President’s Report

Despite Challenges, Positive Dairy Trends Abound

In 1650, the English theologian and historian Thomas Fuller wrote, “The darkest hour is just before the dawn.” We dairy farm families have been through a very dark time. We have had rough spells before, but this down cycle has been very long.

The length and severity has raised debt levels and lowered equity. We have continued to look for the light at the end of the tunnel, but that light seems to be the headlights of a train coming at us.

Like the seasons, economic forces beyond anyone’s control are constantly changing. The changes may be caused by factors such as weather or politics, distorting the rules of the game or the game itself. As a consequence, dairy farm families have left the business or changed their business structure or plan.

However, after the longest downturn in my lifetime, I believe that there are finally a number of positive signs that can give us hope for brighter days to come:

• The world supply/demand picture has improved.
• World dairy stocks have moved lower.
• World dairy production has leveled off.
• More people are discovering and rediscovering that milk is still nature’s most nearly perfect food – a good value!
• Milkfat is being looked at more favorably. Higher fat content improves the taste of dairy. Whole milk sales are up!

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NATIONAL DAIRY MONTH OPEN HOUSES

SATURDAY, JUNE 8 • TIME TBD
Delaware County Breakfast on the Farm

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12 • 4:00-8:00PM
WIDA Open House, Maurice

FRIDAY, JUNE 14 • 7:00AM-NOON
ISU Open House, Ames

SATURDAY, JUNE 15 • 8:00-11:00AM
Jones Dairy Breakfast on the Farm, Spencer

SATURDAY, JUNE 15 • 2:00-6:00PM
Hilltop Dairy Days, Mt. Pleasant

SATURDAY, JUNE 22 • 8:30AM-12:30PM
Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation Breakfast on the Farm, Calmar

SATURDAY, JUNE 22 • 11:00AM-2:00PM
Cinnamon Ridge Dairy Open House, Donahue

SUNDAY, JUNE 23 • TIME TBD
Jackson/Clinton Open House, Bellevue
President’s Report (cont.)

- Milk protein is being recognized as being the very highest quality protein.
- Milk is a versatile product. We in dairy are getting better at innovation and marketing, and we are producing an increasing variety of delicious products.
- It is becoming more widely recognized that dairy farms and families are good for our economy and social structure.
- We are getting better at the export business and producing for foreign markets.
- Trade discussions are underway and may someday benefit us.
- The new Dairy Margin Coverage program will help set a floor under our farm prices.
- Dairy Revenue Protection and LGM insurance programs may help reduce price risk further.
- While sexed semen has been one factor in our oversupply problem, the increased value of crossbred beef calves has decreased the raising of extra dairy heifers.

We may see a reduced supply of available replacements, somewhat limiting growth.
- This extended crisis has brought some discipline to the market: “There may not be a market for unneeded production.”

Your ISDA board, recognizing the tough situation, has eliminated the annual membership fee for 2019. We are moving forward in studying how to best work for more dairy processing capacity, which should lower hauling costs and increase demand for our milk. We will continue to represent you and the Iowa dairy industry as best we can.

I hope this finds you well! May we have sunshine and dry weather, followed by timely summer rains, a good crop, and an extended period of significantly higher milk prices!

My best to you and your family,

Larry Shover
President

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John Sparrgrove
Officio Members
Dr. Don Beermann
Secretary Mike Naig
Dr. Ruth MacDonald
Dr. Joe Colletti
The Iowa State Dairy Association (ISDA) 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 farms 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 a stand on statewide dairy issues. We work 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.

This year has been a tough year for dairy producers. We hope that all dairy producers look into the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program for some much-needed relief.

Together, margins from the first two months of 2019 are already enough to ensure that producers who enroll at the maximum coverage level will receive more in DMC payments during 2019 than they will pay in premiums. The USDA is predicting that coverage at the $9.50 per cwt will generate payments from March all the way through August.

For more information, access the tool at fsa.usda.gov/dmc-tool. For DMC sign up, eligibility and related program information, visit fsa.usda.gov or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

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.

Thank you for your membership and remember to share your dairy story in June for National Dairy Month!

