

Women of the Farm Event 2017 Date to Be Announced Soon

We'll soon be announcing the date of our 3rd Annual Women of the Farm Luncheon — An invitation has been extended to a fabulous speaker, and once confirmed we can finalize the date and share all details.

Last year's event was filled to capacity! We welcomed special guest speaker, Kim Bremmer, of Ag Inspirations. Kim shared how our industry is being perceived by consumers and the importance of being a vocal champion for agriculture. We all laughed at her stories and how she never misses an opportunity to tell her own ag story, whether she is at the grocery store or the airport. Hopefully, she inspired you to tell your story this year.

We look forward to bringing you another opportunity for learning, fun and socializing. Watch for your invitation in next month's milk check.



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November 2016

Ellsworth Production Facility Expansion Project

If you've visited Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery's Ellsworth plant, you've certainly noticed the rather large hole in the ground outside the building. This past September we began an expansion project that will continue through early 2017.

The expansion is necessary to allow us to better keep up with demand for our value-added products. "Plain and simple, we've outgrown our space," said Paul Bauer, CEO/Manager. "At our current rate of growth, we'll max out our production capabilities by the middle of next year. We either do something now or we stop growing."

The 28,000 square foot addition will increase capacity by adding cooler and dry storage space, some of which has been designed to be converted into additional cooler space in the future, if needed.

New production space will expand operations from two production lines to four lines that will run simultaneously. Two of the new lines will accommodate cheese cutting and wrapping, and two will be dedicated to various cheese curd packaging.

Packaging of small batch artisan cheeses will transfer entirely from the Comstock plant to Ellsworth once the expansion project has been completed. This will free up much needed space for small batch cheese production there.

The new addition will be fairly simple in construction and result in no loss in current production. The two-story structure will be insulated cinder block construction with a white steel exterior.

According to current construction timelines, the building should be weather-tight by January 1, 2017, at which time interior plumbing, wiring and finishing work will begin.

Plans are to begin to move product lines in early March with full utilization of the new space to take place in early spring of 2017.

The additional production capabilities will also lead to an expanded workforce. By the completion of the project approximately 20 new positions will be created. Positions range from general labor and line worker positions, to more skilled office personnel and production supervisors.

"After months of study, planning and discussions at the board level, it's great to see the project finally getting underway," says Bauer. "As a cooperative we're very cognizant of how we spend our member's money and our Board is much attuned to that. This is a plan that's been worked and revised over the past 18 months and we're confident the sizing and scope fits our growth patterns and what we can afford as an organization, yet still allows us options for future growth."



Slow but sure, the project is progressing. We're building a strong foundation in preparation for a great future.

ellsworth cooperative creamery

dairy proud for over 100 years.

National FARM Program: Version 3.0

Implementation of the next phase of the National FARM Program will begin in January 2017. Details are still forthcoming. However, here's what we know so far.

In March of 2016, the NMPF Board of Directors approved a resolution that adopts and endorses the NMPF Animal Health and Wellbeing Committee's recommended changes to the program. These changes are being referred to as "Version 3.0".

Version 3.0 will focus on two priority phases:

Phase One Priority Areas = Mandatory Corrective Action Plan (MCAP): Written plan agreed upon between the dairy producer and FARM 2nd Party Evaluator and/or Veterinarian of Record (VOR) that outlines necessary steps to comply with Priority I Animal Care Standards. Such MCAP requires re-evaluation not to exceed one year's time. Failure to complete the MCAP may result in a Notice of Removal.

Phase Two Priority Areas = Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP): A written proposal that identifies any area(s) for improvement in animal care. It specifies actions to make the improvement and a suggested timeline for completion.

More information, including FAQs, can be found at NationalDairyFarm.com. Your Field Rep will also be sharing updates with producers as they become available.

A Wake-Up Call in Engaging Globally

By Paul Bauer, CEO, Manager
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This year's National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) Conference was held in Nashville, TN, October 31 through November 2. Once again I attended the conference; it's always interesting to

connect with other producers and cooperative managers, learn from varying perspectives within the industry, and receive updates on what's taking place in the industry, both domestic and globally.

