UW-River Falls Dairy Pilot Plant renovation project receives first $1 million in pledges

Feb. 25, 2014

RIVER FALLS

Dairy industry leaders and leadership at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) have kicked off fundraising efforts to make needed updates to the university's Dairy Pilot Plant.

UWRF is one of few campuses in the nation that delivers a 360-degree experiential-learning opportunity for undergraduate students to work in a dairy plant production environment and participate in new product development, from testing to marketing, from production to final retail, in addition to being able to access the key academic components in the classroom.

"Wisconsin's dairy industry is in the need of cheesemakers, buttermakers, process operators, quality assurance and food microbiologists," said Tayt Wuethrich, vice president/owner of Grassland Dairy Products, Inc., as he expressed his support for the renovation of UWRF's Dairy Pilot Plant. "UW-River Falls competes with many other schools of higher learning from across the U.S. so upgrading the pilot plant sends a statement that we are here to retain and train our next generation of dairy leaders in Wisconsin."

Launched in June 2013, the fundraising effort has already reached $1 million in gifts and commitments, one third of its goal to raise $3 million in private contributions to update and upgrade equipment in the Dairy Pilot Plant. UWRF will also seek to secure an additional $500,000 in institutional and state funding for facility renovation and modernization.

"This transformational renovation of the Dairy Pilot Plant is a high priority project for the university," said UWRF Chancellor Dean Van Galen. "The renovation will modernize our facilities, expand our capacity to support business and industry and enable us to provide high-quality hands-on experiences to a new generation of leaders in Wisconsin's signature industry."

The Dairy Pilot Plant first opened in 1982 and has been producing popular retail products such as cheese and ice cream for students, staff and the local community ever since. Today, more than 20 flavored cheeses and 30 different flavors of ice cream are made by UWRF students with milk from the dairy herd on the UWRF Mann Valley Farm.

Modernization efforts will ensure the campus's 30-year-old Dairy Pilot Plant will continue to be considered relevant to the region's growing dairy processing industry, and will help meet demands for talented production floor-ready graduates.

As a testament to the project's vital role in the dairy processing industry, major donations have been received from the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA), Grassland Dairy Inc. (of Greenwood), Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery (of Ellsworth), Welcome Dairy (of Colby), Loos
Machine (of Colby), Mullins Cheese (of Mosinee) and Foremost Farms USA (of Baraboo).

These organizations are the first seven of 20 possible members on the Dairy Plant Advisory Committee, which will afford benefits such as priority recruitment access to UWRF graduates; the opportunity to advise on plant renovation designs and program development; and access to the facility for research, short courses and workshops.

"This is a very important project for UWRF and the Wisconsin dairy industry," said Dave Fuhrmann, president of Foremost Farms USA, Wisconsin's largest dairy cooperative. "The demand for trained dairy processing and product development personnel will continue to grow in the future. Foremost Farms will look to UWRF for qualified candidates for the positions we'll have open in the future. We are confident the investment that is made today will provide the expertise our business needs."

The plant is an integral component of academic programming in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES), and the college is reinforcing its emphasis on teaching in-demand disciplines, which include food technology, processing, and plant management skills. A new faculty member will soon be hired in Food and Process Engineering and a new minor created in Food Processing Technology. A renovated Dairy Pilot Plant will be integral to the success of these academic emphases.

"CAFES wants to ensure we have a modern, well-equipped plant with processing capacity relevant to the industry which will give our students direct, hands-on experience and provide for expanded outreach training and programming," said CAFES Dean Dale Gallenberg.

The dairy pilot plant also serves a vital role in outreach and applied research, as indicated by Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Executive Director John Umhoefer.

"Four of the five basic courses required for the Wisconsin Cheesemaker's license are taught at UWRF, along with opportunities for cheesemaker apprenticeships and short courses for industry personnel and students to earn their pasteurizer license," Umhoefer said. "The Dairy Pilot Plant at River Falls has also new dairy businesses test new products and processes."

