



Milwaukee  
Cooperative  
Milk Producers



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## **Membership vote would establish largest grassroots milk cooperative in the Midwest**

*Three Wisconsin-based milk cooperatives propose to merge.*

Madison, Wis. [November 2, 2012] – The board of directors for Family Dairies USA, Manitowoc Milk Producers Cooperative and Milwaukee Cooperative Milk Producers have unanimously voted to recommend a unified merger for their membership. Combined, these three cooperatives could soon become the largest Midwest dairy marketing cooperative.

“We are extremely excited about the future this effort will offer our members,” says David Cooper, general manager for Family Dairies USA. “The combined size and strength of the new cooperative will provide all of our members with a deeper and broader voice in policy-making decisions, both locally and nationally. And, by combining the resources of three independent organizations, we will be able to improve efficiencies and effectiveness.”

“The timing of coming together could not be better,” adds Dennis Donohue, general manager of Manitowoc Milk Producers Cooperative. “The current, individual financial status of all three cooperatives is outstanding. This allows the new organization to start out on very strong footing, so that we can immediately focus on growing and improving member benefits.”

“Considerable due diligence has been done by each board,” says Jim Bird, general manager of Milwaukee Cooperative Milk Producers. “Our cooperatives have shared common goals and even collaborated in business together over the years. It is a natural progression. Now, we can combine efforts that will allow us to put more resources into critical member areas that will continue to build upon the 200-plus years of combined history we have.”

Informational meetings will be held by each cooperative’s membership over the next six weeks. The proposal to merge will be voted on by each membership in mid-December. If the merger passes, the new, combined cooperative will begin business function January 1, 2013.

Under the new cooperative, the combined member representation will be divided into a total of nine districts, based on membership within each district. The current directors from each of the three cooperatives will transition into the new organization, helping ensure consistency in leadership and membership voice.

Family Dairies USA Milk Program and the Fox Valley Quality Control Laboratory will continue to operate as subsidiaries of the new cooperative.

**Family Dairies USA**, based in Madison, Wis., is a grassroots, non-partisan, regional dairy co-op organization dedicated to bring fairness and equity to its family farm members in dairy policy

matters and to provide excellence in dairy marketing services at reasonable prices. Family Dairies represents approximately 2,300 farms.

**Manitowoc Milk Producers Cooperative**, based in Manitowoc, Wis., was established in 1933 and represents more than 2,650 farms. The cooperative provides required Federal Milk Marketing Order services to members and is co-owner of a milk quality testing laboratory for components, cultures and somatic cell counts.

**Milwaukee Cooperative Milk Producers**, based in Brookfield, Wis., represents approximately 500 farms, providing insurance alternatives to dairy producers. Together with Manitowoc Milk Producers Cooperative, they co-own Fox Valley Quality Control Laboratory in Neenah, Wis. The cooperative was established in 1916.

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