

Recommendation #5**Subcommittee:** Dairy and Rural Community Vitality**Submitted by:** Dennis Bangart, Darin Von Ruden and John Schmidt

Problem Statement: Wisconsin's economy ranks number 11 in the United States at \$342 billion annually. Agriculture in general is 25.75% of this at \$88.2 billion and dairy is 12.7% of the total at \$43.3 billion.

Dairy supports one out of ten jobs in Wisconsin, and the economic impact supports an additional 1.46 jobs. The average cow in Wisconsin generates \$34,000 of economic activity every year. Agriculture, and especially dairy, is an important economic driver for the state of Wisconsin.

Recommended Solution:

Additional funding should be budgeted for the University of Wisconsin to study existing or proposed dairy and agricultural infrastructures in a community, county, or broader region and the benefits of the impact that currently exists or the benefits of future impact where new infrastructure is proposed. This could be a partnership program with business development under the other cabinet secretaries' areas. The goal is to bring economic studies and indices to the awareness of local communities and their local contributions of the dairy and agricultural sector. These models of local contributions can then be used for the creation of tools to identify dairy and agricultural opportunities in the local infrastructure as well as provide a viewpoint of the importance the sector already serves.

The program may be open to models that emphasize either production agriculture or agribusiness or a combination of both. Demographic and economic history, trends, or proposed changes within the models should be used to help communities set goals for the continued integrity of their community or proposed long-term benefits of future infrastructure changes.

Recommendation #8**Subcommittee:** Dairy and Rural Community Vitality**Submitted by:** Elizabeth Wells, Dennis Bangart and Michael DeLong

Problem Statement: The economic impact of the dairy industry on the state's Gross Domestic Product is not well understood. This literacy should be enhanced and made accessible to local decision-makers throughout the state.

Recommended Solution:

The Dairy Task Force 2.0 endorses the establishment and maintenance of agriculturally based programs with emphasis on dairy in chambers of commerce, extension networks, and workforce development programs throughout the state. These agriculturally based programs should build understanding of agriculture's economic impact, enhance the agriculture infrastructure, educate the consumer on farm origination to table destination, promote agriculture career development, and works to improve the vitality of Wisconsin's rural heritage.

Recommendation #10**Subcommittee:** Dairy and Rural Community Vitality**Submitted by:** Don Hamm, Jerry Schroeder and Dave Buholzer**Problem Statement:** Rural communities need access to road infrastructure support and maintenance funds.**Recommended Solution:**

1. Mandating that a set percent of the total transportation budget for the State of Wisconsin goes to local roads.
2. Class A trucks used to haul feed and/or manure should be treated the same as milk trucks (heavy truck fee)
3. Support a local wheel tax for towns and/or counties
4. Looking at road bonding thru insurance companies or a Line of Credit
5. Farms that are large enough to generate substantial heavy vehicle traffic could partner with local towns to help build roads out to a major highway.
6. Dyed fuel tax for farm equipment that would go directly back to the townships, not thru the General Transportation Fund.

Recommendation #11**Subcommittee:** Dairy and Rural Community Vitality**Submitted by:** Janet Clark

Problem Statement: As generations of employees are becoming further removed from the farm, they have little experience with today's modern farming practices. It is important for our community of employees to have a connection with these practices. Therefore, it is vital to create educational opportunities to be available to Wisconsin businesses to train their employees in today's modern farming practices.

Recommended Solution:

The Task Force recommends these educational programs include the following:

1. **Basics of a Dairy Cow:** This course would cover how milk is produced, different dairy facilities and how farmers care for their animals.
2. **Farming Essentials:** This course would focus on land and crop management. It would include the different types of farming, from grazing, organic to conventional. The importance of manure management to cropping systems.
3. **Business Management:** This course would culminate the business needs of a dairy farm; how the dairy cow, land & feed management filter into the business management of a farm. Creating an understanding of different business structures and how new ideas and methods can impact a dairy farm.

We further recommend that grant funding be created for organizations that are creating these educational opportunities. These funds would be available for day of training expenses.

