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Welcome to

Soaring Eagle Dairy



Mission Statement

The mission of Soaring Eagle Dairy is to operate an efficient and profitable business producing high quality dairy products. We strive to be leaders, create a positive image for the dairy industry, promote personal growth and financial stability among ourselves and our employees. It is important that everyone involved in the business promotes Christian values in dealing with one another, the livestock and the environment.

Manitowoc County Discovery Farm Program

Soaring Eagle Dairy's commitment to environmental stewardship is reflective in its participation in the Manitowoc County Discovery Farms Program. The program, operated through the UW-Madison Extension office, is a collaboration of agricultural, conservation and environmental interests. The goal of this project is to measure farm practices and their effects on water quality and the environment.



At Soaring Eagle Dairy we are committed to delivering the highest quality dairy products "From Our Cows to Your Table". We welcome any visitors to tour our facilities. To arrange for a tour, please contact us at the number listed below. In addition, we open our land for recreational snowmobiles and hunters. If you are interested, please contact us.

Soaring Eagle Dairy, LLC
Jim and Sandie Fitzgerald
Kelly and Brian Goehring
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Soaring Eagle Dairy History

In 1980 Jim Fitzgerald built a 60-cow tie stall barn after farming with his father and brothers for 24 years. In 1994, Jim began using a custom heifer raising operation to allow room for the milking of an additional 30 cows. In 1997, Soaring Eagle Dairy, LLC was formed and the new 400-cow free-stall and double 12 parallel parlor was built. Two years later, a transition barn was added, allowing the herd to grow to 640 and providing a place for fresh and steam-up dry cows. An expansion of the transition barn in 2004 will provide an additional 100 free stalls.

Today, SED is owned by Jim and Sandie Fitzgerald and their daughter and son-in-law, Kelly and Brian Goehring. Each of Jim and Sandie's other children are involved in the dairy, with Julie and Stacy working full-time on the farm.

A Day in a Cows Life

Cows are milked at SED 3 times each day. Cow comfort is important to the dairy and has led to the installation of a mist cooling system, rubber flooring and long day lighting. Sand bedded free-stalls will be retrofitted into the current barn in 2004. All cows are bred AI after a 45-60 day waiting period and are dry for 45 days prior to freshening. Heifer calves continue to be raised by a custom grower and bull calves are sold shortly after they are born. A mixed ration of corn silage, haylage, corn, cottonseed and wet distillers grain are fed to the cows. Over 400 acres of corn and 600 acres of alfalfa are grown to provide the roughage needs of the herd.

Facilities

The milking center houses the parlor, milk house, utility room and office. DeLaval milkers are used in the parlor with automatic take-offs. Located in the basement are milk weight meters, pulsators and the pipeline. Milk weights for each cow are captured and downloaded to Dairy Comp 305 for analysis and herd information. Two bulk storage milk tanks hold 6000-7000 gallons of milk each. Both a chiller and plate cooler ensure that milk is cooled from a cows internal body temperature of 101.5 degrees to 34 degrees before entering the bulk tank.

Waste Management

All manure from the barns is scraped into a collection pit that flows via gravity to an earthen lagoon located behind the barn. Manure is hauled in the fall of the year to the 1000 acres owned or leased by the dairy. Fields in close proximity have manure injected into the ground by a tractor and drag hose while fields further away rely on tankers to haul the manure. The practice of incorporating manure into the soil within a few hours is employed at Soaring Eagle. In addition, voluntary buffer strips protect waterways from nutrient contamination. The dairy works with a crop consultant in the management of its phosphorus based nutrient management plan. Soil is tested yearly for nutrient needs and records of these tests are kept for each field. A leachate collection system at the bunker silos was installed to further protect the environment.

Herd Management System

Computers are an integral part of managing Soaring Eagle Dairy. Data from these systems are used to monitor how management decisions affect production, health, reproduction and profitability. DeLaval's Alpro system records the daily weights from the milking center. Dairy Comp 305 is used to monitor milk weight deviation, health and reproduction records. Breeding is accomplished through a combination of aggressive visual heat detection program and timed insemination. The farms TMR mixer keeps track of the usage of each ingredient and downloads information from the computer on exact ration recipes.

Employees

In addition to the 5 full-time family members involved in Soaring Eagle, the dairy employees 9 full-time associates. In addition, part-time help is called upon during the busy summer months. The make-up of the Soaring Eagle team includes family members, men, women and both Hispanics and locals.