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FDA Proposal Would Allow Salt Substitutes In Standardized Food

Separately, FDA Issues Draft Guidance On Use Of Dietary Guidance Statements On Food Labels

Silver Spring, MD—The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said today that it will soon propose to amend its standards of identity to permit the use of salt substitutes in foods for which salt is a required or optional ingredient.

The proposed rule would provide manufacturers with flexibility and facilitate industry innovation to reduce sodium in standardized foods, FDA stated.

Standards of identity typically describe what ingredients a food must contain and what is optional, FDA noted. They may describe the amount or proportion of ingredients or components. Some standards also prescribe a method of production or formulation.

There are more than 250 standards of identity and, according to the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), about 37 percent of those standards are for dairy products, including numerous standards for cheeses and cheese products.

Salt substitutes are currently used in many non-standardized foods in the US, but most FDA standards do not permit the use of salt substitutes, the agency pointed out.

Manufacturers of standardized foods have few options for reducing the sodium content of their products, FDA noted. If salt is a required ingredient, they may generally use less salt. If salt is an optional ingredient, they may either use no salt or less salt. However, they cannot replace salt with another ingredient unless the standard permits the use of another ingredient. Most standards do not provide for a substitute for salt.

FDA's proposed rule would use a "horizontal" approach for standards, under which a single rule would apply to multiple standards across several categories of standardized foods.

Specifically, the proposed rule would amend the 80 standards that specify salt as a required or

an optional ingredient. Because these 80 standards are referenced in other standards, 140 of the 250 standards currently established for a wide variety of foods could be affected.

The proposed rule does not list permitted salt substitutes but defines them as safe and suitable ingredients used to replace some or all of the added sodium chloride and that serve the functions of salt in food. The extent to which salt can be replaced depends on the ability of a salt substitute to replace the functions of salt in food without compromising food safety and the characteristics of the food, FDA noted.

Where salt is permitted in FDA standards, the use is not described uniformly in the provisions of the standards. This is largely due to the standards having been established with different structural formats. The lack of uniformity is also due to the use of salt differing across different standardized foods. In some foods, salt is a mandatory ingredient, and in

• See **Salt Substitutes**, p. 23

US Milk Production Rose 1.0% In Feb.; Output Fell In Half Of Reporting States

Washington—US milk production in the 24 reporting states in February totaled 16.9 billion pounds, up 1.0 percent from February 2022, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service reported.

January's milk production estimate for the 24 reporting states was revised up by 5 million pounds, but output was still up 1.5 percent from January 2022, as originally estimated.

Production per cow in the 24 reporting states averaged 1,892 pounds for February, seven pounds above February 2022.

The number of milk cows on farms in the 24 reporting states in February was 8.94 million head, 54,000 head more than in February 2022 and 12,000 head more than in January 2023.

For the US as a whole, February milk production totaled 17.7 billion pounds, up 0.8 percent from February 2022. Production per cow in the US averaged 1,877 pounds for February, seven pounds above February 2022. The number of milk cows on farms in the US in February was 9.42 million head, 37,000 head more than in February 2022 and 12,000 head more than in January 2023.

California's February milk production totaled 3.28 billion pounds, down 0.9 percent from

• See **Milk Output Rises**, p. 8

Lipari Foods Buys Swiss-American, Inc., Will Expand Cheese Offerings

Warren, MI—Lipari Foods, a specialty food distributor based in Warren, MI, on Monday announced that it has acquired Swiss-American, Inc., a specialty cheese solutions provider focused on retail deli.

This opportunity will further enhance the Lipari manufacturing division's capabilities through its subsidiary The Deli Source, with a specific focus on expanding cheese offerings, Lipari Foods stated.

"We are excited to welcome Swiss-American into our family as we further enhance our cheese program offerings," said Thom Lipari, CEO of Lipari Foods. "We

• See **Lipari Acquires**, p. 19

Milkfat Demand To Keep Rising In US; Skim Solids To Need Exports

Omaha, NE—As the demographic makeup of US consumers changes, demand for milkfat should continue to grow, albeit not enough to completely offset the slower population growth, according to a new report by Ben Laine, senior dairy analyst at Terrain.

Demand for skim solids in the US, meanwhile, will flat line, relying on export markets for growth, Laine's report projected.

The US population is getting older and more diverse, and that will have meaningful implications for dairy demand, the report noted.

And as demographic makeup changes, the product mix in the United States will change and with it, demand for dairy components like milkfat and skim solids.

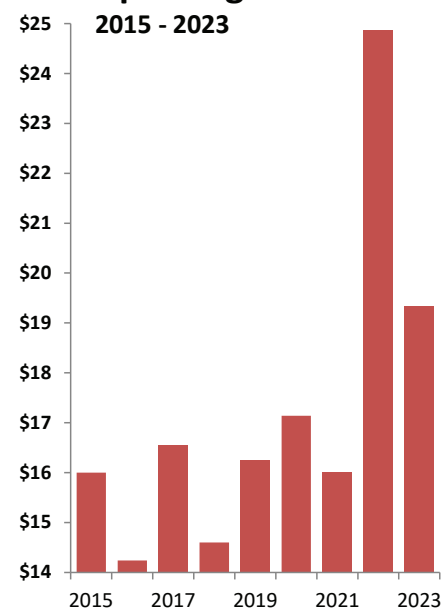
Laine's report investigates the implications of a changing population on dairy component demand.

According to the US Census Bureau, the United States population is headed for several demographic turning points in the coming decades: 2030 will mark when all Baby Boomers will be older than 65 years; four years later, older adults (over 65) are projected to outnumber children for the first time in history; and by 2060, the population over 65 will nearly double, and the population over 85 will nearly triple.

As the older population overtakes the younger population, deaths begin to outpace births and the natural rate of popula-

• See **Future Demand**, p. 18

Class I Base Price: April Avg





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Dairy Price Inflation Will Be Almost Non-Existent This Year

In February, the Consumer Price Index for dairy and related products stood at a record 272.3 (1982-84=100), up 0.1 percent from January and up an eye-opening 12.3 percent from February 2022, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

But while that year-over-year comparison is indeed eye-opening, it's that month-to-month change that's hopefully going to be opening some consumers' eyes, and wallets, this year.

Notably, February's 0.1-percent increase in the dairy CPI followed a 0.2-percent rise in January. That's two straight months in which the dairy CPI barely increased from the previous month.

Also worth remembering: December's dairy CPI was up just slightly from November.

Of course, these comparisons just reflect one month of retail price movements. But another way of looking at these number is as follows: the dairy CPI was 271.3 back in November, and increased to just 272.3 as of last month.

But going back to the beginning of 2022, the dairy CPI rose from 238.7 in January 2022 to 271.3 in November. Over that period, dairy CPI increases included 1.6 percent in February (from 238.7 in January to 242.4 in February), 1.2 percent in March (to 245.3), 2.4 percent in April (to 251.0), 2.6 percent in May (to 257.7), 1.4 percent in June (to 261.3), 1.7 percent in July (to 265.6), and 0.7 percent in August (to 267.5).

These were astounding increases in the context of recent, and for that matter historic, dairy price inflation. Over the 2003-22, the dairy CPI increased by an average of 2.3 percent annually, according to USDA's Economic Research Service. So there were two month-to-month increases in the dairy CPI last year that were greater

than the annual average increase in the dairy CPI over the 20-year period 2003-22.

Also, going back to 2015, there were three years in which the dairy CPI actually declined (2015, 2016 and 2018), one year in which the dairy CPI increased by just 0.1 percent (2017), and one year in which the dairy CPI rose by 1.0 percent (2019).

In 2022, there were several month-to-month increases in the dairy CPI that exceeded the entire increase in the dairy CPI over the 2015-19 period.

But most of those large dairy CPI increases in 2022 came during the first eight months of the year. The dairy CPI rose 0.5 percent in September (to 268.8), 0.2 percent in October (to 269.4), 0.7 percent in November (to 271.3), and then just a slight increase in December (to 271.4).

These small dairy CPI increases are continuing here in 2023, with no end in sight. And while very small increases in the dairy CPI should certainly be welcomed by consumers, what's obviously more noticeable is what's happening with retail dairy product prices.

And those prices provide further evidence of the lack of dairy price inflation here in 2023. For example, in February, the average retail price for Cheddar cheese was \$5.85 per pound, according to the BLS.

That's the fifth straight month in which the average retail Cheddar price was under \$6.00 per pound. It had reached a record high of \$6.08 per pound last September; that's the only time the average retail Cheddar price has ever topped \$6.00 a pound.

Going back a bit further, BLS statistics show that the average retail Cheddar price was \$5.86 a pound in July 2022, meaning that, after a couple of increases, retail Cheddar prices are right where they were last July. And

That's the fifth straight month in which the average retail Cheddar price was under \$6.00 per pound... BLS statistics show that the average retail Cheddar price was \$5.86 a pound in July 2022, meaning that, after a couple of increases, retail Cheddar prices are right where they were last July.

unlike then, retail Cheddar prices are trending down, not up.

Meanwhile, the average retail price for whole milk was \$4.16 a gallon in February, down almost four cents from January and the lowest price since July 2022, when it was also \$4.16 a pound. Average retail whole milk prices have now declined three months in a row.

What's also interesting about these average retail dairy product prices is how little they've actually increased over the medium term (going back a decade). For example, the average retail Cheddar price in February, \$5.85 a pound, was actually almost nine cents lower than the average retail price back in February of 2013.

Granted, that February 2013 price set a record that didn't get broken until August of last year. But when you can go back a decade and find multiple months in which retail Cheddar prices aren't all that different than they are today, well, that tells us that short-term dairy inflation has been impressive, but long-term inflation hasn't really been all that bad.

Part of the problem was the "in-between," when, for example, the average retail Cheddar price fell below \$5.00 a pound back in February of 2017. Compared to six years ago, retail Cheddar prices have skyrocketed, but compared to a decade ago, they're actually a bit lower.

Future retail dairy price prospects look to be steady to maybe down a bit. After all, CME spot market prices for blocks, barrels and butter are all well below where they were a year ago, and milk prices are similarly lower than they were a year ago.

Inflation will continue to garner headlines here in 2023, but as far as dairy price inflation is concerned, it will be almost non-existent.

Global Dairy Trade Price Index Falls 2.6%; Cheddar Price Drops 10.2%

Auckland, New Zealand—The price index on this week’s semi-monthly Global Dairy Trade (GDT) dairy commodity auction declined 2.6 percent from the previous auction, held two weeks ago.

That’s the third consecutive decline in the GDT price index. During the first six commodity auctions of 2023, the price index fell five times and increased once.

This week’s auction, which featured 148 participating bidders and 122 winning bidders.

Results from this week’s GDT auction, with comparisons to the previous auction, were as follows:

Cheddar cheese: The average winning price was \$4,052 per metric ton (\$1.84 per pound), down 10.2 percent. That was the second consecutive decline of 10.2 percent in the Cheddar price.

Average winning Cheddar prices this week were: Contract 1 (April), \$3,864 per ton, down 14.7 percent; Contract 2 (May), \$3,888 per ton, down 14.6 percent; Contract 3 (June), \$4,080 per ton, down 10.2; Contract 4 (July), \$4,328 per ton, down 5.4 percent; and Contract 6 (September), \$4,180 per ton, down 2.1 percent.

Skim milk powder: The average winning price was \$2,648 per ton (\$1.20 per pound), down 3.5 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$2,652 per ton, down 3.5 percent; Contract 2, \$2,641 per ton, down 3.1 percent; Contract 3, \$2,659 per ton, down 3.8 percent; Contract 4, \$2,656 per ton, down 3.8 percent; and Contract 5 (August), \$2,660 per ton, down 4.6 percent.

Whole milk powder: The average winning price was \$3,228 per ton (\$1.46 per pound), down 1.5 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$3,199 per ton, down 1.7 percent; Contract 2, \$3,216 per ton, down 1.6 percent; Contract 3, \$3,240 per ton, down 1.7 percent; Contract 4, \$3,292 per ton, down 0.1 percent; and Contract 5, \$3,394 per ton, up 0.8 percent.

Butter: The average winning price was \$4,748 per ton (\$2.15 per pound), down 3.0 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$4,693 per ton, down 3.6 percent; Contract 2, \$4,700 per ton, down 3.2 percent; Contract 3, \$4,737 per ton, down 2.9 percent; Contract 4, \$4,880 per ton, down 2.0 percent; and Contract 5, \$4,965 per ton, down 2.6 percent.

Anhydrous milkfat: The average winning price was \$5,150 per ton (\$2.34 per pound), down 3.8 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$5,109 per ton, down 3.9 percent; Contract 2, \$5,105 per ton, down 3.9 percent; Contract 3, \$5,129 per ton, down

4.1 percent; Contract 4, \$5,205 per ton, down 4.0 percent; and Contract 5, \$5,317 per ton, down 2.3 percent.

If weak supply has been the theme of global dairy markets for much of the past couple of years, lower demand is now the predominant feature, according to ASB Bank’s “Commodities Weekly” report.

A less certain outlook for the global economy and the prospect of weaker consumption in many parts of the world are weighing on buyers. With milk production also getting past its lows, the balance of supply and demand “has shifted markedly.”

Demand/supply ratios for both whole milk powder and (especially) skim milk powder have deteriorated, ASB Bank noted. The number of participating bidders at the GDT has fallen to around 140 to 160 over recent auctions (it was 170 to 190 this time last year), and the ratio of winning bidders to participating bidders is now north of 80 percent (it was 60 to 65 percent this time last year).

“In short, fewer producers are short of product, and those that are participating are generally securing what they need without needing to go on the offensive,” ASB Bank reported. “Competition for product just isn’t there.”

As ASB Bank expected, China’s return to the GDT party isn’t pushing prices higher.

Three months or so on from its zero COVID exit, China’s now back to securing about 60 percent of the whole milk powder on offer each Global Dairy Trade (more than 12-month highs) and it’s now securing more product than this time last year.

But correspondingly, Southeast Asia/Oceania and the Middle East, the regions that have helped bolster prices, are increasingly stepping back.

ASB Bank expects this to remain a theme over the course of the next season, with improving Chinese demand offset by weaker dairy consumption elsewhere. Further, with local production strong and dairy stocks still healthy, there’s a limit to what Chinese processors will be prepared to pay for now.

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Future Price Direction Difficult To Project

Dairy Situation & Outlook - Mar. 20

DR. BOB CROPP,
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Some strengthening of cheese prices in March will result in a higher Class III price. The February Class III was \$17.78. March Class III could be near \$18.00. Barrel Cheddar cheese prices have increased steadily since early March going from \$1.55 per pound to now \$1.9525. Forty-pound Cheddar blocks moved up and down in March declining to \$1.78 per pound early March to now \$1.99.

Where milk prices are headed for the remainder of the year is a big question. The answer seems to change weekly as dairy product prices change as do forecasts of milk production, domestic sales, and dairy exports.

Milk production increased just 0.1 percent in 2022. USDA is forecasting milk production to increase 0.9 percent in 2023. This higher increase will put some downward pressure on milk prices.

It is not likely milk production will increase more than this. With continued high feed costs and higher cost of other inputs along with lower milk prices dairy producers will face tighter margins in 2023 than 2022.

Also higher slaughter cow prices will likely increase the culling of cows from the herd and this along with fewer dairy replacements could actually reduce the average number of cows in 2023.

USDA forecasts the average number of cows in 2023 will decline by 10,000 from 2022. High feed prices are likely to dampen the increase in milk per cow.

The increase in milk production has been 1 percent higher than a year ago since August. The February increase was just 0.8 percent. Milk cows were 37,000 above a year ago, an increase of 0.4 percent and milk per cow was just 0.4 percent higher.

Twelve of the 24 reporting states had more milk cows than a year earlier and 12 had more milk production than a year ago. States with the relatively highest increase in milk production were Georgia 6.8 percent, South Dakota 6.2 percent, Iowa 6.0 percent, and Texas 5.0 percent.

Increases in milk production in other key states were Idaho 3.4 percent, Michigan 3.1 percent, New York 2.9 percent, and Wisconsin 0.3 percent.

Production was 0.9 percent lower in California. The biggest relative decline in milk production was Florida 11.4 percent with 11,000 fewer cows, Virginia 5.2 percent with 6,000 fewer cows and New Mexico 4.2 percent with 12,000 fewer cows.

Domestic sales for 2022 fell slightly below 2021. USDA is forecasting domestic sales for 2023 to increase and being higher than 2021. Operators of restaurants are

optimistic for sales in 2023. If this materializes it would strengthen cheese sales. Retail prices of milk and dairy products should also decline some which would help sales.

Dairy exports reached a new record in 2022.

USDA is forecasting a decline in exports for 2023. This is based on the fact that US will face more competition for markets as milk production is improving in Western Europe and possibly New Zealand, the two leading dairy exporters, and slower growth in global demand.

However, dairy exports in January on a milk-solids equivalent basis were 16 percent higher than last year.

Compared to January of last year exports were up 15 percent for nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder, 12 percent for whey products and 16 percent for cheese but down 13 percent for butterfat. US prices of cheese and nonfat dry milk/skim milk powder are expected to remain competitive on the world market.

Dairy futures are not the best price forecaster.

In early March Class III futures were in the \$17's and low \$18's first half of the year. While Class III was \$17.78 in February Class III futures through June have increased to the high \$18's. Class III futures were in the \$18's to low \$19's for the second half of the year and have increased to the high \$19's.

These current futures are much more optimistic than USDA's latest forecast.

The USDA Class III forecast is \$18.20 first quarter, \$17.25 second quarter, \$17.35 third quarter

• See **Cropp**, p. 8

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

50 YEARS AGO

March 24, 1973: Tracy, CA—Increased demand for fluid milk in the San Joaquin, Merced and Stanislaus counties is expected from the operation of what is billed as “California’s largest cheese plant.” Petaluma Cooperative Creamery has broken ground on the new facility, which will occupy a 10-acre site here.

Washington—The government’s theory that increased imports of cheese to reduce a current shortage and decrease prices was questioned by NCI executive director Robert Anderson. “I don’t believe that the lunch buckets of men going to work will contain these exotic cheeses,” Anderson said.

25 YEARS AGO

March 27, 1998: Green Bay, WI—Per Olesen of Bornholms Andelsmejeri, Klemensker, Denmark, topped the World Championship Cheese Contest with a Danablu entry that scored 99.257 in the championship round of judging. First Runner-Up is Marcel Gravel of Cabot Creamery with a Cheddar that scored 99.225 in the final round.

Montreal, Canada—Saputo has signed an agreement with Avonmore Waterford Group whereby Saputo will acquire the Wisconsin-based businesses of Avonmore Cheese and Waterford Food Products, for \$36 million. The sale does not include Avonmore’s Idaho operations, which stay with the parent company.

10 YEARS AGO

March 22, 2013: Twin Falls, ID—Glanbia Foods announced the acquisition of the Sartori Company cheese plant in Blackfoot, ID. Glanbia said the acquisition is key to its goal of becoming not only the largest producer of American-style cheese, but also the most innovative producer of American-style cheese.

Verona, VA—It was reported that Shamrock Farms, headquartered in Phoenix, AZ, and one of the largest family-owned and operated dairies in the US, will build a new \$50 million dairy processing facility here.

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Study Finds 29% Of All Pre-Grated Cheeses Adulterated With Palm Oil

Columbia, MO—A recent study found that 29 percent of all samples of pre-grated hard cheeses sampled were “certainly adulterated with palm oil.”

That combined with nearly half of the adulterated samples possessing lipid fractions composed of greater than 50 percent palm oil “shows a rather brazen attitude in this industry regarding the commission of fraud through the adulteration of these products,” said the study, which was published in the journal *Molecules*.

Hard cheeses are a widely consumed product throughout much of the world and pre-grated products made from these cheeses are popular as a condiment for many foods, noted the study, which was written by Colleen L. Ray, Madison P. Bylo, Jonny Pescaglia and C. Michael Greenlief of the University of Missouri’s Department of Chemistry; and James A. Gawenis of Sweetwater Science Laboratories, Glasgow, MO.

The majority of these pre-grated products are composed of grated cheese with small amounts of antimycotic preservatives such as potassium sorbate, which was used in many samples in this study. Anticaking agents such as cellulose powder were also used in

most samples tested.

Adulteration of these cheese products has previously been discovered involving the addition of cellulose powder as a filler at levels far beyond those sufficient to prevent caking, the study noted.

Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectroscopy analysis of food products is a powerful tool for the detection of adulteration, according to the study. It is ideal for analysis of this type due to high sample throughput, the ability to discriminate based on structural differences of metabolites with similar masses, and the ability to examine samples in either their native state or with little sample preparation.

Analysis of cheese via NMR has been performed for quite some time, the study said. However, previous works were typically focused on aqueous extracts in order to determine point of origin, or a combination of origin and the process of cheese ripening.

The aim of this study was to create and test a method for the analysis of hard cheese products with the aim of detecting vegetable oil adulterants. The method was designed to be rapid in order to facilitate its use in high-through-

put situations. The difference in lipid profiles between cheese and vegetable oils makes the detection of adulterated cheeses relatively straightforward with a simple ratiometric analysis.

For the study, nine ungrated samples and one grated sample of various cheeses were analyzed to ascertain a lipid profile of unadulterated cheese samples. Of these baseline samples, three were Parmesan, two were Romano, and one was Asiago. To gain a broader understanding of cheese lipid profiles, one sample of Mimolette, one sample of Piave cheese, and one sample each of ungrated and pre-grated Mozzarella were also analyzed.

All market survey grated hard cheese samples were obtained from retailers, restaurants, and public school cafeteria kitchens. All samples were composed of Parmesan, Romano, Asiago, and combinations thereof. Canola, grapeseed, peanut, olive, high oleic sunflower, high oleic safflower, soybean, and palm oils were purchased from local and online retailers and used as received.

“This study revealed a previously undiscovered method of adulterating pre-grated bovine hard cheeses for economic purposes,” the study said. “Palm oil itself is a clever adulterant owing to its semi-solid state at room

temperature, similar color to cheese, and low price compared to cheese.”

The 52 samples tested in this study are “by no means an exhaustive survey of all pre-grated hard cheeses sold, however, it does reveal a new frontier in food adulteration,” the study continued. The method described in the study “will make the detection of this new type of food adulteration straightforward and aid in combating the problem.”

“The analysis of food products with NMR spectroscopy is a powerful tool for the detection of adulteration,” said Greenlief, director of the MU Proteomics Center and Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Facility and corresponding author of the study. “It is ideal for analyses of this type due to a high sample throughput, the ability to discriminate based on structural differences of metabolites with similar masses, and the ability to examine samples in either their native state or with little sample preparation.”

“Food adulteration leads to a product that is cheaper to produce but is sold as the original product,” Ray said. “This results in consumers buying a product that is not what they expected and is often inferior to the unadulterated version. Therefore, we wanted to explore the authenticity of these products.”



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Unique Case Creates Uncertainty for Dairy Processors

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There is an old saying in the insurance world that goes something like this: “Insurance policies cover what the courts say it covers.”

Various courts, specifically a ruling from the Wisconsin Supreme Court in 2016, are creating uncertainty for food processors about whether their current commercial general liability policy will cover property damage claims. There are many scenarios for which a food producer could be found liable for property damage. An example would be selling a dairy ingredient that is adulter-

ated or non-conforming, causing a situation in which it damages a finished food product, rendering it unusable.

In 2016, the Wisconsin Supreme Court heard a case, Wisconsin Pharmacal Co., LLC v. Nebraska Cultures of California, Inc. The case involved a probiotic supplement tablet that was rendered unusable and had to be recalled and destroyed as a result of the inclusion of an incorrect ingredient. In their ruling, the court adopted the “integrated systems” approach and ruled that the incor-

poration of a defective, or incorrect ingredient, did not constitute property damage.

As a result of court cases like this, situations have arisen in Wisconsin and other states in which there is uncertainty about whether product liability claims resulting from the use of a defective or incorrect ingredient will be covered by insurance.

