



615 North Main Street, Westby, WI 54667

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Westby Cooperative Creamery Reports to Members on Another Year of Growth and Profit. Members Elect Two New Board Directors.**

**January 27, 2017 (Westby, WI):** The 113<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of *Westby Cooperative Creamery* was conducted on Thursday, January 19, 2017, in the lower-level auditorium of *Our Savior Lutheran Church* in 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.

A room-filling crowd of over two-hundred member-owners, employees, and business partners assembled in the auditorium. First, to enjoy a luncheon prepared and served by church volunteers; then, to participate in the business meeting and election by members of two new representatives to their Board of Directors. With a quorum of members ruled as present; the meeting was called to order by Board President, Loren Oldenburg, at precisely 12:30pm.

Independent financial auditors and business operations managers reported to members on another year of continued growth and profit for their cooperative dairy business. General Manager, Pete Kondrup, provided the audience with a summary-recap of performance highlights over the past dozen years.

From fiscal year 2004 to 2016:

- The number of family dairy farm patron-member-owners has doubled from 110 members to 220 members.
- These members now supply, as defined by the dairy industry, 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 milk is Grade-A and rBST-free.
- The annual volume of milk supplied by members has also doubled, from 83-million pounds to 166-million pounds. The volume of organic milk supplied has grown each of the past several years, now representing over 60% of total milk delivered by member-owners.
- From this milk, the total annual pounds of award-winning dairy foods produced by the Creamery manufacturing facility has more than tripled; from just under 7-million pounds to over 26-million pounds.



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- Dairy food products produced now include an expanded line of Cottage Cheeses, Sour Creams, Dairy Dips, all types of Yogurts, Cheese Curds and Hard Cheeses; including many organic dairy food products. Packaging capabilities now range from single-serve cups to 2500-pound reusable totes. And, *Westby Cooperative Creamery* is the only manufacturer of Cottage Cheeses in the state of Wisconsin; a product category experiencing growth.
- In addition to *Westby* brand products; the business manufactures numerous Private Label Brand, Food Service, and Food Ingredient products for an expanded base of customers.
- From what had been little; the Cooperative now contributes, annually, about \$200,000 worth of dairy food products to local food banks and other charitable organizations.
- The total number of employees has tripled from 45 to 135; with more growth projected.
- Over \$8-million in capital investments have been made to the Creamery manufacturing facility to improve productivity, efficiency, and safety. In 2012, a new Distribution Center featuring a 10,000 square-foot refrigerated warehouse was constructed; along with General Offices.
- Annual business revenues have more than tripled, from \$17-million to \$73-million in FY-2016.

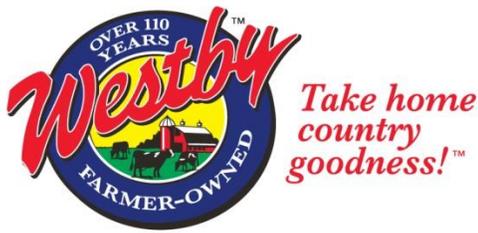
Kondrup concluded his remarks with a thank-you to employees for their dedication, teamwork, and hard work that resulted in another record-setting year for the business in total pounds of the highest quality dairy food products produced, and revenues generated. He further said that the business continues to meet the stringent requirements of the *SQF Code* for food safety and quality as certified by the *Food Safety & Quality Management System* (Number 108139).

The next step of business at this Annual Meeting was the election of two new members to the seven-member Board of Directors. Long-serving Board members, Kay Yanske and Loren Oldenburg, had reached their term limits on total years of board service and could not run, again, as candidates. Kay had served for thirteen years, with eight as Secretary/Treasurer; and Loren had served for fourteen years, with the past five as Board President. It was during this time of their service that the above business highlights occurred. Each was awarded a commemorative plaque, along with the appreciation and applause of their fellow cooperative members and guests in attendance at this Annual Meeting.

A record number of eight member-owners had submitted their names as candidates for these two Board seats. After the submission and counting of paper-ballots, members in attendance of this Annual Meeting elected Robert Anderson and Art Thicke to their Board of Directors. Each will serve a three-year term. Mr. Anderson, and his wife, Kari, own and operate a 35-cow organic dairy farm, just northwest of Westby, WI. Mr. Thicke, and his wife Jean; along with Chad and Melissa Crowley; own and operate a 95-cow organic dairy farm, north of La Crescent, MN.

Anderson and Thicke join Ryan Dunnum, Chuck Fremstad, Ralph Petersheim, Keith Rach, and Thomas Schaub on the Board of Directors of *Westby Cooperative Creamery* for fiscal year 2017. At the first meeting of this new Board, in February, 2017; officers will be elected for President, Vice President, and Secretary/Treasurer.

(End)



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(Photo-A-0659)

(Photo-A Caption) At the 113<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Westby Cooperative Creamery, Pete Kondrup, General Manager, reports to members on another year of growth and profit for their dairy cooperative.



(Photo-B-0737)

(Photo-B Caption) At the 113<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Westby Cooperative Creamery, long-serving Board members, Kay Yanske (13 years) and Loren Oldenburg (14 years), receive thanks and commemorative plaques for their service on the Board of Directors. Each had reached their term limits on total years of Board service.



(Photo-C-0736)

(Photo-C Caption) At the 113<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Westby Cooperative Creamery, member-owners elected two new members to their Board of Directors. For fiscal year 2017, the seven-member Board includes (above, left to right): Ryan Dunnum, Keith Rach, Thomas Schaub, Ralph Petersheim, Art Thicke (newly elected), Chuck Fremstad, and Robert Anderson (newly elected).