

Western United Dairymen hires new CEO

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

The leadership of Western United Dairymen has hired Anja Raudabaugh as the organization's new CEO. Raudabaugh will officially begin her role in late July, WUD announced on Thursday.

"We are pleased to welcome Anja to the Western United family," WUD vice president Frank Mendonsa, said in a press release.

"I look forward to the fresh perspective, valuable experience and superior personal characteristics she will offer our membership as the new CEO," he said.

Raudabaugh has served as executive director of Madera County Farm Bureau since 2011. Before that she worked as a project manager for a Fortune 500 company and as the senior legislative assistant for Rep. Doug Ose,

representing California's 3rd District in Washington D.C.

Previously the marketing director for the California Asparagus Commission and district representative for state Sen. Dick Monteith, her extensive experience in the political environment will add tremendous value to the organization, WUD stated.

Raudabaugh's time in Sacramento working as a project manager and technical advisor

handling CEQA and NEPA requirements as they applied to state and federal agencies has lent her a skill set adept with navigating complex issues, WUD stated.

A graduate of the University of the Pacific in Stockton, Raudabaugh earned her bachelor's degree in biology and earned a master's degree in biochemistry from UC Davis, with an emphasis in global pan-

demics and infectious diseases.

"I am honored and extremely humbled to be accepted into the role of CEO with Western United Dairymen. It will be my privilege to grow the organization and expand our members' global opportunities, along with maintaining our vision and way of life," Raudabaugh said.

Raudabaugh replaces for-

mer CEO Michael Marsh, whose 15-year tenure with WUD abruptly ended in December due to the desire of the organization's directors to move in a different direction and re-energize membership.

Paul Martin, who retired from WUD in 2012 after serving as the long-time director of environmental services, has served as interim CEO.

Diversification helps farm thrive

By HEATHER SMITH THOMAS
For the Capital Press

GOODING, Idaho — Starting their own cheese-making business in 2004 allowed the Ballard family to diversify by creating an additional market for its milk.

"We came here from Southern California and our son Travis is in business with us now. We have 50 acres and rent another 40 acres from a neighbor," Steve said.

This is a family operation, he said.

"Stacie does the financial side of the business and marketing. She provides input on almost everything, and helps with the cows — she has a knack for dairy farming. She milked the cows for a long time before we started the cheese side of the business," he said.

Their cows are 100 percent Jersey.

"We like Jerseys because their milk is a lot richer," Steve said. They process 40 percent of their milk in their cheese plant, and sell the remaining 60 percent to Glanbia Foods.

"We don't want to be limited with all our eggs in one basket. Diversity has helped, with more than one product to sell. If we weren't making cheese we would have been in and out of the dairy business within 12 years." When milk prices are low, the cheese business adds another customer base.

Their many varieties of cheese are marketed under their label — Ballard Cheese. Most is sold wholesale, but visitors who take a tour of the dairy and cheese plant can also purchase cheese.

The Ballards also have regular restaurant and retail customers, ranging from Win-Co and other big box stores to small farm stands in the Treasure Valley.

"We sell to specialty food stores and restaurants direct, and to the food service industry," Steve said. "It helps to be vertically integrated, so we have more control over quality and handling of the end product."

Their son Travis is the cheese-maker, and is involved with the dairy's operation.

"If I'm traveling on business



Photos by Heather Smith Thomas/For the Capital Press

A Jersey calf is fed at the Ballard Dairy in Gooding, Idaho.



Cheese is made at Ballard Family Dairy & Cheese in Gooding, Idaho.

Ballard Family Dairy & Cheese

Owners: Steve and Stacie Ballard

Since: 1995

Location: Near Gooding, Idaho

Herd: 80 Jersey cows

"Dairymen who run large operations do a very good job, but I prefer to keep my farm small. I want to be able to take care of the land and my cows — and have the ecosystem on our farm support itself. It all boils down to the management style a person chooses," Steve said.

"We also choose to be a conventional dairy. Personally, I don't feel that organic is any better than conventional. It costs a lot to do things organic, and our customers are satisfied with our product," Steve said.

"That's the beauty of America; everybody has a choice. This is what we market — a choice, and the experience of what we produce here on our farm. We are happy to share our quality products with customers across Idaho."

for the Idaho Dairy Products Commission or the National Dairy Board, he helps take care of the dairy. Our daughter Jessica also works with us, and her boys, Michael and Matt (age 14 and 18), also work on the dairy, and in the cheese plant with their uncle," Steve said.

Ballard's Jersey cows produce for a long time.

"We milk a lot of cows that are 10 years old and still doing well. A person has to choose the production level to aim for. As soon as a cow drops below that level she goes for another purpose," he explains.