The Wisconsin Pharmacal decision creates a situation that could lead to limited coverage under a processor’s Commercial General Liability policy when its product is “integrated” into another product that cannot be separated. As a result, there is a potential that a dairy processor could face the burden of paying for the damage to their customer’s products out of their own pocket.

Every dairy processor who makes a product that is an ingredient in a finished good should be aware of the case law that could have consequences on their insur-

ance coverage.

This interpretation of property damage is not impacting only Wisconsin food processors. The 2016 case is having wide-reaching impact. For example, in 2019 an Ohio Court referenced the Wisconsin case as reason to rule that no property damage occurred when a non-conforming nonfat dry milk (NFM) ingredient was incorporated into baby-formula rendering it unusable.

The last thing you want in the event of a product issue is to lack insurance coverage due to a court ruling. With this uncertainty, one of the most important steps that dairy processors can take is to discuss this issue with their insurance broker. Creative coverage solutions that can reduce uncertainty and minimize your financial risk do exist — but asking for them is the first step.

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New Catalyst Makes Single-Use Plastics Easier To Recycle, Biodegrade

Ames, IA—Researchers have created a new catalyst that transforms hydrocarbons into chemicals and materials that are higher value, easier to recycle, and biodegrade in the environment.

This catalyst transforms materials such as plastics in single-use grocery bags or milk bottles, and their caps. It was developed by a team of scientists led by Aaron Sadow, a scientist at Ames National Laboratory, director of the Institute for Cooperative

Upcycling of Plastic (iCOUP) and professor of chemistry at Iowa State University.

The new catalyst is designed to introduce functional groups into aliphatic hydrocarbons. Aliphatic hydrocarbons are organic compounds made up of only hydrogen and carbon. They typically do not mix with water, instead creating distinct layers, partly because they do not contain functional groups.

Functional groups are specific groupings of atoms within molecules that have unique characteristics. Adding functional groups to these hydrocarbon chains can drastically affect their properties and make the materials recyclable.

“Methane in natural gas is the simplest of hydrocarbons with

nothing but carbon-hydrogen (CH) bonds. Oils and polymers have chains of carbon atoms, linked by carbon-carbon (CC) bonds,” Sadow noted.

Aliphatic hydrocarbons make up a lot of petroleum and refined petroleum products, such as plastics and motor oils. These materials “don’t have other functional groups, which means they are not easy to biodegrade,” Sadow said.

The conventional way to add atoms to hydrocarbon chains requires considerable energy inputs. Petroleum is “cracked” with heat and pressure into small building blocks. Next, those building blocks are used to grow chains. Finally the desired atoms are added at the end of the chains.

In the new approach, existing aliphatic hydrocarbons are converted directly without cracking and at low temperature.

Sadow’s team previously used a catalyst to break the CC bonds in these hydrocarbon chains and simultaneously attached aluminum to the ends of the smaller chains. Next, they inserted oxygen or other atoms to introduce functional groups. To develop a complementary process, the team found a way to avoid the CC bond breaking step.

“Depending on the starting material’s chain length and the desired properties of the product, we might want to shorten chains or simply add the oxygen functional group,” Sadow said.

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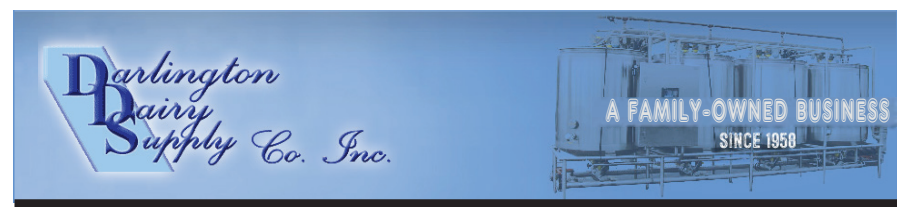


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Milk Output Rises

(Continued from p. 1)

February 2022, due to 3,000 more milk cows but 20 less pounds of milk per cow.

California's January milk output had been down fractionally from January 2022.

Wisconsin's February milk production totaled 2.45 billion pounds, up 0.3 percent from February 2022, due to 3,000 fewer milk cows but 10 more pounds of milk per cow. Wisconsin's January milk production was revised down by 12 million pounds, so output was up 1.2 percent from January 2022, rather than up 1.6 percent as originally estimated.

February milk production in Texas totaled 1.33 billion pounds up 5.5 percent from February 2022, due to 32,000 more milk cows and 40 more pounds of milk per cow. Texas's January milk production had been up 5.2 percent from January 2022.

Idaho's February milk production totaled 1.28 billion pounds, up 3.4 percent from February 2022, due to 15,000 more milk cows and 20 more pounds of milk per cow. Idaho's January milk production was revised up by 7 million pounds, so output was up 3.1 percent from January 2022, rather than up 2.6 percent as originally estimated.

New York's February milk production totaled 1.22 billion pounds, up 2.9 percent from February 2022, due to 10,000 more milk cows and 25 more pounds of milk per cow. New York's January milk output was revised up by 3 million pounds, so production was up 3.8 percent from January 2022, rather than up 3.5 percent as initially estimated.

Michigan's February milk production totaled 927 million pounds, up 3.1 percent from February 2022, due to 7,000 more milk cows and 30 more pounds of milk per cow. Michigan's January milk production was revised up by 12 million pounds, so output was up 3.4 percent from January 2022, rather than up 2.1 percent as originally estimated.

February milk production in Minnesota totaled 812 million pounds, up 1.0 percent from February 2022, due to 2,000 more milk cows and 10 more pounds of milk per cow. Minnesota's January milk production was revised up by 7 million pounds, so output was up 1.9 percent from January 2022, rather than up 1.1 percent as initially estimated.

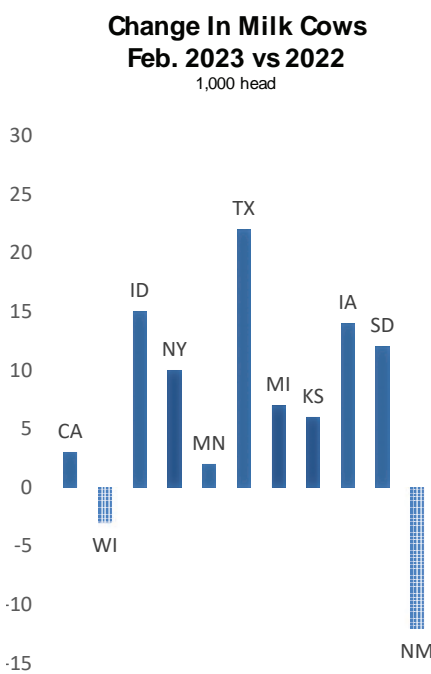
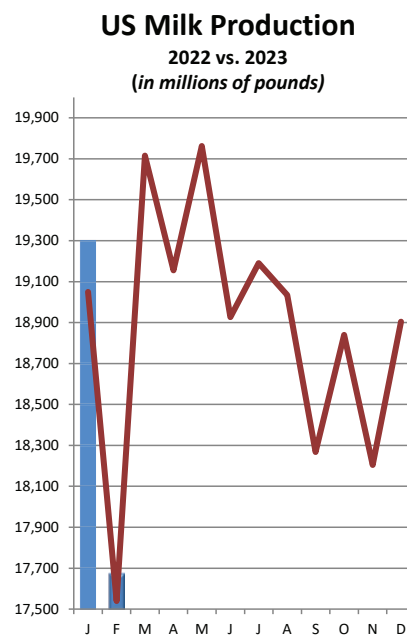
Pennsylvania's February milk production totaled 781 million pounds, down 0.1 percent from February 2022, due to 2,000 fewer milk cows but five more pounds of milk per cow.

Pennsylvania's January milk output had been up 0.1 percent from January 2022.

New Mexico's February milk production totaled 547 million pounds, down 4.2 percent from February 2022, due to 12,000 fewer milk cows but unchanged milk per cow.

New Mexico's January milk production had been down 4.1 percent from January 2022.

February milk production in Washington totaled 479 million pounds, down 2.2 percent from February 2022, due to 6,000 fewer milk cows but unchanged milk per cow. Washington's January milk output was revised up by 1 million pounds, so production was down 1.7 percent from January 2022, rather than down 1.9 percent as originally estimated.



Milk Production by State

STATE	Feb 2022 millions of lbs	Feb 2023 millions of lbs	% output change	Change Cows
California	3311	3282	-0.9	3000
Wisconsin	2438	2445	0.3	-3000
Texas	1257	1326	5.5	22000
Idaho	1242	1284	3.4	15000
New York	1187	1222	2.9	10000
Michigan	899	927	3.1	7000
Minnesota	804	812	1.0	2000
Pennsylvania	782	781	-0.1	-2000
New Mexico	571	547	-4.2	-12000
Washington	490	479	-2.2	-6000
Iowa	432	458	6.0	14000
Ohio	427	436	2.1	4000
Colorado	402	398	-1.0	-2000
Arizona	394	390	-1.0	-2000
Indiana	342	349	2.0	2000
South Dakota	306	325	6.2	12000
Kansas	315	325	3.2	6000
Oregon	206	201	-2.4	-3000
Vermont	198	196	-1.0	-1000
Georgia	162	173	6.8	5000
Utah	166	163	-1.8	-2000
Florida	166	147	-11.4	-11000
Illinois	138	135	-2.2	-1000
Virginia	115	109	-5.2	-3000

All told for the 24 reporting states in February, compared to February 2022, milk production was higher in 12 states, with those production increases ranging from 0.3 percent in Wisconsin to 6.8 percent in Georgia; and lower in 12 states, with those production declines ranging from 0.1 percent in Pennsylvania to 11.4 percent in Florida.

Cropp

Continued from p. 4

\$17.45 for fourth quarter and averaging \$17.55 for the year compared to \$21.94 for 2022.

While neither dairy futures or USDA forecast may end up near what Class III prices will be both are possible.

Higher Class III prices the second half of the year versus the first half seems likely as milk production is seasonally lower in the summer and early fall while building of butter and cheese inventories begin in preparation for seasonally high butter and cheese sales Thanksgiving through Christmas.

Based on projected less than a 1.0 percent increase in milk production, a modest increase in domestic sales and dairy exports down slightly USDA's price forecast seems too low.

Dairy futures may also be too high unless milk production ends up lower than projected and domestic sales and or dairy exports end up higher than projected.

Dr. Bob Cropp is the Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Bob Cropp's column has been appearing in Cheese Reporter for many years. Cropp was recently honored with the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Distinguished Service Award.

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Bipartisan House Bill Would Require USDA To Call Federal Order Hearing

Washington—US Reps. Nick Langworthy (R-NY) and Joe Morelle (D-NY) on Thursday introduced the Dairy Pricing Opportunity Act.

Under the legislation, not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the bill, the US secretary of agriculture would provide notice of, and initiate, national hearings to review federal milk marketing orders.

Such a review would have to include review and consideration of views and proposals of dairy producers and the dairy industry on the Class I skim milk price, including the “higher of” Class I skim milk formula, and any other proposals on the Class I skim milk price., and such other matters as the secretary of agriculture considers appropriate.

The legislation would also require mandatory reporting of dairy product processing costs, and would require the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to publish a report every two years containing these dairy product processing costs.

Similar legislation was introduced in the US Senate earlier this year.

“This critical bill will provide much-needed stability and certainty to ensure that our farmers can do what they do best: produce food for Americans,” Landworthy said.

“Volatility in the dairy market means uncertainty for farmers and consumers alike, and it’s critical we take action to ensure everyone receives the fairest price possible,” Morelle commented. “By providing farmers with additional confidence in the dairy pricing system, the Dairy Pricing Opportunity Act will help create more stability in the dairy market and support New York state’s proud history of dairy production.

“Federal milk marketing reform is a key priority for AFBF, and we are pleased to see Rep. Langworthy incorporate several of our requested changes into the Dairy Pricing Opportunity Act,” said Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF).

“Dairy farmers deserve clarity and confidence in how they are paid, and all-inclusive cost and yield surveying of processors is a good first step to ensure make allowances are being calculated fairly and accurately,” Duvall said. “Switching back to the ‘higher-of’ Class I formula as quickly as possible is a priority of our dairy farmers.

“We commend Rep. Langworthy for including a provision that would require USDA to initiate

a national federal order hearing process that will allow us to pursue this change administratively while we also pursue the change legislatively,” Duvall continued

“Meaningful federal milk market order reform is essential for New York’s dairy farms to help ensure they receive a fair price for their milk,” said David Fisher, president of New York Farm Bureau and a dairy farmer.

“Farm Bureau has long been advocating for federal order changes and created a special working group made up of farmers and industry leaders to help identify areas for key change,” Fisher continued.

Mandatory updates of federal order make allowances has drawn support from several dairy industry organizations. The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), for example, wants a process developed to ensure make allowances are reviewed more frequently.

This includes enacting legislation to require USDA to conduct regular, mandatory and auditable processing plant cost studies every two years and to report the results.

Also, the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association supports adoption of dynamic make allowances for milk price formulas which incorporate regular cost of processing audits and current-cost price adjustors.

WCMA recommends mandatory USDA staff audits at dairy

plants at regular intervals to determine costs to produce dairy products surveyed in USDA’s National Dairy Products Sales Report. Audit data gathered from a diverse array of dairy manufacturers can assure formulas do not disadvantage one group of processors versus another group. Informal rulemaking could update make allowances on a regular basis, based on data USDA derived from audits.

USDA audits should be supplemented by make allowance price adjustors — publicly available data series vetted in pre-hearing information sessions, ratified informal rulemaking, and tracked at regular intervals by USDA, the WCMA believes.

Price adjustors would automatically adjust make allowance values.

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Westby Cooperative Creamery Well-Positioned As Leader In Organic Fermented Dairy Products

Westby, WI—Westby Cooperative Creamery is seeing good growth in Cottage cheese and other fermented dairy product production, driven by a change in consumer habits.

Westby Co-op has 140 members; 105, in particular, are supplying organic milk which is driving the growth of the cooperative's products.

Westby makes organic, as well as small batch conventional Cottage cheese, sour cream and yogurt for ingredient, retail, and for the foodservice marketplace, said Pete Kondrup, general manager of the cooperative.

"Our members produced 130 million pounds of milk last year, which is about 27 million pounds of product," Kondrup said. "We also have some other outlets for our milk and we contract for some organic cheese makers."

He said about 14 million pounds of that production goes into Cottage cheese, while the remainder of the production is split "almost exactly" between sour cream and yogurt products. The co-op also makes some French Onion Dip.

Westby has its own branded label for the Upper Midwest region where people have grown up with the products and have come to recognize the label as a standard of quality, Kondrup said.

Kondrup believes the cooperative is the biggest organic Cottage cheese manufacturer in the US.

"We do a lot of private label manufacturing which, depending on where you go, are national and regional products," he said.

He said 80 percent of the Cottage cheese the co-op makes goes into retail while the majority of the remainder goes into bulk industrial products.

"We make Cottage cheese for a company with national distribution. It's a clean label with no stabilizers. It's something they can differentiate themselves," Kondrup said. "They have been very successful in the marketplace. We'll be increasing our production as they continue to grow. Organic Cottage cheese has really grown in the retail segment."

Another area of growth for the co-op's Cottage cheese is in the ingredient sector.

"We make a lot of Cottage cheese that goes into prepared lasagnas and cheese blintzes," Kondrup said. "We do a lot for egg bakes. Our Cottage cheese is a key ingredient in these products."

Cottage Cheese Trending

Kondrup said that Cottage cheese consumption, at least for the co-op's products, has gone up over the last few years, especially on the organic side of things.

"We don't really market the product because we do a lot of private label but there are national and regional brands doing some really good stuff promoting Cottage cheese as a healthy, high-protein, keto-friendly, trendy, product," Kondrup said. "They're getting younger people to try it."

He said there is also ample evidence showing that Cottage cheese and other fermented dairy products aid in digestive health.

"We try to help marketers by pushing the protein and health aspects. We make for a national brand who is trying to go towards the younger demographic and market it that way," he said.

Emily Bialkowski is the sales and marketing manager at Westby Cooperative Creamery.

She said the Westby consumer understands the nutritious quality of Cottage cheese.

"Cottage cheese is a healthy product. It's great nutritionally and it is a great protein," she said.

Through the company's social media sites, Westby learns who is visiting and what questions visitors have.

"They are primarily mothers asking questions about the nutritional aspects of our products," Bialkowski said. "There are certain groups of people that really look to it for the health aspects both for themselves and for their kids."

Bialkowski also is finding that there is regional appeal to Cottage cheese.

"The East coast and Midwest use Cottage cheese as a ingredient and as a healthy snack, whereas the West Coast consumer uses it more as an ingredient," she said.

Kondrup said dinner at the table is far different than it used to be and by making Cottage cheese more mobile and convenience-friendly it is making it trend better as of late.

"Sitting at the table having dinner isn't as it used to be," Kondrup said. "Now kids are going in every direction and Cottage cheese, up until recently, hasn't really been a portable product. Smaller size and more convenient packaging is playing a part of the growth we're seeing."

He said that households being smaller than they use to be is another reason smaller size packaging is key to growth.

Westby offers its Cottage cheese in anywhere between 8-ounce cups to 24 ounce containers. And while they don't do a lot of restaurant business, they provide 5-pound containers.

"The restaurant segment isn't really too big for us. It's really competitive and they are not as interested in organic Cottage cheese as retail," he said.

The cooperative offers their Cottage cheese in plain, strawberry, blueberry, and pineapple in single serve size packaging.

"We also do a whipped Cottage cheese that has really no curd identity because we have a customer wanting that," he said. "It's popular in certain parts of the country. It's kind of a spreadable cottage cheese."

When yogurt became much more popular, it kind of hit the cottage cheese segment the most, Kondrup thought.

"Cottage cheese is more of a savory flavor and I think maybe kids are getting more of the sweet through yogurt. Adding flavors to Cottage cheese is helping those with a sweet tooth."

Yogurt Business

Kondrup said all of the cooperative's organic- and conventional-milk yogurt production is used as an ingredient.

"We don't do any retail yogurt. We got out of that. The pricing was just too outlandish. We weren't making any money doing it. It was hard keeping your foot in the door."

For the industrial marketplace, the company offers their yogurt in 40-pound boxes as well as 2,500-pound totes.

"We have customers use it as an ingredient for dressings and other products," he said. "Some of it goes into yogurt dips. We've really seen some nice developing markets for our yogurt. We have a customer that freeze-dries it for infant snacks."

New Pouch Filler Helps Sour Cream's Growth

With the tremendous growth of Mexican cuisine, Westby's sour cream has seen an equal amount of growth in bulk and retail sales.

"The trends in Mexican foods are way up and sour cream is benefiting from it," Kondrup said.

"Salsa is now the number one condiment and where there is salsa, typically you see sour cream. Sour cream sales over the last couple of years have gone up. Sales are really improving. Seems like we are getting more orders all the time."

In 2021, Westby put in a new pouch filler that has helped growth of their product.

"It's been pretty successful. It seems to be growing," Kondrup said. "Consumers like the convenience and we've been lucky with our formulas. Separation isn't as much in the pouches. Consumers like that."

The co-op offers their sour cream in 8- and 16-ounce packaging.

"We offer our sour cream in private and our own label. But, our own label isn't a big part of the



Westby

Continued from p. 10

plan. When you do private label you don't pay slotting fees," Kondrup said. "When it comes to sour cream, that's a huge benefit."

On the retail side, most of the co-op's Cottage cheese buyers are also buyers of their sour cream.

"On the ingredient side that doesn't happen," Kondrup said. "They are just looking for a particular item and don't want the other offerings."

Members See Bright Future

Since 1903, the Westby Cooperative Creamery has been producing high-quality cultured products under the same principle since day one – "small production batches and top quality milk make for a great product."

"I don't see any reason not to be excited by the Cottage cheese market. We have some really good customers who are excited about selling more. The products we are making are award-winning quality products. This place is set up perfectly to continue that tradition."

— Pete Kondrup,
Westby Cooperative Creamery

"We're nicely positioned. I like what we are doing. We'll be a viable manufacturer for many years," Kondrup said. "We have been looking at expanding our building and increasing our Cottage production because we have good demand for that and could make more of it than we are currently."

Growth means members either will have to increase their production or the cooperative will

need to add new members, which hasn't been happening enough to warrant expansion.

The cooperative supplier members come from all over Wisconsin and parts of Minnesota.

"We've lost members but we haven't lost a lot of milk," said Kondrup, who is retiring sometime in April after 18 years as general manager. "The farms, while not getting much larger, are producing more higher-quality milk."

According to Kondrup, the board is very progressive, open to ideas, but mostly, they are proud of its size and believes in the sustainability message of the co-op.

"When I first came here we didn't do anything organic," Kondrup said. "I just happened to run into somebody I knew who was looking for organic milk products. I went to the board and said there was some potential here. It wasn't a hard sell convincing the conventional farmers and it has proved to be a great success."

A Westby milk producer has probably around 75 cows and crops the land. They are a family operation, Kondrup said.

"We are a good avenue for the multi-generational family farmer," he said. "The members want to keep this thing going for the smaller farmers."

The co-op has some farms with over 200 hundred head but that would be near their largest member.

"We've been approached by bigger producers," Kondrup said. "The board really hasn't been interested in that kind of size, right now."

The co-op keeps investing in the operation. It recently spent over \$6 million on new upgrades to the facility.

Westby added new make equipment and packaging equipment like the pouch filler. It will add robotics to the operation to increase production and help in the labor area.



And the co-op is finishing up an addition to their new whey operation by investing in a UF system and RO polisher that will take care of the products' acid whey.

Kondrup doesn't envision the co-op changing course any time soon.

"I don't see any reason not to be excited by the Cottage cheese market. We have some really good customers who are excited about selling more," he said. "The products we are making are award-winning quality products. This place is set up perfectly to continue that tradition."

We are here to get our members the best return on their milk and we feel that's in the products we make, Kondrup said.

"I think a major key to future growth is to stay with organics," Kondrup said. "And keep partnering with companies who want specialty products. Cottage cheese and the other products made the

way our customers want them made, the way no one else will make them. Smaller batches, different flavors, different sizes."

The biggest concern for the long-term success of the cooperative, according to Kondrup, are the trends in farming.

"They work really hard. We are seeing the next generation of farmers moving away from this profession. The biggest question is where will our milk come from in 10 years."

He said he is seeing some modernization on the farm, a few adding robots, but admits, most have not moved in that direction yet.

"It's still a very positive business we have grown here," Kondrup said. "We have a bright future. We have positioned ourselves in a way where the next generation of Westby leaders can continue this very long tradition well and into the future."

For more information, visit www.westbycreamery.com.

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Researchers Detail New Approach For Accelerating Smear Development

Kongens Lyngby, Denmark— Researchers from DTU National Food Institute here have developed a new method that they said can reduce ripening time for Danbo and other smear-ripened cheeses by three to four weeks, thus making the production faster, cheaper and more sustainable.

Bacterial smear-ripened cheeses, such as Brick, Muenster, Limburger, Tilsiter, Appenzeller and the Danish Danbo cheeses are characterized by an orange to red-brown rind color and a special aroma/flavor that distinguish them from non-surface-ripened cheeses, NTU researchers noted in a study published in the scientific journal *LWT — Food Science and Technology*.

This characteristic color is generated by *Brevibacterium linens* and other smear bacteria that produce carotenoids, the study noted. *B. Linens* is an obligate aerobe that can tolerate high concentrations of sodium chloride and which can metabolize lactic acid and amino acids. *B. linens* is acid sensitive and grows in the pH range 5.5 to 10, with an optimum around 7. When it metabolizes amino acids, ammonia is generated, which gradually increases the pH of its growth substrate.

B. linens produces several enzymes that are considered important for the ripening of smear-ripened cheeses out.

Normally, the freshly brined cheeses are inoculated with dilute smear culture, either washed off from cheeses with an established smear (old-young smearing) or obtained from culture providers

(often a combination is used), the study noted. Freshly brined cheeses are slightly acidic and have a pH of around 4.9 to 5.3, depending on cheese type.

