

Dairy Innovation Hub Advisory Council

August 14, 2023

Meeting minutes

Notes by Elisabeth Berndt

Participants In-Person: Heather White (DIH), Maria Woldt (DIH), Elisabeth Berndt (DIH), Steve Kelm (UW-River Falls), Tera Montgomery (UW-Platteville), Chuck Steiner (UW-Platteville), Randy Romanski (DATCP), Shelly Mayer (PDPW), Dave Daniels (WFBF), Scott Rankin (UW-Madison), Mitch Breunig (PDPW), Aric Dieter (DBA), Troy Runge (UW-Madison)

Virtual Participants: Larry Baumann (UW-River Falls), Glenda Gillaspay (UW-Madison), Tim Fiocchi (WFBF)

Absent: Michael Orth (UW-River Falls), Chuck Nicholson (UW-Madison), John Umhoefer (WCMA)

In person at Arlington Ag Research Station, Public Events Building & virtual Zoom meeting.

Dave Daniels called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: (4.26.23 meeting) A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Steve Kelm, Randy Romanski seconded. All were in favor. The minutes were approved.

Dave provided the meeting overview and welcomed everyone.

Council member updates: Each council member provided a working update from their areas/departments since the April 26th meeting.

Industry/association representatives: Dave Daniels (WFBF) shared that Beth Schaefer has been named the new Ag in the Classroom coordinator. DATCP has increased funding for the program and has created a partnership with Alice in Dairyland. Leaders of the Land is a new program that highlights leader-led, farmer stories and shares sustainability insights from its members. WFBF continues to advocate for farm policy in the farm bill. Dairy producers are encouraged to participate in FMMO hearing in Carmel, IN on Aug. 23.

Shelly Mayer (PDPW) reported that the Dairy Signal continues to make an impact in the community with roughly 800 unique listeners. STRIDE, a program focusing on youth development, will hold a one-day conference at UW-Madison in September with hopes to reach the Platteville and River Falls campuses in coming years. PDPW will be meeting with executives at Kwik Trip in LaCrosse with specific emphasis on the farm bill. Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives (DBI) invested in projects and funded dollars regionally; the University Wisconsin is included in the program.

Mitch Breunig offered a farmer perspective. Rain, or lack thereof, has influenced the market. Milk prices were at their lowest (in recent past) last month. There is recent emphasis on risk management and cost of production. Spot loads are selling over class price.

Aric Dieter (ALCIVIA, representing DBA) shared that corn crops rebounded well after lack of rain, and now some timely rain; The last few years, forage and harvest yields were the best they have

been in years with an overabundance of quality silage. Insurance premiums are anticipated to increase as one insurance provider is no longer offering services due to expensive claims related to weather.

Randy Romanski (DATCP) provided an update on the governor's budget that includes consistent prioritization for agriculture and continued funding for: DIH, transportation, conservation, farmer mental health, and meat processing programs. Trade export missions to the UK continue to be fruitful and another trip is planned to Morocco; DATCP recently hosted a group from Thailand. Pathways continue to be identified for young people to pursue careers in agriculture.

University reps: Scott Rankin (UW-Madison) noted that the Babcock Dairy Plant is online and receiving raw milk to process ice cream and cheese. A new outreach and extension program will soon be launched and offered in Spanish.

Tera Montgomery (UW-Platteville) has begun her new role as the School of Agriculture director. Due to three faculty resignations, the School of Agriculture intends to fill positions short-term while looking at current revisions and program rates. The Dairy Pilot Plant received a \$1M grant commitment from Compeer Financial; fundraising efforts continue to progress. There is increased interest in agriculture and working on the farm from incoming freshman.

Larry Baumann (UW-River Falls) did not provide comments.

Campus updates and Hub highlights: Campus leaders focused on net new capacity.

Platteville (BILSA Interim Dean, Chuck Steiner): Chuck Steiner shared that Chancellor Dr. Tammy Evetovich was selected as the 15th chancellor at UW-Platteville. She has visited Pioneer Farm, started strategic planning through 2023 with specific interest in DIH impacts and its benefits. Christopher Patton has been appointed vice chancellor of administrative services. A search for the provost and BILSA dean will begin soon. Campus continues to deal with structural deficits.

Pioneer Farm continues to make strong investments, specifically milking robots. With new capacity, they hope to expand operations and intend to collaborate with computer scientists and engineers on campus.

Collaborative projects relating to animal behavior and dry-off periods are underway. Installation of a C-lock feeding system is providing a wealth of opportunity for dairy cow nutrition. Research continues to expand outside parameters of faculty and capacity. Currently, two cows are cannulated.

River Falls (CAFES Professor Steve Kelm): Steve Kelm served as proxy for Dean Michael Orth. He shared that Dean Orth began his deanship on June 1. There has been a lot of leadership turnover at the dean level across the university. Maria Jose Fuenzalida, new faculty in Animal and Food Science, is moving forward with collaborations. Luis Peña-Lévano recently resigned; the position intends to be filled. A research tech position is currently open. The dairy processing plant is hosting a grand re-opening in October. Kurt Vogel has held the first classes with the newly formed humane handling institute.

Registration for FISC is half full for instruction beginning on Oct. 25; plans for long-term funding are being explored. Admission numbers in CAFES have increased by 25-28 incoming students over last year.

