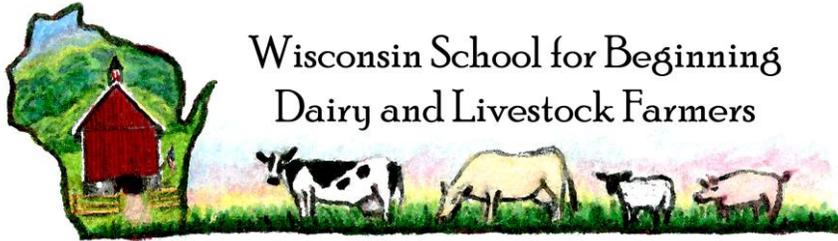


If you have a passion to farm, it's our mission to help you get started

A program of the UW Madison Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems and the Farm and Industry Short Course, within the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences - CALS

## Wisconsin School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers



# 2015 Autumn Newsletter



## A Word from the WSBDF Team

Dick Cates, Nadia Alber and Matt Raboin

Hello and welcome back to another edition of our annual newsletter. We are eagerly awaiting the commencement of the 21st session of the Wisconsin School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers! This year's class will be chock full of farmer and industry leader speakers, farm tours, conferences and, most importantly, student-farmers who will attend our class in Madison, across the Midwest and, NEW this year, in Freeport, Maine!

We would like to thank everyone who has donated in some way, shape or form to our cause: program sponsors, families who have made financial contributions, classroom speakers, distance education classroom facilitators, our agency and WI Technical College partners, farm internship mentors, farm family and FFA hosts for our annual class field trip and Ride to Farm picnics, Ride to Farm riders, and all of our friends—for your continued belief in and work towards our mission: We're here and going strong to help the next generation get started farming! Since its inception in 1995, the WSBDF has nurtured almost 500 students, 75% of which have gone on to pursue their life-long dreams of owning, managing or operating a farm. Without all the help of our donors this would have never been possible, so THANK YOU!!!

This fall we are grateful to have the help of CIAS Outreach Specialist Matt Raboin. Matt is a beginning farmer himself, with a small orchard near Barneveld, and is excited about helping WSBDF beginning farmers. Matt designed a new WSBDF website and logo (at the top of the page!). He also updated our internship files and in the coming months he will make our Grass-Based Dairy and Livestock Seminar CD set available as an online course.

The WSBDF remains an accredited business training program for new borrowers in the USDA FSA Beginning Farmer Loan Program. This program is a valuable resource for farm establishment. To find out more go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA). The partnership between WSBDF and the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program (DGA) started its fourth year in 2015. The DGA is a new apprentice-mentor program whose mission is to provide a guided pathway to independent grazing farm ownership. To find out more go to [www.dairygrazingapprenticeship.org](http://www.dairygrazingapprenticeship.org).

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Famer Anne Topham (**top**) shows off her baby dairy goats, or kids, to several cyclists at our afternoon farm stop. Dave Drapac (**middle**), member of the 1<sup>st</sup> place Friends and Family Team, Cows and Goats, enjoys some Madison-made Yumbutter. Dave sported cow ears the entire ride! Brad Sirianni (**bottom**), one of the founding fathers of Ride to Farm, sports his official Ride jersey while signing this year's ride waiver.



**WORD, cont.**

Other highlights of the past year included our two annual fundraisers. The 6<sup>th</sup> annual *Partnering for Progress -Celebrating our Rural Communities* initiative and Barn Party celebration brought in more than \$4,000, while our 12<sup>th</sup> annual bicycle *Ride to Farm* was our most successful to date. We had over 60 cyclists and volunteers who raised over \$18,000! Our sincere appreciation goes out to all those who contributed. With these most recent fundraisers, the WSBDF UW-Foundation Endowment Fund established in the late '90s, along with WSBDF endowed scholarship funds, have surpassed \$500,000. Thanks to you, the WSBDF aims to establish a permanent place at UW-Madison and around the state!

## Ride to Farm 2015

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, we hosted our 12<sup>th</sup> Annual *Ride to Farm* bicycle ride fundraiser. Over 50 cyclists embarked on either a super hilly 100k (or 62-mile) ride, or a less challenging 52-mile ride, that began and ended at Botham Vineyards in Barneveld with a lunch stop at Culver's in Dodgeville. Chief Operating Officer of Organic Valley, Louise Hemstead, stopped by in the morning to give the riders a rousing send-off. From there, the route included rest stops and tours on two SW Wisconsin farms, where participants sampled Organic Valley Fuel, fresh goat cheese and other snacks sourced from local farms. Stop one took riders to the Heisner Family Farm an Organic Valley dairy south of Dodgeville. Stop two was at the grass-based goat dairy of Anne Topham, Fantome Farm, just north of Ridgeway.

This year, the riders and supporting businesses helped to raise \$18,000 for WSBDF program activities, in addition to promoting awareness of the importance of supporting the next generation of innovative farmers. We also had over 10 volunteers helping out before, during and after the event. Thanks to all those who donated their time and effort to make this event a success!