"This renovation project will ensure the university's relevancy in the dairy industry with regards to education and training, while introducing state of the art processing, food safety and bio-security features," said Dairy Pilot Plant Manager Michelle Farner.

The renovation is scheduled to start in summer 2015 with much of the work completed in time for the start of fall semester. Full occupancy of the new space is anticipated by January 2016. The renovation fundraising effort is part of UWRF's larger $20 million Rising to Distinction comprehensive campaign which has raised more than $14 million to date.

Specific outcomes of the renovation project will include an overall modernization of the equipment and processes and an increase in space dedicated to the Dairy Pilot Plant, bringing the facility from 1600 square feet to 6000 square feet.

This will allow for the separation of raw product handling and whey processing and the creation of independently functioning spaces for cheese and ice cream production. Space will be added for raw milk processing and separation, along with increased HTST capacity, additional cheese vats, and a cheese aging room.
An improved ice cream manufacturing space will feature temperature control, updated processing equipment, and separate raw and pasteurized processing areas. A classroom/training area overlooking the cheese processing space will also be added.

"UWRF students have the unique opportunity to work in the Dairy Pilot Plant and gain experience that makes them immediately valuable in the industry upon graduating. This important renovation project will help ensure that students continue to get relevant academic preparation and hands-on training in dairy product processing," said Jim Mildbrand, secretary-treasurer of the Central Wisconsin Cheesemakers' and Buttermakers' Association (CWCBA) and a member of the steering committee providing oversight for the fundraising project.

In demonstrating their commitment, the CWCBA approved a $25,000 gift for the project on Feb. 18.

For more information on the dairy plant renovation, visit go.uwrf.edu/dairyplant or contact Dean Gallenberg at 715-425-3784.

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UW-RF’s Dairy Pilot Plant Project Gets $1 Million in Pledges
Wisconsin Ag Connection - 02/20/2014

A fundraising effort to make necessary upgrades to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls' dairy facility is off to a good start. A special committee has already reached $1 million in gifts and commitments since last summer, which is about one third of its goal to raise $3 million in private contributions to update equipment in the plant. UWRF will also seek to secure an additional $500,000 in institutional and state funding for facility renovation and modernization.

"This transformational renovation of the Dairy Pilot Plant is a high priority project for the university," said UWRF Chancellor Dean Van Galen. "The renovation will modernize our facilities, expand our capacity to support business and industry and enable us to provide high-quality hands-on experiences to a new generation of leaders in Wisconsin's signature industry."

The Dairy Pilot Plant first opened in 1982 and has been producing popular retail products such as cheese and ice cream for students, staff and the local community ever since. Currently, more than 20 flavored cheeses and 30 different flavors of ice cream are made by UWRF students with milk from the dairy herd on the UWRF Mann Valley Farm.

River Falls is one of few campuses in the nation that delivers a 360-degree experiential-learning opportunity for undergraduate students to work in a dairy plant production environment and participate in new product development, from testing to marketing, from production to final retail, in addition to being able to access the key academic components in the classroom.

The renovation is scheduled to start in summer 2015 with much of the work completed in time for the start of fall semester. Full occupancy of the new space is anticipated by January 2016.

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Jenessa Freidhof, a junior majoring in agricultural business, stirs cheese into curds in the Dairy Pilot Plant at UW-River Falls.

**UWRF Dairy Pilot Plant renovation project receives first $1 million in pledges**

By news@riverfallsjournal.com March 3, 2014

Dairy industry leaders and leadership at UW-River Falls have kicked off fundraising efforts to make needed updates to the university's Dairy Pilot Plant.
UWRF is one of few campuses in the nation that delivers a 360-degree experiential-learning opportunity for undergraduate students to work in a dairy plant production environment and participate in new product development, from testing to marketing, from production to final retail, in addition to being able to access the key academic components in the classroom.

“Wisconsin's dairy industry is in the need of cheesemakers, buttermakers, process operators, quality assurance and food microbiologists," said Tayt Wuethrich, vice president/owner of Grassland Dairy Products, Inc., as he expressed his support for the renovation of UWRF's Dairy Pilot Plant. "UW-River Falls competes with many other schools of higher learning from across the U.S. so upgrading the pilot plant sends a statement that we are here to retain and train our next generation of dairy leaders in Wisconsin.”

