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1. Dairy Connection, Inc. Expands to New Location

Cathy and Dave Potter have moved their Madison based dairy cultures and ingredients business: Dairy Connection Inc., to a larger warehouse and office space. Dairy Connection was started in 1999 with the goal to fill the supply gap for farmstead and artisan cheesemakers for ingredients and technical support. The company also offers a variety of supplies including cheese wrap, wax, plastic coat, plastic cheese molds and technical resources.



Dairy Connection's move and expansion is thanks to continued sales and product line growth. The former home-based business has moved to 501 Tasman Street, Suite B, Madison, in the industrial park off Cottage Grove Road. The new facility is 2,400 square feet, over three times as large as their previous quarters. The expansion will allow Dairy Connection to increase its product line of concentrated dairy cultures, both freeze-dried and frozen, as well as other supplies and ingredients. The company distributes cultures, enzymes and color used in cheese and fermented dairy products with its primary supplier being Danisco USA. In addition to the move, the Potters have also hired Jeff Meier as Operations Manager, who brings more than 12 years of customer service experience. For more information, contact Dairy Connection at 608-242-9030; e-mail getculture@ameritech.net or visit www.dairyconnection.com.

2. DBIC Team Member Monthly Message



This month we hear from **Norm Monsen, Dairy Development Specialist**. Norm talks about the past and future of America's Dairyland in his column titled "**Dairy: 10 years back, 10 years ahead.**"

We all have dates or seasons in our lives that for various reasons are memorable. Thinking back to those times sometimes helps us put in perspective what happens today as well as maybe prompting us to dream of the future. The season of 2006 reminded me to think back to that season of 10 years ago. For myself and my family the fall of 1996 was a life changing time. Due to a farm accident and season of life our family sold our dairy cows. The memory of the sadness of our family saying goodbye to those cows who were part of our family will always be with us.

The intensity of that particular time also helps me remember in clear detail what was going on in the world and the dairy industry in particular. For agriculture and dairy the similarity of that time to today is noteworthy (does history repeat?). At that time dairy prices were just starting to slide to low levels from almost historically high points, commodity grain prices were stable and beginning to climb, and an intense grass roots effort from dairy farmers to find alternatives and add value to milk was beginning.

As we begin to plan and dream about the future years, I thought it might be good to look back to what dairy was dreaming and planning 10 years ago. Many of the ideas the dairy industry developed from that point to today were often regarded as “way out there”, or “crazy”, or “that was already done and it didn’t work”. Regardless of what the initial view of the idea was from “those who should know” these ideas today are mainstream and in many cases profitable. Here is my top 10 list of crazy ideas of the last 10 years but for whatever reasons are working today (no particular order).

- Aging cheese in caves
- Kefir
- Non-homogenized milk in glass bottles
- Milking sheep
- Milking goats
- Mixing milk of different species to make cheese
- A mobile dairy processing plant
- Milk vending machines in schools (that sell out!)
- Home delivery of milk
- Dairy products from certain breeds of cows or cows fed certain ways
- Milk based sports energy drinks



I’m sure we all could add many items or products to the above. The point is that whatever the item or idea, dairy visionaries and entrepreneurs developed it (or reinvigorated it), made it, and are now selling or doing it. While it is enjoyable and interesting to look back, the real fun can start when we start looking ahead. With help from some of my colleagues, we came up with the following looking forward list of “crazy” dairy ideas of today that may be mainstream and profitable 10 years from now.

- Milking horses and other non-traditional dairy animals
- Home butter kits
- Micro, at home cheese caves (at home affinage)
- Biodegradable milk containers
- Milk products from cows that are only milked by hand
- Dairy bars featuring ice cream and milk-based fermented dairy drinks
- Women dairy artisans outnumber men
- Super premium, extra rich dairy products
- Restaurants and large mainstream retailers featuring local dairy products
- Ice cheese cream
- WI cheese production double that of California



The above list probably causes many of us to doubt the likelihood of these items coming to pass. As we harbor that doubt, we should probably look back at the first list. Could it be that at one time we had more than a few moments of doubt about those items? Could it be that the items on the looking forward list (and many other items not even dreamed about) might be part of the story of the rebirth of the dairy industry?



