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1. Register Now for Great Milk, Great Markets International Conference

Dairy producers and processors specializing in the exploding arena of value-added dairy products should plan now to attend the "Great Milk, Great Markets" conference in September. "It all begins with great milk" is the theme for the Sept. 11-12 event at the Radisson Hotel in La Crosse, Wis. Attendees will meet innovative industry leaders and hear ideas they can apply to their own businesses.

The line-up of speakers and sessions includes:

- **Global Milk Markets and Models, International Panel.** Including Simon Tucker of the Fonterra Co-operative Group, New Zealand, George MacNaughton from the Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Gerardo Ortiz Gonzalez, a cheese research scientist from Mexico and Karen Nielsen of the Babcock Institute, who will speak about China's dairy industry. The panel will provide perspectives on how other countries are innovating to meet the needs of the 21st century dairy market.
- **Bill Luth, Tillamook County Creamery, Oregon.** Tillamook Cheese is a 100-year-old farmer-owned cooperative committed to the core values of quality and cooperation. Luth will address the importance of milk quality to the production of high quality cheddar cheese.
- **Dan Strongin, Edible Solutions.** Strongin will present an interactive, high energy session on turning value-added products into profit - the difference between mere gambling and taking calculated risks can be all you need to know to turn a profit.
- **Donna Berry, Dairy and Food Communications, Inc.** Berry will share what's new in the world of 21st century milk, including the new world of yogurt drinks, smoothies, flavored milk, fortified dairy drinks, meal replacements and sports beverages.

Conference registration is \$85 if received before Aug. 29 and \$125 after Aug. 29. Registration includes all lectures and panel discussions, speaker handouts, a cheese and wine reception, breakfasts and a buffet lunch on Sept. 11. For information and to register, visit: <http://babcock.cals.wisc.edu/events/milk.en.html> or call 608-265-0673. The conference is sponsored by the Babcock Institute for Dairy Research and Development, the UW Madison Department of Food Science and the Dairy Business Innovation Center.



2. DBIC Team Member Monthly Message



This month we hear from **Dan Strongin**, DBIC Marketing Consultant. Dan discusses "Taste, Taste Again: Selecting Cheeses to Mature."

At the American Cheese Society annual conference, I listened intently to Edward Appleby, a traditional Cheshire cheesemaker, and David Lockwood of Neal's Yard Dairy in England explain how they select young cheeses for aging. Common sense suggests selecting is something important, but to my knowledge, few of us are doing it.

Years ago I visited the winery of Louis Mousset in Provence. After tasting every wine they made, I asked Louis Mousset Sr. his secret, as every wine was delicious. He told me, "When I was 9 my father took me to the winery and we tasted the grapes before and after crushing; the juice going into the vats; the young wine going into the barrels - at 1 week age, at one month, at 6 months, etc. Every day from then on I have tasted in the same way. Now I can taste a grape fresh off the vine and know exactly what our wine would taste like in the future."

I kept this in mind as I listened to speaker Edward Appleby's key points:

- As you taste, or "grade" your cheese, rub a piece in your fingers to mush it so you can feel the moisture content, then smell it, then place it in your mouth.
- Taste repeatedly and keep reliable records on your evaluation of appearance, aroma, texture and flavor, using a simple ranking system.
- Include production codes or dates so you can refer back and learn later.
- Look for cheeses that develop in a balanced way as candidates for aging.
- If sour or other tastes start to develop early, sell it young. Too early development can lead to bitterness with age.

And then I listened to David Lockwood of Neal's Yard Dairy, who stressed:

- Pay attention to the moment of tasting, have few distractions, categorize your experience, and remember, cheese tastes different every day.
- Use your notes as a learning tool. When you taste a great version, go back and study the make sheets and tasting notes.
- Continuously talk with your customers. Learn what people like about your cheese when it is good. Apply those values to your criteria for tasting.
- Involve the public in the process at demos and at the creamery.

How many times and when should you taste each batch? I can't tell you. Only you can find out by tasting, tasting and tasting again.

3. New Organic Report Discusses Consumer Awareness, Attitude of Dairy

Organic – a buzzword often associated with wholesome, healthy products that carry a higher price tag. Are these the feelings of the average consumer? Many consumers are curious about the organic trend in dairy products on the market today. Likewise, those who produce organic are interested in consumers' attitudes and usage of their organic products. Do consumers really know what it means to be organic?



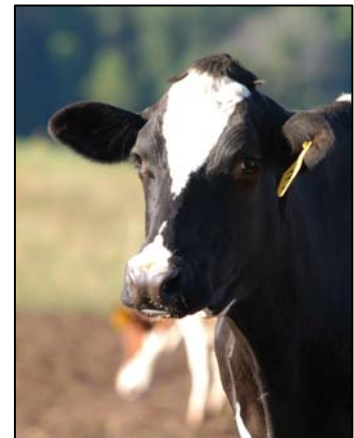
The Dairy Business Innovation Center, in conjunction with Voltedge, Inc, a marketing communications firm, regularly conducts focus groups for clients wishing to have consumers evaluate their concepts, labels and/or products. Since the first focus group in November 2004, ten focus groups have been

conducted and organic dairy has been a popular subject of evaluation. Janet Ady, President of Voltedge and moderator for the DBIC focus groups, has noticed patterns in the consumer interest of organic dairy. "Consumers are interested in organic," she says. "There seems to be some consistencies in what people know and don't know about organic, and that information will be very helpful to those who make organic dairy products."

