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1. 5th Annual Focus on Goats Conference Well-Attended

Over 150 dairy goat producers, cheesemakers and industry leaders from across the nation attended this year's 5th Annual Focus on Goats Conference, held Oct. 21-22 at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. The two-day conference featured a vast array of speakers and educational seminars, as well as a cheese tasting reception.

Conference topics included seminars for both dairy goat producers and dairy processors.

Relevant topics for producers included:

- Goat nutrition calculator (Dr. Steve Hart, Langston University)
- Improving ventilation in goat barns (Dr. David Kammel, UW Extension)
- Introduction to milking machine function (Dr. Doug Reinemann, UW-Madison)
- Claws and inflations for goats (Pete Draeger, Coburn Company)
- Biosecurity measures for goat farms (Dr. Elizabeth Patton, WI-DACTP)
- Disease testing for goats (Dr. Donald Sockett, UW Vet Diagnostic Lab)
- Farm transition planning (Joy Kirpatrick, UW-Madison & Larry Hedrich, LaClare Farms)
- Hiring and retaining employees (Liz Doornink, Jon-De Farm)
- Raising buck kids (Monica Streff, Cargill Animal Nutrition)
- Virtual farm tour of three unique feeding and management systems



Focus on Goats Conference attendees listen to Pam Ruegg present on farmstead dairy testing.

Topics relevant to processors included:

- Farmstead dairy testing (Dr. Pamela Ruegg, UW-Madison)
- Value-added dairy production farmer panel (Anne Topham, Dela Ends, Laura Jay)
- Mammary health and milk quality (Dr. Steven Hart, Langston University)

Bob Wills, Cedar Grove Cheese, gave the opening keynote address. In addition, Julia Ela and Katie Baumann gave a talk on goats and woodland conservation.

On Friday, a cheese reception featuring award-winning Wisconsin goat milk cheeses was held. A variety of cheeses from Carr Valley Cheese Co., Cedar Grove, Fantome Farm, Hillbilly Hollow, Montchevre, Prairie Fruits Farm, and Woolwich Dairy were available at the reception. A generous thank you goes out to the organizations that helped sponsor this event.

Each year the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Association holds their Select Sale in conjunction with the conference. Held as the last event of the conference on Saturday, this year's sale featured 11 total lots, consisting of five does and six bucks. The sale averaged \$428, up slightly from 2010. "We had real top-quality goats at the sale. The quality has been strong show pedigree wise and had some stock with good milk records," stated WDGA President Dan Considine. The WDGA also holds an annual doeling raffle along with the sale. This year's raffle doeling was donated by Barbara Knilan, Janesville, Wis., breeder of Oberhasli doeling. The raffle winner was Cyrus Bradley of Camp Douglas, Wis.



Barbara Knilan of Janesville, Wis., donated an Oberhasli doeling to this year's WDGA raffle.

Conference attendees were pleased with this year's focus. "I don't go to many meetings that are too short – but this was one! I could have wallowed in it for another 24 hours easily," said conference attendee Wes Jarrel of Prairie Fruits Farm. Wes, along with his wife, Leslie Cooperband, operates a farmstead goat cheese operation in Champaign, Ill.

This event has continued to evolve and grow over the years, as an increasing number of dairy goat farms and supportive infrastructure have propelled Wisconsin to lead the nation in the production of goat milk products. Mark your calendar for next year's conference, to be held Oct. 12-13, 2012 at UW-Platteville. For more information on the conference, contact Jeanne Meier at jeannemariemeier@gmail.com or 608-219-4081.

Organization of the Focus on Goats conference is conducted with the cooperation of the University of Wisconsin–Cooperative Extension, the Dairy Business Innovation Center, the University of Wisconsin–Platteville, and the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Association. For more information, contact Claire Mikolayunas at mikolayunas@wisc.edu or 608-890-3802.

2. New Video – From Pasture to Plate: Exploring Grass-Based Dairy

A new video “From Pasture to Plate: Exploring Grass-Based Dairy” was released earlier this month. The goal of the project, funded by the SARE program, was to explore the potential of milk from pastured cows as a “specialty milk” for value-added dairy products. The 13-minute video highlights the experiences of farmers, processors, researchers, and chefs.

“We felt that one of the best ways of capturing the uniqueness of the milk and the enthusiasm of those who work with it was having them tell the story themselves,” said Grazing and Organic Agriculture Specialist Laura Paine, with the Division of Agricultural Development at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

Highlighted in the video are:

- Bert Paris, Belleville, Wis. – Edelweiss Graziers Cooperative
- Mike Gingrich, Dodgeville, Wis. – Uplands Cheese
- Steve Young-Burns, Goodhue, Minn. – PastureLand Cooperative CEO

To date, DBIC has had the privilege to work with over 10 companies that are now producing grass-fed milk products.

