

Minnesota DHIA News

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Spring Cleaning in the Barn

As the snow begins to melt and the days grow longer, many of us feel the familiar urge to do a little spring cleaning. Elsewhere on the farm, it might mean ventilation changes, organizing the shop, or getting machinery ready for the season ahead. In the dairy barn, spring can also be a good time to take a fresh look at the herd and ask an important question: ***Which cows are truly earning their keep?***

Every herd accumulates a few passengers over time. Maybe it's a cow that always seems to be a little behind the rest in production, one that struggles with mastitis or health issues, or one that just never quite fits your breeding goals. As milk prices have tightened and input costs stay high, every cow needs to justify herself. This season of record cull cow prices is a natural checkpoint to review records and make thoughtful culling decisions that keep the herd moving forward.

The good news is that dairy producers today have better tools than ever to help guide those decisions. Production, components, SCC, reproductive performance, health events, and genetic merit all tell part of the story of a cow's value. When those pieces of information are brought together in one place, they become powerful management insights.

That's where HerdHQ comes in. Minnesota DHIA members who process their test days with DRMS—or who use DART as their herd management software—can now **access HerdHQ at no cost**. HerdHQ brings together production and management data into easy-to-use dashboards that help you **quickly identify your most profitable cows and the ones that may be candidates for culling** (or at least inseminating with beef semen). Instead of digging through multiple reports, you can see the bigger picture of herd performance and make more confident decisions. Herds that test monthly with good recording of management and health events have the most to reap from these tools!

Spring cleaning in the barn doesn't always mean selling a lot of cows. **Sometimes it simply means taking a closer look at the data and confirming that the herd is moving in the right direction** (this is the idea

behind the **Fresh Cow Index, or FCI**). Either way, the goal is the same: a herd that is **healthier, more productive, and better positioned for the future**. If you haven't explored HerdHQ yet, this spring might be the perfect time. A little digital spring cleaning of the records may make the decisions in the barn a whole lot clearer! Looking to get started? Visit with our new Dairy Technical Advisor, Hannah Molitor at 320.310.5252 or hannahm@mndhia.org.

Happy Milestone Anniversary to Field Technician, **Tracie Vikla** from Lonsdale for your 10 years of service and the important role you play in supporting dairy farmers!



HERD HQ

Backed by Data. Built for Action.

From complex data to confident action — powered by DRMS—standardized test-day data or your most recent DartSync backup.

Too Much Data. Not Enough Clarity.

You're collecting the right data — but it's scattered across tools that don't connect.



Breeding Calendar



Lab Data



Reports



Herd Software

The HerdHQ Portfolio Brings It Together.

Whether it's test-day insights or DartSync backups, HerdHQ consolidates trusted data into one visual platform. Tools like CowCompass and DairyDepot make it easy to spot patterns and take action — and if you need help getting started, Minnesota DHIA and DRMS staff are here to assist.



COWCOMPASS



DECISIVEDRY



DAIRY DEPOT

Minnesota DHIA welcomes Brad Heins of Morris to its Board of Directors. Heins is the faculty director of the 300-cow dairy herd at the University of Minnesota-West Central Research and Outreach Center (Morris). Also, Mark Bechtold of St. Cloud (Vice President) was re-elected to a 3-year term. Both directors were seated at the MnDHIA Annual Meeting on January 29th.

Many thanks and congratulations to Dave Scapanski (photo left) of Sauk Rapids, who was recognized for his years of service on the board of directors and particularly for his 12 years as President. Scapanski continues to represent you on the National DHIA board of directors.



The five other 2026-27 MnDHIA board members include Peter Seitzer of St Peter (President; photo right), Holly Thompson of Plainview (Secretary/Treasurer), Brian Kimm of Pelican Rapids, Angie Barlau of Waverly, and Kathy Bauer of Faribault.

Hannah Molitor starts as Dairy Technical Advisor



Hannah Molitor of Rockville started in early March as Minnesota DHIA's Dairy Technical Advisor. This is a new position MnDHIA created in partnership with, and funded by, the Dairy Development and Enhancement Program administered by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Molitor was raised on her family's dairy farm in central Minnesota and represents the fourth generation of her family connected to the operation. She has worked as a Minnesota DHIA field technician since 2019, gaining hands-on experience working directly with dairy producers and their herds. Molitor also has experience working with Farm Service Agency's livestock and dairy disaster programs in her previous job role. She is active in several agricultural organizations as well as her parish and is a podcast host and guest blogger of "Catholic Country Chronicles."

In her new role, Molitor looks forward to serving all Minnesota dairy producers (members and non-members alike) by **helping you make the most of your herd data**, especially lab services, software, web tools and management reports available through Minnesota DHIA. She is passionate about building relationships with producers and helping **connect herd information to practical, on-farm decision making**. Specifically, Molitor hopes to **provide one-on-one assistance to farmers**, conduct regional workshops, develop materials that spur engagement and show best practices for applying new information and technology. Ultimately, her position will help dairy farmers to **reduce inefficiencies and improve dairy herd performance**.

Hannah is looking forward to working with you and your farm! Contact her at 320.310.5252 or hannahm@mndhia.org.

Six MnDHIA High School Seniors and College students were recognized with DHIA scholarships in 2026. National committee members ranked applicants based on scholastic achievements, leadership in school and community activities, and responses to DHI- and career-related questions. This outstanding group reflects exceptional talent and promise, and we are confident their hard work will lead to successful futures. Congratulations, and best wishes in your post-secondary pursuits!