This low pH is a challenge for *B. linens*, which is why acid tolerant, and lactic acid metabolizing yeasts such as *Geotrichum candidum* and *Debaryomyces hansenii* initially dominate the cheese surface.

The yeasts consume lactic acid and hydrolyze protein to generate ammonia, which raises the pH of the rind, allowing for growth of *Brevibacterium* and other bacteria.

Overcoming this low-pH barrier thus makes smear cheese ripening a slow process, the study explained. To facilitate growth of the surface smear, special temperature and moisture-controlled facilities are needed, which are costly to run, and since the cheeses have to be flipped routinely to ensure even development of the smear, a lot of manual labor is involved.

A serious drawback of the traditional “old-young” smearing method is that it introduces an unnecessary risk: pathogenic and spoilage microorganisms often present in the environment easily can end up in the smear.

In this study, researchers investigated a novel approach for overcoming the slow smear development on red-smear ripened cheeses. The model strain, *B. linens*, was grown in a bioreactor on acid whey (AW) supplemented with a nitrogen source to a high cell density, and then applied to the cheese surface.

Researchers followed smear development over time and the

effect on the growth of unwanted microorganisms, e.g., various fungi and *Listeria monocytogenes*, was assessed.

Results obtained from this study “clearly show the benefits of using high-cell density cultures of *B. linens* when smearing surface-ripened cheeses,” the study noted. It is possible to establish a deep orange surface smear in days, in contrast to three to four weeks when using the traditional approach.

Applying dense suspensions thus should significantly shorten the smear ripening period and reduce associated costs, e.g., manual labor for flipping cheeses, temperature, and moisture control of the ripening facilities, according to the study.

An added bonus, the study said, was the strong antimicrobial effects observed. Five spoilage fungi were efficiently inhibited, as was *Listeria monocytogenes*, an effect that most likely was due to ammonia production.

Finally, the researchers said they have demonstrated a novel application of acid whey, a challenging by-product of Greek yogurt and acid coagulated cheese production, which is costly to dispose of.

“Today, it takes about a month to cover the cheeses with ripening microorganisms. But by propagating the surface culture in a fermentation tank, you can obtain a concentrated culture that can be applied to the cheeses and enable the cheeses to be covered by ripening microorganisms within a few days,” said Associate Prof. Christian Solem from the DTU National Food Institute, one of the researchers behind the innovation.

CA Dairy Council Receives \$20,000 To Develop Culturally Responsive Nutrition Toolkits

Sacramento, CA—Dairy Council of California (DCC) announced this week that it is receiving \$20,000 in project funding from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for the development of culturally responsive resources to support infant and toddler nutrition for Latino and African American families.

This funding is provided by NACCHO under the Reducing Disparities in Breastfeeding through Continuity of Care project, which is funded by the Centers for Disease Control, and Dairy Council of California is the lead consultant coordinating the development of these critical resources with key partners.

Dairy Council of California collaborated with University of California, Irvine School of Medicine and two of its physician training programs specific to communities of color, Leadership Education to Advance Diversity-African, Black and Caribbean program (LEAD-ABC); and Program in Medical Education for the Latino Community (PRIME-LC) for Latino, along with Boston-based BOND of Color, a professional organization devoted to increasing the number of African American and Afro Caribbean nutritionists and dietitians and providing nutrition education in the community.

The LEAD-ABC program aims at producing future physicians who are committed to addressing the health needs of African, Black and Caribbean communities in California, the US and beyond. The PRIME-LC is a five-year medical degree Master’s program that is committed to training physicians to meet the needs of under-resource Latino communities.

These partners, along with local public health agencies; the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); and the Child and Adult Care Food Program, are providing support to collect community input for the development of resources, recipes and social media outreach that provide actionable and relevant solutions that support children’s optimal health and well-being, and are tailored to the diverse needs of these communities, according to DCC.

“This project provides an actionable way to better reach families with culturally tailored resources that are relevant and relatable,” said Dairy Council of California CEO Amy DeLisio.



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Parmigiano Reggiano Consortium Reports Higher Sales And Exports

Milan, Italy—The Parmigiano Reggiano Consortium recently announced its 2022 performance at a press conference at Milan’s Palazzo Giureconsulti: consumer turnover hit an all-time high of 2.9 billion euros, versus 2.7 billion euros in 2021, with volume increasing by 6.9 percent (156,620 tons versus 152,690 tons in 2021 up 2.6 percent).

A high was reached in sales volumes in international markets by 3 percent (64,202 tons versus 62,351 tons), and value at production with 1.8 billion euros, versus 1.71 billion euros in 2021.

In terms of consumption distribution, the Parmigiano Reggiano target market is becoming more and more international, the Consortium reported: the weight of exports increased by two percentage points, hitting 47 percent. The fastest growing market is Spain (up 11.3 percent with 1,602 tons versus 1,439 tons in 2021), with a “great performance” in the US, the first export market for Parmigiano Reggiano PDO (up 8.7 percent with 13,981 tons versus 12,867 tons) and France (up 7.2 percent with 12,944 tons versus 12,077 tons).

Good results also came out of Japan, growing by 38.8 percent (1,010 versus 728 tons) and Aus-

tralia, which posted a 22.7 percent increase (713 versus 581 tons) and Canada, up by 6.3 percent (3,556 versus 3,345 tons).

Italy accounted for 53 percent of Parmigiano Reggiano sales last year.

Regarding distribution channels, large retail chains proved again the top one (62.3 percent), followed by food manufacturers (17.5 percent), which benefited from the increasing demand in products featuring Parmigiano Reggiano among their ingredients, and by direct sales from dairies, which markedly increased (up 5.3 percent).

The HoReCa (Hotel-Restaurant-Catering) channel was again in last position, therefore illustrating enormous potential for development, accounting for 9.2 percent of the total, the Consortium noted.

The remaining 11 percent was distributed through other sales channels.

In 2022, the market price of Parmigiano Reggiano hit an annual average figure of 10.65 euros per kilogram (12-month Parmigiano Reggiano from the producer dairy), an increase compared to 2021, when it came to 10.34 euros per kilogram. The output slightly decreased compared to 2021, the

year in which the highest ever number of wheels was produced: 4.002 million wheels vs 4.091 million (down 2.2 percent).

Of the provinces in the area of production, Parma was the largest producer (1,357,224 wheels versus 1,419,179, down 4.37 percent), followed by Reggio Emilia (1,245,159 wheels versus 1,302,555, down 4.41 percent), Modena (849,145 wheels versus 824,551, up 2.98 percent), Mantua (455,439 wheels versus 442,659, up 2.89 percent) and Bologna (95,303 wheels versus 102,200, down 6.75 percent).

With a total investment of 18.6 million euros allocated to market development in 2023, Parmigiano Reggiano is firmly on its way to becoming a true global brand, ready to meet the challenges of extremely large markets, despite imitation products, the Consortium said.

This is the reason why the Consortium is working to enhance the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) distinctiveness, providing consumers with more information on its characteristics: maturation, origin, the production process and flavor, all elements that distinguish Parmigiano Reggiano from imitators.

A perfect example, the Consortium noted, is the United Kingdom, Parmigiano Reggiano’s number four export market, accounting for 6,570 tons, which features profound contradictions

generated by Brexit, posting a 1 percent decrease compared to 2021.

The tender procedure for promotion activities, organized in January 2022, had the goal of establishing Parmigiano Reggiano as a testimonial of the quality and value of the entire European agricultural production (estimated total value of the project: over 3 million euros in three years). The first TV advertising campaign in the UK, with a commercial featuring Gennaro Contaldo, an Italian chef who is a favorite with the British public and Jamie Oliver’s mentor, as well as the Consortium’s brand ambassador, aired on ITV, Channel 4 and Sky, the Consortium reported.

“2022 was an unprecedented year for Parmigiano Reggiano: both for the performances achieved, sales up by 2.6 percent and exports up by 3 percent, and for the challenges it set us for our future,” said Nicola Bertinelli, the Consortium’s president.

“The data at the beginning of the year is very encouraging: in the January-February two-month period, sales in the large retail chains channel in Italy grew by 15.1 percent versus the same period of 2022,” Bertinelli continued.

For more information on the Parmigiano Reggiano Consortium, visit www.parmigianoreggiano.com.

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Dairy Retailers Should Drop Outdated Model Of 'Average' Consumer Family

Madison—Cheese and dairy retailers need to recognize the demographic shift in consumer households over the past decade, which now features smaller families, older shoppers and the digital demands of Gen Z and beyond.

This about-face was one of several major headlines in a recent webinar sponsored by the International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association (IDDBA), which teamed up with IRI to look at current retail trends and posit what's ahead for the coming year.

The past year is best described as a boomerang, said Jonna Parker, consultant with the IRI Fresh Food Solution Center.

Starting in 2020, we threw out ideas and thoughts and reactions, and we found that consumer demand – what they buy and why they buy – didn't come back in the same way, Parker said.

What we threw out was more akin to 2010 to 2019, she said. That was the key learning of last year, and frankly what we need to take into the next decade.

The big thing we're talking about this year at IRI is the changing of the guard, Parker said. We've been making grocery and retail about the ways it's been shopped forever.

"And yet Millennials and Gen Z are telling us that they don't want to shop like that," she said.

"I think we have a somewhat outdated picture of the American consumer," Parker said.

First of all, the average number of people on today's household is

2.5, so deli has become one of the key places for smaller households to find meal solutions that frankly, the rest of the store doesn't provide them, she continued.

"We often talk about the typical American consumer being a woman with two children at home," Parker said. "Seven out of 10 US households currently don't have anyone under the age of 18."

In a lot of situations, retailers are starting to feel a little off the mark or tone deaf, she continued.

Another big word for 2022 was "inflation," Parker said. There was lots of press last year about how food eaten at home was growing its price per unit at a faster rate than food away from home.

The headline for 2022 would be "Concern over price continues to change behaviors," she said. About 84 percent of consumers are making changes to shopping behavior, including cutting back on non-essentials and actively looking for sales.

The vital point is that despite more consumers eating at home to save money, they're not foregoing "fresh," Parker said.

Those looking to save money while dining out would also perhaps skip extras like appetizers and dessert, which retailers should view as a huge opportunity for bakery and deli, she said.

Specialty Cheese As 'Self Care'

The wellness category exploded during the pandemic, as consumers sought out functional food and dairy products designed to provide added health benefits.

Post pandemic, the category is still growing and while wellness

is still important after shedding COVID-era pounds, qualities like "gratifying" and "connecting" are equally important, Parker said.

Buying yourself high-end cheese can be marketed as a "self care" moment, along with purchasing foods for gatherings and practicing self care through the company of family and friends.

Other macro trends include the uptick of breakfast and snack occasions at home, and the drive to produce less food waste.

"Less waste and more eating occasions from one purchase, especially important among higher-income consumers, is a huge messaging opportunity in the coming year, Parker said.

Where consumers are buying food is also seeing a sizable shift. Fresh sales at super-centers and club stores like Walmart and Costco are on the rise. Traditional grocery stores account for only 39.7 percent of the total fresh food marketplace.

"Think about how much space at Costco is given to heat-and-eat, deli-type foods," Parker said. "It's a significant amount."

The biggest takeaway is that if you haven't thought about what Walmart, Costco and online is offering in fresh foods, it's absolutely made in-roads and nothing to do with the pandemic, she said.

They're seen as formidable competitors by traditional grocery stores, as more consumers shop them for fresh, Parker continued.

European Butter Sales Boosted

Inflation over the past year has hobbled the dairy case, but also provided some opportunities.

Dairy and similar products across the board – milk, eggs, butter – a lot of these have been hit really hard with inflation as prices

have increased, said IRI consultant Amanda Evans.

Unit sales have not dropped dramatically, however, since many of these products are considered core staples, Evans said.

European and sweet cream butters with a higher fat content are having the largest growth in the overall butter sector, Evans said. Butter is also considered a staple purchase, and fairly exempt from dramatic declines in sales.

The team at IRI looked at 2022 holiday sales to research current and future trends. Due to inflation, the average Thanksgiving meal in 2022 was up 13.5 percent higher than 2021– the bulk of which was dedicated to fresh food purchases, said IRI fresh food consultant Kate Allmandinger.

Among fresh purchases, specialty cheese accounts for roughly 5 percent of consumer dollars.

The specialty cheese sector during the 2022 holiday season "really had a time to shine," Allmandinger said. "Gruyere was up 47 percent and Fresh Mozzarella did really well."

Retailers rely heavily on sales during the last three months of year, which typically account for a high percentage of their yearly sales. Dairy sales uptick around mid-September, where they account for roughly 7.8 percent of sales, Allmandinger said.

A portion of sales increases did come from inflation, but also lots of baking and holiday-flavored egg-nogs, creamers, etc.

In the dairy department, Pumpkin Spice flavors were up 23.3 percent, topped only by Sweet Cream flavor 23.9 percent. Other popular flavors were Hazelnut, up 18.2 percent, and Vanilla, up 15.8 percent.

Looking back at October 2022, 96 percent of consumers were concerned about inflation. However, all dairy, deli and bakery categories saw higher prices sales than previous years. Unit sales were softer, though, Allmandinger said. This could be due to gatherings being smaller and few far between.

Many retailers are already starting to plan for the 2023 holiday season, and can expect to see several of these trends continuing into 2024.

There's also going to be a whole new era of eating at home, showing off culinary skills with home entertaining rather than going out, Parker said.

"This is a brave new world," Parker added. "We're going to continue to see inflation color decision-making. We've changed the way we think about food and people are watching prices more than ever."

That doesn't mean they're not going to buy a beautiful charcuterie board, and we shouldn't assume consumers are just going to chase the bottom, she added.



association (IDDBA), which teamed up with IRI to look at current retail trends and posit what's ahead for the coming year.

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FDA Releases Strategy To Enhance Safety Of Queso Fresco-Style Cheese

Silver Spring, MD—The FDA has released a summary of a new strategy aimed at reducing foodborne outbreaks and illness associated with the consumption of soft fresh Queso Fresco-type cheeses.

Soft Queso Fresco-type (QFT) cheeses are fresh, unripe cheeses that do not go through a significant aging process, FDA explained. These types of soft cheeses have high moisture, low salt content, low acidity, and a shorter shelf life than aged cheeses.

Depending on the country of origin, some of the more popular fresh, soft QFT cheeses are labeled as either Latin-style or Mexican-style cheeses. Examples of soft fresh QFT cheeses, according to FDA, include Queso Fresco, Queso Blanco, Asadero, Queso Panela, Oaxaca, and Requeson.

The pathogen of primary concern among soft QFT cheeses is *Listeria monocytogenes*. Outbreaks of listeriosis have been linked with soft QFT cheeses made from raw milk or those that contain ingredients that were contaminated somewhere during the cheesemaking process.

Historical outbreaks of listeriosis have been associated with QFT made from unpasteurized (raw) milk, but recent outbreaks have been caused by cheeses made from pasteurized milk that was contaminated during the cheesemaking process, FDA said. The soft QFT cheeses linked to past outbreaks were often manufactured by smaller-scale producers.

In 2021, FDA, in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and state and local partners, investigated a multistate outbreak of *L. monocytogenes* infections linked to the consumption of Queso Fresco cheese that sickened 13 people.

During the investigation, the outbreak strain was found in a retail sample of Queso Fresco cheese. FDA also initiated an on-site inspection of the firm where the cheese was produced.

FDA did not isolate the outbreak strain (or any *L. monocytogenes*) from the production environment but identified potential contributing factors including the failure to identify and implement appropriate controls for *L. monocytogenes*, and lack of environmental monitoring for the presence of pathogens.

FDA inspections of cheese manufacturers connected with outbreaks of *L. monocytogenes* illness have found food safety issues including, but not limited to, the following: unlawful use of raw milk in QFT cheesemaking; poor employee hygiene practices; inadequate pest control; pres-

ence or continued existence of *L. monocytogenes* in production areas; irregular and/or unsatisfactory cleaning, washing, and maintenance of equipment; inadequate maintenance of facilities, causing issues such as roof leaks, cracked floors, and deteriorated walls; inadequate, or lack of, control measures in manufacturing, packaging, and storing products, especially measures needed to lessen the potential for bacteria growth and contamination; and poor sanitation practices leading to standing water and cross-contaminated food-contact surfaces.

Based on review of the findings, historical data, and engage-

ments with industry stakeholders, FDA has identified measures that can be taken to reduce future incidences of foodborne illnesses related to Queso Fresco-type:

- Prioritizing inspections with environmental sampling at soft fresh QFT manufacturing firms.
- Engaging with state partners to increase sampling of QFT cheese at retail operations in the US for the presence of *L. monocytogenes*. This could result in potentially contaminated products being recalled and removed from the market.
- Distribute a publication that outlines the potential causes of recent listeriosis outbreaks in soft cheeses and a fact sheet that describes requirements for *Listeria* control in cheese manufacturing.
- Collaborate with states and

other food safety partners to disseminate training and education materials to producers and consumers of soft fresh QFT.

By implementing these activities, FDA hopes to:

- Ensure that the cheese industry is aware of regulatory requirements applicable to the production of Queso Fresco-type cheeses.
- Enhance compliance with the applicable regulatory requirements by producers of QFT.
- Verify through inspections and sampling that producers of QFT are adhering to those requirements.

Manufacturers of soft QFT cheese have many resources available to them, including from FDA, universities and trade associations, FDA noted.

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USDA Announces New Investments To Boost School Meal Programs

Greeley, CO—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Wednesday announced several actions to expand support for and access to the school meal programs, including awarding \$50 million in grants that the agency said will increase collaboration between schools, food producers and suppliers, and other partners to develop nutritious, appetizing school meals for children.

USDA also announced \$10 million in grants for schools to expand nutrition education, as well as a proposed regulatory change to give more schools the option to provide healthy school meals to all students at no cost.

These actions were highlighted by Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack at an event in Greeley, CO, where he spoke with school and district leaders about how these USDA actions will benefit their communities.

“Continuing to make school meals healthier and available to more students are some of the best ways we can help our children thrive early in life,” Vilsack commented.

Vilsack announced that the agency is awarding \$50 million to the following organizations to manage the School Food System Transformation Challenge Sub-Grants:

- Boise State University
- Chef Ann Foundation
- Full Plates Full Potential
- Illinois Public Health Institute

These grants will foster innovation in the school food marketplace to get a wider variety of healthy, appealing foods into the

marketplace and onto kids’ lunch trays, USDA said.

Schools and other eligible organizations can apply for the challenge sub-grants later this year and are encouraged to check USDA’s Healthy Meals Incentives website for updates.

“USDA is taking a holistic approach to supporting school meal programs, which includes strengthening the food supply chain that supports them,” said Stacy Dean, deputy USDA under secretary for food, nutrition, and consumer services. “We’re hopeful that these grants will accelerate and expand innovation in the school food marketplace, so that schools — and ultimately our children — have better access to healthier food products.”

Also Wednesday, USDA opened applications for up to \$10 million in fiscal year 2023 Team Nutrition Grants, which support nutrition education for school-aged children. The grants will extend nutrition education efforts beyond the cafeteria, incorporating it into all parts of the school day and even enrichment activities outside of school.

The resources also support another component of the Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative by helping school districts introduce additional nutritious menu options, and eventually qualify for a Recognition Award.

Vilsack also announced that USDA is proposing a change that would give more schools the option to provide healthy school meals to all students at no cost. The rule would expand the num-

ber of schools eligible to opt into the Community Eligibility Provision, also known as CEP, which could result in more children receiving tasty, nutritious school meals, according to USDA.

“Many schools and even some entire states have successfully provided free meals to all their students,” Vilsack said. “We applaud their leadership in nourishing children and hope this proposed change will make it possible for more schools and states to follow suit.”

While the proposed rule does not increase federal funds for school meals, President Biden’s 2024 budget requests an additional \$15 billion over 10 years to support schools participating in CEP and reach 9 million more children.

USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is encouraging all interested parties to comment on the CEP proposed rule during the 45-day comment period.

That rulemaking proposes to expand access to the Community Eligibility Provision by lowering the minimum identified student percentage participation threshold from 40 percent to 25 percent, which would give states and schools greater flexibility to choose to invest non-federal funds to offer no-cost meals to all enrolled students.

As a result, more students, families, and schools would have an opportunity to experience the benefits of the Community Eligibility Provision, including access to meals at no cost, eliminating unpaid meal charges, minimizing stigma, reducing paperwork for school nutrition staff and families, and streamlining meal service operations, USDA said.

With Meals At No Cost, School Meal Participation Rose During 2021-22 School Year

Washington—With most schools back to in-person learning and offering breakfast and lunch at no cost to all of their students, participation in school meals grew during the 2021-22 school year, slightly surpassing pre-pandemic participation, according to a recent report from the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC).

Just over 15.5 million children received a breakfast, and 29.9 million children received a lunch, on an average day during the 2021-22 school year, an increase of almost 1.6 million children in breakfast and 10.1 million in lunch when compared to the 2020-21 school year, the report noted.

An extension of the nationwide waivers issued in response to the pandemic allowed schools to serve meals to all students at no charge through the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), while receiving the higher Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) reimbursement for each meal served.

This gave students access to much-needed school breakfasts and lunches to help ensure that they were in class well-nourished and ready to learn, according to the report. It also significantly reduced the administrative burden on school nutrition departments, eliminated school meal debt, and better supported school nutrition departments in the face of rising food costs and ongoing supply chain disruptions.

Additional findings included:

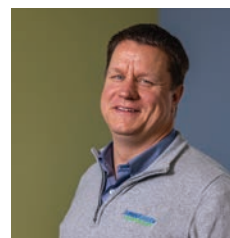
- During the 2021-22 school year, almost 2.4 billion breakfasts were served through SSO and School Breakfast Program (SBP) combined, an increase of 237.4 million meals when compared to the 2020-21 school year.

- During the 2021-22 school year, just over 4.5 billion lunches were served through SSO and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) combined, an increase of 1.5 billion meals when compared to the 2020-21 school year.

- Breakfast and lunch participation in 2021-22 was slightly higher than that of pre-pandemic levels.

“This sharp increase in participation demonstrates what is possible when meals are provided to all students at no charge and children are back in school” said Luis Guardia, FRAC’s president.

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House Oversight Panel Seeks FDA Documents On Infant Formula Crisis

Washington—US Reps. James Comer (R-KY), chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, and Lisa McClain (R-MI), who chairs that panel's health care subcommittee, want the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to provide documents and communications related to the agency's response to the US infant formula crisis.

Formula shortages began in the summer of 2021 as global supply chains were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the two lawmakers noted in a Mar. 21 letter to FDA Commissioner Robert M. Califf. "As the administration scrambled to contain the issue, families across the nation were presented with the question of how they would feed the infants in their families and communities."

Now, instead of removing or reassigning the individuals at fault for the poor response to this crisis, the announced restructuring of FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) "simply requires certain offices and personnel to report to the newly created position of Deputy Commissioner for Human Foods," the letter noted.

The oversight committee "is concerned that the FDA's restructuring is a superficial attempt — rather than a real effort — to bring accountability and make meaningful changes," the letter continued.

To assist with the committee's investigation of FDA's response to the infant formula shortage, Comer and McClain requested the following documents and information no later than Apr. 4:

- All communications between or among FDA, the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS, FDA's parent agency), and White House staff referring or relating to the formula shortage;

- All documents and communications relating to the development of FDA's reorganization plan related to food safety and nutrition;

- All documents and communications related to the search for and selection of a deputy commissioner for human foods;

- All documents and communications related to the decision not to reassign or terminate the employment of any individual related to the shortage;

- Documents sufficient to outline the processes and procedures for the transitions of FDA units affected by the reorganization; and

- All documents and communications regarding a timeline for

implementation of the reorganization.

