



CHAPTER  
1

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# The show we got... something for everyone

Nearly fifty years ago, the dairy industry needed a show.  
World Dairy Expo is the show we got.

by JIM LEUENBERGER AND STEVE LARSON

Expo has survived and thrived. By any measure, the show continues to grow, evolve, and improve.

- Attendance of more than 77,000 in 2014 set a modern-day record. That included more than 3,200 registered international visitors from ninety-four countries.
- The 2014 show had 835 commercial exhibitors from twenty-four countries, including forty-four states and six Canadian provinces. Expo wishes it had space available for the hundreds of well-qualified firms on the waiting list of exhibitors.
- Nearly 1,750 cattle exhibitors from thirty-seven states and eleven Canadian provinces brought more than 2,300 head of cattle to the show in 2014. Cattle buyers could choose from 139 head sold at the five breed sales that year.
- Expo is the twenty-seventh largest trade show of any kind held in the United States, based on square footage, and is known internationally for its size and its dairy-production focus.
- The show attracted 296 members of the media from thirteen countries in 2014. There is a strong media presence from Europe, Mexico, and Canada, as well as the U.S., with more recent interest from China, Australia, and Africa.

Expo has become a melting pot of people and businesses from all over the world. It's like the dairy industry's biggest family reunion and largest business conference all rolled into one.

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PREVIOUS PAGE: The world's finest dairy cattle remain the heart and soul of Expo. And what says World Dairy Expo more than the often-photographed globe? It was erected for the first show in 1967 using two silo roofs and a motor and axle from a ten-ton truck.

## IMPACT FAR AND WIDE

Each year, people in the dairy industry around the world look forward to World Dairy Expo. It is safe to say that literally everyone in the hospitality and retail trade in and around Madison also anticipates the show. They are well aware of when Expo is coming each year and make plans to accommodate the influx of people from far and wide. The economic impact Expo has in the Madison/Dane County area (hotels, restaurants, souvenirs, etc.) is estimated to be well in excess of \$30 million. For example, in 2012, the direct and indirect impact on the Dane County and regional economy was measured at \$50,281,494.

However, an even greater economic impact comes from the business-to-business deals and relationships formed during, before, and after the show. Companies that exhibit cement relationships with current customers and cultivate new clientele. Dealers and exporters take on new product lines. Bus loads of dairy farmers from the U.S. and other countries crisscross the upper Midwest looking at dairy facilities, visiting A.I. organizations, and stopping at dairy farms to see some of our best dairy herds.

Scores of people deserve credit for being among the driving forces that launched what was the World Food and Agricultural Foundation in 1967. Fort Atkinson Holstein breeder Allen Hetts was probably the person most responsible for bringing the show to Madison because of his energy, contacts, and unwavering determination. The state of Wisconsin pledged \$50,000 to help get the show started, and Governor Warren Knowles urged all dairy breed organizations to hold their national or regional shows in Madison.

The show's first executive director was Bruce Walter from Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, who served in 1967 and 1968. The cattle show was held in the Arena Building and nearly 1,200 head were shown.

But there was one problem . . . no one came to see the show. It was ten days long, as was the second show in 1968. Several ideas were tried to increase attendance, but they weren't successful, and the World Food and Agricultural Foundation continued to pile up debt.

## THE SHOW'S REBIRTH

In 1969, there was a transition in the show. Mr. Bev Craig, an executive with Oscar Mayer in Madison, was hired as executive director. During his eleven years in that position, he focused on attracting more commercial exhibits and reduced the show to five days to make it more practical for both commercial and cattle exhibitors.

Also in 1969, the cattle show was held in the new Coliseum for the first time, and the opening night banquet hosted 2,000 people. The Coliseum had been completed in 1967, and it was a Madison-area feature that helped attract the show to Wisconsin.

All was in place, except the money. The show remained on shaky ground financially. In 1971, industry leaders from across the U.S. met in Madison to discuss solutions, one of which was the need for a major trade show for dairy farmers. A broad array of organizations pulled together to keep the show alive. Associated Milk Producers, Inc., headquartered in San Antonio at the time, was a major investor. AMPI corporate board member Greg Blaska was elected president, a post he held for thirty-one years.

