



NorthStar Laboratory expansion will benefit Michigan's dairy industry

Grand Ledge, Michigan - Growing demand for collaboration within the state's dairy industry has led to a decision to expand the NorthStar Cooperative Laboratory in Grand Ledge, Michigan. The first phase of growth includes doubling the space of the existing facility to accommodate increases in commercial diagnostic services, and research and development.

NorthStar relocated to the current facility in 2015 creating a state-of-the-art laboratory for diagnostic services. Advanced technologies, such as mid-infrared spectroscopy, flow cytometry, ELISA, and PCR are used to analyze various sample types from the livestock industry for BVD, Johne's, leukosis, mastitis, MUN, neosporea, progesterone, pregnancy, fat, protein, SCC and more.

"Even in an overall depressed dairy economy there are significant positive developments occurring in this state, and we are going to be a part of that," said Dr. Todd Byrem, Director, Research and Development for NorthStar Cooperative. "Michigan's dairy industry is a vital part of the state's economy, and we are committed to investing talent and resources to continue to serve the men and women on farms, and in this industry as best possible."

A 75-year-old cooperative, NorthStar broadened its offerings in 1999 to include laboratory services to the dairy industry. Initially providing Dairy Herd Information (DHI) milk analysis; NorthStar quickly added diagnostics for ruminants. Today NorthStar's two laboratories in Grand Ledge and Kaukauna, Wisconsin process nearly 6 million samples to provide convenient and customer-oriented diagnostics to the livestock industry.

"Our continual investment in research and development to improve farm processes allows NorthStar to develop unique diagnostic tests for the livestock industries that are convenient, customized and labor efficient," said Byrem. "We are extremely proud of our involvement in this area as it helps to ensure healthy, wholesome end products are available to consumers."

NorthStar's original investment in research developed a series of novel diagnostics tests that can be applied to milk samples. Traditionally, tests for Johne's, BVD, BLV, neosporea, parentage, pregnancy, etc., required invasive sampling procedures such as venipuncture, biopsies and palpation. Today, these tests are being conducted autonomously through milk samples, without any disturbance to animals or operations.

With the milk diagnostic platform successfully established, NorthStar is ramping up research and development with the addition of more space and highly skilled research scientists. Fueled by collaborations with industry and academia, research interests now span the globe and will keep NorthStar at the forefront of advancing agricultural technologies.

NorthStar Cooperative, Inc. is a stock based cooperative, owned by dairy and beef producers in Michigan, Indiana and Wisconsin. Originally formed as an artificial insemination cooperative, NorthStar has grown into a leader in developing and delivering integrated products and services that assist owners and the industry with herd performance. Diagnostic services, animal health products, DHI services, genetic consulting and reproduction services are among the services provided. Headquartered in Lansing, Michigan, NorthStar works with producers, veterinarians and industry members across the United States. For more information about NorthStar, visit www.northstarcooperative.com.

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Photo 1: Fueled by collaborations with industry and academia, research interests now span the globe and will keep NorthStar at the forefront of advancing agricultural technologies.



Photos 2: The addition of 5,700 square feet will be ready to accommodate increases in commercial diagnostic services, and research and development in Summer 2019.