In an effort to synthesize all the information pertaining to organic from the DBIC consumer focus groups, Ady has put together a report to draw some preliminary generalizations about consumers' awareness, attitudes and usage of organic dairy products. This report serves as a starting point for more focused research on organic in the next DBIC focus group, which will probe consumers deeper for their attitudes and usage of organic. These findings will supplement the current report. DBIC clients may request a copy of the preliminary organic report from their DBIC client manager. A follow-up report will be available in October.

4. Industry News

- **Grants Available for Johne's Disease Risk Management Program:** Wisconsin cattle and goat producers may apply until Aug. 31 for grants up to \$1,000 for equipment and materials that help control Johne's disease on their farms. To be part of the program and eligible for grants, farmers must have had an initial or renewal Johne's disease risk assessment done by a certified veterinarian in the past 14 months or complete one before applying for these funds. These grants must be used in projects recommended in herd plans that result from the risk assessment. Grants will reimburse dairy and beef producers up to \$1,000, and goat producers up to \$600, or 75 percent of the cost, whichever is less. Producers must pay at least 25 percent of the project cost. Grants will cover costs incurred between July 1 and Nov. 30, 2006. Applications will be evaluated and ranked after Aug. 31, and applicants will be notified by Sept. 15 whether they will receive funding. Application materials are available by calling or emailing Debbie Elliott, 608-224-4893, deb.elliott@datcp.state.wi.us, or Dr. Darlene Konkle, 608-224-4352, darlene.konkle@datcp.state.wi.us.
- **Dairyland State Academy Proposal Moves Forward:** A proposal to create an academy to train dairy farmers is moving forward, as members of the Marathon County Finance Committee voted this week to recommend releasing the remaining monies it set aside to explore the creation of the Dairyland State Academy in Marathon County. It will be presented to the Marathon County Board on Aug. 24 and board members are expected to act on the recommendation Aug. 29. The program would be based on Northeast Iowa Community College's dairy science program, offered at its dairy education and applied research center in Calmar, Iowa. If the County Board approves the release of the funds, it will allow the academy to set up a governing board, incorporate and seek nonprofit status. It would also enable it to raise money and develop a strategic plan and curriculum, according to Marathon County Administrator Mort McBain.
- **Artisan Cheese Vats For Sale:** BelGioioso Cheese is selling horizontal cheese vats with round corners and capacities between 5,000 and 7,000 pounds each. Ideal for small artisan cheese production with very good agitators. Contact Lisa Cumbers, BelGioioso Cheese, at 920-863-2123.



6. Upcoming Important Dates

- **August 23: Farmstead Cheesemaking Seminar: Cheese Cultures and Enzymes. Wisconsin.**
This one-day seminar will focus on understanding cultures and enzymes for the production of farmstead and artisan cheeses. Workshop instructors Neville McNaughton, DBIC consultant and president of CheezSorce, and Dave Potter, president of Dairy Connections, Inc., will lead this hands-on event, with the morning session providing an in-depth presentation and discussion of cultures and enzymes, and the afternoon covering hands-on experiments with various cultures and their properties. Location will be the Danisco office in Madison (2802 Walton Commons, Madison, WI). Cost for the workshop is \$100 per person, which covers all instruction materials, hands-on experiments and lunch. Registration is due July 28. To register or for more information, contact Heidi Busse at 608-224-5047 or heidi.busse@datcp.state.wi.us
- **August 25: WI Academy Future of Farming and Rural Life: Rural Education and Health Care, Menasha, Wis.** A full day of activities focusing on health care and education in rural Wisconsin will take place at the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley center in Menasha. The WI Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters is presenting the forum, the fourth of six it is hosting throughout the state. WI Superintendent of Public Instruction Elizabeth Burmaster will present her insights, concerns and priorities in rural education while Wisconsin Secretary of Health and Family Services Dr. Helene Nelson will speak to rural health care. The program is from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with a networking reception featuring local cheeses and foods from The Washington Hotel to follow. Registration required; there is no fee for the session, but a \$12 fee covers meals. To register, visit www.wisconsinacademy.org/idea
- **August 26: Author Nina Planck Presentation, L'Etoile Restaurant/Café Soleil, Madison, Wis.**
Nina Planck is the author of *Real Food: What to Eat and Why*. In her book, Nina discusses why traditional foods and whole dairy foods are not only delicious but also very good for you. In addition, Nina has been a local foods leader as founder of farmers markets in London and Washington D.C., in addition to running New York City's famous Greenmarket. The daughter of Virginia vegetable farmers, she wrote *The Farmers' Market Cookbook* and hosted a British television series on local food. Nina will talk about food nutrition and their cultural significance as she conducts a book signing and from 9-11 a.m. in front of L'Etoile, and then presents a talk from 4-5 p.m. at Café Soleil. For more information, contact Lael Grigg at L'Etoile at 608-251-0500.
- **Sept. 15: Goat Field Day for Southwestern Wisconsin Goat Producers. Richland Center, Wis.**
Serenity Springs Farm LLC and Riverdale Ag of Muscoda Wis. are hosting an event for farmers interested in the potential of Wisconsin's goat industry. The field day will be held at the Richland County Fairgrounds from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration is due by Aug. 18. Contact Victoria Kumbier at 608-532-6494 or email skumbier@mhtc.net
- **Sept. 15-16: Food for Thought Festival, Martin Luther King Blvd, Madison, Wis.** This annual festival is a fun, festive forum that explores and celebrates our many opportunities to eat more pleasurably, healthy and sustainably. Friday evening will feature presentations on the topic of Eat GRUB: Putting Justice on Your Plate with Anna Lappe (who co-authored *Hope's Edge: The Next Diet for a Small Planet* with Frances Moore Lappe), guest chef Mollie Katzen (award-winning illustrator, cookbook author and culinary historian), Jim Goodman (owner of Northwood Farm in SW Wisconsin) and moderator Larry Meiller. Wisconsin artisan and farmstead cheeses to be featured at a pre-lecture tasting. Focus is on local, regional products. For more information, contact Miriam Grunes at info@reapfoodgroup.org



