



2021 PDPW Business Conference

MARCH 17-18, 2021

Kalahari Resort
Wisconsin Dells, WI



WELCOME!

conference snapshot

DAY ONE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17

8:00 am	Registration and Hall of Ideas open
8:45	Hands-On and Specialty Sessions
8:45-10:00	Youth Session, part one
10:15	Learning Lounges
11:00	Opening Session: Vann Morris Lt. General Russel L. Honoré
12:30 pm	Lunch
1:00	Learning Lounges
1:45	Learning Lounges
2:30	Hands-On and Breakout Sessions
2:30-3:45	Youth Session, part two
6:30	Dinner

DAY TWO THURSDAY, MARCH 18

8:00 am	Registration and Hall of Ideas open
8:45	Hands-On and Specialty Sessions
8:45-10:00	Youth Session, part three
10:15	Learning Lounges
11:00	General Session: Dan Basse
12:30 pm	Lunch
12:45 pm	Learning Lounges
1:30	Hands-On and Breakout Sessions
1:30-2:45	Youth Session, part four
3:45	Closing Session: Captain Charlie Plumb

Throughout the flier, sessions are color coded based on their primary content, as follows:

- animal care, food safety
- business, financial
- human resources, management, next generation
- social license (consumer trust, environment, policy)



Who'd have thought an in-person conference would be unique?

As we've so recently seen, the work you do every day is critical. Important. *Essential*. And so is taking care of your most vital asset – you; and your ability to learn, grow, and transform with the times.

Savvy new ideas run full tilt at this year's business conference. Unveiling 28 sessions, 42 speakers and two new introductions to the Business Conference platform, the program is tailored for you by fellow dairy producers.

Get ready. A whole new world of discovery awaits at the Kalahari Resorts and Conventions in Wisconsin Dells.

NEW THIS YEAR:

The Nexus Stage – Discoveries at work! Innovation! New ideas! On the all-new Nexus stage, companies that have entered in advance will vie for audience attention as they highlight how their new product or service will advance the dairy community.

Leadership sessions for youth – Teens ages 15 to 18 with an interest in dairy can participate in dynamic, interactive leadership sessions throughout both days.

YOUR SAFETY, OUR PRIORITY:

We'll follow CDC recommended guidelines as follows:

Safe distancing: Capacities have been calculated for each room; attendance will be capped in sessions as necessary. Extra AV will be set up in overflow areas to allow for social distancing while learning. Room set-ups will be arranged in a free-stall manner; each attendee can sit where they choose and reposition their chair as desired to maintain safe distances.

Masks and hand sanitizer: Masks and hand sanitizer will be part of your training kit along with meeting proceedings.

Food service: All food and beverages will be individually served by Kalahari staff. Bottled water and unlimited milk will be provided.

Good judgment: If you're not feeling well, please don't attend the conference.



PAM JAHNKE, our conference emcee, is known to many as “the Fabulous Farm Babe.” Growing up on a dairy farm just north of Green Bay, she was surrounded by agriculture. Jahnke is a past president of the National Association of Farm Broadcasting, has been named Farm Broadcaster of the Year and has moderated panels for U.S. Ag Secretaries in the White House. The Midwest Farm Report network has grown to encompass 26 stations in Wisconsin and Minnesota, as well as daily appearances on the CBS-TV affiliate in Madison and the Fabulous Farm Babe Facebook page. In her spare time, Pam farms in partnership with her brother, sister and mother on the home farm.



EVANGELO “VANN” MORRIS is a former nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submariner, Afghanistan-deployed combat veteran, and retired U.S. Navy Surface Warfare Officer. This decorated and educated vet has a Master’s in Business Administration degree from the Naval Postgraduate School, and an array of military achievements, including an incident in 2001 in which his team seized 14 tons of pure cocaine during a Colombian drug raid – the largest drug bust in U.S. maritime history. During his last two tours of duty, he served at the U.S. Pentagon in Washington D.C. and the United States Special Operations Command in Tampa, Florida.



