



State of Wisconsin
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Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
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Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board Elections Near

MADISON, Wis. (April 8, 2009) — Dairy producers in eight districts have the opportunity to vote for their Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB) representative. Director elections will be held April 13 through April 25, with results announced later in May. According to the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), 11 nominees for the Board of Directors 2009 election have been certified.

To vote, DATCP is forwarding mail-in ballots to licensed dairy producers who live within the eight districts up for election. Producers who have not received a ballot by April 17 should contact Noel Favia at (608) 224-5140 or (800) 942-2474.

Here are the candidates, their representing districts and abbreviated biographies:

District 2 Florence, Forest, Langlade, Marinette, Oconto, Vilas
Candidate: Connie Seefeldt, Coleman

Connie Seefeldt and her family began farming in 1972. They currently milk 99 cows, farm 500 acres and ship their milk to the Michigan Milk Producers Co-op. Connie belongs to the Michigan Milk Producers Co-op, Oconto Electric Co-op, Wisconsin Farm Bureau and Marinette County Dairy Promotions. In addition, the farm has received the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP) Achievement Award for Milk Quality and the Michigan Milk Producers Association Milk Quality Award.

Statement: I would like to serve on the Board because I believe involvement is the best way to cause change and make a difference. I enjoy representing dairy producers, asking questions and helping set direction. I have always believed in promotion and marketing and welcome the opportunity to serve my fellow producers in this way.

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In the recent down turn in milk prices, it is more important than ever to be sure our promotion dollars are spent in the best, most efficient ways. It is and always has been, my intent to ask questions, require accountability and stay well informed.

District 5 Dunn and St. Croix
Candidate: Kay Zwald, Hammond

Kay Zwald and her family began farming in 1975. They milk 600 cows, farm 1,200 acres and ship their milk to AMPI. Kay belongs to the St. Croix County Dairy Promotion group and the Zwald farm was named the 2007 Conservation Farm of the Year for St. Croix County.

Statement: Through my involvement in the St. Croix County Dairy Promotion group, I felt the desire to be more actively involved in how Wisconsin promotes dairy. As a board member, I can be influential in decisions concerning how Wisconsin best uses the dairy producer's promotion money.

District 8 Marathon
Candidate: Keith Langenhahn, Marathon

Keith Langenhahn has been farming all his life. The 5th generation farmer bought the home farm in 1980. He and his family milk 80 cows, farm 400 acres and ship their milk to Lynn Dairy. Keith belongs to the Manitowoc Milk Producers, Farm Bureau, Marathon FFA Alumni, plus he is the 2011 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days Executive Committee Chairman. In addition, Keith is serving as the Marathon County Board Chair (1998-present), Town of Marathon Board Chair (1978-present), Chair of the National Association of Counties Agriculture and Rural Affairs Steering Committee (2002-present) and the Chair of Wisconsin Counties Association Agriculture Steering Committee (1996-present). The Langenhahn Farm was recognized in 1982 as a Marathon County Century Farm (the farm has actually been in the Langenhahn family since 1878).

Statement: I have been involved in agriculture all my life and feel that with my interests and background I could offer WMMB my first-hand experiences. My on-farm and political experiences could be used as a benefit to my fellow producers.

Candidate: Robert (Bob) Prah, Wausau

Robert Prah and his family began milking in 1976. They milk a little more than 100 cows, farm about 285 acres and ship their milk to Foremost Farms, USA. Robert is currently a Director on the Foremost Farms Board, plus a member of the county Dairy Herd Information Association

(DHIA), County Farm Bureau, Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (PDPW), and Servco Co-op. In addition, he is an organizational member and officer on the Dairyland Academy Board, and previously served on Farm Credit Services (FCS) North Central Board and the Genex Co-op board. The Prahm farm was honored as a Century Farm in 1979 (it has been continually farmed and owned by Robert's family for 130 years) and it received the County Land Conservation award in 1970 and 1985.

