

Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: 79th Alice in Dairyland top candidates announced

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has announced the six top candidates to become the 79th Alice in Dairyland. The top candidates are Faith Baerwolf, Kelly Herness, Gabrielle Huitema, Jessica Moor, Anastasia Poull, and Michelle Stangler.

Prior to being selected, the top candidates completed an application and preliminary interview. Over the next two months, they will participate in an extensive interview process that will allow them to showcase the communications and public relations skills required to be the 79th Alice in Dairyland. All top candidates will receive industry, media, and public speaking training to earn a DATCP Agricultural Marketing and Communications Certificate.

This training process will prepare the top candidates for the Alice in Dairyland Finals, scheduled for May 14-16, 2026, in Marathon County. The three-day Finals includes agribusiness tours, media interviews, an impromptu question-and-answer session, candidate presentations, and more. The selection of the 79th Alice in Dairyland will be announced at a public event on May 16, 2026, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Wausau. The selected candidate's term as Alice will begin on July 6, 2026.

"The process to become Alice in Dairyland creates six outstanding advocates for agriculture, allowing each individual to gain valuable skills in marketing and communications no matter where their career may take them," said 78th Alice in Dairyland Sarah Hagenow. "I look forward to watching each candidate enhance their own skills and abilities as we move closer to selecting Wisconsin's 79th Alice in

Dairyland.”

Candidate Biographies

Faith Baerwolf, Columbus, is completing a bachelor’s degree in life sciences communication and agricultural and applied economics, including a certificate in digital studies, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Raised on a Wisconsin dairy farm and involved in her family’s creamery, Baerwolf developed a strong appreciation for agricultural marketing and consumer communication early on. Her academic coursework has focused on social media, marketing communications, digital design, and video production. Baerwolf has completed several internships that deepened her love for agriculture. She has also created educational and promotional materials, and led workshops and farm tours for students and consumers of all ages.

Kelly Herness, Whitehall, is a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, double majoring in agricultural and applied economics and life sciences communication, with a certificate in public policy. Growing up on her family’s dairy and crop farm in western Wisconsin, she developed a deep appreciation for the state’s agriculture industry and its rural communities. Herness has immersed herself in the agriculture community at UW-Madison through involvement in the Collegiate Farm Bureau and the Association of Women in Agriculture, holding leadership positions in both organizations. She has interned with the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation and with U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin’s office.

Gabrielle Huitema, Markesan, is a senior at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls majoring in animal science with a meat animal emphasis. Through rigorous coursework and undergraduate research, she has developed a strong foundation in livestock production, meat science, and agricultural systems. Huitema gained hands-on dairy industry experience through an on-farm internship in the summer of 2025. She currently works at LeRoy Meats, where she has strengthened her understanding of meat processing, food safety, and customer engagement. She recently served as the 2025 Green Lake County Fairest of the Fair, promoting agriculture through public appearances, youth outreach, and community events.

Jessica Moor, Wilson, has a love for agriculture that started on her family’s hobby farm in western Wisconsin. Her passion further grew by being involved in 4-H and FFA, where she participated in horse judging, speaking contests, and exhibited at the county fair. In 2022, Moor graduated from the University of Wisconsin-River

Falls with a bachelor's degree in business administration management. After completing an additional degree from Chippewa Valley Technical College, she now works full time as a dental assistant. Outside of work, she enjoys horseback riding, reading, and volunteering on the St. Croix County Fair Board and Rodeo Committee.

Anastasia Poull, Port Washington, has longstanding passions for agriculture, learning, and new experiences. During her first four years at South Dakota State University, Poull earned three bachelor's degrees in animal science, agricultural leadership, and agricultural science, with two minors in agricultural business and communication studies. Her extracurricular involvement, including the 2020 Wool Judging Team and ambassadorship for the College of Agriculture, helped develop important connections for her Master of Arts in communication and media studies. Through her studies and work opportunities, Poull found a strong disconnect between producers and consumers and hopes to help bridge this gap through agricultural communications.

Michelle Stangler, Watertown, grew up on her family's dairy farm and was actively involved in 4-H and FFA from a young age. She earned a Bachelor of Science in journalism and agricultural marketing communications from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, and completed internships with Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Mid-West Farm Report, Brownfield Ag News, and WEAU 13 News. She also studied abroad in Europe and served as the 2024 Dodge County Fairest of the Fair. Stangler now contributes to the Ag News Daily podcast, Dairy Star newspaper and podcast, and serves as a member engagement coordinator with the Wisconsin Grocers Association.

About Alice in Dairyland

Alice in Dairyland is a one-year, full-time communications professional for DATCP. The Alice in Dairyland program is supported by several partner organizations, including Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Ginseng Board of Wisconsin, Goodman's Jewelers, Kettle Moraine Mink Breeders Association, the Dairy Innovation Hub, Wisconsin Beef Council, Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board, and the Wisconsin Potato Industry Board. For more information about the Alice in Dairyland program, visit www.aliceindairyland.com and follow Alice online on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).