LT. GENERAL RUSSEL L. HONORÉ is an American hero who helped New Orleans recover from catastrophe. As the commander of Joint Task Force Katrina, Lieutenant General Honoré became known as the “Category 5 General” for his striking leadership style in coordinating military relief efforts in post-hurricane New Orleans. A decorated 37-year army veteran and global authority on leadership, he also planned and oversaw the military response to the Space Shuttle Columbia tragedy. When hurricanes and other national crises arise, news networks such as CNN, Fox, MSNBC and CBS consider him their go-to expert on crisis management and emergency and disaster preparedness.



DAN BASSE is president of AgResource Company, a domestic and international agricultural research firm in Chicago that forecasts domestic and world agricultural price trends. AgResource provides their research around the globe to various segments of the industry including farmers, elevators, soy and corn processors, wheat millers, food companies, trading companies, importers and exporters. An economist who’s been in the commodity business since 1979, Dan was raised on a dairy/grain farm in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Since April 2020, his market reports and forecasts have been among the most popular episodes of PDPW’s The Dairy Signal™.



CAPTAIN CHARLIE PLUMB graduated from the Naval Academy in 1964 and earned his Navy Wings the following year. Shortly afterward he made his mark helping develop the Navy Fighter Weapons School, known today as “TOP GUN.” During the Vietnam War, Captain Plumb flew 74 successful combat missions over North Vietnam and made over 100 carrier landings. On his 75th mission, just five days before the end of his tour, he was shot down over Hanoi, taken prisoner and tortured. He spent the next 2,103 days – just shy of six years – in prisoner of war camps, distinguishing himself as incredibly adept at underground communications.

morning specialty sessions

Wednesday – 8:45 - 10:00 am

select one of three

Blockchain: redefining traceability

"Blockchain" is beyond a buzz word to dairy. Learn from a company that is revolutionizing a manual process into automation with timely tracking of food products to the marketplace. Learn what blockchain is and how it will transform the supply chain, regulatory tracking and what happens on the farm.

PHIL HARRIS

● 1.25 DACE

Emerging diseases

COVID-19 heightened awareness of emerging diseases; the pandemic gave rise to human-health questions while also serving as an important wake-up call to dairy producers. With animals and people traveling around the globe more, novel diseases are more commonly hitching a ride. Veterinarians Stowell and Lauer will direct our attention to what can be controlled by managing ahead.

**DR. RALPH STOWELL, DVM AND
DR. VICKY LAUER, DVM**

● 1.25 DACE, 1.25 ARPAS

Transporting nutrients

Nutrient application is continuing to evolve and dairy producers are using new techniques to optimize the complete cycle from cow to soil and back to the cow. This diverse panel will provide you with insights of new and diverse techniques currently happening within dairy while also offering a glimpse at methods other industries are using.

**DON HEILMAN, MATT KOMRO, JOE HEESE,
JASON FULLER, AUREL LÜBKE; FACILITATED
BY ANDREW SKWOR**

● 1.25 DACE, 1 NM CCA



Gather in the Hall of Ideas & Equipment Trade Show 12:30-2:30pm

Network, connect and enjoy the company of your peers and fellow professionals.

Lunch stations will be open in the Hall of Ideas at this time.

Better coaching for winning teams

The greatest gift a manager can bring to his or her team is goal-based coaching. Michael Hoffman will focus on this critical skill and direct your attention to the things you say and do on purpose in your one-on-one interactions with team members to create a workforce of people who own their roles.

MICHAEL HOFFMAN

● 1.25 DACE, 1 PD CCA

Risk management

Whether you invest in an LGM for dairy policy, contract your milk and feed, intentionally sock money away in a rainy-day fund or do a combination of these, there are many ways to protect yourself when dairy margins fall. The challenge is to decipher which of the available options is the best fit. One thing's for sure; doing nothing is not an option. This producer panel will shed light on what they've learned works and what doesn't.

JOE FETZER, PATRICK MAIER, KENDALL MELICHAR; FACILITATED BY TIM SWENSON

● 1.25 DACE

My perfect cow

The market place sends messages to dairy producers that keep changing – and often contradict each other. If we lived in a perfect world, we would design the perfect cow to meet every need. This session will provide a thirty-thousand-foot view of what we'll ask of tomorrow's cow. Genetics, environmental factors and the feed-efficiency metrics that impact dairy's carbon footprint are key talking points. Discover what some of the common denominators are that lead to success.

