

# Blake Klaphake

I am writing this letter in support of Riverview's expansion at West River Dairy.

When I think of continued growth of the dairy industry in Minnesota, I think of three important factors for success: worker safety, environmental responsibility, and animal welfare. Riverview is the gold standard in all three.

Their "Be Safe" and "Be Kind" initiatives focus on worker safety and animal care. They have a special "SWAT" team that helps their workers anytime there's a special circumstance with any injured animal--if an employee doesn't know how to handle a cow that has a health condition, the team is called in and is specially trained for handling cows in any difficult situations. They are organized, well-trained, and respectful to the animals.

I work on a neighboring farm and deliver corn and other products to Riverview's dairies. The sites are clean and well-maintained. I have observed them applying manure on our farm and they follow state guidelines for rates and for maintaining proper setbacks from the ditches.

They recently built a water capture pond to conserve water on the site. This is so they don't have to use as much groundwater. They recycle water that they use to wash cows. They also recycle bedding so they use far less per cow than your average dairy.

Riverview has been a huge benefit to our local communities, and the farmers that farm around the sites are very happy with the opportunity. NOT only can they sell crops to the dairy, it also means they're not wasting fuel and labor and time shipping corn and hay 20 miles down the road.

I highly support this permit application.