

Perceptions of Wisconsin's Dairy Industry

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ABSTRACT

Wisconsin's dairy industry has always been, and will continue to be, a vital part of the state and national economy. As the baby boomer generation starts to retire in larger numbers, the young adults of Generation Y must take their place within the industry in order for it to be sustainable. Due to the declining number of dairy farms and lack of agriculture education programs in recent years, this research study was designed to discover the attitudes and perceptions today's young adults have about Wisconsin's dairy industry. This paper highlights characteristics of Generation Y members and their involvement in the industry, as well as their attitudes towards the industry and the career opportunities it has to offer. It concludes with industry promotion recommendations to the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this project is on the discovery and analysis of the thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions Generation Y/Millennials (young adults) currently hold about Wisconsin's Dairy Industry. Once these have been discovered and analyzed, they will be compared with strategies currently used by the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB). Recommendations will be given as to how the WMMB can communicate more effectively with these young adults that are the future of the industry.

I chose to pursue the study of my generation's perceptions about the Dairy Industry for a variety of reasons. First, and most important, the dairy industry is an industry I am very passionate about. I grew up on my family's 200 cow dairy farm in south central Wisconsin, and as almost any dairy farmer will tell you, it is a lifestyle, not just a career. I love helping out on the farm and work weekends there during the school year. While working on the farm the rest of my life is not necessarily one of my long term career goals, I will always believe the industry should be supported and understood by society. With my marketing degree I would like to eventually work for an agricultural company that deals with Wisconsin's dairy industry, such as the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board or the Wisconsin Farm Bureau. In pursuing this career path, I believe it is important to understand the perceptions my generation has about Wisconsin's dairy industry. According to an article in the *Journal of Business and Psychology*, Generation Y includes young adults born in the 1980's or 1990's, making them between about 15 and 33 years of age (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). I am a member of this generation, and since this age group is the future of the industry I think it is important to understand their views on it in order to be able to market to them and gain their support.

According to the winter 2013 issue of *New Holland News*, a tractor manufacturing company farming lifestyle magazine, dairy farmers now spend less time with their cows and more time with their families (Romance, 2013). This is due to increasing technology, such as robotic milking machines and automatic calf feeding machines that eliminate the need for manual human labor. This increasing technology provides less physical work for farmers and in the future will decrease the number of dairy farmers needed (Romance, 2013). However, as the world's population continues to increase, more and more food products (in this case milk) will need to be produced in order to feed all those people. The combination of these two factors indicates that in the future more milk will be produced by a fewer number of farmers. The purpose of this research then is not necessarily on discovering who will become future dairy farmers and why but instead on how the current young adult generation perceives the dairy industry and whether or not they support it. With less exposure to dairy farms (neighbors, family, and friends) than in the past, what opinions and perceptions does this new generation of adults have about the industry? In the January 2013 issue of *The Progressive Farmer*, an FFA member from Monticello, KY wrote a speech about farming for his English class because it was something he was passionate about (Hillyer, 2013). His parents submitted the written form of his speech, which was titled "I Believe in the Farmer" to the magazine because they thought it was worth sharing. Reading this speech and the respect it conveys motivated me even more to discover if others in my generation, otherwise known as Generation Y (people born in the 1980's or 1990's) feel the same way or if most have neutral or other opinions about the Dairy Industry. This young man, like me, grew up on a farm which may have influenced his passion. I want to know if young adults who do not necessarily live on farms feel any passion for the industry.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dairy industry magazines (some even published in the great state of Wisconsin) are plentiful and provided a relatively large knowledge base for background research on the industry and the young adults within it. It was difficult to find information about young adults within Wisconsin's dairy industry specifically as most of these publications are about the nation's dairy industry as a whole. This difficulty translated into journal article searches, as perceptions of Wisconsin's dairy industry by young adults is a very narrow topic within the field of dairy. While frustrating, this lack of specific information brought to light a gap in the research that my study may be able to help fill. Due to the lack of specific industry information available, I decided to focus my journal article searches on Generation Y within the workplace in the hope that learning about their working styles would help predict their attitudes about Wisconsin's dairy industry and the career opportunities it provides. I will use the industry publications to attempt to find more specific information about the industry itself, although I do recognize the potential for bias within these publications that work hard to promote their industry.

