



Jason and Shelby Weihrouch are the hosts of this year's dairy breakfast.
(Photo contributed)

Farm Breakfast Provides Education, Reason to Smile

Have you ever wondered why we're commanded to say "cheese" for a photograph? A popular theory suggests that saying the word causes our teeth and lips to move into a position that forms a smile. From dairy products to the cows themselves, the annual on-the-farm dairy breakfast offers another reason to say "cheese." The event is a great opportunity to promote and support the industry, educate the public, and provide an experience for those who have never witnessed the daily operations of a farm.

Imagine what would happen to the

on-the-farm breakfast experience if there were no farm to host the breakfast. The impact would be lost. Jason and Shelby Weihrouch knew that when they were asked to host the 38th Annual Jackson County Dairy Breakfast. "A dairy breakfast wouldn't be the same without a farm," says Jason.

"It's been hard to find a host farm the last few years due to the current dairy industry and the loss of many farms," shares Dairy Breakfast Director Max Hart. "The breakfast is an opportunity for the public to interact with a dairy farm and to influence them to consume dairy products, which helps keep our local farms in business," he adds.

Dairy Fun Fact

The Wisconsin dairy industry generates \$43.4 billion each year for the state's economy.—Source: wisconsinmilk.org

Jason and Shelby are both third-generation farmers. Both grew up on registered dairy farms started by their grandparents, Jason on his family's farm in Melrose, and Shelby on her family's farm in Cannon Falls, Minnesota. Together, they operate their 40-cow Eachibon Swiss and Mahoney-East Holsteins Farm on Jason's family farm. It's nestled on South Road in Melrose, almost marking the halfway point between State Highway 54 and West Indies Road. The Eachibon in the farm name is a variation of the Japanese Ichiban, meaning "number one" or "first." Jason's grandfather was in the military and served in Japan. He named the farm Eachibon because it was the first farm he owned on his own. Mahoney-East comes from Shelby's family name.

Asked what made them decide to continue on with the farm's legacy, Jason and Shelby expressed their passion for the industry and desire to continue on with their family farm names. "We enjoy the opportunity to be our own boss and farming has always been a part of who we are," expresses Shelby. The couple does not have any hired help and completes all the chores themselves.

Both milk and feed the cows, and Shelby cares for the calves. Jason does the field work, planting and harvesting their



The farm is located outside of Melrose on South Road.



own crops on the farm's 100 acres of tillable land. He also does some custom field work for neighbors. Jason's parents, Yvonne and Charles, help with the chores when the couple is gone or busy with field work.

During a challenging time in the dairy industry, Jason and Shelby explain that you must be as frugal as you can, while also being competitive. They remain competitive by breeding high-pedigree animals for high production. All of the animals on the farm are raised from birth. Heifers are raised and bred through artificial insemination, while bull calves are usually sold within the first week of being born. The couple is currently conducting genomic testing on their Brown Swiss bull calves, with the intent to get involved with an AI company.

"We also show cows, which is how Jason and I met at World Dairy Expo," shares Shelby. Shows provide an opportunity to advertise the farm's genetics, which helps with remaining competitive. Memberships in both the Brown Swiss and Holstein associations at the state and national levels offer another outlet to recognize the herd's genetics.

Another challenge faced by the current dairy market is consumer education. Jason and Shelby hope that the breakfast educates the public and convinces people that dairy products are safe. "There's a lot of false and misleading labels on products," says Shelby.

"We have regulated, controlled, quality products," adds Jason. "If the product is not safe, we can't sell it."

The Jackson County Dairy Promotion Committee and



Attendees will also get to enjoy the young animals on the farm.

local volunteers are committed to promoting dairy products and spend many hours preparing for the event, with the hope that more consumers are educated and purchase local foods. The Ag Artisan and Farmer's Market tent was added last year, and will showcase the best of Jackson

County, from local meats to wineries.