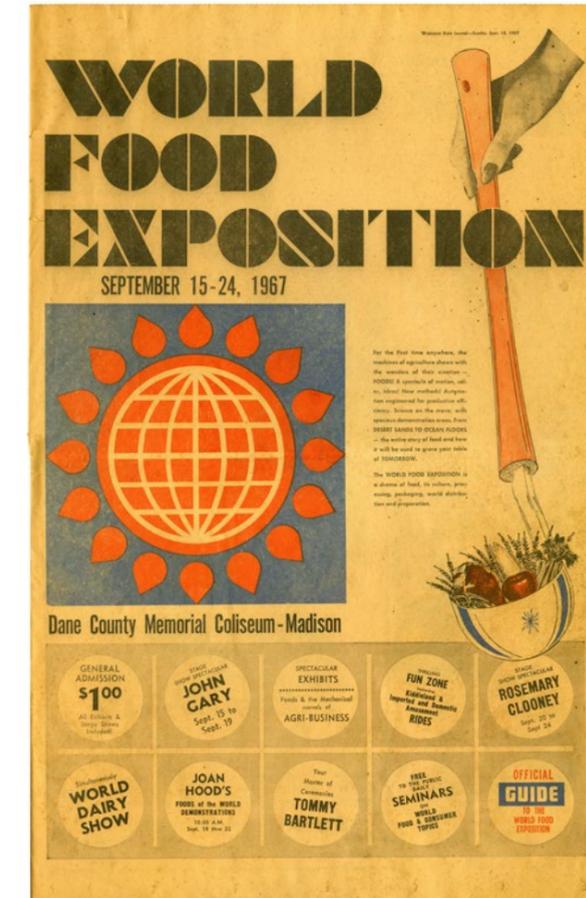
## MET INDUSTRY'S NEEDS

Meanwhile, the show was gaining momentum and respect throughout the dairy world. Nineteen seventy-one may well have been the year when World Dairy Expo built a foundation and a blueprint for what would make it successful in the decades ahead. It was the first Expo at which farm

management workshops were held. The first Expo where recognition awards were presented. National Dairy Shrine moved its festivities to Madison after being established at Waterloo. To attract attendance, Expo began to focus on craft and food exhibits for dairy farm women. Through the years, many of these attractions have grown and evolved and brought in exhibitors and attendees.

To assist with its business organization, World Dairy Expo became a 501(c)3, not-for-profit corporation in December 1993. As another source of income, on March 1, 1995, World Dairy Expo took on management of the Dane County Fair, held on the same grounds. After three years of managing that fair, and with Expo growing, WDE Management, Inc., (WDEM) was established in November 1998 as a for-profit subsidiary of World Dairy Expo.

In addition to providing needed industry services, WDEM provides revenue that helps World Dairy Expo employ a full-time staff of competent, year-round employees. The WDEM board consists of five members, two from the Expo board and three others from within the dairy industry.



Entities currently managed by WDEM include: The Dane County Fair (since March 1, 1995), Purebred Dairy Cattle Association (since March 5, 1999), North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge (since April 1, 2004), and Wisconsin Rural Opportunities Foundation (since July 1, 2005).

Several other management roles were tried but were discontinued. They include: World Beef Expo, which was managed from 1993 to 1995 and then moved to Wisconsin State Fair Park, and the Greater Madison Golf Show, established in 2001 and sold to Royal Publications in November 2004.

## SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

World Dairy Expo is the largest dairy-focused trade show in the world. Major industry-related companies exhibit there every year, sometimes in more than one location, an indication of the importance they place on having a presence at the show. It's where the world's dairy industry meets every fall. Designed for dairy producers and industry partners, it is a showcase for elite dairy cattle, cutting-edge research, and modern technology.

This tailor-made building became the headquarters of World Dairy Expo in 2005. Located at 3310 Latham Drive, Madison, it has office space, a conference room, and enough warehouse area to store most of the show's materials. Before 2005, the staff had been housed at six different Madison locations.