Prizes such as "Milk for a Year" from Organic Valley and a Trek road bike were awarded to top individual fundraisers. Top fundraisers this year were Allison Dungan (ind.) and American Transmission Company (team). The top team fundraiser this year was Team "Cows and Goats" - made up of UW-Madison graduate students, staff and friends. Many thanks to Culvers Restaurants, Organic Valley Farmer-Owned and the WI Milk Marketing Board for significant contributions of value meal and sundae coupons, organic cheese and "Milk for a Year" and T-shirts, respectively, which all contributed to making the Ride such a great event this year!

For more information on how you can be a part of our 13<sup>th</sup> annual Ride next summer (June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – Save the Date!), please take a minute and visit our Ride website: [ridetofarm.dojiggy.com](http://ridetofarm.dojiggy.com). We are always looking for more riders and volunteers; any help is greatly appreciated!



Rider team Cows and Goats (**above**) accept the trophy for top fundraising Friends and Family Team from Alice in Dairyland, Teyanna Loether. More than 60 cyclists and volunteers (**bottom left**) gathered at beautiful, Botham Vineyard in Barneveld, before getting ready to hit the road! Louise Hemstead, Organic Valley Manager, (**bottom right**), gave the Riders a rousing send-off at the start of the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Ride to Farm! Thank you Louise for all you and your daughter, Kristina Ralph, do for beginning famers in our state!

## WSBDF Launches a New Website...

With recent graduate profiles

Matt Raboin helped us launch a brand new WSBDF website this fall and we are very excited about the new look and presence it will give us on the web. There are several new graduate quotes and profiles, so be sure to check it out! Have no fear, if you go to our old URL you will be redirected to the new page which is:

[www.wsbdf.wisc.edu](http://www.wsbdf.wisc.edu)

Here are some photos from our website of the current profiled WSBDF graduates. Enjoy surfing our new site!



Nick Sergi, class of 2013, with his grass-fed beef herd.



Peter Hutter, Distance Education (Viroqua site) class of 2012, managing the Siemon Family Farm (of George Siemon, Organic Valley CEO) in La Farge, WI.

## WSBDF via Distance Education: **NEW** site in Freeport Maine!

The distance education option for taking the WSBDF seminar in locations across the Midwest continues to grow and this year we will have a site on the east coast in Freeport, Maine! Currently, fifteen locations have a classroom facilitator who is ready and able to lead the on-site discussion and host the weekly live webinars.

For the 2015-16 academic year, the distance education fee is approximately \$300 (varies slightly by site) for 15 weeks of instruction, which includes lectures from experienced farmers and UW faculty, plus the creation of your own farm business plan and the opportunity for discounted attendance at conferences. For those looking to obtain a loan, lease a farm or enter into their own farm business, this investment of a modest amount of time and money can reap great dividends in obtaining critical information and support for future success.

Class meets Thursdays from mid-November through March. Deadline for applications for the distance sites is **Nov. 1**. Those interested should contact the facilitator at one of these sites in Wisconsin or Maine:

**Appleton/Chilton** – Jeremy Hanson 920-585-1821, **Elkhorn** – Peg Reedy 262.741.4961, **Freeport, Maine** – Dave Herring 207.865-4469, **Green Bay**– Amy Kox 920.498.6908, **Independence** - Brad Sirianni 715.533.8081, **La Crosse** - Aimee Finley 507.273.7722, **Ladysmith** - Rich Toebe 715.532.2151, **Medford** – Bob Brandt 715-965-6771, **Menomonie** - Mark Denk 715.577.3036, **Milladore** – Joel Kuehnhold 715-321-0229, **Monroe** – Dustin Williams 608-391-0238, **Portage/Reedsburg/Watertown** – Randy Zogbaum 608.745.3192, **Prairie du Chien**-Vance Haugen 608.326.0223, **Spooner** - Otto Wiegand 715.635.3506, and **Wausau** - Victoria Pietz 715.803.1414.

To get application materials to attend the WSBDF on the Madison campus, or for more information about any aspect of the program, go online to [www.wsbdf.wisc.edu](http://www.wsbdf.wisc.edu) or call 608-265-6437.



To contact the UW Foundation Friends of the WSBDF Fund: Jodi Wickham, (608) 263-2027; [jodi.wickham@supportuw.org](mailto:jodi.wickham@supportuw.org). Contributions may be mailed directly to: The UW Foundation, attn: Jodi Wickham; Friends of the WSBDF Fund; US Bank Lockbox, Box 78807, Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807

**Contributions of any amount are welcome!**

Please do not mail cash; checks can be made out to: UW Foundation-WSBDF Fund

## THANK YOU! FOR GENEROUSLY SUPPORTING THE WSBDF

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Ride to Farm fun!  
Save the Date  
June 4<sup>th</sup> 2016

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