

# CORN & BUTTER PICK UP WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24 (10 AM-2 PM)

**NEW  
HOURS**



We enjoy sharing with our neighbors so once again this year we would like to give your family a dozen ears of sweet corn and a pound of butter. On corn day please enter the East driveway, if you prefer to just pick up your sweet corn and butter, you can drive through and then exit the West driveway. If you have time and would like to view the new milking facility, you are welcome to park in front of the old parlor and go up to view the new rotary from the observation room. Please remember to bring along your newsletter to receive your corn and butter. Thank you!



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

5555 County Rd. A • Merrill, WI 54452

FALL 2022 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our 2022 Newsletter!

Van Der Geest Dairy has been very busy this year with building projects, repairs, cattle care, & cropping. We have been a part of this community for over 50 years and are proud to support community organizations, local businesses, and people. We strive to be good neighbors and to be transparent in our operation. Look below to see what is happening at the dairy.

## NEW MILKING PARLOR



The new 90 stall DeLaval rotary milking parlor became operational in February. We had hoped to be operating sooner but due to shortages of supplies the completion was impacted. We are finishing pouring concrete for sidewalks and the driveway, completing interior rooms and exterior landscaping.

The new parlor has improved cow comfort,

milk harvesting efficiency as well as eased operations for our milking staff. It is remarkable seeing the rotary in process, it is hard to imagine that the system came in pieces and now after assembly, every 6.5 seconds a cow steps onto the carousel, she is prepped for milking, and as her milk is harvested, she takes a short ride around. She then steps off the carousel and returns to the barn where she eats and rests. The harvested milk passes through a chiller to be cooled and is then stored in milk silos until the tanker trucks take it to the dairy plant where it is processed into delicious Wisconsin cheese. We look forward to you being able to see the amazing process from our observation room!

Of course, cattle comfort is very important so on warm days the cattle are misted with water and then dried by large fans while they wait to be milked. When it is extremely warm, they are misted with water again after they are milked, and the fans dry them off as they return to their pens.

Each cow has a tag in their ear which allows us to continually monitor their biometric data such as rumination (how many times a cow chews in a day), and activity. This enables us to quickly identify any animal that may need extra care or to be removed from the pen for attention.



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



## CROPPING

Spring weather delayed our planting date by a couple of weeks as well as creating a challenge for incorporating our manure fertilization and preparing the fields for planting. Crops, however, were planted in good conditions. Warm weather in June and July enhanced the growing process. Hopefully heat and timely

rains will continue, which will enable us to start harvesting sometime in mid-September.

Feddick Farms of Medford will again assist us with harvesting corn silage. We hope the fall harvest will be dry which will allow for a quick, timely harvest of approximately 50,000 tons of corn silage for our cattle to benefit from next year.

Safety of course is our main concern when harvesting, we expect the drivers to be law abiding and courteous. We try to keep the roads clear of mud and debris so please let us know if you see an area of concern.

As a reminder, our trucks and implements are large and slow moving, please be patient, we are trying to harvest high quality feed in a short period of time. Once fall harvesting is complete, we will begin transporting our organic manure to the fields to prepare for the next growing season. We haul the manure by semitruck to the fields farthest away from our facility so that we do not have to haul in the spring when the roads are soft from the frost.

When cropping, the soil from each field is tested, and manure is applied for the crop's nutrient needs. We test the manure daily when applying to ensure the proper amount is placed where needed. There is a meter on the tractor that allows the operator to monitor how many gallons are applied, this is done while following all DNR regulations for setbacks on wells, waterways, creeks, ponds, wetlands etc. A lot of effort is put into this process to ensure it is done accurately and properly. Thank you in advance for your patience with us during harvesting and fertilizing!

We are always looking for productive cropland to produce feed for our cattle. If you own ag land within 15 miles of the dairy and are not already renting to us, but are interested in doing so, please give us a call! Our policy is to take care of the land leaving it better than it started. We carry liability insurance on all the land we utilize, and we follow Natural Resource Conservation Service guidelines as well as the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources standards, and we pay a competitive rental rate.



## TOURS

You will be able to view the milking process from our observation room as well as view a video of the milking process and other operations at our facility. Cows are milked continuously throughout the day except between 2-4pm when the facility is sanitized. We hope to resume tours soon! Please like us on Facebook and watch for updates!

All of us at the dairy appreciate the community support. We wish everyone a safe and happy remainder of 2022! Thank you again!

*From all of us at Van Der Geest Dairy*