



Meet Our Speakers

2022 Dairy Market Outlook Conference
June 22-23 | Chicago, IL



Alyssa Badger

Director of Global Operations & Insights, HighGround Dairy

Alyssa started her career at the Board of Trade managing a firm that had a primary focus in grains. The nucleus of her position centered around order entry and research development. From there, Alyssa's enthusiasm for commodities grew which led her to move to West Texas and assist in hedging for the largest originator of U.S. cotton to textile mills worldwide. Alyssa has been back in Chicago for more than 7 years with HighGround as the Director of Global Operations, overseeing the market intelligence and advisory business units. Alyssa's risk management background, as well as working closely with New Zealand and other international dairy companies, provides HighGround a unique value-add perspective.

Find Alyssa on [LinkedIn](#)

Lucas Fuess

Director of Market Intelligence, HighGround Dairy

Lucas has spent his entire life in the dairy industry, beginning with growing up on a 200-cow dairy farm in upstate New York and, most recently, joins HighGround Dairy after 6 ½ years at Glanbia Nutritionals. Lucas is responsible for leading HighGround's market intelligence and analysis division, ensuring that the team delivers maximum value to their global customer base. Lucas is a primary contributor to HighGround Dairy's published content and provides the team a fresh perspective on the markets.

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Eric Meyer

President & Founder, HighGround Dairy

Eric Meyer is a seasoned dairy risk management and sourcing professional with more than 20 years of experience including tenure at Downes-O'Neill LLC, Sara Lee Corporation, FCStone & Winona Foods before founding HighGround Dairy in 2012.

Eric's extensive hedging and procurement experience for both small boutique firms and large multi-national corporations gives him a unique insight into the dairy market. He has a strong reputation of creating insightful educational programs and content, specifically HighGround's comprehensive dairy market intelligence, industry-leading analysis that is read by subscribers across the globe.

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Tom Bailey

Executive Director –
Consumer Foods &
Foodservice, Rabobank

Tom Bailey is a Senior Consumer Foods analyst at Rabobank with over a decade of experience across the supply chain. Tom's experience began early with his involvement on the family farm in Illinois and has since worked in food and agriculture roles in dairy commodities, CPG, private equity, and banking. Before re-joining Rabobank in 2021 Tom worked in private equity where his responsibility was managing a consumer food brand and integrating regenerative farming methods through to finished products. As a Senior Analyst for Rabobank Tom now covers the consumer food sector where he is focused on consumer foods, foodservice, sustainability, and macro trends driving the food industry.

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Ryan Benthem

Owner, Benthem Brothers Dairy,
2021 Michigan State Dairy
Farmer of the Year

A family business since the 1940s, Ryan is part of the third generation of Benthems to oversee the management of Benthem Brothers Dairy. After graduating from Michigan State University in 2006, Ryan returned to assist with the operations and management of the dairy, which at the time was milking 300 cows and farming 1,000 acres. In his 16 years of overseeing operations, the dairy has expanded to milk 3,000 cows and farm 4,000 acres. Ryan is an early adopter as he incorporates new technology and best-in-class practices to improve efficiency. Improvements included creating custom calf barns to accommodate young cattle during the harsh Midwest winters, installing a rotary milking barn to accommodate a larger herd size, and is now in the process of building a manure digester to lower greenhouse emissions and capture additional revenue streams.

Quality, efficiency, and good management have been operational goals for Benthem Brothers Dairy, and it has been recognized for the effort. In 2021, the dairy received the MSU Dairy Farmer of the Year. In 2019 and 2020, it was awarded National Mastitis Council National Dairy Quality Awards (Silver). In 2017, the dairy received a Gold MMPA Quality Award and was a finalist for Consumers Energy Project of the Year.



Dr. Marin Bozic

Founder & CEO, Bozic LLC

Dr. Marin Bozic is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota. Marin's research program covers dairy markets and policy and livestock risk management.

Dr. Bozic is also the founder and CEO of Bozic LLC, a global provider of technology solutions for commodity markets analytics and risk management with close to 100 clients on four continents.

Dr. Bozic is an advisor to several dairy trade associations, a nationally popular speaker on economics of dairy markets, and a frequent consultant on important dairy market and policy issues.

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Jason Bray

Associate Director,
Southern Pastures

Jason Bray is an Associate Director of Southern Pastures, a niche fund of 20 dairy farms split between the Waikato and Canterbury regions of New Zealand. The fund is seeded by ethically minded investors with an intergenerational horizon, allowing the group to focus on their world class environmentally friendly farming systems & premium 'values' driven products.

