

# MUNSON LAKES Advisor

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## A Feed Company on the Rise!

This summer, we constructed a new office building in front of our feed mill in Howard Lake, Minn. This building, which replaces a tiny structure erected in the 1950s, is an indication of the growth of Munson Lakes Nutrition (MLN) and follows many improvements to MLN's people, processes and milling facilities.

John Zander, who joined the company in 1980 and has served as general manager since 2004, says that MLN has distinguished itself as an expert in animal nutrition.

"We've worked hard to change an image that people had of our sales staff as order takers," says John. "We have sales people who should rightly be called nutritionists." These nutritionists advise dairy and beef producers on environmental factors that maximize milk production and economic gain, as well as building cost-effective rations.

As the dairy business continues to evolve, says Zander, it will be important for MLN to set itself apart as a company with expert advisors and service—not just as a supplier.

"Dairy farms are fewer and bigger," notes Zander. "The number of cows hasn't dropped, but we must be able to work with both the traditional farms, and the larger and robotic farms of the future."

According to Zander, MLN has been able to do that. "We've grown our business each of the last 10 years," he states. "Today, we manufacture and ship feed throughout

**New Munson Lakes Nutrition office at dawn, with mill silhouetted in the background.**



[WWW.MUNSONLAKES.COM](http://WWW.MUNSONLAKES.COM)



**Nutritionists, left to right: Charlie Peterson, Mike Foust, Jake Reed, Ted Radintz, Austin Davis, Jeff Thorp, Ray Munson and Doug Sawatzke.**

the state of Minnesota and to customers in the Dakotas, Wisconsin and Iowa."

Ted Radintz, MLN's new sales manager, praises the forward vision of the company. "We don't forget where we came from, but we won't rest on our laurels," he states.

As a result, MLN continues to refine its pelleting ability. "We make a lot of beef concentrate and we're able to produce specialized pellets for dairy customers who have invested in robotic milking systems."

MLN also leads the industry in meeting and exceeding regulatory standards. Under safety and compliance manager Brian Yager, MLN was one of the first mills in Minnesota to be certified in FSMA's Hazardous Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) six years ago. During its most recent HACCP audit, MLN achieved a 100% score.

"Munson Lakes Nutrition will continue to purchase ingredients right and manufacture high quality feeds," predicts Zander. "We'll continue to hire good people to make and deliver that feed—and to give expert nutritional advice." ●

MUNSON LAKES  
nutrition  
QUALITY

# Feed and Farming at The Country Store



Everett Nowak, who grew up on a dairy farm near Silver Lake, has been working at our Howard Lake Country Store since September 2015. At first, he worked part-time while a senior at Dassel-Cokato High School. In June of 2016, he joined MLN full-time.

He grew up on a dairy cow and goat farm near Silver Lake. "Today, we raise steers and cash crop," says Everett of his partnership with his dad. Everett also farrows pigs, selling some as feeders and finishing some.

Everett appreciates the flexibility of working at The Country Store. "It's a nice job in that I can still take off for farming," he states.

"I like dealing with the customers and making sure they get everything they need help with," he adds. Everett feels a connection with his customers. "I can appreciate their life and understand their problems," he states. "I can be right there with them, because I'm farming, too. ●



## Yager Joins MGFA Board



Brian Yager, Munson Lake's safety and compliance manager, has been appointed to the board of directors of the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association (MGFA). Brian will fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Tom Traen as general manager of Glacial Plains Cooperative.

MGFA advocates

for Minnesota grain facilities and feed mills with the state legislature and regulatory agencies. The organization also keeps the public informed on industry issues, and holds training sessions for members' employees.

MGFA is a member of the National Feed and Grain Association which advocates for our industry on the national stage. ●

## A Calf Starter to Override Stress

By Ted Radintz, MLN Sales Manager



Working with our partners at PMI, Munson Lakes Nutrition has developed a new pelleted calf starter called Elite Kaff. On local farms this high-performance option

focuses on rumen health and immunity, as well as digestive efficiency.

Calves are under enormous stress as they transition from milk to grain-based diets. Elite Kaff is a nutritional strategy that optimizes animal performance and production efficiency by including prebiotics, probiotics, plant extracts and specialty flavorings to support optimal gut integrity.

Available in 20 and 22% protein levels, Elite Kaff is an enhanced, whole corn and oat calf starter that brings new technology and nutritional trends to a calf pellet at a reasonable cost.

Of course, MLN still offers its existing line-up of calf starters. However, if you are looking to invest in your calf program, I recommend you take a look at MLN's Elite Kaff high-performance calf starters.

