



SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Governor Scott Walker Announces 43 Farmers Awarded Grow Wisconsin Dairy 30x20 Grants

Recognizes success of farmer with a disability, under year of "A Better Bottom Line" initiative

La Crosse – Governor Scott Walker today announced 43 recipients of the Grow Wisconsin Dairy 30x20 grants at Lane Creek Dairy Farm, LLC in La Crosse. The goal of Governor Walker's 30 x 20 initiative is to increase Wisconsin's milk output to 30 billion pounds by 2020. With the grant funds, farmers can invest in management, develop expansion plans, and transition their farms for the next generation.

"Our investment in Wisconsin's agriculture industry through these grants will enable these farmers to improve their profitability, and allow Wisconsin to thrive as a leader in the nation's dairy industry," Governor Walker said. "Agriculture contributes more than 350,000 jobs to the state's economy, and I'm happy to support the farmers, their families, and their staff who do the hard work. I'd also like to thank farmers like Jeffery Berg, whose passion for the industry allows them to overcome all obstacles."

Jeffery Berg and his wife Jo own Lane Creek Dairy Farm in La Crosse. Berg was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1989, but refused to allow the limitations caused by his disability to keep him from building his business for the next generation.

Lane Creek Dairy Farm was awarded Grow Wisconsin Dairy 30x20 grant in 2012. The Bergs used the funds to plan for new construction on the farm and installed a slatted floor with a manure pit under the free stall barn to collect waste. Governor Walker was able to see first-hand how the grant is helping the Bergs increase efficiencies and grow their business.

Governor Walker announced the Grow Wisconsin Dairy 30x20 Initiative in 2012 to offer farmers options to increase profitability and make sure the state's milk production can meet the growing demand for dairy products in the marketplace. Recipients may use the grant funds for a variety of projects, including improved record-keeping, investigating reproductive issues, and increasing cow comfort. Other grants will be used to assist with farm transfers, manure handling, and grazing management. This is the third round of grant awards.

Farmers awarded the latest Dairy 30x20 grants:

- Brian Barlass, Janesville
- Tim Bowers, Marion
- Joe Bragger, Independence
- Glenn Breunig, Sauk City
- Bernard Byrne, Brooklyn
- Ryan Dunnum, Westby
- Randal Erickson, Bear Creek
- Jared Feltz, Stevens Point

- Jay Fitzgerald, Reedsville
- Wallace Franta, Spring Valley
- Michael Fremstad, Westby
- Michael Gough, Monroe
- Lonnie Holthaus, Fennimore
- Steven Horvat, Willard
- Gregg Jensen, Menomonie
- Chad Krzewina, Crivitz
- Thomas Levendoski, Clear Lake
- Sharon Mackiewicz, White Lake
- Ron Markley, Prairie du Sac
- Lloyd Meyer, Chilton
- Larry Meyer, Chilton
- Barry Midtling, Port Washington
- Daniel Miess, Dodgeville
- Nick Mlsna, Cashton
- Janeen Naedler, Granton
- Richard Navis, Cleveland
- Travis Paul, Fox Lake
- Chris Peterson, Cashton
- Jeffrey Pionek, Manitowoc
- Dennis Rank, Luxemburg
- John Reudinger, Van Dyne
- Mark Ryan, Fond du Lac
- Josh Salentine, Luxemburg
- Joe Sarbacker, Verona
- Brian Schaal, Burlington
- Leroy Schmitz, Fond du Lac
- Michael Straubhaar, Blue Mounds
- Tom Tranel, Cuba City
- David Travis, Sharon
- Tim Vosberg, Cuba City
- Danika Wehling, Westby
- Paul Wehrs, West Salem
- Andre Zellmer, Montello

To learn more about the Grow Wisconsin Dairy 30x20 Initiative, visit GrowWisconsinDairy.wi.gov. To access technical assistance or available resources throughout the year, dairy farmers should call the toll-free number at 855-WI DAIRY (855-943-2479) or email GrowWisconsinDairy@wi.gov.

A Better Bottom Line

To continue working in the agriculture industry, even when the limitations caused by his disability made his daily tasks difficult to accomplish, Jeffery Berg received assistance from UW-Extension's AgriAbility program, which works closely with the Department of Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Berg received services in 2007 and 2011 as his disability progressed, including modifications to farm equipment and buildings to ease access and assist him with the ability to perform daily farming tasks. DVR's mission is to obtain, maintain, and improve employment for people with disabilities by working with Vocational Rehabilitation consumers, employers, and other partners. AgriAbility is a partnership between UW Extension and Easter Seals Wisconsin, and has served more than 2,300 farmers in the state since 1991.

Governor Walker proclaimed 2014 as the Year of *A Better Bottom Line* to highlight the advantages of hiring people with disabilities, and removing barriers to their employment. During the Year of *A Better Bottom Line*, Governor Walker is directing state agencies to focus on recognizing, promoting, and investing in public and private programs, companies, and organizations that are improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including veterans, students, and farmers.

Growing Wisconsin's Agriculture Industry

Wisconsin is home to nearly 10,500 dairy farmers. In 2013, Wisconsin dairy cows produced 27.6 billion pounds of milk, a new record for the state. The goal of the Dairy 30x20 program is to produce 30 billion pounds of milk by 2020 through increased profitability and efficiencies on the farm.

Wisconsin exported more than \$3.2 billion worth of agricultural products from January to December 2013; the value of these exports was a 9 percent increase for the same period in 2012, Wisconsin continues to rank 13th overall for agricultural exports. The value of Wisconsin's dairy exports totaled \$399 million in 2013, a 41 percent increase; the state now ranks fourth nationwide for the value of our dairy exports.

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