

Dairyman

DECEMBER 2014



Take a Look at the Winning
Calendar Photos



F.A.R.M. Steps Up

by Don Boelens

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**Swiss Valley Farms
 Cooperative**

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Nancy Feeney
 Editor/ Member Relations Mgr.

Swiss Valley Farms will produce, distribute and sell value-added, quality products for our:

- Customers & Consumers
- Owner/Members
- Workforce

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Demonstrating responsible care management on America's dairy farms is always a number one priority. From what we hear from our customers, this seems to be more and more important every single day. Consumers want to know where their milk is coming from and how the animals are treated. America's dairy cooperatives are fortunate to have a program already in place that will let the world know how well you all take care of your animals on your dairies.

This is the National Dairy F.A.R.M. program, or Farmers Assuring Responsible Management. This program has evolved over the past five years to meet the expanding needs of dairy producers and their animals. All the Swiss Valley Farms field representatives have been trained as F.A.R.M. evaluators and are fully prepared to come on your dairy to confirm your excellent animal care and employee training practices.

At their annual meeting in late October, the board of directors of the National Milk Producers Federation took an important step that will raise the bar on this national program to an even higher level. The NMPF board unanimously voted to require that each dairy marketing organization participating in F.A.R.M. must enroll all of its farmer-suppliers



CEO Don Boelens

to ensure full participation in the program.

Under this new policy, cooperatives and processors must require that every dairy producer supplying them will be enrolled in the program. The Swiss Valley Farms board has been examining the importance of the F.A.R.M. program to today's dairy industry and has decided that all co-op members must be enrolled in F.A.R.M. by July 1 of 2016.

"This NMPF Board decision means each farm in a participating cooperative will be held to the same high standards, with no exceptions," says NMPF Board Chairman Randy Mooney. "It demonstrates that the nation's dairy farms, regardless of size, are committed to high-quality animal

(ARTICLE CONTINUES ON PG. 3)

Exciting Plans for Luana Expansion

Swiss Valley Farms has announced a \$20.6 million expansion of its cheese manufacturing facility based in Luana, Iowa. The expansion centers around the improvement of the cheese manufacturing operating equipment, including a replacement of current press vats with a molding system solution, installation of additional system automation, updated press tunnels and new buffer tanks. The project also includes a 12,000 square foot expansion that will allow room for this new equipment and additional warehousing space.

The northeastern Iowa facility was acquired by the company in 1967 when it was called Mississippi Valley Milk Producers Assn. and we merged with the NE Iowa Dairy Cooperative. Over the years, the co-op has added on to this original cheese plant and expanded the production line. Today, we manufacture Swiss, Baby Swiss, Gouda, Cream Cheese, Neufchatel and Sweet Whey in this facility. Increased demand for these products as well as new varieties of cheeses spurred the decision to move forward with this new expansion, according to Swiss Valley Farms CEO

Don Boelens. “Our goal is to increase capacity at this facility, drive efficiency and explore new cheese types that our customers are demanding,” he said.

Expansion efforts are expected to break ground in 2015 and are anticipated to be completed in late 2016. Once completed, the expansion is expected to double the natural cheese production capacity and give the company the flexibility to produce new cheese varieties and sizes, such as Maasdam, Havarti and Muenster. This will also increase the production of Cream Cheese and Whey.

Boelens is excited for the new opportunities this investment will bring. “This expansion will be a great benefit to our customers, our members and to the Clayton County community,” says Boelens. “It will give us the flexibility we need to meet ever-changing market demands and the operational upgrades needed to continue to be a viable business.”



F.A.R.M. _____ Cont. from Pg. 2

care across the supply chain.”

According to NMPF CEO Jim Mulhern, mandatory enrollment in the F.A.R.M. program is needed today more than ever. “We hear it from our customers, from consumers and from the media. Even if we didn’t have to deal with these videos from animal rights groups, we still need to tell consumers the real story about proper animal care on today’s dairy farms.”

Mulhern says he is proud that the NMPF Board of Directors decided to require that in order to be listed as

an organization participating in the F.A.R.M. program, you must require that all your farms are covered by it. “This will strengthen the F.A.R.M. program and further demonstrate to our customers and consumers that we are proud of the care we provide our animals, and we want the world to know it,” he says.

I couldn’t agree more. Let’s show the world what a great job we are doing on our dairy farms by signing up for F.A.R.M. now.