Mitch Schulte
Executive Director

Sign-up for DMC opens on June 17th and coverage is available from $4 per hundredweight to as high as $9.50 per hundredweight. Tier 1 coverage is the first 5 million pounds of production covered by a farm and coverage for Tier 2 remains capped at $8 per hundredweight. Program payments may be triggered monthly and are made if the DMC margin falls below the farmer’s elected coverage level.

To learn more about the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program visit: fsa.usda.gov/dmc-tool

For DMC sign up, eligibility and related program information, visit fsa.usda.gov or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.
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, we’re celebrating our 10th Annual Breakfast on the Farm event which will be held on Saturday, June 22 at Iowa’s Dairy Center, located just 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.

There will be plenty of activities to keep visitors 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 and other elementary school visits are well underway at the Dairy Center. This year, almost 1,400 elementary students from over 30 Northeast Iowa schools will visit Iowa’s Dairy Center. Students visiting learn about dairy nutrition, history, breeds and the digestive system of a cow through a series of morning sessions 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.

With the warmer weather, Iowa’s Dairy Center is beginning to become a more popular tourist destination as we anticipate the bulk of our 10,000 annual visitors to walk through our doors this summer. Visitors from all over the world are stopping by to see our one-of-a-kind facilities and learn more about dairy.

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, history and more. Viewing areas to watch cows being milked in the parlor and by the robots are open 24/7 while guided tours can be arranged during the week. For more information, visit our website at www.iowadairycenter.com.

Providing education for farmers is always a priority.

discontinued on page 5
We’ve hosted several industry meetings, training sessions and events at Iowa’s Dairy Center.

Earlier this spring, The Northeast Iowa Dairy Foundation, in partnership with Iowa State University Extension & Outreach and Western Iowa Dairy Alliance, hosted a three-day, two-night bus trip to Central Plains Dairy Expo. Dairy farmers, students and industry members attended the trip and enjoyed visits to Trans Ova Genetics, Stensland Family Farms Creamery, Travis Tritt Concert, Central Plains Dairy Expo, Gehl Manufacturing Plant, Rock Bottom Dairy and Great-Heritage Holsteins. Thank you to our sponsors who made the trip possible and we’re hoping to continue this trip again next year.

As the semester wraps up for NICC students, we reflect on all of their accomplishments. This spring, NICC students participated in the National Professional Agricultural Student Organization (PAS) competitions in Loveland, Co. There, the dairy science team consisting of Amanda McNally, Rachel Fick and Rebecca Franksain were named national champions. Additionally, Avery Enyart, Ryan Guese and Ryan Kenyon participated in the Midwest Regional Dairy Challenge in Freeport, Ill. 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. Avery was part of the third place team at the contest. In May, students graduated 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 2019 graduates!

Last summer, the Dairy Center Connection print newsletter moved 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, 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.
Join us in Ames for the Midwest Summer Stockmanship & Stewardship experience on June 28-29, 2019. Stockmanship & Stewardship is a unique two-day educational experience featuring live low-stress cattle handling demonstrations, Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) training, and industry updates you won’t find anywhere else.

Beef producers who attend not only receive hands-on training in best management practices to help improve their operation, but also the chance to get both BQA and BQA Transportation certified.

This regional event brings together beef and dairy producers, stakeholders, and key industry leaders to partake in educational programs in cattle handling and management from the industry’s experts. “Attendees will gain an edge on learning about consumer concerns regarding beef sustainability and livestock welfare, how those concerns have impacted the industry, and the role that BQA plays in the conversation,” commented Rusty Gibbs, Director of Industry Relations for the Iowa Beef Industry Council.

All involved within the beef and dairy industries are encouraged to attend and engage in the discussion of current industry challenges, consumer driven trends, and realistic strategies to enhance producer’s commitment to stockmanship and stewardship. Iowa State University Extension Beef Specialist Katy Lippolis stated, “The Midwest is home to a large concentration of cattle fed in the U.S., beef and dairy producers, and livestock transporters. The desire for producers to seek BQA and BQAT certification and education has continued to increase.”

To learn more about the June 28-29, 2019 Midwest Stockmanship & Stewardship event in Ames, visit https://www.stockmanshipandstewardship.org/events/ames-ia.