DR. JUAN TRICARICO, STEVE BERLAND, JON SCHEFERS

● 1.25 DACE, 1.25 ARPAS

OPENING SESSION

11:00 am

Old Glory

In a world where we are more divided than united; in a country where we're more conflicted than compassionate, this keynote will remind us of our blessings. Old Glory is a picture of just how privileged we are to stand together under one flag. This opener is a beautiful tribute to those who have served and continue to serve our country. It's a message that's needed more today than ever before.

EVANGELO "VANN" MORRIS 0.5 DACE

Resilient leadership

In dairy we need to lead every day. Whether it's making a tough business choice in the personnel we work with or in practices that are no longer optimal, we're called on to direct our business day in and day out. In this can't-miss session, an American hero will remind us we're stronger than we know, wiser than we realize, and braver than we dare to believe, and that we must prepare for tomorrow's challenges. Lieutenant General Russel Honoré will share the bold leadership approaches he relied on to rebuild a city after the utter physical, economical and emotional devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

LT. GEN. RUSSEL L. HONORÉ 1.25 DACE

Dinner 6:30 pm

Come and go as you please; network, connect and enjoy the company of your peers and fellow professionals.

A NEW ADDITION

Future of Success

exclusively for
teens 15 to 18

Teenagers 15 to 18 years old:

The future of your success hinges on how you interact and work with others. The world needs leaders with strong social and communication skills, emotional intelligence and an ability to collaborate with others, particularly those with different personalities and backgrounds.

This all-new addition to PDPW Business Conference gives you the chance to develop leadership skills by participating in team challenges and activities that promote teamwork. *(Wear comfortable clothes and shoes!)*

Trainer Hans Gochenaur's unforgettable style will have you laughing and learning - the time will fly.

Your future success starts now. Right here.

Each session is different; you'll want to attend them all:

Session 1: Weds. 8:45-10 am
Session 2: Weds. 2:30- 3:45 pm
Session 3: Thurs. 8:45-10 am
Session 4: Thurs. 1:30- 2:45 pm

for teens
15 to 18

morning specialty sessions

Thursday – 8:45 - 10:00 am

select one of three

People management that works

Coaching your employees to think and act within their realm of influence creates a culture of ownership in which everyone knows the whys and understands their boundaries. And that's the winning formula. As you take a closer look inside the management cycle and explore different styles of coaching conversations, you'll learn compelling strategies to set expectations, conduct meaningful reviews and deliver practical feedback.

MICHAEL HOFFMAN

● 1.25 DACE, 1 PD CCA

Phosphorus harvesting

While phosphorus harvesting is somewhat of a new concept to dairy, it is being used in the public sector. Learn the process and the implications for nutrient management on your farm. Discover how the practice reduces phosphorus loading on your land and discover ways to potentially generate additional revenue streams.

MENACHEM TABANPOUR, DR. LEON DOWNING; FACILITATED BY GREG GUNDERSON

● 1.25 DACE, 1 SWM CCA

Active shooter!

Nobody wants to imagine the terror of being in an active-shooter situation. But being prepared, knowing what to do and protecting yourself from becoming a white-chalk outline on the pavement is the whole point of this session. You'll walk away with sensible tips and a mind set on forming a plan to share with the whole team in case the unthinkable happens.

MIKE BOLENDER

● 1.25 DACE, 1 PD CCA

GENERAL SESSION

11:00 am

Ag policy and trade - where's the bull?

For U.S. dairy, global market and international trade have long been a bitter pill to swallow. With markets down and a future uncertain, activities that encourage bullish action are what we're after. Economist Dan Basse will summarize current macro-economic forces and outline what can be expected in the seasons ahead.

DAN BASSE

● 1 DACE, 1 PD CCA

Gather again in the Hall of Ideas & Equipment Trade Show 12:30-1:30 pm

Network, connect and enjoy the company of your peers and fellow professionals.