Last December, a Reagan-Udall Foundation review of FDA's Human Foods Program found that, during the infant formula crisis, a review of events "indicates that lack of communication and engagement" across FDA accounted, in part, for "missteps." While it appears that staff at all levels sought to follow the rules and procedures within their division, "there was little motivation, and apparently no requirement, to share information and interact across the Agency to facilitate critical thinking and proactive decision-making."

"Despite this report, and the acknowledged need for a major overhaul, you stated that there would be no reassignments nor firings over the administration's response to the infant formula shortage," Comer and McClain noted in their letter to Commissioner Califf.

In a related development, McClain said the subcommittee she chairs will hold a hearing on Tuesday, Mar. 28, titled "FDA Oversight Part I: The Infant Formula Shortage," to investigate FDA's response to the infant formula crisis, including the agency's failure to heed watchdog warnings about a bacteria outbreak in a formula production facility in Michigan and the Biden administration's failure to respond to the nationwide shortage.

Frank Yiannas, former US Food and Drug Administration deputy commissioner, Office of Food Policy and Response, is scheduled to testify at the hearing. Yiannas resigned from his position earlier this year.

In his resignation letter to Califf, Yiannas noted that, regarding infant formula shortages, it is 'incumbent on any public organization that has undergone a crisis of this magnitude to undergo an independent and thorough review to understand how the crisis happened, what can be done to prevent it from happening again, and that the findings be transparently shared with the public.' Yiannas added that he is "grateful" that congressional leaders have demanded that this happen.



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Future Demand

(Continued from p. 1)

tion change (births minus deaths) falls, the report explained. Immigration will disproportionately be the driver of population increase in the decades ahead.

The combined effect will be slower growth of about 1.8 million more people per year through 2050, compared to an average of about 2.3 million per year since 2010. The resulting population will be older and more ethnically diverse.

Current Demand Trends

Breaking down current demand patterns of US consumers by demographic groups helps shed light on what might happen as those demographic groups increase and decrease in influence, the report said.

Pizza is an importance source of US dairy consumption.

Almost 25 percent of cheese consumed in the US is in the form of pizza. On any given day, about one in eight Americans consume pizza.

However, those pizza consumers aren't distributed evenly across age groups, the report pointed out. The strongest demographic for pizza demand is six- to 19-year-old males, of whom about one in four consume pizza on a given day. Of adults over 60, only 5 percent to 6 percent consume pizza on a given day. An aging population, there-

fore, may not be a favorable scenario for pizza demand.

After getting the majority of their milkfat in the form of whole milk in early childhood, cheese is the main driver of milkfat consumption for Americans, the report noted. Skim solids are primarily consumed in the form of fluid milk for males and cheese for females.

Increasingly, as fluid milk consumption continues to fall and cheese consumption grows, cheese is becoming the dominant form of delivery for all milk solids to consumers, the report said.

Among consumers over 70 years of age, fluid milk and ice cream have been strong primary sources of dairy demand. However, a continuation of that trend is not guaranteed, the report pointed out.

Ice cream may maintain strength among older Americans, but will fluid milk maintain popularity among the older demographic when those consumers are coming from generations that had experienced declining interest in fluid milk?

To simplify the huge variety of dairy products measured in the dietary surveys (from cheese on a pizza to butter in scrambled eggs and lactose in infant formula), Laine converted each food reported in the survey data used into an equivalent amount of milkfat and skim solids. This allows demand shifts to be viewed

in terms of milk components that can be influenced at the farm level.

Older consumers have increased their milkfat consumption dramatically in recent years, Laine noted. While this isn't enough to overcome the projected overall slower growth in population, it is a positive story for fat values relative to skim values. Total milkfat demand is projected to grow annually by 1 percent through 2050.

He projects fat consumption per capita to increase across nearly all age and gender groups except for females younger than 10 years old, which may see a very slight decline.

The strongest growth is expected to occur in the older age groups for both genders, though particularly strongly for males.

The historical data the projections are based on, between 2010 and 2020, includes a period of changing attitudes toward the health of butter and other dairy fats.

This change influenced the strong growth in demand.

Laine projects skim solids consumption to continue to decline across age groups younger than 30 years old for both males and females.

For age groups 30 years old and older, growth trends are mixed and less dramatic. But, like fat demand, Americans 70 years and older will drive the growth in per capita demand for skim solids. Some of this growth will be driven by products targeted at healthy aging, but some may be a result of higher dairy intake in general as concerns about dairy fat subside.

“If we continue the current trajectory of increasing component levels and increasing output of milk per cow, we will easily meet future domestic consumption levels. And we will do so without adding additional cows to the US herd,”
Laine said.

— Ben Laine, senior dairy analyst, Terrain.

Skim solids demand growth, meanwhile, is projected to be only 0.1 percent annually.

This is a significant flattening from the historical growth trend of 1.6 percent annually since 2000, Laine said.

Milk Adjustments At Farm Level

Farm milk makeup in the US varies by region and through seasons, but it has evolved over time to match the demands of consumers, Laine noted.

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Future Demand

Continued from p. 18

The federal milk marketing order system has the job of transmitting value from finished dairy products upstream to the farm, Lane said.

Over time, when consumers demand more butter and cheese, the value of fat in farm milk goes up, and dairy producers, through a combination of feed and genetics, start producing milk with higher fat content.

The fat content of US farm milk averaged between about 3.6 percent and 3.7 percent through 2010, then began to climb, chasing higher value driven by strong butter and cheese markets. Since then, fat tests of farm milk rose from 3.65 percent in 2010 to 4.01 percent in 2021.

The skim solids content of farm milk has climbed more gradually, from 8.7 percent to 9 percent since 1995, and annual growth rate of 0.13 percent.

“If we continue the current trajectory of increasing component levels and increasing output of milk per cow, we will easily meet future domestic consumption levels. And we will do so without adding additional cows to the US herd,” Laine said.

Skim solids content makes up more than 90 percent of total exported milk solids, so increasing exports is the clearest path to relieving the future market of

extra skim, Laine noted. But the projected overhang of skim solids could still weigh on markets.

The US will have opportunities to gain market share in the global market.

The European Union (EU) and Oceania face firm environmental constraints, which will limit their production growth.

Looking at historical trends, skim solids exports have increased substantially, from 4.53 million pounds in 1995 to 4.2 billion pounds in 2020, an average growth rate of 9.3 percent annually.

Much of the increase over that period can be attributed to strong growth in demand from China for whey and milk powders, which could see slower growth in the future.

Maintaining a similar growth rate ahead will likely rely on other regions to step in with additional demand growth, Laine said.

While it may be a generous assumption, if a continuation of that trend is projected forward, skim export demand would climb to 9.4 billion pounds by 2050, he said.

This represents 5.1 billion pounds of additional demand in 2050 compared to 2020, falling short of the nearly 11 billion excess pounds that would not be absorbed by the flat growth of the domestic market.

The resulting excess supply of skim solids will weigh on the

component values of protein and other solids, but it could help position the US as a supplier of affordable dairy protein to growing populations in new markets, Laine said. This could help clear the market of the excess solids, but increasing exports of milkfat, in the form of cheese or otherwise to existing markets would bring a more rapid infusion of value.

There is plenty of time for unforeseen changes and other dynamics to impact these long-term projections, but the direction of supply and demand trends and the impact that a changing US population will have on demand provides a starting point to prepare for the future, Laine continued.

Supply and demand will balance over time, and prices will be the mechanism through which that happens.

The projections suggest that continued elevated fat values, relative to skim values, will incentivize milkfat production over skim solids.

Decades-long trends don't speak to short-term volatility, and there will still be plenty of month-to-month volatility driven by near-term demand factors and weather.

But longer-term trends toward greater milkfat demand are worth considering for herd genetics and long-term marketing plans, Laine said.

Lipari Acquires

(Continued from p. 1)

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“Swiss-American is a trusted leader in the cheese industry, and we are excited to add their expertise into The Deli Source operation while adding the Lipari DSD expertise to the Swiss-American operation, providing greater opportunities for all of our customers,” Thom Lipari added.

“In Lipari we found a partner we could trust with the company's legacy of exceptional customer service and quality products provided by the outstanding people at Swiss-American,” said Joe Hoff of Swiss-American, Inc. “Together, our companies can realize significant synergies and growth that will ultimately lead to great value and exceptional service for our combined customers.”

For over 84 years Swiss-American, a specialty cheese company based in St. Louis, MO, has partnered with retailers to maximize their sales through the development of optimized solutions in the deli. Utilizing its vast supplier network and unique capabilities such as hand-wrapping of soft ripened and blue vein cheeses, Swiss-American is committed to sourcing the finest cheeses and specialty foods from partners across the US and around the globe, the announcement stated.

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QualiTru Founder Darrell Bigalke Honored By University Of Minnesota

Oakdale, MN—Darrell Bigalke, the founder of QualiTru Sampling Systems and a dairy microbiologist and entrepreneur who has dedicated four decades to ensuring food safety through the revolutionary development of inline aseptic sampling systems for the dairy and liquid food industries, has been honored with the Darrell Bigalke Food Safety & Food Quality Award.

This annual dairy science scholarship, which is intended to help the next generation of students from University of Minnesota's College of Veterinary Medicine or College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences further pursue key issues in dairy science and food quality and safety, was announced Thursday.

Bigalke, an alumnus of the University of Minnesota (class of 1974), holds a master's degree in food science with an emphasis in dairy microbiology. His thesis, entitled "Relationship Between Conditions of Production and Handling of Raw Milk on the Farm and Bacteriological Quality," reveals how closely his study of dairy science and food safety issues have aligned with his career.

After working as a dairy microbiologist at Ecolab for a decade, Bigalke was inspired in 1983 to establish QualiTru Sampling Systems (originally named QMI). Shortly thereafter, serious outbreaks of dairy-related Salmonella and Listeria caused thousands of people to become sickened.

Drawing from his extensive knowledge of the dynamics of microbial contamination, Bigalke

focused his company on the singular mission of promoting inline aseptic sampling for the dairy industry, extending the capability for testing raw and processed dairy products far beyond what had been the industry's regulatory requirements up until that point.

With the introduction of his inline aseptic representative sampling system, Bigalke played a pivotal role in helping shape the establishment and adoption of new, more rigorous industry quality standards, the company noted. Today, QualiTru's products are used to verify product quality, perform inline aseptic sampling for testing and quality checks in bulk tanks and silos, and for microbiological testing.

The use of Bigalke's patented technology is referenced in the FDA's Pasteurized Milk Ordinance as approved for the required collection of representative samples directly from bulk milk tanks or silos prior to the milk being transported for processing. QualiTru Sampling Systems are now used to help the dairy and liquid food industries produce safe, high-quality products in over 30 countries.

"Through his pioneering work, Darrell has personally helped millions of people avoid serious food poisoning risks by equipping hundreds of commercial dairies and dairy processors with the ability to perform inline aseptic sampling. The data provided by these systems enables organizations to detect contamination issues so they can effectively stop potentially affected products from entering the food distribution system," said Ian Davis,



Dr. Sandra Godden, DVM, DVs, professor and interim associate dean of graduate programs at University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine, and Dr. Frank Busta, director emeritus, National Center for Food Protection & Defense at University of Minnesota, Darrell Bigalke, founder of QualiTru Sampling Systems (formerly QMI), Anne Bigalke, VP of strategic development at QualiTru Sampling Systems, and Clarence Johnson, QualiTru Sampling Systems Board of Directors.

QualiTru's CEO.

"Darrell's passion for food safety and quality, captured in his mantra, 'Your test result is only as accurate as your sample,' has guided the philosophy of our company for the past four decades. As QualiTru celebrates its milestone 40th anniversary as a company, we are proud to honor Darrell's extraordinary impact on the dairy and liquid food industries with this award in conjunction with the University of Minnesota," Davis continued.

"We look forward to the contributions of future award recipients, as they continue to progress in their academic explorations while continuing to advance the body of knowledge related to innovations in food quality and safety," Davis added.

"The College of Veterinary Medicine is very grateful to Qua-

liTru Sampling Systems for sponsoring this award, which will contribute greatly to the training of a veterinary student with a strong interest in dairy population medicine," said Sandra Godden, professor and interim associate dean of graduate programs at the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Minnesota, referencing the first recipient who will be chosen for the scholarship.

"This award extends Darrell Bigalke's legacy in pioneering sampling tools that have helped dairy producers better manage their herds and allowed for enhanced efficiency for monitoring milk quality and composition. As a result, dairy farmers have experienced not only enhanced animal health, well-being and performance, but greater profitability and sustainability in their milking operations," Godden added.




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GS1 US Publishes New Guideline To Help Address Food Traceability Rule

Ewing, NJ—GS1 US® has published a new guideline to help the food industry leverage GS1 Standards to help address the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) food traceability final rule.

That final rule, issued last November, mandates companies that physically handle certain foods on the Food Traceability List (FTL) keep additional records to assist in tracebacks during an investigation of a foodborne illness outbreak.

The final rule implements Section 204(d) of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

FDA's Food Traceability List includes numerous cheeses, other than hard cheeses.

GS1's document, *Application of GS1 System of Standards to Support FSMA 204*, was created by industry members of the GS1 US Foodservice and Retail Grocery Working Groups and defines the best practices for product and location identification, structured product descriptions, and the recording of common industry-defined events to support the additional traceability requirements.

The final rule outlines specific Key Data Elements (KDEs) of Critical Tracking Events (CTEs) that need to be recorded and shared with FDA, upon request, and at minimum, through a sortable electronic spreadsheet. With the exception of the Shipping CTE and select upstream activities, the final rule does not require companies to share these records with their trading partners, only to keep records in case FDA requests them.

The rule does not specify the use of data carriers (e.g., barcodes or RFID tags) or additional formats beyond a sortable spreadsheet for the exchange of data with FDA or between trading partners, the document noted.

GS1's guideline was prepared by the GS1 US FSMA 204 Workgroup to assist the US food industry with implementing GS1 Standards for traceability and specifically to help meet the requirements outlined in the final rule. The guidance excludes the point of consumption and is limited to batch/lot traceability.

In response to this, members of the industry are preparing their systems and business processes to meet the final rule's requirements. Specifically, the guidance noted, many food supply chain stakeholders have been implementing or exploring the benefits of using the following GS1 Standards and business solutions:

- Global Trade Item Number™ (GTIN®) for unique product

identification.

- Global Location Number™ (GLN®) for unique party and location identification.

- Global Data Synchronization Network® (GDSN®) and Global Data Model (GDM) for consistent descriptions of products.

- Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and Electronic Product Code Information Services (EPCIS) for structured data capture and sharing internally and among trading partners.

Leveraging GS1 Standards provides consistency and interoperability across different environments and systems while meeting

a wide variety of business needs, the document noted. More than 65 organizations of the GS1 US retail grocery and foodservice industry initiatives have worked together to analyze business processes and business requirements, and consider how the standards can be applied to support requirements outlined in the final rule.

The guideline presents current insight within industry for how GS1 Standards can be applied to US food supply chain business processes to support product and location identification, structured product descriptions, and recording common industry defined events. It may be updated to reflect feedback from industry pilots, updates to GS1 Standards, and other industry efforts which advance the level of thought.

The guideline does not provide any guidance or advice regarding regulatory compliance.

For more information and to download the guideline, visit www.gs1us.org/foodsafety.

"Through our collaboration with many stakeholders, technology providers and associations, industry now has guidance that will help them extend their investment in GS1 Standards and also support data requirements for this new final rule," said Angela Fernandez, vice president of community engagement, GS1 US.

"This guideline will help all companies that handle food to maximize supply chain visibility and ultimately advance food safety practices," Fernandez added.



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World Health Organization Backs Policies To Reduce Sodium Intake

Geneva, Switzerland—Implementing cost-effective sodium reduction policies could save an estimated 7 million lives globally by 2030, according to a World Health Organization *Global Report on Sodium Intake Reduction*.

The global burden of unhealthy diets constitutes a “major public health and development challenge worldwide,” the report stated. “Urgent action is required to modify the production and consumption of foods and beverages, including industry manufactured (pre-packaged) food.”

The largest number of diet-related deaths, an estimated 1.89 million each year, is associated with excess intake of sodium, the report continued. The global average sodium intake is estimated to be 4,310 milligrams per day (10.78 grams of salt per day), which “far exceeds” the physiological requirement and is more than double the WHO recommendation of less than 2,000 milligrams of sodium (equivalent to less than five grams of salt) per day in adults.

WHO has identified a set of interventions to tackle noncommunicable diseases that the organi-

zation said should be undertaken immediately. These aim to reduce sodium intake through:

—Reducing sodium content in a food supply (reformulation of processed/manufactured food);

—Reducing sodium in meals or snacks consumed outside of the home (public food procurement and service policies); and

—Encouraging consumers to make healthier choices related to sodium through information and absence of negative influence.

These policies and other measures are mutually reinforcing, the report said. As the number of policies and other measures implemented increases, there is a compound increase in immediate benefits. However, a single policy or measure can be implemented based on the resources available, and built upon with additional complementary policies and measures over time.

Generally, mandatory policies, whether expressed in legislation or other government guidance, are more likely to achieve impact because they have higher coverage and set a level playing field across the food manufacturing sector

where all companies abide by the same limits and rules, the report stated. Mandatory policies create a food environment that restricts or demotes the least healthy food options regardless of where food is served or sold.

Of the 194 WHO member countries, 55 percent (119 countries) have implemented sodium reduction policies and other measures through mandatory (nine countries), mandatory and voluntary (53 countries) or voluntary (57 countries) approaches, according to the report.

The most implemented sodium reduction measure is voluntary media campaigns, followed by reformulation and public food procurement and service policies that are both mandatory and voluntary.

An effective way to reduce population sodium intake is through lowering the sodium content of foods that are consumed frequently, the report stated. In many high-income countries, and increasingly in low- and middle-income countries, a significant proportion of sodium in the diet comes from processed foods such as bread, cereal and grains, processed meats, and dairy products.

Mandatory maximum limits for sodium in processed foods promote industry-wide reformulation, the report continued. It creates a marketplace that restricts the least healthy food options regardless of where people shop or how much they understand (or have access to) information on labels. This type of policy requires no consumer action and places the burden to avoid manufacturing less healthy products on the food industry.

The variation of sodium content in manufactured food offers a “significant opportunity” for reduction through reformulation and demonstrates that reducing sodium in processed food is possible, the report said. It is likely that reformulation of processed foods and beverages will generate the greatest impact in reducing the consumption of sodium, particularly in countries where these foods are commonly consumed.

Dairy Farmers Of Canada Releases Guide On Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions On Farms

Ottawa, Ontario—Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) on Monday released its *Net Zero by 2050 Best Management Practices Guide to Mitigate Emissions on Dairy Farms*.

The guide is intended to help Canadian dairy farmers contribute to reaching net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, a goal set by DFC last year.

DFC’s guide has been developed in consultation with experts to help farmers identify and implement best management practices (BMPs) on their farm, including an overview of 30 BMP opportunities for reducing emissions, increasing carbon sequestration, and improving overall environmental sustainability.

The BMPs are organized according to the four categories in DFC’s Life Cycle Assessment: livestock management, feed production, manure management, and energy, infrastructure and transportation, as well as a fifth category for land management, which includes additional practices aimed at carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancement.

While practices in this final category may have a smaller emissions mitigation potential, they provide important environmental benefits that help farms to be more resilient and adapt to the effects of climate change, like severe temperatures, wildfires, drought and flooding, DFC noted.

DFC said it is working with GHG reduction specialists, federal and provincial governments, dairy stakeholders, and most importantly, farmers, on strategies that can be applied at the farm level to reduce and sequester emissions as they strive for continuous improvement.

To learn more about the steps Canadian dairy farmers are taking towards Net Zero by 2050, visit dairyfarmersofcanada.ca/sustainability.

USDA News

A New Product that is officially accepted for use in Dairy Plants inspected by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Dairy Plant Survey Program. *USDA Project Number 13377*

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- 42-02 In-Line Strainers for Milk and Milk Products. • 63-03 Sanitary Fittings.
- 18-03 Multiple Use Rubber and Rubber-Like Materials.
- 20-17, currently 20-27, Multiple-Use Plastic Materials.

Product Materials are also compliant with the following applicable Standards:

- ASTM A240/A240M, Stainless Steel AISI 300 Series.
- US FDA 21CFR177.2600, Rubber Articles Intended for Repeated Use.
- US FDA 21CFR177.1550, Fluoropolymers For Use as Basic Components of Single and Repeated Use.
- USP Class VI Tests, 2004: USP 27, NF 22, 2004, <88> Biological Reactivity, In Vivo.
- USP MEM Elution Cytotoxicity, 2004: USP 27, NF 22, 2004, <87> Biological Reactivity, In Vitro.
- EU 1935/2004(3)EC, Food Contact Regulations. • EU 2011/65/EC, Recast of EU 2002/95/EC RoHS Directive



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Salt Substitutes

(Continued from p. 1)

other foods, salt is an optional ingredient. For some foods, salt is permitted at a specific point in the manufacturing process, whereas salt is permitted in other foods without regard to manufacturing time.

These differences mean that different amendatory language in the individual standards is necessary to permit the use of salt substitutes. To address this, FDA is proposing four types of revisions to the regulatory text in the applicable standard of identity.

In particular, there are differences in how the use of salt is prescribed in certain standards for cheeses and related cheese products in part 133 (21 CFR part 133). For example, several standards for cheese use terms such as “salted,” “salting,” “brine,” or “salt solution,” to prescribe the application of salt in the cheesemaking process.

For additional clarity, the proposed amendments for cheeses and related cheese products are grouped and discussed separately from other standards. There are four types of revisions to the applicable standards in FDA’s proposed rule. The third and fourth types only apply to standards in part 133.

Those four types of revisions are as follows:

Type 1: When the current text of the standard lists “salt” as an optional ingredient, the proposed rule would amend the standard to state, “salt or salt substitute.” For example, the standard for cold-pack and club cheese lists “salt” under “optional ingredients”. The proposed rule would replace “salt” with “salt or salt substitute.”

Type 2: When the text of the standard provides for the use of “salt” in a paragraph, the proposed rule would amend the standard to state, “salt or salt substitute.”

Type 3: When the current text of the standard uses terms such as “salted,” “salted with dry salt or brine,” or “salting,” to provide for use of salt in the food, but does not specify salt as an ingredient, the proposed rule would amend the optional ingredient list to add “salt substitute.”

Type 4: When the current text of the standard uses terms such as “salted,” or “salted in brine,” to provide for the use of salt in the food, but does not provide a list of optional ingredients, the proposed rule would amend the standard to add a paragraph stating that, “During the cheesemaking process, where the curd is salted, salt substitute may be used.”

FDA is also proposing amendments to permit the use of salt substitutes in 39 standards for

products that are not cheeses or related cheese products prescribed in part 133.

The amendments would occur through two types of revisions to the current regulatory text of the applicable standards:

Type 1 revision for standards not in part 133. Several standards provide for the addition of salt by listing it as an ingredient (e.g., as an “optional ingredient,” “other optional ingredient,” or including salt in a list of substances that could be added as a seasoning or flavoring.) FDA is proposing to amend these standards to permit the addition of a salt substitute in addition to, or in place of, salt by replacing “salt” with “salt or salt substitute.” For example, the SOI for acidified milk lists “salt” under “other optional ingredients;” the proposed rule would replace “salt” with “salt or salt substitute.”

Type 2 revision for standards not in part 133. Five standards prescribe the use of salt in paragraphs that describe the food, rather than as part of an ingredient list. FDA is proposing to amend these to permit the addition of a salt substitute in addition to, or in place of, salt by replacing “salt” with “salt or salt substitute” in the regulatory text.

Comments on the proposed rule should be submitted within 120 days after publication in the *Federal Register*.

The deadline for submitting comments has not yet been finalized.

Dietary Guidance Statements

Meanwhile, FDA today issued draft guidance to provide industry with the agency’s current thinking on how and when to use Dietary Guidance Statements in food labeling, and to ensure that Dietary Guidance Statements promote good nutrition and nutritious dietary practices.

