

What is the Dairy Strong Sustainability Alliance?

Supporting farmers in conservation and their sustainability journey

By Lauren Brey, director of strategic partnership and sustainability, Dairy Strong Sustainability Alliance

The Dairy Strong Sustainability Alliance (DSSA) is a collaborative, industry supported, effort to promote and support farmer-led solutions to today's environmental challenges, taking into account business viability and community engagement. It was established in 2016 driven primarily by the Dairy Business Association, Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative and The Nature Conservancy.

DSSA provides support for farmer-led conservation groups, including Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers (SRPF), and helps connect individuals, organizations and companies wishing to support their efforts.

Through the partnership of a farmer-led conservation group with the DSSA, mutual goals of both organizations can be achieved.

With services outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), there is the opportunity for the farmer-led group to achieve **increased membership, revenue and community engagement**.

Collaborating with the DSSA is intended to make more **efficient use of time** for both farmers and group collaborators. Additionally, services provided will help the group maintain a **professional image** and assist the group in **realizing goals**.

DSSA serves as an incubator and support system for SRPF and other groups. The alliance offers various services that each group can choose from depending on its individual needs. Examples include administrative support, communications, strategic services and connections with experts. DSSA also serves as a conduit between the farmer organizations, experts and other entities that can add value and help in achieving their goals and amplifying their stories.

Additionally, DSSA can help groups secure funds for research projects or other initiatives they may not otherwise have funding for.

Besides SRPF, DSSA supports Calumet County Ag Stewardship Alliance, Lafayette Ag Stewardship Alliance, Peninsula Pride Farms, Western Wisconsin Conservation Council and Yahara Pride Farms.

To learn more, visit dairystrong.org/sustainability or contact me at lbrey@voiceofmilk.com.