

Speaking: Tracey Werry

Good afternoon Mr. Mayor and members of Council. I am Tracey Werry, coordinator for Leading Livestock Genetics, an alliance of dairy cow and dairy goat breeders located in Kawartha Lakes, Peterborough and Durham Region working to develop export opportunities.

Here with me today are Suzanne Atkinson dairy farmer and Canadian Farm Writer, and Kelly Maloney Agriculture Development Officer City of Kawartha Lakes. Together we, along with three other team members, John Devries, beef farmer and member of LLG , Marty Phillippi and Marlene Werry, formed the Canadian Planning Team for the 2018 Russian Dairy News Motor Rally.

A gentleman named Bob Lang who has dedicated much of his life to developing export opportunities for Canadian Agriculture, arranged for Russian agriculture journalists to visit Canada in April 2017. The journalist who came was Vera Mozgovaya Editor for the online publication the Russian DairyNews. During Vera's time here the idea was hatched to hold the 2018 Motor Rally here in Ontario.

Canadian Team members Suzanne, John and Marty participated in the 2017 Motor Rally in Siberia and upon their return planning for 2018 began. Working closely with Vera and her team in Russia we chose host farms and businesses, arranged for hotels, assisted with car rentals, printing materials, ordering of t-shirts, flags and more.

When the Motor Rally date arrived, 45 Russian participants had travelled to Canada to participate in the Rally. Early the morning of Monday, July 16, a convoy of 19 cars decorated with decals and flags hit the pavement on the journey west. We arrived in Kawartha Lakes on Tuesday and spent two days in the area. We toured Kawartha Dairy, Mariposa Dairy, Green Tractors, Grasshill Farm, Kawartha Holsteins as well as Crovalley Holsteins in Peterborough, and Canadian Tire Motorsport Park and Benrise Holsteins in Durham Region. Over the week we toured a total of 16 stops including dairy farms, dairy processing plants, equipment dealers and manufacturers, before ending in Niagara Falls.

The Russian participants were able to see firsthand the management, techniques, and equipment that is employed daily here in Canada to secure high production and animal care standards.

As follow up to the event, I can report that business is being pursued.

1. Goat Genetics from Canada (Grasshill etc.) - info sent and under review.
2. Farm equipment, manure spreaders, feed processing, TMR equipment - working through jurisdictional priority but solutions are under consideration for equipment purchase.
3. Three companies have approached an export development company regarding potential dealership interests in Russia.

This first attempt to interchange 'Milk Industry' issues and understanding between Canada and Russia is just that - a first step! All participants expressed the intent to further engage and also to engage other regions (countries) to expand dairy knowledge and experience.

And now, we would like to show you one of the videos that was created showcasing the Motor Rally. This features some of their fourth day stops on July 18th and began with a greeting at their hotel by Mayor Letham.

Motor Rally Video to be shown.

Speaking: Suzanne Atkinson

In April of 2017 I was driving a Russian journalist through Ontario; and having spent a week touring this country's dairy industry, she wanted to do more than just write about it. She wanted to bring her readers here to Ontario. Fortunately her publication, the Dairy News, had that venue; Motor Rally.

For me the prospect of bring 50 or 100 Russians to Canada was astounding. To think that that many people would spend their own money to come here to see what makes Canadian farmers, and I'll use Vera's words here; "the richest in the world," was an incredible opportunity for Canada.

These weren't sight-seers. These were industry leaders who had an agenda; the agenda of improving their businesses.

But you can't just jump on an airplane and fly to Canada from Russia. In applying for a visa you need to have hotels booked and flights booked and for all of that you need an invitation.

Kawartha Lakes and Leading Livestock Genetics stepped in to give this idea the corporate credibility it needed to get off the ground. Much of Motor Rally's success is due in no small part to people on this council who believe in agriculture and to your economic development team.

Registration was cut off at 50 people and Vera was sure 100 would have come, had we been able to accommodate them. Last year 148 participated in Motor Rally –in Siberia- including John, Marty and I.

International economic activity isn't just a matter of saying I have what you need. The first step is relationship building; and that's what Motor Rally did.

One man brought his whole family with the intention of sharing that dairy farming can be a family activity. He has returned home with the plan to purchase 18 milking robots and enroll his son in agriculture at the University of Guelph.

Business succession is a no small topic in Russia because farmers have never before had the option. They wanted to see it in action here in Canada. At Grasshill and Kawartha Holsteins, Mariposa and Kawartha Dairies; at all those places succession was discussed. There was an impromptu evaluation lesson offered at Kawartha Holsteins

and the university professor/dairy owner that I drove around, went home with the new idea that what the outside of a cow looks like, impacts her profitability.

As a side-note, Russian farmers don't tend to share their insights in part because they don't want give away a competitive advantage. In bucking that trend this group signed on to a group on What's App. And that same group is still conversing with each other two months later! I think that's remarkable.

Motor Rally opened many, many doors for dairy farmers in Kawartha Lakes, Ontario, and across Russia.

To thank the City of Kawartha Lakes for all that you did to make this event possible and on behalf of all of the participants, I'd like to present you with the official flag of Motor Rally, as a symbol of our gratitude.

Thank you.

Flag Presentation:

The presentation is being given by 2 members of the Canadian Planning Team, Tracey Werry, Marketing Co-ordinator, Leading Livestock Genetics Breeders Association, and Suzanne Atkinson, an independent farm writer and member of the Canadian Farm Writers Federation. The photo of the presentation of the flag would be with Tracey Suzanne and Kelly Maloney, City of Kawartha Lakes Agriculture Development Officer with Mayor Andy Letham.