

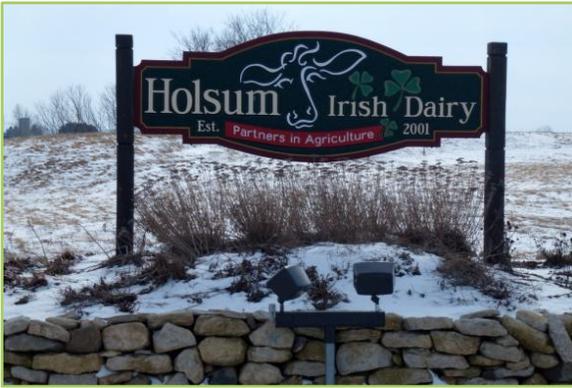


**U.S. Dairy  
Sustainability Awards**  
Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy®

## Holsum Dairies, LLC: *Elanco* Award for Outstanding Dairy Farm Sustainability

During a recent visit to Holsum Dairies manager, Bob Nagel shared how sustainability practices are woven into the farm's foundation.

### Communication with partners is key



Holsum Dairies in Hilbert, Wis., is comprised of two nearby sites, Holsum Irish and Holsum Elm. Managers frequently give tours to local community organizations to promote a greater public understanding of how Holsum Dairies functions.

"We're always going that extra mile to make sure we're up front and well-communicated," Bob Nagel, dairy manager, says. This communication takes place between many local businesses as well, with Holsum Dairies contributing \$24 million annually for plumbing/electric, hauling, equipment repair, agricultural work, etc., within Calumet County

### Green Tier recognition since 2004



Holsum Dairies has been a valued member of Wisconsin's nationally recognized environmental leadership program Green Tier since its 2004 inception. Partner Kenn Buelow worked closely with Green Tier in choosing a site and designing the dairy operation, also developing a comprehensive Environmental Management System. Today Nagel and Buelow work with their third manager, Kirk Vander Dusse, to maintain the profitable and positive dairy.

The Green Tier designed Holsum Dairies provides a happy home for cows, crops and people. Holsum Dairies is saving big: \$64,000 a year in fuel usage costs, 1,000 gallons of water a day in the washing parlor and \$95,000 a year in electrical reductions. The power of thorough planning and positive relationships has been paramount for the dairy. According to Nagel, "Relationships can either be win-win or lose-lose, but if any of us are in a win-lose relationship for very long, we're going to give up." Nagel and Holsum Dairies, LLC, are proving that when a community is taken care of, win-win is not just a goal. It's a reality.



## Bringing the right people together to do the job



Seventy-five percent of the dairy workers live within 10 miles of the dairy. Nagel attributes the farm's success to creating the right culture and bringing the right people together. "Nobody ever shows up for work today and says 'I'm gonna do a bad job.'...My job as a manager is to figure out their strengths and weaknesses and position them so that they win and feel good about it," Nagel says.

Holsum Dairies offer a competitive wage, good health insurance, paid vacation time and a company-funded retirement plan.

This respect goes both ways. Employees often extend courtesies to management; not too long ago, two employees provided nine months' notice before leaving. This courtesy is made more extraordinary when the same departing employee supplies a reliable replacement candidate when he or she goes.

## Attentive and individualized animal care



A few years ago, a Holsum breeder befriended one of their 4,000 cows. He began feeding her chocolate cookies after discovering she had a sweet tooth. She got spoiled — so much so that for a month after the breeder left Holsum, Nagel had to keep a pack of Oreos adjacent to the milking parlor. "She wouldn't leave the parlor until she had been fed her cookie," Nagel says.

This story speaks to Holsum Dairies' attentive, individualized animal care. According to Nagel, "We're here to serve the animals and do the best care we can for them. As a result, the rest of the business flows through that."

Nagel also credits the cows' natural recycling abilities for the dairies' successful savings. Cows consume what would otherwise be landfill waste—corn gluten, cotton seed, hominy, corn kernel, malt sprouts, wet brewers' grain. "We can't digest it, but the cows can — and it helps them produce high-quality milk for you and me," Nagel says.

To learn more about Holsum Dairies' sustainability efforts, visit [USDairy.com/Sustainability/Awards](http://USDairy.com/Sustainability/Awards).