Elgin farmers began shipping milk to Chicago before the Civil War. Soon the Elgin Board of Trade was established, setting dairy prices for most of the United States for more than 40 years. Elgin was home to dozens of dairies including Gail Borden’s company, famous for its Eagle Brand condensed milk.

It’s a nearly forgotten story.

Dairies to Prairies tells the story of Elgin’s dairy heritage. The project will also explore how these former dairy farms have come under pressure from suburban development, modern day agriculture and efforts to restore natural prairies.

This story will be presented through a feature-length documentary film and companion traveling exhibit.
Your donations will help make this project possible. Significant contributors will be recognized in the opening and closing film credits.

Donation for Dairies to Prairies

Your name will also be included on our traveling exhibit and on our website and social media pages.

Send a check, or use your credit card online at www.elginhistory.org

For more information please contact:
Elizabeth Marston, Museum Director at 847.742.4248 or visit www.elginhistory.org/dairiesstoprairies

The documentary film and traveling exhibit is being created by The Elgin History Museum and Grindstone Productions.

**Project Goals**

- Help residents connect with Elgin’s remarkable dairy heritage.
- Capture and preserve oral histories for future generations.
- Explore the community culture and business environment that made the powerful Elgin Dairy Board of Trade possible.
- Explain the factors that led to the decline of Elgin’s dairy dominance.
- Examine modern-day land use issues and how suburban growth and open space initiatives can sustainably co-exist.
- Promote environmental education and appreciation of restored prairies.

Can You Help Us Tell This Story?

**Elgin, Illinois**

Dairies rairiestoP prairies

The Land Surrounding Elgin

Has a Story to Tell

Created by The Elgin History Museum & Grindstone Productions

The Elgin History Museum is a regional treasure trove of historical information, exhibits, archives and photo collections. It is the home base of several accomplished local historians.

Grindstone Productions is an Elgin based production company that produces story-driven content for businesses and non-profit associations. Grindstone has collaborated with the Elgin Historical Society on more than a dozen projects over the past 15+ years, including the recently released Project 2-3-1: A Story of Elgin African-American Heritage.

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