Many of the articles about Generation Y/Millennials focus on the differences between characteristics of Generation Y and previous generations in the workplace. An article by Meister and Willyerd published in the *Harvard Business Review* does the same but also provides three suggestions for mentoring these young adults in their new jobs. Meister and Willyerd discuss how Millennials want instant feedback, a clear path to success, skill development and a sense of purpose in their work (Meister & Willyerd, 2010). Three ways to mentor this generation based on these characteristics include reverse mentoring, where the Millennial is paired with an executive and essentially mentors the executive about tools such as social media, group mentoring, where groups of mentors guide groups of mentees mostly through online methods, and anonymous mentoring, where the mentee is paired with a coach outside the organization (Meister & Willyerd, 2010). An article by Tracey Cekada in *Professional Safety* also characterizes Generation Y workers as wanting a clear path to success and immediate feedback but differs from Meister and Willyerd's work in that she notes Millennials can be considered overconfident and arrogant (Cekada, 2012). Her training recommendations for Generation Y include showing instead of telling, having them work in groups or teams, and utilizing media methods and activities (Cekada, 2012). Eisner's article in the *Journal of College Teaching and Learning* also describes Generation Y as responding best to visual and "fun" learning (Eisner, 2011). Members of this generation are extremely technologically savvy and may learn best through activities such as "game shows" that are competitive in nature (Eisner, 2011). Although this last article was about a college environment and not a working one, many members of Generation Y are just finishing college and transitioning into the working world. They will need to learn how to function in their new jobs and it is important for managers to know how this generation learns best.

This research indicates that if Generation Y members believe they can receive immediate feedback, learn new skills through a visual or game-like process, see purpose in their work and see a clear path to success from Wisconsin's dairy industry, they will be more likely to consider career options within it and have a favorable attitude towards it.

The information found in the various dairy industry publications was encouraging and fun. An article in *Successful Farming* explained how three brothers between the ages of 16 and 22 created funny YouTube videos to showcase what it is like to work on a farm and to explain to people that agriculture feeds the world (Kurns, 2013). The lyrics of popular songs "I'm Sexy and I know It" and "Gangnam Style" were changed to farming lyrics that the brothers sang while showing viewers life on the farm (Kurns, 2013). Both videos went viral instantly and have received millions of views. This is an example of a way in which social media can be used to inform the public (especially young adults) about the industry in a positive, unique, and fun way. Another article in *Successful Farming* highlights the use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) to provide information to the public about where their food is coming from and how it is grown or raised (Tevis, 2013). This communication helps to maintain trust between farmers and consumers and illustrates that farmers share the values and concerns of the public when it comes to food and consumer health. These social media campaigns are being created by individual farmers and non-profit organizations because research done by the Center for Food Integrity shows that consumers are more trusting of them than of promotions done by companies with a profit motive (Tevis, 2013). Since social media is a part of daily life for most young adults, the use of it to promote the industry (especially when created by members of the industry) should help create favorable attitudes and perceptions of the industry by young adults.

A 2013 article in *Hoard's Dairyman* highlights the story of a young college student who grew up in a farming community but did not live on a farm herself. She witnessed firsthand how hard farmers work and the responsibility they take on with minimal complaint. While at college, this young adult was confused by all the criticism towards the dairy industry because it did not match what she had experienced growing up (Moser, 2013). During her senior year she was assigned a portfolio art project that would reflect something she was passionate

about, and she chose farming and called her project *For the Love of Dairy*. Her project and presentation were a huge success and people at the show told her they appreciated learning the facts about farming instead of all the negative aspects they hear from some activist groups and the media (Moser, 2013). I thought this article was important because it shows that a young adult who did not grow up working in the industry still feels passionate about it and wants to share that passion with others.

An interesting article found in the April 2013 issue of *Rural Route*, a publication of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, describes Wisconsin's first agriculture-themed charter school for elementary students. Known as SAGES, the School for Agriculture and Environmental Studies was created in 2012 in Waupun, WI to offer an interactive educational experience that promotes agriculture and environmental studies in students from kindergarten through sixth grade (Langan, 2013). Farm Bureau board members think the success of this school (which has enrolled 125 students just in its first year) could be the start of something significant for Wisconsin (Langan, 2013). If schools such as this one were to take off and become increasingly popular and successful, young adult's attitudes and perceptions of Wisconsin's dairy industry would be shaped from a young age, hopefully in a positive and encouraging manner.