I was excited by the overall tone of this year's conference. I felt as an industry we are communicating in a much more unified voice than in the past. For example, we know the Margin Protection Program isn't working. Unlike similar challenges in the past, I was encouraged by how solutions are being discussed (with the exception of the Regional Feed Modifier).

Unilaterally, the goal is to keep the Margin Protection Program, but make it realistic. Rather than adjust the program to make it meet budget parameters, the focus is on ensuring it meets the needs of today's producers. In my opinion, that's a much smarter strategic approach.

However, I'm afraid our industry also had a big wake-up call during the conference: We've spent a little too much time in our own backyard.

We've been so attentive to the domestic issues of our industry, such as the Margin Protection Program, The National Dairy FARM Program, addressing the anti-GMO movement, to name a few, that we took our eye off of the world stage and missed taking part in larger global conversations taking place.

I was surprised to learn that unbeknownst to the United States' dairy industry, the United Nations, and even the Pope, have been pushing various policies that have the potential to greatly impact our industry.

For example, various international interests are working to mandate new and stricter global sustainability, animal welfare, and animal vaccination requirements/limitations that could affect our farming practices here at home.

Our industry has learned a valuable lesson, albeit the hard way. Not only is it important to our profession that we talk in a unified voice nationally, we must also be prepared to act internationally. Hopefully it's not too late to pull up a chair to the table and begin taking part in world-wide discussions for the benefits of all producers here at home.

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Big Wins at the NMPF National Cheese Competition

The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) held its 2016 Annual Meeting October 31 through November 2, at the Gaylord Opryland Resort in Nashville, TN. Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery was represented by board members Scot Meyer, Jerry Croes and CEO, Paul Bauer.

Aside from networking with other dairy professionals and the industry news, one of the highlights of the annual meeting is the Championship Cheese Competition. This year a total of 164 entries were submitted, totaling more than 2,500 pounds of cheese to be judged.

We're thrilled to report that once again Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery brought home several awards, with our cheese curds sweeping the entire 'Snack Cheese' category! This is the third year in a row!

Our Blaser's Smoke & Bacon Cheddar, made in our Comstock plant, took first

place in the 'Unique or Mild Flavor' category.

Once again, our Blaser's Hot Pepper Jack, also crafted in our Comstock plant, took top honors with a first place win, shutting out the competition yet again in the 'Hot or Spicy Flavor' category.

And proving that there's no better cheese snack anywhere, in the 'Cheese Snack' category it was Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery Cheese Curds taking 1st (Taco), 2nd (Garlic), and 3rd (Cajun) place. Take that cheese sticks!

The Board extends heartfelt congratulations to all who take part in making our products worthy of such recognition. From our cheese making staff, to you, our patron farmers; it's your hard work and an ongoing dedication to quality that makes our products award winning and our brand one we can be proud of.



Pictured: Paul Bauer, ECC CEO/Manager, Randy Mooney, NMPF Board Chairman, Jerry Croes, ECC Board Member, Scot Meyer, ECC Board Member, Jim Mulhern, NMPF President/CEO.

Will the Election Impact My Farm?

We have a new President-elect. After such an unusual and unique campaign cycle, it's natural to wonder what impact a new electorate will have on our industry.

What the future holds remains to be seen. However, complacency is never a good strategy and so we'll remain active within our circles of influence as it relates to ag policy, and we encourage you to do the same.

In addition, we'll be encouraging organizations, such as the National Milk Producers Federation, among others, to advocate aggressively, both nationally and internationally, to protect and strengthen agricultural policies and interests.

Jim Mulhern, President and CEO of NMPF released this statement on November 9, 2016:

"We congratulate Donald Trump on his election as the 45th president of the United States, and look forward to working with the Trump Administration on issues that will help strengthen the U.S. economy, provide regulatory clarity to those in agriculture, and expand opportunities for America's dairy farmers.

In the coming months, we will share our views with the White House and cabinet-level agencies – as well as members of the Senate and House – on strategies that will help achieve these goals. We must strengthen the safety net for dairy farmers here at home, grow markets for farm exports abroad, and ensure that pro-farmer policies are in place in areas including labor, environmental regulation and taxes."