When you come to World Dairy Expo, you can view the more than 850 commercial exhibits or watch the Virtual Farm Tours or Expo Seminars to gather ideas for your home operation. You can relax in the Coliseum to watch the dairy cattle shows or participate in the lively bidding at one of the breed sales.

World Dairy Expo is also where producers can compete in the World Forage Analysis Superbowl or see the results of the World Dairy Expo Championship Dairy Products contest. For the youth, there are fitting competitions, showmanship contests, the National 4-H, Post-Secondary, or Intercollegiate Dairy Cattle Judging contests, along with Central National FFA events.

Or you can have a grilled cheese sandwich or a double-

dip ice cream cone. In other words, World Dairy Expo offers something for everyone.

*We hope you enjoy this look at the colorful history of World Dairy Expo.*

The world-class show stretches the limits of the Alliant Energy Center campus. In 2014, the New Holland Pavilions replaced the livestock barns in the center. Veterans Memorial Coliseum, at upper left, completed in 1967 was instrumental in attracting the show to the Madison area.





CHAPTER  
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They needed  
a show... *indeed!*

“Necessity is the mother of invention,” they say.  
And, in the mid-1960s, the U.S. dairy industry  
needed a cattle show. Here’s why.

by STEVE LARSON AND COREY GEIGER

The National Dairy Cattle Congress at Waterloo, Iowa, became the place to be for the best of the best of dairy breeds and a great gathering place for the industry. After months of travel to state shows and state fairs, often by railroad boxcar, owners selected only their best for the annual showdown on the banks of the Cedar River.

To its good fortune, Cattle Congress enjoyed what might be called the Golden Era of the purebred dairy cattle business. Many so-called farmer-breeders showed there successfully for years. But perhaps most memorable were the so-called estate herds. Those picture-perfect showstrings were the pride and joy of owners of well-known brands such as Pabst and Schlitz Brewing, Maytag appliances, DuPont chemicals, Curtiss Candy, Dayton-Hudson department stores, Proctor and Gamble, and dozens of others.

There very well may never be another World Dairy Expo.

Likely, neither will there be another National Dairy Cattle Congress. Known across the land and still as “Waterloo,” the northeast-Iowa show founded more than 100 years ago was Expo’s forerunner, if there was one.

PREVIOUS PAGE: The romance of the showing was in its heyday during the glory years of National Dairy Cattle Congress, Waterloo, Iowa, the forerunner of World Dairy Expo. Until the mid-1960s, Cattle Congress was the main gathering place of the dairy industry. Changing priorities at the Waterloo event created the need for a new show place for dairy cattle and equipment.



## WATERLOO’S LEGACY

The Iowa State Dairy Association first organized what was called Dairy Cattle Congress in 1910 in an effort to stimulate attendance at its annual meetings. The experiment was an immediate success. Lured by the prospect of seeing elite show

cattle on display, more than 40,000 people attended that first year. Breeders exhibited more than 300 head.

By the early 1920s, annual attendance topped 100,000. In 1921, the show boasted having \$1 million worth of farm and farm home equipment on display in 85,000 square feet of exhibit area. By comparison, the main section in the Exhibition Hall at World Dairy Expo provides 100,000 square feet of exhibit area.

In 1949, the word “National” was added to the official name of the show. That timing was ironic because that year also

marked the beginning of new directions for Waterloo. Concerned about the future of the dairy show, the show’s management wanted to broaden the event’s focus.

Dairy cattle and equipment no longer would be the big draw. Posters promoting the 1949 show touted competitions for horses, poultry and waterfowl, and the Midwest Rabbit Show. There also were special exhibits for alfalfa, corn, and soybean growers.

## WHO’S THE AUDIENCE?

Thus began what might be called Waterloo’s identity crisis. What kind of a show did it want to be? Whom did it want to attract? Missteps in answering those questions were the beginning of the end for the historic dairy event. And, ironically, those same questions would challenge early organizers of World Dairy Expo.

Maurice Telleen was manager of the Cattle Congress from 1961 until his retirement in 1972. While he had roots in the dairy industry, Telleen’s heart was with horses. He founded the highly successful *Draft Horse Journal*.