Launched in June 2013, the fundraising effort has already reached $1 million in gifts and commitments, one third of its goal to raise $3 million in private contributions to update and upgrade equipment in the Dairy Pilot Plant. UWRF will also seek to secure an additional $500,000 in institutional and state funding for facility renovation and modernization.

“This transformational renovation of the Dairy Pilot Plant is a high priority project for the university," said UWRF Chancellor Dean Van Galen. “The renovation will modernize our facilities, expand our capacity to support business and industry and enable us to provide high-quality hands-on experiences to a new generation of leaders in Wisconsin’s signature industry.”
The Dairy Pilot Plant first opened in 1982 and has been producing popular retail products such as cheese and ice cream for students, staff and the local community ever since. Today, more than 20 flavored cheeses and 30 different flavors of ice cream are made by UWRF students with milk from the dairy herd on the UWRF Mann Valley Farm.

Modernization efforts will ensure the campus’s 30-year-old Dairy Pilot Plant will continue to be considered relevant to the region’s growing dairy processing industry, and will help meet demands for talented production floor-ready graduates.

As a testament to the project’s vital role in the dairy processing industry, major donations have been received from the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA), Grassland Dairy Inc. (of Greenwood), Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery (of Ellsworth), Welcome Dairy (of Colby), Loos Machine (of Colby), Mullins Cheese (of Mosinee) and Foremost Farms USA (of Baraboo). These organizations are the first seven of 20 possible members on the Dairy Plant Advisory Committee, which will afford benefits such as priority recruitment access to UWRF graduates; the opportunity to advise on plant renovation designs and program development; and access to the facility for research, short courses and workshops.

“This is a very important project for UWRF and the Wisconsin dairy industry,” said Dave Fuhrmann, president of Foremost Farms USA, Wisconsin’s largest dairy cooperative. “The demand for trained dairy processing and product development personnel will continue to grow in the future. Foremost Farms will look to UWRF for qualified candidates for the positions we'll have open in the future. We are confident the investment that is made today will provide the expertise our business needs.”

The plant is an integral component of academic programming in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES), and the college is
reinforcing its emphasis on teaching in-demand disciplines, which include food technology, processing, and plant management skills. A new faculty member will soon be hired in Food and Process Engineering and a new minor created in Food Processing Technology. A renovated Dairy Pilot Plant will be integral to the success of these academic emphases.

“CAFES wants to ensure we have a modern, well-equipped plant with processing capacity relevant to the industry which will give our students direct, hands-on experience and provide for expanded outreach training and programming,” said CAFES Dean Dale Gallenberg.

The dairy pilot plant also serves a vital role in outreach and applied research, as indicated by Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Executive Director John Umhoefer.

“Four of the five basic courses required for the Wisconsin Cheesemaker’s license are taught at UWRF, along with opportunities for cheesemaker apprenticeships and short courses for industry personnel and students to earn their pasteurizer license,” Umhoefer said. "The Dairy Pilot Plant at River Falls has also new dairy businesses test new products and processes.”

“This renovation project will ensure the university’s relevancy in the dairy industry with regards to education and training, while introducing state of the art processing, food safety and bio-security features,” said Dairy Pilot Plant Manager Michelle Farner.

The renovation is scheduled to start in summer 2015 with much of the work completed in time for the start of fall semester. Full occupancy of the new space is anticipated by January 2016. The renovation fundraising effort is part of UWRF’s larger $20 million Rising to Distinction comprehensive campaign which has raised more than $14 million to date.
Specific outcomes of the renovation project will include an overall modernization of the equipment and processes and an increase in space dedicated to the Dairy Pilot Plant, bringing the facility from 1600 square feet to 6000 square feet. This will allow for the separation of raw product handling and whey processing and the creation of independently functioning spaces for cheese and ice cream production. Space will be added for raw milk processing and separation, along with increased HTST capacity, additional cheese vats, and a cheese aging room. An improved ice cream manufacturing space will feature temperature control, updated processing equipment, and separate raw and pasteurized processing areas. A classroom/training area overlooking the cheese processing space will also be added.

