



MUNSON LAKES Advisor

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The Best of the Best

Janski Farms, 15 miles south of St. Cloud, switched to robotic milking in January of 2014. "I went to robotics because my kids were very good with computers and they were interested in staying in the dairy," says Richard Janski. "I knew the only way we'd see them continue in dairy is if we went with the best of the best."

To help them convert to Lely robotics, the Janskis turned to Munson Lakes Nutrition. "We bought the robots in August of last year, and in September we switched all of our business to Munsons," Richard states.

"We'd heard that Jeff Thorpe was one of the best for robotic nutrition and that Munsons had the best pellets for the dairy cows," says Richard. "We've stayed with them because of their willingness to work with us."

Richard explains that he appreciates the willingness of Jeff and sales nutritionist Doug Sawatzke to stop frequently and keep an eye on the herd. Land O'Lakes calf specialists Devin Banitt and Melissa Holtz have also lent Janski Farms their expertise.

"If we have a question, they answer right away," explains Richard. "If we have a problem, they are on it right away."

He adds, "They are aggressive about making us happy."



Richard and Marlys, Thomas, Daniel, and Tyler Janski.

Richard is the third generation on this dairy farm. His grandfather started the operation in 1939. "It was an Old McDonald farm," he states. "My grandpa (also named Richard) had 15 cows, farrow-to-finish hogs, and chickens, and hauled eggs to town twice a week.

"My dad, Robert, took the herd from 15 to 31 cows in 1963, then 31 to 52 cows in 1967, and to 82 cows in 1980," states Richard. The Janskis raised crops on about 500 acres in 1980, and that side of the farming operation has grown since then.

"In 1996, we built the freestall dairy barn we have now and went to 230 cows." Around that time, the Janskis got rid of all the hogs and chickens to concentrate on their dairy herd.

The herd they milk today, robotically, is the same size, and they installed automatic calf milk feeders in August of 2014.

Richard says he started farming full-time with his dad, Robert, in 1984. He married his wife, Marlys, in 1986, and she



Cows enter one of four robotic milkers on Janski Farms.

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The Best of the Best

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became actively involved in the operation in 1993. “That’s when she started helping me milk cows,” says Richard. “Now she does all of our bookkeeping and takes care of the baby calves.”

As for the fourth generation, sons Thomas, 23, and Daniel, 21, and nephew Tyler, 19, are now partners in Janski Farms, and the reason Richard strives to improve the dairy operation.

“I never look back,” he states. “I always look forward.

“I want to see my kids progress and grow,” he continues.

“I could have kept things the way they were, worked another five years and retired, but now I’m making something for them.” ●



MLN's Doug Sawatzke with Richard in the calf barn.

Mill Earns HACCP Certification

Munson Lakes Nutrition (MLN) has completed an important project one year ahead of schedule. The company’s mill at Howard Lake received certification on Aug. 25, 2014, under the global Hazardous Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) program. What had been expected to take two years took just 12 months, thanks to the company’s employees.

“Our employees have been on board from day one,” states Brian Yager, Feed Safety Coordinator. “They know that, if we’re going to be leaders, we need to be ahead of our industry.

“HACCP certification assures our customers that we provide high-quality, safe food for their livestock,” explains Brian, who observes that processors are already asking some MLN customers if their feed supplier is HACCP certified.

Rather than chasing food safety crises after they happen, HACCP identifies potential problems and prevents them. “HACCP relies on a system of checks and balances such as maintenance records, how you handle feed ingredients, knowing who your ingredient buyers and haulers are, and knowing they are going to keep things clean and safe,” says Brian. “It also emphasizes training our employees to recognize the importance of maintaining their work areas to keep the animal food we manufacture safe.”

MLN received its HACCP certification only after a rigorous audit by SGS Auditing, a global accounting firm. “The audit

rates each company on a 1,000-point scale, and we received one of the higher scores—in the 900s,” Brian reports.

Munson Lakes will be audited every year to maintain their HACCP certification.

“The employees actually pushed for (early certification),” says Brian, who notes the difficulty of reviewing thousands of pages of educational material and getting the company’s 40+ employees trained in 12 months.

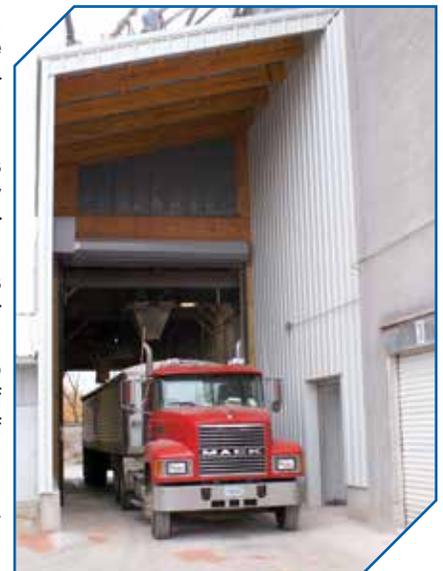
“Our employees didn’t want to drag it out,” he states. “They felt that if we got into the habit of doing things the right way, it would be better.”

For the 78-year-old feed company, striving for certification also involved a major investment in physical assets to assure food security.

“We needed to enclose our grain pit to keep pests and debris away from feed ingredients,” says Brian, who adds that roads in front and in back of the mill were either concreted or paved to keep dirt, dust, and moisture out of the mill.

Certification under HACCP is an important first step to meeting new regulations for the animal food industry set out by the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2010, whose first rules are scheduled for implementation July 15, 2015. “HACCP prepares us for that,” says Brian.

