

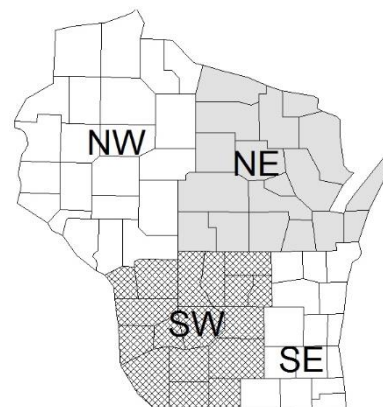
Dairy Producer Survey, 2020

In March 2020, approximately 7,081 surveys were mailed to dairy farmers across Wisconsin. The list of names was obtained from DATCP's Division of Food Safety. 2,871 surveys were returned, resulting in a response rate of 41%. The tables below are a summary of good responses. Because we do not know how non-respondents would have responded, we cannot generalize the survey results to all dairy farmers in Wisconsin. Most responses were received before the major impacts of Covid-19 were felt across the state. There were some comments about coronavirus, but it does not seem to have had much influence on the results. Results are presented by herd size and by region.

Respondents were asked to indicate the region where their cows are located, number of cows, rolling herd average, and average percent fat and protein. A few respondents did not provide their region so the total by region is lower than the 2,871 surveys returned. All regions and all herd sizes were well represented across the state. Many respondents did not know their rolling herd average (RHA), fat percent or protein percent. If they reported their production in pounds/head/day, it was multiplied by 305 to estimate a RHA. Many who did report their fat and protein percentages, were only able to report to one decimal place.

Responses by Region, 2020

Herd Size	NW	NE	SW	SE	Total	% of respondents
Number of farms responding						
1-49	227	182	260	71	740	26
50-99	375	274	237	149	1,035	37
100-199	102	118	160	116	496	18
200-299	34	44	58	46	182	7
300-699	47	59	76	53	235	8
700+	31	32	22	38	123	4
All	816	709	813	473	2,811	100



Average RHA, Fat %, Protein %, 2020

Herd Size	RHA	Fat	Protein
	Pounds	Percent	
1-49	16,894	4.04	3.19
50-99	21,358	4.01	3.21
100-199	23,189	3.99	3.19
200-299	24,706	3.97	3.19
300-699	26,985	3.97	3.18
700+	28,456	3.98	3.20
All	21,669	4.01	3.19

Average RHA, Fat %, Protein %, 2020

Region	RHA	Fat	Protein
	Pounds	Percent	
NW	21,224	4.03	3.22
NE	22,235	4.00	3.19
SW	20,741	4.02	3.19
SE	23,228	3.97	3.17
All	21,669	4.01	3.19

Respondents were asked about practices such as custom heifer raising, using beef or sexed semen on their dairy herd, marketing, and raising feed. Larger herds were more likely to have their heifers custom raised, but the age at which the heifers left and returned to the farm did not vary much. Over half of respondents reported they use beef semen on their farm, but only use it on about one-quarter of their cows and one-third of their heifers. About one-quarter of farms feed bull calves or excess heifers to market weight. Most farms market their male calves through a sales barn at less than one week old. Larger farms were more likely to use sexed semen, with about one-third of farms using it statewide. Respondents reported raising 82% of the feed for their operations.

Custom Heifer Raising, 2020

Herd Size	Use heifer raising	If use heifer raiser, heifers raised in-state ¹	If use heifer raiser, heifers raised out-of-state ^{1, 2}	Average age leaving farm	Average age returning to farm
	Percent of farms			Age in months	
1-49	1	100	0	5.6	16.1
50-99	5	98	4	6.0	18.1
100-199	7	100	3	4.9	17.7
200-299	20	100	0	5.4	19.4
300-699	30	97	9	5.0	18.2
700+	59	68	51	4.5	18.8
All	10	90	17	5.1	18.4

¹Some operations had heifers custom raised both in- and out-of-state

²Other states reported were CO, IA, IL, KS, MN, NE, ND, OH, TX

Custom Heifer Raising, 2020

Region	Use heifer raising	If use heifer raiser, heifers raised in-state ¹	If use heifer raiser, heifers raised out-of-state ^{1, 2}	Average age leaving farm	Average age returning to farm
	Percent of farms			Age in months	
NW	7	91	14	5.6	18.8
NE	9	90	25	4.0	17.5
SW	9	93	10	6.0	18.9
SE	15	86	22	4.8	18.5
All	10	90	17	5.1	18.4

¹Some operations had heifers custom raised both in- and out-of-state

²Other states reported were CO, IA, IL, KS, MN, NE, ND, OH, TX

Use of Beef Semen, 2020

Herd Size	Currently use beef semen on at least part of dairy herd	If use beef semen, percent of cows bred to beef bulls	If use semen, percent of heifers bred to beef bulls
	Percent of farms	Percent of herd	
1-49	34	32	49
50-99	50	22	32
100-199	58	24	29
200-299	71	25	18
300-699	77	31	17
700+	93	44	12
All	53	27	30