“UWRF students have the unique opportunity to work in the Dairy Pilot Plant and gain experience that makes them immediately valuable in the industry upon graduating. This important renovation project will help ensure that students continue to get relevant academic preparation and hands-on training in dairy product processing,” said Jim Mildbrand, secretary-treasurer of the Central Wisconsin Cheesemakers’ and Buttermakers’ Association (CWCBA) and a member of the steering committee providing oversight for the fundraising project.

In demonstrating their commitment, the CWCBA approved a $25,000 gift for the project on Feb. 18.

For more information on the dairy plant renovation, visit go.uwrf.edu/dairyplant or contact Dean Gallenberg at 715-425-3784.
$1 million in pledges raised for Dairy Pilot Plant at UW-River Falls - WQOW TV: Eau Claire, WI NEWS18...

$1 million in pledges raised for Dairy Pilot Plant at UW-River Falls

Posted: Feb 27, 2014 6:27 PM CST
By Aarik Woods - bio | email

River Falls (WQOW) - As one of only two on-campus facilities in the state, UW-River Falls' Dairy Pilot Plant is a unique learning environment. But some of the equipment is getting stale, so to speak, and the school has been raising money for new gear.

"We're constantly coming up with new products," said Amy Kringle, UW-River Falls Senior.

As food science majors at UW-River Falls will tell you, cutting the cheese is no joke. In fact, it's just part of the learning process.

"There'll be one person that's packaging it, someone that's sealing it, someone that's shrink-wrapping it, and then labeling it," said Nick Larscheidt, UW-River Falls Senior.

But for future students, that process will be sped up. That's because the school has officially received $1 million in pledges for a renovation project.

"We're hoping to upgrade our HTST pasteurizing system, and we're hoping to update two new cheese vats. It takes us close to three and a half hours to get through an entire pasteurizing system. So what we're trying to do is shorten that time and make it more relevant for the students," explained Michelle Farner. Dairy Pilot Plant Manager.

"You learn how the product goes from the milk in the bulk tank to on the shelf. And you get to see all different aspects while you're working here," Kringle added.

Students here have already packaged a Sweet 'n Spicy Cheese and a Wasabi Dill Cheese, and those are just two of the more than 20 varieties the plant produces.

The milk for the cheese comes from the school's nearby farm, and the finished products? Once students finish labeling them they head to a store on campus, which has a menu that's constantly under construction.

"We just made a new flavor of cheese this past week. It was Bacon Mango Colby," Larscheidt added.

With $1 million in pledges so far, the school needs an additional $2 million before construction starts. It's tentatively scheduled for the summer of 2015. The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association and Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery have contributed to the project. And if cheese isn't your dairy product of choice, students also make over 30 flavors of ice cream.
UW-River Falls Fund-Raising Effort For Dairy Pilot Plant Reaches $1 Million

River Falls, WI—The fund-raising effort to renovate the University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) Dairy Pilot Plant has reached $1 million, one-third of its goal.

Launched in June 2013, the fund-raising effort is looking to collect $3 million in private contributions to update and upgrade equipment in the plant. UWRF will also seek to secure an additional $500,000 in institutional and state funding for renovation and modernization.

The UWRF facility gives undergraduate students the opportunity to work in a dairy plant production environment and participate in new product development, testing and marketing, production and retail.

Major donations have been received from the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association; Grassland Dairy; Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery; Welcome Dairy; Loos Machine; Mullins Cheese; and Foremost Farms USA.

These organizations are the first seven of 20 possible members on the Dairy Pilot Plant Advisory Committee, which will receive benefits like priority recruitment access to UWRF graduates, the opportunity to advise on plant renovation designs and program development, and access to the facility for research, courses and workshops.

