

Ideas & Information You Can Build On

Breaking Ground

Got Milk? New Robotic Dairy and Visitor Center Comes to Fair Oaks, Indiana

When you reach for that carton of milk in your refrigerator, do you know where it comes from? The Hamstra Group recently completed a state-of-the-art robotic dairy and visitor center in Fair Oaks, Indiana. This 116,000-square-foot facility houses Fair Oaks Farms' entire robotic milking line, which is visible to those in the attached 6,000-square-foot visitor center. This bio-secure center, sponsored by De Laval, gives visitors full visual access to the cows' routines, whether they're in the robots or roaming in the relaxation and feed lane.

The farm has twelve V300 De Laval robotic milkers, the most advanced iteration, allowing up to 75 cows to be milked per robot. Fair Oaks' unique cow management system allows for the cows to choose when to be milked—or when to simply relax and eat. The facility features roof coverings from WeCover that provide ample natural light throughout. The ventilation system is also very specific for this dairy farm.

Through extensive analytics, Fair Oaks is able to provide the best living environment for the cows, all while studying feeding patterns, milk quality, and production. What the farm has found is their dairy cows are peaking higher in their milk production cycle by 5-7% and they're also experiencing a 33% reduction in farm labor.

This \$4.5 million design-build project would not be possible without the experience of key Hamstra team members—Project Manager Kevin Vander Molen, Project Superintendent Brian Hanewich, Electrical Engineer Don Tilley, Plumbing Engineer Mike Wood, Design Coordinator Rick Eenigenburg, and WeCover Engineer Brent Leatherman. Their combined expertise allowed this incredible project to be completed in just eight months.

“Once again, The Hamstra Group pulled through with seamless integration and gave



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Roof coverings from WeCover provide ample natural light throughout the facility.

us a quality building that meets the needs of both the dairy and the guests of Fair Oaks Farms,” says Fair Oaks owner Sue McCloskey. “Once we knew what we wanted and finished the preliminary design, Hamstra, being one of the best dairy builders in the country, just took the hand-off and produced a one-of-a-kind project.” So, if you want to know exactly where that carton of milk came from, be sure to stop by Fair Oaks Farm's visitor center.

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Did You Know?

- 1) Ben & Jerry originally considered getting into the bagel business. Luckily for us, the equipment was too expensive.
- 2) In Japan, letting a sumo wrestler make your baby cry is considered good luck.
- 3) Barry Manilow wrote the jingles for State Farm Insurance and Band-Aid.
- 4) It is rude to write in red ink in Portugal.
- 5) Between 1900 and 1920, tug of war was an Olympic event.
- 6) In 1986, Apple launched a clothing line.
- 7) Although they are rarely seen, bobcats are the most common wildcat in North America.
- 8) Dolly Parton once entered a Dolly Parton look-alike contest—and lost.
- 9) The Nile crocodile can hold its breath underwater for up to two hours.
- 10) Hearing is the fastest of the human senses. A person can recognize a sound in as little as 0.05 seconds.

—*Mental Floss*

Medieval Epidemiology

We're depending on the epidemiologists at the World Health Organization and the CDC to predict what might happen with the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly with regard to a possible new surge in the disease. In the Middle Ages, people also looked to the experts for guidance, but the experts at the time were astrologers.

According to *The Conversation* website, "Astrologers were respected health authorities who were taught at the finest universities throughout Europe, and hired to treat princes and dukes." Astrology is based on the belief that the positions of heavenly bodies like the moon and the planets affected life on Earth in many areas, including epidemics like the Bubonic Plague. In 1348, for example, physicians at the University of Paris told the King of France that the plague was caused by the conjunction of Saturn, Mars, and Jupiter.

In the 17th century, British astrologer John Gadbury analyzed data from four previous plagues in 1593, 1603, 1625, and 1636, and looked at planetary tables for correlations between the planets' positions and the rise and fall of each outbreak, finding a connection between disease and the positions of Mars and Venus. With this data he attempted to predict the behavior of a plague ravaging the country at the time.

"He predicted the upcoming movement of Venus in August would see a fall in plague deaths," the website states. "Then the movement of Mars in September would make the plague deadlier, but the movements of Venus in October, November, and December would halt the death rate."

Actually, plague deaths rose dramatically during August, although he was correct in predicting they'd peak in September and then decline steeply at the end of the year. Fortunately, today's experts have come a long way.

"We are just an advanced breed of monkeys on a minor planet of a very average star. But we can understand the universe. That makes us something very special."

—Stephen Hawking

Expert Financial Advice for Staying Solvent During a Crisis

The pandemic isn't just a health threat; it's also an economic one. Finance expert Suze Orman shares tips on keeping your finances under control on the *Yahoo Finance* website:

- **Put bills on hold.** Some mortgage lenders are giving homeowners a break on payments, and many states and communities are prohibiting evictions over nonpayment of rent. Citizens with student loans can withhold payment for two months. Talk to your creditors to see what they can do for you.
- **Don't sell stocks in a panic.** Yes, the stock market is down severely right now. If you have your savings there, you might be tempted to get out before things get worse. Orman advises staying the course as much as you can. In time, the market will rise again. Keep investing if possible.
- **Beef up your emergency fund.** Most experts advise saving enough money for three months of bills. Try to expand that. Chances are this crisis will last a long time, and if you're laid off or furloughed, three months may not be enough to tide you over.
- **Be reasonable with purchases.** Put off buying that new smartphone or major appliance unless you absolutely have to. Conserve water and electricity as much as possible. And don't go overboard with online shopping if you're cooped up at home. It's all too easy to click "buy" on something you don't really need.