The video was written and directed by Jeanne Carpenter, and produced by Monica McCarthy.

For more information on this video, contact Laura Paine at 608-516-4438 or laura.paine@wisconsin.gov.

3. State Fair Dairy Promotion Board Scholarships Available

The Wisconsin State Fair Dairy Promotion Board will award three \$1,000 scholarships for use during the second semester of the 2012-13 school year, to third or fourth-year college students pursuing dairy-related or food science degrees at one of Wisconsin’s four-year universities.

Two additional \$1,000 scholarships will be made available to high school seniors planning to pursue a dairy-related or food science degree at one of Wisconsin’s four-year universities or students studying in a two-year, technical school program related to dairy or food science.

Applicants will be evaluated on involvement and leadership in ag-related activities, scholastic achievement, and career objectives. Finalists will be interviewed in mid-April, with the recipients to be announced at the 2012 Wisconsin State Fair.

The application is available at www.wistatefair.com. Application deadline is April 2. For more information, contact Katy Katzman at 262-903-6727 or katzman@idcnet.com.

4. Upcoming Events

- **Jan. 25: Farm to School Summit. Delavan, Wis.**

A showcase of current Farm to School efforts across the state, new resources for Farm to School practitioners and advocates, and highlights of future opportunities for Farm to School programs and policy. Designed to support the work of public health advocates, local food advocates, school nutrition staff, school administrators, producers, state and local health departments, local coalitions, parents, and more! To register and for more information, visit: <http://healthinpractice.org/farm-to-school-summit>.

- **Jan. 26-27: Wisconsin Local Foods Network Conference. Delavan, Wis.**

The 6th Annual Wisconsin Local Food Summit will take place Jan. 26-27 at the Lake Lawn Resort in Delavan, Wis. The Wisconsin Local Food Summit brings together community organizers, agency advocates, educators, local food producers, students, and others to learn, network, and help shape our local food systems. The Summit will offer a mix of plenary presentations, breakout sessions, and discussions intended to increase knowledge and understanding, foster connection, and plan action. As always, networking opportunities will abound during the summit. And, of course, we will be serving delicious local food! Make your lodging reservations by Dec. 26 to receive the special \$70 event rate. Be sure to mention that you are attending the Wisconsin Local Food Summit. To register for the event and for more information, including sponsorship, visit: <http://wilocalfood.wordpress.com/discussions>.

- **Jan. 25, Jan. 30, Feb. 1, and Feb. 3: “Branding: It’s not just about logos!” Workshops.** Branding helps set your products apart and connects buyers with the story of your farm. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) encourages local food producers to attend one of the four Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Regional Workshops titled, “Branding: It’s not just about logos!”

Andrea Neu, owner of Image Maker marketing communications, will be the speaker for the workshops. She has more than 36 years of experience in Integrated Marketing Communications, focusing her expertise in the food industry. Neu has worked with Wisconsin cheesemakers/marketers, farmstead, and artisan dairy producers to assist with their brand development. At the workshop, attendees will learn more about brand development through examples of successful branding projects. They will also learn about local food trends and the 12 steps to successful packaging. Attendees are welcome to bring promotional materials or packaging to the workshop to receive feedback.

Each workshop will be held from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Dates and locations include:

- Jan. 25: Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, 29270 Highway G, Ashland, Wis.
- Jan. 30: Viroqua Area Medical Clinic, 407 S Main Street, Viroqua, Wis.
- Feb. 1: James P Coughlin Center, 625 E County Road Y, Oshkosh, Wis.

- Feb. 3: DATCP, 2811 Agriculture Drive, Madison, Wis. (*Free webinar also available*)

The cost to attend is \$30 for the first registration, and \$15 for any additional registrations of the same farm, family or organization. Lunch is included. The registration deadline is Wednesday, Jan. 18. Space for each workshop is limited. To register or for more information, visit datcp.wi.gov/Business/Buy_Local_Buy_Wisconsin or contact Theresa Feiner at theresa.feiner@wi.gov or 608-224-5112.

