

NEWS/BUSINESS

Land purchase approved to create nation's largest research dairy near Rupert, Idaho

BOISE, Idaho — A plan to create the nation's largest research dairy advanced last month with the Idaho State Board of Education's vote to allow University of Idaho to buy land for the \$45 million project. University of Idaho is partnering with the Idaho dairy industry to create the Idaho Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (CAFE).

University of Idaho and Idaho Dairymen's Association (IDA) will jointly purchase 540 acres in Minidoka County near Rupert, Idaho, from members of the Whitesides family, who will in turn donate another parcel of land. The university will pay \$2.5 million

and IDA will pay \$2 million toward the purchase.

IDA members first began working with University of Idaho on this project 15 years ago and dedicated funding to the project a decade ago. Since then, Idaho's dairy industry has grown dramatically to rank third nationally in milk production. Much of that growth took place in south central Idaho's Magic Valley, primarily in Jerome, Gooding, Twin Falls, Cassia and Minidoka counties.

University of Idaho economists last month projected that milk sales in 2018 totaled \$2.36 billion, a third of Idaho agriculture's total cash

receipts.

"One of our key focuses will be to have this dairy represent what this industry looks like in the West," says Rick Naerebout, CEO, IDA. "Being the largest research dairy in the country will help support the industry and put Idaho on the map as a premier location for environmental research."

IDA will celebrate the progress on CAFE during its annual legislative banquet March 4 in Boise, Idaho. In meetings with Idaho legislators last month, Michael P. Parrella, dean of the University of Idaho College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, outlined plans for CAFE beyond the new

research dairy, including an outreach and education center and greater focus on food processing through a partnership with the College of Southern Idaho and its existing facilities.

In 2017, the Idaho Legislature appropriated \$10 million from the state's Permanent Building Fund to help finance the project with an additional \$5 million investment anticipated as the project progresses.

"We have enjoyed strong support from Idaho's elected leaders, businesses and others," Parrella says. "Buying property will move us beyond talking about an idea to making it a reality." **CMN**

Comings and goings

A2 Milk Co., Sydney, has appointed **Phil Rybinski** as chief technical officer, effective April 2019. In this new role, he will have primary responsibility for the company's existing quality, regulatory affairs and product development teams across all product forms and markets. Rybinski brings more than 30 years' experience in the dairy industry, most recently as head of research and development and quality for Parmalat Australia.

The **Dairy Business Association**, Green Bay, Wisconsin, has elected **Tom Crave** of Crave Brothers Farm, Waterloo, Wisconsin, to lead the board as president. Crave has been a dairy farmer for 38 years. **Mike North**, who is stepping down from that role, will become president emeritus.

Amy Penterman, who owns and operates Dutch Dairy in Thorp, Wisconsin, with her husband was chosen as vice president.

Eriez, Erie, Pennsylvania, has promoted **John Klinge** to the newly created position of director, strategic sales-aftermarket. In this role, Klinge will head Eriez aftermarket business, which includes the company's service, repair and spare parts departments. Klinge joined Eriez in 2008 as a technical sales representative and has earned consistent promotions. Most recently, he served as light industry market manager.

Gossner Foods, Logan, Utah, has announced **Kristan Earl** has taken the helm as the new president and CEO. She is the granddaughter of longtime company President and CEO Dolores Wheeler, who passed away in November. Earl grew up at the family-owned Gossner Foods, first doing retail counter, kitchen and general office work before moving into milk procurement and accounting. She has a degree in agribusiness from Utah State University. **CMN**

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