Talk with your MLN nutritionist. He has all the details. ●

# Serving Good Food and Talk

Employees and partners of MLN served 535 dinners to customers and friends who traveled up to 60 miles on Wednesday, August 7, to attend the feed company's annual Customer Appreciation Pork Chop Feed. The event is held each year at Howard Lake Memorial Park.

Five employees of Those Pork Chops, Elk River, Minn., artfully grilled 1,150 pork chops for the occasion. Wright County Dairy Ambassadors, Sophie Salmela and Brooklyn Decker, were accompanied by County Dairy Princesses Elizabeth Ahrens, Bailey Mucciacciarra and Bethany Kozitka who served up root beer floats to the hungry crowd.

"We appreciate this yearly opportunity thank our customers for their business by putting on an event where they can come, relax and visit with others in their industry," says John Zander, MLN general manager. ●



## New Thoughts on Pre-partum Transition Cows

By Amber Wilkens, Dairy Technical Specialist, Phibro Animal Health Corporation

Feeding and management strategies for pre-partum transition cows have taken a 180-degree turn. Before, it was "Out of Sight, Out of Mind." Today, we know that de-emphasizing the pre-partum transition cow program only leads to reduced cow health and performance, which ultimately affects farm profitability.

### Benefits of a sound pre-partum transition cow program?

A properly fed and managed program allows cows to express their full genetic potential for milk yield and reproductive performance. Benefits include:

1. Providing the increased amount and balance of key nutrients for animal health and productivity.
2. Maintaining/increasing pre- and post-partum dry matter intakes.
3. Increased milk yield in early lactation, increasing total milk yield throughout lactation.
4. Reduced health events including DAs, RPs, metritis, mastitis, ketosis and hypocalcemia.
5. Earlier return to estrus and enhanced fertility for improved reproductive performance.

Managing subclinical hypocalcemia (SCH) is a key to transition cow health and productivity.

SCH is the most prevalent herd health disorder of fresh cows. It affects upwards of 70% of all animals. Despite the high risk of cows to SCH (good milk cows are prone to hypocalcemia) it is a disorder which can be managed and reduced through the feeding of a negative DCAD ration. Many research reports substantiate the benefits to cow health, milk yield and reproductive performance of feeding a negative DCAD ration.

Choosing the correct anionic product along with the proper ration nutrients is critical to the success of the program. Animate<sup>®</sup>, from Phibro Animal Health, is a highly palatable, concentrated and complete anionic mineral. When fed correctly, Animate will help reduce the incidence and negative effects of hypocalcemia.

Phibro Animal Health works closely with MLN's nutritionists to ensure your transition cow program is meeting your dairy's needs. For more information on Animate and how to evaluate your current program, contact your MLN representative, or visit [www.animate-dairy.com](http://www.animate-dairy.com). ●

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 Howard Lake, MN 55349



# Some Things Change, Some Won't

By John Zander, General Manager

We moved into our new office building July 19, 2019. The contractor tells us the landscaping and parking lot will be finished in September. When it's all completed, please stop by our new office along U.S. Highway 12 in Howard Lake, right in front of the mill that makes your feed.



Although we have been growing rapidly in recent years, we operated out of the same small office building constructed almost six decades ago, because we felt it was important to improve the facilities and processes of our feed manufacturing business first. Finally, we've constructed a new office building.

Moving day was in some ways traumatic and in some ways freeing. We went from an old, tight building where we were literally sitting on top of each other to a bright, spacious building with a fresh new look.

Thank you to everyone for getting ready. Special thanks to Brian Yager for handling the IT side and making sure the internet, phones and everything else was up and running.

In the old building, which has since been torn down, we didn't have room enough for our sales manager, Ted Radintz, so he worked out of his office at home. Having Ted in our new office, working side-by-side daily with operations and directing our experts in nutrition, will be very good for you and for us.

With the new building, we'll be better able to train our field staff, host producer meetings on site, and give our excellent people a better work environment as well.

Yes, we have changed offices. We're in a new building that should tell you (and the whole world) we intend to continue growing. But some things will never change. You can find a list of these non-negotiables at right.

Thank you for your business. We look forward to serving you in the future. ●

## OUR MISSION

Some things never change — even after 80+ 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.*

## MUNSON LAKES NUTRITION DIRECTORY

### HOWARD LAKE OFFICE

800-245-7717  
 320-543-2561

### THE COUNTRY STORE

800-663-9177  
 320-543-3517



Inside MLN's new office at Howard Lake.



MLN corn buyer Mark Dahlman visits with receptionist Denise Berg.