



State of Wisconsin  
Governor Scott Walker

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**Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection**  
Ben Brancel, Secretary

July 20, 2017

Good afternoon,

At the Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection meeting today in Tomahawk, I announced my retirement from state public service. I will retire on August 13.

When I was in high school, a national trip by the 4-H organization gave me a chance to meet my Congressman Melvin Laird. He instilled in me a desire to enter public service someday.

In 1986, the citizens of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District gave me an opportunity to start my service at the state level. Then, in 1997, Governor Thompson gave me another exciting opportunity to serve at a cabinet level position.

Life changed again in 2001 when I started my service as state director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency. In 2009, I became the state liaison for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 2011, Governor Scott Walker gave me another chance to be the Secretary of DATCP.

It has been my pleasure to serve as Secretary. I have given this much thought about when is the right time to retire. I came to the conclusion that there always will be unfinished business to be done, but now is the time to return to my family's farm full-time in Marquette County as we plan for our first ever production sale. My son and daughter-in-law are now the sixth generation to farm the land. My first job was a farmer, and my last job will be a farmer.

I especially want to thank Governor Walker for the privilege to serve in his cabinet. I am grateful that I was able to be part of this administration, serving farmers, protecting consumers and supporting businesses.

I am very appreciative of my leadership team and the entire staff at the department. The service the agency provides to the public is second to none.

I am humbled by the great opportunities I have had throughout the past three decades. My work has taken me around the world, something I never would have imagined when I was young working in my barnyard.

I have always said that in agriculture, we are a family. Thank you for letting me be a part of it.

Sincerely,

Ben Brancel

*Agriculture generates \$88 billion for Wisconsin*

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