



### --- EXTERNAL TALKING POINTS ---

As families and a dairy business partnership, MVP Dairy, LLC strives to create wholesome products in a sustainable manner. Using best management practices, our farm works to achieve the best in animal welfare, responsible environmental stewardship, sustainable community engagement, and the creation of a safe, rewarding work environment.

#### Water quality

**The farm is designed to reduce odor and runoff by recycling waste.**

- The dairy includes a proven anaerobic treatment cell system that has the same core process currently in use at eight Mercer County municipalities:
  - Manure is efficiently removed from the barns multiple times per day and separated into various valuable products.
  - Nutrient resources extracted from the cow manure will be applied to our own crops, and only in prescribed necessary amounts in the right locations and right times for natural fertilization of the crops that feed our cows. Treated wastewater will be irrigated onto land that utilizes cover crops so there is always a growing crop on the land benefiting from the water and nutrients.
  - All nutrients that do not need to be applied to our farm land will be supplied to other farmers.
- We are committed to doing our part to protect our watersheds and water quality for all of us to enjoy, while also operating a high-quality, exemplary dairy neighbors can be proud of.
- The use of cover crops, no-till methods, grid soil sampling, grass filter strips along open ditches and variable-rate nutrient application technology will be used on the farm to help protect and conserve the environment, including soil health, and maintain water quality.

## Manure management

**An innovative and patented anaerobic treatment cell system will significantly reduce waste volume and odor, and implement a recycling system which maximizes benefits for animal care, crop care and the environment.**

- The core of this system is a proven technology used by many municipalities throughout the United States and relies upon natural treatment of the manure after valuable components have been separated for beneficial uses.
- Reduce
  - The system will extract nutrients from the manure so that over 70 percent of the total manure volume generated can be applied as valuable and **virtually odor-free**, low nutrient irrigation water to grow feed for the cows.
- Re-use
  - The farm will use sand bedding which will be **reclaimed and recycled** as bedding through this system. Fiber solids removed by the system can be applied to fields as **high-organic** content fertilizer.
- Re-cycle
  - Manure from the farm will go through a 4-step process to separate and treat solids and liquids before being converted into organic fertilizer. Manure is removed from the barns by flushing multiple times daily with completely recycled wastewater.
    - i. Sand bedding is separated from the manure, washed and reused, which removes approximately 15 percent of the manure stream volume
    - ii. Organic solids are separated, removing an additional 15 percent of the manure stream volume
    - iii. The processed manure moves to settling basins where a majority of any remaining solids will settle and be removed as a nutrient dense slurry.
    - iv. The remaining liquid flows into an anaerobic treatment cell for final manure treatment, resulting in irrigation water with **little to no odor**. This treated water will be used to supplement the recycled water to flush the barns several times per day.
  - All of the nutrients and water produced by the dairy will be applied to cropland to grow grains and forages, most of which will eventually feed the cows on the dairy.

## **Odor/flies**

**We construct and operate our farms with our neighbors in mind by using innovative best management practices to create an environment that minimizes fly populations and odor.**

- By the time the manure goes through the entire treatment system and is ready for irrigation and application to fields, it will be virtually odor-free.
- The barns on the farm are tunnel ventilated to aid wind speed and cooling, and will exhaust out the back of the buildings. Manure is flushed from the barns multiple times daily. The reduced presence of manure and constant air movement limits fly breeding.
- The side of the barns will be constructed with a transparent polycarbonate siding that allows natural light into the buildings, creating a positive environment for the cows and negative environment for pests.
- Careful attention to building layout, landscaping and overall dairy design will create a modern and aesthetic presentation to the public.

## **Animal Welfare**

**Taking care of our cows is of the highest priority. From cow-friendly design to working with top animal health experts and implementing strict certification standards, the farm will operate transparently and humanely.**

- Both the McCartys and VanTilburgs work with top experts in animal nutrition and well-being, with all McCarty Family Farms locations already having earned certification by Validus, an independent firm with the most stringent requirements for socially-responsible, scientifically-based, economically-viable and long-term solutions for dairy animal care.
  - This intensive animal welfare certification program was developed and is regularly reviewed by renowned animal welfare expert Temple Grandin, and is only attained by dairies that meet the strictest requirements.
  - The Validus Certified Responsible Producer seal is an assurance that the farm earned certification in each area offered by Validus: Animal Welfare Review, Environmental Review and On-Farm Security Review.
  - In addition, key employees at each dairy are certified in the Beef Quality Assurance Program.
- The mechanical, rotary-style parlor system being installed at the dairy benefits the health and well-being of cows in several ways. The parlor provides an efficient and predictable routine for the cows that lowers stress. Routine health checks and care will be conducted as the cows exit the milking parlor, allowing them to quickly return to their barn/stall where they can spend more time eating, drinking, sleeping and socializing with other cows to their liking and as naturally as possible.
- The side of the barns at the dairy will be constructed with a transparent polycarbonate siding that allows natural light into the buildings. This reduces animal stress, in addition to creating an environment that is difficult for flies to live within.

