



BRAD PFAFF **STATE SENATOR**

June Dairy Month: A Month to Recognize Wisconsin's Rich Dairy Heritage

By: Senator Brad Pfaff

I'll admit it — I'm a big fan of milk and cheese. Whether it's white, chocolate, or strawberry milk, I enjoy it all. And when it comes to cheese, melted, deep-fried, served on a cracker or a pizza, I eat plenty of it. And I know I'm not the only one, either. Many Americans share my love for dairy and regularly enjoy countless healthy and nutritious dairy products.

So, I'm sure it's no surprise that, as a farm boy myself, June Dairy Month is one of my favorite times of the year. In June, we get to celebrate all things dairy and recognize the hard work and contributions of Wisconsin's dairy farmers and workers.

I am proud that Wisconsin is a national leader in dairy production, ranking first nationally in cheese production and second in milk production. Our state is home to more than 5,000 dairy farms, and the dairy industry contributes over \$50 billion to Wisconsin's economy annually. Thanks to better nutrition, the milk produced has become healthier and even more nutritious, and thanks to genetics, cows have become more productive and give more milk.

But still today, too many farmers experience immense stress, competing with the consolidation of farms, navigating financial challenges, and often wondering whether they'll lose the family farm they've lived on for years and worked for generations. Despite all of this, Wisconsin farmers remain resilient and innovative, maintaining a spot on the nation's dairy leaderboard.

Because of the grit of Wisconsin farmers, our state has earned the title of America's Dairyland. More than just a slogan that can be seen on our license plates, Wisconsin's reputation tells a story – a story of honest, resilient people who through hard work, diligence, patience, and faith, get up early 365 days a year, including Christmas, to do what they love and produce high-quality, delicious, and nutritious food for all of us to enjoy at a reasonable price.

As a State Senator, I have never forgotten where I came from, the dairy farm. The farm taught me the values that I hold dear: hard work, dedication, and resilience. As a child, the farm paid our family's bills, put food on our table, paid for the braces on my teeth, bought my first car, and allowed me to earn enough money to pay for college.

I will always fight for agriculture and family farmers. We need to continue to support the dairy economy, further build out our supply chains, invest in greater research and development for new dairy products, provide incentives to encourage the next generation of farmers to remain in agriculture, and open new markets for Wisconsin products so consumers worldwide can enjoy the award-winning dairy products that all of us here enjoy every day. Happy June Dairy Month!