Lunch stations will also be open in the Hall of Ideas at this time.





afternoon breakout sessions

Thursday – 1:30-2:30 pm, 2:40-3:40 pm
select two of three

Opportunities in crossbreeding beef on dairy

Far from being a last resort, more and more producers are crossbreeding with beef, and seeing an increase in profits. But years of trial and error – and success – show it takes calculated planning and selection to consistently produce an efficient animal to match the market's ever-changing needs. Learn top tips from your been-there, done-that colleagues so you, too, may benefit from the opportunities.

KELLI RETALLICK, CASEY DAVIS, JERRY WULF;

FACILITATED BY JAY HEEG

● 1 DACE, 1 ARPAS

Is direct marketing for you?

Adding extra value to your dairy by diversifying on-farm sales may sound appealing. But how does one start? What plans need to be put in place? Learn from dairy producers who have created new revenue streams and hear the truth about what it takes to launch, grow and maintain a successful business.

AMANDA FREUND, WALT GLADSTONE;

FACILITATED BY KURT PETIK

● 1 DACE

Collecting your data

From pedometers to seed placement, your dairy is producing data 24/7. What rights do you have to control these data streams? Ag tech attorney Todd Janzen will provide an overview of current laws affecting ownership and control of data streaming off your dairy farm.

ATTORNEY TODD JANZEN

● 1 DACE

CLOSING SESSION 3:45 pm

An 8 x 8 perspective

Many will look back on 2020 as a year of isolation, challenges and broken connections. With a message of self-reflection and inspiration like no other, Captain Plumb will provide a perspective that confirms we were made to overcome the obstacles we face. This man who survived one tragedy only to endure another in the worst of circumstances will have you discovering that what seems to be insurmountable is not. The perspective he offers will resonate with you long after the conference has concluded.

CAPTAIN CHARLIE PLUMB 1 DACE



Day 1

10:15 -
10:45 am**Answering the call** – *Tom Thibodeau*

Today's world is crying for help. This session will direct you to your greatest opportunity to serve and answer the plea for leadership.
0.50 DACE, 0.50 PD CCA ●

1:00 -
1:30 pm**Politics: get involved** – *Joe Thome*

Why and how should farmers be involved in local politics? As direct caretakers and business owners in our communities, you likely have more of a feel for the local needs and solutions for your community. Learn how to get involved, how to run and what you need to know to get started. 0.50 DACE ●

1:45 -
2:15 pm**Human trafficking** – *Lt. Paul Marik*

Human trafficking is a grave violation of human rights and a serious crime. And every year, thousands of people fall victim to it. Know what to look for and how to prevent it from happening.
0.50 DACE ●

Day 2

10:15 -
10:45 am**Outsource social media efforts?** – *Kallie Coates*

Think outside the digital box and grow your team's social media reach. Outsourcing or working with a freelancer may be just what your farm needs to make your social story go viral.
0.50 DACE ●

12:45 -
1:15 pm**Determine the right social platforms** – *Kallie Coates*

Whether you're a novice or a pro, determining which social-media platform is right for your business is critical. Explore two booming platforms and learn how to most effectively use them. 0.50 DACE ●

Alternative energy in agriculture – *Adam Wehling*

Alternative energy resources have significantly progressed over the last few years. Understand how and what geothermal, solar and wind energies are and how we can use them in agriculture.
0.50 DACE ●

Effective management teams – *Liz Griffith*

Liz will share simple and practical do's and don'ts for creating effective management teams. Learn how to build a management team that works for the good of the whole – effectively.
0.50 DACE, 0.50 PD CCA ●

Manure and conservation – *Matt Oehmichen*

Manure can be a precious commodity or a problem child when not managed correctly. Learn about landscape management with implemented conservation practices and how they unlock more opportunities with your acres and nutrient applications. 0.50 DACE, 0.50 NM CCA ●

Rations: get what you ordered – *Dr. John Goeser*

For many reasons, rations often vary from what was intended or formulated. Learn how to evaluate your ration based on goals, ranging from troubleshooting to uncovering hidden opportunities and more. 0.50 DACE ●

Capitalize on carbon credits – *Andrew Skwor, Doug Grotegut*

How can your dairy cash in on carbon credits? Discover some ways to create revenue from the manure that's produced without any extra effort on your part. 0.50 DACE ●

hands-on hub

these hands-on sessions run simultaneously both days

Day 1: 8:45-10:00 am, 2:30-3:45 pm ... Day 2: 8:45-10:00 am, 1:30-2:45 pm

Stayin' alive: first response

Doing nothing while waiting for the paramedics to arrive isn't always the best reaction to on-farm accidents. Knowing how to apply pressure to a bleed or other quick life-saving measures may come in handy for a loved one, team member or yourself. This hands-on lab will equip you with some first-response techniques known by first responders that save limbs, lives and ultimately families.

