

NEWS RELEASE

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April 6, 2004

German Dairy Farmers Tour Manitowoc County

Guten Morgen. Wie geht's? That's about all the German I know, but hopefully the dairy farm guests who visited Manitowoc County on March 31st know a lot more about our dairy business. Altogether, 52 German dairy farmers, along with four farmers from Austria, participated in a one-day mini-tour of Manitowoc County. I had the opportunity to speak to them for approximately 2½ hours before they departed for lunch at the Inn on Maritime Bay and a guided tour of Kappelman's Meadow Brook Farms. The German and Austrian dairy farmers received training in business planning, writing a mission statement and establishing short and long-range goals. The session also included information regarding the \$100 plus million dairy industry in Manitowoc County, along with information on agriculture in Wisconsin.

As indicated, the dairy farmers were primarily from Germany and had dairy herds ranging from 50 to 70 cows. The average herd size in West Germany is 38 cows while East German dairy herds average 175 cows, according to Gustav Wilke, tour leader and translator. The average Manitowoc County dairy farm has 121 cows. Milk production per cow, for the farmers attending, averaged approximately 18,000 pounds with 4.1% butter fat and 3.35% protein. The average production in Germany is about 14,000 pounds, about 5,000 pounds less than the average Manitowoc County dairy cow. Average age of the farmers who participated in the session was 32.

Unlike us, Germany has a quota system, which is designed to limit milk production. The average pay price for March, 2004 was \$15 per 100 pounds of milk. Many of the farmers in attendance plan to expand their herd size in the next two years. In order to do so, however, the farmers must first buy more "quota". The current price is \$.40 per kilogram, or \$.18 per pound of milk. In other words, in order to increase the herd by one cow (average milk production of 14,000 pounds), a German dairy farmer must first buy quota, which would cost \$2,520. Without question, purchasing additional quota is the most expensive part of producing milk in Germany.

The next German dairy group is scheduled to visit Manitowoc County for a similar training session on June 17th.

Program to Focus on Manure Handling Technology

Manitowoc County Pro Ag/Pro Environment and Centerville CARES have scheduled a public informational meeting for Wednesday, April 21st at 7:00 p.m. at Lakeshore Technical College (LTC). In celebration of Earth Day, numerous presentations will be provided, including an update on the new manure handling and processing equipment at Maple Leaf Dairy. John Roach, co-owner of AES which installed the system, will provide an update on what the system is designed to accomplish.

Dave Bougie from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will address issues related to manure application and incorporation, including winter spreading of manure. An update on the Manitowoc County UW-Discovery Farms project will also be addressed by Russ Tooley, president of Centerville CARES and myself.

The general public is encouraged to attend this session in the Lake Michigan Room at LTC.

MANITOWOC COUNTY UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN AGRICULTURE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIPS

The Manitowoc County UW-Agriculture Alumni Association Board is still accepting applications for several scholarships that will be awarded to students from Manitowoc County who are enrolling at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Platteville, River Falls, Green Bay or Stevens Point and pursuing a degree in agriculture or in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Farm and Industry Short Course. Scholarships for a degree program will be up to \$500; scholarships for Farm and Industry Short Course will be up to \$200. These scholarships are also available to students transferring from a non-agriculture program to an agriculture program at one of the aforementioned colleges.

Scholarship amounts will depend on the number of qualified applicants. These scholarships are made available through the cooperation and support of businesses, organizations and individuals in Manitowoc County. The Board of Directors of the Manitowoc County UW-Agriculture Alumni Association will make the selections.

Each applicant must return the application form to the Manitowoc County Office Complex, c/o "Manitowoc County UW-Ag Alumni Association", Attention: Scott Gunderson, P.O. Box 1150, Manitowoc, WI 54221-1150, by April 15, 2004, and provide the Selection Committee with three letters of recommendation by that date. Instructions for those writing letters of recommendation are included with the application form. Selection will be based on the application form and the letters of recommendation.

The purpose of the scholarship is to encourage deserving young men and women to pursue further education to better equip themselves for the operation of a farm or to assume employment and leadership responsibilities in another phase of agriculture.

Payment of the scholarship will be made to the institution after the scholarship recipient has enrolled and started classes.

For further information, contact the Manitowoc County UW-Extension Office at 683-4168.

**MANITOWOC COUNTY UW-EXTENSION ANNOUNCES
FARM PROGRESS DAYS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE**

The Manitowoc County Farm Progress Days Scholarship Committee is still accepting applications for the Manitowoc County Farm Progress Days Donald R. Peterson Scholarship for 2004.

This \$1000 scholarship is awarded to a graduating high school Senior from Manitowoc County who is planning to attend UW-Madison, UW-Platteville, UW-River Falls or UW-Stevens Point to pursue a career in the agricultural life sciences or the natural resources area.

Scholarship applications and guidelines are available from local high school guidance counselors and agri-science teachers or at the Manitowoc County UW-Extension office located at 4319 Expo Drive. Completed applications must be received at the UW-Extension office on or before April 15, 2004. For more information, please call 683-4168.

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