Continuing the education discussion, a 2013 online article in *Hoard's Dairyman* highlighted some information about college agriculture courses. The number of students enrolled in dairy science majors nationwide is only around 1,200 and the number of schools offering these programs is dwindling (Wattiaux, 2013). These programs are becoming less specific as they need to prepare students for a vast array of careers within the dairy science field due to specific career courses not being offered. It has also been indicated that in the near future the number of students with no dairy, farm, or agricultural background will outnumber those with an agriculture background (Wattiaux, 2013). The dwindling number of agriculture courses being offered is concerning. I know from personal experience that UW-L does not offer any sort of general agriculture education course, and within the UW college system only River Falls, Platteville, and Madison are known for agriculture. How are young adults that did not grow up on farms supposed to learn about and gain appreciation for the industry if no one is willing to teach them?

Even though Universities may not be stepping up, the Wisconsin Association of FFA reports that 2011-2012 membership increased by over 500 members and five new chapters of the FFA were created that same year (Wisconsin Association of FFA, 2013). This indicates that students are interested and wanting to participate in agriculture and know that the FFA is a great place to start.

METHOD

In order to get the best understanding of the thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions Generation Y members currently have about Wisconsin's dairy industry, I decided to conduct qualitative research. The specific type of qualitative research I conducted included personal interviews with students on campus at the University of Wisconsin- La Crosse (UW-L). While this was indeed a sample of convenience, students at UW-L come from a variety of backgrounds and I therefore believed their answers to be largely generalizable. I interviewed 10 male and female students over the age of 18 who currently attend UW-L and hail from a hometown in the state of Wisconsin. These students were my classmates and acquaintances, and I had already asked many of them if they would be willing to participate in my study prior to the actual interview. Please see Appendix A for a copy of the interview questions these individuals were asked. Included in the interview of students was a question about the "Happy Cows Come From California" commercials. Participants were asked to give their reactions to these commercials if they had seen them, and if they had not then they were shown a sample commercial. With approval from the participants, I voice recorded their responses to questions in order to ensure access to their answers for greater analysis after the interview. The interview recordings will be secured in a safe location until 6 months after the completion of the project, at which time all files will be deleted. Each interview took about 20-30 minutes. In this final written report, the names of the participants have been changed to keep their confidentiality. Participants were not compensated for their time nor did they experience any risk other than mild fatigue from talking.

In addition to interviewing members of Generation Y, I also conducted personal interviews with two professionals within Wisconsin's dairy industry. I interviewed a dairy farmer from south central Wisconsin (who prefers to remain anonymous), and Larry Fiene, a regional manager for Winfield Solutions. The first professional I interviewed is a dairy farmer who operates the same farm that he grew up on and that has been in business since 1856. He owns a family-operated farm that milks an average of 200 cows twice per day. In addition to milking, he feeds and tends to the cows and their calves and raises crops in order to feed the large herd.

Mr. Fiene sells fertilizers and chemicals to Wisconsin farmers, and works closely with those farmers to give them the highest yielding crops to feed their milking cows. I interviewed Larry to get the perspective of someone who works less directly with the dairy industry but still plays an important role. I asked these

professionals about how they believe Generation Y currently views the industry as well as how important these young adults are for the future of the industry. Please see Appendix B for a copy of the questions that I asked these two industry professionals.

After conducting the interviews I thoroughly reviewed each one and looked for similarities and patterns within the responses of each participant. I also looked for potential biases or unexpected answers that were surprising. After carefully reviewing each interview, I compared the patterns in responses with the information provided by the Wisconsin Milk Marketing board to see if the messages conveyed by the Board were getting through to today's young adults. Following this comparison I provided recommendations to the board on how to improve their marketing messages to reach young adults.

