during the interim to talk to their legislators about the importance of keeping the dairy industry strong and Iowa milk safe.

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ISDA Objectives: Seek to unite the members of a diversified industry into a purposeful organization* Provide leadership for the Iowa dairy industry* Develop programs to motivate and encourage dairy youth within the industry* Recognize dairy leaders in the state of Iowa* Promote dairy farmers and the dairy industry in Iowa* Representation at meetings impacting the dairy industry* Monitor and influence regulatory issues in Iowa* Act as a primary contact for the dairy industry in Iowa, dedicated to the service of its membership* Organize activities, initiatives and coordinate information for the Iowa dairy industry* Join us today!