

July 2024



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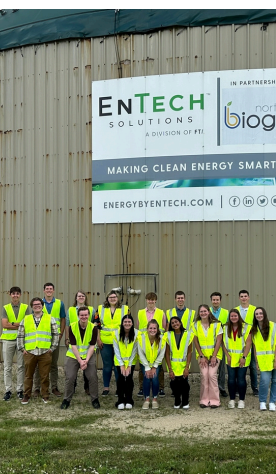
Foremost Farms Summer Internship Program



Each year, our summer internship program brings college students into Foremost Farms plants and headquarters and provides them with hands-on experiences, career mentorship and exposure to various departments within the dairy industry.

This year, the program welcomes sixteen students from twelve universities across the country. Interns are learning how their professional interest in various business areas are applied across the cooperative.

Interns participate in various activities, including farm and plant tours, career development workshops, sustainability initiatives and final presentation projects. These experiences foster professional growth and prepare interns for successful careers.



Foremost Farms 2024 Interns participating in various activities.

- Photo Credit: Katey Bittner



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Market Corner

CLASS III PRICE

June 2024

@ 3.5% Test
\$19.87/CWT

FMMO COMPONENT VALUES

Butterfat.....	\$3.5444
Protein.....	\$2.0546
Other Solids.....	\$0.2326
SCC Adjuster.....	\$0.00100

PRODUCER PRICE DIFFERENTIALS AT BASE ZONE

Order #30.....	\$0.18
Order #32.....	\$0.49
Order #33.....	\$0.96

JUNE 2024 FEDERAL ORDER MARKET STATISTICS

	FO 30	FO 33
Butterfat Test	4.16%	4.02%
Protein	3.18%	3.14%
Other Solids	5.80%	5.78%
Weighted Avg SCC	175,000	187, 000
FO Class I Utilization	5.5%	35.48%

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Featured Farm: Gathje Dairy Farm



Gathje Dairy Farm Family.
- Photo Credit: Gathje Dairy Farm

The rural landscape of southern Minnesota is sculpted by the nearby Mississippi River, accompanied by small streams and rivers that traverse through the valleys and wooded bluffs. In its open prairies sits the **Gathje Dairy Farm near Pleasant Grove, Minn.**

The Gathje Dairy Farm, owned by Andy and Nora Gathje, is now in its fourth generation, with their sons Andrew and Ben carrying on the family tradition. Established in 1941 by their great-grandparents, the farm has been passed down through the generations. The Gathje family cares for a small but mighty herd of 60 Holsteins, milking them twice daily in a head-to-head stanchion barn. The property is adorned with white barns and features seven white tractors, cherished favorites of their grandfather. During the planting season the family cultivates nearly 1,150 acres of rotating crops of corn, beans and hay. The family transitions between crops every four to seven years.

In his youth, Andrew was actively involved in 4H and Future Farmers of America (FFA), where he achieved officer ranks. He furthered his agricultural education by earning a degree in Dairy Science from the University of Wisconsin–River Falls in 2019 – Andrew was also a Foremost Farms Foundation scholarship recipient. College expanded his network of dairy industry connections and deepened his knowledge base. From a young age, Andrew knew he wanted to return to the family farm, a passion that now drives him. “I just appreciate the opportunity to farm, knowing not everyone gets this,” Andrew expressed. He hopes to continue the family's legacy through their dairy operation.

Living and working on a small dairy farm requires adaptability. The Gathje's manage all aspects of the farm within the family, but no matter the priority, the wellbeing of the herd remains the top concern. During the fair-weather months, the cows enjoy the longer days exercising and resting in the pasture. Access to pasture offers many benefits to cows, including hoof and joint health as well as enhanced socialization. Andrew shares his enthusiasm for being outdoors with the cows. “Summer is my favorite season on the farm. The warm weather and long days are what I look forward to each year,” Andrew noted.

Over the years, the family has implemented a Total Mixed Ration (TMR) feeding method for the herd. TMR combines various feeds into a single mixture, that is formulated to meet specific nutritional requirements. This approach ensures the cows receive the essential nutrients needed for milk production, growth and reproduction. Andrew noted that this feeding method has enhanced the dairy herd's profitability by increasing the butterfat content in the milk and allowing the cows to breed back sooner.



Beautiful white tractors on the farm.
- Photo Credit: Gathje Dairy Farm.

Andrew has his sights set for the future, understanding that major upgrades and expansions will be necessary in the coming years to keep the farm efficient and profitable. He is optimistic and ready for the challenge. Currently, the focus is maximizing herd profitability while maintaining top care.

Small dairy farms are the cornerstone of America's identity, embodying the values of hard work, resilience and stewardship. “Knowing that the work I do each and every day is the backbone of the country feels really good,” Andrew expressed. The continued support of these farms is integral to the food chain and provides a well-being for rural life.