

## Badger NAMA gets a glimpse at calf hutch manufacturing

Story and photos by Karen Lee

The Badger chapter of the National Agri-Marketing Association (NAMA) went behind the scenes of the L.T. Hampel Corporation in Germantown, Wisconsin, in late March.

Hampel manufactures products for John Deere, GE, Harley-Davidson, Caterpillar and Johnson Controls. It forms sheets of high-quality plastic into snowplows, portable restrooms, dumpster lids and calf hutches, to name a few products.

The corporation's Calf-Tel line of calf housing was first introduced in 1981. Today, these calf-housing products are available in dozens of options, for indoor and outdoor applications, and are responsible for providing a home to nearly two million calves annually.

Using a thermoforming process, the hutches are made by heating plastic and vacuum forming it around a mold. At a critical point in the cooling process, robotic arms cut in the hutches' openings. Hampel can manufacture 15 to 20 hutches per hour.

Hampel has undergone recent expansions to its manufacturing plant and offices. Today, Hampel employs over 150 people at its 200,000-square-foot facility. **PD**



**TOP LEFT:** Portable restroom pieces bring color to Hampel's warehouse. These are assembled at the facility or shipped in pieces and assembled on-site, particularly during natural disaster relief efforts.

**TOP RIGHT:** A robotic arm is used to cut openings and vents in the calf hutch.

**LOWER LEFT:** Calf-Tel also manufactures an indoor pen system, which is available in three sizes.

**LOWER RIGHT:** Every product begins in the tooling department as craftsmen turn paper designs into molds for the thermoforming process.

**BACKGROUND:** Calf hutches ready for a dairy producer to place an order.