News from Iowa Beef Industry Council

Midwest Summer Stockmanship & Stewardship Experience Slated for Ames June 28-29

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Spring 2019 • ISDA Newsletter
The dairy cattle industry’s influence on beef production is significant. CattleFax beef audits for 2012-2016 show dairy cows and fed dairy cattle average about 20 percent of total U.S. beef production. About half of the dairy beef came from fed dairy cattle.

Nationally, Iowa ranks twelfth in dairy cow inventory with 215,000 head on January 1, 2017. From 2004 to 2017, nearby state beef cow inventories (Minnesota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin) decreased 1 percent and dairy cow inventories increased 4 percent. Similarly, Iowa beef cow numbers declined 1 percent while dairy cow numbers increased 10 percent over this time period.

Declining veal slaughter also meant dairy animals have accounted for an increased share of the calf crop available for feeder cattle supplies. As the size of the Iowa and nearby beef cow herd declined to 60-year lows with minimal change in total feedlot capacity in the early 2010s, cattle feeders faced increased competition to keep cattle in their feedlots. With dairy animals accounting for a larger percentage of the calf crop and offering a viable option for some cattle feeders to fill excess capacity, more dairy calves have entered feedlots in recent years.

Dairy operations of various sizes and structure are located throughout the state, with the heaviest concentrations of production located in northwestern and northeastern Iowa.

Iowa beef feedlots capitalize on this close proximity of available feeder cattle. A 2014 Iowa Beef Center survey of Iowa feedlots indicated that 8 percent of feedlots typically place dairy cattle on feed and an additional 1 percent of feedlots place dairy × beef crossbreds on feed.

"Source: Iowa State University Extension & Outreach Iowa Beef Center Dec. 2017; "Economic Importance of Iowa's Beef Industry"
**2019 Iowa Statehouse Wrap-Up**

Legislators arrived in Des Moines on Jan. 14, 2019 to kick off the 88th General Assembly and spent 104 days working through hundreds of pieces of legislation.

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**Bills of Interest Signed by Gov. Reynolds to Date**

**SF220** - Corporation Section 179 Expensing. Effective 3-15-19

**SF 519** - Agriculture Trespass. Effective 3-14-19

**SF555** - Relating to weight limitations for certain implements of husbandry. Effective 3-1-19

**Appropriation Bills of Interest**

**SF 609 Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriations** - The department request was a status quo budget with the exception of additional funding for Foreign Animal Disease. $18,327,339 was appropriated to IDALS. The Legislature also provided an additional $250,000 for the Foreign Animal Disease Fund, fully funding the original livestock group’s request of $500,000 for animal health experts in the department to implement and run the FAD program. An additional $300,000 was provided to the Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, making the total funding $4,300,000.

**SF 608 Economic Development Appropriations** - Appropriations included a total of $1,100,000 ($825,000 IEDA and $275,000 to ISU) for the development of a biosciences innovation ecosystem. This is a new appropriation. In order to implement the program as envisioned a policy bill, SF 228 Bioscience Development Board was passed. It replaces the Iowa Innovation Corporation with the Bioscience Development Corporation. Adds developing bioscience as an additional duty. Increases the number of members in targeted industries to 14, makes corresponding reductions in other areas and other membership provisions.

**HF 765 Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund (RIIF)** - Appropriations include: $5,200,000 Water Quality Initiative. The Iowa Water Quality initiative provides funding for prioritized watersheds to implement conservation practices that will reduce nutrient transport to bodies of water in Iowa. Additionally $1,875,000 Agriculture Drainage Wells Funding will go to the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship for the closure of agriculture drainage wells. $3,000,000 Renewable Fuels Infrastructure Program. $1,300,000 Broadband Improvements. The appropriation will connect Iowa farms, schools, and communities with broadband grant funds. $1,060,000 County Fair Infrastructure Improvements. This budgeting unit is for county fair infrastructure improvements; county fairs will receive $10,095 each.

**Policy Bills of Interest**

**HF 750 Department of Agriculture Bill** - A bill for an act relating to the powers and duties of the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, by changing the name of the weather bureau, modifying provisions applicable to demonstration projects involving alternative fuels, transferring certain Code sections, providing for the use of certain appropriated moneys for surface water...
quality, and eliminating certain watershed demonstration projects.

