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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Buffalo Dairy Farm Family Named 2013 Producer of the Year

BUFFALO, Minn. (December 3, 2013) – Minnesota Milk Producers today named a dairy farm family that has implemented a variety of sustainable practices as its Minnesota 2013 Producer of the Year. The recognition of Krause Holsteins of Buffalo, Minn., continues an annual tradition of recognizing a dairy farm family during the Midwest Dairy Expo in St. Cloud.

The Krause family and its dairy – Charles and Robyn and their children, and Charles’ parents, Warren and Carol Krause – was selected for its commitment and dedication to the community, future generations and the dairy industry.

Charles Krause, who today manages the 475-acre farm with 165 milking cows, is a fourth-generation farmer with an eye toward the future. His 22 years of full-time farming began after graduation from the University of Minnesota, and slow growth of the dairy has been geared toward allowing his own children the opportunity to return to the farm.

In addition to planning for the future, the Krause family has taken pride in their efforts to make the farm environmentally sustainable, installing energy-saving variable speed fans attached to thermostats, a variable speed vacuum pump in their milking parlor, using LED lighting, and attaching and recovering heat from the milking process in order to cool the milk. They also chopped newspaper for cattle bedding for 13 years, reusing more than 1.3 million pounds of newspaper over that time.

“We are always looking for ways to be sustainable and to be good stewards of the land,” said Charles Krause. “My parents have always been big supporters of the dairy and they see how new technology will make our cows more comfortable and productive as well.” That support led the family to build a new free-stall barn last year, and begin to separate solids from the cow manure to dry and re-use for animal bedding. Liquid manure is injected into the crop land, providing a natural source of fertilizer.

Making that “green” decision has also been part of the Krause Holsteins’ priority of cow comfort. Thirty-two temperature-controlled 52-inch fans provide ventilation in the new barn. Proving that comfortable cows respond with more milk production, the Krauses experienced a 10-pound per day increase in milk per cow in the new housing.

“From the moment an animal is born to the day they leave the farm, the care and comfort of every animal is of utmost importance, and everyone on the farm knows that,” says Charles

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Krause. To that end, three employees — Shannon Zachariason, Robert Epple and Brad Ebert — assist, with a combined total of more than 20 years of experience.

The family works to be good neighbors to nearby residents on a lake adjacent to the farm, notifying them by letter or personally when the farm’s manure management plan calls for liquid manure application every three to four years. “I have actually received ‘thank you’ notes from some shoreline owners for letting them know what’s going on,” Charles Krause reports.

His son, Andrew, is now a University of Minnesota freshman and hopes to be the fifth generation on the family farm after his graduation. Consequently, the farm is now on a growth phase, geared toward expanding the milking herd to 250 cows in the near future. His daughter, Morgan, a Buffalo High School student, is also involved in the farm’s daily operation.

In order to help people understand dairy farming and how it assures people of health and wholesome food, he has spoken at Minnesota Vikings events and school assemblies, three Retail Grocer Academies and a variety of community events. He’s also done numerous media appearances.

“I try to talk not only about our farm, but about all of the nearly 4,000 dairy farm families in Minnesota,” he says.

The farm has also played host to numerous tour groups, including high school classes and foreign visitors. Krause Holsteins will be the host for the 2014 Wright County Breakfast on the Farm, an annual event that attracts about 2,500 people.

A video describing Krause Holsteins can be viewed at <http://youtu.be/twwGdOdILrs>.

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ABOUT THE MINNESOTA MILK PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

The Minnesota Milk Producers Association serves as the “Voice of Minnesota’s Dairy Industry,” a grassroots organization for the industry with a democratically elected board of dairy farmer directors. Its mission is to promote a positive image for the dairy industry while protecting dairy producers’ business interests and way of life. For more information, visit www.mnmilk.org.