Grace Lewis' DIH lab space is set up and producing results. She and her team received first place in a product development contest in Chicago for a ginger flavored yogurt, "RootCurd." Analytical lab spaces have been created and existing space has been renovated to accommodate new equipment and research projects.

Madison (CALs Associate Dean for Research Troy Runge, CALs Dean Glenda Gillaspay): Troy Runge reported that student numbers are increasing to approximately 4,000 in CALs. The position for an assistant dean for recruitment is open. CALs is investing capital into student services and spaces to empower students to be ambassadors for the college. Charles Lee Isbell Jr. was named the new Provost at UW-Madison; he is interested in AI, sustainability in agriculture, and DIH's ability to leverage funds and continued progress and success. The newest faculty hire, Michaela Hoffelmeyer, is a social scientist who plans to begin this month. Three more DIH hires are anticipated next year. An RFP for post-doctoral fellowship research projects recently closed; council members were invited to review proposals and provide feedback.

Dean Gillaspay shared that UW-Madison faculty and staff met with the leadership team from LSU. The visit was initiated by LSU President Bill Tate who reached out to four land grant institutions exploring how universities have successfully implemented research programs and initiatives relating to key agricultural regional strengths. Interest in sustainability across crops was discussed. Four community agriculture leaders/stakeholders, including dairy processors, were invited to present and participate in panel discussions.

C-Lock GreenFeed units have been installed on the Blaine Dairy in the free-stall barn and in the pasture. Additionally, seventy-two new individual calf pens have been installed at the Arlington Ag Research Station that will expand calf studies and increase flexibility through individual and group housing options.

Discussion: Differences in majors across the three universities were explored. Each institution has the ability to create a unique pipeline that infuses talent on each campus. DIH shows research capacity at all campuses and provides numerous opportunities. Industry partners are also trying to increase awareness and strengthen pipelines to careers and interest in agriculture from youth through college-aged students.

Administrative update (program update): Heather provided an update on DIH administrative activity through FY23.

Funding: Capacity- building equipment projects help recruit students, faculty, and trainees that provide research opportunities at all three campuses. All projects funded by DIH would not be possible without the Hub funding mechanisms. There have been six collaborative awards funded across all three campuses.

Faculty: The mission of the Hub was to create net new faculty positions as campus colleges still prioritize funding as usual. Each campus is still funding dairy-related positions that are open due

to retirements and resignations. Hub funded faculty positions are intended to be NET NEW. There were seventeen new faculty hired between three campuses.

Trainees: There have been 106 graduate students to date that have received some DIH funding, whether fully or partial. PI's self-reported 200 undergraduates on Hub funding for FY23 and nearly 500 undergraduate students to date.

Discussion: DIH is looking for more efficient ways of collecting data as it enters the fourth year of funding. Due to the number of funded projects, some PIs are reporting on several projects per year. DIH staff could adjust reporting to once a year that would be consistent with annual activity reporting. DIH is collaborating with the CALS dean's team and partnering with other campus and UW System resources. DIH is seeking a collaborative platform to be used at UW-Madison, UW-Platteville, and UW-River Falls. There is increased interest to make research more relatable to stakeholders and the public through data and storytelling. Numbers are powerful tools to relay progress and success while highlighting "star" projects. Researchers could be used to identify the "stand" out projects.

Outreach update: Maria provided an overview of the following meetings and events.

Dairy Symposium recap: The academic focused spring event in Madison highlighted advanced Hub funded research. Synergies between all three campuses made the event successful. The event will move from the Pyle Center to Memorial Union in 2024.

Stakeholder meetings: DIH participated in several meetings this summer. The Farm First board meeting at the Arlington Ag Station featured an overview of DIH and included several research presentations and tour stops at the Blaine Dairy, the WICST field, and the Beef Cattle Nutrition unit. Heather attended the WAEWDC council meeting in Wausau to discuss work force development in the field of agriculture. Lastly, campus leaders from LSU visited UW-Madison to learn how to use resources to grow and diversify agricultural research. Heather represented the Hub by overviewing the early stages of the Hub, sources of funding, and how the Hub leverages new dairy research.

Manure Expo: Fourteen DIH research project posters were displayed in the research tent that interfaced with the public. The event was hosted by the Arlington Ag Research Station.

Dairy Summit: A public facing DIH event held in the fall that rotates between the Madison, Platteville, and River Falls campuses. This is a fully hybrid event and is accessible to everyone related to dairy in Wisconsin. This event highlights newly DIH funded projects. Registration will open soon for the 2024 Dairy Summit, hosted by UW-Platteville.

Other events related to the Dairy Summit are as follows:

- **Advisory council meeting** will be held on Tues., Nov. 14.
- **Reception and tours** will be open to researchers, faculty, and staff on the evening of Tues., Nov. 14.
- **Dairy Summit**, the main event, will take place in Velzy Commons, Ullsvick Hall on Nov. 15.

Annual report: Maria shared an update. The design, layout, and content for the report is in progress and going well. The report should be finalized in October with a four-page executive summary ready for distribution at the World Dairy Expo. The focus of the report is students and advanced-stage research projects.

Lunch was served followed by tours and informal Hub funded research presentations.

Motion to adjourn the meeting: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mitch Breunig. Troy Runge seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 12:18 p.m.

Future meetings: The last meeting for 2023 is Tues., Nov. 14, 12:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. at the Markee Pioneer Student Center on the UW-Platteville campus.