3. Wisconsin Artisan Cheesemakers Return from Terra Madre 2006

Five Wisconsin cheesemakers who represented Wisconsin's Slow Food community at Terra Madre and Salone del Gusto in Turin, Italy during October have returned. The cheesemaker delegation included Mike and Carol Gingrich, Tony and Julie Hook, Willi Lehner, and Anne Topham. DBIC Outreach and Education Specialist Heidi Busse attended as the food community coordinator, and a delegation from Slow Food-Madison attended as part of the Madison-Mantova Sister City project.



Photo Courtesy of Anne Topham, Fantome Farm

The Wisconsin Slow Food and Cheesemaker delegation poses with a group of Italian cheesemakers from Italy's Lombardy region.

While attending the five-day conference of international farmers and food artisans, the group attended educational workshops, met with European cheesemakers and affineurs and participated in an exchange program with Mantova, Madison's sister city. Nearly 6,000 attendees came from 150 countries. Attendees included farmers, artisans, academics, government officials, retailers and chefs and all who are working toward developing a sustainable model of food production and distribution. The first Terra Madre was held in 2004, and has since become an international food movement for fair and good food.

Transportation for the trip was funded by Babcock Institute's Wisconsin Dairy Artisan Research Program. A full report will soon be available on the Babcock Dairy Artisan website at <http://www.babcock.cals.wisc.edu/artisan/index.en.html> as well as on the DBIC website. In addition, the group plans to soon host a public presentation with photos and stories from the trip. Stay tuned for an announcement on date and time.

4. Register Now for DBIC Private and Public Sector Financing Workshop

The DBIC is pleased to offer a one-day "Private and Public Sector Financing Workshop" to DBIC clients on December 11, from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. This session is the second in a series of value-added workshops hosted by the DBIC and will examine aspects of both public and private sector financing for dairy businesses. Key elements of the one-day session include the following:

- Differences between financing different parts of a dairy business. For example, equipment vs. inventory vs. working capital
- How to present financial information to different audiences including banks, private investors, public low interest loans and grants
- Financial and management tools for effectively supporting requests for financing
- Discussion of what financial assistance is available
- Key eligibility requirements for financing and likelihood for success

The DBIC especially recommends businesses to attend that are currently involved in start-up or expansion in order to fully understand financial options available. The workshop is limited to the first 15 companies that register and who complete a short confidential informational survey that will help focus the course content. The course fee is \$75 per company. A maximum of two people per company may

attend. The workshop will be held in Madison, Wis. at the Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, 2811 Agriculture Drive.

Additional DBIC workshops are being planned and will be held in early 2007. For more information, to register, and to complete an informational survey, contact Abby Bachhuber at awind23@gmail.com or 608-658-3392.

5. Industry News

- **Farmstead Goat Yogurt Plant Breaks Ground:** Dairy artisan Todd Jaskolski of Black Creek, Wis. began constructing his own farmstead dairy plant last week. Jaskolski uses milk from his family farm's herd of 400 Saanen and Alpine dairy goats to craft Caprine Supreme - a unique all-natural creamy goat's milk yogurt. Flavors include vanilla, blueberry, black cherry, peach, strawberry and plain. Congratulations to the Jaskolski family!
- **Specialty Retailers Visit Wisconsin:** The DBIC recently hosted 10 specialty cheese buyers and distributors from eight states for a three-day tour of Wisconsin artisan and specialty dairy plants, farmsteads and farmer's markets. Early evaluations show at least seven new Wisconsin cheeses being carried in at least four new markets with unlimited growth potential. In all, retailers met with 15 specialty cheesemakers from around the state and visited with industry experts from the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board and Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research. Thank you to all who took time to visit with these buyers on the DBIC's second annual retailer tour.
- **Chicago Public Television to Air "Living on the Wedge":** Chicago Public Television - WTTW Channel 11 - has announced it will air the 30-minute version of "Living on the Wedge: Wisconsin's Dairy Artisans," a documentary sponsored by the DBIC and WMMB. A premier showing will air Sunday, Dec. 17 at 9:30 p.m. with a repeat showing on Wednesday, Jan. 3 at 10:30 p.m.