- Sept. 21: Goat Bacchanal: A Celebration of Wisconsin's Artisan Goat Cheeses. Milwaukee, Wis.** Join a feast of Wisconsin's finest artisan and specialty goat cheeses at this evening's tribute to the goat in downtown Milwaukee. From 6-9 p.m. at the Milwaukee Center Atrium (111 E. Kilbourn Ave., corner of Water and Kilbourn), this event will feature Wisconsin award-winning goat cheeses and a chance to visit with some of the state's most celebrated cheesemakers. The event will not only be a decadent celebration of great food, but cheesemakers will showcase newly released cheeses giving attendees the first taste. Cost is \$20 per person and includes all tastings, wine, hors d'oeuvres and desserts. Attendance is limited, so contact Steve Ehlers at Larry's Market, 800-236-1307 or email steve@larrysmarket.com now to reserve tickets. The event is sponsored by the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Association and Larry's Market.



- Oct 3: Butter Grading Seminar. Madison, Wis.** This seminar will coincide with the Wisconsin Dairy Products Association's annual dairy products evaluation clinic during the World Dairy Expo at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison. This full-day seminar will provide dairy industry and retailing personnel the opportunity to sharpen their grading skills while also gaining a better understanding about present USDA and WI grading standards and how they are applied. The seminar will feature a comprehensive discussion of common defects in butter, what buyers are looking for and how to properly package, handle and grade butter, all in compliance with Wisconsin Food Safety standards. For further information or to register, please visit WDPA's website at www.wdpa.net or call 608-836-3334. For general inquiries, contact Heidi Busse at 608-224-5047.
- Oct. 3: Butter Dinner at Harvest Restaurant. Madison, Wisconsin.** Oleo runs, "western grease" and the Babcock test are just a few highlights in the entertaining history of Wisconsin butter. Join Tami Lax and Chef Justin Carlisle as they prepare a 5-course meal and ode to one of our state's treasures, butter. The evening will include a presentation and guided tasting tour. Cost for the dinner is \$40 per person, with wine pairings extra. For more information or to register, please contact Heidi Busse at 608-224-5047 or heidi.busse@datcp.state.wi.us
- October 3-7: World Dairy Expo, Madison, Wis.** Four Wisconsin agricultural agencies and organizations will partner and host a joint "Wisconsin is the Best Place to Dairy" booth at World Dairy Expo. Participating organizations are: WI Dept. of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection, Dept. of Commerce, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association and UW-Extension. Staff will assist visitors with questions and opportunities on how to re-invest in Wisconsin dairying. For more information, contact Jeanne Carpenter at 608-358-7837.
- Nov. 9-11: Great Lakes Dairy Sheep Symposium. LaCrosse, Wis.** The Dairy Sheep Association's announces its 12th Great Lakes Dairy Sheep Symposium, to be held in La Crosse, WI on Nov. 9-11. This international event brings together dairy sheep producers, researchers and processors from across North America and Europe to discuss current industry issues. Features of this year's conference include a tour of Carr Valley Cheese and a visit to a farmstead artisan cheesemaker and sheep producer. For more information, visit www.dsana.org or contact Yves Berger at yberger@facstaff.wisc.edu or 715-635-3735.

The Dairy Business Innovation Center offers technical assistance to dairy producers and processors in developing value-added dairy products, business planning and market development. For more information, visit www.dbicusa.org or contact Jeanne Carpenter, 608-358-7837.