RESULTS

Young Adults

As stated earlier, I interviewed 10 young adults (5 males and 5 females). I had originally planned on interviewing 15-20, however I found that the information gathered from answers was so similar that I was no longer gaining significant new information. Only one participant grew up on a farm, and she was the only one who said she had ever actively considered a career in the dairy industry within her field of study. One female participant did say she has always wanted to marry a farmer, which would mean choosing a different lifestyle for herself, but not necessarily a career. The participants knew of some of the different career options within the dairy industry, but had trouble relating them to their specific field of study. All 10 participants thought that Wisconsin's dairy industry was important to the state's economy and that there were "a lot of farms in Wisconsin" but excluding the participant who grew up on a farm, the rest knew little else about the industry. Four participants emphasized dairy products such as cheese, ice cream, and milk throughout their interview and how much they enjoyed and will buy those products throughout their life. All participants had positive (such as pride) or neutral attitudes towards Wisconsin's dairy industry due to their perceived importance of the industry. All participants also believed the industry would affect them in the future and that the success or failure of the industry was important due to its large impact on the economy (local, state, national, and global) and the fluctuation in prices of dairy products in the store.

When it came to describing what they believed others their age thought about the industry, two main answers were given; pride and ignorance. Participants believed that most people their age did not know much about the industry and therefore were ignorant. However, they believed that if young adults did know about Wisconsin's dairy industry they were proud of it and believed it to be important. Only two participants knew anything about the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board and after probing it was discovered that they were mostly just guessing what the WMMB did based on its name. When asked about the "Happy Cows Come From California" ads, all participants used strong negative words such as angry, disgusted, and hurt to describe how they felt about the ads. Four of the participants explained how Wisconsin cows are better and happier than California cows. All of the participants believed social media should be used to promote the industry through commercials or promotional contests/sweepstakes to get the public involved and create more awareness of the industry. Since most participants believed that others their age were ignorant about the industry due to a lack of education, they suggest social media as a way to remedy that ignorance and educate people about Wisconsin's dairy industry. Many participants (7 of the 10) also want a "retaliation" against California through the creation of commercials and YouTube videos explaining how Wisconsin cows are better.

All participants in this study knew people who lived on dairy farms whether it be family, friends, or neighbors. As stated earlier, only one participant lived on a farm. All participants had heard of FFA and had a general idea of what it was and what it stood for. Only two participants had ever taken an agriculture class in school, and two other participants stated that their high schools (in Wisconsin) did not offer agriculture education courses or FFA. Not a single participant whose school offered FFA became a member.

The participant who grew up on a farm explained at the end of the interview how she believed that society was not very encouraging towards young adults who are interested in a career within the dairy industry. She believes these young adults either do not receive enough information about the available career options or such strict regulations are in place that makes it difficult for them to get started.

Professionals

The dairy farmer I interviewed explained how dairy farming is his livelihood and without it he and his family would be unemployed or working jobs they are not passionate about. This farmer believes that today's young adults are ignorant about the industry due to the declining number of dairy farms. Kids today are less likely to know someone who lives on a farm than they were 30 years ago. He believes young adults spend too much time with television, cell phones, and the internet and not enough time learning about agriculture. He thinks this is dangerous for the industry as more and more farmers near retirement age with very few young adults willing and

able to take over. This farmer believes that young adults do not realize how many career opportunities there are within the industry besides just dairy farming. There are animal nutritionists, vets, feed mills, agronomists, implement dealers, hoof trimmers, custom croppers, and a variety of other fields in which jobs are available that are part of Wisconsin's dairy industry. This farmer is a member of the FFA Alumni association in his town and believes that the organization is doing a great job of educating today's youth. He thinks many people believe you need to have grown up on a farm in order to join, and wishes people understood that is not true. This farmer is not very familiar with social media sites such as Facebook, but believed more television commercials could help promote the industry and inform the public. The farmer stated that the "Happy Cows Come from California" ads do not bother him much because he knows his cows are comfortable and well cared for which makes him happy and proud.