Use of Beef Semen, 2020

Region	Currently use beef semen on at least part of dairy herd	If use beef semen, percent of cows bred to beef bulls	If use semen, percent of heifers bred to beef bulls
	Percent of farms	Percent of herd	
NW	48	25	30
NE	53	27	26
SW	52	28	37
SE	61	29	24
All	53	27	30

Feed Bull Calves or Excess Heifers to Market Weight, 2019

Herd Size	Feed to market weight
	Percent of farms
1-49	25
50-99	28
100-199	27
200-299	32
300-699	20
700+	20
All	26

Feed Bull Calves or Excess Heifers to Market Weight, 2019

Region	Feed to market weight
	Percent of farms
NW	24
NE	26
SW	30
SE	24
All	26

Marketing Male Calves, 2020¹

Herd Size	Sales barn	Dealer	Directly to another farmer	Directly to a calf ranch
	Percent of farms			
1-49	82	8	32	2
50-99	81	6	32	2
100-199	75	7	37	2
200-299	79	11	34	4
300-699	67	16	36	6
700+	47	40	34	14
All	77	9	34	3

¹Some operations sold through more than one marketing channel.

Marketing Male Calves, 2020¹

Region	Sales barn	Dealer	Directly to another farmer	Directly to a calf ranch
	Percent of farms			
NW	79	11	30	3
NE	82	10	24	3
SW	75	7	44	3
SE	71	10	38	3
All	77	9	34	3

¹Some operations sold through more than one marketing channel.

Weight at which Majority of Calves are Marketed, 2020

Herd Size	Less than 1 week old	150-300 lbs.	300-600 lbs.	600 lbs. or more
	Percent of farms			
1-49	56	20	12	12
50-99	72	10	5	13
100-199	70	8	7	15
200-299	77	8	5	10
300-699	84	4	4	8
700+	88	1	2	9
All	69	11	7	13

Weight at which Majority of Calves are Marketed, 2020

Region	Less than 1 week old	150-300 lbs.	300-600 lbs.	600 lbs. or more
	Percent of farms			
NW	72	11	6	11
NE	78	8	4	10
SW	56	16	11	17
SE	76	8	5	11
All	69	11	7	13

Use of Sexed Semen, 2020

Herd Size	Use sexed semen	If use sexed semen, percent of cows bred with sexed semen	If use sexed semen, percent of heifers bred with sexed semen
	Percent of farms	Percent of herd	
1-49	12	31	56
50-99	27	23	47
100-199	35	21	55
200-299	56	19	62
300-699	65	24	65
700+	82	25	79
All	32	24	59

Use of Sexed Semen, 2020

Region	Use sexed semen	If use sexed semen, percent of cows bred with sexed semen	If use sexed semen, percent of heifers bred with sexed semen
	Percent of farms	Percent of herd	
NW	27	21	55
NE	32	26	61
SW	30	25	61
SE	42	22	57
All	32	24	59

Feed, 2020

Herd Size	Raised	Purchased
	Percent of feed	
1-49	81	19
50-99	84	16
100-199	84	16
200-299	82	18
300-699	79	21
700+	73	27
All	82	18

Feed, 2020

Region	Raised	Purchased
	Percent of feed	
NW	83	17
NE	82	18
SW	82	18
SE	81	19
All	82	18

Almost 90% of respondents were conventional farms, and two-thirds were sole proprietorships. Just under one-quarter reported that they will need additional labor within the next two years. Most indicated they would consider hiring/mentoring a military veteran, and just under half reported they would consider hiring a person who has been incarcerated. About one-fifth of respondents reported providing housing for employees.

Farm Production Management System, 2020¹

Herd Size	Conventional	Organic	Managed intensive grazing
	Percent of farms		
1-49	79	20	24
50-99	92	8	10
100-199	93	5	6
200-299	97	2	4
300-699	97	3	1
700+	99	1	0
All	90	9	11

¹Some operations selected more than one management system. A few operations specified they used managed intensive grazing, but did not specify whether they were also conventional or organic.

Farm Production Management System, 2020¹

Region	Conventional	Organic	Managed intensive grazing
	Percent of farms		
NW	89	10	11
NE	93	6	10
SW	85	15	16
SE	96	4	5
All	90	9	11

¹Some operations selected more than one management system. A few operations specified they used managed intensive grazing, but did not specify whether they were also conventional or organic.

Farm Business Arrangement, 2020

Herd Size	Sole proprietorship	Partnership	Corporation	LLC/LLP	Other ¹
	Percent of farms				
1-49	90	6	2	2	0
50-99	79	9	4	8	0
100-199	57	8	9	25	1
200-299	37	13	13	37	0
300-699	24	4	18	54	<1
700+	12	3	21	64	0
All	67	8	7	18	<1

¹Other were university and prison farms.

Farm Business Arrangement, 2020

Region	Sole proprietorship	Partnership	Corporation	LLC/LLP	Other ¹
	Percent of farms				
NW	75	7	8	10	<1
NE	69	5	5	21	0
SW	66	11	6	17	<1
SE	53	6	9	32	0
All	67	8	7	18	<1

¹Other were university and prison farms.