He worried that Cattle Congress was doomed to become a regional dairy cattle show, in part because it had become more and more expensive and impractical to ship show herds to Waterloo by rail. Today’s extensive web of interstate highways was in its infancy.

Indeed, changing economics in the purebred cattle business led more breeders in the East to show at the Eastern States Exposition in Springfield, Massachusetts, and the All-American in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and those in the West to show at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, California, or the Washington State Fairgrounds at Puyallup, Washington. Canadian breeders always had preferred the International Dairy Show in Chicago, Illinois, on the heels of Toronto’s revered Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Ontario, Canada, for which their show herds were in bloom.

Dairy cattle exhibitors did not like what they saw happening. Chief among them was Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, Holstein breeder Allen Hetts. He and his Crescent Beauty Farm Holsteins were Waterloo fixtures. He was admired for his showring success and passion and was highly regarded by exhibitors of all breeds.

Hetts also was well thought of by show management. The Cattle Congress board of directors invited him to sit in on their meetings held at the end of each show, and he became the voice and ears of all dairy cattle exhibitors. Hetts was especially concerned following the 1963 Cattle Congress wrap-up board meeting.

## ALLEN HETTS GIVES A HEADS-UP

Fellow Wisconsin Holstein breeder Ray Kuehl had showed with Allen Hetts for many years. He recalled Hetts saying, “Ray, Waterloo is going to end as we know it.”

Hetts also shared his concerns with good friend and showring rival Gene Nelson of Gray View Farms, Union Grove, Wisconsin. They pulled in others such as Brown Swiss breeder Howard Voegeli, Monticello, Wisconsin, and Ray Brubacher, who was with Hayssen Farms in Wisconsin at the time. The Brubacher

connection proved valuable later as he returned home to his native Ontario and encouraged Canadian breeders to show at what became World Dairy Expo.

Word spread through the barns that there was going to be a meeting that night at the Kit Kat Klub, a nearby Waterloo watering hole. Hetts wanted cattle exhibitors to know that the future of Cattle Congress as a dairy show was threatened. The board wanted more emphasis on Cattle Congress as a horse show.

A couple of clear messages came out of that momentous meeting. Breeders wanted to make sure that there was still a major, national dairy show somewhere . . . and it very likely wasn’t going to be Waterloo, at least, not at Cattle Congress.

Waterloo is  
going to end  
as we know it.

— Allen Hetts

As it turned out, Hetts himself was selected to judge the 1965 National Holstein Show at Waterloo. His son, Roy, who later became a Holstein classifier, recalled, “There was more interest in the future of the show than there was in the placings that year.”

There still was a dairy show at Waterloo in 1966. Only the Milking Shorthorn breed made it a national show. There was no national Holstein show that year. At Cattle Congress, there were seven classes for each breed instead of sixteen as in previous years, and there was no premium money, only ribbons.

So, Waterloo’s rich history as a dairy show ended on a sour note. Nineteen sixty-six marked the end of the National Dairy Cattle Congress as a meaningful dairy show.

### NOW WHAT?

Many of the concerned Waterloo veterans were from Wisconsin. They began to enlist support from others in the Badger State. For example, Allen Hetts sought advice and support from his good friend and herd veterinarian, Lee Allenstein, Whitewater, Wisconsin. “Doc” Allenstein went on to serve as World Dairy Expo’s veterinarian for more than thirty years.

There was talk of several likely locations for a new dairy show. Some breeders investigated the state fairgrounds at St. Paul, Minnesota; Springfield, Illinois; and Columbus, Ohio.

The well-respected veterinarian and Brown Swiss and Guernsey breeder Dr. John L. McKittrick, and his son, John W., of Welcome Inn Farms pulled together support for the Ohio location, site of a mid-October show called the “North American” and longtime home of the National Jersey Show.

One possibility was the International Dairy Show in Chicago that had been struggling. It was held in the thirty-year-old International Amphitheater at the Union Stock Yards four miles east of Chicago’s Loop. Conditions there were not good for either cattle or exhibitors. Also, the show was held in conjunction with the International

Livestock Exhibition and the National 4-H Congress in late November, which often created problems with cold weather.

