

## Women of the Farm Event

Save the Date  
Saturday, January 18, 2020

The date is set for our 6th annual Women of the Farm luncheon! More details and your official invitation will be coming your way soon (watch your December milk checks). However, for now, reserve Saturday, January 18, 2020 on your calendar! We look forward to bringing you another opportunity for learning, relaxation, fun, and socializing. We always have a great time together and we hope to see you again this year!



Here we are at last year's event. Look at those smiles! We were pampered and it shows—we all had soft hands from the lotions we made at the "body butter bar" and relaxed shoulders after our turn at the massage chair. The wine tastings didn't hurt either!

**CHEERS to CHEESE**

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November 2019

## The Art of Planning for the Future

As 2019 comes to a close, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery's CEO, Manager, Paul Bauer, shares his thoughts about our focus on 'value-added' and how that this has served us throughout the past year and will come to mean as we look forward.

Let's set the tone for this month's article : Value-added carried us in 2018, propelled us in 2019, and we need to look at how to add fuel to it for the future. I have been using the term 'value-added' for years and I will continue to for the years to come.

Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery is having a good year. The products, processes and alignment with production are doing what we want them to do in 2019 based on the commodity markets we have today. That is all well and good, but we need to work on what will drive member milk value going forward.

We are working with the board to develop those plans, processes, procedures and people to make sure they will work with the current and future of the cooperative. We can't wait to plan just because things are going well today—we need to be ready for the upcoming needs of the cooperative.

It sounds easy, right? Well, not so long ago it was about reduced-fat everything. That's not the case today. Then it was reduced-salt, now not so much. So, what are the future trends?

Cut cheese for consumer use is a growing area—the US is consuming more cut cheese each year. They are purchasing flavors that are unique from small batches—they like to think each one is made just for them. They like small label brands. In fact, the main-label companies are flat in sales. Consumers want quality and flavor at a fair price.

On the foodservice side, buyers want performance and flavor. We sell a lot to foodservice product—Restaurants want a product that performs for their

menu, to provide the purchasing consumer flavor and a great meal. This is where the Wohlt plant comes into play, making processed cheese to meet those needs.

The natural cheese plants can fill those needs as well in some of the offerings we have. Cheese curds can be custom-flavored and sized to meet the needs of foodservice. Natural cheese can be flavored or shaped to give a dish or sandwich a special flavor or unique flair.

To maintain our existing level of sales, we need to plan to address our customer's future needs, yet our plans must be within our limits of financial and management expertise. We will continually look at options that will fulfill those requirements.



The annual World Dairy Expo, a celebration of one of America's key agricultural sectors, was held last month in Madison. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue attended a town hall meeting and fielded questions from the media, producers, and dairy farmers.

Our Paul Bauer was there and took the opportunity to stress his frustration, in the form of a lengthy question, about the price spread between block and barrel cheese prices. While the Secretary remarked he hears a lot of questions about milk orders and wants to make sure there is no predatory pricing, he promised to look into the matter further.

ellsworth cooperative creamery

dairy proud for over 100 years.



## News Bites...

### SAVE THE DATE: Annual Meeting

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery's Annual Meeting. Watch for Board of Director self-nomination forms and more details to come your way soon!

### Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery Annual Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 2020

Lunch: 11:30am

Meeting: 12:30pm

C3 Church

(formerly CrossRoad Community Church)  
W7562 US Highway 10, Ellsworth

### The Holiday Gift Box Season is Underway!

It's hard to believe that it's gift box time! We're so excited to roll out this year's gift box line-up featuring our top-selling cheese collections!

Once again this year, we're featuring our Ellsworth Valley limited edition box--The entire Ellsworth Valley collection of cheeses in a hand-crafted distressed wooden box stamped with the Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery logo!

View the catalog online at [EllsworthCheese.com](http://EllsworthCheese.com), or request a copy by calling 715-273-4311 ext. 225. Hopefully, we just made your gift-giving easier!

### Updated Cheese List

We recently updated our retail store Cheese List to include all our most current offerings. You should have received a copy with your last milk check. To request additional copies, or to place an order, call 715-273-4311, ext. 225.

