

District 5 Director Harold Cnossen Retires from MMPA Board

MMPA District 5 Director Harold Cnossen retired from the MMPA Board during MMPA's District 5 meeting on February 20.

Harold was elected as District 5 Director 19 years ago to a 1-year term, taking the place of former MMPA board member Joel Chapin who had passed away. He has since been elected to 6 consecutive 3 year terms by his fellow dairy farmers.

During his time as the District 5 Director, Harold helped lead the direction of the cooperative through many significant events. He is particularly proud of the cooperative's decision to enter into a joint venture with Leprino foods and the continuation of that relationship. Maintaining, expanding and increasing product offerings at MMPA's Ovid and Constantine plants has also been important in Harold's view.

"I am proud that we chose to spend money to continue and expand our Ovid and Constantine plants," Harold says. "MMPA has done a great job growing the product line from mainly making butter and powder to selling specialized products like sweetened condensed milk to candy manufacturers and ice cream makers."

As a member of MMPA's board, Harold had the opportunity to travel to National Milk Producers Federation Annual Meetings where he and his wife Karen were able to get to know other dairy farmers from across the country.

"We really appreciate the trips we've been able to take and the people we've met and get to reconnect with each year," he says. "It's been a good experience meeting people from all over."

The fellow MMPA members who elected Harold to the MMPA board honored him with a standing ovation following his address to them during the Evert local meeting in January.

"That was really special to me," Harold says. "A lot of people came up to me to express their appreciation about the time I spent on the board – that really means a lot to me."



Harold may be retired from the MMPA board, but he is certainly not retiring from dairy farming. He and Karen operate Prosperous Dairy Farm in Falmouth, with their son, Bob, and his family. The family milks 400 cows and farms 1,300 acres.

Dairy Heifer Program Provides Youth with Opportunity to Learn and Earn

Michigan 4-H and FFA members with an interest in learning more about what's involved in raising a dairy animal have until April 15 to sign up for the fifth annual Michigan Dairy Heifer Replacement Project.

"The Michigan Dairy Heifer Replacement Project provides youth with an opportunity to learn about and gain valuable experience with the dairy industry through the process of selecting, raising, breeding and marketing a dairy animal," says Joe Domecq, Michigan 4-H dairy youth specialist and coordinator of the program. "Though the primary objective is for tomorrow's dairy producers to gain knowledge about dairy cattle and the dairy industry, this program also gives participants a chance to earn money by selling their project animals during a special sale held at Michigan Dairy Expo."

In 2006, two Michigan 4-H members took part in the program and sold their animals for an average price of \$2,100.

The 2007 Michigan Dairy Heifer Replacement Project is open to all Michigan 4-H and FFA youth who were at least 9 but no older than 19 as of Jan. 1, 2007. Heifers must be exhibited in the All-Michigan Dairy Youth Show at Michigan Dairy Expo, and entries are limited to a maximum of two per exhibitor.

Participants must keep accurate and detailed feeding, health and reproduction records, and supply pedigree and identification information.

Any breed of dairy heifer – registered or grade – can be entered, though sires of the heifers must be registered, and their dams must meet breed-specific minimum production requirements. Heifers must have been born between June and October 2005 and confirmed pregnant and due to calve between September 1 and December 1, 2007.

The entry deadline is April 15. Official rules and entry forms are at MSU Extension county offices and the Michigan 4-H Dairy Office, or downloaded at <http://www.canr.msu.edu/anscikids/dairy.html>.

For more information on the 2007 Michigan Dairy Heifer Replacement Project, call Domecq at (517) 353-7855 or send an e-mail to domecqj@msu.edu.

Michigan Dairy Expo is the largest annual dairy event in the state. More than 200 4-H members and other youth compete in a dairy quiz bowl, a cattle show, and dairy judging and dairy management contests during the weeklong event, and state dairy breed associations conduct cattle shows and other activities.