**HF 768 Beginning Farmer Credit** - Establishes a new Beginning Farmer Tax Credit program to replace the Agricultural Assets Transfer Credit. In this bill existing landowners are given a tax credit for leasing their land to beginning farmers. Cash rent, commodity share and flex leases to beginning farmers all qualify for the credit, which is equal to 5% and 15% respectively of the lease payment. Includes calculations for the credit and caps the credit at $50,000 in one year for one farmer.

**HF 769 Special Farm Trucks** - Increases the weight limit for certain special farm trucks to 39 tons with the required additional axles and registration fees.

**HF 772 Rural Broadband/Housing** - In addition to the original provisions in the bill establishing the Empower Rural Iowa Act, changes to incentives to broadband requirements, and the increase in housing tax credits in rural Iowa as well as competitive scoring, the bill now includes $10 million in housing tax credits to help rebuild in flooded areas and requires all housing credits in FY2020 go to small cities.

**HF 778 Farmland Capital Gains Exemption** - Expands who qualifies for capital gains exemptions for the sale of certain farmland. Allows sales to additional entities owned by relatives to qualify. Strikes certain limits on the capital gain deduction if property is sold or transferred within five years. Strikes certain restrictions related to income computations for the income tax.

**SF 170 Agriculture Extension Elections** - A bill for an act relating to the publication duties of and the filing of vacancies on county agricultural extension councils and including effective date and applicability provisions.

**SF 548 Government Land Acquisitions** - The bill restricts the acquisition, donation, or sale of real property for specified purposes by local government from using federal clean water funds to acquire the land unless there is a water quality component. The floor managers spoke about the importance of evening the playing field for farmers who are bidding on the same land but don’t have access to low interest loans from the state revolving loan fund.

**SF 599 Iowa Hemp Act** - The bill would legalize the production, processing and marketing of hemp in Iowa; it would not legalize recreational use of marijuana or cannabis above 0.3 percent THC. Farmers cannot legally grow hemp in Iowa until the U.S. Department of Agriculture approves the state’s proposed regulatory plan, and farmers must have a license from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to grow it.

**Other Bills of Interest**

**SF 634 Property Tax Limits** - The amended bill includes requirements for public hearings and for a 2/3 majority to approve an increase of more than 2% in revenue spending. It does not include referendum procedures as was earlier discussed.

**HF 546 SAVE Fund Purposes** - Extends the SAVE (Secure an Advanced Vision for Education) Fund for the school sales tax until 2051. The bill has been touted as both an $19B tax extension as well as a $4.8B property tax relief.

**HF 732 Medical Cannabidol** - Changes untreatable pain to severe and chronic pain on the health conditions treated under Medical Cannabidiol.

**HF 764 Constitutional Amendments** - Changes the publication requirements for constitutional amendments so that the Legislature and not the SOS is responsible for publication. Deems that an amendment which has been approved by two consecutive General Assemblies shall be submitted for ratification despite any errors in publication.
Western Iowa Dairy Alliance News

WIDA Set to Host Multiple Summer Events to Promote the Industry

National Dairy Month is the perfect time to reach out to consumers and Western Iowa Dairy Alliance is ready to host events to “Bring Dairy to Life.” Our 12th Annual Dairy Open House is scheduled for Wednesday, June 12th at J&S Dairy near Maurice, Iowa.

J&S Dairy began milking cows in the Fall of 2017 with four Lely Astronaut Robotic Milking Units. J&S Dairy is the third dairy in Northwest Iowa to install robots.

With J&S Dairy utilizing the robotic milking system, this is an opportunity to showcase new technology that is available to our dairy farmers while still providing the same quality of care for our cows and producing a wholesome dairy product for consumers to enjoy.

Dairy Day at the Children’s Museum will be held on Wednesday, June 26 at the LaunchPAD Children’s Museum in Sioux City, Iowa. 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.