## **Road usage**

**We understand concerns associated with increased dairy-related traffic on local roads, and are committed to operating our dairy with minimal impact.**

- We expect the impact of farm-related traffic to be minimal and nearly unnoticeable.
- The new dairy will be sited adjacent to U.S. Route 33 and Hasis Rd., only using a 150-yard portion of one township road to access the farm.
- Vehicle traffic to and from the dairy, once operational, is expected to increase traffic by about 1.6 percent (100 vehicles) per day in this area, according to 2014 Ohio Department of Transportation statistics.

## **Labor**

**The creation of dozens of new jobs for existing and new residents will increase local housing, spending and tax income, providing a boost to Mercer County and the surrounding area's economy.**

- The new dairy will require the hiring of approximately 35 employees once it becomes operational, providing a boost to the local economy as they will reside and spend their income within Mercer County.
  - An increase in these new local jobs will also translate to more children in local school districts, resulting in increased housing demand and tax revenues for the county and state.
- The dairy will hire the best-qualified applicants for open positions, and encourage local residents to apply for these positions.

## **Why Mercer County, Ohio?**

**Mercer County's strong agricultural heritage, proximity to our main milk customer and the VanTilburgs' shared vision for a sustainable modern dairy has us excited to be a part of this community.**

- We believe our success is dependent upon the communities where we live and operate our farms, and when the community grows and prospers, so do we. We are excited to be a part of a community with such a proud agricultural heritage, and are dedicated to our mission of being a partner and neighbor local residents will be proud to call their own.
- The VanTilburg family is a valuable partner for this new venture because of their longstanding positive operations and engagement in the local community.
- The construction of this new, state-of-the-art dairy allows us to implement our shared vision and design for a cutting-edge, unique, efficient and environmentally-friendly operation the community will be proud to call their neighbor.
- The new dairy will be constructed just 18 miles from Dannon's largest U.S. yogurt production facility in Minster, Ohio. All milk from the farm is expected to be supplied to this facility for yogurt production. The dairy's location will ensure a fast "cow-to-cup" process that is expected to result in high-quality, fresh and wholesome yogurt to consumers.
- The volume of milk expected to be supplied by the new dairy to Dannon will fulfill a portion of the company's growth needs, with the remainder to be supplied by other local dairies.

## **Community involvement/ History of good works**

**We are committed to our cows, the environment and our communities and have a 100-year track record of operating innovative and award-winning farms focused on sustainability.**

- We have a solid track record of innovative and award-winning operations that reduce environmental impact, increase sustainability and bring positive impacts to the communities where we operate. Examples of this include:
  - Yogurt for Youth - a collaboration with Dannon that provides yogurt to local schools near our farms in Kansas and Nebraska.
  - Transparency - Plans for a visitors' center on the Mercer County farm that will be open to the public, where visitors can learn about the dairy and milk production.
  - Sustainability
    - An innovative and patented anaerobic treatment cell system will be installed on the Mercer County dairy that will drastically reduce water consumption and odor, while implementing a recycling system beneficial for animal care, crop care and the environment. This is a proven style of system, already in use in eight Mercer County municipalities.
    - The VanTilburgs have been recognized as Ohio's No-Till Business of the Year and received the Ohio Master Farmer Award, in addition to other awards for their conservation efforts. These include the use of cover crops, no-till methods, grid soil sampling, grass filter strips along open ditches and variable-rate nutrient application technology to help protect and conserve the environment and maintain water quality.
  - Innovation - In 2011, the construction of an on-farm condensing plant (the first of its kind in the nation) at the McCartys' Rexford, Kansas farm, allowed for quicker, fresher transport and processing of milk through a process that reclaims two-thirds of the water from the milk to be reused to operate the condensing facility, as drinking water for cattle or for watering crops.
  - Award-winning
    - McCarty Family Farms

- 2013 Innovative Dairy Farmer of the Year by the International Dairy Foods Association and Dairy Today magazine
  - 2014 Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy's Outstanding Dairy Sustainability award
  - In 2007, the community of Bird City, Kansas requested the McCartys construct a dairy, recognizing the boost that a well-run and reputable dairy brings to their local economy, schools and more.
- VanTilburg Farms
    - Ohio No-Till Business of the Year
    - Ohio Master Farmer Award
    - Certified Crop Adviser of the Year
- Job Creation - With the construction of the Mercer County dairy, McCarty Family Farms operating in Kansas and soon in Ohio will have provided steady jobs for more approximately 210 employees. In addition, VanTilburg Farms' growing ventures over the past 20 years currently provides jobs to 70 employees.