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### WISCONSIN FARM TECHNOLOGY DAYS, INC. SELECTS DANE COUNTY AS THE 2015 HOST COUNTY

Dane County was selected to host the 2015 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days by the Board of Directors of the show during its annual meeting held April 11 in Madison. Tom Stoebig, Dane County Supervisor and chair of the County Extension Committee and Carrie Edgar, Department Head, Dane County Extension presented the Dane County application to the Board of Directors. During their presentation, they described the importance of agriculture in the Dane County economy and the support they received for the application from the county board and extension committee.

Dane county is Wisconsin's most productive agriculture county. It ranks first in both corn grain and corn silage production. It ranks second in soybean production and third in wheat production.

Agriculture is a very important element of the Dane county economy. Ag-related sales are \$3.45 billion, ag-related employment accounts for 16,767 jobs and agriculture contributes \$1.2 billion to county income. Dane county's top agricultural commodities are milk, \$206.2 million, grain, \$109.4 million and cattle and calves, \$46.4 million. Farms in Dane county number 3,331 covering 535,756 acres.

Direct market sales are an important element of Dane county agriculture. These 246 farms generate \$2,684,000 through roadside stands, farmers' markets, community supported agriculture, produce auctions and pick-your-own operations.

Sources of support for their application were County Extension staff, County Extension Committee, County Board and County Agribusinesses. Farm Bureau, the leading farm organization in Dane county indicated strong support for hosting the show. The Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau described the volunteer reputation in Dane county which is an important element of the show

Dane County has an excellent road system to manage the traffic coming from all directions during the 2015 show. Lodging capacity is an important to the show and Dane county has more than 9000 hotel rooms.

Previously the show was hosted in Dane County during 1970 near Sun Prairie on the Krebs farm and 1986 near DeForest on the Rauls and Treinen Farms. Both years the show was held during the fall featuring corn production and fall tillage.

Planning for hosting the show starts immediately with the formation of a County Executive committee which serves to manage the show at the county level. Members of this committee will represent numerous segments of Dane county agriculture and related businesses. This committee should be formed during the summer of 2012 and is expected to meet monthly until the 2015 show. The selection of a host farm is expected to be completed by November, 2012. Many tasks must be completed to prepare for this show and the nearly 1500 volunteers required.