Labor, 2020

Herd Size	Will need additional labor in the next two years	If need labor, would mentor/hire a military veteran	If need labor, would hire a person who has been incarcerated.
	Percent of farms		
1-49	10	48	28
50-99	18	76	40
100-199	30	92	51
200-299	38	89	44
300-699	44	96	63
700+	55	100	68
All	23	84	48

Labor, 2020

Region	Will need additional labor in the next two years	If need labor, would mentor/hire a military veteran	If need labor, would hire a person who has been incarcerated.
	Percent of farms		
NW	20	81	49
NE	24	91	44
SW	24	76	43
SE	26	91	61
All	23	84	48

Employee Housing, 2020

Herd Size	Provide housing for employees
	Percent of farms
1-49	7
50-99	11
100-199	18
200-299	27
300-699	51
700+	55
All	18

Employee Housing, 2020

Region	Provide housing for employees
	Percent of farms
NW	21
NE	12
SW	23
SE	14
All	18

Respondents were asked how much money they had invested over the past five years in facility improvements or additions and how much they anticipated investing in the next five years. There was much uncertainty about the next five years. Many respondents wrote that it was dependent on milk prices or just put in a ‘?’ As one would expect during these times, the average investment in facilities per farm is expected to be lower in the upcoming five-year period.

Facility Improvements/Additions, 2015-2019

Herd Size	Dairy housing facilities	Feed handling systems/storage facilities	Milking system/facility	Manure handling systems/storage facilities
	Average investment per farm (dollars)			
1-49	5,600	2,400	1,400	1,200
50-99	21,600	8,100	8,000	3,900
100-199	73,000	19,100	32,600	14,200
200-299	217,900	30,100	104,100	54,200
300-699	456,600	71,100	179,900	97,100
700+	828,900	205,600	341,200	379,100
All	111,000	24,200	45,700	32,300

Facility Improvements/Additions, 2015-2019

Region	Dairy housing facilities	Feed handling systems/storage facilities	Milking system/facility	Manure handling systems/storage facilities
	Average investment per farm (dollars)			
NW	94,900	17,600	30,600	26,700
NE	128,100	28,800	49,000	35,100
SW	106,500	21,400	34,900	28,700
SE	125,300	35,000	85,300	45,800
All	111,000	24,200	45,700	32,300

Anticipated Facility Improvements/Additions, 2020-2024

Herd Size	Dairy housing facilities	Feed handling systems/storage facilities	Milking system/facility	Manure handling systems/storage facilities
	Average investment per farm (dollars)			
1-49	3,700	1,500	1,400	900
50-99	11,200	5,100	4,100	3,800
100-199	45,500	12,200	22,400	15,400
200-299	80,500	20,700	26,900	24,900
300-699	167,700	97,200	101,300	120,600
700+	570,800	165,100	260,200	346,700
All	56,800	20,900	27,000	30,900

Anticipated Facility Improvements/Additions, 2020-2024

Region	Dairy housing facilities	Feed handling systems/storage facilities	Milking system/facility	Manure handling systems/storage facilities
	Average investment per farm (dollars)			
NW	41,000	11,600	15,300	16,200
NE	80,200	25,200	30,200	31,800
SW	39,100	24,600	24,300	33,500
SE	81,700	25,500	48,700	52,000
All	56,800	20,900	27,000	30,900

Respondents were asked about conservation practices and alternative manure handling on their farms. Almost 60% use cover crops and 70% use grass waterways. Fifteen percent use composting, while sand separators, digesters, and nutrient recovery systems are primarily used on larger farms.

Conservation Practices, 2020

Herd Size	Cover crops	Diversion ponds	Buffer zones	No-till	Contour strips	Inter-seeding	Grass waterways
	Percent of farms indicating they use this practice						
1-49	54	3	23	27	29	25	64
50-99	55	5	23	48	30	17	70
100-199	63	6	28	65	39	17	72
200-299	64	8	30	65	37	18	73
300-699	73	11	38	70	37	23	76
700+	79	16	53	72	29	30	85
All	59	6	27	50	32	20	70

Conservation Practices, 2020

Region	Cover crops	Diversion ponds	Buffer zones	No-till	Contour strips	Inter-seeding	Grass waterways
	Percent of farms indicating they use this practice						
NW	58	7	25	45	25	23	76
NE	56	3	27	45	13	21	56
SW	66	8	28	54	62	19	80
SE	56	4	28	58	23	16	64
All	59	6	27	50	32	20	70

Alternative Manure Handling, 2020

Herd Size	Composting	Sand separator	Digester ¹	Nutrient recovery system ²
Percent of farms indicating they use this method				
1-49	18	0	<1	2
50-99	15	0	<1	3
100-199	11	0	<1	4
200-299	11	0	1	5
300-699	11	3	<1	3
700+	18	33	9	12
All	15	2	1	3

¹Some of the smaller farms are likely utilizing a digest, although it may not be on their farm.

²Some of the smaller farms are likely recovering nutrients from their manure, although they may not have an official “nutrient management system.”