The draft guidance provides recommendations on how and when manufacturers should use key or principal recommendations from consensus reports, such as the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, as the basis for labeling statements that represent or suggest that an individual food or food group may contribute to or help maintain nutritious dietary patterns.

For the purposes of this draft guidance, Dietary Guidance Statements are written or graphic material, based on key or principal recommendations from a consensus report, in food labeling that represent or suggest that a food or a food group may contribute to or help maintain a nutritious dietary pattern (e.g., “make half your grains whole”; or “choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products instead of full-fat dairy options”).



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Award-Winning Ways Continue At Roelli Cheese; Success Stems From Their First — Dunbarton Blue

Shullsburg, WI—It has been 15 years since Chris Roelli of Roelli Cheese first introduced his now-famous Dunbarton Blue, and despite the many awards for some of the other cheese he offers, the success of the company continues to grow from its first one.

Roelli, a perennial winner of World Championship Cheese Contests, US Championship Cheese Contests and American Cheese Society (ACS) Cheese Contests, has established himself in the artisan cheese industry with original recipe Cheddar-Blue creations like Dunbarton Blue and Red Rock.

“Our success, the recognition across the country, our brand recognition, our increased foot traffic at the store, our growth, our expansions and remodels — it all stems from Dunbarton,” Chris Roelli said. “It was all built off of that cheese.”

Dunbarton, and its sister cheese, Red Rock, are cellar-cured cheeses that develop a natural rind that enhances the character and flavor.

“I make my cheese to sell,” Roelli said. “I make it for the end consumer, and I sell more of that cheese to people who don’t think they like Blue cheese. My customers on the retail level describe them as transitional Blue cheese. It’s a Blue that people warm up to because it is mellow, it’s mild.”

Roelli Cheese runs about 1 million pounds of milk a year from a single family farm nearby, creating about 105,000 pounds of cheese.

The company makes over 15,000 pounds of Dunbarton per year; probably three times as much as 10 years ago, Roelli said.

“We are doing about 30,000 pounds of Red Rock a year.”

Red Rock is a 2022 World Championship Cheese Contest Best of Class award-winning cheese.

Other cheeses include the ACS-award-winning Appenzeller-style cheese, Little Mountain, modeled after his Swiss-emigrating family’s cheesemaking techniques.

Rounding out the line, the company makes a Roelli Haus Select Cheddar, a 2023 US Championship Cheese Contest Best of Class winner; traditional waxed Cheddar; Chesire; Gouda-inspired cheeses; Raclette, and other styles.

“When you look at the scale of what we produce, about 1,200 pounds of cheese a day, there is not a lot leftover, so we have to run things on a shoestring,” Roelli said. “That’s not news to other artisan producers around the country. It’s hard on that scale. We are too big to be small and too small to be big.”

Roelli said his company never loses sight of its size and scale.

“At a certain point, with the true artisanship of our products, we could lose some of that artisanship if we were to volume produce. You can’t lose sight of what got you to the dance.”

And that includes the fact that Roelli and his team controls every aspect of the production.

“My hands touch every piece of cheese we produce here. So do my taste buds. We have total influence, we have total control of that product — from cow to consumer. That is really our niche in the market.”

While he said that control is burdensome, it’s also what keeps him in the artisan marketplace.

“When you have input into how the cows are housed, when you have input into how they are fed, when you have complete

control of the practices within the factory, and you add up all the duties you have with the need to maintain quality, it can be a relief to keep a lid on how much you produce,” he said.

He used COVID as an example of how tenuous artisan cheesemaking can be.

“There was a sudden realization that the balance of supply versus demand could be wrecked overnight,” Roelli said. “If I was out on a limb, with a new plant and a couple million dollars invested in warehoused product, would we have made it? The answer is probably no. We have to stay diligent and true to the overall plan.”

Buyers of “Finicky” Cheese

Roelli Cheese’s customers are a discerning, educated, wealthy, foodcentric people who live their life around a special treat or a luxury, Roelli said.

“They have the ability to wander,” he said. “You have to have wandering to sell artisan cheese. People need to go out to their favorite places and treat themselves to something they consider a luxury for artisan cheese to sell.”

Most of the cheese is pre-sold and targeted to upscale grocery stores and upscale cheese stores.

“Our cheese is a finicky product to market,” he said. “It’s a naturally rinded cheese. So there is extra labor involved. We benefit heavily from cheesemongers and service counter salespeople assisting with the sale.”

As long as the quality is there to back it up, the story behind the product is vitally important to Roelli Cheese.

“We are growing at upscale restaurants who sell high-margin cheese plates. It’s not necessarily about the volume for us,” Roelli said. “It’s the restaurant that is selling our story that we really like. It’s that story that they will remember when they locate us again at the grocery stores. That’s what we really want.”

Roelli believes artisan cheese has almost a cult-like following, saying people have a specific brand or specific style they want.

“People gravitate to our cheese because of its story and because of the quality that backs that story up. I feel Dunbarton and Red Rock have that cult following. There are people out there that I don’t know banging the drum at the quality of our products.”

The company’s cheeses are sold in nearly every state. Roelli says he gets a great deal of inter-

est from exports but as of now, hasn’t set his sights on the overseas’ marketplace.

“We have to take care of what we have here,” Roelli said. “There’s still room for growth, probably in the tune of 10- to 15-percent per year here for the next few years, just in reaching customers that we haven’t with our existing products. There are customers in this country we haven’t reached yet.”

One of the ways Roelli thinks he can grow the company is with the ability to meet people and to be seen by his customers. Labor shortages, as well as controlling the total process have both hindered that ability.

“Our cheese is a finicky product to market. It’s a naturally rinded cheese. So there is extra labor involved. We benefit heavily from cheesemongers and service counter salespeople assisting with the sale.”

— Chris Roelli, Roelli Cheese

“I haven’t been travelling much to support our brand,” he said. “I need to get out there. That opens doors and opportunities.”

Roelli said he has a good team of workers now and realizes he needs to delegate some of the duties which will enable him to tackle some sales objectives.

“I have always been a better cheese maker than a marketer,” Roelli said. “Quality is the number one priority. We have to maintain that quality. I just need to teach myself to let the team do what they do best and for me to give up a little of that control.”

The non-cheese marketer Roelli said having a product like Dunbarton was a blessing in disguise.

“It sold itself for the first eight to 10 years of its life,” Roelli said. “We were able to expand our offerings when Red Rock came along. I didn’t have to work at sales. It was people just calling me.”

And whenever Roelli was able to bring on more milk or through another plant renovation, he said he was able to add a little more production and was able to say yes to more and more customers.

“When Red Rock came along, all of a sudden, I now had an avenue for a second product through the same existing customers that were buying Dunbarton.”

• See **Birth of Dunbarton**, p. 11



Birth of Dunbarton

Continued from p. 36

The cheese business is a few thousand years old, Roelli said, so it is pretty rare when something new and unique pops up

When he was tinkering with ideas for a new and unique cheese, and coming from a Cheddar background, he was aiming for a farmhouse bandaged-style Cheddar.

“Everyone knows you don’t make Blue cheese in a Cheddar plant,” Roelli said. “So I worked primarily on Cheddar recipes with a flavor profile I was looking for. But my mind always kept coming back to blue mold.”

While he had influences from other cheeses like Stilton and Lancashire, Roelli admits, through a happenstance meeting with Neils Yard Dairy, he replicated the cheese of an English bandaged Cheddar wheel that would develop a blue vein when it would crack by defect.

“These cheese makers were getting a premium price from a cracked bandaged Cheddar. People bought it as a delicacy. I knew I wanted to recreate that flavor.”

“The feedback we got from that was so encouraging. We left there confident, finally realizing that we had a signature cheese and a direction for the other cheese we’d make.”

— Chris Roelli

After that, it was discovered in a big way and became what Roelli describes as “lightning in a bottle.”

“We are about a year and a half in the new cheese plant. We are getting noticed. When I say lightning in a bottle I really mean it. We were being hailed as a fourth-generation cheese maker-feel-good-story. I had access to people and places where others might not have had.”

He credits Dan Carter and the Dairy Business Innovation Center (DBIC) for the rapid pace at which Dunbarton grew.

“I was happy with it at the time. It was what I was working on from the start but I knew things could still be tweaked to improve it, but it was something I knew I wanted to move forward on.”

In 2009, Roelli took the cheese to the American Cheese Society annual conference in Austin, TX.

“I really still didn’t know what we had when I took it to ACS. Although we did not win an award that year, I took it to a Meet the Cheesemaker event which proved to be successful. The feedback we got from that was so encouraging. We left there confident, finally

realizing that we had a signature cheese and a direction for the other cheese we’d make.”

Roelli Family Tradition

Chris Roelli is a fourth-generation cheese maker. He grew up making cheese in the same plant his great grandfather, Adolph, made cheese in and alongside his grandfather, Walter, and his father, Dave.

The operation was primarily a Cheddar plant when it closed in 1991. It remained shuttered until 2005 when Chris Roelli decided to get back into cheesemaking.

“I went into the milk hauling side of our business,” Roelli said. “But for me, this was always kind of what I wanted to do.”

Coming back to a plant, Roelli decided not to go into the same commodity market that forced his family out of 15 years earlier.

“We saw that market evaporate in the late 1980s, early 1990s. Dad was working really hard selling probably 35,000 pounds of cheese curds a week and making some blocks on top of that. The curd side of things was great and the block side of things was not.”

With support from his dad, Roelli followed another path.

“My dad said if you’re going to do this, you’re not going to be tied to the block and barrel price. You have to do something different and special,” Roelli said. “That was quite visionary at the time. In 2005, the artisan cheese industry was still pretty young.”

Roelli said the intent of what he wanted to do was a complete 180 from what his dad was doing.

“I knew that I wouldn’t be able to finance what I wanted to do in the cheese factory with that type of commodity product. I knew we needed to have something special, a signature cheese.”



Chris Roelli holding a Dunbarton Blue: It’s been 15 years since he first started making Dunbarton Blue and, he says, all of the success at Roelli Cheese stems from that cheese.

With the cheese plant under renovation after the long shutdown, Roelli started making his cheese in Darlington Dairy Supply’s Cheese On Wheels.

“After running that for about eight months, the reception to our cheese was positive and we knew we could make a go of it and with a little bit of help from Dad, we put the money back into reviving the old plant.”

Located on Highway 11 outside Shullsburg, WI, the Roelli family has had a popular cheese store adjacent to the factory since 1976.

When Roelli started making cheese curds in the Cheese On Wheels he said people began to flock to the cheese store again.

In 2022, Roelli made over 35,000 pounds of cheese curds.

“We get a lot of praise for the cheese we make and sell to those upscale places, but, say what you want, the Roellis have always had the ability to make great cheese curds,” he said. “This cheese store was really aching to get our own

product back. When we stopped making cheese all those years, we lost, I think, some credibility. Something is just not right about a cheese store when you are only selling other people’s products.”

As long as he can excuse himself away from the vat, perhaps Roelli can slow down and enjoy some time travelling and meeting customers and setting some long-term plans.

“We have positioned ourselves to be a place where other companies would love our brand and our recipes,” Roelli said. “We get a lot of interest. But my family started here. Right or wrong, I am going to fight to continue here. We have a great, high-quality milk supply. The passion still burns. I still love what I do but I also know there’ll come a day. Whether it’s my kids or perhaps it is some young couple, like my father before me and his before that, I will help whoever it is.”

For more information, visit www.roellicheese.com



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WCMA Announces Seven Scholarship Winners For 2023 Totalling \$19,000

Madison—The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) announced seven current and future dairy professionals selected to receive a total of \$19,000 in scholarship funds for 2023.

The WCMA Student Scholarship Program is funded by the annual Championship Cheese Auction, where gold medal cheeses from WCMA's Championship Cheese Contests are sold to the highest bidders.

The next auction will be held here in conjunction with CheeseCon, scheduled for April 4-6 at the Alliant Energy Center.

"The promising future of the dairy processing industry is evident in the accomplishments and ambitions of these students.

WCMA is honored to invest in dairy's next generation, thanks to generous industry support," said WCMA executive director John Umhoefer.

Myron 'Mike' Dean Scholarship

For over 26 years, WCMA has awarded the Myron P. "Mike" Dean Cheese Industry Student Scholarship to 46 students affiliated with dairy manufacturers and processors. In 2023, this scholarship will be awarded to Lizzette Lopez and Tyler Schroepfer.

Lopez trained as an industrial engineer in her native Nicaragua before beginning her career in the food and beverage industry, eventually becoming a food safety/quality assurance technician for

Great Lakes Cheese Company in Wausau, WI.

She is pursuing a master's degree in food safety through Michigan State University, which she expects to complete in 2025.

Schroepfer, son of Sartori Company employee Jolynne Schroepfer and Dave Schroepfer, is enrolled in the food science program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, set to graduate in May 2024.

He plans to combine his interest in food research and development with dairy industry background, eventually earning his Wisconsin cheese maker's license and opening his own creamery.

Supplier Student Scholarships

First established in 1999, the WCMA has bestowed 60 Supplier Student Scholarships to dairy industry suppliers and their family members. This year's winners

are Josie Boyle, Rainna Simone, and Samantha Hawkey.

Boyle, whose parents are Ted Boyle, an employee of Chr. Hansen, Inc., and Angela Rowson, grew up surrounded by her family's dairy farming tradition in rural Iowa. She will attend the University of Iowa this fall to pursue her goal of becoming a communications professional for a dairy-focused business.

After earning her dairy science degree from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls in May 2025, Simone hopes to launch her career as a dairy calf nutritionist, working with producers to develop well-managed calf care operations.

Simone is the daughter of Roehl Transport, Inc. employee Amy Simone and Chad Simone.

Hawkey is the human resource coordinator for Kelley Supply, Inc., and a student in the Human Resource Management Program at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Upon graduation in May 2024, she plans to continue her career as a full-time employee of Kelley Supply, where she has strengthened her business acumen and skills. Hawkey hopes to lead a human resource department as a manager or director.

Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship For Skilled Trades

In 2021, WCMA established its Brian Eggebrecht Student Scholarship Supporting Skilled Trades in the Dairy Industry.

Named in honor of Championship Cheese Contest chairman and generous donor Brian Eggebrecht, the scholarship is open to students attending any technical school in Wisconsin, or high school students registered to attend a Wisconsin technical school.

Two recipients are awarded \$2,000 each. This year's winners are Nathan Nikolay and Kaitlin Rydzewski.

Nikolay, son of Nelson-Jameson, Inc. employee Jay Nikolay, will graduate in May with a degree in ag power equipment from Fox Valley Technical College.

He plans to use his education, combined with experience in dairy management and equipment operation at Nikolay Farms, to become an ag service technician and ultimately own his own equipment repair business.

Rydzewski, whose father is Stephen Rydzewski of ProActive Solutions USA, is currently studying welding at Moraine Park Technical College.

She will pursue a career in stainless welding in the dairy industry, where sanitary welds are critical to product safety and quality. As a young woman in her field, Rydzewski hopes to help grow the dairy industry by inspiring other women to join the welding profession.

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Conference: April 5-6, 2023
Tabletop Exhibits: April 5 | 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Alliant Energy Center, Madison, Wisconsin
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DISCOVER

Learn from the industry's best and brightest

CheeseCon's insightful seminars offer something for everyone. After the Opening Keynote Panel exclusively sponsored by KSS/RELCO, you'll find engaging sessions on sustainability, federal milk marketing order reform, food safety, new cheesemaking techniques, whey processing and more.



CONNECT

Build your network with thousands of customers and colleagues

For businesses large and small, CheeseCon is the place to connect. Meet the global dairy industry at exciting networking events. Catch up with colleagues, and make new connections at dairy's largest gathering!



ADVANCE

Grow your business on our largest-ever exhibit floor

Find trusted partners and solutions as you peruse over 300 booths hosted by the industry's expert suppliers. Visit the popular Ideas Showcase stages right on the show floor for quick-hitting talks on everything from cutting-edge automation and software to the highest quality ingredients and equipment.



INSPIRE

Honor success and celebrate the future of dairy processing

Don't miss CheeseCon's many exciting opportunities to celebrate the industry's best and brightest. Support dairy scholarships and education at the lively Chr. Hansen Reception & Championship Cheese Auction. Join friends and peers in honoring industry legends at the Recognition Breakfast and cheer winners at the U.S. Champions Awards Banquet.

Pre-Registration Ends March 27

After March 27, all registrations will take place on-site at CheeseCon.

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Schedule of Events

Tuesday, April 4

Registration Open 12:00-7:00 p.m.

WCMA JOB FAIR

3:00-5:00 p.m. | Upper Level Lounge
At this popular event, WCMA member companies and cooperatives offering fulfilling careers and competitive benefits connect with the industry's next generation, motivated for a new professional challenge.

TETRA PAK WELCOME RECEPTION

5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. | Atrium
Join friends, colleagues, as valued industry supplier Tetra Pak kicks off CheeseCon 2023 with this refined gathering, open to all attendees.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS RECEPTION

7:00-9:00 p.m. | Coopers Tavern
Enjoy an evening of networking, refreshments and fun in the heart of downtown Madison with fellow young professionals in the dairy processing industry. **Event sponsored by IFF.**

Wednesday, April 5

Registration Open 7:00a.m.-5:30 p.m.

AMCOR CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

7:00-8:00 a.m. | Atrium
Kick off Wednesday morning with Amcor's continental breakfast.

OPENING KEYNOTE EXCLUSIVELY SPONSORED BY KSS/RELCO

8:00-8:45 a.m. | Hall A

Sustainability Now: Implementing, not Discussing, Sustainable Practices in Dairy

The drive toward industrywide adoption of sustainable production of dairy products is an imperative with a new generation of consumers, and a requirement from a growing number of commercial dairy buyers. Leading dairy businesses will describe their activity to develop and reach sustainability targets and how the U.S. Dairy Stewardship Commitment is advancing measurement and reporting on the industry's behalf.

Wednesday continued

COLLEGIATE DAIRY PRODUCTS EVALUATION CONTEST

9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. | Mendota Rooms 5-7
Dairy student teams from across the United States gather at CheeseCon to evaluate dairy products and vie for the title of Collegiate Champion. Visit the action live on-site and catch a glimpse of the future of the dairy industry!

Wednesday Concurrent Sessions

INNOVATION CENTER FOR U.S. DAIRY TECHNICAL SESSION: IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES NOW

9:00-11:00 a.m. | Upper Level Meeting Rooms
Dairy processors discuss how they are incorporating sustainability into their long-term strategic planning (materiality) and implementing measures across their operations and milksheds. Dairy company sustainability experts will discuss the tools that have been custom built for U.S. dairy processors to understand and measure GHG across their operations and how they are measuring and reporting on a number of different sustainability metrics both on-farm and in-plant on behalf of U.S. dairy.

CDR TECHNICAL SESSION: OPTIMIZING MANUFACTURE OF SNACK CHEESE

9:00-11:00 a.m. | Mendota Rooms 3-4
From string cheese, cheese curds to baked cheese crisps and more, the snack cheese category has grown and is expected to continue to expand. This session will share innovative strategies to produce and manufacture different snack cheese formats. Learn about the snack cheese market and retail trends, and the research taking place focused on extending the shelf life of string cheese and on developing cheese crisps/puffs.

Overall Snack Cheese Market

Overall Technologies Available

Current Research, Extending Life of String Cheese

Current Research, Developing Cheese Crisps/Puffs

Q & A PANEL

WCMA POLICY PANEL: MILK PRICING REFORM IN FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDERS

9:00-11:00 a.m. | Mendota Rooms 1-2
Most dairy leaders agree: updates to federal milk marketing orders are essential to the long-term strength of our industry.

Reaching consensus on the degree of change may be a more challenging matter. Hear from those steering this debate in

Washington, DC in this all-star panel discussion led by Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association Executive Director John Umhoefer.

TABLETOP EXHIBITS

10:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. | Halls B, C, D

The largest tabletop exhibit floor in the 36-year history of this national conference – more than 300 expert supplier partners from around the world – takes over CheeseCon Wednesday afternoon. It's the dairy industry's single best interaction of processors and solutions providers – all in one giant hall.

COMPLIMENTARY LUNCH

11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. | Hall A

Everyone at CheeseCon can enjoy a complimentary lunch right on the exhibit floor during the Tabletop Exhibits. Enjoy networking with friends, new and old.

RECOGNITION FOR WCMA LEADERSHIP TRAINING GRADUATES

12:30-1:00 p.m. | Hall A

During our complimentary lunch, meet rising stars in the dairy industry as WCMA puts the spotlight on industry personnel who have completed leadership training with WCMA.

IDEAS SHOWCASE

12:30-4:30 p.m. | Hall B

Supplier experts take to our two education stages throughout the afternoon, imparting quick-hitting, impactful information to dairy processors. It's a tool chest of ideas presented right on the exhibit floor.

COLLEGIATE CONTEST AWARDS CEREMONY

3:30-4:30 p.m. | Hall A

Hundreds of students attending CheeseCon for the Collegiate Dairy Products Evaluation Contest move from visiting exhibits to our main stage to celebrate the students and schools that performed best!

CHR. HANSEN RECEPTION & CHAMPION CHEESE AUCTION

5:00-7:00 p.m. | Hall A

The afternoon of Tabletop Exhibits closes with a bang as the dairy industry gathers to celebrate gold medalists in the United States Championship Cheese Contest and bids to take these winners home. The Chr. Hansen Reception is the high energy climax to the first full day at CheeseCon and a chance to support WCMA Contests, scholarships, training programs and strategic support of industry partners like CDR. Bid for the future of the dairy industry!

Thursday, April 6

WCMA RECOGNITION BREAKFAST EXCLUSIVELY SPONSORED BY DSM FOOD & BEVERAGE

8:00-9:15 a.m. | Hall A

All attendees are invited to celebrate the achievements of industry greats. WCMA is proud to honor leaders who have built the U.S. cheese industry, featuring recipients of:

- WCMA Life Member Award
- WCMA Babcock Award
- WCMA Vanguard Award
- WCMA Luminary Award
- WCMA Distinguished Service Award
- WCMA Cheese Industry Champions

Thursday Concurrent Sessions

U.S. DAIRY EXPORT COUNCIL: MARKET OUTLOOK AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHEESE EXPORTS

9:30-11:45 a.m. | Upper Level Meeting Rooms
U.S. exports of dairy products, particularly cheese, continue to set records and are poised for future growth. USDEC experts join with Wisconsin-based resource partners to share the outlook for dairy exports as well as new market research, sales support, grant support and additional tools to advance growth of U.S. dairy sales overseas.

USDEC Custom Research: Cheese "Tastes Good" Research Defines Favorable Sensory Attributes in Key Target Markets

Global Market Outlook for Dairy Exports

Export Marketing Tools offered by Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin

2023 Export Activities Planned by WDATCP International Team

Export Grants and Resources offered by Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association

Thursday continued

CDR TECHNICAL SESSION: NEW GENERATION OF CHEESEMAKING APPROACHES

9:30-11:45 a.m. | Mendota Rooms 3-4
CDR will highlight various emerging approaches to cheesemaking. This session will dive into some of these technologies and their potential impacts and applications for the cheese industry. CDR will also discuss concentrated milk and how to deal with potential issues, such as coagulation and textural changes.

Waterless Cookers and Using Different Vats

Whey-less Cheese and Customized Powders

Standardizing Lactose and Dealing with Issues when Using Concentrated Milk

Q & A PANEL

INNOVATION CENTER FOR U.S. DAIRY AND CDR FOOD SAFETY FOCUS: PATHOGEN PREVENTION, TRAINING RESOURCES AND TRACEABILITY

9:30-11:45 a.m. | Mendota Rooms 1-2
The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy and CDR will lead an informative dairy food safety session with speakers and panelists from across the industry.

