



NEWS RELEASE

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 S Webster, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707
Phone: (608) 266-6790 TDD: (608) 267-6897
dnr.wi.gov www.wisconsin.gov

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CONTACT:

John Shenot, DNR, 608-267-0802
Laurie Fischer, Dairy Business Association, 920-491-9956

SUBJECT:

**Dairy Business Association signs Green Tier Charter with
Department of Natural Resources**

MADISON – The Dairy Business Association (DBA) is helping dairy producers and processors make America’s Dairyland a bit greener by signing the industry’s first charter with the Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR) Green Tier program.

DNR Secretary Matt Frank and association executive director Laurie Fischer signed the charter today in Madison at DBA’s Business Conference. Green Tier is Wisconsin’s innovative program for organizations that voluntarily pledge to go beyond environmental compliance.

“Wisconsin should be proud of DBA’s commitment to helping dairy producers and processors achieve environmental excellence,” DNR Secretary Matt Frank said. “Dairy farms are a cornerstone of Wisconsin’s history and it’s encouraging to know that Wisconsin dairy producers and processors will continue to make exceptional dairy products while pursuing superior environmental performance.”

The charter is a partnership effort between DNR and the Dairy Business Association’s Green Tier Advancement Project. The goal of the Green Tier Charter is to provide opportunities for Wisconsin dairy producers and processors to achieve superior environmental performance by providing resources and support in the development, implementation and auditing of Environmental Management Systems (EMS), an eligibility requirement for participation in Green Tier. DNR was recently awarded a \$275,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to help off-set the initial costs of developing, implementing and auditing EMS’s for prospective Charter participants.

“By leveraging the dairy industry’s commitment to environmental excellence, DBA hopes to work with DNR and the dairy industry to provide additional financial incentives for participating in Green Tier,” DBA Executive Director Laurie Fischer said.

DBA President Jon Vrieze added the charter “paves the way for a new future between DNR, dairy producers and processors.

“Wisconsin has long been the leader on environmental issues and Wisconsin’s dairy industry is an important partner in informing and solving many of the issues Wisconsin faces,” he said. “Participation in Green Tier doesn’t mean simply checking a box; it requires real commitments that will require considerable effort on the part of producers.”

The development of the charter was made possible by the support and contributions of numerous individuals and organizations, including: Kenn Buelow (Holsum Dairy), Karl Klessig (Saxon Homestead Farm), Liz Doornink (Jon-De Farm), John Vrieze (Baldwin Dairy), DNR Runoff Management Program, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and the Wisconsin Agricultural Stewardship Initiative. Grants from the Wisconsin Department of Administration’s Coastal Management Program and the Joyce Foundation were also instrumental to successfully completing this agreement.

Dairy producers and processors who are interested in learning more about the opportunities available to Green Tier participants, or the charter should contact DBA or visit DNR’s Green Tier web page at <http://greentier.wi.gov>.