Alternative Manure Handling, 2020

Region	Composting	Sand separator	Digester	Nutrient recovery system
Percent of farms indicating they use this method				
NW	19	2	<1	2
NE	13	1	<1	3
SW	15	1	1	3
SE	12	3	1	5
All	15	2	1	3

Respondents were asked about whether their operation will still be farming in five years and about challenges in the dairy industry. Over 80% reported that they will still be farming in five years. Many wrote comments indicating that this is dependent on milk prices, but that they were hopeful to still be farming. About two-thirds plan on milking the same number of cows, and about three-quarters will have the same number of cropland acres. Extreme weather was the most frequently chosen challenge to continuing milking, while balancing milk supply/demand is anticipated to be the top dairy industry disrupter over the next five years.

Will Operation Still be Farming in Five years, 2020

Herd Size	Yes	No
Percent of farms		
1-49	77	23
50-99	81	19
100-199	88	12
200-299	87	13
300-699	94	6
700+	99	1
All	83	17

Will Operation Still be Farming in Five years, 2020

Herd Size	Yes	No
Percent of farms		
NW	83	17
NE	82	18
SW	85	15
SE	83	17
All	83	17

Cows Milked in Five Years, 2020

Herd Size	None, will sell cows	Fewer cows	About the same number of cows	More cows
	Percent of farms			
1-49	23	3	65	9
50-99	20	4	68	8
100-199	13	6	70	11
200-299	12	4	64	20
300-699	4	4	73	19
700+	2	2	59	37
All	17	4	67	12

Cows Milked in Five Years, 2020

Region	None, will sell cows	Fewer cows	About the same number of cows	More cows
	Percent of farms			
NW	17	3	68	12
NE	16	5	66	13
SW	17	4	69	10
SE	18	4	65	13
All	17	4	67	12

Cropland Acres in Five Years, 2020

Herd Size	None	Fewer acres	About the same number of acres	More acres
	Percent of farms			
1-49	5	4	84	7
50-99	3	4	80	13
100-199	4	3	68	25
200-299	6	3	62	29
300-699	1	4	58	37
700+	3	0	39	58
All	4	4	73	19

Cropland Acres in Five Years, 2020

Region	None	Fewer acres	About the same number of acres	More acres
	Percent of farms			
NW	3	4	76	17
NE	4	4	72	20
SW	4	4	75	17
SE	4	3	70	23
All	4	4	73	19

Primary Challenges to Continuing Milking, 2020¹

Herd Size	Inability to find labor	Access to capital	Aging facilities	Access to land	Extreme weather conditions	Reg-ulations	Manure mgmt./disposal	Lack of public/private services in area	Manage day-to-day expenses	Manage long-term debt
	Percent of farms									
1-49	10	5	40	11	46	41	7	2	46	27
50-99	16	5	43	16	50	37	10	1	39	26
100-199	28	7	35	25	46	34	20	1	36	24
200-299	35	6	29	25	44	33	21	1	38	31
300-699	46	8	30	21	32	44	33	1	30	23
700+	50	8	15	24	35	68	47	1	13	12
All	21	6	38	18	46	39	15	1	39	25

¹Respondents could choose up to 3 challenges

Primary Challenges to Continuing Milking, 2020¹

Region	Inability to find labor	Access to capital	Aging facilities	Access to land	Extreme weather conditions	Reg-ulations	Manure mgmt./disposal	Lack of public/private services in area	Manage day-to-day expenses	Manage long-term debt
	Percent of farms									
NW	18	7	38	15	41	40	13	2	42	27
NE	22	5	39	18	52	43	16	1	31	21
SW	19	5	34	17	44	35	15	2	46	30
SE	30	5	43	23	49	40	20	1	27	19
All	21	6	38	18	46	39	15	1	39	25

¹Respondents could choose up to 3 challenges

Top Dairy Industry Disrupters in Next Five Year, 2020¹

Herd Size	Challenging weather patterns	Plant based foods	Animal welfare	Regulations	Groundwater concerns	Balancing milk supply/demand	Trade policies
	Percent of farms						
1-49	32	21	37	53	16	72	37
50-99	32	23	41	49	16	70	43
100-199	35	23	40	44	18	70	52
200-299	28	27	38	52	13	73	55
300-699	29	19	36	57	21	72	51
700+	20	17	44	75	26	61	43
All	31	22	39	51	17	70	44

¹Respondents could choose up to 3 disrupters.

Top Dairy Industry Disrupters in Next Five Year, 2020¹

Region	Challenging weather patterns	Plant based foods	Animal welfare	Regulations	Groundwater concerns	Balancing milk supply/demand	Trade policies
	Percent of farms						
NW	24	27	43	52	14	71	44
NE	35	18	39	55	18	68	43
SW	35	21	35	47	18	73	44
SE	33	23	42	49	18	69	47
All	31	22	39	51	17	70	44

¹Respondents could choose up to 3 disrupters.

Almost 10% of respondents have felt the need to access mental services in the past year due to farming challenges. This need was for both respondents and their family members. Six percent received mental health services.

Mental Health, 2020

Herd Size	Felt need to access mental health services in past year due to farming challenges	Need to access mental health services was for respondent ¹	Need to access mental health services was for other family member(s) ¹	Respondent or family member received mental health services in the past year
	Percent of farms			
1-49	7	70	28	6
50-99	8	71	34	6
100-199	10	76	49	5
200-299	16	66	41	9
300-699	14	70	36	8
700+	9	73	36	8
All	9	71	36	6

¹A few respondents indicated they had felt the need to access mental health services but did not specify if this need was for themselves or family member(s).

