



# Wisconsin Farm Technology Days 2007 – Green County

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Four Generations of the Blumer Family Serve as Hosts for Wisconsin Farm Technology Days in Green County**

Plainview Stock Farm in Albany will be the site for Wisconsin Farm Technology Days in Green County in September 2007, with four generations of the Blumer Family serving as hosts. When talking with the three generations who work on the farm, you have to be impressed with how the entire family works hand in hand. This family, which could be referred to as “TEAM BLUMER,” consists of William and Shirley, Keith and Teresa, Trent and Krishell – and their children Lauren and Evan.

The Blumer family history on Plainview Stock Farm dates back to 1946 when William (Bill) Blumer returned from serving as a Marine in World War II and began working alongside his father-in-law, Vern Jones. Bill and his wife Shirley have 3 children, including Rhonda, De’Anna, and Keith - who has followed in his father’s footsteps on the family farm. Bill and Shirley have been members of the Albany American Legion and Auxiliary for the past 62 years. They currently live in a neighboring subdivision near the farm.

Keith, the oldest of Bill and Shirley’s three children, was born at Plainview Farm and has lived there his entire life. He bought half of the farm from his parents in 1967. His wife Teresa has been a beautician for 28 years and works at a small shop in downtown Albany. She also serves as a church choir director. Teresa’s attention to detail is evident in the beautiful flower gardens around their home, and in her plans to paint the fence at the edge of their yard prior to the Farm Technology Days show. Keith and Teresa bought the remaining half of the farm from his parents in 1979. They have two children. Michelle Wills and her husband Jim live in Middleton with their children Alex and Aaron. Trent and his wife Krishell live nearby in a home built several years ago on some of the land from the original Vern Jones homestead, dating back to 1918.

Trent Blumer attended UW Lacrosse and majored in Business. Following a career at Hormel Foods, he returned to Albany and began working on the family farm in 1996. Krishell is employed as a teacher at the nearby Brodhead Elementary School, where she has worked for 10 years. The couple has a daughter, Lauren, who at eight years old is an accomplished yodeler who enjoyed her reign as the 2006 Green County Cheese Days Princess. Lauren and her six-year old brother, Evan, attend school in Brodhead.

Plainview was a dairy farm when Bill started farming with 320 acres and a herd of about 25 milking cows. He milked by hand the first year and then purchased a milking machine, with Shirley delivering the milk to the Indiana Condensery in Albany. The herd size eventually increased to 60. The Blumers had doubled the herd size to 120 cows when Keith said the time had come to either milk on a larger scale, or quit.

“It took about 100 years to develop the dairy industry,” Keith said, “now it changes every two to three years. Once 100 cows were considered a large dairy, now that is small.”

The Blumers sold the herd about 12 years ago and made the decision to raise crops, steers and heifers. In 2001 they built a new facility to start a custom heifer-raising operation and a second new freestall building was completed in 2006. Features of the buildings include headlocks, mattresses, manure pits under the buildings, and high velocity - low speed fans for increased animal comfort. Currently, they raise 2000

heifers per year. The Blumers also farm 3000 acres, growing all their own feed for the custom-raised heifers. Approximately half of the remaining crops (corn and soybeans) are sold.

Feed, fuel, fertilizer and nutrients for the balanced rations necessary for raising quality heifers are purchased from Landmark Services Cooperative. The agronomy work (“scouting the fields” for weeds, insects, pests and managing the nutrients in the soil) is also done by Landmark. At one time what is now Landmark was known as Union Co-op, an organization Keith served as president for 12 years.

The Blumers meet the specific needs of their livestock customers in Illinois and Wisconsin by providing the breeding, nutrition, vaccination program, and an environment that the customers want. The Blumers do the vaccinating of the heifers and pay close attention to their diet, making changes every four to six weeks as needed. Testing is done continually for moisture in the haylage, dry hay and corn silage.

The obstacles that face the farmers of today (long hours, variable weather, low pay) are no different than in Bill’s day. However, adaptations have been made over the years to keep up with the industry.

“The Ag industry has changed so fast in the past 10 years that to remain on the cutting edge changes need to happen every three years if not more often,” Keith said, noting that since 1960 technology in the areas of herbicides and pesticides has changed and improved greatly. Another example Keith gives is having a computer in the combine to measure the yield, and he also says that tractor cabs with air conditioning are great!

Having hosted the popular and well-attended “Green County Breakfast on the Farm” in 1993, the Blumers are familiar with providing hospitality for large crowds. The family is looking forward to welcoming all of Wisconsin agriculture to Green County for Wisconsin Farm Technology Days on September 18 - 20.

## **IF YOU GO**

What: Wisconsin Farm Technology Days

When: September 18 – 20

Where: Plainview Stock Farm, W1202 St. Hwy. 59, Albany

Cost: Admission \$5, kids 12 and under are free

Information: 608.328.9440

Website: [www.greenfarmtech.com](http://www.greenfarmtech.com)

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