

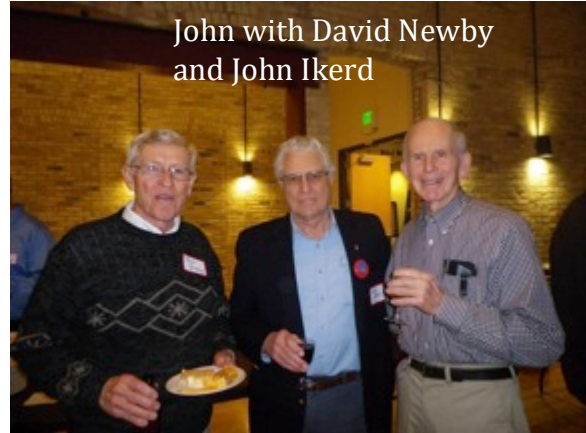
John Kinsman was a man small in stature, but a giant among us.

I met John in the late 1990's and was immediately struck by his quiet wisdom. But it was only gradually in the next few years, as we worked sporadically on specific projects, that I began to realize what a force he was in the world movements for sustainable agriculture, fair trade, and a society dedicated to peace, justice and true solidarity.

How he became a world figure while running a small dairy farm, I honestly do not know. It seems impossible. But his improbable fusion of being a family farmer and a world leader should be a model for us all.

We will miss John terribly. But what he did, what he stood for, and his inspiration to us all will not be forgotten.

John Kinsman, Présenté!



John with David Newby and John Ikerd

David Newby

President Emeritus, Wisconsin State AFL-CIO

President, Wisconsin Fair Trade Coalition

From John Stocks, Executive Director of the National Education Association:

John Kinsman brought the voice and values of family farmers to the contemporary struggles for social, economic and environmental justice. He will be deeply missed by the progressive community. Godspeed.

From Kerry Schumann, head of the League of Conservation Voters:

Really sad to hear that John Kinsman has passed away. I've always been so impressed with John - his visionary thinking on farming, his dedication to working for family farmers around the globe, and his kindness. One of the sweetest men I've met. There's a farm in southwest Wisconsin that's feeling a little emptier today.

From Walt Kessler, dairy farmer and former VP of FFD:

Sorry to hear about the passing of John. The dairy industry has lost a pioneer of equalizing justice for the dairy farmers investment in the marketing of their milk. I will always think of him helping others and sharing his dandelion wine, I was surprised that it was good.

From Kimberlee Wright, Midwest Environmental Advocates:

I was so sorry to read of John's passing in the paper this morning. A true Wisconsin champion who will be remembered and missed.

From Dan Cornelius, Great Lakes Region at Intertribal Agricultural Council:

The world lost an amazingly inspirational person today, fittingly on Martin Luther King Day. John Kinsman ran a sustainable dairy farm in Lime Ridge, Wisconsin almost his entire life while somehow managing to accumulate countless adventures on his world travels that typically focused on food sovereignty and sustainable agriculture. I met John in 2007, I think, on a sustainable farm tour, organized by Family Farm Defenders where John (I later discovered), resided as president. John and Family Farm Defenders would organize tours when visiting dignitary farmers from other country came to Wisconsin, almost always ending with a small press conference at a cafe in Reedsburg. John and I quickly hit it off, and were soon collaborating on an effort to partner with his Amish neighbors to harvest ash trees on his land and turn them into custom made furniture for Union South. While university bureaucracy stifled that effort, we forged a lasting friendship. I've fortunate enough to work with his daughter, Susan Hunter, a Tribal liaison for farm programs in Wisconsin. Unsurprisingly, she is also an amazing person...I'd expect nothing less of one of John children. John will be missed, but his mark on the world will continue, as his connections and positive influence literally span the globe. Whether is donning a cow suit and pour BgH milk on the Memorial Union steps or giving a rousing lecture on food sovereignty, John inspired so many people during his long and productive life. I don't often look for role models, but John's life provides a stellar model for us all.



From Christine Schiavoni, FFD Board member:

Just processing the sad news of the passing of John Kinsman, an amazing farmer leader and among the greatest individuals I have ever had the privilege of calling a friend. John was a farmer, father, friend, and, among other roles he played, what I consider to be a true revolutionary. He had boundless energy and a genuine love of life, and love for the Earth and all beings. For me, John really epitomized the spirit of La Via Campesina, the global peasant

movement that he was so proud to be a part of. I had the honor of seeing John in action at some of the many international gatherings he participated in and was always struck by how he could have the most in-depth, profound, heart-to-heart conversations with others in the struggle, even (or especially) when the person he was communicating with didn't share a single word of common language with him (I can still see him doing a gesture of milking udders in the air, saying "I'm a dairy farmer."). So the movement has lost a great leader, and many of us have lost a great friend. It's probably impossible to count the number of lives he has touched. I feel blessed to count my life among them. What an amazing legacy he has left us with. Onward in the struggle for food sovereignty and for dignity and justice for all those who provide our food. JOHN KINSMAN PRESENTE!

Matthias Hanselmann Dear John, I am so thankful for having been your guest at your farm 3 years ago. You were a real dedicated fellow, a true companion. Wished you were my dad. Love, and good-bye-Matthias from Germany.

Eva Schulte John was an inspiration and a delight of a person, always with his heart in the right place and unafraid to act. Hoping his spirit passes on to all those whose lives he touched.

Isidoro Quezada I will always remember a good friend and a good mentor for a farmer god have him in his glory.

Alan Cohen John Kinsman was more than a mentor, he was a tower of strength, as Dr. King said, a drum-major for justice, for fairness, for the Earth and those who labor upon it. I was lucky to spend many hours with John and his children on long PSA bus trips to and from Mississippi, supporting Eddie Carthan and the Tchula 7 in Madison and in Tchula, MS; fighting against BGH, for pure milk, against corporate power in agriculture, and building community. John, you live on in your children, grandchildren, and all the leaders you have taught and supported over the many years of struggle. My heart goes out to his family, and to the family farmers of Wisconsin, and all over the world his life has touched. You will be remembered, my friend and my hero.

I know, Christina Schiavoni forwarded me the email from John Peck. Fitting somehow that he should pass on MLK day. Words can't describe his goodness. Send our love to all the Wisconsin kin,
Alicia Harvie, Farm Aid

We got a card to him last week saying goodbye and thanks. What an amazing guy, irreplaceable.

John Stauber

In my lifetime of reporting, John is one of the two most admirable people I've met. Wow. What a life!--
Marc Eisen
Writer and Editor (Isthmus)
Madison WI 53704

Jan Weber: John was a gentleman fighter for farmers. He will be so, so missed. A great man.
