



## Stepping Back

Dan Leitterman is retiring after nearly 50 years in the agricultural industry.

Pictured are some of Dan's candid moments during his career.

Please see page 2 for Dan's full letter and future plans.



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# Stepping Back: With Reflection and Gratitude



By Dan Leiterman

This coming April I will be 72 years old and have served the agricultural industry for nearly 50 years. After much reflection and with immense gratitude, I believe it is time to step back and retire.

In reflecting back on my career, it is humbling to see how much I owe the farming

community. Almost everything in my life can be somehow connected to my career in agriculture. It was 45 years ago, while working at a local feed mill in western Wisconsin that a pretty young woman came into our store looking for horse feed. I loaded the feed into her truck and asked her out on a date. Fast forward to today, Jan and I have been married for over 43 years. We have raised a family and now enjoy watching our sons grow their families.

Over 26 years ago, my wife and I started Crystal Creek®. As our business grew, our family alone could no longer keep up with the workload, and we added employees over the years. The extraordinary team that has developed is a testament to the dedication, work ethic and high standards that each employee brings to our effort. They strive daily to give our customers the very best service and products possible. It has been a pleasure to work closely with our employees over the years. They are an inspiration to see in action. My sincere thanks and appreciation goes out to our staff for their professionalism and genuine caring when serving our customers.

Our oldest son, Ryan, has taken over the business and has been in charge of the day-to-day operation for almost five years now. He is doing an excellent job. It makes me happy to see our family business transition to the next generation and I am very proud of the job he is doing. He continues to run the company with the same core values that my wife and I started our business with: honesty, hard work, and a dedication to quality products and service to our customers. The Crystal Creek® mission has been right from the start, to be innovative and find ways to help our customers reach their operation goals with healthier, longer lived and more profitable livestock to help their bottom line. Our customer's success was then, and still is today, our top priority. I am very proud of the Crystal Creek®



Ann O'Leary, 2016 Alice in Dairyland, Ryan Leiterman and Dan Leiterman at Crystal Creek® headquarters in Spooner, WI.

team with their advanced technology and dedication to the industry, which enables them to provide leadership and quality service to our customers.

As a livestock nutritionist, animal agriculture has given me not only a job to put food on my family's table, but it has provided me a meaningful purpose in my career. It has been a very satisfying career that constantly challenged my mind and allowed me to be creative, take risks and grow as a person. It is also humbling to see how much the industry has changed. I still remember doing my first rations in college using the Pearson Square and a slide rule, because the hand calculator was not available yet. I have seen a lot of change over my career, some good, some not so much. I am still optimistic about the future of farming. I strongly believe that the core principles of good healthy livestock husbandry and sound business practices will bring success to the livestock industry.

I have enjoyed serving the farm families that this country relies on. Throughout the course of my career, I have had the honor of working with countless farming families and I consider myself lucky to be able to call many of them my friends. The tremendous support that I received in my career from so many wonderful customers has been truly appreciated. I humbly thank all of our customers for your trust and support. I firmly believe that agriculture is the backbone of this country. Farmer's hard work, dedication and strong family principles are a model we should all learn from.





## Looking Ahead

What is next for me? While some people look forward to slowing down during retirement that is not in my fiber. I am full steam ahead with new projects. I recently bought a band saw lumber mill and have been putting in a lot of hours turning red pine, hard maple and white oak trees off of our property into lumber. It keeps me active, both physically and mentally, resulting in a good purposeful, quality day. I am really enjoying being a grandpa and spending more time with my grandchildren. I have a new nickname now, "Boot Camp Dan", because when the grandchildren come over they know grandpa

has rules and expects them to behave. It is never too early to set some standards. The adventure of travel, hunting, fishing and camping have always been in my life and will continue to be as long as the good Lord allows. Ryan jokes that I've traded in rubber farm call boots for fishing waders. I also have some writing goals that I want to accomplish over the next few years. It is a full life. I am blessed.

Thank you again to all of the wonderful people I have worked for and with over the years. You are amazing!

Best Regards and a Sincere Thank You.

Dan Leiterman