Mental Health, 2020

Region	Felt need to access mental health services in past year due to farming challenges	Need to access mental health services was for respondent ¹	Need to access mental health services was for other family member(s) ¹	Respondent or family member received mental health services in the past year
	Percent of farms			
NW	10	73	36	7
NE	9	74	37	6
SW	10	70	36	6
SE	8	69	36	4
All	9	71	36	6

¹A few respondents indicated they had felt the need to access mental health services but did not specify if this need was for themselves or family member(s).

About one-quarter of respondents indicated their milk purchaser has adopted a supply management plan. Over half of respondents reported utilizing at least one risk management program, with ARC/PLC and dairy margin coverage being the most common. Almost half of respondents receive no income from off-farm employment and very few farms have diversified into agri-tourism, specialty crops or value-added products to provide more income.

Supply Management, 2020

Herd Size	Milk purchaser has adopted a supply management plan
	Percent of farms
1-49	26
50-99	21
100-199	25
200-299	29
300-699	20
700+	26
All	24

Supply Management, 2020

Region	Milk purchaser has adopted a supply management plan
	Percent of farms
NW	14
NE	19
SW	33
SE	31
All	24

Risk Management Programs, 2020

Herd Size	Dairy margin coverage	Milk contracting	Crop insurance	Dairy revenue protection	ARC/PLC	Locking in inputs
Percent of farms indicating they use this program						
1-49	32	4	18	7	33	17
50-99	53	4	38	14	55	35
100-199	69	8	59	26	71	48
200-299	77	15	70	37	77	63
300-699	73	29	76	50	78	72
700+	75	50	81	70	69	79
All	54	9	43	21	56	39

Risk Management Programs, 2020

Region	Dairy margin coverage	Milk contracting	Crop insurance	Dairy revenue protection	ARC/PLC	Locking in inputs
Percent of farms indicating they use this program						
NW	48	8	37	17	48	38
NE	55	8	43	22	57	37
SW	54	9	47	22	56	34
SE	67	15	51	27	69	54
All	54	9	43	21	56	39

Family Income from Off-farm Employment, 2020

Herd Size	None	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	More than 75%
Percent of farms					
1-49	38	30	15	11	6
50-99	53	27	10	6	4
100-199	51	26	12	6	5
200-299	53	26	11	4	6
300-699	55	22	9	7	7
700+	64	20	11	3	2
All	49	27	12	7	5

Family Income from Off-farm Employment, 2020

Region	None	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	More than 75%
Percent of farms					
NW	51	28	10	7	4
NE	50	26	12	7	5
SW	47	27	12	8	6
SE	49	26	13	7	5
All	49	27	12	7	5

Diversification in Past Two Years to Provide More Income , 2020

Herd Size	Agri-tourism	Specialty crops	Value-added products
	Percent of farms indicating they diversified in this way		
1-49	1	10	8
50-99	1	4	7
100-199	1	4	5
200-299	1	5	8
300-699	1	4	4
700+	0	5	10
All	1	6	7

Diversification in Past Two Years to Provide More Income , 2020

Region	Agri-tourism	Specialty crops	Value-added products
	Percent of farms indicating they diversified in this way		
NW	1	4	6
NE	1	6	7
SW	1	9	8
SE	2	4	7
All	1	6	7

The person most responsible for day-to-day decision making on the farm were asked to answer questions on age and farm succession. Almost half of primary decision makers were aged 50-64. The year in which they began managing their farm was split fairly evenly over the past several decades. Only 42% have identified a successor who will eventually take over the management of the farm, and these successors are primarily their children. When asked to anticipate what will happen to the farm when they retire, about 40% thought the farm would be turned over to a successor who will continue milking, while 30% were unsure. Over one-third have an estate plan, but only 30% reported having some form of long-term healthcare insurance (a couple respondents wrote 'Medicare' next to the question, so we have to assume that some interpreted this as having any retirement health insurance as opposed to 'long-term healthcare insurance.'). The financial capacity of the farm to allow more owners and not having a successor were the top barriers to planning farm succession.

Age of Primary Decision Maker, 2020

Herd Size	Under 35	35-49	50-64	65 or older
	Percent of farms			
1-49	17	25	44	14
50-99	14	24	48	14
100-199	8	22	51	19
200-299	8	22	53	17
300-699	5	29	49	17
700+	3	30	53	14
All	12	25	48	15

Age of Primary Decision Maker, 2020

Region	Under 35	35-49	50-64	65 or older
	Percent of farms			
NW	13	29	44	14
NE	11	24	50	15
SW	13	25	46	16
SE	6	18	58	18
All	12	25	48	15

Year Primary Decision Maker Began Managing Their Farm, 2020

Herd Size	Before 1970	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
	Percent of farms					
1-49	7	11	19	18	19	26
50-99	6	10	21	22	19	22
100-199	10	14	23	21	18	14
200-299	9	13	26	25	13	14
300-699	8	13	24	23	21	11
700+	11	14	16	26	19	14
All	8	11	22	21	18	20