At Leibfried Dairy

Robots Adjust to Organic Lifestyle

by Nancy Feeney

When you live in Wisconsin, starting a major construction project after Thanksgiving seems very optimistic. That's what Leibfried Dairy LLP did last year during what turned out to be one of the coldest winters in decades. Fortunately for everyone, this story has a very happy ending. Their new four-robot parlor was up and running by March and was put on display via an open house in early October. Over 500 dairy enthusiasts came to take a look.

Leibfried Dairy Farms LLP is an organic dairy milking 220 Holsteins consisting of three brothers – Francis, Steve and Ken – and Steve's son Aaron. Francis and his brothers moved to this farm in 2003 and combined their three farms on this 388 acres. Francis moved his conventional herd to Aaron's organic herd. "We were milking both an organic herd and a conventional herd at first," he says. "In 2008, we went all organic."

Why did the brothers get such a late start on their robotic construction project? When you're planning to

install four robots in a new barn, there's a lot of research to be done. They visited many robotic dairies to see the different styles, ask questions and get ideas. There were many, many decisions to be made. All of this, of course, takes time, especially when everything has to be discussed among four people. This intense research began in March 2013. The decision to purchase the Lely robotic setup was made the following November.

Construction quickly began with all cylinders firing! The frame of the new parlor was up before Thanksgiving. The sides went up next and from there, the work was undercover so the construction company labored on all through that bitter cold winter. The barn and robots were up and ready for use by March.

According to Francis, who is in charge of the dairy portion of the operation, when the cows were first introduced to the robotic setup, "there was little sleep for us and a whole lot of work."

As the process always goes, each cow must first be

(ARTICLE CONTINUES ON PG. 6)

At right: Francis Leibfried, right, and his brother Steve were pleased to serve Swiss Valley Farms Baby Swiss cheese to their open house guests. Francis says before the open house, the Leibfried's have been giving tours to people since the robots first started up. "Lely likes to bring in organic farmers from Indiana and Wisconsin to see these robots," he says. "Sometimes, people just show up on the dairy and ask for a visit. It's best if people call ahead. We might not be here if you just drop by."



The cows seem to coexist well with the robots on the Leibfried Dairy.

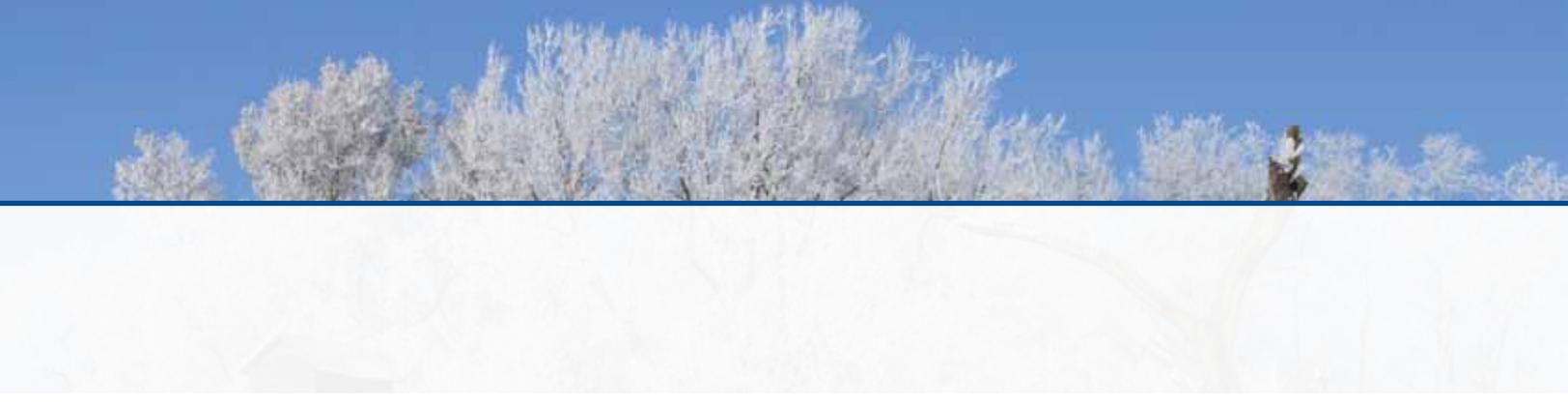
At right, this robot is programmed to slowly move up and down the free stall aisle to push feed up to the cows every hour. Another robot scraps manure out of the aisles and into the pits.

Below right, the front of the new robotic parlor is ready for the open house guests.

Below left, this inside alley separates the double-sided, four-robot setup in the barn.

Along the bottom, guests receive a tutorial on the robotic computer software, Steve Leibfried answers questions by the new bulk tank, and a Lely rep hams it up near the robotic milking parlor.





