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1. Decades of Dreams Come True at Saxon Homestead Creamery

More than 20 years after first exploring the idea of crafting farmstead cheese from the milk of their pasture-based cows, the partners of Saxon Homestead Creamery celebrated the grand opening of their new dairy in Cleveland, Wis., on June 8, joined by more than 100 friends, families and industry officials.

The special grand opening ceremony featured guest speakers Agriculture Secretary Rod Nilsestuen, Dairy Business Innovation Center Founder and Chairman Dan Carter, Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board Director Rosalie Geiger, 61st Alice in Dairyland Ashley Huijbregtse, and representatives from Senator Herb Kohl and Congressman Tom Petri's office.



More than 100 people enjoyed tasting Saxon Homestead Creamery cheeses Green Fields and Big Eds at the dairy's grand opening celebration in Cleveland, Wis., on June 8.

"Big ideas, respect for the environment and innovation are all deeply rooted in this family," Carter told those gathered, remarking that late patriarch Ed Klessig was surely smiling down on the day. "Today, Saxon Homestead Creamery is born. It is with the deepest of joy and respect that we celebrate with you."

Creamery manager and co-owner Gerald Heimerl, along with brothers-in-law Karl and Robert Klessig, who manage the family's nearby grass-based Saxon Homestead Dairy Farm, began production of unique, handcrafted, small-batch cheeses last August. Saxon partners Neville McNaughton and Dan Strongin led a tasting of two of Saxon's carefully-aged cheeses: Green Fields, an earthy elegant table

cheese featuring a washed rind wrapped in special breathable paper, and Big Eds, named for family patriarch Ed Klessig. Strongin said the cheeses should enjoy national distribution yet this year.

The creamery's milk is produced at Saxon Homestead Dairy Farm, where the Klessigs hosted 2,500 people at the Manitowoc County Dairy Breakfast that same morning. The Klessigs and Heimerls converted their conventional dairy to a rotational grazing operation in 1989. That experience became the family's "a-ha moment" as they turned their herd of Holstein cows out of the barn onto pasture for the first time. Read more of the family's story at: www.saxoncreamery.com

Secretary Nilsestuen praised the Saxon partners for significantly reinvesting in their family dairy operation and for greatly adding to the state's dairy economy: "This is the fifth dairy plant opening I've been to so far this year. I'd say we have more to celebrate in America's Dairyland that we have for decades, and it's because of entrepreneurs like the Klessigs and Heimerls. Their story will be heard around the country."

2. DBIC Monthly Message: More Resources for Dairy Goat Industry

This month, we hear from **Jeanne Meier**, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Jeanne leads the **Grow Wisconsin Dairy Goat Initiative** and is a valuable partner to the DBIC, sharing the most up-to-date information and available resources. This month, Jeanne provides an update on "Needs of the Goat Industry – Research and Education."



Early in 2006, dairy goat producers and goat milk processors met and told us what they thought was needed to grow and strengthen the dairy goat industry in Wisconsin. There was unanimous support for the need to do research in the state on everything from Somatic Cell Count to herd health, genetics and nutrition.

I am proud to announce that the University of Wisconsin will conduct two research studies this summer. Working directly with producers, the studies will focus on 1) milk quality issues; and 2) how to best measure the utilization of pasture protein in lactating animals.

Dr. Pamela Ruegg, Department of Dairy Science, will lead a team of graduate students to identify milking practices and develop baseline benchmarks for the quality of milk and prevalence of mastitis on a sample of Wisconsin dairy goat farms. Between 15-20 farms will be randomly selected within three herd-size categories: small (25-100 does); medium (101-200 does); and large (more than 200 does). The study will collect general data, including herd demographics, production, nutrition, and breeding information. Specific data will be collected on parasite control, prevention protocols, vaccination program, and selected diseases.

This project will provide the first information about milking practices and herd health of Wisconsin dairy goat farms. Participating producers will each receive a separate report with their own farm's results shortly after the farm visits. Results of the combined data of the entire study will be disseminated using

the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Initiative online listserv, the Wisconsin Dairy Goat Association website -- www.wdga.org -- and through the University of Wisconsin dairy team.

Farm visits will take place this summer during June, July, and August. A written report will be completed by the end of September after laboratory testing and analysis is completed. The report will be submitted for publication to the academic journal, "Small Ruminant Research" at the end of this year.

Another research project involves a study to determine the nitrogen balance of dairy does (and dairy ewes) to assess their utilization of pasture protein. Not much research has been done concerning grazing of dairy goats. Producers who graze goats do it more for fresh air, sunshine, and exercise rather than for part of the ration. This study will attempt to measure pasture utilization by monitoring the nitrogen intake from pasture and supplement, and excretion (milk yield, milk protein, and milk urea, urinary and fecal nitrogen) of grazing does during lactation. The information obtained from the study may allow producers to fine tune supplements to better complement the nutrient intake from pasture. With producers seeking ways to cut feed costs during a time of unprecedented priced for feed, this study may provide part of the solution. Claire Mikolayunas, a Ph.D. graduate student, under the direction of Dr. David Thomas, Department of Animal Sciences, leads this study. She will be working with three dairy goat producers who graze lactating does.

Another key need identified by producers and processors was the need for information and education. As a result, the Wisconsin Technical College System met with producers to design a dairy and meat goat component of its established agricultural programs. Mark Alden, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, is working to complete curriculum for use at any of the campuses which offer agriculture programs. The curriculum will also be offered by distance learning. The first class will be rolled out this fall: Goat Business Management, a two-credit course. Other courses in development include a two-three credit course, Goat Husbandry, and three one-credit courses: Dairy Goats; Meat Goats; Processing and Marketing Goat Products.