Furthermore, Jason is the Commercial Director of NZ Grass Fed Products Limited Partnership (NZGF), the wholesale arm of the Southern Pastures group, managing the commodity price risk generated by over \$200 million in bulk dairy ingredient sales. With over 10 years' industry experience in both trading and brokering financial derivatives, Jason is well placed to optimise the NZGF bulk portfolio ensuring the best return is achieved for the group's farmers.

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Charles Funnell

Managing Director, CF
Commodities

Charles Funnell is Managing Director of CF Commodities GmbH based in Schaffhausen, Switzerland. He has extensive experience in risk management, physical and futures trading across soft commodities and has held senior roles at a hedge fund, trade house and a large industrial user. The company provides specialist services to well established industrial clients. Core services include commodity risk management strategy, implementation and governance as well as physical and futures trading.

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Jeff Goodwin

President & CEO,
Pivotal Ingredients

Jeff Goodwin is the part of the leadership team at Pivotal Ingredients serving as its president and CEO. Pivotal primarily sources and produces dairy derived ingredients that provide increased value and performance to nutritional products. Pivotal Ingredients is a partnership with United Animal Health, a global animal nutrition company founded in 1956 and based in the United States. The unlikely partnership between United Animal Health and Mr. Goodwin stems from United's desire to leverage their science in new markets.

Prior to forming Pivotal, Jeff was the Chief Commercial Officer with Westland Milk Products, the second largest dairy cooperative in New Zealand. As a part of the Westland Executive Leadership Team, Jeff was directly responsible for the five-year strategy, budgets, revenue, and Yili Group's global assets, the parent company of Westland. During Jeff's time at Westland, he helped manage the cultural shift from a cooperate to a private company.

In addition to his time at Westland, Jeff has held the roles of VP Global Operations for James Farrell and Company, Regional Director at Glanbia Nutritionals, and General Manager at Olam International.

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Drew Lerner

Senior Agricultural
Meteorologist, Founder &
President, World Weather Inc.

Drew Lerner is President and Senior Agricultural Meteorologist of World Weather, Inc. Drew has been forecasting international weather for 43 years. He began his meteorology career in 1978 as he participated in an international effort to collect data and improve weather forecasting for the Asian Monsoon. Since then, Drew has been supporting the agricultural industry by providing detailed short and long range weather predictions for each major crop area in the world. His daily assessments of crop and weather expectations supports commodity market trade and helps many companies make better agricultural business decisions. Drew started World Weather, Inc. in 2001 after leading Global Weather Services in the late 1990s. World Weather, Inc. is based in the Kansas City area and supports an expanding group of clientele residing in North and South America, India, Europe, Africa and Australia.

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Jukka Likitalo

Secretary General, Eucolait

Jukka Likitalo has 13 years of experience in the dairy sector. He has been heading Eucolait, the voice of the European dairy trading community with more than 400 members, since 2014. Jukka is the main representative of the organisation and responsible for its output and analysis, covering a variety of dairy policy and market topics.

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Megan Sheets

Director of Strategic Development, U.S. Dairy Export Council

Megan Sheets, Director of Strategic Development at the U.S. Dairy Export Council, leads custom research initiatives that provide insight into global trends and international market opportunities. Prior to joining USDEC, Megan spearheaded consumer insights at Midwest Dairy where she designed research that guided strategy and served industry partners such as Casey's General Stores, Scooters Coffee, Coborn's and Pizza Ranch. Megan has an MBA with an emphasis in Marketing and a Bachelor of Science in Speech Communication from the University of Central Missouri.

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Simon Vander Woude

Owner, Vander Woude Dairy; California Dairies, Inc. Chairman of the Board

Simon Vander Woude hails from a family of dairymen and had the desire to follow in his family's footsteps from a young age. A family business based in Merced, CA, Vander Woude Dairies, strives to provide a safe, healthy, and happy environment for the cows and their family of employees in order to produce the best product from the happiest cows in the dairy business. With a focus on the herd of 3,200 Holsteins' comfort, health, and wellness, the Vander Woude's continue to innovate and improve practices to ensure they produce high-quality milk from a well-managed herd. Combining sustainability and modern innovation, Simon introduced a state-of-the-art solar field designed to utilize natural energy to power operations. Every aspect of their operations is set toward affordability and sustainability such that the entirety of their dairy and farming systems work together to recycle every nutrient responsibly. With two double 30-parallel milking pits, the milking protocol is stress-free and sanitary to ensure the milking herd experience a quick turn-around and the best possible results for the herd's wellness and milk quality.

Vander Woude Dairies is F.A.R.M. (Farmers Assuring Responsible Management) certified through the US government and the owners, Simon and Christine Vander Woude, are active representatives of the dairy industry on a variety of industry issues. Simon currently serves as the California Dairies Inc. Cooperative Board Chairman.

Find out more about Simon [here](#)

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