6. Upcoming Important Dates

- **Dec. 6: State of the Dairy Goat Industry Brown Bag Lunch. Madison, Wis.** This session will include everything you wanted to know about goats but were afraid to ask. How do you milk a goat? What does a goat eat? What does goat milk taste like? Who milks goats? To learn the answers to these questions and more, plan now to attend a one-hour presentation at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Bob Battaglia, director of the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service, will discuss results from a recent dairy goat and sheep survey, while two dairy goat producers will describe their dairy goat operations and answer questions from the crowd. Event begins at 12 Noon in the DATCP Board Room, 1st Floor, and is free and open to the public. Location: DATCP, 2811 Agriculture Drive, Madison, Wis.
- **Dec. 7: Dairy Summit IV. Fennimore, Wis.** Learn ways to modernize and maximize profit while networking with other dairy producers and industry specialists at Dairy Summit IV on Dec. 7 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Southwest Wisconsin Technical College in Fennimore will host the event. Registration begins at 9:15 a.m. Cost is \$40 and \$20 for each additional person from the same farm.

Early registration ends Nov. 28. After this date, the fee increases \$10. For more information, contact Kevin Bernhardt at (608) 342-1365 or bernhark@uwplatt.edu.

- **Dec. 11: Private and Public Sector Financing Workshop. Madison, Wis.** This workshop, second in a series of value-added workshops hosted by the DBIC, will examine aspects of both public and private sector financing for dairy businesses. Fee: \$75. For more information, to register, and to complete an informational survey, contact Abby Bachhuber at awind23@gmail.com or 608-658-3392.
- **Jan. 5, 2007: WSCI meeting. Madison, Wis.** The Wisconsin Specialty Cheese Institute will hold its January membership meeting at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, starting at 10 a.m. Guest speaker will be Jeffrey Lee, Midwest Product Development Manager of Earthanol, Inc., of Long Lake, Minn. Earthanol is a prospective long-term developer, owner and operator of permeate-to-ethanol facilities in North America. Lee will discuss how Earthanol can provide a value proposition to Wisconsin cheese companies interested in reducing the net cost of whey permeate processing and disposal. For more information, contact Kathy Brown at 262-740-2180 or info@wisspecialcheese.org.
- **March 12-14: 2007 U.S. Championship Cheese Contest. Milwaukee, Wis.** The nation's oldest and largest cheese and butter competition provides the opportunity to vie for prestigious awards in more than 50 classes. Gold, silver and bronze medals go to the top finishers with certificates to fourth and fifth place entries. A Championship Round evaluates gold medal cheeses to declare a United States Champion Cheese, as well as a First and Second Runner Up. Every maker and processor of cheese or butter in the United States is eligible and encouraged to compete. The cost to enter each product is \$60. Products must be shipped to arrive no later than March 7, 2007. Fifteen cheese and butter experts will evaluate entries during the conference and winners will be honored April 19, 2007, at a gala Awards Banquet during the Wisconsin Cheese Industry Conference in La Crosse. For more information, visit <http://www.wischeesemakersassn.org/>
- **April 18-19: 2007 Wisconsin Cheese Industry Conference. LaCrosse, Wis.** More than 1,200 cheese industry leaders from around the nation will gather to gain information about the latest in cheese technology, product marketing and dairy issues affecting our industry. The show opens with a joint seminar, followed by an afternoon "Tabletop Mini Exposition" and an evening auction of Champion Cheeses. Thursday consists of a full day of seminars and closes with the United States Championship Cheese Contest Awards Banquet, open to all attendees. The conference is co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association and the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research. For more information, visit <http://www.wischeesemakersassn.org/>
- **May 5-13, 2007: Specialty Cheese Tour to Netherlands. New Horizons Tours.** Visit some of the most entrepreneurial and innovative dairy producers of this leading European dairy nation. Aside from numerous farm visits, visit countryside stops, world-famous tourist attractions and have the unique opportunity to get to know the Netherlands at its best. For a detailed itinerary visit www.newhorizontours.info/tours.html and click on the tour link. For more information, call 608-231-5881.

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.