Later this summer at the Plymouth County Fair in LeMars, the aRound the farm in the BARN exhibit, in the historic Round Barn, will be featuring the dairy industry. WIDA is assisting the LeMars Chamber of Commerce-Agriculture Division with coordinating the exhibit. The exhibit will feature area dairy farmers, displays from all five FFA chapters in Plymouth County focusing on dairy products, dairy farm technologies, and a Mobile Dairy Classroom. The mobile dairy classroom will provide an interactive opportunity to watch a milking demonstration with an educational program. The fair attracts over 100,000 people each year and WIDA and the LeMars Chamber of Commerce are excited to work together to educate the public about the dairy industry.

WIDA will continue to work hard to serve its members making sure to share the dairy industry’s story of providing quality care for its animals and producing a nutritious product. WIDA’s efforts provide the opportunity to reach a large number of consumers, educating the public about the dairy industry and we look forward to continuing representing our dairy farmers making sure 2019 is a 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.
The Ever Expanding Role of Dairy Managers

By Mitch Schulte, ISDA Executive Director

Earlier this month I attended the 25th Annual National Workshop for Dairy Economists and Policy Analysts in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It was an opportunity to hear many of the folks I read about in the national journals and then ask them questions directly.

One of the speakers presented the progression of change in dairy farm managers that I had not thought of before. Prior to 1970, herd owners and managers who were good cow managers and willing to work hard had a profit incentive to expand. However, there was a limit to the number of cows a family could manage and milk each day.

Soon progressive herd owners found that if they hired employees, they could expand their herds and follow the same profit incentive. The successful ones became good people managers and found that well-trained and dedicated employees made them money. This lead to salary incentives, special employee training and using emerging technologies to aid in maintaining cow comfort and productivity. With the advent of automatic milking systems, employers had to carefully evaluate how best to balance technology and employees — this is pushed as low unemployment rates made finding skilled employees harder to find.

This change, along with milk price challenges, has furthered the progression of managers to become good finance and business managers — the best ones had the profit incentive to keep getting bigger. While the herd size is growing faster than ever, during the past 50 years we have progressed from good cow managers to good people managers. We have now entered the era where managers have to focus on being exceptional business leaders.

The other aspects are not ignored, just often assigned to others in the business organization. Today’s herd owners and managers will have to continue to sharpen their financial and business acumen. The dollars and financial risk are just too great and require a specialized skill set.

This change is supported by following the change in milk by herd size. Since the mid-2000s, all sizes of dairies below 500 head have produced a smaller percent of the national milk supply. Herds from 500 to 1,000 cows have mostly maintained their percentage of the national milk supply and herds over 1,000 cows have increased their percentage. Herds over 2,000 cows have seen a dramatic increase.

While successful managers have always had elements of all three traits, today’s herd owners and managers will have to continue to sharpen their financial and business acumen. Being a small or large producer does not change the requirement to manage cows or people well, nor to understand financial opportunities and options. However, as the numbers get bigger, so does the risk.
PRODUCER MEMBERSHIP: $50/YEAR Waived
Open to any individual actively dairy farming by producing milk or raising heifer replacements.

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Available to any individual not actively dairy farming but has interest in the Iowa dairy industry.

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Please contact Mitch Schulte at 319-775-3451 for information on ISDA’s corporate memberships.

Contact Name: _______________________________________________________________________________________

Farm or Business Name: ________________________________________________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________________________ State: __________ ZIP Code: ________________________

Phone: __________________________________________ Cell Phone: __________________________________________

County: ___________________ Email: ___________________________________________________________________

# of Cows: __________ Ship Milk To: ___________________________________________________________________

☐ I wish to opt out of the ISDA Producer Membership. I understand that by checking this box I opt out and will lose the right to the benefits provided by the ISDA.

You can also visit the ISDA website at www.iowadairy.org to fill out an online membership form. Please make Associate Membership checks payable to the Iowa State Dairy Association. For 2019, the ISDA Producer Membership fee will be waived in recognition of the financial restraints in the agricultural industry in Iowa. In 2019, we will review reinstating membership fees for the 2020 calendar year.

While membership dues to the Iowa State Dairy Association are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes, a portion may be tax deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses. However, the portion of membership dues that represent nondeductible lobbying activities of Iowa State Dairy Association is not tax deductible. The nondeductible portion of your dues is 30%. Please return dues and membership form to: ISDA Accounting Office, 2015 Rice Street, St. Paul, MN 55113.