

PDPW MANAGERS memo

March 27, 2009

This PDPW Managers Memo contains the highlights from the March 17-18 Annual Business Conference!

The PDPW Annual Business Conference, "Adding Passion, Multiplying Profits," gathered 1148 people from 25 states and 3 countries who listened to industry experts and leaders, stopped at booths in the Hall of Ideas tradeshow and used the two-day event to network with fellow producers. Please mark your calendar now for our 2010 conference March 16-17.

Thanks,
PDPW

From a Dairy Producers Perspective:

"PDPW's Annual Business Conference gave me the opportunity to learn about industry topics ranging from the markets to reproduction to managing employees. The conference may be a six-hour drive one way, but these two days were well worth it."—Nico Niessen, Milco Dairy, Lewisville, Ind.

"We attended the conference to learn from the high-quality speakers who addressed a wide variety of topics, to network with fellow producers and to stay abreast of what's new in the industry through the Hall of Ideas trade show, and this year's conference was a great one. No where else can a dairy producer be exposed to so much in such a short amount of time. During these challenging economic times, we also appreciated the conference's positive environment."—David Beck, Campellsport, Wis.

For Your Dairy Business & Your Business Mind:

DAIRY PRODUCERS FROM CALIFORNIA AND MICHIGAN shared what they consider their best business moves during a Tuesday general session producer panel at the Annual Business Conference.

Dwight Hunt, Green Meadows Farm, Elsie, Mich., underscored the importance of staying abreast of technology, taking advantage of state grants and keeping on track by having a plan in place. Hunt also said Green Meadows Farm is fortunate to have a strong relationship with Michigan State University which has a teaching veterinary facility on the farm.

Steve Maddox, managing partner of Maddox Dairy Inc., Riverside, Calif., shared that his dairy enterprise benefits significantly from participating in a peer group. He also emphasized the value of having Standard Operating Procedures—and having SOPs expressed to employees in words and visuals plus in English and Spanish. He said Maddox Dairy also benefits from its focus on independent cow care, disease prevention and attention to genetic matings. The family farm also has a 30-year plan that involves agricultural spin-offs—such as growing grapes and almonds—so the farm can accommodate family members who want to be a part of the business. “And animal welfare is more of a concern to us than milk prices,” he summarized.

GET THE SKINNY ON 18 SPECIALTY SESSIONS and the general sessions conducted at PDPW’s Annual Business Conference by going to PDPW’s web site. [Click here](#) to view and read the various press releases. You’ll find a quick-read press releases highlighting conference specialty sessions that ranged from “Protect Yourself: Take Immigration Laws Seriously” to “Communication Key to Green Light on Dairy Expansion” to “Market to Market Host Highlights What Lies Ahead for Agriculture.” [Click here to see](#) a few photos taken at the conference.

‘NEVER, EVER GIVE UP.’ That’s one of two life rules Ron “Gus” Gustafson shared during his keynote wrap-up on Wednesday afternoon, March 18, at PDPW’s Annual Business Conference. Gustafson’s other life rule: “Have the courage to face the next challenge.” This gifted, entertaining and to-the-point speaker said he learned these two rules firsthand when, as a fourth grader, he lost his right arm and shoulder and permanently injured his right leg in an accident. Rather than become “the one-armed little Gustafson kid who would never play sports like his older brothers,” Gustafson elected to embrace challenges and accomplish more than most people thought possible, including playing on grade school, junior high, high school and college basketball teams. Gustafson underscored the fact that “we won’t reach any goal if we give up” and that “courage” is not intellectual. Instead, he defined courage as “a gut-level feeling that drives you.”

Identifying with dairy producers faced with today’s economic challenges, the keynote speaker reminded everyone that he is a “big believer in the fact that we are never given more than we can handle.” He added that “There are days when we think there is no way around something. But there is always a way, a solution, to a challenge. And we can never give up. We can always squeeze a little more out.”

