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FarmFirst Workshops Open to All Dairy Producers

Young Cooperators Welcome all Dairy Producers to Attend

Madison, Wis. [January 30, 2018] – The Young Cooperators of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative invite all dairy producers to attend their workshop series taking place on Saturday morning, February 10, 2018 at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center in Oshkosh, Wis.

“The Young Cooperator Program is focused on building up the next generation of dairy producers. While the program is available through FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative, we believe it is important to extend the educational opportunities to all dairy farmers,” says Janet Clark, Chair of the Young Cooperator Steering Committee.

“As the second annual Young Cooperator Conference, these workshops are intended to bring young farmers together to focus on building the skills and network for these farmers to succeed well into the future,” says Julie Sweney, Director of Communications and Marketing at FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative. “Its more than just hosting educational sessions that interest them; it is about knowing their concerns for the future and having them befriend other dairy farmers, near and far. It’s important for them to know they are not alone and that a variety of resources are available to help them through challenges they face.”

This year’s workshop series includes:

Reflections on Animal Welfare, Customer Expectations and Building Added Value in Dairy, presented by Terry Homan, DVM & Founder of Red Barn Family Farms at 8:30 a.m. Challenging dairy market situations can lead to innovation, and for Red Barn Family Farms, it led to building a unique, added-value brand. Hear from the founder of Red Barn Family Farms on what the brand means to him and the producers certified in the program, and how that contributes to their bottom line.

Milk Quality 101: Tests & Quality Know-How to Save Time & Money, presented by Fox Valley Quality Control Lab, including Cheryl Harrmann, Toni Buhrow and Cheryl Zablocki-Wagner at 9:30 a.m. Take a deeper look at the milk quality and expand your knowledge of what resources are available to you from your milk testing facility. Knowing what tools are available to you can help you gather information in a more cost-effective, time-efficient manner, saving you time and money.

Workshop attendees will then have the opportunity to join the delegate session of FarmFirst’s Annual Meeting to also listen to:

A View from the Capitol, presented by Shawna Morris, Vice-President of Trade Policy at the National Milk Producers Federation at 10:45 am. Hear the latest development of dairy policy and key industry discussions taking place on the frontlines in Washington, D.C.

Industry Expert Panel: Perspective Across the Industry, featuring Sam Miller, BMO Harris Bank; Dan Smith, WI Dept. of Ag; Terry Homan, Red Barn Family Farms; Julie Cooper, Belgioioso Cheese; and Norbert Hardtke, Family Dairies USA at 11:15 a.m. The dairy industry has experienced quite a few changes in the last few years. Hear from these industry experts on some of their thoughts on where the industry is at currently and what changes might be in store for the future of Midwest dairy farmers.

Dairy farmers interested in attending should contact Julie Sweney at FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative by calling 608-286-1909 before Tuesday, February 7, 2018. Registration is required for lunch which is available at 12:30 p.m.

FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative was established in 2013 and is based in Madison, Wis. The cooperative represents farms in Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana through policy bargaining, dairy marketing services, laboratory testing opportunities and industry promotion.

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