



71st Alice in Dairyland Top Candidates Announced

Release Date: March 16, 2018

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Editor's note: Download group and individual photos [here](#).

HANCOCK - Six top candidates for the 71st Alice in Dairyland were announced today at a press conference at Heartland Farms in Adams County, a key step in the selection of Wisconsin's next "agricultural ambassador."

Following an extensive interview process, the next Alice in Dairyland will be selected from among the six top candidates at the conclusion of the Alice in Dairyland Finals Program, May 17-19 in Adams, Wis.

Over the next two months, the candidates will participate in a rigorous interview process allowing them to showcase communications and public relations skills required to be the next Alice in Dairyland. Although only one of the six top candidates will be selected as the 71st Alice, the personal and professional growth experienced by all six candidates as a result of participating in the process will carry far into their future careers.

"The Alice in Dairyland program has a strong history of promoting the diversity of Wisconsin's agriculture industry, and one of the six top candidates will continue this tradition as Wisconsin's most recognized agricultural spokesperson," said 70th Alice in Dairyland Crystal Siemers-Peterman. "For all six top candidates, participating in the finals process will be an invaluable asset to build upon throughout their careers."

Candidate biographies:

Kristen Broege is a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, studying Dairy Science with a certificate in Agricultural Business Management. Her passion for agriculture extends beyond the classroom and on campus she is involved in Badger Dairy Club, the Association of Women in Agriculture, Dairy Challenge and Dairy Judging. Broege's interest in agriculture stems from growing up on her family's dairy farm in Janesville. She, along with her sisters, own and show a small herd of registered Holsteins. In her youth, Broege was actively involved in 4-H, FFA, and the Wisconsin Junior Holstein Association. She recently applied her knowledge and learned more about Wisconsin's agricultural industry through internships with Gil-Bar Jerseys, Landmark Services Cooperative, and East Central/Select Sires.

"If chosen to represent Wisconsin's diverse agriculture industry as Alice in Dairyland, I will use my enthusiasm to learn and hear about other agriculturists' passions and communicate that new knowledge to consumers," said Broege.

Sydney Endres grew up on her family's Jersey farm in Lodi. She graduated in August from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with degrees in Dairy Science and Life Sciences Communication. While there, she was involved in multiple agriculture student organizations including the Association of Women in Agriculture, the Dairy Girl Network, and the UW-Madison Dairy Cattle Center and had positions with the Wisconsin State Fair, Land O' Lakes, Inc. and Professional Dairy Producers Association. After graduation, she interned for Fair Oaks Farms and now works for US Jersey. A Jersey Association Lifetime member and All-American Junior Show Committee member, in her spare time, Endres enjoys helping out on the farm, Nordic skiing and spreading her love of Wisconsin agriculture.

"As Alice in Dairyland, I will devote my time to learning and sharing about Wisconsin's diverse agriculture industries with audiences of different ages and backgrounds," said Endres. "With so much to share, I will find something valuable for everyone to know about the top industry in our state."

Alexus Grossbier grew up in Elk Mound and developed an understanding and excitement for Wisconsin's vast agricultural commerce on her family's small hobby farm. She was involved in the Elk Meadow 4-H club, where she raised and showed pigs at the county fair, along with crocheting, vegetables, and cake decorating. She served as secretary and president for her 4-H club. Previously, and presently, she furthers her agricultural knowledge by helping her dad with his meat processing business. She graduated in May, 2017 from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities with a major in psychology and a minor in leadership. On campus she was involved in the Gopher Dairy Club, was a teaching assistant, and worked as a social media specialist with the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center. She recently ended her reign as Dunn County's 2017 and first-ever, Fairest of the Fair.

"As Alice, I will use my communication and leadership skills to not only educate and teach consumers of all ages about Wisconsin's agricultural impact but also grow myself and my knowledge of all the agricultural products this great state has to offer."

Jacqueline Hilliard, a Wisconsin Dells native, discovered her passion for Wisconsin agriculture on her parents' grain farm and through involvement in Adams County 4-H and Wisconsin Dells FFA. Through these organizations, she served as Adams County Fairest of the Fair and competed at nationals to receive her FFA American Degree. In May, 2017 Hilliard graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with degrees in horticulture and agronomy. There she was involved in collegiate FFA as the chapter's president, the UW Marching Band, UW Crops Club, and the UW Horticulture Society. Previously, she interned at Allen Centennial Garden, and the West Madison Agricultural Research Station. Currently she works as an Assistant Plant Propagator at McKay Nursery Company in Waterloo, and assists in managing her family's wedding and event barn.

