During the 2019 Sectional Leadership Workshops, the Wisconsin State FFA Officer Team got to experience many sides of Wisconsin agriculture. Here are the businesses they visited this year!
SECTION 1

We kicked off visits in Barron at N-Tech, INC. The manufacturing business started about forty years ago. The Nesseth brothers saw a need for a new system to manage manure, and it only took a few days for them to come up with the first piston pump. The business has gone through a lot in the past forty years, but is still a family-owned company working to solve problems in the agricultural industry. The product line has grown to more than pumps including tanks, props, load carts, augers, and much more! N-Tech provides parts all over the world and enjoys serving our hard-working farmers.

Then, we travelled to Synergy Cooperative in Cameron. This highly diverse cooperative is the result of Cedar Country Cooperative, Lakeland Cooperative, and United Ag Cooperative that merged in 2017. There are eight different locations, specializing in agronomy, car care, convenience, energy, feed, hardware, and machinery. In Cameron, they receive dry soybeans and wet or dry corn, which are then brought to different storing locations to eventually produce feed. Synergy knows that agriculture is endless and strives to provide customers with all of their retail and agricultural needs.
Then, the team visited Sailer’s Meats in Elmwood. Sailer’s has been serving the surrounding area since 1923. Jake Sailer is the Fifth Generation to own the business, and he earned his Master Meat Crafter degree from UW-Madison in 2012. They offer venison and custom processing, as well as many products like retail cuts, sausages, snack stix, brats, bacon, and ham. Sailer’s has achieved many awards for their products as they have competed in state, national, and international competitions. They continue to grow every year and take pride in their products.

On our way to Ellsworth, we made a stop at Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire. The college offers over 140 programs, certificates, and apprenticeships. In Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources, there are amazing programs including Agronomy Management, Farm Operation, and more. They are the only school that offers a Bee-Keeping Course. The hands-on learning offered at CVTC gives their students a valuable education to use in their future career. CVTC graduates have a ninety-three percent employment rate.
While still in Arcadia, we travelled to Nelson Global Products. Nelson Global has grown to be the leader in acoustic technology, thermal management, and fluid transfer since 1939. They cover many different markets and offer a wide range of products. The business works to provide uniquely engineered solutions to customers all around the globe. In Arcadia, the employees designed a 7,000 pound muffler for a large ship.

Our last stop in Arcadia was the Number One Furniture Manufacturer in the world. Ashley Furniture began in 1945 in Chicago, but moved to Arcadia when Ashley Furniture and Arcadia Furniture combined. Ashley manufactures many types of living, dining, bedroom, entertainment, and office furniture. The company has grown to have over 800 stores nation wide and continues to add more.
In Shullsburg, the team learned more about Nutrien Ag Solutions. Nutrien is the world’s largest crop company. The company’s roots trace back to the Nineteenth Century, however the name is still pretty new. There are over 1,700 locations worldwide, and they serve agriculture in many different ways. From different fertilizer products to tissue sampling services, Nutrien is working to help farmers produce the best crops possible.

While headed to Shullsburg, we visited Wisconsin Whey Protein in Darlington. The company strives to produce quality whey products for their customers to use in other manufacturing solutions. In Darlington, the four main products created are Whey Protein Concentrate, Premium Ultra-White Lactose, White Cheddar Cheese, and Parmesan Cheese. Wisconsin Whey Protein is Wisconsin’s largest single-site whey and protein producing facility, and serves many industries including the infant, medical, health, and wellness fields.
On our way to Orfordville, the team got the chance to explore Seneca Foods in Janesville. The vegetable processing company started as the Dundee Grape Juice Company in 1949. Now the company has some of the most advanced facilities in the world that produce about ninety million cases of canned fruits and vegetables and other food products annually. The Janesville plant has 172,000 square feet of production and has exceptional product flow. There are 373 employees at the plant. Seneca has many fundamental beliefs including integrity, responsibility, leadership, and excellence.

In Brodhead, the team visited Kuhn North America, Inc. The first Kuhn machines were distributed in the 1960s, and now the company has grown to be one of the largest manufacturers of agricultural implements in the world. Kuhn offers a wide variety of services, parts, and machinery, but specializes in producing spreaders, mixers, hay, and tillage tools. There are over 800 Kuhn employees in the United States, and as a leading innovator in both agricultural and industrial equipment, it continues to grow.
In Sauk City, we stopped by McFarlanes’ True Value to do some exploring. McFarlanes’ has been serving the agriculture industry for over 100 years. Since 1917, the business has grown from being farm and tractor equipment to being very diverse. The family-owned business works alongside its community to ensure that they are providing the needed products and services. Although McFarlanes’ has changed a lot over the years, the employees still value working as one team to serve their customers to the best of their ability.