Year Primary Decision Maker Began Managing Their Farm, 2020

Region	Before 1970	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
	Percent of farms					
NW	6	12	18	22	20	22
NE	7	10	23	22	19	19
SW	8	10	22	19	19	22
SE	9	14	27	23	13	14
All	8	11	22	21	18	20

Successor, 2020

Herd Size	Have identified a successor who will take over management of farm
	Percent of farms
1-49	30
50-99	37
100-199	50
200-299	63
300-699	57
700+	62
All	42

Successor, 2020

Region	Have identified a successor who will take over management of farm
	Percent of farms
NW	39
NE	39
SW	42
SE	51
All	42

Successor, 2020¹

Herd Size	Spouse	Child/children	Other family	Other non-family
Percent of farms				
1-49	1	90	6	3
50-99	3	89	7	3
100-199	1	87	10	2
200-299	2	88	11	2
300-699	1	92	8	3
700+	0	75	18	20
All	2	88	9	4

¹Some respondents indicated more than one type of successor.

Successor, 2020¹

Region	Spouse	Child/children	Other family	Other non-family
Percent of farms				
NW	2	91	7	2
NE	1	89	8	5
SW	2	87	9	4
SE	2	85	12	5
All	2	88	9	4

¹Some respondents indicated more than one type of successor.

What Will Happen to Farm when Retire, 2020

Herd Size	Turn over to successor, continue milking	Turn over to successor, continue farming, but not milking	Sell to another farmer	Rent/lease to another farmer	Sell for non-farm use	Leave idle	Unsure
Percent of farms							
1-49	30	13	5	10	2	2	38
50-99	39	12	5	9	2	2	31
100-199	43	14	5	7	2	1	28
200-299	54	11	4	9	1	1	20
300-699	57	5	7	4	1	0	26
700+	72	3	6	1	1	0	17
All	41	12	5	8	2	2	30

What Will Happen to Farm when Retire, 2020

Region	Turn over to successor, continue milking	Turn over to successor, continue farming, but not milking	Sell to another farmer	Rent/lease to another farmer	Sell for non-farm use	Leave idle	Unsure
Percent of farms							
NW	42	11	6	8	2	1	30
NE	40	9	6	8	2	2	33
SW	43	12	5	8	2	1	29
SE	41	15	4	8	2	2	28
All	41	12	5	8	2	2	30

Estate Plan, 2020

Herd Size	Have an estate plan
	Percent of farms
1-49	23
50-99	31
100-199	43
200-299	56
300-699	57
700+	74
All	37

Estate Plan, 2020

Region	Have an estate plan
	Percent of farms
NW	31
NE	38
SW	33
SE	52
All	37

Long-term Healthcare Insurance, 2020

Herd Size	Have long-term healthcare insurance
	Percent of farms
1-49	22
50-99	27
100-199	35
200-299	40
300-699	44
700+	49
All	30

Long-term Healthcare Insurance, 2020

Region	Have long-term healthcare insurance
	Percent of farms
NW	26
NE	32
SW	30
SE	35
All	30

Primary Barriers to Planning Succession, 2020¹

Herd Size	No successor	Financial capacity of farm to allow more owners	Too much debt currently on assets	Lack of communication among farm/family members	Resistance to change	Ideas about farm's future too different among farm/family members	Don't know how to start	Access to professionals to help with process	No barriers/already have succession plan
	Percent of farms								
1-49	35	26	15	12	17	15	16	5	35
50-99	31	31	25	12	15	14	15	6	28
100-199	23	39	32	19	11	15	12	9	28
200-299	21	39	41	14	5	16	11	13	26
300-699	27	32	34	19	8	11	6	8	34
700+	19	30	24	27	8	16	4	4	40
All	29	32	26	15	13	14	13	7	31

¹Respondents could choose up to 3 barriers

Primary Barriers to Planning Succession, 2020¹

Region	No successor	Financial capacity of farm to allow more owners	Too much debt currently on assets	Lack of communication among farm/family members	Resistance to change	Ideas about farm's future too different among farm/family members	Don't know how to start	Access to professionals to help with process	No barriers/already have succession plan
	Percent of farms								
NW	29	30	24	13	13	14	13	6	31
NE	31	29	25	15	12	14	13	8	33
SW	26	35	29	16	15	15	15	8	27
SE	29	34	24	15	13	15	11	7	31
All	29	32	26	15	13	14	13	7	31

¹Respondents could choose up to 3 barriers

Some additional cross-tabulations were requested. More can be provided if desired.