CHRIS ST. PIERRE

● 1.25 DACE

Understand your land

Your land has a personality all its own. Like nobody else, you know the areas prone to flooding, erosion and all the other soil-control challenges. We're bringing in the outdoors in this hands-on session with a water-runoff simulator to mimic the effects of rainfall on varying soil types. You'll see how ground cover, topography and land management impacts what happens not just on your land, but downstream as well.

JASON CAVADINI, MATT OEHMICHEN ● 1.25 DACE, 1 SWM CCA



thank you sponsors!

National sponsors support PDPW's work and mission throughout the year in a variety of valuable ways - without which producer programs would not be possible. **THANK YOU!**

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the nexus stage



Nexus gives companies with cutting-edge technologies a platform from which they can connect with you – the dairy community's most innovative and forward-thinking managers.

Gather around the stage to review a Ted Talk-style presentation as inventors, creators and idea-generators share their most novel idea, product or service that could change the way you dairy.

Presenters will give a 15-minute CliffsNotes version of the ins and outs of their innovation. Nexus™ will be moderated by the team at Progressive Dairy magazine and delivered in a style that allows you to have an opportunity to ask questions of the presenter.

Think of the Nexus stage as a cross between the "Shark Tank" and speed dating ... a rapid-fire sharing of ideas with a question-and-answer session to more fully vet out the possibilities.

REGISTER NOW

- Call PDPW at 800-947-7379 ... or
- Register at www.pdpw.org ... or
- Scan QR code below

PDPW member rates	1 day	2 days	non-member rates	1 day	2 days
<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer	\$200	\$325	<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer	\$325	\$450
<input type="checkbox"/> Premier supplier (sponsor or exhibitor)	\$200	\$325	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	\$750	\$1,000
<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	\$350	\$625	<input type="checkbox"/> Student (including teens 15-18; for student rate, registrant must be a full-time student)	\$75	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> Student (including teens 15-18; for student rate, registrant must be a full-time student)	\$75	\$150			

Registration fees are non-refundable after February 28, 2021.
Walk-ins are welcome for an additional \$20/person.



Continuing Education Units available

Dairy AdvanCE Select sessions of the 2021 PDPW Business Conference have been approved by Dairy AdvanCE (DACE) for CEUs. Powered by PDPW, Dairy AdvanCE is a continuing education accreditation provider for dairy farmers and other dairy industry professionals. Visit www.dairyadvan.org for more information.

ARPAS Select sessions of the 2021 PDPW Business Conference have been approved by American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists (ARPAS) for CEUs. ARPAS provides certification of animal scientists through examination, continuing education and commitment to a code of ethics. Participants should know that limitations and restrictions apply to the number of CEU credits that can be obtained.

Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) Select sessions of the 2021 PDPW Business Conference have been approved by Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) for CEUs. The Certified Crop Advisor Program is one of the professional-certification programs offered by the American Society of Agronomy (ASA). See www.certifiedcropadvisor.org for more information.

Hotel Information

Kalahari Resorts & Conventions
1305 Kalahari Drive, Wisconsin Dells, WI, 53965
877-525-2427 www.kalahariresorts.com





Steve Berland is a co-founder of GenElite, LLC, which exports around 1,200 elite-genetic embryos to international markets annually. He started GenElite, LLC, with Jim and Claudia Copper in 2000 and has continued with Rick VerBeek as partner. Berland has served in several roles with the Holstein Association USA, as executive secretary of the Minnesota Holstein Association and as herdsman at Deer-Brook Farm in Minnesota.



