



June 26, 2017

## **UW-Platteville officials mark Cheese Day**

**MONROE, Wis. – University of Wisconsin-Platteville officials were among those who celebrated “Wisconsin Cheese Day” Monday, June 26 with Gov. Scott Walker and other industry and political leaders.**

**Dr. Wayne Weber, dean of the College of Business, Industry, Life Science and Agriculture, and Dr. Rami Reddy, who becomes the director of the School of Agriculture July 1, participated in festivities at Klondike Cheese Company, just outside of Monroe, Wisconsin.**

**“Now that cheese is the official dairy product of Wisconsin, it’s only fitting that we visit some of the more than 140 cheese producers in the state to acknowledge their role in keeping Wisconsin a world leader in the industry,” Gov. Walker said. “The state’s 1,200 licensed cheesemakers work hard every day to produce more than 600 varieties of cheese that are sold around the world, and Wisconsin Cheese Day is a chance for us to celebrate their successes.”**

**Wisconsin cheesemakers make 27 percent of the nation’s cheese, ranking Wisconsin as the top cheese producing state, according to the governor’s press release prior to the event. If Wisconsin were a country, it would rank fourth in the world in overall cheese production.**

**“As the governor talked about, dairy is a \$43.4 billion industry, which is part of the \$88 billion economic impact on the state,” Weber said. “The whole dairy industry has such an impact not only on Wisconsin but the whole tri-state region.”**

**“This is a good reminder for us how important the dairy industry is to the state of**

Wisconsin, more importantly to this part of the state of Wisconsin,” said State **Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green)**. “One of the things I am so impressed with is the economic impact to businesses in my district. It’s huge.”

Monday’s activities featured a plant tour of Klondike Cheese **Company, which is in the process of a major expansion to its fourth-generation family-owned plant. The Klondike Cheese Factory features many custom-built machines to aid in its production.**

“This tour really brought it home in that, number one, we are graduating the agriculture leaders of the future,” said Weber. “Our graduates have the **background to come into these processes and other aspects of the dairy industry and have an immediate impact. Number two, looking around this plant, Kraemer Brothers Construction is the contractor here, and they are a good partner with UW-Platteville and the building construction management program. We’re also looking at all these processing machines, and those are tied to our metal processing technology program and our manufacturing program. All of these are impacted by the types of leaders UW-Platteville graduates.**”

**There are more than 9,000 dairy farms throughout the state providing nearly 80,000 jobs, the governor’s press release said. Many of those jobs are covered by UW-Platteville graduates.**

“The placement of **UW-Platteville** graduates is so high in agriculture,” Marklein said. “A lot of these jobs are fairly high tech, involving chemistry **and other sciences. What is happening at UW-Platteville aligns well with some of the jobs** being created here.”

**State Rep. Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville) added, “UW-Platteville is tremendous, and you can see through some of the engineering in this plant alone. We have a premier engineering school right next to my district. UW-Platteville is a very important player in Southwest Wisconsin.”**

**UW-Platteville offers hands-on learning experiences inside and outside the classroom, including courses at Pioneer Farm that ready students for the latest industry standards. In 2016, the university launched a new major in dairy science.**

**“We expanded our dairy science into a major, and we have 59 students signed up for the major,” Reddy said. “We have students coming from rural backgrounds whose experiences are expanding here for more opportunities. The businesses are growing, and we are growing our students’ skills set.”**

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