

CORN & BUTTER PICK UP - WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19 (1-5 PM)

This year our corn and butter giveaway will be handled a bit different than past years due to Covid-19. In recognition in sharing our neighborhood, we would like to give your family a dozen ears of fresh sweet corn and a pound of butter once again. Due to Covid-19 our socializing with neighbors and the sharing of ice cream along with the tours of the dairy will not be allowed this year. We look forward to that returning next year. For your corn and butter pick up, we will have a drive by pick up system. Prior to your arrival, please insert your name on the label and correct address if necessary, tear off that portion. When you arrive at the dairy, please come in the east driveway, drive up to the tent area, stay in your vehicle, hand that tear off portion of the letter to the attendant and they will give you the corn and butter. You will then exit the west driveway.



VAN DER GEEST
DAIRY CATTLE, INC.
715-675-6043

5555 County Rd. A • Merrill, WI 54452

FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER



Overhead bin structure

For over 50 years, Van Der Geest Dairy has been a part of the community here in central Wisconsin. We have enjoyed working with you and we would like to keep you informed as to what the dairy has been busy doing over this past year.

CATTLE NUTRITION

Good nutrition, including a balanced properly formulated diet keep the cattle healthy and productive while they are in our care. Our dairy needs to formulate several different diets specific to the animal needs and deliver them fresh to our cattle each day. We work with Brad, Magdalena and James from ProActive Technologies, who have over 35 years of experience balancing cattle's needs for vitamins, minerals and energy. Animal nutritional needs change as cattle mature and begin the process of producing milk. As an example, a cow producing 100 lbs. of milk will eat well over 100 lbs. of feed that is high in

energy versus an animal getting ready to have a calf which will eat only 40 lbs. of feed. Feeding the cattle is one of our largest expenses. Over this past year we have focused a great amount of attention and added a lot of expenditure into updating how we feed our animals. We purchased an upgraded feed mixer, which is like a blender that you have in your home with the exception that this one mixes 42,000 lbs. of feed at a time! Our nutritionist formulates a diet for a group of cattle, enters the formula into the computer and the computer sends it to the mixer. The mixer has a scale on it and a computer screen. The mixer operator selects which group of cattle he wants to feed, then the ingredient is displayed on the screen and while the ingredient is added the display counts the lbs. down to zero. The screen then advances to the next ingredient, all the while the feed program keeps track of each ingredient, the amount used and how accurate the person mixing is at adding ingredients and mixing that batch of feed. Once all the ingredients are added the operator starts the mixer, mixing the batch for a set amount of time and then delivers the new fresh diet to the group of selected cattle. The feeds are tested continually for moisture; nutritional value; molds and yeast to make sure we have quality feed for the cattle. Fourteen loads are fed each day to the animals. We have partnered with Agra Industries of Merrill to install overhead bins that store our bulk proteins, minerals, vitamins and corn. The mixer pulls underneath the bin and the operator watches the scale readout while pushing a button to open an electric door to add ingredients. This is a very fast and accurate system that keeps the ingredients dry while minimizing shrinkage. Several of the ingredients in our feed mixture cost several hundred dollars a ton, so time, accuracy and efficiency are very important. The bins are filled from semis that deliver the feed into an auger and a bucket elevator that drops the feed into the overhead bins. A semi load of feed can be emptied in only 15 minutes. We are very pleased with the new efficiencies with the new mixer, computer system and overhead bin upgrades.



5555 County Rd. A • Merrill, WI 54452

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



CHEESE SALES

We now have the capability of selling cheese at our dairy! We are very proud of the clean, nutritious milk we produce every day. Our milk is shipped to AMPI in Jim Falls WI every day. AMPI is a highly awarded cheese processor that turns our local milk into several varieties of great tasting cheese.

We recently installed a cooler and offer several varieties of cheese available for purchase from AMPI. The cheese is delivered to our dairy directly from the plant. Please visit our newly revamped website and follow links to view a video from AMPI on the process of cheese making. You can place an order for cheese and within 24 hours you can pick your order up at the dairy. We only accept credit or debit card payments for cheese orders. Please give us a call if you have any questions.

We are proud that a locally produced product can be processed safely and sold locally. Give it a try, the products are great!

CROPPING

Our cropping year improved considerably over last year. Crops were planted on time and we received timely rain and plenty of heat. We are very blessed with an almost perfect growing season and we are hopeful that we will produce plenty of nutritious feed for our cattle.

We will again be working with Feddick Farms from Medford to harvest the corn for silage. We need proper maturity and moisture to ensure the best quality feed. The corn should be ready the early part of September. We will be working long days, nights and weekends to complete the harvest. We thank you in advance for your patience with the harvesting process.

Our drivers and Feddick drivers are instructed to be courteous, cautious law-abiding drivers. Please let us know if you encounter any situations where this is not the case. Following the harvest season, we will be applying our liquid plant nutrients to our fields for next year's crops. As always, we apply these nutrients in accordance with DNR regulations. Please let us know if you have a special occasion/event at your home and we will do our best to accommodate your schedule so we are not applying the nutrients during that time.

All of us at the dairy sincerely appreciate everyone working with us. We wish everyone a safe and happy remainder of 2020! Thank you again!

From all of us at Van Der Geest Dairy