

Profit Demands Several Things Done Right

Brian and Kevin Brabec value dependability. The Mayer, MN, brothers rank nutrition high on the list of several factors that keep their dairy herd productive. Their relationship with Munson Lakes Nutrition (MLN) began more than 40 years ago while their parents, Bob and Betty, owned the farm.

“Kevin and I took over January 1, 1994,” reports Brian. “Munson has been our only feed company, and it was Dad’s only feed company.”

That’s due to service and reliability, the brothers agree. “Jeff Thorpe and Joel Pettit [MLN nutritionists] help us produce milk profitably, and if we have a problem, they’re here to help solve it,” Brian continues.

Kevin and his wife, Bonnie, have two adult children, Nicole and Bradley, and one grandson. Brian and his wife, Karla, have two preschool boys. In the dairy operation, Brian and Kevin provide all the labor and management.

MLN keeps rations balanced

“We rely on Munson Lakes Nutrition because they help make the best use of our homegrown feeds while our production keeps growing,” reports Kevin, as he thumbs through his meticulous feed records and DHIA reports. “That’s why we have a tank average of 80 pounds of milk per cow per day.”

With 132 cows milking, the Brabec Farms rolling herd average is 24,548 pounds per cow. A year ago it was 23,835. Their calving interval is 11.3 months and services per conception average 1.3 for heifers and 1.8 for cows.

“It takes a lot of things done right to get that,” Brian says.



Brian (left) and Kevin Brabec report that their milking herd thrives in a free-stall barn with a central drive-through feed aisle.

The MLN nutritionists monitor Brabecs’ daily production where they market their milk, the brothers point out, and they periodically pull a DHIA snapshot.

“Whenever we change a batch of corn silage or haylage, they sample and test to balance nutrients properly,” says Kevin.

Quality feeds pay off

The brothers readily point out feed products that perform for them. For example, about three years ago, Joel Pettit recommended feeding Rally™ Dairy in the maternity barn to meet the nutritional demands of calving and lactation. That helped them overcome several fresh cow disorders.

Kevin also points out that QLF (Quality Liquid Feed) Cow Supplement helps boost production and reduce costs. And Amplifier® Max NT milk replacer always gets calves off to a great start.

It’s a terrific combination, the Brabec brothers agree. Good products, great service, and people who know the dairy business make MLN a feed company they can depend on. ●