Recommendation #14**Sub-committee:** Dairy and Rural Community Vitality**Submitted by:** Melissa Haag, Janet Clark and John Schmidt

Problem Statement: Agritourism businesses are important specialties for many small dairies throughout the state of Wisconsin. Some of these agritourism businesses provide a form of entertainment for spectators to enjoy a taste of an agricultural lifestyle. Other agritourism businesses produce a specific dairy food product that allows consumers to directly connect to a farm where their food comes from. There is a growing population of farms looking at developing future business plans that involve agritourism as a way to diversify their small operation. Agritourism is important to the economic vitality of small, rural communities and the Wisconsin dairy industry.

Recommended Solution:

1. Pathways in Education: We recommend a document(s) be drafted that highlights a step by step process for farms to follow that could help standardize and reduce risk for the farms providing on-site tours of their operations. Each farm would have the freedom to put their own local spin on their tour. The documents can include but are not limited to resources for media training, communicating with consumers and identify the financial risk of hosting tours (i.e. compensation for time dedicated to giving tours and ways to protect yourself from the liability of hosting events)
2. Centralized Marketing for Farms participating in agritourism: We recommend a centralized location(s) (i.e. website, farm listing brochures) for farms who want to advertise their agritourism business or product. Consumers could seek out a variety of contact information in one location for farms around Wisconsin that provide agritourism activities.
3. Join Efforts Against Label Marketing of Dairy Free Products: Competition for space in the dairy cooler at grocery stores is difficult enough amongst true dairy products. Our small, specialty cheese, ice cream, yogurt, and fluid milk creameries should not have to compete for space in the dairy cooler against products that do not actually contain dairy. Ideally dairy free products should find alternative placement in the grocery store. We are seeking support for the in-Labeling Laws that are currently in place but not being enforced.

Recommendation #15**Sub-committee:** Dairy and Rural Community Vitality**Submitted by:** Melissa Haag, Janet Clark and Mike DeLong

Problem Statement: Options for internet services in rural areas are extremely limited. The few options that are available usually come with data cap restrictions or are of a very slow service speed. The technological capabilities and communication expectations of modern day society depend on reliant and fast internet services. We feel that it would be important for families living in rural communities to have access to broadband internet services.

Recommended Solution:

We recommend support for Wisconsin legislators to continue investigating the possibility of making this a reality for rural Wisconsin communities. As family farms are trying to upgrade technology that might make their farms more efficient, there will be an increasing need for them to utilize broadband.

Additionally, if we want to keep a subset of our population living in rural communities, we need to have efficient way for them to communicate and work with the population living in the cities. There are numerous job opportunities that can allow a spouse to work from home, provided they are connected via the internet. Adequate internet service would give families the option to live in a rural community, having one spouse work on a farm or at a local business, while the other spouse potentially holds a job connected via electronic communication. We recommend supporting and researching opportunities for broadband internet services in our rural Wisconsin communities.

Recommendation #16**Sub-committee:** Dairy and Rural Community Vitality**Submitted by:** Melissa Haag

Problem Statement: The threat of a contagious, zoonotic, or foreign animal disease is an ever present risk to the livestock on our dairy farms. Accountability of individual animals and the ability to trace their movements from a processing facility to farm of origin is important for veterinary teams to contain, isolate, and quarantine potentially infected or exposed facilities. Once a disease is identified, the goal is to limit the spread as efficiently as possible, thereby affecting the fewest number of farms. The financial impacts for a dairy having to deal with an outbreak of this magnitude can be extremely devastating if not catastrophic.

Recommended Solution:

Looking proactively, a system of unique individual animal identification on every animal that leaves a dairy premise would help create an efficient paper trail for traceability of animal movement. Should an infected animal be positively identified on another farm or in the food processing system, unique animal identification provides a streamlined path in which to identify the locations that animal has been and/or was raised.

Official animal identification is already required for interstate movement of cattle. Our recommendation would be that any bovine leaving a farm for sale, exhibition, or for slaughter be identified with official identification. Official identification options include: Brucellosis vaccination eartag, 840 AINs, or Silver/Brite tags.

Recommendation #36**Sub-committee:** Dairy and Rural Community Vitality**Submitted by:** Don Hamm

Problem Statement: Urbanization of Wisconsin's rural communities can mean that township boards and planning commissions are filled with members who do not have a farm background or appreciate the complexities of operating a farm business. This can lead to local ordinances which unfairly restrict vehicle movement or practices necessary to farming operations.

Recommended Solution:

The Dairy Task Force 2.0 recommends dairy producers run for local town offices and serve on local plan commissions.