Celebrate June Dairy Month!

June Dairy Month is an annual tradition in Wisconsin, taking place since the 1930s. June is a designated time to showcase our dairy industry and celebrate our agriculture legacy and its contributions to the state of Wisconsin.

The prosperity and health of our dairy industry would not be possible without Wisconsin's veterinarians. Dr. Mike Nicholson, WVMA member veterinarian from Evansville Veterinary Service, says his main role on dairy farms is to support the health and well being of the individual animals as well as the herd as a whole.

"Veterinarians are uniquely trained to advise dairy farms on issues involving herd management, preventative health care and acute animal care," states Dr. Nicholson. He also stresses a veterinarian-client relationship is necessary to ensure proper use of medications on the farm.

Dr. Nicholson encourages you to attend June Dairy Month events! June Dairy Month provides people with an opportunity to meet dairy veterinarians and producers. "Wisconsin is America's Dairyland," states Dr. Nicholson. "This is due to the efforts of the state's dairy farmers providing a plentiful supply of dairy products." Attending events will allow you to appreciate first-hand the impressive work these farms and veterinarians do every day!

Local veterinarians and producers are available at events to educate you on all that they do. Below, Dr. Nicholson shares some frequently asked questions.

1. What are the main breeds of dairy cows?
There are seven breeds of dairy cattle. The four most common breeds are the Holstein, Brown Swiss, Jersey and Guernsey. The Ayrshire, Milking Shorthorn, and Red and White Holstein breeds also can be found in Wisconsin.

2. What do dairy cows eat and how much?
Dairy cattle can be fed a variety of grass, hay and silage (fermented, high moisture plant material). Corn and hay silage are commonly fed along with vitamin and mineral supplements. Cows spend most of their day eating or resting in their stalls or on pasture. When full grown, they can eat over 100 pounds of feed daily!

3. How much milk do cows produce?
Cows will typically produce between 6-12 gallons of milk daily, depending on their environment, time of year, and how long its been since she last had a calf.

4. How often are cows milked?
Cows are milked two or three times a day, depending on the producer's preference.

The dairy industry is a huge part of Wisconsin's economy, contributing $26.5 billion annually. Dr. Nicholson is proud to say that Wisconsin leads the nation in sheer number (over 12,800) and diversity of our dairy farms. Our state continues to be world leaders in cheese production and crafting of specialty cheeses. Wisconsin is also a leader in bovine (cow) medicine and research.

To find featured recipes and other events throughout the month of June, visit www.eatwisconsincheese.com . A large part of Wisconsin's June Dairy Month celebration is a Dairy Breakfast hosted by each

county. To find a dairy breakfast location near you,
click here
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This June Dairy Month, show your appreciation to Wisconsin's leading industry – dairy!

What's your favorite dairy product? Check out www.wvma.org to vote!

Tips for Selecting Your Puppy!

Adding a puppy to your family is not as simple as it sounds. It is important to select a puppy that will fit you and your family's needs and lifestyles for the puppy's entire lifetime!

Dr. Jami Quick from Tender Care Animal Hospital, Prairie du Chien, says a crucial part of selecting a puppy is doing as much research as possible before getting a puppy. Speak with your local veterinarian to learn about the different breeds and which one will realistically fit into your lifestyle.

Consider the activity level of puppy, feeding and grooming requirements, exercise/training the puppy will need, and a breed that is good with kids and other pets (depending on your current and future family).

Dr. Quick suggests starting your puppy search at a shelter! Ask local veterinarians and shelters if they have a pet that fits your needs. If you decide to go with a reputable breeder, Dr. Quick suggests seeing the puppy's parents, health history, and disease screening results (if applicable) before taking your puppy home. Contact your veterinarian before you purchase a puppy to see what records should be available to you.

It is important to ask the breeder or shelter about the puppy you are selecting. Dr. Quick recommends keeping these questions in mind when choosing your puppy.

- Has the puppy been examined by a veterinarian? Ask for a copy of the health certificate.

- How many puppies were in this litter? Did they all survive? If not, what was wrong?

- What is the feeding routine for this puppy?

- Has the puppy been dewormed? If so, with what, how much, and when?

- If the puppy is a purebred, request pedigree information and papers.

A common mistake prospective owners make is “I didn’t choose the puppy – it chose me.” Dr. Quick says although it may be difficult not to pick the one that first runs up to you, it is important you select the puppy that ultimately fits your needs. The puppy that first approaches you is not necessarily “choosing” you. The puppy could just be excited, curious, or want to sniff you.

Once you have selected a puppy, he/she should be seen by a veterinarian as soon as possible. This will allow the puppy to get up to date on vaccines and ensure it is healthy and ready for its new home. Be sure to schedule future visits for your new pup. According to Dr. Quick, a monthly visit for the first three months is recommended. A six month check up should be scheduled for spay or neuter. After that, twice a year examinations are a general rule of thumb, but should be discussed with your puppy’s veterinarian.

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