

# **WISCONSIN SUCCESS STORY**

## **2003**

### **Organic Choice Cooperative**

#### **Outline of Need:**

Improve the sales and stability for the dairy cooperative members.

#### **How Rural Development Helped:**

Rural Development Specialist, Margaret Bau, has worked with the cooperative on incorporation issues since the co-op began two years ago.

They have recently received a \$50,000 Value Added Development Grant that will allow the cooperative to institute a business plan and enabled them to bring in accounting and legal consulting services.

#### **The Result:**

Organic Choice Cooperative has found a solid place in the wholesale milk market and is currently recruiting new members. The seven-member coop is shipping a load of organic milk to Horizon Organic Dairy in Colorado every other day, but their current contract would allow them to ship up to three loads every day. This is a huge leap from a year ago when they were struggling to retail their milk under the brand name "Next Generation", with little success.

Now, their long-term plan is to establish a federated cooperative through Organic Choice co-op, which would handle the marketing and licensing while allowing individual groups to maintain local control.