Use of Beef and Sexed Semen, 2020

	Use sexed semen	Do not use sexed semen
Use Beef Semen	Percent of farms	
Yes	45	55
No	17	83

Facility Improvements/Additions, 2015-2019

Operation will still be farming in five years	Dairy housing facilities	Feed handling systems/storage facilities	Milking system/facility	Manure handling systems/storage facilities
	Average investment per farm (dollars)			
Yes	130,000	28,800	53,700	39,200
No	32,800	5,900	14,200	4,800

Anticipated Facility Improvements/Additions, 2020-2024

Operation will still be farming in five years	Dairy housing facilities	Feed handling systems/storage facilities	Milking system/facility	Manure handling systems/storage facilities
	Average investment per farm (dollars)			
Yes	69,900	25,600	33,400	38,100
No	3,100	1,700	1,300	2,100

Long-term Healthcare Insurance, 2020

Age of primary decision maker	Have long-term healthcare insurance
	Percent of farms
Under 35	23
35-49	26
50-64	29
65 or older	45

Addendum 1

The 2017 Census of Agriculture can serve as a reference to the overall size, location and milk production on Wisconsin dairy farms. The Census provides strata and county level data. Most, but not all, of the strata align nicely with the 2020 Dairy Producer Survey. The Census collects data on milk sales, not milk production. As higher sales reflect higher production, however, milk sales can be used to reflect how much milk is being produced. Only 2% of farms had 1,000 or more cows, but they accounted for 30% of milk sales. Thirty percent of farms had fewer than 50 cows and accounted for 4% of milk sales.

Wisconsin Dairy Farms and Milk Sales, 2017¹

Herd Size	Farms with milk sales	Milk Sales
	Percent	
1-49	30	4
50-99	35	13
100-199	18	14
200-499	11	23
500-999	3	16
1,000+	2	30
All	100	100

¹Source: USDA, NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture

Wisconsin Dairy Farms and Milk Sales, 2017¹

Region	Farms with milk sales	Milk Sales
	Percent	
NW	32	22
NE	21	24
SW	31	29
SE	16	25
All	100	100

¹Source: USDA, NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture

Addendum 2

Copy of the questionnaire



WISCONSIN DAIRY PRODUCER SURVEY 2020

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
PO Box 8911
2811 Agriculture Drive
Madison, WI 53708-8911

Please return by **March 27, 2020** in the provided envelope.

Instructions: "**Operation**" refers to the land owned, rented or used by you or by the partnership, corporation, or organization named on the address.

1. How many milk cows are currently on your operation, including dry cows and first calf heifers?

- ¹ 1-49 50-99 100-199 200-299 300-699 700 or more

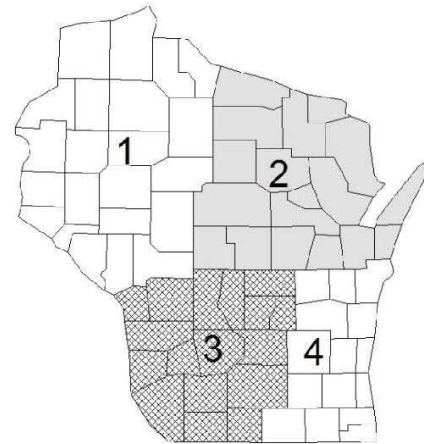
2. What is your current rolling herd average? ² _____ lbs

Average percent fat? ³ _____ %

Average percent protein? ⁴ _____ %

3. In what region of the state are the cows on your operation located? (*Please refer to map*)

- ⁵ Region 1
 Region 2
 Region 3
 Region 4



4. Are any of your heifers kept at a custom heifer raiser? ⁶ Yes No

If yes, at what age do they **leave** your operation? ⁷ _____ months old

At what age do they **return** to your operation? ⁸ _____ months old

Are any raised in-state? ⁹ Yes No

Are any raised out-of-state? ¹⁰ Yes No If yes, which state(s)? ¹¹ _____

5. Do you currently use beef semen on any of your dairy herd? ¹² Yes No

If yes, what percent of your **cows** are bred to beef bulls? ¹³ _____ %

What percent of your **heifers** are bred to beef bulls? ¹⁴ _____ %

6. Do you currently feed bull calves or excess heifers to market weight? ¹⁵ Yes No

What percent of your **steers** were fed in 2019? ¹⁶ _____ %

What percent of your **heifers** were fed in 2019? ¹⁷ _____ %

7. How do you market your male calves? (*Check all that apply*)

- ¹⁸ Sales barn ¹⁹ Dealer ²⁰ Directly to another farmer ²¹ Directly to a calf ranch

8. At what weight do you market the **majority** of your male calves?
 22 Less than 1 week old 150-300 pounds 300-600 pounds 600 or more pounds

9. Do you currently use sexed semen? 23 Yes No
 If yes, what percent of your **cows** are bred with sexed semen? 24 _____ %
 What percent of your **heifers** are bred with sexed semen? 25 _____ %

10. By volume, what percent of feed do you **raise** for your operation?

26	%
----	---

 By volume, what percent of feed do you **purchase** for your operation? +

27	%
----	---

 =100%

11. Which of the following describe your farm production management system? (*Check all that apply*)
 28 Conventional 29 Organic 30 Managed intensive grazing

12. Which of the following **best** describes your farm business arrangement?
 31 Sole proprietorship Partnership Corporation
 Limited Liability Company/Partnership (LLC/LLP) Other (*please specify*) _____

13. Will you need additional labor within the next two years? 32 Yes No
 If yes, would you consider mentoring/hiring a military veteran? 33 Yes No
 Would you consider hiring a person who has been incarcerated? 34 Yes No

14. Do you provide housing for employees? 35 Yes No

15. How much money did you invest in FACILITY improvements or additions AND how much do you estimate you may invest in the next five years?

