

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MEDIA CONTACTS

Matt Howard  
VP Water Stewardship, The Water Council  
Director of AWS North America  
[mhoward@thewatercouncil.com](mailto:mhoward@thewatercouncil.com)  
(414) 988-8749



Raj Shukla  
Executive Director  
River Alliance of Wisconsin  
[rshukla@wisconsinrivers.org](mailto:rshukla@wisconsinrivers.org)  
(608) 257-2424 x115

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## **Wisconsin dairy producers address water challenges through implementation of globally recognized water stewardship framework**

**MILWAUKEE (June 27, 2019)** – The Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) North America and River Alliance of Wisconsin announced today the initial findings of the groundbreaking Clear Water Farms Program that is targeted at helping farmers meet the financial opportunities of their businesses while also addressing critical water management challenges in their watersheds. A complete report will be released in July 2019.

Agriculture is often identified as a significant contributor to compromised water quality, not only in Wisconsin, but globally. By leveraging the AWS International Standard as a framework to identify and mitigate water-related challenges and risks, the Clear Water Farms Program aims to engage farmers in addressing their role in the water quality challenges faced by the state of Wisconsin.

Miltrim Farms, a dairy producer in Marathon County, Wisconsin, is the first participant in the Clear Water Farms Program, and the first agricultural site in North America to seek certification to the AWS Standard in July of 2019. The objectives of Miltrim Farm's plan aim to generate high-quality farm products that increase farm profitability, while implementing practices that make them better stewards of water resources.

"Dairies like Miltrim are gaining a deeper understanding of how water impacts their business and how they in turn impact shared water resources," said Matt Howard, director for AWS North America, which is headquartered at The Water Council in Milwaukee. "Miltrim will lead the way in demonstrating that good business sense and water stewardship go hand-in-hand and can lead to a competitive advantage in this turbulent marketplace."

The Clear Water Farms Program plans to engage additional farmers in Marathon County and other regions of Wisconsin in the implementation of the AWS Standard. As more sites in the same watershed are certified to

the AWS Standard, the program expects to see measurable water quality impacts in the rivers, streams and other bodies of water.

"Farms like Miltrim are the solution to our water crisis. The AWS certification and Clear Water Farms shows producers how to cut costs, help the environment and strengthen local communities," stated Raj Shukla executive director, River Alliance of Wisconsin. "River Alliance of Wisconsin is excited to grow our partnership with the Alliance for Water Stewardship and future Clear Water Farms Program participants."

The Clear Water Farms Program's specific objectives include partnering with local regulatory agencies and community groups to ensure their understanding of the challenges and facilitate better working relationships.

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### **About Alliance for Water Stewardship North America**

The Alliance for Water Stewardship is an international, multi-stakeholder organization dedicated to enhancing water stewardship. With The Water Council as the official North American regional partner, AWS connects leading organizations in North America with each other and their counterparts from around the globe who are committed to advancing the responsible use of freshwater. As a result, AWS North America works collaboratively to develop North American water users and managers into world-class water stewards who protect and enhance freshwater resources for people and nature. [www.awsnorthamerica.com](http://www.awsnorthamerica.com)

### **About River Alliance of Wisconsin**

Formed in 1993, River Alliance of Wisconsin is a statewide nonprofit, non-partisan advocacy organization that empowers people to protect and restore Wisconsin's waters. The organization's membership includes more than 1,500 individuals, businesses and local watershed groups. For more information, visit:

[www.wisconsinrivers.org](http://www.wisconsinrivers.org)

### **About The Water Council**

Headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA next to the world's largest freshwater system and home to one of the most influential freshwater technology hubs in the world, The Water Council (TWC) is recognized as a global center for advancing water technologies and stewardship. At its heart, TWC is a non-profit, membership organization that connects, convenes and showcases the hub comprised of more than 238 water technology businesses and the diverse water leadership network of 200 members it is linked to from around the world. While TWC's mission is centered on driving economic development, attracting and connecting world-class talent and supporting water-focused technology innovation, its larger goal is to help secure freshwater resources for the world by driving solutions to the numerous industries that need and use a large amount of water. [www.thewatercouncil.com](http://www.thewatercouncil.com)