Recent Recalls, Prevention, and Approaches to Reducing Pathogen Risks

We'll review recent dairy illness outbreaks and recalls and look at the root causes with an eye on prevention. Expert speakers will highlight the critical control areas of facility and equipment design, GMP's, separation/zoning, sanitation, with a deeper dive into environmental monitoring and Corrective and Preventive Actions (CAPA)

Traceability, What You Need to Know About the New Rules with an Expert Q&A Panel

Overview of the New Rule, Dairy Implications, and Actions Needed

Q&A PANEL

Tools and Resources for Employee Training and Improving Your Food Safety Programs

Research Review: Recent Findings and Advances in Listeria and Pathogen Controls

Mining Food-Grade Microbes for Novel Antimicrobials Against Listeria in Dairy Production

CDR TECHNICAL SESSION: ADVANCES IN WHEY PROCESSING

9:30-11:45 a.m. | Mendota Rooms 5-6

Learn about some of the exciting advances in whey processing. Hear how these technologies can help the dairy industry take advantage of crossflow filtration to modify whey products for a range of interesting and useful purposes.

Utilizing Nanofiltration to Separate Galactose and Lactic Acid from UF Permeate or Acid Whey

Discovering Bioactive Ingredients from Whey Protein Phospholipid Concentrate

Concentrating the Phospholipids from Whey Protein Phospholipid Concentrate

Making Heat Stable WPI Without Microfiltration

Q & A PANEL

COMPLIMENTARY KEYNOTE LUNCH DAIRY MANAGEMENT INC. : IS DRIVING INNOVATION AND DAIRY GROWTH

12:00-1:00 p.m. | Hall A

Attendees reconvene for complimentary lunch and the opportunity to hear a Keynote Address on exciting new plans at Dairy Management Inc.

VISIT THE NEW CENTER FOR DAIRY RESEARCH!

1:15-4:00 p.m. | Lobby Departures at 1:15 and 1:45 p.m.

Take a complimentary bus ride courtesy of C.D. Smith to the new Center for Dairy Research on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus for the opportunity to tour the largest dairy research center in the United States. Up to 200 attendees can sign up at the CheeseCon Registration Desks to participate. Meet with CDR staff and participate in various guided tour spots throughout the building including the sensory booths, culinary applications lab, and state-of-the-art pilot plant. Total time at CDR for

each participant will be about 75 minutes. Visiting inside the pilot plant is optional and will require following CDR's GMPs.

C.D. Smith-sponsored coach busses will take you from the Alliant Energy Center to UW-Madison campus/CDR and back to the Alliant Energy Center.

Lobby Departures from Alliant Energy Center – two buses at 1:15 p.m., two busses at 1:45 p.m.

INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP | LEARNING THE ART OF TECHNICAL CHEESE GRADING

1:30-4:00 p.m. | Mendota Rooms 5-6

Join Jim Mueller, Chief Judge of the Championship Cheese Contests, and other expert cheese evaluators for an informative, hands-on exploration of defect evaluation in commodity and specialty cheeses. You'll learn the unique characteristics of numerous cheese types and discover the exacting art of distinguishing (and scoring) great cheeses and good cheeses.

U.S. CHAMPIONS RECEPTION EXCLUSIVELY SPONSORED BY ECOLAB

5:00-6:00 p.m. | Lobby

Ecolab opens the Thursday evening festivities with a splendid gathering featuring the best cheeses from all over the nation.

U.S. CHAMPIONS AWARDS BANQUET

6:00-8:30 p.m. | Hall A

Gather with dairy professionals from around the nation to honor the outstanding achievements of the 2023 United States Championship Cheese Contest winners! This elegant gala is a night to remember for dairy craftsmen, and a must for anyone with a passion for the industry.

CUSTOM FABRICATING & REPAIR AFTERGLOW RECEPTION

9:00-Midnight | Sheraton Hotel Ballroom

Relax and mingle with your peers in quality dairy production. The perfect ending for an evening of celebration.

For complete details, visit [CheeseCon.org](https://www.cheesecon.org)

CHEESECON

Exhibitors

Exhibit Hours | Wednesday, April 5 | 10:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

A record-breaking 326 companies will exhibit at CheeseCon. Plan your visits by reviewing our list of exhibitors now.

AGC Heat Transfer, Inc.	1308	E.A. Bonelli + Associates, Inc.	310	Kurita America Inc.	720	Seitz Stainless	1005
ALPMA USA	715	Ecolab, Inc.	507	Kusel Equipment Co.	612	Select Custom Solutions	1023
ALS Marshfield	209	Endress+Hauser	510	L.W. Allen, Inc.	1121	Separators, Inc.	307
AMS Steam Products, LLC	1112	Energenics	516	LETICO Inc.	416	Shambaugh & Son, L.P.	610
AWI Manufacturing	911	Energy Panel Structures, Inc.	318	LM-Tarbell Inc.	902	Sika Corporation	1114
Ace Chemical Products, Inc.	311	Enerquip Thermal Solutions	705	Lallemand Specialty Cultures	821	SoffTrace Ltd	621
Ace Sanitary	1216	Engineering Specialists	1024	Laporte Consultants Corporation	1017	Solecta, Inc.	1015
Advanced Detection Systems	217	Equipment Specialists LLC	112	Liftrac	1312	Sonoco	916
Advanced Process Technologies – APT	813	ErgonArmor	420	Liquid Process Equipment	1013	Staab Construction Corp.	1307
Air Quality Process	405	Eurotherm/Watlow	1022	Loos Machine & Automation	708	Stainless Technologies LLC	1101
Airgas, an Air Liquide company	522	Evaporator Dryer Technologies, Inc.	815	Louisiana Pepper Exchange	216	Staubli Robotics	1119
Alce North America, Inc.	1324	Evoqua Water Technologies	604	Lyras A/S	1218	Steel & O'Brien Manufacturing	1316
Alfa Laval Inc.	415	Excel Engineering, Inc.	707	M4 Control Systems	317	Steriflow Food & Beverage	1011
Alliant Energy	205	Extrutech Plastics Inc.	119	MANN+HUMMEL Water & Fluid Solutions Inc.	1208	Sterilex	314
Allied Blending LP	514	F.N. Sheppard & Co.	424	MCT Dairies, Inc.	601	Strategybytes, LLC	1107
Amano Enzyme USA	128	FBF North America, LLC	723	MHM AUTOMATION	520	Stuart W. Johnson & Company Inc.	625
Amcor	700	FOSS North America	608	MULTIPOND America Inc	906	Suedpack Oak Creek Corporation	1104
American Dairy Products Institute	713	FSNS, A Certified Group Company	806	Malisko Engineering, Inc	725	Summit Refrigeration Group	1016
Americold	113	FT System North America LLC	325	Mamata Enterprises, Inc.	104	SupplyOne Wisconsin	1200
Ametek MOCON	1105	Fiberglass Solutions LLC	710	Marchant Schmidt, Inc.	300	Sweetener Supply	809
Ampco Pumps Company Inc.	702	Flair Flexible Packaging Corporation	319	Martin Milk Service And Martin Warehousing	315	Synder Filtration	810
Anderson Chemical Co./ Sanitation Technologies	901	FlexLink Systems, Inc.	1122	Massman Companies	722	TC Transcontinental Packaging	606
Anderson Chemical Co./Water Management	903	Flexopack USA Inc.	1210	Masters Gallery Foods, Inc.	615	TDI Packsys	1319
Anderson-Negele	1311	Flexray	924	Matrix Sciences	409	TMI Coatings, Inc.	1306
Applied Science, Inc.	719	Focal Point Financial Strategies	822	McFinn Technologies	1110	Tecnal	418
Aquatech	904	Food Tech, Inc.	110	McMahon Associates, Inc.	324	Teel Plastics, Inc.	215
Arena Products	820	Fortress Technology, Inc.	200	Mead & Hunt, Inc.	519	Teinnovations	1315
Associated Milk Producers Inc.	1300	Foth	703	Membrane Process & Controls, Inc.	413	Tetra Pak Inc.	506
Astro Pak Corporation	107	Fredman Bag Company	202	Membrane System Specialists, Inc.	801	The Boldt Company	1020
Atlantium Technologies Ltd	105	Freedom Warehousing	1206	Midwest Mechanical Solutions	1317	The Boson Company	419
Axiflow Technologies, Inc.	900	Fresh-Lock by Presto	711	Midwest Rubber Service & Supply Co.	1120	The Haskell Company	922
BELL-MARK	1109	Fristam Pumps USA	1100	Miron Construction Co., Inc.	406	The Probst Group, LLC	603
BFR Systems	117	Fromagex	303	Mohawk Technology	1115	Th-Turbo GmbH	1222
BW Flexible Systems	807	G-M-I, Inc	914	Multi-Conveyor	1000	Toray Membrane USA	504
Baldwin Supply Company	219	GEA Systems North America	609	Natec USA LLC	721	Total Energy Systems, LLC	120
Bartelt Insulation	130	GF Piping Systems	211	National Utilities Co.	1303	Translation Services LTD	1313
Bassett Mechanical	907	GS PlantOptics	624	Nelson-Jameson, Inc.	613	Trilogy Essential Ingredients	1103
Batzner Pest Control	816	Garon Foods Inc.	502	Nercon Conveyor Systems	921	Tweet/Garot Mechanical	505
Baumer Ltd.	804	Great Northern Corporation	616	Newterra, Ltd.	121	Ultrasource LLC	402
Begert Stainless, Inc.	817	Green Bay Packaging Inc.	718	Northfield Corporation	425	United Scale a Transcat Co.	1322
Bentley Instruments	919	HART Design & Manufacturing, Inc.	521	Novasina AG	1113	Urschel Laboratories, Inc.	408
Bionix, LLC	724	Handmann	717	Nutricepts, LLC	617	VIRESCO Renewable Energy	223
bioMerieux, Inc.	825	Hanna Instruments	1124	Oterra	1019	VNE Corporation	908
Bruker Optics	905	Harpak-Ulma Packaging, LLC.	1224	PBBS Equipment Corporation	923	Valcour Process Technologies	611
Burkert Fluid Control Systems	309	Harrigan Solutions	103	POWER Engineers, Inc.	511	Valgroup LLC	1004
CEM Corporation	1008	Heritage Manufacturing, Inc.	915	Packaging Corporation Of America	308	Veolia Water Technologies & Solutions	1007
CP Packaging LLC	523	Heron Innovators, Inc.	1108	Page & Pedersen International, Ltd	220	Victaulic	1117
CRB	1302	Hitachi Industrial Equipment & Solutions America, LLC	917	Paul Mueller Company	812	Viking Masek Packaging Technologies	407
CSL USA INC	422	Hixson Architecture, Engineering & Process	214	PerkinElmer, Inc.	1002	Vivalac Cultures Corporation	414
Caloris Engineering	1006	Hood Packaging Corporation	1125	Piller TSC Blower Corporation	116	WDS Construction	805
Center for Dairy Research	400	HowToRobot	210	Polipa North America, LLC	106	WOW Logistics	824
Charter Next Generation	623	Hydranautics - A Nitto Group Company	912	Polyplex	1123	Watertech Of America, Inc.	622
Cheese Market News	503	Hydrite	500	Power Food Technology	1323	Watson-Marlow Fluid Technology Solutions	1118
Cheese Reporter	412	Hygiena	1012	Precision Biolabs	1001	Wayland Industries	212
Chem-Aqua, Inc.	410	IFF	515	ProActive Solutions USA, LLC	701	Weber, Inc.	618
ChemStation International	423	IFM Efector, Inc.	517	Profood World	1214	Weimer Bearing & Transmission	910
Chemco Products Company	1305	IML Containers	122	Provisur Technologies	313	Wells	704
Chr. Hansen, Inc.	509	ISG	803	Q-Interline	1010	Werner Electric Supply	716
Christakis Agathangelou Ltd.	118	Immel Construction	1116	QComp Technologies, Inc.	1220	Wila A/S	322
Chubb	823	Inficon	1009	QLC, Inc.	605	Winpak	808
Clauger Sotek	1318	Ingredion	909	Quadbeam Technologies Ltd.	913	Wisconsin Aging & Grading Cheese Inc.	301
Clayton Industries	1018	Integrated Packaging Machinery	100	QualiTru Sampling Systems	321	Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association	1310
Clean Water Technology, Inc.	1003	International Food Products Corporation	126	Quality Tank Solutions, LLC	925	Witt Gas Controls	1014
Climate by Design International	225	International Machinery Exchange	403	Qualtech Inc	614	World Water Works, Inc.	316
Compeer Financial	101	International Media & Cultures, Inc.	312	Quasius Construction	1314	Yokogawa Corporation of America	222
Complete Filtration Resources	709	Interpak LLC	1202	R.W. Baron Process Equipment, Inc.	1111	Zee Company a division of the Vincit Group	323
Coprodev Plus	417	Intralox	213	RELCO, A Koch Separation Solutions Company	607	Zepnick Solutions, Inc.	524
Creative Business Services	918	Ivarson, Inc.	814	RathGibson	320	Zone Mechanical	1304
Custom Fabricating & Repair, Inc.	501	J&W Instruments	125	Reiser	513	Zorn Compressor & Equipment	206
Cybertrrol Engineering	525	JIE USA INC.	208	Revela Foods, LLC	920		
DCI, Inc.	518	JLS Automation	306	Rieger Flow Products, LLC	305		
DR Tech, Inc.	619	Jasper Engineering & Equipment Co.	1212	River Valley Logistics, LLC.	102		
DSM Food Specialties USA, Inc.	712	KDV Label, LLC	1301	Rohde Brothers	124		
DSO Fluid Handling	203	KEI Steam Solutions, Inc.	811	Rubber Fab	411		
Dahmes Stainless Inc.	802	KJ Cold Storage, LLC	1320	Rytec High Performance Doors	218		
Dairy Connection Inc.	512	Kalt Maschinenbau AG	115	SEW-EURODRIVE	819		
Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin	1309	Karl Schnell Inc.	201	SGS	800		
Delkor Systems, Inc.	818	Kassa Cutters USA	1021	SPI – Stainless Products	123		
Della Toffola USA	1102	Keller, Inc.	204	SPX Flow, Inc.	404		
Delta 3 Engineering, Inc	114	Kelley Supply, Inc	508	SVF Flow Controls	1321		
Detectamet Metal Detectable Products	706	Kerres USA, LLC	1204	Saldesia Corporation	221		
Deville Technologies Inc.	600	Kersia	714	SaltCo	108		
Digested Organics	111	Key Resin Company/Flow Resin	224	Sani-Matic, Inc.	1025		
Dirty Ducts Cleaning and Environmental	304	Koss Industrial, Inc.	401	Sanitube LLC	1106		
Doral Corporation	421	Kraemer Brothers, LLC	302	Schenck Process	602		
Dorner Manufacturing Corp.	207	Krohne Inc.	620	Schneider & Schneider Mechanical	109		

2023 UNITED STATES CHAMPIONSHIP CHEESE CONTEST

21st BIENNIAL

2023 Championship Cheese Auction

Join us for the Auction event of the year – the sale of Gold Medal winners from the 2023 United States Championship Cheese Contest benefitting the education and training programs of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association.

Buying these amazing dairy products allows you to congratulate these winning manufacturers and has helped WCMA support excellence in our industry. WCMA has used Auction dollars to build popular training programs for dairy manufacturers and suppliers, make key donations to dairy education facilities and support student scholarships and contest improvements!

AUCTION PROCEDURE

- The Auction begins at 5:30 p.m. during the Chr. Hansen Reception at the 2023 CheeseCon. Visit the Auction stage starting at 5:00 p.m. and grab a bidding paddle with your company name.
- Bids during the Auction are made on a per-pound basis. The total pounds of each item for bid are noted below each item number. Many items have multiple cheeses.
- Successful bidders must arrange payment immediately following the Auction at the Auction supervisor's table.
- Cheeses can be shipped to winning bidders. However, WCMA encourages bidders to pick up their items Thursday, April 6 (8:00 to 10:00 a.m.) or Friday, April 7 (8:00 to 10:00 a.m.) at the cheese display coolers on the CheeseCon exhibit floor.

2023 AUCTIONEER

Tim Slack Auction & Realty

2022 WINNING BIDDERS

Milk Specialties Global
DSM
DR Tech
Great Lakes Cheese
Masters Gallery Foods
Nelson-Jameson
Decatur Dairy & Guggisberg Cheese
IVARSON
APT
Loos Machine
Oshkosh Cold Storage
TC Transcontinental
Kelley Supply
ProActive Solutions
Dairy Connection
Hydrite
Vivolac Cultures Corp.
TC Jacoby
Emmi Roth
Wisconsin Aging & Grading Cheese
Custom Fabricating & Repair
Chr. Hansen
Food Safety Net Services
ALPMA
WABASH
Novak's Cheese

ITEM #1 FABULOUS KRAFT Philadelphia Cream Cheese, Kraft Heinz, Beaver Dam, WI	5 lbs	ITEM #10 CLASSIC RED BARN Vintage Cupola American Original Cheese, Team Door Artisan Cheese Co., Red Barn Family Farms, Egg Harbor, WI	9 lbs	ITEM #19 VALLEY QUEEN REIGNS Reduced Fat Cheddar, TJ Jacoby, Valley Queen, Milbank, SD	40 lbs	ITEM #28 AGROPUR PERFECTION Low Moisture Mozzarella, Whole Milk, Low Moisture Part Skim Mozzarella, Smoked Provolone, & Reduced Sodium Provolone, Jeremy Robinson, Agropur, Luxemburg, WI	46 lbs	ITEM #35 PINE RIVER GOLD PACK Mango Habanero Cold Pack Cheese Spread, Pine River Pre-Pack Inc, Newton, WI	12 lbs
ITEM #2 TERRIFIC TILLAMOOK Hot Habanero Jack, Hickory Smoked Cheddar, & Seriously Strawberry Farmstyle Cream Cheese Spread, Tillamook, Tillamook, OR	40 lbs	ITEM #11 KLONDIKE GOLD Odyssey Feta, Kristi Wutrich	30 lbs	ITEM #20 MIGHTY KINGSTON Kingston Premium Blue & Breezy Blue, Kingston Creamery, Cambria, WI	12 lbs	ITEM #29 GUGGISBERG'S BOSS BABY Baby Swiss Wheel, Rindless, DV Team 2, Guggisberg Cheese, Millersburg, OH	10 lbs	ITEM #36 FANTASTIC LACTALIS Galbani Low Fat Ricotta, Lactalis American Group, Inc., Buffalo, NY	10 lbs
ITEM #3 ASTONISHING ARENA Original Recipe Colby Jack Deli, Arena Cheese, Arena, WI	6 lbs	ITEM #12 PINE RIVER'S BETTER BUTTER Sea Salt Caramel Butter, Pine River Dairy, Manitowoc, WI	5 lbs	ITEM #21 GLORIOUS GLANBIA Color Cheddar, Abel Navarrete	40 lbs	ITEM #30 KEMPS & DFA COTTAGE KINGS Kemps 4% Pineapple Cottage Cheese, Kemps, LLC, Farmington, MN	4 lbs	ITEM #37 ROCKIN' ROELLI Roelli Haus Select Cheddar, Roelli Cheese Co., Inc., Shullsburg, WI	20 lbs
ITEM #4 GILMAN GLORY Colored Sharp American, Gilman Cheese Corporation, Gilman, WI	24 lbs	ITEM #13 LOVING THAT LACTALIS CRACKER BARREL! Cracker Barrel Aged Reserve Cheddar, Manufactured by Agropur - Weyauwega, Lactalis Heritage Dairy, Weyauwega, WI	40 lbs	ITEM #22 REMARKABLE ROTHENBUHLER Founder 56 Emmentaler Swiss, James Yoder, Rothenbuhler Cheesemakers, Middlefield, OH	50 lbs	ITEM #31 DIAMOND DECATUR Muenster & Havarti, Matt Henze	20 lbs	ITEM #38 GREATEST GREAT LAKES Mild Provolone Cheese, Cuba Team 3, Great Lakes Cheese, Cuba, NY	15 lbs
ITEM #5 CABOT, NAB IT! Extra Creamy Sea Salted Butter, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, West Springfield, MA	15 lbs	ITEM #14 EXCEPCIONAL SPECIALTY CHEESE Panela, Specialty Cheese Company Inc., Reeseville, WI	5 lbs	ITEM #23 DEER CREEK + HENNINGS = DEERLICIOUS! Deer Creek The Stag, Henning Cheese, The Artisan Cheese Exchange, Kiel, WI	22 lbs	ITEM #32 AMAZING ARTISANS Hootenanny, Goat Rodeo Farm & Dairy, Allison Park, PA	50 lbs	ITEM #39 BURNETT'S SUCCESS Smoked String Cheese, Burnett Dairy Cooperative, Grantsburg, WI	10 lbs
ITEM #6 MOSAIC MEADOWS MAGIC LaClare Fig & Honey Goat Cheese, LaClare Creamery, Malone, WI	5 lbs	ITEM #15 BELGIOIOSO BRILLIANCE BelGioioso Burrata, Robert W. Wheeler	25 lbs	ITEM #24 SUPERIOR SCHUMAN Organic Copper Kettle Parmesan, Cello Mascarpone, Cello Fontal & Cello Asiago, Team Lake Country Dairy, Schuman Cheese, Turtle Lake, WI	60 lbs	ITEM #40 MARIEKE'S MARVELS Whitney, Jasper Hill Farm, Greensboro Bend, VT	40 lbs	ITEM #41 V&V VALOR Sierra Brand Cotija, V&V Supremo Foods, Chicago, IL	40 lbs
ITEM #7 A-M-P-I LOVE IT! Cheddar, Dillon Sylla, Associated Milk Producers Inc., Blair, WI	40 lbs	ITEM #16 LOVELY LAND O' LAKES Aged Cheddar, Kiel Production Team, Land O' Lakes, Kiel, WI	60 lbs	ITEM #25 CARR VALLEY CURDTASTIC White Cheese Curds, Carr Valley Cheese Company, La Valle, WI	10 lbs	ITEM #42 THE U.S. CHAMPION! Europa, Arethusa Cheese Team, Arethusa Farm Dairy, Bantam, CT	12 lbs	ITEM #43 PRAIRIE FARMS PROMINENCE Small Curd 2% Cottage Cheese, Prairie Farms Dairy, Quincy, IL	17 lbs
ITEM #8 CRAVE-ING CHOCOLATE MASCARPONE Chocolate Mascarpone, Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, Waterloo, WI	10 lbs	ITEM #17 CAPITAL CAPUTO Mini Nodini, Caputo Cheese, Melrose Park, IL	5 lbs	ITEM #26 BONGARDS BEST Monterey Jack, JR Larson, Bongards Creameries, Perham, MN	40 lbs	ITEM #33 PRAIRIE FARMS PROMINENCE Small Curd 2% Cottage Cheese, Prairie Farms Dairy, Quincy, IL	10 lbs	ITEM #34 SUPER CESAR Hand Stretched String Cheese, Cesar's Cheese, Plain, WI	5 lbs
ITEM #9 SENSATIONAL SIGMA Queso Oaxaca & Cotija Grated, Mexican Cheese Producers, Sigma Darlington Plant, Darlington, WI	10 lbs	ITEM #18 LAGRANDER'S GRANDEUR Colby Longhorn, Team #3, LaGrander's Hillside Dairy, Stanley, WI	13 lbs	ITEM #27 WINNING WIDMERS Matterhorn Alpine Cheddar, Widmer's Cheese Cellars, Theresa, WI	40 lbs				



Paperboard Cartons Don't Preserve Milk Flavor As Well As Other

Alternatives Should Be Sought For School Meal Fluid Milks

Philadelphia, PA—Milks packaged in paperboard cartons don't preserve the freshness of fluid milk as well as glass and plastic containers, according to a new study in the *Journal of Dairy Science*.

Paperboard cartons are the most widely used packaging type for school meal programs in the US, and milks packaged in paperboard cartons showed distinct off-flavors and presence of specific migration volatile compounds, the study found.