Mr. Fiene has been working for Winfield Solutions, a branch of Land O' Lakes since 1982. In that time he has noticed that the number of farms that his company works with has decreased from 100,000 to about 10,000. The size of the remaining farms has increased drastically as well as the technologies they use. Mr. Fiene works with these farmers to help them grow their crops efficiently and harvest the highest yield per acre as they can. Wisconsin's dairy industry is important to his livelihood because without it, he could not work for the company he does, at least not in the Midwest region of the United States. Mr. Fiene believes that today's young adults may be interested in the industry but are worried about its future. All they seem to hear about are how many more farms each year are going out of business rather than all of the opportunities still available to them. Mr. Fiene believes that today's young adults "are the lynch pin for the economic engine that drives the dairy business." In other words, he thinks they are of utmost importance. He thinks that some young adults do realize how opportunistic Wisconsin's dairy industry is to them but that there are many who do not. Mr. Fiene feels that young adults who grew up involved with the industry (whether it be on farms or in other ways) understand the opportunities better than those who did not. Mr. Fiene was involved with the FFA and FFA Alumni and believes strongly in the organization and its values. He is not sure how effective it is at communicating with young adults today, but he knows it is one of the best tools the industry currently has. He thinks social media and the internet have the potential to greatly promote the industry but could also be used negatively and harm the industry. For example, animal rights groups can use it to portray the maltreatment of animals and cause the public to think negatively of farmers and farming. While maltreatment unfortunately does occur, it is relatively rare and people need to realize that most farms are not like that. The "Happy Cows Come from California" ads make Mr. Fiene proud of Wisconsin's dairy industry and wish that Wisconsin had come up with the idea. He emphasized that the lack of education most young adults have of the industry is a serious threat that needs to be overcome.

DISCUSSION

No significant differences were found in the responses between genders, which is interesting since in the past farming was typically considered "men's" work. The lack of interest in dairy industry careers is concerning, although it mostly seems to be due to a lack of knowledge about the different options other than "being a farmer." Most of the participants did not seem to know what options there were in the dairy industry related to their specific fields of study. This indicates that the industry needs to do a better job of promoting the vast array of opportunities it provides other than just "farming." It is promising however that all participants believed Wisconsin's dairy industry was important and would affect their futures. They all understood that the dairy industry is a large part of the local, state, national, and global economies and there would be serious consequences for all if the industry suffered. Even though some participants joked that the price of ice cream would increase in that case, they were also serious and talked about job loss and rising food prices for most products.

It was surprising to me that all participants had either positive or neutral attitudes towards Wisconsin's dairy industry. I had expected there to be at least a few somewhat negative views (i.e. "hick" stereotypes) but I am happy to report that there were none. I also thought it was surprising that when asked about others their age, most participants believed their generation had either ignorance or pride about the industry. While ignorance is not necessarily a good attitude, it is better than hatred, disgust, or disdain. Ignorance can be turned into knowledge and pride can be further reinforced. It is unfortunate that not much is known about the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board as it is a great tool for the industry if used correctly (recommendations to the Board are given in the next section).

I was not surprised by the reactions to the "Happy Cows Come from California" ads. I have heard the idea of creating a commercial of retaliation mentioned before, and the use of social media would be a great way to do it. For example, there is currently a "Happy Cows do NOT Come from California, They Come from the Dairy State" Facebook page with over 8,000 likes since it was created in 2009 ("Happy Cows, 2009). There is the possibility for an integrated retaliation campaign through the different social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube, which young adults would most likely support with intensity.

Even though the number of family owned dairy farms in Wisconsin has been steadily decreasing over the years, and decreased by 200 farms from 2011-2012, it was reassuring that all participants knew someone who lived on a dairy farm (Adamson & Battaglia, 2013). This indicates that there are still real-world connections between young adults and actual dairy farms instead of just experiences through television and the internet. The fact that agriculture education courses and/or FFA are not offered at all high schools in Wisconsin is a scary notion. With budget cuts non-core courses are continually being dropped, but if most young adults believe Wisconsin's dairy industry is important and will affect them in the future, should it not still be taught in all schools? Mr. Fiene brought up the same point in his interview. He was wondering why there are so many high schools and colleges that do not offer an agriculture education course to students. While colleges are forcing students to take general education courses to make them "well rounded" individuals, there is no "Farming 101" course to teach them where much of their food supply comes from and how basic crops are grown. There may be courses on global warming, where cows are "considered evil methane producing demons" but there is no course describing the bright side of agriculture and its importance to the state, national, and global economy. Mr. Fiene explains that companies such as his must spend large amounts of time and money training new employees and teaching them about the industry because they are typically misinformed or uninformed. The dairy farmer interviewed believed the FFA was a great tool for young adults to use but was worried many did not join because they believed only kids who grew up on farms or wanted a career in farming could join. This indicates that perhaps a lack of communication between the FFA organization and young adults is happening.

It was interesting that both professionals were wary about the use of social media, while the young adults were all for it promoting the industry. This indicates a generational difference in attitudes about technology. Mr. Fiene believed social media could be used for good but that it could have harmful consequences if used negatively. The farmer did not have much experience with social media which may have led to his hesitancy to think of it as a helpful tool for the industry.

