

Kelsey VanOverbeke

My name is Kelsey VanOverbeke and I would like to not only express my support for the expansion project at West River Dairy, but also give my personal & professional experiences interacting with Riverview directly & indirectly. I grew up on a farm near Campbell, MN which some of our family land is near the Campbell Dairy location. I have worked in the local agriculture industry in MN, ND & SD mainly within the counties of Wilkin, Traverse, Grant, Ottertail, Big Stone & Stevens in MN; Richland, Sargeant, Barnes in ND & Roberts in SD for 20 years as a professional agronomist with a B.S. degree in Agriculture Economics & also Crop & Weed Science from NDSU, Certified Crop Advisor including credential of certification to work with large dairy operations, Technical Service Provider for the NRCS including 590 & 595 mainly for Nutrient Mgt & IPM. I work with 32 farms that account for about 285,000 acres of farmland mainly in an 80 m radius of Fairmount, ND.

My first experience with Riverview was when the Campbell Dairy was proposed. From a farm girl perspective of it being my hometown, you always wonder who is this "new business" that is moving in and change is hard for anyone to accept. However, the way Riverview was honest & transparent with their intentions as well as the legal steps they had to take to even have the project considered, let alone a permit approved, exceeded the expectations of myself and so many others that I heard from in the community and through the daily conversations of my job. As they always say, "Good intentions are overrated. Good actions is where the proof of character exists." Riverview showed our community of Campbell MN the proof of their character as a business and as people; not just in the business interactions but also their support for the community and working with neighbors both farmer neighbors and non.

Fast forward to current interactions with Riverview management, local dairy location management and staff in the Red River locations & Stevens locations, farm operations management and staff as well as their agronomists, contracted operators, etc; my impression of Riverview as a dairy operation, farm operation & the people in general keeps exceeding my expectations with every interaction I have with them. Again, as an agronomist I interact with many farm managers, operators, staff, etc on a daily basis & what I can confidently say about Riverview Personnel is that they carry themselves in a professional, ethical manner in which they always are more than happy to hear any questions, concerns, recommendations, etc anyone has to offer. They follow their legal & moral duties without wavering. I cannot say that about too many businesses otherwise that go to the extent that they do. They have a large business to run, but unlike most people I see with that much responsibility, they always seem to make time to spend time in their community, with local growers & neighbors, youth, etc whether it be in a community parade event to show support or a winter meeting providing an educational presentation and open discussion with their very knowledgeable Master Agronomist whom I have a great deal of respect for.

Knowing the massive amount of agronomic benefits having manure in your crop rotation can provide in various ways as well as the diversity of the alfalfa in crop rotations and silage as an option as well; the Riverview Dairy locations in our Red River Valley area have provided intangible benefits & measurable returns to the local farmers who participate in a relationship with Riverview. I know through direct conversations with growers in that area that tell me if Riverview had not been approved to set up their dairy location in our local home area of Campbell & Nashua (Campbell Dairy & North Ottawa Dairy); there would have been some tough decisions to make on some farms to either rent out or sell in some cases. However, because Riverview set up a dairy and offered silage & haylage acres including the option of manure, those farms are still in operation today and thankful the opportunity was there for them to diversify their operations and their source of nutrients to help with the biology of their soil as well as the organic matter & water holding

capacity that had been struggling in recent years. I have seen this first hand in fields I work with directly that there are many agronomic advantages to the soil health & biology mainly through carbon sequestration that the alfalfa provides, improvements in Organic Matter & C:N balance in creating a balanced soil biology for microbes to excel in creating better soil health and mineralization, etc. I walk alfalfa fields weekly and am so thankful that we are able to grow it in the Valley where it typically would not have any reason to be grown otherwise. Many alfalfa crops that come out of rotation also allow for us to not have to apply as much nitrogen for a crop year or two as the residual N is consistently sufficient as a large percentage of the next year's corn crop needs. This is extremely important in times like we are in now with extremely high fertilizer prices to be able to have growers access alfalfa acres and manure. The growers that I work with that have the least cost of production per bu produced are $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time a grower that works with one of the Riverview Dairy locations to grow silage, haylage and access manure. This is the kind of options we need in agriculture for these local farms to survive and leave their legacy for the next generation. Growers (and I) rest assured that the recommendations of the manure management team have been intensively reviewed to be in compliance with the BMP's each location & field has to follow in order to be in compliance. I have no doubt that the West River Dairy location follows & will continue to follow the same strict protocol that all the other locations know to follow as well. Their team, from upper management to field applicators all keep in communication on compliance along with rigid record keeping and submitting documentation to the proper entities. I know, because I have been a part of the process of these steps and their professionalism exceeds my expectations every interaction where we work together to make plans for a grower. They don't take the requirements of any of the permitting process lightly and anyone who wants to work with them in executing the agronomic needs at hand, also knows that they are to follow the guidelines. Even their haylage & silage operations are run extremely safely & efficiently so that there is very little room for error or injury or damage otherwise. My brother runs a cart for an operation that carts for silage at one of the locations and he said that safety, efficiency, cleanliness & communication are all keys to a successful season that Riverview stresses. If you've ever toured any of their facilities in the RRV, Steven's, Swift, etc you already know they run a clean, organized & first class operation in the care they take with their animals, the cleanliness of the facilities inside and out and also by the way everyone carries themselves in a kind & professional manner. The obvious characteristics of Riverview is that if you know how this all works; you know they they or any other operation for that matter cannot set up an operation like the West River Dairy without following ALL of the proper protocols and procedures legally. The key thing that most people overlook, assume or just flat out do not have experience with is the fact that they also prove to me and others that they not only follow their legal obligations but they follow their moral obligations to the environment, the local communities, their personnel, their farming neighbors & to the generations yet to come. I believe that is just as important to know about them that I hope more people get to experience and know about the Riverview people. Thank you for your consideration of supporting & approving the West River Dairy. Kelsey VanOverbeke