

## **The 2020 Central Plains Dairy Expo is canceled**

Due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 and the desire of all interested parties to minimize further exposure to the virus, the city of Sioux Falls, S.D. (host of the 2020 Central Plains Dairy Expo), declared a state of emergency. Thus, the city announced that gatherings in city-owned facilities, including the Denny Sanford Center, will be limited to fewer than 250 people through March 27, 2020. Consequently, this year's Central Plains Dairy Expo (CPDE), scheduled for March 24-26, has been canceled.

CPDE typically attracts about 4,000 attendees and more than 300 exhibitors. "We initially expected at least 4,000 to attend this year's Central Plains Dairy Expo, as everyone was very much looking forward to this great get-together within the dairy sector of our wide region," said Olga Reuvekamp, Central Plains Dairy Association president, Lake Benton, Minn., with Minnesota Agriculture and Rural Leadership and Hilltop Dairy. "The show is internationally renowned and a favorite for vendors and farmers alike."

Reuvekamp added, "This cancellation feels like canceling a family reunion. Every year, the (Central Plains Dairy) Expo brings thousands of people together for the good of the region's dairy industry. There is fun with the concert and Foundation Dairy Forward auction, business with the expo, and education from experts in the industry. While the cancellation is outside of the organizers' control, we all wish for nothing more than the good health and safety for our friends and neighbors."

The Central Plains Dairy Association board of directors made the difficult decision to not reschedule the Expo. "We recognize that producers will soon be getting ready for a busy season on the dairy," said Reuvekamp.

"It was extremely difficult to cancel this year's Expo," said Reuvekamp. We've (dairy producers and industry partners) faced adversity in the past. The backbone of America, dairy producers continue to show up, milk cows and care for animals – despite weather, economic conditions or global pandemics. Dairy producers' passion for their animals, communities and commitment to feeding the world is unwavering. The entire dairy sector has a strong resilience and high adaptability."

The Central Plains Dairy Expo will continue to support the industry's efforts for innovation and growth in the years to come. Next year's Central Plains Dairy Expo will be held March 23-25, in Sioux Falls, S.D.