Finding Happiness At Work

You spend lots of time at work—even if you're working from home these days—so it makes sense to be happy there. *Boss Magazine* has some tips for increasing your happiness on the job:

- **Build strong bonds with co-workers.**

In an office setting, you spend more time with your colleagues than with your family. Even when you're distant, you still depend on them for assistance and support. Get to know them as people. Celebrate their successes. Talk about stuff other than work. You'll create relationships that will make work feel more like play.

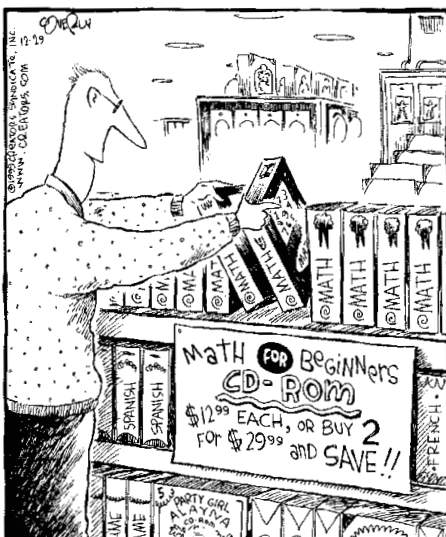
- **Know your role and responsibilities.**

We feel stress when we're uncertain about what we're supposed to do. Be sure you know exactly what you're responsible for—now more than ever. Who do you report to? Who depends on your work? How are your results being measured? The more you know, the better you can concentrate on doing your job.

- **Set goals for yourself.** It can be very motivational and satisfying to achieve goals, even small ones. Challenge yourself to hit a self-imposed deadline, learn a new skill, or ace an important project. When you accomplish each goal, spend some time savoring the experience. Then get started on a new objective.

SPEED BUMP

Dave Coverly



Success Secrets From Tony Robbins

Success guru Tony Robbins is world famous for helping people achieve their dreams. On the *Forbes* website he shares some of his knowledge for everyone striving to improve and advance in their career:

- **Value.** “You’re rewarded for delivering massive value. And now, when a lot of jobs are being automated and technology is making things happen faster than ever before, it’s even more important.”
- **Motivation.** “Focusing on the needs of others has a way of motivating you to do more than you thought possible. When you give back to others, whether that’s your clients, your employees, or your community, you have a different kind of drive; a force that pulls you forward.”
- **Role models.** “I’ve found that the key to success is modeling the best. Find the people who have already achieved what you want to achieve. Study the methodology behind their success and create a similar path for yourself. One of my original mentors, Jim Rohn, taught me: ‘Work harder on yourself than you ever do on your job or business. Because if you can become more valuable, you will produce an amazing result.’”

Salt Water On Mars?

Pockets of salty water—brine—may be able to exist on the surface of Mars, the *Sci-News* website reports. Regular water would instantly freeze, boil, or evaporate because of Mars’ low temperatures and dry conditions, but brine would have a lower freezing temperature and therefore would evaporate more slowly.

Salts have already been found on the surface of Mars. A study using atmospheric models and spacecraft measurements looked at specific regions on Mars where liquid water temperature and accessibility limits might allow known terrestrial organisms to replicate. Researchers found that pockets of brine can form for up to six hours over 40% of the Martian surface—from the equator to high latitudes—but only for about two percent of the Martian year. The maximum brine temperature that might be found is -55 degrees Fahrenheit, too low for the formation of organic life. Still, the results represent a reduced risk for the future exploration of Mars and contributes to the potential for habitable conditions for humans, scientists say.

Find Your “Big Idea”

The legendary David Ogilvie was a pioneer of the advertising industry. One reason for his success and influence was his ability to create what he called “the Big Idea”—a memorable concept that he could wrap an ad around, or base an entire advertising campaign on. Here’s how he developed Big Ideas—and how you can, too:

- **Step 1.** Analyze your data and look for the single element that best expresses what you want to say. What one idea do you want people to remember?
- **Step 2.** Take that idea and boil it down to a statement of 10 words or less, using lively, action-oriented language.
- **Step 3.** Build your presentation—whether it’s an ad, a speech, or a persuasive e-mail—around your “Big Idea.”

“Creative people don’t follow the crowds; they seek out the blank spots on the map.”

—David Brooks

Got Milk?... *continued from page 1*



Pictured left: Fair Oaks Farm installed 12 state-of-the-art De Laval robotic milkers, each one capable of milking 75 cows per robot. Right: The facility features a large indoor resting area for the cows. From here, they can choose to be milked at any time.



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Pictured left: The bio-secure visitor center allows the public to visually participate in all aspects of the cows' routine—from eating and resting, to entering the milk production area. Right: During construction, we truly began to understand the scope of the project once the pre-engineered metal canopy was erected. Lots of space makes for happy cows!