The study's findings suggest that the milk industry and policy makers should seek new package alternatives for school meal fluid milk products.

The consequences of using fluid milk packaging that contributes significant off-flavors, over time, may affect how young children, and those children as adults, perceive fluid milk.

The objective of the study was to compare the sensory and chemical properties of fluid milk packaged in paperboard cartons,

low-density polyethylene, high-density polyethylene (HDPE), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), linear low-density polyethylene (LLDPE), and glass.

Lead investigator MaryAnne Drake, Ph.D., of the North Carolina State University Department of Food, Bioprocessing and Nutrition Sciences, explained that "milk is more susceptible to packaging-related off-flavors than many other beverages because of its mild, delicate taste."

The dairy industry, as such, has focused on light blocking options in regards to packaging. Light-oxidized flavor is a well-established and well-researched off-flavor in retail fluid milk in transparent containers and is caused by photo oxidation of riboflavin and other naturally occurring photosensitive compounds in milk, the study explained.

Paperboard cartons are generally considered to have good light barrier properties compared with other fluid milk package materials, such as PET, HDPE, or glass. Paperboard cartons and HDPE are the most widely used package types for fluid milk, according to the study. Paperboard cartons are widespread because they are

malleable and cheaper to produce than many other options.

However, paperboard cartons have potential disadvantages because paperboard is highly permeable to the surrounding environment and can allow volatile compound migration into the container contents, the study noted.

Besides light oxidation, "milk's taste can be impacted by the exchange of the packaging's compounds into the milk and by the packaging absorbing food flavors and aromas from the surrounding refrigeration environment," Drake pointed out.

To quantify the flavor impacts of packaging, the researchers examined pasteurized whole and skim milk stored in six half-pint containers: paperboard cartons, three plastic jugs (made from different plastics), a plastic bag, and glass as a control. The milk was stored in total darkness to control for light oxidation and kept cold.

The samples were tested on the day of first processing, then again at five, 10, and 15 days after. A trained panel examined the sensory properties of each sample, and the research team conducted a volatile compound analysis to understand how the packaging was intermingling with the milk.

Finally, the samples underwent a blind consumer taste test on day 10 to see whether tasters could tell any difference between milk stored in the paperboard carton or the plastic jug compared with milk packaged in glass.

The results showed that package type does influence milk flavor, and skim milk is more susceptible to flavor impacts than whole milk.

Of the different packaging types, paperboard cartons and the plastic bag preserved milk freshness the least due to the paperboard's absorption of milk flavor and the transfer of paperboard flavor into the milk.

Milk packaged in paperboard cartons, in fact, showed distinct off-flavors as well as the presence of compounds from the paperboard, the study found.

The final study results show that, while glass remains an ideal container for preserving milk flavor, plastic containers provide additional benefits while also maintaining freshness in the absence of light exposure.

Paperboard cartons are the most widely used packaging type for school meal programs in the US, so these findings are especially relevant for the consideration of how young children consume and enjoy milk, the researchers noted.

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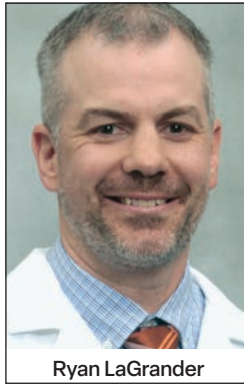
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Kirk Auchue



Tony Hook



Ryan LaGrander



Ben Shibler



Tim Stearns

Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Program Welcomes Four New Graduates; One Returning Master Earns Additional Certification

Madison—The Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research (CDR) and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW) have announced the 29th graduating class of the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program, with four new and one returning Master Cheesemakers.

To be eligible for the program, students must be licensed Wisconsin cheese makers for at least 10 years. Before applicants are accepted, they're required to complete CDR's Advanced Cheese Technology Short Course and one other workshop of their choice.

It takes about three years to complete the program. To date, more than 90 cheese makers have earned the title of Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker in dozens of cheese varieties. Many Wisconsin Master Cheesemakers have also earned multiple certifications in different cheese types and styles.

Kirk Auchue, Saputo Cheese

While attending college, Kirk Auchue got a job at the Saputo plant in Fond du Lac that changed his life.

"I became a cheese maker and decided that's what I wanted to do," Auchue said. "The challenge was there, and it was a trade that I could start young and continue."

Auchue moved up quickly in the plant, earning his cheese maker and pasteurizer licenses and attending short courses at CDR. When a cheese maker retired, he landed the job and continued a family tradition of working in the dairy processing industry.

"My grandfather was a butter maker," Auchue said. "He owned his own company in Coleman, and then moved to Fond du Lac and worked for Borden's. It was a cool way to relate to my grandfather."

Since Auchue's start in Fond du Lac, he has filled several different roles at different Saputo locations, including a 13-year stint as a production supervisor at the plant in Black Creek.

Auchue currently works as a technical service coordinator at Black Creek, where he oversees about 48 different recipes.

Auchue enjoys the challenges of cheesemaking, and is particularly proud of the cheese makers and other staff he works with at the plant.

"When I first started here, everyone was just pushing buttons; things had been so automated," he said. "Working with them now, they check their sets to see when they need to cut the

cheese; they look at their drop pHs, and they make adjustments on their own as needed for ripening times or increasing rennets or cultures."

Auchue joins the ranks of Wisconsin Master Cheesemakers with a certification in Cheddar.

"I like the flavor of Cheddar. I like aging it, too, and using different adjuncts to create different flavors," Auchue said. "There's so many things you can do with Cheddar. It's my favorite cheese."

Auchue thanks his mentor, Gregg Palubicki, who took him under his wing early on and helped him get started. In addition, he thanks Kevin Sweeney of Saputo for supporting him.

When Auchue received the call notifying him that he had graduated from the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program, he let out a big sigh of relief.

"You have to research those answers and say where you got them from," Auchue said. "You're looking for that answer, but you're also learning other things along the way."

Tony Hook, Hook's Cheese

Tony Hook is a pioneer of Wisconsin artisan cheese. He and his wife Julie had been making cheese

for distributors at their plant in Mineral Point when they first brought their cheese to Madison's Dane County Farmers' Market in the early 1990s.

"One of our niches at that point was that we aged some Cheddar out," Hook said. "Nobody else was doing that."

The Hooks soon gained a following and gradually opted to concentrate more on specialty cheeses. In 1997, they added Blue cheese to their repertoire.

"Blue cheese is really fun to make," Hook said. "We've developed seven different styles, so it's one of our main types."

Today, he makes an original Blue cheese, Gorgonzola, Tilston Point (an English Stilton), and Blue Paradise. The Hooks also make Blue cheese with sheep, goat, and mixed milk.

It's perhaps no surprise that Hook is earning his Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker medal in Blue cheese.

Hook got his start in cheesemaking right out of high school when, in the summer of 1970, he went to work for Bill Ienatsch at his cheese plant in Barneveld, WI. One of the highlights was making 200-pound Swiss Wheels.

Around 1977, he and Julie began managing and making cheese for a cooperative cheese factory outside Mineral Point called Buck Grove.

In 1987, the Hooks purchased and moved to the current Hook's Cheese plant, a historic building that was once a hotel in downtown Mineral Point – first converted to a cheese plant in 1929.

In 2001, the Hooks decided to make more cheese for their own label and increased their specialty cheese production. Tony Hook credits the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, the Dairy Business Innovation Center, and CDR for helping promote and develop Wisconsin specialty cheeses.

"We've really grown the artisan cheeses. Now we're up to probably four times as much in sales as we used to have when we were running full time, but that's because we've increased the price on artisan cheeses as opposed to selling it as a commodity," he said.

Hook is also proud to further his reputation and graduate from

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the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program.

Ryan LaGrander, LaGrander's Hillside Dairy

As a third-generation cheesemaker, Ryan LaGrander grew up above the family cheese factory.

"It was kind of a unique upbringing living right above the vats," he said. "Cheesemaking was something I got into at a very young age. I enjoyed it, and it was hard work, but you always felt good at the end of each day knowing you accomplished something."

In 1960, Ryan's grandfather, Dannie, purchased the plant now known as LaGrander's Hillside Dairy. In the early 1990s, his dad, Randy, took over the plant. Ryan started working in the plant in grade school and took a full-time position after college. Now, Ryan and his brother, Joe, are continuing the family business as owners of LaGrander's Hillside Dairy.

"I run everything from cheese production to the farms to the customers," LaGrander said. "A lot of my time is spent with the actual cheese production, making adjustments and working to fulfill our customers' needs."

He is continuing the family tradition of Master Cheesemakers – his father, Randy, graduated with the classes of 2003 and 2006. In 2017, Ryan earned his first Master certifications in Colby and Monterey Jack. This year, he is adding Cheddar and Cheese Curds.

"Cheddar and cheese curds go hand-in-hand as curds are part of the Cheddar process. We're also one of the largest producers of cheese curds for the appetizer and snack industry. It was a natural fit to get that certification."

As a Master Cheesemaker, LaGrander prides himself on continually improving. He also believes the Master program is a great opportunity to learn more about the cheesemaking process.

"It definitely gets you to think a lot more about why you're doing things," LaGrander said. "It opens your eyes and makes you really look at your process and try to make improvements."

With four Master medals, he sees the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program as an important asset for the state's cheese industry.

"I'm honored to be a part of it and be included with the other Master Cheesemakers," LaGrander said. "It's a pretty tight-knit community. Everyone knows everybody. It means a lot to go through the program and be recognized for completing it."

Ben Shibler, Pagel's Ponderosa Dairy/Ron's Wisconsin Cheese

Ben Shibler got into cheesemaking by accident. After graduating with an associate degree in forestry and wildlife management, he

had a hard time finding a job in that profession, so he took a position at a local cheese plant.

"I knew they paid well, and I didn't want to live at home forever," Shibler said. "So, I got a job there while I was looking for something in my field, and then I never left the dairy industry."

Shibler started out working the night shift, doing the grunt work of scrubbing tables and other tasks but was soon promoted.

"A year-and-a-half after I walked into my first cheese plant, I got my cheese maker license and just never looked back."

Shibler enjoys the intellectual and physical aspects of cheesemaking. Today, Shibler is the operations manager and head cheese maker for Ron's Wisconsin Cheese, which is owned by Pagel's Ponderosa Dairy. The job involves everything from cheesemaking to sales.

"It's kind of like I run my own company. That's sort of what John (Pagel) told me when he hired me seven years ago."

Among the different cheeses he makes, he is known for his Mozzarella, which he sells a lot of as String cheese and cheese whips.

"My first day ever in a cheese plant was working with Mozzarella," he said, "so there's a little bit of sentimental value there. Growing up in Wisconsin, there were numerous places in the Green Bay area where you could get some of the best String cheese in the world, so that was a staple growing up."

This year, Shibler joins the ranks of Wisconsin Master Cheesemakers with a medal in Mozzarella. He is honored and said it feels like joining a cheese maker hall of fame.

"It means a lot to me personally to achieve that level of success, and also to be recognized in front of the whole industry of my peers and in an industry I never thought I'd even be working in," he said. "I thought I'd be counting leaves on trees right now somewhere in northern Wisconsin, not becoming one of the state's Master Cheesemakers."

He added that the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker program provides a valuable opportunity for cheese makers to improve and boost their knowledge.

"It really makes you increase your knowledge of the process and the science, and that makes you a more valuable asset not only to your company but to the industry. It also makes for better, more robust products."

Timothy Stearns, Land O'Lakes

While other high school kids were flipping burgers or bagging groceries, Timothy Stearns got a job at the local cheese plant.

"After school, I'd go in for a couple of hours and wash tubs,"

Stearns said. "Then the summer after I graduated, I got a full-time job there filling up the 640 barrels."

Stearns was soon immersed in the work and earned his cheese maker's license only a couple of years after first setting foot in the plant. He also took some of his first short courses at CDR.

"It was kind of cool to learn the science behind the things I was doing in the plant," he said. "That was when cheesemaking opened up for me, and it was exciting to learn more."

Stearns also has a tremendous resource right in his family – his uncle, Dan Stearns, is a retired Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker, formerly of Agropur, Weyauwega.

"Dan is a huge mentor for me. He gave me the benchmark for what a Master Cheesemaker should be. He always talked about cheese with me, but he wouldn't just hand-feed me everything."

This year, Stearns joins his uncle in the prestigious ranks of Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker with a certification in Cheddar.

Now, Stearns is Master Cheesemaker at the new Land O'Lakes plant in Kiel where he makes and ages Cheddar.

"I'm helping oversee the cheese make. Everything from the cul-

tures to the cheesemaking to the grading. Being at the front line of that is really exciting," he said.

The Land O'Lakes plant in Kiel processes over three million pounds of milk a day. The plant fills up one of its 10 60,000-pound vats roughly every 22 minutes.

The team at the Kiel plant also does a lot of cheese grading. Stearns mentioned that he recently finished grading eight loads of 40-pound blocks.

"We were selecting which ones to put into aging and which ones to pull for mild Cheddar. We look for blocks we think will age well and develop some really nice flavor."

From the beginning of his career, Stearns tried to push himself and continuously develop his skills and knowledge.

Early on, he knew he wanted to try to become a Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker.

"Any role I was in, I wanted to improve and put myself in the best position. The CDR short courses and now the Master program really helped me dive in and learn the art and science of cheesemaking," Stearns said.

For information about the Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Program, visit www.wisconsincheese.com.



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Cheese Snack Kits, Lactose-Free Trends To Watch As ‘Organic’ Softens

Madison—Since 2020, consumer demand for cheese has weathered inflationary prices, pandemic-era sales structures, and growth of plant-based consumer eating habits – only to come out ahead in almost all retail and deli segments.

The International Dairy-Deli-Bakery Association (IDDBA) hosted a presentation on this and other micro and macro cheese trends by Circana, formerly Information Resources, Inc. (IRI).

Circana client insight consultants Emilee Sattler and Joel Wieseckel shared the latest research on the category, which is enjoying growth across almost all segments except for some processed cheeses, and deli service cheeses.

Focusing on the service counter, retail cheese is competing in price with pre-sliced cheese in the deli section, Wieseckel said. We need to look at how the price-tag compares to what’s being seen by the same consumers at the pre-sliced grab-and-go deli section.

The e-commerce sales channel has also been growing since 2020, Wieseckel said. Pandemic-era e-commerce was often the only way consumers had to shop, and they haven’t really gone back.

This sales structure has since stabilized, and we “haven’t seen the rapid growth that we saw in 2020,” but we see steady growth in cheese and in other categories, and now e-commerce accounts for roughly 10 percent of total category sales, Wieseckel said.

Consumers are really looking for convenience when they shop, he continued. E-commerce provides that convenience; leading national brands like Kraft and Sargento are generating sales for specific e-commerce retailers.

As consumers alter their buying behavior in search of greater convenience, the rise of “grab and go” will prompt some sales to leave the service case and drift to the pre-packaged area, research showed.

String Cheese Snack Kits Are Fire

Cheese makers are responding to convenience and proliferation of snacking occasions with new flavors and highly in-demand String cheese snack kits.

“What we’re seeing is a very specific kind of theme-based innovation in the cheese section,” Wieseckel said. We’re seeing snacking and on-the-go as consistent themes – convenience, simplicity, capitalizing on a kind of consumer use; and occasions to provide convenience.

Cheese companies are introducing new flavors and appli-

cations “to really go after that cheese snacking occasion, and then taking advantage of some flavor extensions to go with vintage cheeses, looking to take their brands into different areas,” Wieseckel said.

One of the brightest spots is the strength of cheese snack kits, which has enjoyed sustainable growth over the past several years.

Examples include Hillshire Farm SNACKED! Pepperoni & Mini String Cheese Snack Pack with Confetti Cake Bites; Arla Havarti & Gouda Cheese Snack Kit; and Target brand Good & Gather Cheddar Cheese & Beef Sausage Protein Pack Quick Bites.

When the rest of the dairy cheese category was down in 2021, cheese kits had strong growth, Wieseckel said. Consistent distribution and sustained assortment has helped maintain that growth over the past couple of years.

“As you can see across all dairy, 2021 was a tough year. Again, coming out of that pandemic surge, it was a hard time cycling that kind of growth,” Wieseckel said. “We rebounded in 2022, largely based on inflationary prices with some contribution in volume as well. We came back in 2022 actually ahead of 2020.”

“We kind of replaced that whole surge and now we’re growing again across most categories,” Wieseckel said.

While 2021 was a tough year for sales, we saw sustained growth

in 2022 and in 2023, “we’re off to a good start – picking up right where we left off,” he said.

However, price and volume tell a different story in regard to the impact of inflation on the two key categories of processed dairy and natural dairy cheese

“You can see in 2021 a decrease in volume – we kind of held our own by holding the price. In 2022 and so far in 2023, we’re seeing all that growth is driven on price inflation,” Wieseckel said.

“So on the top-line dollar basis, we’re seeing strong growth; the category is struggling to maintain that core volume. From a consumer point, we’re seeing all that growth come from increased prices, not increased demand,” he said.



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“We’re seeing a slight uptick in frequency within the dairy set, and we’re seeing a very, very slight increase in the new buyers category,” he continued. “This is where the impetus is coming from – we’re seeing the retained buyers really driving the growth, through their increased spending.”

Overall, we’re seeing a slight decrease in net buyers due to inflationary pressure that has actually squeezed a few people out of the category, Wieseckel said.

Lactose-Free & Plant-Based Outpacing Organic Dairy Items

Lactose-free and plant-based dairy alternatives continue to show year-to-year growth, but organic demand has declined over the past two years, Wieseckel said.

All US regions are showing

strong year-over-year growth in the lactose-free dairy category, with the highest number of sales clustered along the Northeast Seaboard, where cheese overall is very developed, Wieseckel said.

The lactose-free dairy product segment remains larger than plant-based, especially with dairy products that are naturally-occurring lactose free.

For instance, Cabot advertises its natural aging process – which removes lactose from Cabot Cheddar – on its packaging, Wieseckel said.

“When we look at the majority of brands that have a claim of naturally lactose-free, Cabot is the clear leader here with an 80 percent share of sales within this segment,” he continued. “Lactose free” will be a trend to watch as

more manufacturers offer these items, and more retailers add them to their assortments.”

Switching over to plant-based for a regional view, we see a little different picture, Wieseckel said. In contrast to lactose-free sales, we’re seeing plant-based being a bit more spread out over the East and West coasts.

Within the top 10 brands for plant-based products, Daiya Foods, Inc. and Violife are segment leaders, research showed.

Hispanic Cheese Fastest Growing Style In Specialty Deli Segment

Deli cheese is showing continued growth over the past few years. Inflation-related price increases have contributed to this growth and trips to the store have decreased, but are currently hold-

ing steady at roughly 1.9 trips per week.

Deli cheese contains both fixed and random weight items, and specialty cheese is the largest deli cheese segment, Circana client insight consultant Emilee Sattler said.

Sales in the pre-sliced segment are seeing sizeable growth, as consumers shift service cheese sales to options of greater convenience that have expanded since deli counters were closed for longer periods during the pandemic.

Two of the top specialty cheese brands in the service segment are BelGioioso Cheese and Galbani Cheese. The top sellers at service in 2022 were Hispanic, Cheddar blends, Parmesan and Mozzarella.

Fresh Mozzarella and Hispanic style cheese have seen the strongest growth in the deli section.

Seasonality greatly affects deli specialty demand, with year-end holidays generating the highest increase in sales.

In the summer months, Feta and Fresh Mozzarella have higher dollar sales, while the Easter holidays are popular for Italian styles, Sattler said.

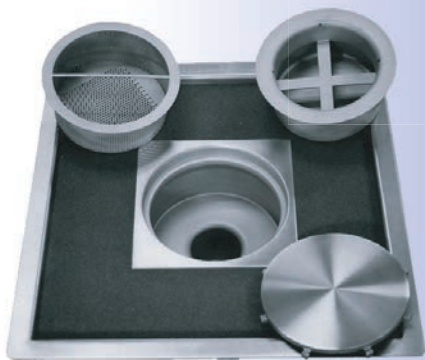
Cheese companies are introducing new flavors and applications “to really go after that cheese snacking occasion, and then taking advantage of some flavor extensions to go with vintage cheeses, looking to take their brands into different areas,”

—Joel Wieseckel, Circana

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In February, we see specialty cheese cross-purchased with seafood, and Mozzarella is indexing higher as more consumers are entertaining with homemade pizza and personally curated cheese boards, she continued.

Another cross-purchasing example shows how limes and pre-mixed cocktails are indexing higher this year, with Hispanic cheeses leading the specialty segment with a growth rate of 14 percent, Sattler said.

The Hispanic cheese segment includes both fixed- and random-weight items; the majority of Hispanic cheese sales are chunk and block deli items, followed by shreds – making home-cooked Hispanic dishes easier to prepare.

Roughly 13 percent of US households purchase Hispanic cheese.

On average, these households make nine grocery trips per year, and purchase 10 pounds of cheese per year. Queso Fresco accounts for 48 percent of total Hispanic cheese sales.

White House Starts Challenge To End Hunger, Build Healthy Communities

Washington—The Biden administration today announced the White House Challenge to End Hunger and Build Healthy Communities.

The Challenge is a nationwide call-to-action to stakeholders across all of society to make bold commitments to advance President Biden's goal to end hunger and reduce diet-related diseases by 2030, all while reducing disparities.

The Challenge builds on the \$8 billion package of private and public sector commitments that the administration announced as part of the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health last September, and complements the administration's work to implement the National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health.

Organizations — big or small, public or private — and communities are encouraged to participate by making bold and impactful commitments in one or more of the following areas across the five pillars of the National Strategy.

Pillar 1: Improve food access and affordability by supporting

school food programs; ensuring kids have access to nutritious meals in the summer; and reducing barriers to participation and involving community members in the design and implementation of federal assistance programs.

Food companies are encouraged to support student's health by developing foods that are more nutritious and affordable for school nutrition programs.

Pillar 2: Integrate nutrition and health by investing in health-related social needs, including conducting more screenings for food insecurity and offering nutrition services; and better educating health professionals about how to help their patients make healthy food choices and be more physically active.

Pillar 3: Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthier choices by creating environments that support healthier choices and bolstering local food procurement.

Retailers and other members of the food industry are encouraged to make the healthy choice the easy choice by marketing and

placing nutritious foods in easy to find areas, online and in stores.

Food manufacturers and retailers should consider evaluating how healthy their product portfolios are and setting benchmarks to offer more nutritious foods and beverages and increase the sales of them.

And investors are encouraged to consider how they can incorporate nutrition into Environmental, Social, and Governance investment standards.

Also, states, localities, and territories are encouraged to increase the amount of local foods they procure and serve in their buildings.

Pillar 4: Support physical activity for all by offering more opportunities to be physically active in communities and supporting comprehensive physical activity programs in schools.

Pillar 5: Enhance nutrition and food security research by filling nutrition research gaps to continue supporting the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and building the evidence-base to improve federal assistance programs, the conference concluded

Academic institutions, research foundations, and philanthropic groups are encouraged to invest in research on the diet and health of older adults, during pregnancy, and birth to 24 months; to invest in longitudinal studies on dietary exposures and interactions with health outcomes throughout life stages; and to better understand nutritional needs across underserved populations, including Native Americans, to advance health equity.

Everyone is welcome to participate in the Challenge, including the food industry (including manufacturers, distributors, retailers, grocers, restaurants, and food

delivery companies, and others), according to the White House.

The administration will work with the President's Council on Sports, Fitness, and Nutrition, co-chaired by Chef José Andrés and Elena Delle Donne, to help cultivate commitments, and will announce Challenge participants in the fall of 2023.

Several companies, non-profits, philanthropic groups, and local elected-officials are already stepping up, according to the White House.