“The idea, with FSMA, will be to protect everything from the farmer to the plate, which includes what is being fed to those animals and what is getting put into the soil,” he adds. ●



Jim Neaton (left) unloads a truck of corn in the new driveway at the Howard Lake Mill. Mark Dahلمان samples the grain.

Metasmart® Liquid Now Available

By Dr. Andy Mueller, Field Dairy Nutritionist



Amino acids are essential nutrients in lactating dairy nutrition. They should not be considered optional feed additives.

In the last decade, amino acid balancing has become more and more popular. When properly balanced in a ration, amino acids can lower the crude protein content needed, manage MUNs, and increase production and components. It can also have positive

effects on health and reproduction.

Balancing a ration for amino acids involves balancing metabolizable lysine and metabolizable methionine—the lysine and methionine that a cow is able to absorb and use. With our Upper Midwestern corn silage, alfalfa, and corn-based rations, we are usually not short on lysine and almost always short on methionine.

There are many bypass methionine products that can be added to a dairy ration. They all work well, but you should also consider the cost per unit of methionine that the product supplies, its supply or availability to be fed, and the benefits to the cow.

Munson Lakes Nutrition recently added a Liquid Metasmart® system at their Howard Lake mill to supply low-cost bypass methionine for dairy rations. Liquid Metasmart is readily available and there are no supply issues like there have been in recent months with other bypass methionine products.

Liquid Metasmart has one of the lowest costs per unit of metabolizable methionine of all commercially available methionine products. Also, Liquid Metasmart can increase both milk fat and protein yield and the percent of each in the milk. A recent University of Illinois study also showed that adding methionine to transition diets, pre and post fresh, increased early milk production and that cows supplemented with methionine had a lower incidence of disease.

There are many benefits to adding supplemental methionine to your dairy ration. Now Munson Lakes Nutrition can help you do it in a very economical way. If you have any questions about amino acid balancing, bypass methionine, or Liquid Metasmart in a dairy ration, please contact your Munson Lakes Nutrition sales nutritionist. ●

Looking to Do Things Better

Growing up on a small cow-calf farm near Howard Lake, John Zander began his career with Munson Feed Company in 1984 as a truck driver. “I spent my first 10 years hauling feed,” he recalls.

In 1994, John moved into production, helping make and bag the feed, but he still drove truck when needed. In 1996, he was promoted to production supervisor, in charge of milling operations. In 2002, he was named assistant manager, and in 2004, the board chose him as the general manager of Munson Lakes Nutrition.

“I’ve seen MLN go from a private to a cooperatively owned feed company,” says John. “The size and operation of dairies we serve has changed dramatically.”

But, he still likes his job. “I come to work every day looking for ways for us to do things better,” says the GM.

John married Shari in 1985, and the couple raised two sons: Timothy, 27, who works for another agricultural cooperative, and Jacob, 24, who is kitchen manager for Fargo’s Texas Roadhouse.

“In my free time, I enjoy fishing, hunting, and volunteering as an assistant coach at Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted High School,” John says.

John’s latest achievement is hiking the Grand Canyon from the south rim to the Colorado River and back to the south rim in one day. It was a vertical journey of almost one mile and a distance by trail of 18 miles, with air temperatures reaching 100 degrees at the bottom.

“For me, the biggest challenge was the last three miles of trail when I was looking up at how far I had to go and my legs were tired,” says John. “At the same time, I had the willpower to know I was going to make it.” ●

Scott Waldner, Land O’Lakes poultry specialist, and John Zander complete their 18-mile Grand Canyon hike.



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Happy Thanksgiving & Merry Christmas

**FROM THE
 EMPLOYEES OF
 MUNSON LAKES
 NUTRITION**

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 DUSTEN WILKING
 GARY WILKING
 BRIAN YAGER
 SUE ZACHMANN
 JOHN ZANDER

Declared Safe, From Our Mill To Your Farm

By John Zander, General Manager

After a year of hard work by the staff of Munson Lakes Nutrition, I'm pleased to announce that we've completed our HACCP certification audit. Special thanks to our internal HACCP committee: Kirk Bengtson, Tom Bobrowske, Trevor Gottschalk, Nathan Gruenhagen, Eric Munson, Brian Yager, and Dusten Wilking. I'm thankful for the effort this team put in to get us this level of recognition. We'll continue to emphasize quality and food safety as the federal government implements the Food Safety

Modernization Act (FSMA) in the coming year.

As part of our HACCP certification, we've remodeled our corn receiving driveway and added roll-down doors to completely enclose the mill. We had to have a way of locking down the entire plant on weekends. We made a considerable investment in those changes as well as completely paving the roads around the mill.

The staff also attended numerous training sessions leading up to the HACCP certification. What we found out is we were doing things right, but have now added the documentation needed to provide our customers with this level of assurance.



All roads around the mill have been paved to prevent dust, debris, and moisture from entering the manufacturing process.

Year-end greetings

In other news, the mill continues to be very busy, for which we are grateful.

We appreciate working with each of you, and know I speak for the entire board of Munson Lakes Nutrition in wishing you a very Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas. ●

OUR MISSION

Some things never change—even after 78 years.

THE VALUES THAT SHAPED OUR HERITAGE WILL REMAIN. MUNSON LAKES NUTRITION WILL CONTINUE TO:

- MANUFACTURE A GREAT PRODUCT AT A FAIR PRICE.
- GIVE GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICE.
- BASE EVERY DECISION ON FAIRNESS AND DECENCY.

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