This is an exciting time for dairy goat research in the State of Wisconsin. Thank you to all of our partners for helping make this happen! For more info and further resource documents, visit the DBIC website at www.dbicusa.org and click on WI Goat Milk Initiative.

3. Ride the DBIC Bus to the American Cheese Society Conference

With the 25th annual American Cheese Society Conference taking place July 23-26 in Chicago, the Dairy Business Innovation Center is sponsoring a one-day bus trip for new or current cheesemakers, prospective dairy entrepreneurs, or industry representatives to the show on Thursday, July 24.

The DBIC has locked in a subsidized per person rate of \$165 for the trip, which includes a one-day pass worth \$240, attendance under the DBIC corporate membership worth at least \$190, round-trip transportation, and all meals.

A coach bus will leave the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture building, 2811 Agriculture, Drive, Madison, Wis., on Thursday, July 24 at 6:30 a.m. Participants will arrive at the ACS show in time to attend their choice of morning educational seminars, have an



opportunity to eat lunch/network, attend their choice of an afternoon seminar, and attend the popular Meet the Cheesemaker event from 4 to 7 p.m. The bus will depart immediately after the Meet the Cheesemaker event and will return to Madison by 10 p.m. Refreshments will be available on the bus.

Registration for the bus trip is due June 17. If you are interested in participating, contact Abby Bachhuber, DBIC Client & Project Specialist, for a registration form. Email awind23@gmail.com or call her at 608-658-3392. Space is limited, so we invite you to register as soon as possible.

4. Hundreds Help Celebrate Sassy Cow Creamery Grand Opening

Hundreds of industry partners, neighbors, families and state officials helped Sassy Cow Creamery celebrate its grand opening in style on May 22.

Farmstead owners Robert and James Baerwolf and their families welcomed the crowd to the fulfillment of their life-long mission to directly connect consumers with their high-quality milk. Their new, state-of-the-art creamery is designed with the customer in mind, as a farmstead retail store features not only Sassy Cow products, but an array of local foods from around Wisconsin.

“It was about two years ago that James came into the barn and said, ‘We should bottle milk.’ Well, I thought he was crazy, but he inspired us and kept that vision alive. He is primarily the reason we are here drinking Sassy Cow milk today,” Robert Baerwolf told the crowd. “It’s a dream come true to have all of you here to celebrate with us.”

Will Hughes, Division Administrator for the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, congratulated the Baerwolves, saying, “This family has the smarts, spunk and spirit to make this operation successful. The State of Wisconsin and the Dairy Business Innovation Center are 100 percent dedicated to helping farmers like the Baerwolves succeed.”

The Baerwolves’ bottled milk is produced from the family’s dual nearby dairy herds: a 400-cow traditional dairy and 100-cow organic dairy, located within miles of each other. It may be the first farmstead operation to offer both traditional and organic bottled milk and is the fourth specialty dairy plant to open in Wisconsin already this year. Congratulations to Sassy Cow Creamery from the DBIC and our partners.



Jane Carter, pictured center, congratulates Robert and James Baerwolf on behalf of the Dairy Business Innovation Center at the grand opening of Sassy Cow Creamery May 22. The operation is one of 18 farmstead dairies in the state, up from just six operations five years ago. Products include whole 2 percent and fat-free conventional and organic milk bottled in gallons, half gallons and pints. Chocolate and strawberry milk, as well as cream are also available. The dairy also crafts ice cream in a variety of flavors.

5. Industry News

- ❖ **New Discussion Paper Available:** The Babcock Institute just released a new discussion paper: U.S. Dairy Trade: Situation and Outlook, 2008 by Edward Jesse and William Dobson. This publication describes U.S. dairy imports and exports for 2007, projected exports for 2008, and future prospects for the Doha Round and other bilateral trade negotiations. To download a copy, visit: <http://babcock.cals.wisc.edu/publications/disc.lasso>
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6. Upcoming Important Dates

For a complete listing of upcoming events, visit: www.dbicusa.org and click on Calendar of Events

- **June Dairy Breakfasts. Statewide, Wis.**
Dozens of Wisconsin counties and organizations are gearing up to host tens of thousands of Wisconsin families for breakfast on the farm during the month of June. For a listing of events happening across the state, visit: <http://www.wisdairy.com/SpecialOffers/jdm/totaldisplay.aspx>
 - **June 21: Summer Goat Field Day. Orfordville, Wis.**
The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture's Value-Added Dairy Initiative invites you to attend a series of goat farm field days in the coming months. A farm field day is scheduled for June 21 at the Aaron Dooley Farm near Orfordville; with another on Oct. 11 at the Ethel and James Jenson farm in Mt. Horeb. Field days are a great opportunity to ask questions, share information, and learn how different farms operate. All field days are free to the public but advance registration is required. For more information and to register, call Jeanne Meier at 608-224-5121.
 - **July 15–17: Farm Technology Days. Brown County, Wis.**
Wisconsin Farm Technology Days is the state's largest outdoor agricultural show. The annual three-day event showcases the latest improvements in production agriculture, including practical applications of recent research findings and technological developments. The 2008 Show will be held at Country Aire Farms in southern Brown County. Budd and Lone Gerrits along with their sons, Mike and Tom and their families, will host this event. For more information, visit www.wifarmtechnologydays.com.
 - **July 23–26: American Cheese Society 25th Annual Conference. Chicago, Ill.**
Register now for the 25th annual American Cheese Society Annual Conference and cheese competition. The conference includes both cherished annual events such as the Festival of Cheese, as well as new events such as Meet the Cheesemaker. Three full days of educational workshops and networking opportunities await you. More info: <http://www.cheesesociety.org/index.cfm>
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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 at 608-358-7837, email: Jeanne@wordartisanllc.com.