Statement: I would like to serve on the WMMB Board to use the life experiences and knowledge I have to assist in the direction and actions of the WMMB. I believe the long-term future of the dairy industry in the Midwest is promising. The promotion and development of products and practices of the dairy industry in our state must be continued along with greater emphasis on having an informed and educated consumer group and targeting future consumers.

Candidate: Steve Sternweis, Marshfield

Steve Sternweis and his family started milking cows in 1972. They currently milk 425 Holsteins, farm 1,165 acres and ship their milk to Nasonville Dairy. Steve belongs to Accelerated Genetics, Christ the King Church Choir, Spencer FFA Alumni and 4-H Shady Lane. In addition, he lists the following achievements: 1989 OYF Candidates Spencer Jaycees, Morning Glory Farms Young Farmer Program 1982-1985 and Wisconsin Jaycees State Officer (2 years).

Statement: I want to learn how the farmer's dollars are spent and how they use that money to make me money. Another reason I'd like to be on the board is so I can answer my neighbor's questions.

District 11 Outagamie and Winnebago
Candidate: Robert Letter, Seymour

Robert Letter began farming in 1983. Now he and his son Russell are partners on the 200-acre farm where they milk 70 registered Holsteins and ship their milk to Mullins Cheese in Mosinee. Robert is affiliated with the Outagamie County Adult 4-H Leaders Association, the Outagamie County Holstein Breeders and the Wisconsin Holstein Association. In 2002, the herd received the Northstar DHIA Award—Low Annual Somatic Cell Count.

Statement: I would like to serve on the board because it is important that Wisconsin dairy producers are well represented on the board by a fellow dairy producer so we all can get the most bang for our buck.

District 14 Jackson, La Crosse, Trempealeau
Candidate: Patricia Kling, Taylor

Patricia and her husband Steve worked with Steve's dad (Robert) from 1976-1981, before buying the farm in 1981. They milk 50 cows, farm 400 acres and ship their milk to Dairy Farmers of America (DFA). Patricia is involved with the Farm Bureau, Dairy Herd Information Association (DHIA), Equity Co-op, Coulee Graziers, Wisconsin Holstein Association and the Jackson County Dairy Promotion Committee. In 2005, the farm won the Conservation Award in Jackson County. In 2002, Patricia received the Taylor FFA Alumni Agriculturist Award, and in 2000, she won the Farm Bureau Woman of the Year. The Klings also hosted the Jackson County On-The-Farm Breakfast in 1995.

Statement: I feel it is important to represent District 14 farmers as a voice on the WMMB board. It is important to educate the public and consumers about our product. With the technology, there are so many different products made from milk and we need to get that good nutrition message to young children, especially. The future is exciting for dairy, but we must have consumer confidence. With WMMB, farmers can work with the Center for Dairy Research to ensure safe, palatable, innovative products.

District 17 Calumet and Manitowoc
Candidate: Rosalie Geiger, Reedsville

Rosalie and her family started farming in 1969. They milk 70 cows, farm 350 acres and ship their milk to Verifine Dairy. Rosalie is actively involved with the Farm Bureau, Manitowoc Milk Producers Co-op, Wisconsin Holstein Association, Manitowoc County Holstein Association, FFA Alumni – Secretary, Equity Livestock Association, Country Horizon Cooperative, Manitowoc County DHI, Manitowoc County Dairy Promotion Committee – past secretary, Calumet County Dairy Promotion Committee, Rockland Sunshine 4-H – dairy leader 15 years, Manitowoc County Jr. Holstein Association – advisor, National Dairy Board 2001-07, NDB vice-president Cheese Committee 2003-07, Manitowoc City UW Extension Community Partner Advisory Committee, and Wisconsin Women for Agriculture. In addition, she has received the following recognition: Farm Bureau Award 2006, UW College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Honorary Recognition Award 2005, Manitowoc County Dairy Promotion Award 2005, Manitowoc County Expo Award for 14 years of service, UW Agriculture Alumni Award, Manitowoc County Outstanding Agriculture Leader 2002

Statement: As a dairy farmer who actively farms and milks cows each day, I am running for the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board because I believe in the Wisconsin dairy industry. Our farm has been in the family since 1867 and my children are continuing their dairy heritage in the industry.