Mike Bolender has been a member of the Oak Creek, Wis., police department for 29 years and is currently operations captain overseeing the patrol division and the communication center. After responding to two active-shooter incidents and seeing the shortcomings of response protocols, he and his team created a program to provide lifesaving preventative measures, response alternatives and trauma treatment.



Jason Cavadini is an agronomist and certified crop advisor at the University of Wisconsin-Marshfield Agricultural Research Station where he manages over 60 field research trials and 700 acres of crops annually. He earned a bachelor's degree in soil science from UW-River Falls and a master's in agronomy from Purdue. He operates a diversified grass-fed-beef operation near Stratford with his wife and their five children.



Kallie Jo Coates earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture education from UW-Platteville and master's degree in agricultural communications from Texas Tech University. While working for her parent's businesses, Kastenson Farms and Harry Hansen Meat Service, she began freelance marketing for small businesses through her own company, Briar Rose Marketing & Design. She especially likes working with ag organizations.



Casey Davis is the cattle procurement manager with JBS Green Bay; a role he's held for seven years. Over the last 15 years he has worked in the cattle-procurement division in multiple areas throughout the U.S. Davis was born and raised on a beef cow/calf operation in southern Indiana. As a teenager, he worked at local livestock auctions. He and his wife and children have a small beef farm south of Green Bay.



Dr. Leon Downing, PhD, is the principal process and innovation leader in the global construction, engineering and consulting company's water technology group for Black & Veatch. Dr. Downing is an expert in resource recovery design and modeling. As a senior process engineer, he has guided and assisted in major resource recovery projects across the United States.



Joe Fetzer is a fourth-generation owner of Fetzer Farms in Elmwood, Wis., with his mom, two brothers, son and niece. Fetzer farms has 30 employees, milks 1,400 cows, raises their own heifers and runs their own cropping enterprise. Fetzer takes care of the farm's marketing, crops and waste management.



Amanda Freund and her family own and operate three unique businesses in East Canaan, Connecticut: Freund's Farm, Inc., CowPots and Freund's Farm Market. Freund is the third generation on the farm serving as the sales and marketing lead for the CowPots business in addition to helping on the dairy farm. She graduated from Cornell University and spent two years in Zambia with the Peace Corps.



Jason Fuller of Carbon Cycle Consulting, LLC, works with farmers to design, build and manage turnkey automated composting facilities that can replace liquid manure lagoons and eliminate raw, liquid manure application. Fuller, based out of Middleton, Wis., was raised on a fifth-generation dairy farm.



Walt Gladstone and his family own and operate Newmont Farm in the Connecticut River Valley. Founded in 1988, the family farm includes dairy cattle and about 200 acres of pumpkins. Gladstone graduated from SUNY Cobleskill in 1982 with a degree in agricultural science and Cornell in 1984 with a bachelor's in animal husbandry. Since 1988 he has been farming with his wife Margaret and sons Will and Matt.



Hans Gochenaur has dedicated 20 years to youth ministry and 16 years to coaching high school sports. Currently, he works for Badgerland Youth for Christ. With energy and passion, Gochenaur brings intensity to his interactive and engaging youth sessions. He graduated from Oconomowoc High School, UW-Oshkosh, and Grace Theological Seminary and resides in Beaver Dam, Wis.



Dr. John Goesser, PhD, director of nutritional research and innovation at Rock River Laboratory in Watertown, Wis., oversees animal nutrition, technical support and research with a focus on carbohydrate digestion, forage management and feed trends. He earned bachelor of science degrees in dairy science and agronomy at UW-Madison and a master of science in dairy science, plant breeding and genetics. He also earned a PhD in dairy science from UW-Madison.



Liz Griffith is a human resource consultant in market development for Encore Consultants in Morris, Minn. Griffith resides in Wisconsin and has 30-plus years of experience in the dairy industry. Having worked with ag companies and producers throughout the U.S., her focus is on human resources: developing better teams, creating positive cultures and improving leadership.



Doug Grotegut co-owns and operates Grotegut Dairy Farm, Inc., a third-generation dairy farm near Newton, Wis. The 2,800 milking cows are milked in an 80-stall rotary parlor and the farm collaborates with the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center, providing cattle for the birthing center and opening its doors to the public for tours. Grotegut oversees the farm and manages crops and manure produced by the farm.