Both industry professionals stressed how critical today's young adults are for the future of the industry. Without them, the industry will not be able to sustain itself which will have negative consequences for the economy and everyone involved. These young adults must be educated and made aware of the opportunities available to them within Wisconsin's dairy industry. The Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board can provide this education and communication and be the link between the industry and today's young adults.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board (WMMB) is a non-profit organization funded entirely by Wisconsin's dairy farm families, and is farmer-owned and directed. The organization's main goal is to increase the sale and consumption of Wisconsin milk and dairy products at the national, state, and local levels (Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, 2012). Some ways the organization works to achieve this goal include working to establish new markets, funding dairy-related research, educating consumers about the quality and nutritional importance of Wisconsin milk and dairy products, and showcasing the important economic contribution that dairy makes to our communities and our state (Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, 2012).

Very few people who participated in this study (two out of the ten) had even heard of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, let alone knew what it stood for or what it did for Wisconsin's dairy industry. My biggest recommendation for the WMMB therefore is to work on increasing young adult's awareness of the organization and what it does. The WMMB does not currently participate in any social media activities and does not have a Facebook page, Twitter account, or Pinterest page. I would strongly recommend that the organization invest in social media because it is one of the quickest and easiest ways to get information to large numbers of people, especially technologically savvy young adults. Today's young adults have grown up with the internet and social media and have come to expect businesses and organizations to use social media frequently. For example, the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation currently participates actively on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest and has generated a large following on each site (94 followers on Pinterest, 660 followers on Twitter, and over 1,700 likes on Facebook (Sutton, 2013). The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's mission is to "lead the farm and rural community through legislative representation, education, public relations, and leadership development (Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, 2011). It is an organization similar to the WMMB but is more focused on legislative policies than industry marketing.

The WMMB sponsors the boys and girls state high school basketball tournament every year, and during halftime and in between games members of the WMMB are interviewed and asked to explain more about what they do. I think the organization should continue to do this; however it is targeting high school students and the communities of the teams that attend the state tournament rather than college students or young adults of a slightly older age demographic. In addition to sponsoring high school tournaments, I think the WMMB should think about

sponsoring college athletics, such as the Wisconsin Badgers. This would help the WMMB to reach the older members of Generation Y. The organization also co-sponsors with the National Football League the "Fuel up to Play 60" campaign to keep kids active and drinking milk (Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, 2012). Overall, the WMMB is focused on youth programs and the promotion of Wisconsin Dairy Products and not on young adults. I think another good way for the WMMB to become more involved with Wisconsin's young adults would be by providing scholarships to individuals planning on attending college for agriculture related degrees.

According to the research done for this project, many young adults are relatively unaware of all the career possibilities for them within Wisconsin's dairy industry other than just farming. It would be a good idea for the WMMB to create a campaign (maybe a YouTube video series) highlighting the various career opportunities available within the industry. A campaign such as this could help young adults understand how opportunistic the dairy industry can be for them within their specific fields of study or interest.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it was found that members of Generation Y have either positive or neutral perceptions of Wisconsin's dairy industry (pride or ignorance). They understand how much impact the industry has on the economy and how important it is for their futures regardless of whether or not they are interested in the career opportunities it provides. They believe social media has the potential to be a great promotional tool for the industry and is one the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board must start to implement.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Almost all of the young adults who agreed to be interviewed for this study knew that I lived on a farm. While we did not discuss this fact during the interview process, it may have skewed their answers. None of the participants had negative attitudes towards Wisconsin's dairy industry and they all believed it would affect their lives in some way in the future. While this was reassuring, I am curious as to whether or not these results occurred because the participants thought I was expecting a certain answer due to the way I asked the questions or due to their prior knowledge about me living on a farm. This would mean interview bias had occurred.

Due to the potential for interview bias or other types of bias, if I were to do this research over again I would choose participants who did not know that I live on a farm. I would also want to dig deeper into learning how and why young adults have formed the attitudes and perceptions that they have about Wisconsin's dairy industry. In addition, it was interesting that one female participant stated she has always wanted to marry a farmer. In another study, it would be interesting to learn if young adults would accept and support a partner who wanted to work in the industry, especially as a farmer.

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