We need to have a positive image for our dairy products and the dairy farmers of Wisconsin. I am concerned about the future of dairying in Wisconsin and the health and

profitability of the agricultural community. We need to promote and market pure, wholesome milk and cheese and keep that image in the consumer's mind. To the consumer, dairy products are a food – a food that must be promoted to compete with soda, margarine, and so forth. I am bringing optimism, experience, and concern for farm families and the dairy industry. I feel I am making a difference at WMMB and am determined to get the most out of every farmer's dollar.

District 20 Richland and Sauk
Candidate: Sharon Laubscher, Wonewoc

Switching from beef cattle, Sharon and her family started dairy farming in 1990. They currently milk 25-30 cows, farm 300 acres and ship their milk to Carr Valley Cheese. Sharon currently serves on the Family Dairies USA Board, Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB), and the National Dairy Board (NDB). In addition, she is a past member of Plum Valley Watershed. The Laubscher farm has received a Century Farm Award, Milk Quality.

Statement: I want to serve on the Board and help make people aware of how good dairy products are, to make sure that no child goes without all the nutrition that dairy products offer. I would like to help provide programs to better promote the Wisconsin dairy industry.

We may be a small farming operation, but it doesn't matter if you are small, large or just in between; I feel we are all in this to get our country the nutrients it needs and to let everyone know dairy products are delicious. And with the economy the way it is, dairy is very economical. I would appreciate your support.

Candidate: Randy Roecker, Loganville

Randy and his family started dairy farming after he graduated from the University of Wisconsin Farm Short Course in 1984. They milk 400 cows, farm 600 acres and ship their milk to Foremost Farms USA. The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture appointed Randy in 2006 to the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board. He also serves on the Board of Directors Sauk County Farm Bureau, is the County Chairperson for Sauk County for Accelerated Genetics, plus is a member of Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin (PDPW), Dairy Business Association (DBA) and Foremost Farms USA. In September of 2008, Randy went on a trade mission to China with select members of the United States Dairy Export Council (USDEC). Also, the farm has received the Focus on Energy Award for energy savings.

Statement: It really has been a dream of mine to always be on the WMMB Board. I love the dairy industry and I have a great deal of passion for it. I already serve at the National level but I also want to serve my fellow Wisconsin dairy producers, especially in these tough and challenging economic times.

District 23 Iowa and Lafayette
Candidate: Jay M. Staffacher, Darlington

Jay Staffacher started farming in 1989. He operates in a partnership that milks 540 cows, farms 2,500 acres and ships milk to Swiss Valley Farms. Jay is involved with Lafayette County Dairy Promotion and Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin, plus he is a Swiss Valley Farms Delegate and the Accelerated Genetics County Chair.

Statement: I would like to serve on the Board because I have always believed in the importance of promoting Wisconsin's dairy products. I was first elected in 2000 to represent District 23 and it has been a very educational and rewarding experience. I am proud to have been a part of many positive results at WMMB: we have shifted our marketing efforts of dairy products to stay abreast of the ever changing retail and foodservice environment. Every year we look at different ways to accomplish our mission statement in the most fiscally responsible and efficient manner possible. I hope that you will continue to support me to represent our district so I can continue to work with the promotion of our dairy products that I hope will eventually translate into a better economic future for our state.

Once elected, directors serve a three-year term helping maintain WMMB's mission to keep the demand high for Wisconsin dairy products, promoting the positive impact the dairy industry has in Wisconsin, guiding the organization's finances, and formulating and setting its policies and long-range business plan. For more information on director's responsibilities, and to review detailed bio information and photographs of each candidate, visit www.wmmb.com/elections.

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*NOTE TO EDITOR:

To download more detailed candidate bios (in Word) and **hi-res photos**, please visit www.wmmb.com/elections.