The North American Invitational Livestock Exhibition (NAILE), or “Louisville” as it is commonly called, in Louisville, Kentucky, did not exist. It was started in 1973 as a replacement of Chicago’s faltering International Livestock Exhibition.

But the case for Madison, Wisconsin’s capital city, was strongest. There was a cadre of hard-working, dedicated breeders with a strong desire to establish a show and who had both political and financial connections. There was the backing of the state, the university, plus scores of dairy-related businesses and organizations.

There was the Coliseum, still Expo’s centerpiece, which was planned for the Dane County Fairgrounds. Commercial exhibitors would set up shop in that unique structure completed in April 1967, which also would provide a venue for entertainers. There would be several barns and some tents to house cattle, which would be shown in the Arena Building, best known for housing ice hockey games.

And there was the vision.

Scores of people, probably hundreds, deserve credit for being among the driving forces that launched what became World Dairy Expo. Many say that without Allen Hetts’ energy, contacts, and dogged determination, the show may not have materialized. Hetts’ son, Roy, a longtime Holstein classifier, then a teen, recalls many meetings about where to have a show and how to get it going.

Around the Crescent Beauty Farm’s kitchen table at various times you might have found Norm Magnussen, sale manager and breeder of Norvic Brown Swiss, Lake Mills, Wisconsin; Howard Voegeli, Brown Swiss breeder, Monticello, Wisconsin; Gene Nelson, Gray View Farm, Union Grove, Wisconsin; Dr. Lee Allenstein, veterinarian, Whitewater, Wisconsin; Art Nesbitt, Nasco, International; Ted Krueger, Curtiss Breeding Service, Cary, Illinois; Norm Rasmussen, secretary of the Wisconsin Holstein Association; and Gene Meyer, Hoard’s Dairyman, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.



*These four ringleaders deserve much credit for conceiving World Dairy Expo and choosing Madison as the location.*

Widely respected in purebred dairy cattle circles, Allen Hetts (second from left) led the effort from his Fort Atkinson-based Crescent Beauty Farm with support from Gene Nelson (left), Gray View Farm. Brown Swiss breeder Howard Voegeli (second from right) enlisted support from the state of Wisconsin. Norm Magnussen, Sr. (right), Brown Swiss breeder and auctioneer, helped arrange an early Expo bank loan.



That group, in turn, reached out to others they knew who could help. Norm Magnussen, for example, was close to Greg Blaska, a Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, dairyman who was active in Associated Milk Producers, Inc., which, at that time, was the nation's largest dairy cooperative. They both knew Wilbur Renk, an area seed corn grower, who also happened to be president of the Bank of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin.

Howard Voegeli was close to Don McDowell, who was Wisconsin's dynamic agricultural secretary at the time. He, in turn, had the ear of Wisconsin Governor Warren Knowles. Soon, the state of Wisconsin pledged in \$50,000 to help launch a show. Plus, Ag Secretary McDowell invited all dairy breed organizations to hold their national or regional shows at Madison.



- Promote dairy and general food shows, and
- Do all things necessary to properly conduct and operate shows and exhibitions as provided for in these purposes.

The name was the World Food and Agricultural Foundation. Wilbur Renk was president; Duane Bowman of Madison's Bowman Dairy was vice president; and Bev Craig (second from left), vice president at Oscar Mayer, the meatpacking firm, was secretary-treasurer. Other members of the executive committee included Eric Lang of Hanley Implement Company, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin; University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture Dean Glenn Pound; Charles Albrecht, Dairy Equipment Company; Henry Reynolds, Madison's mayor and owner of Reynolds Transfer and

Storage; Les Helgeson, a Janesville, Wisconsin, Harvestore dealer; Don McDowell; and Allen Hetts and Norm Magnussen.

Faculty and staff from the University of Wisconsin-Madison provided a core crew to launch the first cattle show under the graces of Glenn Pound, a strong supporter of the state's dairy industry. That brought in, among many others, Jim "Doc" Crowley, state extension dairy specialist, who eventually became the longtime dairy cattle superintendent of World Dairy Expo.

