



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photo(s) Available Upon Request after 8/15/23

### **31<sup>st</sup> Annual Governor's Blue Ribbon Meat Products Auction Raises More Than \$105,000**

*Madison, Wis.* (August 8, 2023) – The Governor's Blue Ribbon Meat Products Auction at the Wisconsin State Fair celebrated its 31<sup>st</sup> year by raising over \$105,000. Proceeds from the auction benefit the Wisconsin 4-H Foundation, which supports Wisconsin 4-H activities including 4-H conferences, teaching materials and workshops, and overall development of 4-H youth.

“Enthusiastic 4-H supporters made for an exciting evening,” said Wisconsin 4-H Foundation Executive Director Brenda Scheider. “Seeing our 4-H youth and adult volunteers working next to our generous donors really brings home what 4-H is all about.”

Wisconsin DATCP Secretary, Randy Romanski, kicked off the sale by encouraging the standing-room-only audience to bid high and bid often. Mistress of Ceremonies Pam Jahnke, radio and TV personality, introduced outstanding 4-H members and special guests before Hostess Nicole Barlass, Sheboygan Falls, and Auctioneer Bob Johnson, Milton, sold 28 Champion, Reserve Champion and Honorable Mention meat products.

The auction action paused for a moment to honor longtime 4-H supporter Wally Bohrer, founder of Wisconsin Souvenir Milkcaps, who passed away in 2022. Wally's family were present to carry on his legacy of generosity.

Wisconsin State Fair Chairman of the Board John Yingling, along with the family of Dennis Buege, presented the 2023 Dennis Buege Best of Show Award to champion processor Wilson Farm Meats of Elkhorn. Wilson Farm Meats earned the honor for its champion entry in the specialty cured meat product division for their “Super Bacon.” It sold to a consortium of Crave Brothers Cheese, Gibbsville Implement, Egg Innovations, UW Provision Company, and Wisconsin River Meats for \$11,300.

A Wisconsin Specialty Package featuring local Wisconsin cheese, sausage, wine and bourbon was purchased by Rich and Evelyn Rathke of Sandwood Hill Farm for \$3,750. Guest Auctioneer selling this specialty item was 8-year-old Ozaukee County 4-H member, Elsie Hanson, who learned to call through a county 4-H program.

Egg Innovations, a dedicated supporter of the auction and our 4-H Youth, broke two records when they purchased the champion ring bologna created by Roskom Meats for \$4,100 and the champion bratwurst created by Geiss Meat Service for \$4,600. UW Provision Company also broke a record when they purchased the champion beef jerky created by Bunzel's for \$4,800. A fourth new record was set when buyer Steve Bysted purchased the champion dried or smoked beef product created by Block and Cleaver Artisan Meats for \$3,500.

One of the highest-selling items of the night was the champion bone-in ham created by Wilson Farm Meats of Elkhorn that sold for \$6,500 to Becky Merwin of Merwin Farms.

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The auction is produced in partnership with the Wisconsin 4-H Foundation, Wisconsin State Fair and the Wisconsin Association of Meat Processors (WAMP). The event was sponsored by WAMP and the Wisconsin Beef Council, both long-time supporters of the Governor's Blue Ribbon Meat Products Auction and the Wisconsin 4-H Foundation.

The Grand Champion, Reserve Champion and Honorable Mention winners and their buyers are:

### **BACON**

**Grand Champion from Newton Meats, Newton**

Buyer: Gibbsville Implement for \$3,500

**Reserve Champion from Mr. B's Smokehouse Meats, Hillsboro**

Buyer: UW Provision Company for \$3,000

**Honorable Mention from Salchert Meats, St. Cloud**

Buyer: Saz's for \$2,750

### **RING BOLOGNA**

**Grand Champion from Roskom Meats, Kaukauna**

Buyer: Egg Innovations for \$4,100 (New record!)

