

2015
Green Tier Annual Report
Crave Brothers Farms



February 2016

Executive Summary

Crave Brothers Farm, LLC (CBF) is the name of our dairy farm. It is located in Dodge County near Waterloo WI. Our farm is staffed around the clock. An expansion was completed in the late fall of 2015. The milking herd has now grown to over 1700 lactating cows. In 2015 we produced approximately 45 million pounds of milk. The milk piped directly to our adjacent cheese factory (Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, LLC.) is used to make a variety of premium cheeses that are sold locally and regionally. Approximately 50 percent of milk production exceeds our cheese making capacity. The additional milk is routinely shipped via truck to other processors.

The expansion to the farm also added an additional 2000 acres to our Nutrient Management Plan. To feed and care for our cows and young stock we now manage over 4500 acres of alfalfa, corn for silage and grain, soybeans, wheat and pasture. Throughout this expansion we continued to utilize various methods, practices and procedures which allow us to be good stewards of the land and raise our crops in an environmentally responsible manner.

A short history of our farm can be found in our 2013 annual report. Needless to say, we continue to evolve in our stewardship of the land as we implement our succession plan. As of the first of the year we have added three additional partners to the Owner/Management team. Addition of these partners completes the first step in the implementation of our succession plan. The new managers continue the responsibility to successfully operate the farm daily while providing for a long term commitment to land and people.

Below is a list of the Targets for 2016. As the economy, technology and regulations change, our targets are adjusted to meet those challenges. However; the list of Targets are based upon our current significant aspects in accordance with our policy and process for continual improvement.

1. We will work to continue to progress our 2015 goal of improving storm water separation.
2. We will increase our agricultural plastics recycling goal from 40% recycled in 2015 to 100% of our Ag Plastics to be recycled in 2016. We will continue our assistance with the state wide Ag. Plastic Recycling Initiative.
3. We will research improvements areas now possible in conjunction with our new co-ownership of the on farm digesters.
4. Continue to participate in activities that promote environmental stewardship within the dairy farm industry.
5. Continue Grazing field improvements efforts to provide high quality fields for our grass fed cows.

Internal Audit of the EMS

CBF uses an EMS calendar to continually review elements and practices of the EMS. In addition we utilize a competent third party to assist and assure the review is complete. Third party assistance aids in understanding our options to manage the EMS. An internal EMS audit was performed in 2015. All sections of the EMS documentation were reviewed and activities compared to the documented procedures. In addition, quarterly photo documentation reviews are completed to document activities taking place on the farm for preventive measures. No major or minor non-conformities were observed.

Environmental Performance 2015

- The Crave Family and employees acted as researchers, discovering and embracing our options. Discussions with both the private and public sectors, aided us in developing the most energy efficient systems.
- In 2015, with the assistance of external resources, we reviewed, updated and expanded our regulatory registry. We list applicable and potential regulations and track our performance compared to the requirements.
- In 2015 improvements to the storm water drainage system were completed. Subsequently, documentation of our process for the elimination of Lechate through best practices and good housekeeping associated with harvesting and feeding practices was completed. Follow through of these documented practices:
 - Allows us to sustain high feed quality and near 100% crop utilization
 - Prevent the need for large areas of impermeable concrete conveyances.
 - Prevent the need for valuable crop area to be used for leachate treatment.
 - Ability to use storm water from the feed storage area for necessary farm cleaning. This prevents well water use for this purpose and saves an estimated more than 50,000 gallons annually.
- We continued our efforts from 2014 to upgrade motors and pumps to more energy efficient models for potable water system. During the farm expansion a substantial investment in time and money was made to improve the pipes and circulation system. These improvements completed the first week of December 2015 continue our water recycling efforts and allow us to recycle an average of 40,000 gallons daily.
- Re-seeded 15 acers of farmland after removing invasive species and noxious weeds to improve herd health and quality of grazing fields.
- Even though we just initiated our Agriculture Plastic Recycling initiative in 2015, we have already recycled an estimated 4,000 pounds of plastic
- This year we spoke again at the National Dairy Conference as well as the Alltech Conference. Our presentations revolved around emphasizing management's role in creating a culture of environmental stewardship in our dairy operations as well as a discussion of our participation in the Green Tier Program. About 500 attendees were at these events.

- We provided water conservation, energy conservation and land stewardship talks to about 185 4-H students on our farm. In addition we provided a tour and exchange of information about environmentally beneficial farming practices to roughly 250 visitors, again, in 2015.

Social-Communication

Below is a list of the different avenues we take to achieve our goal of transparency and ultimately social sustainability.

Replication

We have created a replicable EMS that works with our daily business practices. We do this because we strive to be good stewards of the environment. We want to be transparent for the dairy industry. If others in the dairy industry are looking to develop and implement an EMS we are happy to share our experiences with them.

WDNR Relationship

Crave Brothers Farm has worked with several divisions and departments within WDNR. We are working with our single point, Tom Nowakowski, at WDNR to:

- Inform the WDNR of our processes and activities through required reporting and voluntary reporting.
- Identify and work with various WDNR specialists on specific project areas.

We feel that the collaboration and cooperation with our SPOC (single point of contact) has been excellent.

Closing summary

We reported in 2014 that Ag Star data has shown that the digester system operating on our farm to be perhaps the most efficient in the country. Through the change in ownership in 2015 we maintained equivalent performance to the numbers seen in 2014.

- We are excited for our new partnership with Clean Fuel Partners. We are both working towards improving our efficiency numbers, our generation of additional electricity and investing in a new fiber recovery system to generate fibers that can be utilized throughout the farm.
- We are about 90% complete but continue to improve the pasture quality for heifers and dry cows. This provides animal exercise and weight management which improves the overall health of the herd.
- The value of conversations we initiate and comments we seek from our many visitors provides them a window into our sustainability practices and a blend of modern farming including the usage of pastures. The feedback comments, letter and cards from our many visitors provide the farm a window into the perceptions, amazements and concerns of our interested parties. Through these feedback loops we see that our continual improvements, best practices and good housekeeping initiatives have not gone unnoticed and fuel our farms culture to continue to be environmental stewards.