Greg Gunderson, PE, ENV SP, is a team leader and Wastewater Community of Practice Chair for MSA Professional Services. He has been with the MSA team, a multidisciplinary consulting firm serving public and private clients throughout Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin, since earning his civil and environmental engineering degrees from UW-Platteville.



Philip Harris is a co-founder and president at ripe.io. He brings 30 years of experience from global capital markets and financial services industry to food and agriculture supply chains. ripe.io is acknowledged as an innovative thought leader and operator, bringing blockchain, IOT, machine learning and AI capabilities to provide visibility and business automation across the food supply chain.



Jay Heeg owns and operates Heeg Brothers Dairy, LLC, along with his brothers Mark and Gary. The 1,100-cow, Colby, Wis., dairy raises all of its heifers and employs 20 full-time workers. Heeg is the farm's dairy and human resource manager. He's served in multiple leadership roles, including with the Wisconsin Beef Council, the Beef Quality Advisory Council and the PDPW board on which he's served as president and currently as treasurer.



Joe Heese, sales representative for Puck Enterprises, has helped design and manufacture application systems for a variety of industries. He earned his master's degree from the University of Nebraska-Kearney. For over 12 years, he's led the Puck liquid-transfer school, offering development opportunities for business owners and farmers alike.



Don Heilman is director of business development in the Midwest for Digested Organics. Prior to joining their team in 2014, he co-founded Clean Lakes Alliance in Madison and subsequently assisted with the formation of the Yahara Pride farmer-led group. Heilman served as president of the Clean Lakes Alliance for four years and as executive director of Clean Water Association.



Michael Hoffman is founder and owner of Igniting Performance Inc., a company that specializes in the skills of sales, customer loyalty and leadership. Over the last 25-plus years Hoffman has customized training and delivered presentations for organizations all across the world. His energetic style has made him a favorite among PDPW Podcast listeners.



Todd J. Janzen is an attorney and co-founder of Janzen Agricultural Law LLC, a law firm dedicated to serving the needs of farmers, ag technology providers, and agribusinesses. Janzen serves as the administrator for the national Ag Data Transparent project and general counsel to the Indiana Dairy Producers. He also publishes a nationally recognized ag-technology blog, the Janzen Ag Tech Blog.



Matt Komro is an agricultural project engineer at Komro Sales and Service Inc., a family-operated dairy ag contractor and engineering company specializing in manure handling and processing located in Durand and Whitehall, Wis. Komro works with a variety of dairy producers across the country to design and build safe, state of the art, cost-effective solutions.



Dr. Vicky Lauer, DVM, received her DVM degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia and is part of the Armor Animal Health professional services veterinarian team. Dr. Lauer is involved in the American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners, American Association of Bovine Practitioners, and the American and Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Associations.



Aurel Lübke is the CEO and founder of Compost Systems GmbH in Austria. Compost Systems is an engineering company that is focused on the biological treatment of biological waste streams, designing and building plants around the world for composting and organic-waste stabilization.



Patrick Maier is a third-generation partner on his family's dairy, Maier Farms, LLC, in southern Wisconsin. He holds a degree from UW-Platteville in agri-business with an emphasis on management and has participated in the Executive Program for Agricultural Producers (TEPAP) through Texas A&M's department of agricultural economics.



Lt. Paul Marik is a Lieutenant Commander with the Pleasant Prairie, Wis., police department and is the senior trainer. He's a certified force-science analyst and critical-risk-management expert. His background includes undercover narcotics, SWAT, school resource officer and active threat/shooter. With his team, he created a program to provide lifesaving preventative measures, response alternatives and trauma treatment.



Kendall Melichar helps manage and run her family's farm, Melichar Broad Acres in Port Washington, Wis. A mother of four and CPA with experience in public accounting specializing in taxes, she has taken on various management responsibilities on the dairy since leaving public accounting. Recently she has begun overseeing the risk-management needs of the farm with the help of advisors and consultants.