"As Alice in Dairyland, I hope to be a liaison between consumers and agriculture," Hilliard said. "I feel the conversations with everyone whom Alice meets are essential for fueling the future of Wisconsin's agriculture industry, while building relations between the Alice program and consumers."

Kaitlyn Riley, Gays Mills, learned first-hand the passion and work ethic of Wisconsin farmers growing up on her family's registered Jersey dairy farm. Wanting to share agriculture's story, she studied strategic communications and broadcast journalism at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In college, she held officer positions with the Association of Women in Agriculture and Badger Dairy Club. She also founded the university's first agricultural radio talk show, AgChat. After graduating with honors in May, 2014 Riley served as the 48th Wisconsin Fairest of the Fairs. Professionally, she worked as the farm news director at WPRE-WQPC Radio in Prairie du Chien and as a multimedia journalist with WQOW News 18 in Eau Claire. In May, 2017 she returned to the family farm where she manages calf and heifer care. She continues sharing the stories of agriculture by freelance writing for Hoard's Dairyman, and she volunteers with agricultural organizations such as the Crawford County Dairy Promoters, Crawford County Livestock Camp Committee, and Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation.

"As Alice in Dairyland, I will give a positive voice to Wisconsin's diverse agriculture industry," said Riley. "Through my travels, I will learn from the many faces of agriculture to better educate urban and rural audiences about the importance of Wisconsin food, fuel and fiber production in our daily lives."

Megan Schulte grew up in Hammond, and found a passion for Wisconsin agriculture through her family's dairy farm and raising her own herd of beef cattle. She was active in St. Croix County 4-H and the New Richmond FFA Chapter. Through these organizations she was able to compete in dairy judging at the local and state levels, as well as exhibit dairy, beef, and hogs at the county and state fairs. She will graduate in May from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities with a major in Agricultural Communication and Marketing and a minor in Animal Science. On campus she has been involved in the Gopher Dairy Club, Agricultural Education Club, and Beta of Clovia, a sorority built on the foundations of 4-H. Previously, she interned with Clark County 4-H and Extension Services, and Fair Oaks Farms.

"Supporting Wisconsin agriculture will always be a passion of mine," said Schulte, "and as Alice in Dairyland, I will work to foster a positive relationship with the public and strive to better connect the majority of the population to the people who are directly connected to the farm."

Alice in Dairyland is a one-year, full-time public relations position with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. The start date for the 71st Alice is June 4, 2018.

In this highly visible and fast-paced position, Alice in Dairyland travels throughout the state teaching rural and urban audiences of all ages about Wisconsin's extensive agricultural industry. In the position, Alice in Dairyland cultivates relationships with television, radio and print media outlets; writes and delivers speeches; and utilizes social media to tell the stories of Wisconsin agriculture. Additional duties include developing and executing marketing plans, delivering classroom presentations, and networking with industry professionals.

Each year, a different Wisconsin County hosts the Alice in Dairyland interview activities, with Adams County serving as the host county this year. The 71st Alice in Dairyland will be selected at the conclusion of the three-day finals program, May 17-19.

The public is welcome to attend two public events during the Finals in Adams County in May:

Candidate Discussion Panel, Friday, May 18; Fawn Creek Winery (3619 13th Ave., Wisconsin Dells); 5 p.m., Social Hour; Dinner, 6 p.m.; Discussion Panel, 7 p.m. Join the 71st Alice in Dairyland candidates as they take part in a discussion panel addressing agriculture topics. Ticket required, email agandadventure@gmail.com to inquire.

71st Alice in Dairyland Finale Program, Saturday, May 19; Adams-Friendship Fine Arts Center (1109 E. North Street, Adams), 4:30 p.m., Social Hour, 6 p.m., Dinner; Finale Program, 7:30 p.m. Join 70th Alice in Dairyland Crystal Siemers-Peterman and longtime ag radio broadcaster Bob Bosold as they host the Finale Program culminating in the announcement of the 71st Alice in Dairyland. Ticket required, email agandadventure@gmail.com to inquire.

For more event information, visit aliceindairyland.com.

Direct program questions to Alice in Dairyland Program Manager, Ti Gauger at 608-224-5115 or Ti.Gauger@wisconsin.gov