Terry Howard was another extension dairy specialist involved from the early days. He recalls Doc Jim saying, "You will be involved." Howard eventually also served many years as dairy cattle superintendent and became an emeritus director of Expo as did Jim Crowley's son, Jim, Jr.

In early 1966, the foundation's board hired Bruce Walter from Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, as executive director. He had managed

The state's financial support helped, but it was not enough. Show organizers arranged for a \$100,000 loan from the Bank of Sun Prairie in Wisconsin. Recollections differ on exactly how many people signed that note. There is a general consensus that at least Allen Hetts, Gene Nelson, and Norm Magnussen put up their farms as collateral.

A group of breeders, business leaders, and government and university officials met to organize just three days before Christmas in 1965. The new organization adopted this mission:

- Promote international exhibitions and shows of agricultural commodities, dairy cattle, dairy products, and livestock
- Promote within the state of Wisconsin a national dairy cattle show for exhibitors and owners without restrictions as to their residence and geographic origin of the dairy cattle

the Northern Wisconsin State Fair at Chippewa Falls and the New Jersey State Fair before that.

Two all-breed, calf and heifer sales with donated animals and sale management helped cover initial show expenses. Norm Magnussen managed both. In the April 15, 1967, sale, seventy-eight head brought \$21,156 for an average of \$271 head. Several bull studs donated hard-to-find semen for both sales. ABS donated A.I. service, both semen and insemination, for every consignment sold.

To help promote the second sale in 1969, Magnussen got Arbor Rose Farm in Scappoose, Oregon, to donate a Brown Swiss heifer calf that was registered as Arbor Rose Chat Expo. They put the calf in a special crate and shipped it by air to Madison where there was a big media event to publicize the fund-raiser sale and the dairy show.

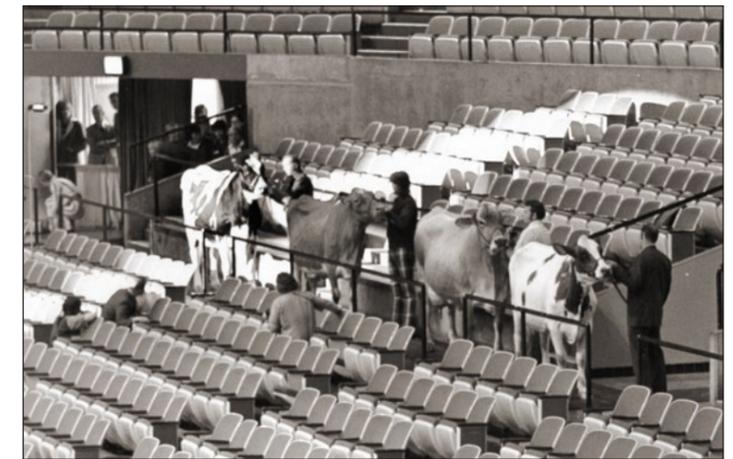
A Madison, Wisconsin, bank purchased the calf, which the Magnussens fed and housed. Norm Magnussen, Jr., recalled how they built a stall for the calf on a snowmobile trailer and carted it around to dairy events around the Upper Midwest that summer to promote the show.

## AN AMBITIOUS START

The first "Expo" spanned ten days, September 15 through 24, 1967. Billed as a World Food Expo, the event boasted ten World Food Forums, two World Youth Forums (Boy Scouts of America was involved), World Home Economics Day, a Cinderella of the Dairy World, and the World Olympics of Dairy Cattle featuring the world's largest dairy trophy.

There were plans to establish a World Dairy Museum and a Dairy Shrine Chamber. Since it's founding in 1949, National Dairy Shrine had met in a remodeled house near the Cattle Congress grounds at Waterloo.

Dignitaries flocked to the 1967 show. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman attended as did Lady Bird Johnson, the nation's First Lady. Of course, Wisconsin Governor Warren Knowles attended.



A spotlighted parade of Grand Champions highlighted World Dairy Expo banquets in the early years. Those festivities attracted as many as 2,000 diners and featured nationally known speakers.



There was a huge dance with music from Green County's Robbie Schneider, a close friend of Brown Swiss breeder Howard Voegeli. There was a tractor pull. There was a banquet for 2,000 people on the floor of the Coliseum.

