



Marathon County to Host 2026 Alice in Dairyland Finals

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has announced that Marathon County will host the 79th Alice in Dairyland Finals May 14-16, 2026. With a rich history, beautiful rolling hills and woodlands surrounding the Wisconsin River and its tributaries, and a diverse agriculture industry, Marathon County provides an ideal destination for this annual event.

Alice in Dairyland is a communications professional who works to educate the public about Wisconsin agriculture. Each May, a new Alice is selected from a group of candidates through an extensive public job interview process and, each year, a different county hosts the finals.

The 79th Alice in Dairyland Finals planning committee invites individuals from Marathon County and surrounding communities with an interest in donating their time or resources to contact the 79th Alice in Dairyland Finals Committee at alicehost2026@gmail.com.

According to the University of Wisconsin–Madison Extension, Marathon County has over 2,200 farms, 97% of which are family owned. More than 473,000 acres of land across the county are devoted to agriculture, and the industry provides more than 11,000 jobs and \$2.8 billion in economic activity each year. Ginseng, dairy, and maple syrup are among the leading agricultural products; in fact, Marathon County ranks number one in ginseng and number two in the dairy industry in Wisconsin.

The 78th Alice in Dairyland, Sarah Hagenow, will visit Marathon County more than 10 times before the 2026 finals. Her appearances will include stops at Colby Cheese Days, the North Central Wisconsin Antique Steam and Gas Engine Show, the Athens Fair, and agribusinesses such as a maple syrup farm and ginseng garden. Each visit will bring increased visibility to the many agritourism events and offerings in Marathon County.

The selection of the 79th Alice in Dairyland will take place on May 16, 2026, in Wausau. The interview process includes the three-day finals event each May, as well as a two-day briefing event several weeks earlier. These events include press conferences, agribusiness tours, interviews with the media, and speeches. Some finale events are open to the public and include opportunities to showcase the host county's local businesses and products.

About Alice in Dairyland

Alice in Dairyland is a one-year, full-time communications professional for DATCP. The program is supported by several partner organizations, including Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Ginseng Board of Wisconsin, Goodman's Jewelers, Kettle Moraine Mink Breeders Association, the Dairy Innovation Hub, Wisconsin Beef Council, Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board, and the Wisconsin Potato Promotions and Auxiliary. For more information about the Alice in Dairyland program, visit <https://www.aliceindairyland.com/> and follow Alice on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).

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