

# Dairy Strong speakers address challenges in dairy industry, offer insights

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Dairy Strong Published 2:36 p.m. CT Dec. 28, 2018



(Photo: Patrick Flood Photography)

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One of the Midwest's premiere conferences for the dairy community will be held Jan. 23 and 24 at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison, Wis.

Dairy Strong 2019 will bring together more than 700 farmers, corporate professionals and government and university representatives to explore the future of an integral part of the culture and economy of Wisconsin and the nation.

The conference will include a dynamic discussion about the changing landscape of export markets and the role of agricultural commodities in trade negotiations. Gregg Doud serves as the chief agricultural negotiator, in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.



Kent Schmidt (Photo: JAMES SCHNEPFF)

Ken Schmidt, the former director of communications for Harley-Davidson and now a highly sought-after communications consultant, will be a featured speaker. Schmidt played an active role at Harley-Davidson in one of the most celebrated turnarounds in corporate history. He will talk about how to improve competitiveness and reach out to new customers in completely non-traditional ways, which is a timely discussion for the dairy community. Schmidt was a featured speaker at the first Dairy Strong conference in 2015.

Peter Zeihan (Photo: Dairy Strong)

Famed geopolitical strategist Peter Zeihan will serve as the economics keynote and closing speaker. Zeihan's worldview marries the realities of geography and populations to a deep understanding of how global politics impact markets and economic trends.



A keynote by sports agency trailblazer Molly Fletcher will kick off the conference. As one of the top agents, she has represented sport's biggest names, including Hall of Fame pitcher John Smoltz, PGA TOUR golfer Matt Kuchar, broadcaster Erin Andrews, and basketball coaches Tom Izzo and Doc Rivers.

Molly Fletcher (Photo: Dairy Strong)

While Fletcher negotiated more than \$500 million in contracts and built lasting relationships, she also observed and adopted the traits of those at the top of their game. She will draw parallels to the dairy community by identifying the traits that allow successful leaders to lean

in to challenging times, emerging better on the other side.

Newly elected Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers has been invited to deliver the state legislative keynote at 9 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 24.

In addition to keynotes, the event will feature track sessions and shorter presentations on the Innovation Stage, presented by CWAS Global, located in the trade show area. Topics range from risk management to advocating for dairy on social media and breakthroughs in dairy nutrition.

New this year is the Wisconsin wine and cheese tasting and pairing stage, presented by HUB International, featuring experts from Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin for cheese education, pairing ideas, fun facts and more.



## Trade negotiations

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Dairy farmers, along with other commodities, are desperate to make sense of the challenges and opportunities that lie in global markets. We know that trade is a critical solution to this prolonged period of low prices.



The Larson Acres team came out to celebrate during Dairy Strong in 2018. (Photo: Patrick Flood Photography)

As farmers, we often focus on what needs doing today, but it's never been more critical to understand and advocate for trade and global markets. With this in mind, the chief agriculture negotiator for the office responsible for developing and coordinating U.S. international trade, commodity and direct investment policy, and overseeing negotiations with other countries will discuss current trade negotiations and future goals. This presentation will take place from 10-11 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 24.

Leading the discussion will be Gregg Doud, from the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. Together with 30 key appointed officials, Doud supervises trade negotiations, monitors trade disputes, enforces laws and keeps a constant flow of communication with Congress, industry, nongovernmental organizations and the public on U.S. trade policy.

Doud will call on his first-hand experience with recent trade negotiations, and audience members will have the opportunity to ask pointed questions. The session is open to all registered attendees of Dairy Strong and will be available to view on YouTube after the event via [dairystrong.org](http://dairystrong.org).

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## Track sessions

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### **Track 1: Consumer Trends**

"Research roundup: Understanding our consumers", presented by Hannah Thompson-Weeman, Animal Agriculture Alliance. Sponsored by Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative.

"Consumers are driving change in today's food culture", presented by Madlyn Daley, Dairy Management Inc. and Helen Lundell, the Hartman Group. Sponsored by Quality Liquid Feeds.

### **Track 2: Dairy Technology**

"Revealing the benefits of precision technology on your dairy", presented by Dr. Jeffrey Bewley, Alltech. Sponsored by Alltech. "Results of a bedding dryer; Healthier cows with dryer bedding", presented by Lee Kinnard, Kinnard Farms and Rob Plank, McLanahan. Sponsored by McLanahan.

### **Track 3: Business Development**

"Best approaches to managing risk and improving dairy business performance". Sponsored by K·Coe Isom.

Featuring: Liz Griffith, Tuls Dairies, Avalon, Wis.

Dan Rice, Prairieland Dairy, LLC, Firth, Neb.

Doug Grotegut, Grotegut Dairy Farm, LLC, Newton, Wis.

"Value-added dairy: On-farm processing opportunities, challenges and insights". Sponsored by Compeer Financial.

Featuring: James Baerwolf, Sassy Cow Creamery; Columbus, Wis.

Mark Crave, Crave Brothers Farm, LLC; Waterloo, Wis.

Jerry Jennissen, Jer-Lindy Farms/Redhead Creamery; Brooten, Minn.



Dairy Strong logo (Photo: Dairy Strong)

## Innovation stage

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The Innovation Stage, presented by CWAS Global, takes place directly on the trade show floor. This space features timely presentations in a concise 20-minute format focused on emerging technologies and innovations.

Presentations include:

- "Risk management: MPP, LGM and new programs", Aaron Gransee, Investors Community Bank. Sponsored by Investors Community Bank.
- "Giving your calves the best start", Rick Roden, Roden Echo Valley, LLC. Sponsored by Calf-Tel
- "Navigating the new tax landscape", Patrick Erickson, CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP. Sponsored by CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP.
- "So, you're thinking about a digester? Talk to me first, please", John Haeckel, Clean Fuel Partners. Sponsored by Clean Fuel Partners
- "The new biogas paradigm", Ryan Murray, Eisenmann Corporation. Sponsored by Eisenmann Corporation
- "Make it, shake it, feed it", Tom Oelberg, Diamond V. Sponsored by Diamond V
- "Practical solutions for improving fiber digestibility in your silage crop: Keys to driving forage levels in the diet that support high production and performance", Bill Powell-Smith, Pioneer. Sponsored by Pioneer.
- "Changing dairy: Starting with how we advocate," Jess Peters, Spruce Row Farm & Katie Dotterer-Pyle, Cow Comfort Inn Dairy. Sponsored by Cargill Animal Nutrition
- For more information about Dairy Strong including the complete schedule and registration information, go to [dairystrong.org](http://dairystrong.org)

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