The dairy pilot plant first opened in 1982 and has been making popular retail products like cheese and ice cream for students, staff and the community ever since. Today, more than 20 cheeses and 50 different flavors of ice cream are made by UWRF students with milk from UWRF’s Mann Valley Farm.

Modernization efforts will keep the plant relevant to the region’s growing dairy processing industry, and help meet demands for experienced graduates.

“UW-River Falls competes with many other schools of higher learning from across the US, so upgrading the pilot plant sends a statement that we are here to retain and train our next generation of dairy leaders in Wisconsin,” said Tayt Waetherich, vice president/owner of Grassland Dairy Products.

“This transformational renovation of the Dairy Pilot Plant is a high priority project for the university,” said UWRF Chancellor Dean Van Galen. “The renovation will modernize our facilities, expand our capacity to support business and industry and enable us to provide high-quality hands-on experiences to a new generation of leaders in Wisconsin’s signature industry.”

“The demand for trained dairy processing and product development personnel will continue to grow in the future,” said Dave Fuhrmann, president of Foremost Farms USA. “Foremost Farms will look to UWRF for qualified candidates for the positions we’ll have open in the future.”

The plant is also an important component of academic programming in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES), which is reinforcing its emphasis on teaching in-demand disciplines like food technology, processing and plant management.

A new faculty member will soon be hired in food and process engineering, and a new minor created in food processing technology. CAFES wants to ensure we have a modern, well-equipped plant with processing capacity relevant to the industry which will give our students direct, hands-on experience and provide for expanded outreach training and programming, said CAFES dean Dale Gallenberg.

The plant also serves a vital role in outreach and applied research, according to WCMA executive director John Umhoefer.

“Four of the five basic courses required for the Wisconsin Cheese-maker’s license are taught at UWRF, along with opportunities for cheese maker apprenticeships and short courses for industry personnel and students to earn their pasteurizer license,” Umhoefer said.

Renovation is scheduled to start in summer 2015 with occupancy of the space to be January 2016.

Renovation fund-raising is part of UWRF’s larger $20 million Rising to Distinction comprehensive campaign, which has raised more than $14 million to date.

The project will include an overall modernization of both equipment and processes, and an increase in space — bringing the facility from 1,600 square feet to 6,000 square feet. This allows for the separation of raw product handling and whey processing, as well as creation of independently functioning spaces for cheese and ice cream production.

Space will be added for raw milk processing and separation, along with increased HTST capacity, additional cheese vats, and a cheese aging room.

An improved ice cream manufacturing space will feature temperature control, updated processing equipment, and separate raw and pasteurized processing areas. A classroom/training area overlooking the cheese processing space will also be added.

“This renovation project will help ensure that students continue to get relevant academic preparation and hands-on training in dairy product processing,” Mildbrand continued.

In demonstrating its commitment, CWCBA approved a $25,000 gift for the project on Feb. 18.

For more details on the dairy plant renovation, visit go.uwrf.edu/dairyplant or contact Dean Gallenberg at (715) 425-3784.
Dairy industry leaders and leadership at the UW-River Falls have kicked off fundraising efforts to make needed updates to the university’s Dairy Pilot Plant.

UW-River Falls is one of the few campuses in the nation that delivers a 360-degree experiential-learning opportunity for undergraduate students to work in a dairy plant production environment and participate in new product development.

Students follow a dairy product from testing to marketing, from production to final retail, and also are able to access the key academic components in the classroom.

“Wisconsin’s dairy industry is in the need of cheese-makers, butter-makers, process operators, quality assurance and food microbiologists,” says Tayt Wuethrich, vice president-owner of Grassland Dairy Products, Inc., expressing his support for the renovation of UW-River Falls Dairy Pilot Plant. “UW-River Falls competes with other schools of higher learning from across the U.S. so upgrading the pilot plant sends a statement that we are here to retain and train our next generation of dairy leaders in Wisconsin.”

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Today, more than 20 flavored cheeses and 30 different flavors of ice cream are made by students with milk from the dairy herd on the UW-River Falls Mann Valley Farm.