Leibfried Dairy

Continued Pg. 4

physically pushed into the robotic unit. So the cows were milked in the old parlor and immediately taken to the new barn. The very first time the cow entered the robotic milking unit, she received a tasty food morsel and was given a chance to get familiar with the new surroundings before being gently nudged out by the robot. “We didn’t actually start milking them until the second time we pushed them into the robot.”

Pushing the cows into the robots went on all day and all night for two days, which is a pretty normal timeline for these startups, according to Francis. “We got lots of help with this from our neighbors and other dairy producer friends.”

On the third day, the cows started entering the robots on their own to be milked. There is always a tasty food pellet for the cow every time she enters the robot, which is a good incentive to keep coming back.

“Being organic, we have to pasture the cows and 30 percent of their dry matter must come from grazing,” Francis says. “Most of the year, the cows go out at night to graze. They are supposed to come home in the morning, but they don’t all come in,” he laughs. There are always a dozen or so stubborn cows who insist on staying out in the pasture. So every morning at 6, Francis goes out into the pasture and brings those few cows back into the barn.

It’s one of the robot’s important software functions to send a telephone alert to the dairy producer if it ever detects a problem. When any cows have not been milked within so many hours, an alert goes out via a telephone call. Francis said that in the beginning, the robot was calling him on his cell phone every hour during the night saying, “A cow has not seen a robot for an hour.”

“Of course not!” he would retort. “They are out grazing.”

“When the robot would call me in the night, my wife, Kim, would say, ‘Your girlfriend is calling you again.’” Lely was told to reprogram the robot’s software

to adjust for these grazing habits. “Now the robot waits for four hours before it makes that report so it is no longer necessary to make the call at all.”

While the Leibfried’s know organic farming, none of them would be considered ‘computer’ people. This initial data entry and pushing buttons on the computer a big challenge. “I had Justin from Lely on speed dial,” Francis says.

At first, all the individual cow data must be input into the robot’s software. “I hired someone to do the major load of data entry. By now, three out of four of us could get the robots up and running again if something goes wrong.”

The Leibfried’s also added another different robot, which is programmed to slowly move up and down the free stall aisle to push feed up to the cows every hour. Lely programmed this robot and set up the barriers for it. Yet another robot has recently been added to the Leibfried operation. This one is programmed to scrap manure out of the aisles and into the pits.

Francis was quick to point out that no one really has to be in the barn at any set time. “We only need two people on site to get all the work done, the feeding, cleaning and outside chores.” The cows get milked around the clock, but no one has to be there to milk. “We choose to be here at the same times we used to be,” Francis says. A 12-year Swiss Valley Farms Board member, Francis no doubt finds it easier to be free to attend his monthly board and committee meetings.

Living with robots in the barn is making many people happy these days. “We can all enjoy the holidays with our families this winter.” Francis is also looking forward to watching the entire Super Bowl this year. “I haven’t done that in about 20 years.”

Applications Are Online

SWISS VALLEY SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Swiss Valley Farms is proud to offer scholarships to its co-op members and their children. The scholarship program was begun by the Board of Directors in 1993. At that time, two \$500 scholarships were offered to full-time students studying in an agriculture-oriented occupational field.

Over the past two decades, the Board has expanded the program to keep up with the needs of its members. Recognizing that not every member of a farm family will want or even be able to return to work on the farm, in 2000 the Board added a \$500 scholarship for a student majoring in non-agriculture-related fields. Since then, more scholarships have been added. In 2005, two \$1,000 scholarships were added to the ag major group. Then two more \$500 scholarships were added to the any major

category in order to assist even more co-op members. Today, a total of eight scholarships are available to co-op members.

To guarantee impartiality when scholarships are judged, the co-op seeks out dairy industry-related professionals from the east or west coast areas. These are people who are familiar with the dairy industry and agriculture, but are most likely not acquainted with any of our co-op members.

The 2015 Swiss Valley Farms Scholarship application can be downloaded online at: swissvalley.com under “member” then “Procurement” then “member benefits.”

Good luck, students! We are proud of you all!

Where Can I Buy Swiss Valley Farms Cheeses?

The Holidays are fast approaching! Family and friends will be visiting! Here's how to get some of that excellent Swiss Valley Farms cheese on your dinner table.

1. The Luana, Iowa cheese plant operates a cheese store in the front of the office. A wide variety of cheeses are available, including the newest members of the Swiss Valley cheese family -- naturally smoked Swiss and Baby Swiss. You can also purchase award-winning Baby Swiss wheels, Swiss chunks, cream cheese, cheese curds and other cheeses from Caves of Faribault, Mindoro Blue cheese wedges, and smoked Gouda and regular Gouda. Phone 563-539-7201.