Several show herds arrived at Madison by train. Roy Hetts recalls there was a railway stop behind where the Sheraton Hotel is now, across John Nolen Drive from the Expo grounds. Showstring crews and volunteers walked the cattle about a half of a mile to the barns and tents used at that time. Some cattle were flown into Madison's airport and trucked over to the grounds.

The cattle show was held in the Arena Building. Entries totaled 1,433, and 1,182 head passed through the ring. There were 465 Holsteins, 257 Milking Shorthorns, 168 Brown Swiss, 112 Jerseys, 91 Guernseys, and 89 Ayrshires.

A dramatic presentation of show winners added glamour to early Expo banquets. Spotlights in the darkened Coliseum, the Grand Champion cow of each breed, one by one, was paraded majestically on the upper concourse walkways above the banquet guests.

The show featured just about everything... except revenue. Few people were drawn to the food forums and other activities. Early Expo organizer R. Dale Jones joked, "Two people came... one to see the cows and one to square dance."

One thing became clear. Other sources of income were going to be needed, be it from commercial exhibits, sponsorships, government support, or gate receipts. Attracting commercial exhibitors and sponsorships was going to be a tough sell. After all, the show was a complete unknown.

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Some showstrings arrived by air in the early days, adding a dash of style and excitement. Some herds also arrived by railroad boxcar, and were unloaded at a siding behind what is the now the Sheraton Hotel. Farm crews and volunteers led cattle across John Nolen Drive to the Expo grounds.

## ANOTHER TACTIC TRIED

Featuring country music and rock headliners had become a rich revenue source for state and county fairs. That was the strategy Bruce Walters and his team chose next. They visualized folks from Madison and surrounding communities coming for the food exhibits and staying for the entertainment. And when it came to booking performers, they aimed high.

The second Expo was billed as an All-Star Country Western Spectacular. It, too, was called a World Food Expo, and it also stretched over ten days—October 4 through 13, 1968.

The entertainment headliners included nationally known performers The Cowsills, Buck Owens and the Buckeroos of Hee Haw television fame, Dolly Parton and Porter Wagoner, and Bobby Vinton. Unfortunately, gate receipts didn't begin to cover the costs of the performers and other show expenses. The foundation piled up debt.



## FINDING A FORMAT

The year 1969 marked the beginning of a transition for Expo. Held over just five days, October 3 through 8, the show began to look more like the Expos of the future.

It was called the World Dairy Expo and Mid-America Festival of Food and Fun. Bev Craig, the Oscar Mayer executive who had been

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Cattle were shown in the Arena Building for the first two years, as shown above. Trade show booths filled the Coliseum floor and concourses. Moving to the air-conditioned Coliseum with its cushioned seats and great sound system in 1969 helped Expo develop into North America's premier dairy cattle show.

the foundation's secretary-treasurer, became executive director, a position he held for eleven years.

Cattle shows took place in the Coliseum for the first time. The Expo banquet attracted 2,000 people and featured U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Clifford Hardin as speaker.

On the bright side, the show was gaining respect in the dairy world. In 1970, the International Dairy Show, formerly held in Chicago, merged into the Expo Foundation. With it came the Sidney Wanzer Memorial Trophy, which was awarded to Expo's Supreme Champion until 2002.

The intercollegiate and 4-H dairy cattle judging contests that had been held at the Chicago's International Dairy Show also moved to World Dairy Expo in 1970. Those contests became designated as the National Intercollegiate and National 4-H Dairy Cattle Judging Contests in 1977.

Also in 1970, the National 4-H Dairy Conference was held in Madison during Expo for the first time. That event gave those select youth exposure to state-of-the-art dairy technology and top quality cattle. It had been held in Chicago as part of the National 4-H Conference and International Dairy Show.

The five-day format continued in 1970. Dairy farmers received free admission tickets from their dairy cooperatives and other milk buyers to encourage attendance. There were two sixteen-head pens of Holstein and Brown Swiss steers at the show to stimulate interest in dairy beef.

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Entertainment such as square dancers and polka fests attracted many people to early Expos, shown right. However, these events did not fit the long-range mission of the show.