Natalie Clemenson



Parents: Brian and Tiffany Clemenson
Zumbrota, MN

Lily Dahler



Parents: Jeremiah and Stephanie Dahler
Foley, MN

Alaina Fisher



Parents: Brian Fisher,
Amanda Fisher
Waconia, MN

Nicole Hauschildt



Parents: Stephanie and Chad Domke
Zumbro Falls, MN

Lindsey Rotz



Parents: Paul and Carolin Rotz
Pelican Rapids, MN

Ella Weist



Parents: Travis Weist,
Kelly Weist
Lino Lakes, MN

What role do you think DHIA will play in the dairy industry in the next 10-20 years?

- "Although farms may grow and change, cows still need to be managed individually, and DHIA will help provide the data to do that in an efficient way."
- "With involvement in DHIA programs, herds might discover areas of their farm and management practices where they could improve that they wouldn't have seen before."
- "DHIA has influenced the whole industry by subtly guiding and supporting farmers to change bad habits and provide resources for improving."
- "No different than a Fortune 500 company, dairies will continue to collect and measure more data points to recognize efficiencies in their businesses and identify their optimal [performance] for profit potential. The value [DHIA] can bring to dairy producers, the dairy industry, and the world is greater than it ever has been."

February Milk Quality Leaders, ranked by SCC then Log SCC					
Name	SCC	Cows	Name	SCC	Cows
JOHNSON DAIRY	30	26	WINGERT REG HOLSTEINS	80	103
TWIN SPRUCE	33	84	RKB DAIRY	81	146
GEHL ACRES FARM	34	134	*STACI SEXTON	81	76
JASSEL HOLSTEINS	35	81	OAK CREST FARMS	82	37
*MARK KLEHR	37	58	TA LEONARD REG HOLSTEINS	83	48
*GLEN AND BECKY CHRISTEN	41	38	THISTLE DEW DAIRY	83	136
*DUANE&KAREN TIMM	41	109	MARSHALL KORN	83	57
SCOTCH PRAIRIE FARM	43	6	DAHRING DAIRY FARM	84	60
ERICKSONS-NELSON DAIRY	43	65	DELBERT BECHTOLD	84	36
*BILL & ALAN MILLER	43	257	BEAVER OAK DAIRY	85	125
LAX-PIETIG DAIRY LLC	45	1102	SCHMITY HOLSTEINS	86	264
*TREVOR DICKE	45	103	LOWELL TANGEN	86	170
KUGATH FARMS	45	16	GAR-LIN DAIRY FARMS INC.	87	2058
CANC	45	63	*CALVIN AND TAMMY BEUMER	87	100
PINE-VUE FARMS	46	104	SPINK COLONY	87	109
BURKE DAIRY INC	47	195	GLEN-D-HAVEN HOLSTIENS	88	303
HARMONY HILLS DAIRY	50	56	*ANDREW PRIMUS	88	54
WIRTLAND HOLSTEINS	53	535	VALLEY ACRES DAIRY	89	975
*JEFF PETERMEIER	53	46	MEYER BROS DAIRY	89	522
TRAIL SIDE HOLSTEINS	55	764	KARL HELDBERG	89	67
*GREG & SANDY WALZ	55	56	BROOKSIDE DAIRY	91	528
KRAIG&RACHELLE KRIENKE	56	681	CLARK FARMS,LLC	92	813
SUNSHINE ACRES	56	211	*JOHN SAUBER	92	54
SCHROEDER BROS LLC	56	153	HINCKLEY HOLSTEINS LLC	94	663
RISING HEITS	57	13	SCHEFFLER DAIRY	95	185
MERDAN DAIRY INC	59	80	*LOREN & LUKE OLSON	96	42
*KRISTEN REIMAN DUDEN	59	29	BITZAN BOVINES	97	75
FUNKS MIDWAY DAIRY	61	859	RICHARD&MICHELLE SCHWEER	97	52
*DEVOINE KRUSE	61	244	FLYINGCOW DAIRY	98	173
*SCHLAUDERAFF ENTERPRISE	63	670	HEMMESCH DAIRY INC.	98	113
*MICHAEL BANSE	65	116	REUTER FARMS	98	137
KIMM'S DAIRY	66	78	TOM & JOYCE SEDGEMAN	98	427
*RYAN AND MOLLY KAPPERS	66	53	DOWN N' DIRTY	98	40
*DARIN WALCHESKI	66	92	*MAREN & JEREMY HOLST	99	112
KUECHLE DAIRY	67	234	*TRAVIS LEHNERTZ	99	458
RIVER VALLEY DAIRY LLC	67	122	AUSPICIOUS OYSTER GRANGE	100	157
SOLUM HOLSTEINS	68	64	AARON WIENER	101	75
*MIKE MENZE	68	85	STELLING FARMS	103	314
*CORY AND KRISTEN SALZL	68	22	BIRCH POINT FARMS PESHON	104	327
*DARYL+LISA MAUS	69	64	*RICHARD LAMBRECHT	104	103
OAT HILL DAIRY	70	74	*BRIAN AND JULIE LIBBESMEIER	104	60
*MATT BERKTOLD	72	209	SHANGHAI DAIRY INC.	104	313
WALNUT ROW FARM LLC	72	22	*KYLE MOSER	104	145
SUNNY SIDE DAIRY	73	135	D&L JOHNSON DAIRY FARM	105	237
CHI-LAKES LAND&LIVESTOCK	73	8	VALLEY VIEW FARM 1	105	129
SCHULTE FARMS	74	277	JM DAIRY LLC	106	381
WAKE UP DAIRY	75	546	HIDDEN HILL DAIRY LLC	107	448
SELKE FARMS	79	269	SMITH FAMILY FARMS	107	449
*MARK BROSIG	79	226	COUNTYLINE LAND-LIVESTOCK	108	90
WALTER BROS FARM	80	476	*CHRISTI AND BRIAN SCHERBER	108	87