Another stop in Sauk City was Culver’s Franchising. Culver’s began right in Sauk City by Craig, Lea, George, and Ruth Culver. Craig decided to share two of his favorite foods, his mom’s homemade hamburgers and Fresh Frozen Custard through Culver’s. The freshness of the great food always brings people in, but hospitality is something everyone at Culver’s values. The restaurant continues to grow, as there is now over 700 Culver’s locations, and there are about forty new restaurants added each year.

We also got to explore Keller’s Kornucopia in Prairie du Sac. The family-run business sells produce in the summer. They also have acres of pumpkins that they sell in the fall. The farm supports all areas of agriculture and are huge FFA supporters. The farm owner, Joe Keller, is a member of the Wisconsin FFA Foundation Board. He has also headed efforts to help farmers in Nebraska who were effected by floods and fires this past year.
As we made our way to Spencer, we visited Wolfcraft Furniture in Marshfield. The company began in 1980 by three brothers. Wolfcraft Furniture remains family-owned, and has grown to about 23 employees. They provide quality furniture to twelve states. The company is creating new designs because of the ever-changing industry they are a part of. The business continues to grow, and they will always go by their motto of “Furniture for Life.”

Our next stop was the National Farm Medicine Center in Marshfield. The Medicine Center was established in 1981 due to the amount of farm patients coming into Marshfield Clinic. The Center strives to enhance the health and safety of all people exposed to hazards and dangers of the agriculture industry. Their research helps create information to reach all people on the importance of being careful on the farm and in any agricultural career.

In Marshfield, we also visited Weber’s Farm Store. Weber’s has been providing high quality dairy products to the Marshfield community since 1904. They began delivering milk products on bikes, but now have a drive-up window for their customers to use. The store offers many delicious products including bagged milk, cheese curds, butter, soft serve ice cream, and more!
In Shawano, we started our day by visiting the GENEX Toystory Campus. The cooperative is a provider of World-Class genetics, progressive reproduction solutions, and valuable products. The former cooperatives that formed GENEX have been around since the 1930s, but a tradition that has been held since then is the idea of innovation. The cooperative is always ready to create new things and continues to do research and works to solve reproductive health problems in the dairy and beef industries.

A Shawano staple is Sundrop, and Twig’s Beverage has been bottling the golden, citrus soda since the 1950s. Twig’s offers a variety of services and products including soda production, distribution, gourmet sodas, and more. The business is a family-owned business, and recently they added a museum and gift shop onto the bottling company. Inside you can experience the history of Twig’s, learn about the production line, and you even get to take a seat at the tasting station and try all of the great sodas Twig’s has to offer, including Butterscotch Rootbeer, Blackcherry, Sour, Sundrop, and many more.
We made another stop in Green Bay at Hansen Foods. The company was founded in 1912 on a ten-acre farm where they delivered fresh milk. Today, the business specializes in producing pizzas and providing fundraising products for non-profit organizations all across the globe. The company is supportive of the local dairy industry. The milk for their cheese comes right from local farms. We also enjoyed a great lunch of pizza with the team at Hansen Foods and it was fabulous!

On our way to Denmark, we visited Schreiber in Green Bay, a dairy product provider for people around the world. The company started as a small cheese processing company in 1945. Now there are over 8,000 locations on four different continents. They are the second largest cream cheese producer in the United States. They also specialize in yogurt, natural cheese, and processed cheese. Not only do they want to be the best dairy provider in the world, Schreiber also wants to enrich lives, help their customers grow, and make the world a better place.
We travelled to Fort Atkinson to visit NASCO Farm & Ranch, a retail store with many different products in the Education, Healthcare, and Farm & Ranch divisions. The store was started by an agricultural teacher in 1941. Since then the operation has grown from a two-door garage to a huge enterprise with thirty-five different catalogs. NASCO leads the marketplace in many categories including educational kits, dissection, agriculture, and more. The business works hard to provide products for all of their customers diverse needs.

From Fort Atkinson we went to Johnson Creek to see Pernat’s Premium Meats. The butcher shop has been open since 1999, and since then, the owners and employees have been working hard to provide great products and customer service. Along with meat processing, the business also offers a variety of products like their award-winning snack stix, brats, and more.

The team then visited Milford Hills Hunt Club in Johnson Creek. The hunt club has about 500 acres and is a premier hunt club in the midwest. The club offers pheasant, quail, and chukar to hunt. The club also has a Grand North Dining Room that offers exceptional food and drinks. Along with the hunting and refreshments, there is a beautiful lodge that can sleep up to eight. Milford Hills strives to provide each of their guests with an exceptional experience.
THANK YOU!

WE HAD A GREAT TIME!

We travelled all the way from Barron to Denmark, and each business that we got to see revealed another side of agriculture that we do not always get to experience. Thank you to the amazing people who made these visits possible. So much knowledge was gained, and we look forward to spreading this new information with FFA members throughout the state!