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RESUME

OBJECTIVE: To serve the Administration of President-Elect Barack Obama and the farmers, ranchers, rural landowners and communities that participate in and benefit from the programs and services of the USDA Farm Service Agency through service as USDA-FSA Administrator or USDA-FSA State Executive Director in Wisconsin.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Chief Executive Officer, Wisconsin Farmers Union Specialty Cheese Co., LLC, Middleton, WI. 2003 – Present. Lead a cheese manufacturing and marketing business. Joined a start-up company with significant debt and negative equity and grew annual revenue from \$164,000 in FY 2002 with a net loss of (\$590,000) to \$9.3 million in FY 2008 with net income of \$860,000. Developed award-winning Blue and Gorgonzola cheese products that have won multiple international and national cheese competitions since 2006 while reducing and restraining production costs and increasing market share.

State Executive Director (SED), U.S. Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency, Madison, WI. 1993 – 2001. Led agency employing approximately 450 permanent full-time career employees delivering agricultural commodity programs, land conservation programs and farm loans to approximately 100,000 farmers and rural landowners through a network of sixty county offices. Elected Midwest representative and vice-chair of SED Leadership Council advising FSA Administrator, participated in multi-agency USDA initiatives as FSA representative, including administrative convergence, and detailed to national office to work as special assistant to FSA Administrator, including work on initial implementation of Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) payment program in 2000. Initiated, developed and implemented a labor / management council in WI that served as a model for other states. Initiated, developed, implemented and refined strategic plans to improve client service despite fewer fiscal and human resources including a transparent, data-driven methodology to equitably allocate diminishing resources available for WI county office operations – key principles of which were adopted by the national office to allocate resources to states. Integrated farm loan programs and resources of the former Farmers Home Administration with programs and resources of the former Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and instilled a client service-driven culture that contributed to growth of the farm loan portfolio to 3rd largest in nation while limiting delinquencies to among the lowest in the nation. Initiated and conducted employee surveys to identify key management weaknesses used to design management training for county executive directors and farm loan managers. Recruited and engaged minority producers in the design and delivery of employee training to encourage and enhance outreach to historically underserved farmers. Honored by the agency as the “Outstanding State Executive Director” during the Clinton Administration for “exemplary leadership, superior management skills, and significant contributions to the betterment of the Farm Service Agency at all levels” on September 29, 2000.

State Director, U.S. Senator Herb Kohl, Milwaukee & Madison, WI. 1989 – 1993. Led staff of about 12 permanent full-time employees plus interns, etc., in five offices providing constituent services, scheduling, media relations, constituency outreach and liaison with state and local government officials. Established offices in northeastern and northwestern WI, constituency advisory committees, and service academy candidate recruitment and screening procedures.

Director of Government Affairs & Commodity Programs, Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives, Madison, WI. 1986 – 1989. Chief lobbyist. Personally handled agricultural legislative and regulatory matters and served as principal liaison to agricultural marketing, farm supply, farm credit and rural electric cooperative members, including staffing standing committees of dairy marketing cooperatives and farm supply cooperatives. Co-founded and chaired WI Coalition for Property Tax Reform. Initiated and coordinated a joint petition for hearings to amend federal milk marketing orders from a broad coalition of member and non-member dairy and farm groups in the Upper Midwest, an effort that subsequently led to formal creation of the Upper Midwest Dairy Coalition.

General Manager, Family Dairies USA (a/k/a Farmers Union Milk Marketing Cooperative), Madison, WI. 1978 – 1986. Led a farmer-owned milk marketing cooperative through a period of rapid and substantial growth to nation's sixth largest, increasing sales from \$3 million to \$23 million and membership from 3,470 to 6,210 farms in seven Midwestern states. Initiated and co-led a coalition of Midwestern dairy and farm groups that developed and successfully lobbied Congress for a voluntary milk supply management dairy program – the “dairy diversion program” – which was enacted into law in 1984.

Legislative Assistant, Rep. Bob Kastenmeier (WI-2D), Washington, DC. 1977 – 1978. Handled a portfolio including agriculture, trade, transportation, commerce, and budget policy and advocacy for district projects, including funding for University of Wisconsin research projects and other initiatives.

Communications Director, Family Dairies USA (a/k/a Farmers Union Milk Marketing Cooperative), Madison, WI. 1973 – 1977. Served as the first public relations and government relations employee of a start-up farmer-owned milk marketing cooperative. Developed and implemented internal and external communication programs. Represented the cooperative in federal and state legislative and regulatory proceedings including federal dairy program policy and federal milk marketing order regulations.

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Member, USDA/USTR Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee – Dairy
- Member, International Dairy Committee
- Member, Dairy Advisory Committee, WI Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
- Member, Dairy Advisory Committee, University of Wisconsin College of Agriculture & Life Sciences
- Member, Agricultural Producer Security Council, WI Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
- Member, Board of Directors, Wisconsin Farm Progress Days, Inc.

EDUCATION

- University of Wisconsin – Madison. 1968 – 1973. Journalism Major.
- Oconto, WI, Public Schools. 1955 – 1968.