	Investments 2015-2019	Expected Investments 2020-2024
a) Dairy cow housing facilities	36 \$	37 \$
b) Feed handling systems or storage facilities	38 \$	39 \$
c) Milking system or facility	40 \$	41 \$
d) Manure handling systems or storage facilities	42 \$	43 \$

16. Which of the following conservation practices/programs do you use on your farm? (*Check all that apply*)

- 44 Cover crops 45 Diversion ponds
 46 Buffer zones 47 No-till
 48 Contour strips 49 Inter-seeding
 50 Grass waterways 51 Other (*please specify*) _____

17. Do you utilize any of the following alternative manure handling methods?

- 52 Composting 53 Sand separator 54 Digester
 55 Nutrient recovery system 56 Other (*please specify*) _____

CHALLENGES

18. Do you think this operation will still be farming in five years? ⁵⁷ Yes No
- How many cows do you anticipate milking in five years?
- ⁵⁸ None, will sell cows Fewer cows About the same number of cows More cows
- How many acres of cropland do you anticipate this operation will crop in five years?
- ⁵⁹ None Fewer acres About the same number of acres More acres
19. In addition to low milk prices, what are the primary challenges in order to continue milking on your farm?
(Please check your **top 3** challenges)
- ⁶⁰ Inability to find labor ⁶¹ Access to capital
- ⁶² Aging facilities ⁶³ Access to land
- ⁶⁴ Extreme weather conditions ⁶⁵ Regulations
- ⁶⁶ Manure management/disposal ⁶⁷ Lack of public and/or private services in your area
- ⁶⁸ Managing day-to-day expenses (paying open accounts, short-term production loans, etc.)
- ⁶⁹ Managing long-term debt (real-estate loans, loans for capital expenses, etc.)
- ⁷⁰ Other (please specify) _____
20. What will be the top dairy industry disrupters over the next 5 years? (Please check the **top 3** disrupters)
- ⁷¹ Changing weather patterns ⁷² Plant based foods
- ⁷³ Animal welfare ⁷⁴ Regulations
- ⁷⁵ Groundwater concerns ⁷⁶ Balancing milk supply/demand
- ⁷⁷ Trade policies
21. Have you felt the **need** to access mental health services in the past year due to farming challenges? ⁷⁸ Yes No
- If yes, for whom: ⁷⁹ Yourself ⁸⁰ Other family members
22. Did you or one of you family members **receive** mental health services in the past year? ⁸¹ Yes No
23. Has your milk purchaser adopted a supply management plan? ⁸² Yes No
24. What forms of risk management programs do you use? (Please check **all that apply**)
- ⁸³ DMC (Dairy Margin Coverage) ⁸⁴ Milk contracting
- ⁸⁵ Crop insurance ⁸⁶ Dairy revenue protection
- ⁸⁷ ARC/PLC (Agriculture Loss Coverage/Price Loss Coverage)
- ⁸⁸ Locking in inputs (ex., feed, fuel, seed, chemicals, fertilizers)
25. What percent of your family income comes from off-farm employment?
- ⁸⁹ None 1-25% 26-50% 51-75% More than 75%
26. In the past 2 years have you diversified your farm to provide more income in any of the following ways?
- ⁹⁰ Agri-tourism ⁹¹ Specialty crops ⁹² Value-added products

FARM SUCCESSION

Please answer the remaining questions on farm succession for the **person most responsible** for the day-to-day operation and decision making on the operation.

27. What is your age? ⁹³ Under 35 35-49 50-64 65 or older
28. In what year did you begin to manage this farm? ⁹⁴ _____
29. Have you identified a successor who will eventually take over the management of your farm? ⁹⁵ Yes No
- If Yes, what relation is that person to you?
- ⁹⁶ Spouse ⁹⁷ Child/children ⁹⁸ Other family ⁹⁹ Other non-family
30. What do you anticipate will happen to your operation when you retire? (*Check only one*)
- ¹⁰⁰ Farm will be turned over to successor(s) who will continue milking
- Farm will be turned over to successor(s) who will continue farming, but not milking
- Farm will be sold to another farmer
- Farm will be rented/leased to another farmer
- Farm will be sold for non-farm use
- Farm will be left idle
- Unsure
31. Do you have an estate plan? ¹⁰¹ Yes No
32. Do you have long-term healthcare insurance? ¹⁰² Yes No
33. What are the **primary** barriers to planning your succession? (*Check your top 3 barriers*)
- ¹⁰³ No successor
- ¹⁰⁴ Financial capacity of the farm to allow more owners into the business
- ¹⁰⁵ Too much debt currently on the assets
- ¹⁰⁶ Lack of communication about the plan among farm/family members
- ¹⁰⁷ Resistance to change
- ¹⁰⁸ Ideas about the future of the farm too different among farm/family members
- ¹⁰⁹ Don't know how to start
- ¹¹⁰ Access to professionals to help with the process
- ¹¹¹ I have no barriers to planning succession/I already have a succession plan

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! We know that you are busy and appreciate your help. If you have any comments that you would like to share with us, please write them here (or on an additional piece of paper) and include them in the return envelope provided.

34. Other Comments:
