

River Alliance of Wisconsin, Gov. Evers, Lt. Gov. Barnes: Recognize innovative farmers at Earth Day farm visit

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GREENLEAF, WI - April 23, 2019 — River Alliance of Wisconsin, a statewide non-partisan conservation organization, shed light on innovative farmers who are taking steps to go above and beyond to protect water quality by bringing them together to meet with Governor Evers and Lt. Governor Barnes yesterday in Brown County.

For Earth Day, Governor Evers and Lt. Governor met on site at Brickstead Dairy in Greenleaf, WI with farmers who are focused on implementing solutions that address water quality, including those taking part in River Alliance of Wisconsin's Clear Water Farms pilot program.

Governor Evers shared, "Earth Day is a reminder to look to the innovators in conservation, like farmers who embrace agricultural practices that protect the land and water in Wisconsin. A single day is obviously never enough. Let's let today be a call to support farmers who are protecting our waters all year long. Consumers can

do this. Elected officials can do this. Together we can use the market to shift agricultural practices in our state to create a healthier future for all residents.”

Dan Brick, of Brickstead Dairy, a Fox Demo Farm (A Great Lakes Restoration Initiative project), shared, “At Brickstead Dairy, conservation has been and will continue to be our priority. For me, it’s about ensuring that my sons inherit healthy soil and clean water, so that they can be successful sixth generation farmers. We are committed to making these practices work on our land and are excited to share what we have learned with our neighbors and the community.”

“River Alliance is proud to stand with the many Wisconsin farmers leading the way to long-term solutions around water quality. We can’t just point fingers at bad actors in agriculture if we want clean water for all. River Alliance, and our partners, know that farmers will be among the heroes that solve Wisconsin’s water crisis. Clear Water Farms aims to lift up farmers doing right by our water. The program will give farmers an edge with buyers up the supply chain as well as families at the local grocery,” said Raj Shukla, executive director of River Alliance of Wisconsin.

Dan Punke, the Crop Manager at Miltrim Farms in Athens, WI was also in attendance at the event. Miltrim Farms is in the process of becoming one of the first two farms in the nation to achieve the Alliance for Water Stewardship’s certification through River Alliance’s Clear Water Farms pilot program.

Punke shared, “[The Miltrim Farms] team has a passion for agriculture, the animals, healthy soil & clean water. We want to lead the way on stewardship by engaging in a regenerative style approach to crop production, while sharing our experiences to help other farmers incorporate similar conservation practices that support their bottom line. What we need at the state level, with easy access for farmers is: more funding for county conservation staffing (proper monitoring and enforcement of current CAFO regulations), funding for manure storage ([we] must eliminate winter spreading), and continued funding for watershed groups.”

Shukla continued, “Every Wisconsin community and business deserves clean water—and that includes agriculture. We must act with urgency and imagination to overcome our challenges. We can look to farmers in Wisconsin who are innovators of conservation practices that protect waterways, and public health. River Alliance of Wisconsin believes that strong partnerships and smart incentives for farmers are a wise investment for the future of Wisconsin’s waters. The Governor’s budget lays out a good start to building long term solutions. We look forward to hearing more

from the legislature in the coming days.”