



# Minnesota Dairy Research/Education and Consumer Outreach Authority

## Annual Report

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Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 3.197, the cost of preparing this report was approximately \$300.

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## Background and Introduction

Statutory authorization of the Minnesota Dairy Research/Education and Consumer Outreach Authority was established in 2012 by the Minnesota Legislature (Statutes 32C.01). For more than five years, the Authority has regularly met with the state's dairy industry and higher education representatives to determine how to strengthen dairy research and educational opportunities.

Dairy Authority board members toured neighboring states' dairy research and educational facilities, gathering information on construction financing, costs of operation, and operating procedures. In addition, the Board met with dairy processors, agricultural lenders, and representatives of farm organizations to formulate a plan and location that meets the needs of the industry.

In 2017, the Authority's work was delayed by the appointment process, but the group met twice in the first half of 2018 to continue the process of siting a new dairy facility. A 2015 in-depth feasibility study determined project costs and design ideas for a facility on the University of Minnesota (U of M) – St. Paul campus.

## Board of Directors

The original Authority's nine directors were:

- Sheryl Meshke, Co-President and CEO, Associated Milk Producers, Inc. (Board Chair)
- Barb Liebenstein, Dairy Producer and board member of Midwest Dairy, MN Division (Vice Board Chair)
- Dr. Doug Allen, President, MnSCU Ridgewater College
- Eunice Biel, Dairy Producer and Minnesota Farmers Union
- Dr. Brian Buhr, Dean, University of Minnesota College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences
- Clint Fall, CEO, First District Association
- Commissioner David Frederickson, Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Daniel Glessing, Dairy Producer and Minnesota Farm Bureau
- Greg Jans, Dairy Producer and Minnesota Milk Board member

The current Authority's nine directors are:

- Eunice Biel, Dairy Producer and Minnesota Farmers Union
- Dr. Brian Buhr, Dean, University of Minnesota College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences
- Commissioner David Frederickson, Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Daniel Glessing, Dairy Producer and Minnesota Farm Bureau (Treasurer)
- Barb Liebenstein, Dairy Producer and Chair of Midwest Dairy MN Division (Vice Board Chair)
- Sheryl Meshke, Co-President and CEO, Associated Milk Producers, Inc. (Board Chair)

- Rick Rugg, Midwest Regional Manager, Lely North America
- Brad Schloesser, Dean, MnSCU South Central College
- Tom Sedgeman, Dairy Producer and Minnesota Milk Board member

## Board Authority Highlights

Previous legislative reports focused on the processes followed to gather information and conduct a feasibility study on how a new dairy facility could serve the needs of the industry. A collaborative effort was discussed with the University of Minnesota Foundation to conduct fundraising from private sources before pursuing a formal bonding request from the Minnesota legislature.

The sunset date of the Dairy Research/Education and Consumer Outreach Authority was extended in the 2017 legislative session to August 1, 2020.

The following board members were reappointed by Governor Mark Dayton in December 2017: Eunice Biel, Daniel Glessing, and Sheryl Meshke. Rick Rugg was appointed to a first, three-year term.

Appointed to fill standing seats were Brian Buhr, Brad Schloesser, Barb Liebenstein, and Tom Sedgeman.

## Timelines

The U of M is currently undergoing a strategic plan for animal agriculture research facilities.

1. The U of M – St. Paul Campus Master Plan will be completed by September 2018, and will inform research and outreach planning.
2. The research and outreach master plan is expected to be completed by summer 2019 and will inform the potential location of and investment in a dairy.
3. Financial planning will occur commensurately and inform private funding and bonding request requirements.

## Future Role of Dairy Authority

Administration expenses of the Authority were primarily covered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), with total administrative costs for FY17 less than \$1000. The MDA staff involved with the Authority included Assistant Commissioner Andrea Vaubel and Agricultural Marketing and Development staff David Weinand and Curt Zimmerman.

At the end of FY17 the Authority had no assets and made no changes to its operational plan. In addition, no significant changes to the bylaws, policies, rules or programs were noted.