



615 North Main Street, Westby, WI 54667

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Westby Cooperative Creamery begins 115th year after another year of sales growth. Governor issues commendation to member-owners and proclaims City of Westby as *The Cottage Cheese Capital of Wisconsin.*

January 23, 2018 (Westby, WI): As codified in the Cooperative's by-laws, an annual meeting of patron-member-owners must be held to report on the financial performance of their business for the fiscal year just concluded. As such, the required Annual Meeting of *Westby Cooperative Creamery* was conducted on Thursday, January 18, 2018, in the lower-level auditorium of *Our Savior Lutheran Church* in Westby, WI.

As this annual meeting concluded the past year, it also began the next; with calendar year 2018 being the 115th Anniversary Year of *Westby Cooperative Creamery*. This cooperative of local family dairy farms was officially formed in October of 1903.

In celebration of this occurrence, Wisconsin Assembly Representative Lee Nerison gladly presented a **Certificate of Commendation**, from Governor Scott Walker, to Ralph Petersheim, Board President of *Westby Cooperative Creamery*. This **Commendation** reads, in part, honoring the "... 225 dairy farm families as patron-member-owners, many of whom are third, fourth, and fifth generation family dairy farms ... and, *Westby Cooperative Creamery* is one of the longest established cooperatives of family dairy farms in the State of Wisconsin and the United States; ... now, therefore, I, Scott Walker, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, commend the member-owners of *Westby Cooperative Creamery* on their 115th Anniversary and wish them continued success in the future."

Representative Nerison further presented a **Proclamation** from Governor Walker that reads, in part, "... the dairy products of *Westby Cooperative Creamery* have won numerous national and international awards; including three 1st Place U.S. and World Gold Medals for *Westby* brand four-percent small curd cottage cheese; and ... *Westby Cooperative Creamery* is the leading innovator of cottage cheeses in the State of Wisconsin; ... now, therefore, I, Scott Walker, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, do hereby proclaim the City of Westby as *THE COTTAGE CHEESE CAPITAL OF WISCONSIN.*"

In attendance at this Annual Meeting, representing the City of Westby, and joining the crowd in a rousing approval of the Governor's Commendation and Proclamation; were Westby Mayor, Dan Halgerson, and Westby Chamber of Commerce representatives, Mary Charles and Whitney Stoker.

Said Board President, Ralph Petersheim: "On behalf of our member-owners, employees, our namesake founding city, and local residents; we proudly thank Governor Walker for his Commendation and Proclamation; and, we thank Representative Lee Nerison; a longtime resident of Westby, for his enthusiastic support of agriculture and our dairy industry; within his Assembly District, and throughout the State of Wisconsin."



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The Annual Meeting then proceeded with presentations by independent financial auditors and business operations managers reporting to members on another year of continued sales growth for their cooperative dairy business. Total annual revenue grew by nearly one-million-dollars to just under \$74-million in FY-2017.

Over the past ten years, annual business revenues have more than quadrupled for *Westby Cooperative Creamery*, growing from \$17-million to now just under \$75-million.

General Manager, Pete Kondrup, attributes this growth on the strength of relationships and shared respect between member-owners, employees, milk carriers, business suppliers and services partners, and the many communities of customers from within and around *Westby Cooperative Creamery*.

Says, Kondrup: "The number of our family dairy farm patron-member-owners has doubled over the past ten years to now 225 members. These members supply two types of milk to their cooperative; conventional-milk and certified-organic-milk. This makes *Westby Cooperative Creamery* one of just a few dairy cooperatives across North America to receive both types of milk from its members; all of which is Grade-A and rBST-free."

During FY-2017, the cooperative also introduced *Westby Organic* brand Cottage Cheeses, Sour Cream, and French Onion Dairy Dip. In addition to *Westby* brand products; the business manufactures numerous Private Label Brand, Food Service, Food Ingredient, and Specialty Dairy products for an ever-expanding base of customers; and all meeting the stringent requirements of the *SQF Code* for food safety and quality as certified by the *Food Safety & Quality Management System* (Number 108139).

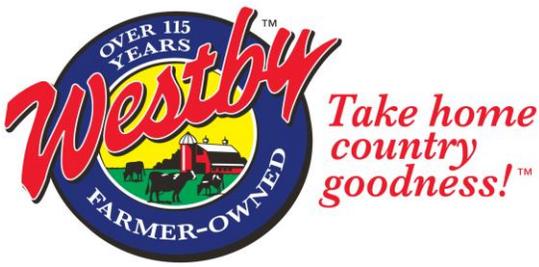
Adds Ralph Petersheim: "This past year of 2017 marked the fifth year in our new Distribution Center. Obviously, it was a major decision by the then Board of Directors, five years ago, to make this investment; along with the many other annual capital investments that have been made to our Creamery manufacturing facility over the past several years to improve productivity, efficiency and safety.

"These investments have fueled our track-record of growth; and, we will continue to make such investments as part of our ongoing strategic and operational planning for the continued growth and success of our dairy cooperative business. As the Board of Directors, we thank our fellow member-owners, employees, business partners, and local communities, for their support of our family dairy farms and our cooperative principles."

The Annual Meeting concluded with the election of two members to the seven-member Board of Directors. Current Board members Ryan Dunnun and Keith Rach were re-elected; joining Robert Anderson, Chuck Fremstad, Ralph Petersheim, Thomas Schaub, and Art Thicke on the Board of Directors of *Westby Cooperative Creamery* for fiscal year-2018. At the first monthly meeting of this 2018-Board; officers will be elected for President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer.

(End)

Below are available photos; PDFs of the Governor's Commendation and Proclamation are also available.



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Available photos, contact Steve King (see above):



Photo A

(Caption): Calendar year 2018 is the 115th Anniversary Year of *Westby Cooperative Creamery*. In celebration of this occurrence at the Cooperative’s Annual Meeting on January 18th; Wisconsin Assembly Representative Lee Nerison (photo-right) presented a **Certificate of Commendation**, from Governor Scott Walker, to Ralph Petersheim, *Westby Cooperative Creamery* Board of Directors President.

Further, Representative Nerison also presented a **Proclamation** from Governor Walker recognizing *Westby Cooperative Creamery* as a national and international award-winning producer, and leading innovator of cottage cheeses in the State of Wisconsin; therefore, proclaiming the City of Westby as *THE COTTAGE CHEESE CAPITAL OF WISCONSIN*.



Photo B

(Caption): General Manager, Pete Kondrup, reports to members on January 18th at the Annual Meeting of *Westby Cooperative Creamery* on another year of sales growth.



Photo C

(Caption): At the Annual Meeting of *Westby Cooperative Creamery*, on January 18th, current Board members Ryan Dunnun and Keith Rach were re-elected to the Board of Directors. For fiscal year-2018, the seven-member Board includes (above, left to right): Thomas Schaub, Keith Rach, Robert Anderson, Ralph Petersheim, Ryan Dunnun, Art Thicke, and Chuck Fremstad.