



AFAN IN ACTION

February 2024 Update

This is the time of year when we spend a lot of time on the road. Coast to Coast more or less. The month kicked off with a meeting in Phoenix, then onto Atlanta, and then wrapping up in California. There is still more to come and more in-state events but those were the big ones.

The annual Dairy Forum, by the International Dairy Foods Association, was held in Phoenix this year. This four-day event had over 1,000 representatives from dairy processing companies from around the world present. The event features great speakers and educational sessions, but our focus is on meeting with high-level executives from strategic dairy companies. We attended this with a representative from the NE Dept of Economic Development. This was one of the best years we've had with people wanting to meet with us. We know we have the natural resources (feed, water, people, open space) to grow the dairy industry, we just need a place to go with the milk. That said, we had great meetings. These things don't happen overnight but at least we have our foot in the door with some prominent companies.

Next, we were on to Atlanta for the International Products and Processing Expo. This amazing event has over 1,200 vendors covering over 630,000 square feet. Truly an amazing sight to behold! This trip is organized by NPPD with participants from Cuming County, York County, North Platte, as well as AFAN. Our goal here is to visit the booths of companies that either are in Nebraska or would align with our existing industry. It is a busy week with a lot of walking but just like IDFA, we put the name Nebraska in a lot of minds.

The last trip was to California for the World Ag Expo. This is like Husker Harvest Days for the fruit, vegetable, and nut industry. There are some fascinating machinery on display. Our focus though is in the dairy building. We have a booth and visit with West Coast dairy farmers about what it is like to dairy in Nebraska. This is another Grow Nebraska Dairy effort with representatives from the NE Dept of Ag and NPPD, as well as supporting representatives from York County and one Nebraska dairy farmer.

During this trip, we hosted the 2nd annual Nebraska Dinner. We invite a select group of dairy farmers to dinner with our team and a contingent of Nebraska Companies that also exhibit at the Expo. This year we had about 20 dairy farmers and families and about 20 individuals from Nebraska. We had some really good conversations and a really insightful Q&A discussion.

When we land a dairy processor we are going to need more dairy farmers and this is

a great way for us to get to know them and find out more about how they operate.

The rest of the month included meetings with County Officials to discuss options for livestock regulations. As an organization, we help producers in a lot of counties, so we see all kinds of regulations, so we are able to share our experiences and how well certain strategies have worked, or not worked. It is a great partnership with the counties and our hope is that it leads to a better system for livestock producers.

We also had a chance to meet with a young farmer who is looking to add livestock to his operation as a way to be able to farm full-time. One option that is "new" is in deep-pit cattle barns. These barns operate differently than a traditional feedyard and have a lot of efficiencies that can allow a person to use this as a piece of the puzzle. There is also a new option for marketing these cattle. There is a new coop called Legacy Beef. This coop will supply beef to Cattlemen's Heritage beef plant and also has a lot of benefits over trying to source and market-fed cattle on your own. If you're interested, let us know and we can fill you in on the basics.

This is also Partnership renewal season so a huge Thank You to all our Partners! We could not do the work we do without your support. Thank you!!!!



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Contact AFAN For More Information

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When you invest in Legacy Beef Co-Op you are getting a share of the Cattlemen's Heritage Beef brand and plant being built in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Save the Date

February

22-23: Women In Ag

27: NSDA Annual Convention

March

6 & 7: AKRS Expo

7: NPZA Annual Meeting

12-13: Nebraska Corn Board Annual Meeting

19-21: Central Plains Dairy Expo

20-21: AKRS Expo

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