



5555 County Rd. A • Merrill, WI 54452

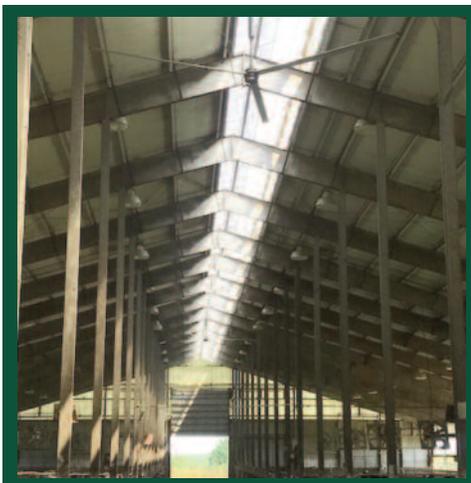
FALL 2017 NEWSLETTER

Time goes by so quickly, which means, it is time for our 2017 Annual Newsletter! We enjoy giving you a snap shot of our year, highlighting what we have changed to keep pace with the latest technology in animal care and cropping practices. We would like say a special "Thank You" to you, our valued employees, neighbors, friends and landowners!!



OUR CATTLE

Van Der Geest Dairy continually strives to improve the environment for our cattle. Our hardworking team's goal is to keep the cattle comfortable, well fed and content. The latest project we just completed was in the far west barn which houses our dry cattle (these are cattle that are not milking) Cattle do not milk for approximately 50 days before they calve and then begin milking again. This barn also houses our heifers, which are animals that return from our grower. We have worked with Fox Feedlots from Minnesota for several years. Fox's receive our animals at 5 months of age and raise them until they are 2 months from having a calf. The cattle then come back to our farm to have their calves and then begin milking in our herd. This barn has been updated to have more control of air quality. We installed an over - shot ridge, allowing more air flow in summer and less in winter. We also installed more fans in this barn for air movement and side curtains that go up or down automatically depending on temperature.



You might have noticed

that we have also installed fans in the front of our parlor to circulate more air into our milking facility. This keeps the cattle and milking technicians more comfortable during milking. We take care of our cattle the best way we can; beginning with the rubber mats on the floor for them to walk on; having their feet trimmed twice a year, to the soft dry bedding for them to lay on. The cattle are misted with water on hot days with fans moving air over them; curtains in the barns move open and close automatically to regulate the correct temperature for the cows. The cattle are fed high quality, nutritionally balanced diet twice a day. We have found that the more comfortable we keep the cattle the more milk they will produce. At Van Der Geest Dairy we know we need to take good care of our animals and in turn they take care of us.





PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 29
Marathon, WI 54448

5555 County Rd. A • Merrill, WI 54452



NEW SHOP

From Ashes to New.

Our new shop has been a great addition to our farm. In the spring of last year, we had a fire that completely destroyed our old shop. This gave us an opportunity to construct a new shop

which is larger allowing us to fit our equipment inside for repair, making it safer for our employees as well as eliminating exposure to the elements. The mechanics now have a large, bright and comfortable place to work. Merrill Equipment did a great job helping us plan and prep this new area. This new shop will be a great asset for many years to come!

2017 crop year has been one of the most challenging that we can remember. We need to keep telling ourselves that having too much rain is better than having no rain at all. At the time of writing this we are approximately 7 inches above normal.

Crop planting was late, wet and long.

CROPPING

As you drive around the area you may notice corn that is 1 foot tall and some that is 6 feet tall, all in the same field. To sum this up, it has just had too much water! However, we are fortunate to have feed in the fields for the cattle. The feed quality and quantity may be the issue when harvest starts in fall. We will just have to wait and see how it comes in.

Fall corn harvest should start approximately the middle of September. We will be having Feddick Farms from Medford help us harvest. Their drivers and our drivers are instructed to be courteous, safe drivers. If you should see that they are not following this plan, please let us know. Once harvest is complete, we will be applying our organic waste back to the fields for next year's crop needs.

As in the past, we ask that you notify us if you have a special event that we may affect. Please let us know if this is the case and we will try to work around your event. Remember in agriculture we are forced to fertilize, plant, spray and harvest as only mother nature allows us. We work nights, weekends, and holidays because of our short window of opportunity. Please be patient with us. We enjoy being part of our community and wish to continue being a good neighbor or good friend and if we rent your land, we Thank You!

On "corn day" take a tour of the Dairy, we will have guides available.

Also, please visit our website at www.vandergeestdairy.com and "click on" "Our Story" which is a new short video about the Dairy's history and story.

From all of us at Van Der Geest Dairy



STOP IN TO VISIT & PICK UP SOME BUTTER & SWEET CORN

We look forward to seeing you. **Bring in this newsletter** on Tuesday, August 29 from 12 until 5 pm to receive one dozen ears of sweet corn & a pound of butter, while supplies last.