2. A variety of Swiss Valley Farms packaged cheeses are available at the co-op's Procurement Office at the Prairie Farms bottling plant in Dubuque. Phone 563-583-7669 and ask for Ronna.

3. Swiss Valley cheeses may be purchased at the Cheese Cave store in downtown Faribault, Minn. at 318 Central Ave. N. This is the official store of Caves of Faribault and you can find everything that is produced and aged at the Caves as well as other Swiss Valley Farms cheeses. Phone (507) 334-3988.

4. If these shopping locations are not convenient for you, you can order Swiss Valley Farms and Caves of Faribault cheeses on-line at www.cheesecave.com. Have it shipped directly to your door.

For your convenience, purchases at the Dubuque and Luana cheese stores can be charged to your milk check.

Milk haulers who use these two receiving stations may pick up cheese for their patrons and deliver it to their farms.

Here are the 2015 Calendar Contest Winners

We hope you will enjoy your 2015 Swiss Valley Farms calendar that once again features photos taken by co-op members on their farms. All of the entries were a joy to behold! As usual, Swiss Valley Farms Corporate employees were asked to vote on their favorites. The winning photos are shown here and on the cover. Congratulations to the winners!

Please continue to keep your eye out for great photographic moments on your dairy throughout the coming year. As these photos prove, every season offers photo worthy moments on the farm. Use your imagination and capture some dairy farm magic with your camera.



First Place: Hank Fink's fall harvest photo was taken on his farm in Ft. Atkinson, Wis. There's a whole lot to like about this First Place photo. The dust kicked up by the combine catches the setting sun and creates an aura. The barn roofs shine through the dust. I even like the silhouettes of the birds sitting on the telephone wires. Good job, Hank!

Second Place: Sarah Gilbert of Iowa Falls, Iowa, came in second with her lovely winter scene barn scene. I couldn't resist making her photo the December magazine cover. The hoar frost on the trees and the perfect blue sky is the icing on the cake of this beautiful winter farm scene. Sarah proves that gorgeous photos can be taken in the winter.



Honorable Mention: Melanie Junk of Epworth, Iowa, picked up an Honorable Mention with this photo of her son Keaton hamming it up in front of his favorite milk hauler's gleaming truck.



Third Place: Nelda Bailey of Tomah, Wis. enjoys following her children around the farm and snapping photos of them doing their chores. The employees loved to see little Teagan Bailey working intently to push the feed up to the cows.

Winter Is Here. . .

Keep Those Driveways Open!

As the snow piles up this winter, Swiss Valley Farms would like to remind everyone that it is the producers' responsibility to keep their farm driveways well maintained for the milk haulers to be able to get safely in and out while picking up the milk. Keeping these driveways plowed and scraped with good traction is essential to keeping these haulers safe and accident free while at your farm. Please do your part and these men and women will strive to do theirs in the coming winter months.

More Cold Weather Tips from the Field Reps:

Keep the well water running during the bitter cold weather. It is too late once the pipes freeze.

Make sure the space heaters are located in a safe place to avoid fire.

Clean the parlor immediately after milking to avoid frozen manure on floors and walls.

Turn up the water heater if you can because it takes more hot water for washing and unthawing equipment.



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*Ref. #1763. 10lb Executive Summary. Elanco Animal Health, Data on File.

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FIELD PERSONNEL & STATISTICS

Field Department & Procurement Division Directory

During the Month of October, these Swiss Valley Farms Members averaged below 100,000 for their Somatic Cell count.

Chris Hoeger *VP Procurement*

Eldridge, IA 52748

Office 563.468.6628

Mobile 563.340.7943

Nancy Feeny *Member Relations*

3855 Manchester Dr • Bettendorf, IA 52722

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Tim Genthe *Field Information & Logistics Manager*