5. Meet Ari Weinzweig, Zingerman's Co-Founding Partner



Ari Weinzweig moved to Ann Arbor, Mich., from his hometown of Chicago, Ill., to attend the University of Michigan. After graduating with a degree in Russian history, he went to work washing dishes in a local restaurant and soon discovered that he loved the food business. Along with his partner Paul Saginaw, Ari started Zingerman's Delicatessen in 1982 with a \$20,000 bank loan, a staff of two, a small selection of great-tasting specialty foods and a relatively short sandwich menu. Today, Zingerman's is an Ann Arbor institution – the source of great food and great experiences for over 500,000 visitors every year. Each day the Deli serves up thousands of made-to-order sandwiches with ingredients like corned beef and pastrami, homemade chopped liver and chicken salad. The Deli stocks an array of farmhouse cheeses, smoked fish, salamis, estate-bottled olive oils, vintage vinegars, whole bean coffees, loose leaf teas and much more.

Ari is involved in many educational activities. He has served as a board member and president of The American Cheese Society and as a board member of the Retail Division of the National Association for the Specialty Food Trade. He is a frequent guest speaker in business classes at the University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University, as well as at various food and business conferences in this country and abroad including the American Institute of Wine and Food, Oldways Preservation and Exchange Trust, the Gathering of Games, and the NASFT Fancy Food Show. In 1988 Zingerman's was instrumental in the founding of Food Gatherers, a perishable food rescue program, and continues to be a major supporter of the organization.

Ari has written over 208 issues of Zingerman's newsletter, "Zingerman's News," and has contributed to such magazines as Fine Cooking, Specialty Foods, Gourmet Retailer, and Food and Wine. He has received praise for his books: Zingerman's Guide to Good Olive Oil, Zingerman's Guide to Good Vinegar, Zingerman's Guide to Good Parmigiano-Reggiano, Zingerman's Guide to Giving Great Service, Zingerman's Guide to Good Eating, Zingerman's Guide to Better Bacon, and his newest book, Zingerman's Guide to Good Leading, Part 1: A Lapsed Anarchist's Approach to Building a Great Business.

Stay tuned for next month's DBIC newsletter, which will feature more on Zingerman's businesses and Ari's take on Wisconsin artisan cheesemakers.

6. The Last Word with Norm Mosen: Anne Pickett, Updates, and Holidays



How many know of Anne Pickett? I'm guessing that those of you who answer yes are in the minority.

Anne Pickett is credited as the first person to really put a cheesemaking business together in Wisconsin. In the late 1840's Anne used milk from her family farm and some of her neighbors to start a cheesemaking business. She was a pioneer and probably a great cheesemaker. Now I'm guessing that Anne would be especially proud of what has been happening in Wisconsin dairy over the last few years.

Cheesemaking and dairy processing has been rediscovered by women as a field of opportunity and innovation, encompassed by good people. I'd like to list some of those women who are out there making a mark (with apologies to those whom I might leave out): First the cheese, butter, ice cream and yogurt crafters – Julie Hook, Anne Topham, Mary Falk, Sara Bredeson, Kathy Martin, Lisa Martin, Ethel Jensen, Katie Hedrich, Marieke Penterman, Brenda Jensen, Vicky Simpkins, Janet Butler, Kara Kasten-Olson, Diana Murphy, Pam Hodgson, Theresa Depies, Chris Paris, and Karen Kelley, are just a few of the names that come to mind – this group could fill an entire warehouse with awards and ribbons!

Of course great dairy crafting doesn't happen without research and education. People like Marianne Smukowski, Ranee May, K.J. Burrington, Carol Chen, Gina Mode, Susan Larson, Karen Smith, Sarah Minasian, Tera Montgomery, Karen Nielson, Bénédicte Coudé, and others all go the extra mile to ensure that dairy products are of the highest quality and safe.

And women more than ever have stepped up to fill important leadership positions in the industry. In addition to those listed above, the contributions of people like Kay Schmitz and Shirley Knox (past and current presidents of the Wisconsin Specialty Cheese Institute), and Jeanne Carpenter of Wisconsin Cheese Originals have been vital and visionary.

It seems like the same message is reoccurring – there is room for all in Wisconsin dairy.

And as this is the last newsletter of 2011, a few updates and comments are appropriate. DBIC status – Current funding sources allow for DBIC to continue operations until June of 2012. On July 1, 2012 alternative funding programs and revenue streams will need to be in place. With this reality setting in, intense efforts are under way to explore and put in place a system that will allow DBIC to continue as a resource for Wisconsin dairy innovation. Leadership and direction has come from all levels of Wisconsin dairy – farmers, processors, dairy organizations, and elected and appointed government officials. The work and concern of all is appreciated and offers optimism for future DBIC operations. Thank you.

Speaking of optimism and hope – we wish you all the best for the holidays and hope that 2012 will be a year of prosperity and good health for all!

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 Kelsi Mayer at 608-290-5855, email: kelsirmayer@gmail.com.

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