The Exhibition Hall, added to the grounds in 1995, really put Expo's trade show on the map. Enabling hundreds of exhibitors to move out of tents into this state-of-the-art facility added a more professional, business-like aura to the event. It also provided room for more trade participants, which helped Expo's long-range financial stability.

Everything seemed to be in place, except the money.

Disappointing gate receipts and debts incurred from booking big-name entertainment continued to leave Expo on shaky ground financially.

On May 5, 1971, leaders representing a variety of dairy interests from across the United States met in Madison to discuss the need for a major trade show for dairy farmers. Following that meeting, many businesses and organizations in the industry dug into their pockets and pulled together to keep the fledgling show—and vision—alive.

Those leaders formed a new corporation and purchased the assets of World Food Agricultural Foundation's World Dairy Expo. The common stock corporation took the name World Dairy Expo, Inc.

### AND EXPO, AS WE KNOW IT TODAY, WAS BORN.

Associated Milk Producers, Inc., (AMPI) based in San Antonio, Texas, at the time was a strong proponent of the show, and it did things in a big way. With 45,000 members resulting from the mergers of twenty-eight co-ops, AMPI had muscle and money.

The giant co-op purchased nearly half of the shares sold and voted in Greg Blaska, an AMPI corporate board member, as president of the Expo board. He served in that capacity for thirty-one years.

Other initial investors included a group called the Purebred Breeders of World Dairy Expo, which represented breeders who had donated animals for fund-raising sales; Dairyman, Inc., a Louisville, Kentucky-based dairy co-op; Mid-American Dairymen, Inc., a Springfield, Missouri-based dairy co-op; Tri-State Breeders Cooperative (now Accelerated Genetics); American Breeders Service; Dairy Equipment Company (now Bou-Matic); Nasco International; Curtiss Breeding Service; and the National Milk Producers Federation.

Over the next eight years, more than twenty additional private and cooperative businesses, federations, and organizations purchased stock. In total, nearly fifty entities owned shares of World Dairy Expo.

Today, most seats on Expo's board of directors are still based on the original investments that businesses and organizations made. There are thirty-six people on the Expo board. Of these, twenty-five are appointed by past Expo investors, seven are elected at-large, three represent the cattle superintendent and the commercial and cattle exhibitors, and two ex-officio directors represent the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the state's agriculture department.

Besides marketing their milk, AMPI sold some members milking equipment, cleaners and sanitizers, and other dairy supplies. John Butterbrodt, Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, who was national president of AMPI in 1971, recalled how the co-op put pressure on companies the co-op dealt with to exhibit at Expo. If they wanted to continue doing business with AMPI, it would be "appreciated" if they would be a commercial exhibitor at World Dairy Expo.

This "influence" helped bolster the number of commercial exhibitors in those early years. (It was the North Central Region of the former AMPI that blossomed into the Minnesota-based AMPI of today.)

### FIFTH-YEAR FIRSTS

Nineteen seventy-one was a year of firsts for the show. It was the first year of what were called farm management workshops. The topics were manure management, raising dairy beef, and mastitis prevention and control. Educational seminars remain an important and popular part of World Dairy Expo.

That year also was the start of Expo's prestigious recognition programs. John Moser, a Kentucky dairy farmer who was head of Dairymen, Inc., a Louisville-based dairy co-op, and David Parr, an executive with AMPI, received "Man of the Year" awards.

National Dairy Shrine held its annual meeting and recognition banquet at World Dairy Expo for the first time in 1971. And Expo partnered with Milwaukee-based *Farm Wife News* on craft and food exhibits and demonstrations for the first time to attract dairy farm women.

Due to incalculable support of all kinds—from individuals, organizations, agencies, and companies—the show made it through its first five years.

Despite its early missteps, Expo

survived and thrived by focusing on its core mission: To serve as a forum for dairy producers, companies, organizations, and other dairy enthusiasts to come together to compete and to exchange ideas, knowledge, technology, and commerce.

To serve as a forum for dairy producers, companies, organizations and other dairy enthusiasts to come together to compete and to exchange ideas, knowledge, technology, and commerce.

— World Dairy Expo Core Mission