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**Dairy herd transition provides research opportunity for Professor Timna Wyckoff**

*Summary: The nearby University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC) provides the perfect research opportunity for Wyckoff '94 as one half of the dairy herd transitions from traditional to organic production.*

(June 25, 2009)-The nearby University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC) is providing a perfect opportunity for Timna Wyckoff's research on agricultural contributions to bacterial antibiotic resistance. The transition of one half of the WCROC dairy herd from conventional production to organic production allows the University of Minnesota, Morris associate professor of biology and her student researchers the opportunity to compare populations of bacteria in two different dairy environments.

In conventional dairy production, antibiotics may be used to prevent or treat disease. In organic production, antibiotics are not used. Wyckoff's research will investigate if changes occur over time to the population of bacteria associated with the organically managed cows as antibiotics are removed from the system.

The timeline of the transition from conventional dairying to organic is integral to Wyckoff's new research. The "matched herds," the result of the new organic herd and the continuing conventional herd starting from a single original herd, offer a unique opportunity for both Wyckoff and WCROC scientists. Organic dairy herds at other universities were started with organically raised heifers rather than transitioned from conventional production.

When the WCROC dairy herd transition is complete, it will be one of only three organic dairy research facilities in the nation and the only one in the Midwest, says Dennis Johnson, professor of animal science and leader of the transition. And the WCROC will be the only land-grant university facility in the United States that includes both organic and traditional dairy research.

[Read more](#) or [watch a video](#) in which Johnson and Wyckoff explain more about their research. Justin Ware, University Relations, Twin Cities, produced the video.

Photo: Timna Wyckoff '94, associate professor of biology

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