Jerseys are smaller-framed than Holsteins and take more time to gain much weight. "If you have a young cow that's not productive enough and sell her as beef, you won't get as much money as you would with an older, heavier cow. The nice thing about Holsteins, by contrast, is that they can serve a dual purpose. You can milk them a few years and then move them on," he said. "It all depends on how you want to manage your herd."

The dairy industry typically supplies 40 percent of the beef market, he said.

Glanbia to train 40 new workers with state help

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

The Idaho Department of Labor has committed \$167,123.50 in Idaho Workforce Development Training Funds to Glanbia Foods to train 40 new employees in safety, quality assurance, sustainability, dairy operations and maintenance, according to a Labor Department press release on Monday.

Glanbia, the largest American-style cheese manufacturer in the United States and one of the largest whey ingredient producers, is expanding its Twin Falls Cheese Innovation Center by seven new positions and its Gooding production facility

by 33 positions.

The 40 new full-time positions will pay an average of \$20.63 per hour plus employer-assisted medical benefits. The positions to be created include production operators, maintenance staff, management and administrative support, lab workers and warehouse workers, according to the Labor Department.

Glanbia also has facilities in Blackfoot and Richfield. The company's global headquarters are in Kilkenny, Ireland, and its North American headquarters is in Twin Falls, Idaho.

The Idaho Workforce Development Training Fund is financed by a 3 percent set-aside from employer unemployment insurance taxes.

Montana wildlife group seeks to stop sheep grazing

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — A wildlife group is asking a federal judge to stop domestic sheep grazing that it says is a threat to wildlife on U.S. National Forest land in the Gravelly Mountains of southwest Montana.

The Gallatin Wildlife Association claims the government's authorization for the Helle family of Dillon to graze almost 8,000 sheep in the area is harming endangered grizzly bears and wild bighorn sheep.

Attorney John Meyer said

the Bozeman-based group planned to file an injunction request in U.S. District Court Monday seeking to halt grazing this summer on two of the Helle's seven grazing allotments.

A lawsuit challenging the approval of the allotments was filed last week.

Helena lawyer Jim Brown, who represents the Helles, says the family has cooperated with wildlife officials on bighorn sheep conservation efforts.

Cash cheese makes significant rally

By LEE MIELKE
For the Capital Press

My thoughts last week that the global chickens had come home to roost following the previous week's continued drop in the Global Dairy Trade (GDT) auction came into question. Cash cheese rallied significantly last week, reaching levels not seen since November 2014 but then reversed gears Friday. Cheese is making its way to Chicago and traders this week had another GDT to analyze and are awaiting Thursday's May Milk Production report.

The cheddar blocks, after soaring to \$1.78 on Thursday, dropped 2 1/2 cents Friday and closed at \$1.7550 per pound, up 4 cents on the week and the sixth consecutive week of gain, but are still 27 1/2-cents below a year ago. The blocks shed another 2 1/2 cents Monday but were unchanged Tuesday at \$1.72 per pound.

The barrels, after hitting \$1.7550 Thursday, dropped 3 1/4-cents Friday to close at \$1.7225, up 8 cents on the week but 24 1/2-cents below a year ago. They lost 2 3/4-cents Monday but were also unchanged Tuesday, holding at \$1.6950. Three cars of block traded hands last week and 22 of barrel.

Cash butter started last week losing 4 cents Monday but gained it back Thursday and Friday and closed at \$1.90 per pound, unchanged on the week but 28 1/2-cents below a year ago. Only four cars traded hands on the week. The spot butter was unchanged Monday but lost a penny and a half Tuesday, closing at \$1.8850 per pound.

Dairy Markets

Lee Mielke



Cash Grade A nonfat dry milk gained 4 cents in the first three sessions last week but lost 2 1/4 cents on Friday to close at 89 3/4-cents per pound, up 1 3/4-cents on the week but 96 cents below a year ago. Eight cars traded hands at the CME last week. The powder was unchanged both Monday and Tuesday.

GDT slippage slowing?

This week's Global Dairy Trade (GDT) auction saw the weighted average for all products offered slip 1.3 percent, following a 4.3 percent decline June 2, and a 2.2 percent decline in the May 19 event. This is the seventh consecutive session of loss but the smallest since March 3, 2015.

The declines were led by anhydrous milkfat (AMF), down 8.9 percent, following a 7.4 percent loss last time. Butter led the losses in the June 2 event, down 10 percent. Lactose was the next biggest loser Tuesday, down 2.8 percent, following a 6.9 percent drop last time. Skim milk powder was off 0.2 percent, following a 1.3 percent decline last time, and whole milk powder (WMP) was off 0.1 percent Tuesday, following a 3.1 percent drop last time.

Moving to positive territory, buttermilk powder led the way, up 10 percent, after dropping 7 percent last time. Rennet casein was next, up 4.3 percent, after dropping 4.4 percent last time. Butter was up 3.3 percent Tuesday,

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