Major donations have been received from the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, Grassland Dairy, Inc., of Greenwood, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery, Welcome Dairy of Colby, Loos Machine of Colby, Mullins Cheese of Mosinee and Foremost Farms USA of Baraboo.

These organizations are the first seven of 20 possible members on the Dairy Plant Advisory Committee, which will have priority access to UW-River Falls graduates; the opportunity to advise on plant renovation designs and program development and access to the facility for research, short courses and workshops.

According to Dave Fuhrmann, president of Foremost Farms USA, Wisconsin’s largest dairy cooperative, “The demand for trained dairy processing and product development personnel will continue to grow in the future. Foremost Farms will look to UW-River Falls for qualified candidates for the positions we’ll have open in the future.”

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The UW-River Falls’s larger $20 million Rising to Distinction comprehensive campaign, which has raised more than $14 million to date.

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For more information, visit go.uwrf.edu/dairyplant or contact Dean Gallenberg at 715-425-3784.
Project reaches first $1 million in pledges, goal to raise $2 million more

By January 2016, UW-River Falls is one of a few campuses in the nation that delivers a 360-degree learning opportunity for undergraduate students to work in a dairy plant production environment and participate in new product development— from tending to marketing, from production to final retail — in addition to being able to bring key academic components in the classroom.

“Wisconsin’s dairy industry is in need of cheesemakers, buttermakers, process operators, quality assurance and food microbiologists,” said Tayt Wuethrich, chair of UW-River Falls’ Dairy Pilot Plant.

UW-River Falls works closely with many other schools with higher learning from across the U.S., coordinating the pilot plant sends a signal that we are here to return and train our next generation of dairy professionals.

UW-River Falls Chancellor Dan Van Galen said the “transformational renovation” of the dairy plant is a high priority for the university.

The renovation will modernize our facilities, expand our capacity to support business and industry and provide high-quality, hands-on experiences to a new generation of leaders in Wisconsin’s signature industry,” he said.

Since the Dairy Pilot Plant opened in 1962, it has produced retail products such as cheese and ice cream for the local staff and the local community. Today, more than 200,000 cases of cheese and 30 flavors of ice cream are made by UW-River Falls students with milk from local dairy farms on the university’s main Valley Campus.

Modernization efforts will allow for the campus’ 50-year-old Dairy Pilot Plant to continue to be relevant to the region’s growing dairy processing industry and will help meet demands for tailored production facility floor-ready graduates.

As a testament to the project’s vital role in the dairy processing industry, major donations have been received from the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, Grassland Dairy of Greenwood, Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery of Ellsworth, Welcome Dairy of Cally, Lass מאחורי, General Mills of Colby, Milkline Cheese of Mosinee and Foremost Farms USA of Baraboo.

These organizations are the first seven of 20 possible members of the Dairy Plant Advisory Committee, which will get benefits such as pre-access to employment opportunities, enroll at UW-River Falls graduates, the opportunity to advise on plant renovation designs and program development, and provide funds to support the facility for research, short courses and workshops.

“This is a very important project for UW-River Falls and the Wisconsin dairy industry,” said Mark Fuhrmann, president of Foremost Farms USA, Wisconsin’s largest dairy cooperative.

“This modernized plant has trained dairy processing and production personnel to continue to work in the renovation project will look to UW-River Falls for qualified candidates for the positions created in the future. In the future, we are confident the current work that is made today will provide the expertise our business needs.”

The project is an integral component of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, and is reinforcing its emphasis on teaching in-demand disciplines such as food technology, process engineering and plant management.

A new faculty member will be hired in Food Processing and Engineering, and access to valuable in the Food Processing Technology will be created.

“CWFANS wants to ensure the work we do modern, well-equipped plant with processing capacity relevant to the industry, which will give our graduates direct hands-on experience and provide for expanded outreach training,” said Mark Fuhrmann, president of Foremost Farms USA, Wisconsin’s largest dairy cooperative.

For more information about the UW-River Falls Dairy Pilot Plant renovation project, visit: https://go.uwrf.edu/dairyplant or call Dale Gallenberg at 715-425-3784.
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