



State of Wisconsin
Governor Scott Walker

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Ben Brancel, Secretary

July 20, 2017

Good afternoon,

At the Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection meeting today in Tomahawk, I announced my retirement from state public service. I will retire on August 13.

When I was in high school, a national trip by the 4-H organization gave me a chance to meet my Congressman Melvin Laird. He instilled in me a desire to enter public service someday.

In 1986, the citizens of the 42nd Assembly District gave me an opportunity to start my service at the state level. Then, in 1997, Governor Thompson gave me another exciting opportunity to serve at a cabinet level position.

Life changed again in 2001 when I started my service as state director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency. In 2009, I became the state liaison for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 2011, Governor Scott Walker gave me another chance to be the Secretary of DATCP.

It has been my pleasure to serve as Secretary. I have given this much thought about when is the right time to retire. I came to the conclusion that there always will be unfinished business to be done, but now is the time to return to my family's farm full-time in Marquette County as we plan for our first ever production sale. My son and daughter-in-law are now the sixth generation to farm the land. My first job was a farmer, and my last job will be a farmer.

I especially want to thank Governor Walker for the privilege to serve in his cabinet. I am grateful that I was able to be part of this administration, serving farmers, protecting consumers and supporting businesses.

I am very appreciative of my leadership team and the entire staff at the department. The service the agency provides to the public is second to none.

I am humbled by the great opportunities I have had throughout the past three decades. My work has taken me around the world, something I never would have imagined when I was young working in my barnyard.

I have always said that in agriculture, we are a family. Thank you for letting me be a part of it.

Sincerely,

Ben Brancel

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