GOV. JIM DOYLE ADDED TO PDPW’S ANNUAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE when he made a last-minute visit and addressed those in attendance early afternoon on Wednesday, March 18. The governor acknowledged the state’s dairy producers, noting that “people like you have built an industry that ended up sustaining this state for generations” and pointed out that Wisconsin’s total milk production in 2008 reached a 20-year high. In concluding his time with the audience, the governor stated, “I know this economy is not easy for anybody, especially for dairy farmers right now. But I’m asking you to work hard and keep your eye on the ball. We will get through this.”

State Agriculture Secretary Rod Nilsen accompanied the governor and noted that USDA numbers indicate that Wisconsin dairy plants have invested \$1.24 billion in new equipment and facilities over the past five years, with an additional \$781 million of planned investments over the next five years.

PDPW’S NINE-MEMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS TWO NEW MEMBERS—Walter Meinholz, DeForest, and Keith York, Lake Geneva—while Doug Knoepke of Durand was re-elected to the board for a second three-year term. Meinholz and York replace outgoing board members Dean Strauss and Kevin Griswold whose terms have expired. Walter Meinholz, his two brothers and two nephews own and operate Blue Star Dairy which milks 2,500 cows at three locations. Keith York owns and operates Merry Water Farm, a 1,100-cow dairy, along with his brother, cousin and parents.

PDPW’S EDUCATION FOUNDATION ENJOYED A \$33,000-PLUS BOOST to its coffers thanks to a live auction and a silent auction conducted in conjunction with the Annual Business Conference. Live auction items went under the gavel after Tuesday evening’s keynote by former Green Bay Packer Adam Timmerman and brought in \$20,305. A total of 53 silent auction items garnered another \$12,855 for the Foundation.

The 13 live auction items included a Wisconsin golf package donated by Baraboo Country Club, The Oaks Golf Course, Autumn Ridge, University Ridge Golf Course, The Bull at Pinehurst Farms, AgStar Financial and Stewart-Peterson, bought by "Friends of Dr. Dave Dickson" for \$3,355; semen tank and \$2,500 in semen donated by Select Sires, bought by Blue Royal Dairy LLC for \$3,000; a registered Holstein calf donated by the Pete and Shellie Kappelman family of Meadow Brook Dairy Farms LLC; CP Feeds LLC, Land O'Lakes Purina Feed Division and Land O'Lakes Milk Replacer Division, bought by Chris Neuser for \$2,800; a registered Jersey calf donated by David and Patty Endres of Endres Jazzy Jerseys, Cooperative Plus Inc., Land O'Lakes Cows Match Jersey Blend, Standard Nutrition Consultant Tim Huffman, Wisconsin Jersey Breeders Association and Wisconsin Junior Jersey Breeders Association, bought by Allen Kracht and Wilfred and Linda Owens for \$2,800; Labrador Retriever puppy donated by Ganderland Quality Labradors, bought by Jim Mlsna for \$500; a handmade quilt donated by Karla Zimmerman, bought by Russ Warmka for \$550; original oil painting by Larry Schultz donated by Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, bought by Lyle Orwig for \$1,500; Alliant Energy Suite during World Dairy Expo donated by Alliant Energy, bought by Terri Dallas for \$850; Door County Getaway donated by ANIMART, bought by Vince VandeYacht for \$1,000; WestfaliaSurge rotating cow brush donated by GEA WestfaliaSurge Inc., bought by Russ Warmka for \$1,200; 10-Bird Pheasant Hunt donated by Diamond V Mills Inc., bought by Steve Root for \$500; Adam Timmerman-signed football bought by Phil Hein for \$400; and Adam Timmerman-signed seed drill bought by Rick and Peg Rau for \$320. A special thank you goes to all who donated, bid and purchased items, plus John Gehl of Gehl's Foods, Germantown, who donated \$2,000 to the Foundation after being the runner-up bidder of both calves.

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