## CME Finally Taking Notice of Market Glitch

By Paul Bauer, CEO, Manager  
[paulb@ellsworthcreamery.net](mailto:paulb@ellsworthcreamery.net)



WHAT is going on with the markets today? As I write this, Barrel prices are higher than Blocks. How can this be?

The government has several trade purchase programs that require barrel cheese. The government purchase is causing barrels to be very short and must meet standards higher than what the CME allows barrels to be sold on the exchange.

In addition, the past conditions on the block and barrel spread has caused other problems for large companies and the CME. To create a futures contract there is a lot of math behind it to make it a financial tool that can be used by companies to hedge risk.

The barrel manufactures have been telling the CME of the problems without any action. In fact, they said the markets were working well as evidence of the volume of barrels being traded. However, they forgot the barrels being traded were below the industry standard as western companies found a new method to make cheese that doesn't melt and thus is traded at a discount.

So after 4 years of pointing out the issue, the CME is in panic mode as the math doesn't work for futures contracts when the spread is so wide. Now they need to fix the spread or the contracts are unusable. I am unsure of

what will get fixed first, but they are finally taking notice.

### Celebrating National Cheese Curd Day!

It's a holiday made for us! We joined the nation in celebrating National Cheese Curd Day on October 15.

Twin Cities Fox9 televised from the Creamery throughout the morning via live remote. Each segment followed the curd making process from when the milk arrives at the Creamery to its transformation into the squeaky curds that have made us famous.

Later in the day, Jarrod Luther, Assistant Director of Operations, and Becky Beissel, marketing team member, appeared on Kare11 to answer the question on everyone's mind, "Why do cheese curds squeak?"

It was a great day of PR and we have no regrets!

**When you have no regrets the day after national cheese curd day:** 🧀



## Customers Flock to Ellsworth Creamery for Apple Festival

Our loyal fans will follow us anywhere! We proved that point one sunny Saturday this past September when we threw a party for all things APPLE.

During Apple Festival our Ellsworth retail store staff showcased the variety of apple and apple-themed items we sell there, including hard cider, apple pancake mix, apple cheese curd brats, caramel apple fudge, green apple ice cream sundaes, and more!

Guests enjoyed free food samples while shopping pop-up vendors set up under the Apple Festival tent in the parking lot.



While not to the scale of the Cheese Curd Festival, the Apple Festival attracted a crowd of hundreds for food samples and shopping during a beautiful September afternoon.

### BY THE NUMBERS: The Minnesota State Fair

It was another record year at the Great Minnesota Get Together and that means record cheese curd consumption. State Fair cheese curd sales were up in 2019 by 8,925 lbs.! Here's a breakdown:

Natural curds = 129,000 lbs.

Flavored cheese curds = 16,350 lbs.

**Total 2019 cheese curd consumption = 145,350 lbs.**

## Big Cheese Wins!

The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) held its 2019 Annual Meeting earlier this month in New Orleans. One of the highlights of the event included the Championship Cheese Competition! We walked away with some great wins!

~ 2nd Place: Processed American Category (Plain): Wohlt Swiss American

~ 2nd Place: Processed American Category (Flavored): Wohlt Swiss Onion

~ 2nd Place: Unique or Flavored Category, Hot and Spicy (Pepper, Jalapeno, Ghost Pepper, Habanero, chipotle, etc.): Blaser's Habanero Ghost Pepper Monterey Jack

And proving one again that there's no better cheese snack anywhere, our Cajun Cheese Curds retained the title with a 1st Place in the Natural Cheese Snack Category. Hickory Bacon Cheese Curds took a 2nd Place win. Take that cheese sticks!

From our cheese making staff, to 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.

### NOTICE! Federal Survey

Wisconsin patron farmers, please be aware that we are due for a survey **BY MARCH 5, 2020!** Now is the time to prepare for that inevitability.

We suggest reviewing the results from your last inspection, particularly the areas where you failed to pass. Ensure that all of these areas have been corrected. It's a simple common sense tip, yet one that is often ignored and upsets inspectors.