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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FROM: Mike Wildeck, Dairy Agent/Director
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RELEASE: Host Farm For 2011 Farm Technology Days Showcases Dairy

The fact that Seehafer Acres, Inc, host farm for the 2011 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days is also a modern 200+ cow dairy operation comes as no surprise. "Dairy is king" in Marathon County, the states largest county and one of the premier agriculture counties in Wisconsin. According to the most recent National Agricultural Statistics Service data, Marathon County leads all other Wisconsin counties in milk production, hay production, barley production, and dry-root ginseng production.

In 2004, Steve Deller, Professor of Agriculture and Applied Economics, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, UW-Madison, analyzed the most recent economic data and reported;

- Agriculture provides jobs for 10,427 Marathon County residents (over 12 percent of the total county workforce)
- On-farm milk production and dairy processing account for about 5,340 jobs in Marathon County
- Marathon County agriculture accounts for \$1.25 billion in economic activity annually (\$953.7 million from the dairy industry alone)
- Agriculture contributes \$317.4 million to Marathon County's total income

Although the diversity of agriculture encompasses enterprises such as Christmas trees, ginseng, grain crops, and meat animals, the predominant focus is dairy. Dairy systems in Marathon County very diverse and include everything from large confinement operations to a growing number of Managed Intensive Rotational Grazing (MIRG) farms. Agriculture contributes significantly to the Marathon County economy, but also builds rural communities and preserves open space.