Matthew Oehmichen is part owner of Short Lane Ag Supply, a family owned/operated ag-retail business. He also works extensively in soil health and ag conservation, specifically in cover cropping and nutrient management and with environmental organizations. Oehmichen shares, collaborates and educates to bring a stronger farming economy and community for north central Wisconsin.



Kurt Petik was raised on an 800-head beef cattle ranch in western South Dakota which his family still operates today. He earned bachelor's degrees in agricultural economics and agricultural business from South Dakota State University. His ag banking career began in 1997 as a loan officer in Rock Valley, Iowa. In 2013, Kurt joined Rabo AgriFinance as a senior relationship manager and opened their Madison, Wis. office.



Kelli Retallick serves as the genetic and genomic programs director for Angus Genetics Incorporated where she coordinates research and application strategies for genetic and genomic technologies. She works with her team of scientists and information-systems professionals to deliver genomic evaluations to the American Angus Association weekly, as well as to six other beef-breed associations through the year.



Jon Schefers is the female-program lead for PEAK Genetics, Madison, Wis. PEAK Genetics is a leading dairy breeding program and is the primary supplier of genetics for Alta Genetics, GENEX, and Jetstream Genetics. In his role, Schefers oversees embryo production from PEAK-owned donors along with mating selection and strategy.



Andrew Skwor, PE, is an agricultural services team leader at MSA Professional Services, Inc. With twenty years of agricultural engineering and project management experience, he works directly with farmers to solve manure challenges. Skwor is a licensed professional engineer in Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Wisconsin.



Chris St. Pierre has worked in the electrical construction industry and public safety sector with an emphasis of focus on hazard assessment, risk-based analysis and supervisory safety. He has attended many safety-related training programs and enjoys sharing the knowledge, skills and abilities learned with others.



Dr. Ralph Stowell, DVM, has been with Waupun Veterinary Service, where he is a partner, since 2007. He earned a bachelor's degree in animal science from UW-River Falls and went to veterinary school at UW-Madison where he focused on food-animal-production medicine. His professional interests include transition-cow health and calf growth/health, educating farm personnel and feedlot medicine.



Tim Swenson is a senior business consultant with Compeer Financial Services. He works with family businesses, providing dairy business planning and dairy profitability consulting services. Swenson also spent 16 years in the feed industry in central Minnesota and western Wisconsin working with large herds and expanding operations. He was also general manager of a feed and agronomy company in northwestern Wisconsin.



Menachem Tabanpour is a co-founder of Nutrient Recovery and Upcycling, LLC (NRU) and has served as president since it was established in 2011. His leadership, research, business, and management skills have brought NRU's technologies from the lab to commercialization. He also holds an appointment as research specialist in UW-Madison's soil science department where he works on novel methods for upcycling nutrients.



Tom Thibodeau has been a faculty member of Viterbo University for more than 35 years. He earned a Masters of Arts degree in human and religious studies from St. Mary's University, Winona, Minn. He is a popular trainer who epitomizes leadership in his character – honesty, communication, confidence, commitment, positive attitude and creativity.



Joe Thome owns and operates Redtail Ridge Dairy, LLC, in Malone, Wis., with his wife Diane, son Tyler and brother John. He has been active in local government, serving on the plan commission and the comprehensive (long-range) plan commission for over 20 years. He is town chairman for the town of Taycheedah and is running for his third two-year term in April 2021.



Dr. Juan M. Tricarico, PhD, is vice president for sustainability research at Dairy Management Inc. His work focuses on sustainable milk production to support efforts by the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy to drive trust and sales in milk and dairy foods. Dr. Tricarico is past president for the Council of Agricultural Science and Technology and serves on various committees related to agriculture and dairy.



Adam Wehling is dean of agriculture, energy and transportation at Chippewa Valley Technical College. As dean, Wehling works with many programs that train students in agriculture, energy, construction and transportation. He was formally trained as an agricultural education instructor and taught twelve years of high school.



Jerry Wulf is manager and partner of Riverview LLP Beef, an integrated-agricultural operation that allows community members to invest in the multi-faceted, ever-changing venture. Riverview consists of an 800-head dairy, beef feedlots, agronomy systems and more. The operation ranks in National Cattlemen's Beef Association's top 25 seedstock producers.

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