"Local food will also be incorporated into the meal, including local sausages, locally sourced maple syrup, and Wisconsin dairy products," says Max. "Culver's will even be on site to serve their frozen custard," he adds.

While this spring's weather brought challenges in preparing for the breakfast, Jason and Shelby are looking forward to the reward of promoting farming and hosting this fun, family-friendly event that brings the community together, serving more than 1,700 people each year. "It's an opportunity to take a break from tough times and have a fun get-together," concludes Shelby.—*Brandi Shramek, Executive Coordinator*

Cheese Fun Fact

47% of all specialty cheese made in the U.S. comes from Wisconsin.—*Source: wisconsinmilk.com*

Dairy Fun Fact

96% of Wisconsin dairy farms are family owned.—*Source: wisconsinmilk.com*

Cheese Fun Fact

90% of Wisconsin's milk is made into cheese.—*Source: wisconsinmilk.com*

Pancakes, local sausage, cheese, yogurt, milk, and cranberry juice will be served at the breakfast on June 1 from 6 to 11 a.m. Cost is \$8 for adults and \$3 for children ages 12 and under. The Ag Artisan and Farmer's Market Tent, wagon rides, kids' games, scavenger hunt, face painting, tractor displays, dairy cattle judging, dairy product giveaways, Culver's custard, a petting zoo, and many other activities will entertain attendees of all ages and may even have them saying "cheese."

Parking:

A hay field off of West Indies Road will be used in dry conditions. If not, attendees will park at the Melrose-Mindoro High School and be bussed to the breakfast. Please tune your radio dial to WWIS (99.7 FM) for the day of the event parking information.

Volunteers:

In each issue, we're highlighting volunteer opportunities in Jackson County. Volunteers are always needed to help at the breakfast. Local royalty, 4-H clubs, FFA chapters, and community members are invited to get involved by volunteering to direct parking, serve food, clean off tables, and refill syrup containers at the breakfast. Anyone who has a desire to promote dairy products is always welcome to join the Jackson County Dairy Promotion Committee. Those interested may contact Max Hart.

ELECTRIC WATER HEATER LOAD MANAGEMENT

Last summer, Jackson Electric hired student employees to inspect the water heater and dual fuel load management receivers. These receivers were inspected because every receiver that is not operating properly is costing the cooperative money.

What is Load Management?

Load management is a tool used by Jackson Electric’s power supplier to balance the demand for electricity with the ability to generate or economically purchase electricity. When demand for energy is higher, so are energy costs. The load management receiver is installed to manage these loads during periods of high energy demand. The radio receiver is connected to your water heater wiring. During these periods, it receives a signal from Dairyland Power to switch off or interrupt the water heater elements.

Shedding these additional loads during daily demand (high usage) periods saves on energy costs for the co-

operative, thus saving you, our members, money.

Please don’t be discouraged to participate in this program because your electric water heater may be interrupted. The majority of members who participate in this program say they don’t notice when their equipment is being interrupted. We advise members to purchase a large enough water heater to fulfill their needs during a load management period.

Load Management Hours

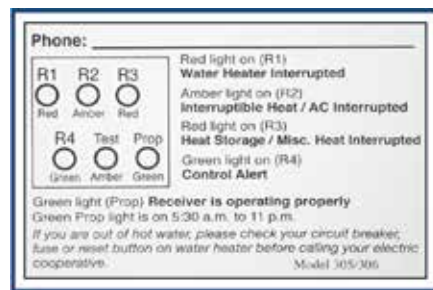
Water heaters are not interrupted every day unless you participate in the dual fuel electric heat program. Water



Your receiver may be located by your electric meter on the outside of your house.

heater load management may occur at any time on any day and is typically limited to six hours. Water heaters are typically interrupted on peak alert days: the hottest days of the summer, coldest days of the winter. An economic control could also be issued when market prices have reached a predetermined threshold.

