

## Dairymen share automation insights at GEA Innovation Dairy Tour

Tour offered up close and personal look at innovations in automated technology

Naperville, IL (USA), January 18, 2016 – Automation and digitalization have found their ways into dairy farms in many different areas and offer farmers solutions to enhance animal care, address labor resources and improve the overall efficiency and day to day management of their farms. To provide insights on the latest automated technologies available, GEA recently hosted dairy producers from throughout the U.S. on an Innovation Dairy Tour. Attendees had the opportunity to talk with three Wisconsin dairy farmers who had installed automatic teat dipping systems, the latest in rotary milking parlors and several other new automation innovations.

“Dairy farms are more sophisticated today than ever before and as technology continues to evolve, dairymen are seeing opportunities to make changes and invest in the future of their operations,” said Matt Daley, head of GEA’s milking and dairy farming sales in North America. The Innovation Dairy Tour allowed for peer-to-peer discussion on planning for technology, decision making and the lessons learned that naturally accompany dairy expansion and improvements. Attendees also had a chance to explore the latest technologies in action on successful dairy farms.

Two of the dairies featured the new AutoRotor PerFormer CX360 rotary milking parlor. “The sleek, stainless steel platform on the CX360 was designed specifically to meet the demands of the North American dairy market,” said James Bringe, sales consultant for GEA who works with the host dairy producers. “The system is engineered around the center of gravity, much like a modern-day bridge. The roller system is like nothing else on the market today and it smoothly turns the platform for an ultra-quiet operation.”

Another notable technology shared on the tour was the Apollo™MilkSystem, a milking unit that automatically post-dips the cow after milking and backflushes in between each cow. “By automating the post-dipping process, dairy producers can reduce labor required in the parlor, improve milking procedure efficiencies and oftentimes increase parlor throughput,” said Bringe.

Valuable insights were shared on manure management, employee training, herd health, milk quality and parlor efficiency. “GEA’s total solutions approach allows us to be the only one-stop provider of milking, manure handling and barn equipment and each of those areas was well represented on the tour,” said Daley.

Dairies visited on the tour and the technologies showcased included:

**Kinnard Farms, Inc., Casco, Wis.:** This facility was built by the Kinnard family in the fall of 2014 and recently began milking 3,500 cows in August 2015. The 100-stall AutoRotor PerFormer CX360 rotary parlor will eventually milk 7,000 cows. A milk cooling system consisting of a KoolWay Chiller, KoolWay Plate Cooler and Xe-Therm heat recovery units complete this GEA milking facility.

Having had the FutureCow™ Prep System in their previous parlor, “there was no doubt in our minds that we would have FutureCow in this rotary,” said Shaun Hardtke, herd manager at Kinnard Farms. “We wanted to maintain the consistency in teat prep and impressive milk let down and through-put we had become accustomed to.” The rotary is currently milking about 625 cows each hour with the capacity to milk 700 cows per hour when the herd size goal of 7,000 cows is reached. This herd currently averages 95 pounds of milk per cow.

**Mlsna East Town Dairy, Cashton, Wis.:** Owned by Nick Mlsna and family, this GEA total solutions operation started milking in their new 80 stall AutoRotor PerFormer CX360 rotary parlor in September 2015. Throughout every corner of the dairy, GEA’s newest solutions in automation can be found including the FutureCow™ Prep System, Apollo™MilkSystem, DairyFeed automated calf feeders, CowScout™ activity monitoring system, and the AutoSelect 5000 sorting system. Milk from Mlsna’s 2,400 cows is cooled using GEAs Classic Chiller, KoolWay Plate Cooler and XeTherm Heat Recovery system. Meanwhile, the freestall barn is outfitted with Jetstream 60” fans, HD Pro Headlocks, Single Beam stalls, High Plains curtains and manure is handled with a system of GEA slope screens, chain scrapers and agitators.

“Automation allows us to comfortably and efficiently milk 400 cows per hour with three operators,” said Nick Mlsna, whose herd is averaging 98 pounds of milk per cow. “One employee can prep a single cow in just a few seconds with the FutureCow system and a second employee will attach the units. Even post-dipping is automated thanks to the Apollo milking unit, so we can have one person in the parlor focused on quality control at all times.”

**Statz Brothers Farm, Marshall, Wis.:** In 2015, Joe, Troy and Wes Statz built a GEA total solutions facility to hold 3,000 cows. The project incorporates the latest milking equipment with advanced technologies including a double 50 Magnum 90i VL parallel parlor, FutureCow™ Prep System, and Metatron 21 meters, PPID (per place ear tag ID system), and AutoSelect 5000 sort gates, to name a few, along with three new 6-row freestall barns outfitted with a complete manure transfer system.

“We put a lot of time and thought into the design of this new facility,” said Joe Statz, whose herd averages 80 pounds of milk per cow. “The investments we are making in technology and automation are going to improve our operational efficiencies and help make us more profitable.”

For more information on the Innovation Dairy Tour or to connect with producers from the tour, contact GEA at 1-877-WS-Dairy (1-877-973-2479).



Dairy producers from across the U.S. recently attended GEA's Innovation Dairy Tour in Wisconsin. The producers toured Kinnard Farms in Casco, Wis., where they viewed the 100 stall AutoRotor PerFormer CX360 rotary parlor.



During the Innovation Dairy Tour, hosted by GEA, producers toured MIsna East Town Dairy in Cashton, Wis. The dairy has experienced success with the ApolloTMMilkSystem and improved milk quality through consistent, thorough post-dipping on their 80 stall AutoRotor PerFormer CX360 rotary parlor.



The GEA Innovation Dairy Tour stopped at Statz Brothers Farm, in Marshall, Wis., where Joe Statz welcomed the group and invited them to explore the double 50 Magnum 90i VL vertical lift parlor and three six-row freestall barns housing 2,700 head of cattle.

# Press Release



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