803 S. School St. • Cuba City, WI 53807

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Home 608.744.3515

Milk Scheduling Hotline:
563-468-6668

Kara Koopmann

Field Information & Logistics Specialist

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Home 563.876.3900

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Office 608.781.5324

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Mobile 563.599.2398

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Cheryl Zablocki-Wagner

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Mobile 920.660.9822

Bob Zielsdorf

309 North St. • Sparta, WI 54656

Mobile 563.599.2399

Home 608.269.5452

Fax 608.366.1772

ALDINGER, ROGER	88,000
BAILEY, MICHAEL & JEAN	90,000
BENNETT, JOHN & CHARLENE	51,000
BREUCKMAN, CHAD	76,000
BRIMEYER, THOMAS W.	83,000
CADDEN, GEORGE & JUDY L.	64,000
CALVERT, KYLE D.	90,000
CAROLAN, KEVIN & DONNA	91,000
DEKLOTZ DAIRY INC.	89,000
DEVORE, RICHARD & VANESSA	73,000
DUTCHLAND DAIRY	95,000
ENDRES, JOHN P.	95,000
ENDRES, JOSEPH E.	95,000
FRICKSON, ANDREW M.	78,000
GAUL, MICHAEL G.	95,000
GAUL, PETER & KIM	95,000
GONZALES, KIM J.	92,000
GORHAM, FLORIEDA	90,000
HENDEL FARMS	49,000
HENKES, MATTHEW	98,000
HENKES, TRENT	98,000
JELSMA DAIRY LLC	94,000
JOHNSON, DUANE	91,000
JOHNSON, ROY A.	91,000
JUNK, MELANIE M.	94,000
KETCHUM, ROBERT C & TERRI A	57,000
MEIER, BRIAN	87,000
MEIER, MIKE & CHERYL	87,000
OPPRIECHT, GERALD & DIANA	85,000
PEARCE, RICHARD J.	74,000
PRIER, DONALD	87,000
SELKE, WALTER	62,000
SELKE, WILLIAM	62,000
THOMPSON, LARRY & LIANE	65,000
VALLEY VIEW DAIRY INC	97,000
VLASAK, STEVEN & SHERRY	64,000
WESSELS, JIM R.	96,000
WORMLEY, JOEL & JAN	97,000

Somatic Cell Range -- Percentage listed is based on number of **A**

Farms	
0-100,000.....	7%
100,001 - 200,000.....	36%
200,001 - 300,000.....	36%
300,001 - 400,000.....	14%
400,001 - 500,000.....	6%
500,001 and above.....	1%



Future Milk Contracts Are Made Through the Blimling Office

Future Milk Contracting is open to Swiss Valley Farms members only. All futures' contracts are made directly through Blimling and Associates. To contract milk, call the offices of Blimling and Associates at 1-800-945-8891 and give them your farm number to get the process started. Through Blimling, you will have access to live market pricing and your contracting window will be larger.

You may contract milk from:

- 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Thursday CST and 8:30 to 1 p.m. Friday CST for the Class III-based program.
- 9:05 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday-Friday CST for Total Price Contracts (this includes Producer Price Contracts) and Options-based contracts.

For more details on Forward Fixed Price Milk Contracting, Swiss Valley members can log on to the members-only section of swissvalley.com.

Have Your Lab Counts Texted to You

Swiss Valley members can now get a text message delivered to their cell phones containing their components from every tank of milk picked up on their dairy as soon as the lab sends the results to Swiss Valley, which is usually the next day.

Lab results include components (butterfat, protein and other solids), SCC and MUN score. The text is identified by the sequence number the hauler puts on the sample when picking up the milk.

To get signed up for texting, send your producer number and your cell phone number and cell phone provider to **tim.genthe@swissvalley.com**.

DECEMBER 2014

Welcome
**NEW SWISS
VALLEY FARMS
MEMBERS**

PATTY DILLY
Montour, IA

AMANDA RUHL
Abingdon, IL

JEFFREY C. ZIMMERMAN
Deerfield, WI

Swiss Valley YC'ers and Facebook users --

This is a great time to join Swiss Valley Farms YC Facebook page. Get connected with your fellow Swiss Valley YC'ers. To get on board, send an e-mail to nancy.feeney@swissvalley.com. Your invitation to join will soon be on its way!

swiss valley farms

ANTIBIOTIC POLICY

Antibiotic Policy

If a member suspects antibiotics in his or her bulk tank & calls a SWISS VALLEY FARMS field representative to report this before dumping the milk:

- **1st time** in a calendar year, the coop will pay 80% of the milk.
- **2nd & 3rd times** in a calendar year, the coop will pay 50% of the milk.
- **Over 3 times** in a calendar year, the coop will pay **zero**.

On the 1st offense, if a member has purchased a test kit and detects the positive antibiotic milk, SWISS VALLEY FARMS, CO. will reimburse that member \$75.00 toward the cost of the test kit.

All claims must be received by the corporate office for payment no later than 60 days after the milk was dumped.

The earliest dated claim turned in will be paid at 80% payment.

If antibiotics are found to be present in a farm truckload as a result of a screening test, the member will NOT be paid for that shipment of milk, and will be assessed as follows:

Full cost of net load plus the cost of disposal.

Net load = total pounds on the load minus the member's pounds.

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