Dual fuel program water heaters are interrupted daily, with the exception of weekends. Economic control can be issued on weekends, which would interrupt water heater operation.



This sticker is on your receiver and instructs you on the load management status.

To determine if your water heater is interrupted, go to www.jackelec.com and click on the Residential Load Control tab. If you’re still unsure, you can look at your load management receiver. If the R1 red light is on, your water heater is most likely being interrupted.

Water Heater Repairs

Jackson Electric works with an independent contractor to repair water heaters during regular office hours for members who participate in the water heater program. To participate, the member must have a load management receiver connected to their water heater. If the repair is plumbing or electrical related, or due to a dry-fired element, parts and labor may be charged to the member.

Water heaters obtained under Jackson Electric’s water heater program are to be used as the primary source of domestic hot water. They are not to be used as supplemental water heaters or storage heaters. This will void the manufacturer’s warranty, and any repairs may be billed to the member.

The water heater load management program is voluntary. However, those members with a grid-enabled 85- or 100-gallon water heater (model number begins with MRG) are required by federal regulations to have a load management receiver installed.

Bill Paying Option: Our Drop Box is Open



Secured payment drop box is located at Jackson Electric’s headquarters.

When you’re dropping off your payment, get out your smartphone and scan the QR code on our drop box to set up your SmartHub account for convenient online bill paying options.



Rebates Available

Jackson Electric has rebates available for the purchase and installation of Energy Star appliances, electric heat pumps, electric boilers, and LED lighting. Go to jackelec.com or contact our office for more information.

Dairy Fun Fact

Over the past 60 years, dairy farmers have reduced the carbon footprint of their products by 63% by improving farm management practices.—Source: WMMB, Inc. 2014

MY CO-OP



OUTAGES HAPPEN, SO PLEASE BE PATIENT

Spring storm season is upon us, and Jackson Electric appreciates your cooperation as we work together to restore power after a powerful storm or other large-scale outage event. Please understand that our line crew is called out to restore power during some of the most severe weather conditions, often working long hours in extreme conditions.

Jackson Electric's line crew work around 7,200 and greater volts of electricity in all kinds of weather conditions. Ignoring safety protocol to restore outages faster can be fatal. Be assured that our line crew is working as quickly and safely as they can to restore power to the largest number of members. When a powerful storm rolls through a portion or all of the service territory, our line crew may have to remove fallen trees, replace broken poles and damaged transformers, and possibly string new conductor.

How power is restored after a storm:

1. After the outage has been dispatched and our crew arrives on site, they must determine the extent of the damage and pinpoint the source of the outage.
2. Power is restored to as much of the

undamaged system as possible. If a substation is out of service, resolving that issue and/or rerouting power from another substation takes priority. Restoration of power to those members on a three-phase line typically takes priority, as well. If you see that your neighbor's lights are on, and your power is still out, it may be that you are on a different feeder line, phase, or circuit.

3. If possible, our line crew will reroute the electricity to temporarily restore power for our members. If not, the crew will need to repair and/or rebuild poles and conductor. This takes time, labor, and equipment.

Automatic Standby Generators

If you have needs to fulfill in the

**Jackson Electric's Outage Reporting Number:
855.222.3275**

event of a power outage, you should consider the purchase and installation of an automatic standby generator. A permanently installed home standby generator runs on natural gas or liquid propane (LP) fuel, and sits outside just like a central air-conditioning unit. A home standby generator delivers power directly to your home's electrical system, backing up the entire home or just the most essential items.

Contact Jackson Electric for more information on automatic standby generators.

Cheese Fun Fact

Wisconsin is the only state that requires a license to make cheese. It also has the only Master Cheesemaker program outside of Europe.

Source: wisconsinmilk.com



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Customer Service 715.284.5385
800.370.4607

Outage Reporting 855.222.DARK (3275)

Diggers Hotline 800.242.8511

Credit Card Payments 844.759.3984

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