



PRESS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Funding awarded to study establishing dairy goat research herd in Wisconsin

MADISON, WI – The development of the first dairy goat research herd in the Upper Midwest is one step closer to reality, thanks to a grant awarded this week to the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Association.

The American Sheep and Goat Center selected the WDGA as one of nine recipients of competitive grant funding. The project will include a comprehensive feasibility study for public and private funding of setting up a dairy goat research herd and facility in Wisconsin.

In addition to the \$13,400 grant from the ASGC, Montchevre Betin, a goat cheese processor in Belmont, Wis., has generously contributed \$5,460 toward the project. The University of Wisconsin-Platteville and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection have also pledged nearly \$5,000 in in-kind staff support.

Funds will pay to study the feasibility of setting up the first dairy goat research herd in Wisconsin. After reviewing the completed study, the university system will decide whether or not to pursue moving forward with the project, said Larry Hedrich, Wisconsin dairy goat producer and committee co-chair for the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Association.

“If this study successfully shows a dairy goat research center is feasible in Wisconsin, then it would be the first northern tier research station in the country,” Hedrich said. “Dairy goat producers across the upper Midwest would benefit from research on feeding and breeding goats. Wisconsin has a healthy dairy goat industry and we want to keep it that way. This study is the first step in reaching that goal.”

Jeanne Meier, director of the Dairy Goat Initiative at DATCP, is especially pleased with the broad monetary support the research project has garnered from the industry, including support from Montchevre-Betin, and staff support by the state and university system.

“The very first time I met with producers, the number one obstacle they listed to growing our state’s dairy goat industry was the lack of a dairy research herd in Wisconsin. This project will go a long way to fulfilling the educational and research needs of Wisconsin’s dairy goat producers,” Meier said.

Dairy goat producers, processors and industry professionals are encouraged attend the Focus on Goats Conference in Merrimac, Oct. 31 – Nov. 1 to learn about how to participate in the dairy goat research herd study. Call Jeanne Meier at 608-224-5121 for more information, or register online at <http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/registration/focusongoats.jsp>

Development of the grant proposal was conducted with funding support by the Dairy Business Innovation Center.

*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.*