**Reserve Champion from Karl's Country Market, Menomonee Falls**

Buyer: Wisconsin Souvenir Milkcaps for \$2,000

**Honorable Mention from Newton Meats, Newton**

Buyer: Crane Farms for \$2,000

### **SPECIALTY CURED MEAT PRODUCT**

**Grand Champion from Wilson Farm Meats, Elkhorn (Super Bacon)**

Buyer: Hull Farms of Lake Geneva/Jones Family Farm for \$3,750

**Reserve Champion from West Bend Sausage Plus, West Bend (Smoked Steak Snacks)**

Buyer: Sunnyside Hatchery for \$1,750

**Honorable Mention from Louie's Finer Meats, Cumberland (Beef Bacon)**

Buyer: UW Provision Company for \$2,500

### **SUMMER SAUSAGE**

**Grand Champion from Newton Meats, Newton**

Buyer: Wisconsin Souvenir Milkcaps for \$2,750

**Reserve Champion from Block and Cleaver Artisan Meats, Siren**

Buyer: Daluge Travel for \$1,500

**Honorable Mention from Wisconsin River Meats, Mauston**

Buyer: UW Provision Company for \$2,600

### **JERKY**

**Grand Champion from Bunzel's Meat Market, Milwaukee**

Buyer: UW Provision Company for \$4,800 (New record!)

**Reserve Champion from Wilson Farm Meats, Elkhorn**

Buyer: Bill Thompson for \$2,500

**Honorable Mention from Wisconsin River Meats, Mauston**

Buyer: Crave Brothers Cheese for \$2,000

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### **DRIED or SMOKED BEEF**

**Grand Champion from Block and Cleaver Artisan Meats, Siren**

Buyer: Steve Bysted for \$3,500 (New record!)

**Reserve Champion from Louie's Finer Meats, Cumberland**

Buyers: Major Goolsby's and Ultimate Confections for \$2,250

**Honorable Mention from Pingel Processing, Shawano**

Buyer: UW Provision Company for \$1,900

### **BONE-IN HAM**

**Grand Champion from Wilson Farm Meats, Elkhorn**

Buyer: Merwin Farms for \$6,500

**Reserve Champion from Geiss Meat Service, Merrill**

Buyer: Randy Schopen Memorial Foundation for \$2,800

**Honorable Mention from Jones Dairy Farm, Fort Atkinson**

Buyer: Hartmann Sand and Gravel for \$4,250

### **BRATWURST**

**Grand Champion from Geiss Meat Service, Merrill**

Buyer: Egg Innovations for \$4,600 (New record!)

**Reserve Champion from West Bend Sausage Plus, West Bend**

Buyer: Wisconsin Souvenir Milkcaps for \$2,250

**Honorable Mention from Louie's Finer Meats, Cumberland**

Buyer: Daluge Travel for \$3,000

### **SNACK SAUSAGE**

**Grand Champion from Wilson Farm Meats, Elkhorn**

Buyer: Gerner Farms for \$2,250

**Reserve Champion from Karl's Country Market, Menomonee Falls**

Buyer: UW Provision Company for \$2,100

**Honorable Mention from Wisconsin River Meats, Mauston**

Buyer: Crave Brothers Cheese for \$2,500

### **WISCONSIN SPECIALTY ITEM**

Buyer: Evelyn and Rich Rathke of Sandwood Hill Farm

### **BEST OF SHOW**

**Wilson Farm Meats, Elkhorn (Super Bacon)**

Buyer Consortium: Crave Brothers Cheese, Gibbsville Implement, Egg Innovations, UW Provision Company, and Wisconsin River Meats for \$11,300.

The Wisconsin 4-H Foundation, based in Madison, provides essential funding for 4-H programs throughout Wisconsin. By partnering with individuals, corporations and foundations, the Foundation supports more than 150,000 youth who take part in various 4-H leadership, developments, and community-building activities throughout the state. Learn more about the Wisconsin 4-H Foundation by visiting [www.Wis4HFoundation.org](http://www.Wis4HFoundation.org).

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<PHOTO> **Dennis Buege Best of Show:** L-R: Alice in Dairyland, Ashley Hagenow; John & Cathy Brunnquell (Egg Innovations); Bob Johnson; Nicole Barlass; 4-Hers Melanie and Maria Zillges from Winnebago County; Winning Processor Justin Corman of Wilson Farm Meats; Charlie Crave (WI 4-H Foundation Board President); Jerry DeBlaey (Gibbsville Implement); Beth and Teagan Fruehling, Catherine Buege (family of Dennis Buege); UW Provision Company; Fairest of the Fair, Sharlene Swedlund.