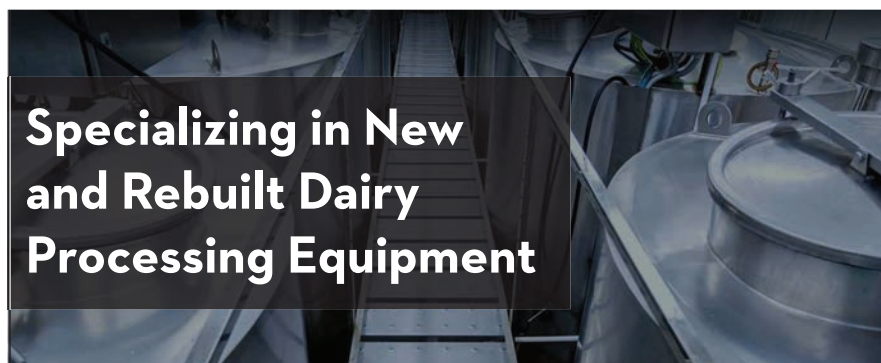
Food manufacturers and retailers should consider evaluating how healthy their product portfolios are and setting benchmarks to offer more nutritious foods and beverages and increase the sales of them.

For example, by 2025, DoorDash will make healthy choices easier by growing the availability of produce in its marketplace by partnering with local, regional and national grocers across the US and increasing the amount of healthy products available in DashMarts.

DoorDash will also help keep healthy options at the top of mind for consumers by promoting and highlighting healthy products on its platform such as through tags, filters, and more options.

Also, DoorDash will work with USDA to offer access to SNAP EBT grocery delivery in all 50 states, D.C., and Puerto Rico by 2025.

More information is available at [health.gov](https://www.health.gov).



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Farm Infrastructure Improvement, Precision Technology Grants Available From SDBII

Knoxville, TN—The Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative (SDBII) is now accepting applications for Farm Infrastructure Improvement and Precision Technology and Management Grants.

The grants are available to dairy producers in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Puerto Rico. The application deadline is June 2, 2023.

The purpose of awards under the Farm Infrastructure Improvement Grant program will be to support operational and management strategies that improve labor, production and marketing efficiencies to help increase sustainability and competitiveness of southeastern US dairies.

Requests for funds under the Farm Infrastructure Improvement Grant should relate to one of the following areas: improvements to existing facilities to reduce the impact of heat stress and seasonal milk production swings; investments in raw milk storage, cooling capacity, and/or transportation efficiency; modernization and improvements to milk harvest; improvements to feed and forage management and storage opportunities; improvements to animal housing and environments; water, waste, and manure management improvements; and investments to improve farm business structure.

A total of \$3.2 million is available under this grant program. The maximum award is \$100,000, and there is a 25 percent matching funds requirement.

The purpose of awards under the Precision Technology and Management Grant program will be to support the use of precision technologies and management strategies to make dairy operations more sustainable and competitive in the southeastern US.

Requests for funds under this grant should relate to one of the following areas: improve animal health, wellbeing, and/or performance; enhance labor efficiency; reduce energy costs or environmental impact (i.e., carbon footprint or GHG emission); or increase utilization of the farm's land base.

A total of \$2.13 million is available under this grant program. The maximum award is \$200,000, and there is a 25 percent matching funds requirement.

House Bills Would Regulate Food, Supplements Made With CBD

Washington—US Reps. Morgan Griffith (R-VA) and Angie Craig (D-MN) last Friday introduced two pieces of legislation aimed at creating pathways for the regulation of cannabidiol (CBD) products in food products and dietary supplements.

The 2018 farm bill removed hemp-derived CBD from the Controlled Substance Act, which legalized the production of hemp and hemp-derived CBD. The farm bill still retained the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authority to establish a regulatory framework for these products.

Since the passage of the 2018 farm bill, CBD sellers have proliferated, but FDA has failed to

set a regulatory roadmap for CBD products sold on the market, Griffith and Craig noted.

The CBD Product Safety and Standardization Act directs FDA to regulate CBD as the agency would for other food ingredients, setting requirements for quality and labeling, among other areas.

The Hemp and Hemp-Derived CBD Consumer Protection and Market Stabilization Act of 2023 would make hemp, cannabidiol derived from hemp, and other hemp-derived products lawful for use as a dietary supplement unless otherwise directed by the FDA.

“The Food and Drug Administration has dragged its feet in

properly regulating CBD and hemp-derived products on the market, creating confusion about its legal uses,” Griffith stated.

“In Minnesota we’ve seen firsthand that our local governments and small businesses need more guidance when it comes to CBD and hemp-derived products,” Craig said.

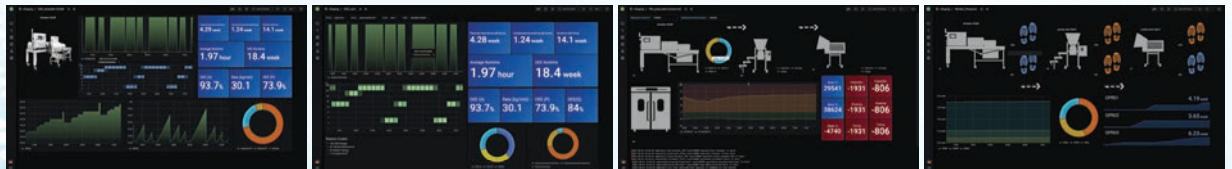
The bills are endorsed by, among others, the US Hemp Roundtable, Council for Responsible Nutrition, and American Herbal Products Association.

“The FDA has made it clear that legislative action by Congress is needed to solve its CBD regulatory problem and these two bi-partisan bills re-introduced by Reps. Griffith and Craig serve as the solution,” said Jonathan Miller, general counsel, US Hemp Roundtable.

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Plant-Based Alternatives Don't Match Dairy Products In Dental Health Area

Wageningen, Netherlands—Plant-based dairy alternatives do not match their dairy counterparts when it comes to maintaining and improving dental health, according to a study recently published in the journal *Nutrients*.

The study was authored by Bleirina Shkemi of the Food Quality and Design Group, Wageningen University & Research; and Thom Huppertz of FrieslandCampina.

The important relationship between dairy product consumption and dental health has been an important area of study for decades, and it has been established that dairy products provide protective effects, the study noted. This has been related to various aspects, e.g., the presence of high levels of calcium and phosphate in dairy products, the buffering capacity, the specific phosphorylated sequences in the main milk proteins, as well as the fact that lactose is the least cariogenic of all dietary fermentable carbohydrates.

It has also been suggested that lipids derived from dairy products may have a protective role, by creating a coating on enamel

surfaces, thereby reducing the demineralization of tooth enamel surfaces.

This combination of factors leads to the positive impact of the consumption of dairy products such as milk, cheese, and yogurt on dental health.

Several mechanisms by which cheese specifically may reduce cariogenicity have been suggested, i.e., the stimulation of salivary flow, and the subsequent buffering effect of salivary compounds, neutralizing plaque acids; and inhibition of plaque bacteria reducing bacterial load and consequently reducing acid production. Further, cheese can also reduce cariogenicity through the release of high amounts of calcium and inorganic phosphate in dental plaque, which leads to a reduction in demineralization and an enhancement in remineralization.

However, such beneficial effects for plant-based dairy alternatives may not be apparent due to differences in the composition of the products as well as differences in the specific components, e.g. in a type of protein or carbohydrate, according to the study.

Increased consumption of fermentable carbohydrates, mainly in the form of sugars found in foods and drinks, is “significantly associated with an increased risk of dental caries.”

When considering the effects of food products and their constituents on dental health, they are often categorized in terms of cariogenicity. Cariogenic refers to any substance that contributes to the development of caries and non-cariogenic applies to agents that do not promote caries.

The term cariostatic applies to substances that prevent or reduce the incidence of dental caries, whereas acidogenicity refers to the capacity to quickly catabolize simple carbohydrates such as sucrose, lactose, glucose, producing organic acids as the main final product when these sugars are in excess, the study explained.

The Role Of Specific Constituents

When considering products in relation to nutrition and health, it is important to understand the role of specific constituents, and how they affect dental health for dairy products and plant-based alternatives. The study looked at the most important constituent groups in this respect:

Carbohydrates: In terms of cariogenicity, sucrose is considered the most cariogenic, followed by glucose, maltose, and fructose. By contrast, lactose has been shown to be less acidogenic than other sugars and less cariogenic. Plant-based products contain sucrose, glucose, and maltose as the major types of carbohydrates, all of which are more cariogenic than lactose.

Minerals: In terms of the relationship between dietary mineral intake and dental health, dietary calcium and phosphorus, which are also the basic elements of hard dental tissues, have generated considerable interest. Some plant-based drinks contain similar calcium and phosphate levels as bovine milk, through fortification, but many products are notably lower in calcium content.

However, some research has found that, even though the total calcium content was quite similar, the levels of soluble calcium in soy-based drinks were lower than in bovine milk beverages, which is likely due to the fact that calcium in plant-based drinks is in the form of added calcium phosphate or calcium carbonate, which are only sparingly soluble in water, the study said. Moreover, it has been shown that calcium in cheese or calcium and phosphates in milk and other dairy products help to restore minerals that the teeth may have lost due to other foods, thereby helping to rebuild tooth enamel.

Proteins: Various mechanisms have been suggested regarding the

anticaries action of casein, such as adsorption to the enamel, an increase of plaque pH by buffering acids, and also the presence of casein phosphopeptides, which have been shown to stabilize calcium phosphate in solution and to increase the level of calcium phosphate in dental plaque.

Plant-based drinks, with the exception of soy drinks, are notably lower in total protein content compared to bovine milk, the study pointed out. However, to date, little is known about plant proteins and their impact on dental health.

Other milk components such as lactoferrin, lysozyme, and lactoperoxidase, may contribute to milk anti-cariogenicity, due to their antibacterial effect, the study stated. Lactoferrin is often used as an ingredient in many oral care products, including toothpaste.

Effects Of The Food Matrix

While it's clear that the components in milk and dairy products have unique properties when it comes to dental health, it is also important to also look at the interactions of individual components with the product, and how these affect overall outcomes, the study noted.

For example, when it comes to glycemic responses of dairy products or dairy-based alternatives, it is not only the concentration and type of carbohydrate that is important but also all other macronutrients, as well as the structural organization of the macronutrients, which is often governed by micronutrients such as calcium and other salts. It is the overall structural organization of the constituents of the product that governs the rate of release of carbohydrates from the stomach to the intestine, and therefore also the rate of absorption into the bloodstream and associated glycemic responses.

When it comes to dental health, similar matrix effects are apparent, the study noted. In milk, for instance, it is the combination of carbohydrates with limited cariogenicity, i.e., lactose, that is present in a product of neutral pH and whose serum phase is saturated with respect to calcium phosphate that results in an overall favorable response in relation to dental health. Such effects are further supported by the protein phase of milk, which contains the phosphopeptides embedded in the casein sequences as well as some proteins with antimicrobial activity, e.g., lactoferrin and lysozyme, in relation to oral microbiota.

While “there will certainly be a place for plant-based products positioned as dairy alternatives in future diets, they may not readily mimic the properties of milk and dairy products when it comes to dental health,” the study said.

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US Food, Ag Sector Contributed Over \$8.6 Trillion To US Economy In 2022

Washington—The US food and agriculture industries and their suppliers contribute over \$8.6 trillion to the US economy, nearly one-fifth of total national output, according to the seventh annual *Feeding the Economy* report, which was released Tuesday by 25 food and agriculture organizations.

Providing data on jobs, wages, and economic output, this farm-to-fork analysis illustrates the food and agriculture sector's impact on economic activity. The data also underscores this sector's resilience and reliability amid unprecedented global and domestic crises, including the commodity shock following the war in Ukraine and continued supply chain disruptions.

This year's report shows the US food and agriculture sector directly supports nearly 23 million jobs, provides \$927 billion in wages, and is particularly vital to rural communities across the US.

The report reveals that the manufacturing of ag products accounts for nearly one-fifth of total manufacturing US jobs. Overall, more than 46 million jobs are supported across the food and agriculture supply chain, increasing nearly 2 percent since the 2019 report despite the economic challenges and disruptions associated with the global pandemic.

Key findings include:

- Total jobs: 46,283,917 (up 1.5 percent since the 2019 report).
- Total wages: \$2.61 trillion (up 26.2 percent since 2019).
- Total taxes: \$947.93 billion (up 3.8 percent since 2019).
- Exports: \$202.2 billion (up 24.4 percent since the 2019 report)
- Total food and ag industry economic impact: \$8.6 trillion (up 21.8 percent since the 2019 report).

Organizations that sponsored the report include the International Dairy Foods Association, National Milk Producers Federation, US Dairy Export Council, American Bakers Association, American Beverage Association, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Frozen Food Institute, American Soybean Association, Association of Equipment Manufacturers, Corn Refiners Association, CropLife America, The Fertilizer Institute, FMI – The Food Industry Association, Global Cold Chain Alliance, Institute of Shortening and Edible Oils, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, National Grain and Feed Association, National Grocers Association, National Oilseed Processors Association, National Pork Producers Council, North American Meat Institute, Peanut and Tree Nut Processors Asso-

ciation, SNAC International, The Sugar Association, and US Grains Council.

"America's dairy manufacturing and marketing industry supports more than 3.3 million jobs that generate \$41.6 billion in direct wages and \$753 billion in overall economic impact. From farms to manufacturing facilities to retail stores, US dairy food makers are providing affordable, sustainable nutrition to consumers everywhere while supporting good-paying jobs and giving back to our communities," commented Michael Dykes, IFA's president and CEO.

"The *Feeding the Economy* report spotlights the crucial role

that dairy and other agricultural exports plays in the US economy," said Jim Mulhern, NMPF's president and CEO. "Despite headwinds — including supply chain challenges and a growing competitive tariff disadvantage without US engagement in comprehensive trade negotiations.

"This growth delivers a real financial impact for farmers and workers throughout the supply chain, building a resilient industry and strengthening rural communities," Mulhern added.

"To best capitalize on that momentum and the benefits that exports deliver to US dairy farmers, workers and companies, we need a robust approach to trade policy that opens new markets and insists on our trading partners' compliance with their obligations."

"Despite the many challenges of the last few years — from COVID to supply chain disruptions to inflation — US dairy exports continued to grow, to well over \$9 billion in value in 2022," said Krysta Harden, USDEC's president and CEO. "More than just a record number, this report highlights how these exports and the agricultural industry at large support thousands of American dairy farmers and workers and supplies the world with nutritious and sustainable products when it's needed the most."

"American agriculture is really the foundation of our lives and our economy. This study reveals the numbers, and maybe some of the spirit, of this one indispensable sector," said Roger Cryan, chief economist, American Farm Bureau Federation.

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EU Proposal Targets Environmental Product Claims, Greenwashing

Brussels, Belgium—The European Commission on Wednesday proposed common criteria against greenwashing and misleading environmental claims.

A 2020 Commission study highlighted that 53.3 percent of examined environmental claims in the European Union (EU) were found to be vague, misleading or unfounded and 40 percent were unsubstantiated.

The absence of common rules for companies making voluntary green claims leads to “greenwashing” and creates an uneven playing field in the EU’s market, to the disadvantage of genuinely sustainable companies, according to the Commission.

Under the new proposal, when companies choose to make a “green claim” about their products or services, they will have to respect minimum norms on how they substantiate these claims and how they communicate them.

The proposal targets explicit claims, such as, for example: “T-shirt made of recycled plastic bottles”, “packaging made of 30% recycled plastic” or “ocean friendly sunscreen”.

It also aims to tackle the proliferation of labels as well as new public and private environmental labels. It covers all voluntary claims about the environmental impacts, aspects or performance of a product, service or the trader itself.

However, the proposal excludes claims that are covered by existing European Union rules, such as the EU Ecolabel or organic food logo, because the current laws already ensure that these regulated claims are reliable.

Claims which will be covered by upcoming European Union regulations will be excluded for the same reason.

Before companies communicate any of the covered types of “green claims” to consumers, such claims will need to be independently verified and proven with scientific evidence. As part of the scientific analysis, companies will identify the environmental impacts that are actually relevant to their product, as well as identifying any possible trade-offs, to give a full and accurate picture.

Several rules will make sure that claims are communicated clearly. For example, claims or labels that use aggregate scoring of the product’s overall environmental impact, will no longer be permitted, unless set in EU rules. If products or organizations are compared with others, such comparisons should be based on equivalent information and data.

The proposal will also regulate environmental labels. There are currently at least 230 different labels and there is evidence that this leads to consumer confusion and distrust.

To control the proliferation of such labels, new public labeling schemes will not be allowed, unless developed at European Union level, and any new private schemes will need to show higher environmental ambition than existing ones and get a pre-approval to be allowed. There are detailed rules about environmental labels in general: they must also be reliable, transparent, independently verified, and regularly reviewed.

The European consumer organization BEUC welcomed the consumer package released Wednesday as an important step towards greener and more sustainable consumption in the European Union.

“In a jungle of unregulated green claims, how can consumers

possibly know which products are truly sustainable? The Commission is raising their game to fight greenwashing, putting an end to the wild west of unsubstantiated green claims,” said Monique Goyens, BEUC director general.

“Preventing the problem instead of correcting it once the harm is done is an innovative move which will benefit consumers, who want to act sustainably and need reliable information to do so.

“Yet a future EU green claims law will only be as good as its enforcement,” Goyens continued. “It is great that the Commission has heard the message.

Authorities will have to heavily fine companies to clean up the market from misleading green claims and labels once and for all.”

This new proposal complements a March 2022 proposal on “empowering consumers for the green transition” by providing more specific rules on environmental claims, in addition to a general prohibition of misleading advertising, the Commission said.

Wednesday’s proposal makes good on a Commission commitment as part of the European Green Deal.

It is the third package of proposals on circular economy, together with the proposal on common rules promoting the repair of goods.

The first and second circular economy packages were adopted in March and November 2022. The first package included, among other things, a proposed consumer law directive on empowering consumers in the green transition. The second package included proposals for packaging and packaging waste regulation, the communication on biodegradable, biobased and compostable plastics and a proposed EU Certification for Carbon Removals Regulation.

Super Premium Cold Brew Ice Cream New From Reborn Coffee

Brea, CA—A new line of Super Premium Cold Brew Ice Cream from specialty coffee retailer Reborn Coffee, Inc. is now available.

Reborn Ice Cream will be promoted throughout existing California-based coffee shops and mall kiosks with samplings and in-store promotions.

The ice cream is low churned for more product and less air, with a high content of 14 percent butterfat.

Reborn Cold Brew Ice Cream offers four debut flavors, each containing the company’s signature cold brew coffee: Cold Brew, Mocha Rum, Bourbon Vanilla and Coconut Cream.

Bourbon Vanilla flavors for adults are infused with 0.5 percent alcohol, and the Coconut Cream is available as a non-dairy alternative.

“Super-Premium cold brew ice cream is a natural extension of our brand, mission and innovative specialty roasted coffee, and we are incredibly excited to begin offering these initial flavors to customers,” said Reborn CEO Jay Kim.

“Our customers, including young urban professionals with high disposal incomes and brand-conscious college students, are ideal demographics to target with luxurious and Super-Premium ice creams with flavors that appeal to their coffee-loving palettes,” Kim said.

The company’s first production test runs have focused on fine-tuning the product and procedures on an industrial scale in preparation for a major roll out to buyers and consumers in the coming months.

Reborn is also working with food brokers to expand into major upscale supermarkets beginning in Southern California to expand brand recognition.

In addition to the ice cream line, Reborn is also developing other frozen dessert alternatives under the brand such as strawberry matcha, acai and energy bowls.

For more information, visit www.reborncoffee.com.





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Tillamook To Open Illinois Ice Cream Manufacturing Plant In Late 2024

Tillamook, OR—Tillamook County Creamery Association (TCCA) on Tuesday announced plans to open an ice cream manufacturing facility in Decatur, IL, in late 2024.

The Decatur facility will be TCCA's first owned and operated manufacturing facility outside of Oregon and will be TCCA's only facility solely dedicated to ice cream production.

TCCA also owns and operates two manufacturing facilities in Oregon, one in Tillamook and the other in Boardman, that are primarily dedicated to cheese production. The Decatur ice cream plant will manufacture Tillamook family-size (48-ounce) ice cream as well as Tillamook foodservice ice cream (three-gallon).

The existing manufacturing operations will continue to operate with no plans to reduce production or the expanding employee base at either location.

The Decatur plant was previously owned by Prairie Farms Dairy, which also used the location for ice cream production until closing the facility in early 2022.

TCCA plans to spend the next 18 to 24 months updating the plant to bring it up to the cooperative's manufacturing quality standards,

with a goal of October 2024 for the first full ice cream production run. The new plant is expected to create approximately 45 new jobs in the Decatur community.

"Consumer demand for Tillamook Ice Cream has grown exponentially over the past several years," said Mike Bever, executive vice president of operations, TCCA. "This new facility is an investment in our continued national expansion plans.

"We are proud to be able to expand our manufacturing footprint even further as another step toward bringing Tillamook to more fans around the country," Bever added.

Tillamook's dairy products are currently available in all 50 states.

"Opening this Illinois manufacturing location will enable us to make more of our ice cream closer to the eastern US, where demand for our ice cream is growing fast. In the last year, we've added 1.6 million households and grown ice cream sales nearly 60 percent in the eastern US," Bever continued.

"Ultimately our continued growth is a 'win' for who and what matters most to us," Bever added. "It allows us to continue to generate meaningful profits for our farmer-owners, create growth and well-being opportunities for

our 900-plus employees and to give back to the communities where we live and work. Now we get to welcome Decatur into that valued group."

"Tillamook's plans to operate here are very exciting for our community and we are proud that another company has chosen Decatur for their first Midwest facility," said Decatur Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe. "This project also advances Neighborhood Revitalization, as the now-empty building along the MLK corridor will again be a bustling part of our economy as soon as next year."

"Tillamook is a fantastic company that will fit in perfectly here," said Nicole Bateman, president of the Economic Development Corporation of Decatur-Macon County. "It's no surprise they selected Decatur for expansion due to our strong business climate, affordable utilities and excellent location with access to a huge base of new customers in the Midwest."

Founded in 1909 as a farmer-owned cooperative, TCCA produces internationally recognized, award-winning cheese as well as ice cream, butter, cream cheese spreads, yogurt, and sour cream. TCCA employs more than 900 people throughout the state of Oregon.

For more information about TCCA, visit www.tillamook.com.

Colorado Dairy Farm Offering Customers A Chance To Invest In Its Business

Denver, CO—Mocafarm Dairy Inc., a farmstead dairy operation, recently announced that its customers can now invest in the company and receive dividends from their investment while supporting the company.

Mocafarm Dairy said it is committed to using sustainable farming practices and investing in the latest milk production and processing technologies to ensure that its dairy products are of the highest quality. The company's product line includes a variety of raw milk cheeses, various raw fluid milk products, cream, butter, yogurt, sour cream and ghee.

By investing in Mocafarm Dairy, customers can be a part of the company's mission to promote sustainable agriculture and protect the environment while also receiving dividends from their investments, the company said.

"We are thrilled to offer our customers the opportunity to invest in our company and share in our success," commented John Smith, CEO of Mocafarm Dairy.

More information about investing in the company is available on the company's website, at www.mocafarm.com.

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CMAB Issues Call For Contestants In Fifth Real California Pizza Contest

Napa, CA—Professional chefs and culinary students throughout the US are invited to enter the fifth annual Real California Pizza Contest hosted by the California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB).

The contest will award prizes up to \$30,000 for the most innovative uses of cow's milk cheeses from California during a bake-off event here Aug. 2.

Chefs can submit recipes in three categories: Cal-Mex, the REAL Californian and Plant-Forward. Cal-Mex recipes incorporate toppings that combine flavors from California and Mexican cuisines and feature Hispanic-style cheeses from California.

The REAL Californian pizza category is designed to highlight California dairy products and toppings, and the Plant-Forward category emphasizes the flavor combinations of fruits, vegetables and California cheeses.

This year's simplified entry form includes pizza name, photograph, and a short description detailing the recipe concept and use of Real California cheese and dairy. Chefs can choose from more than 250 varieties and styles of cheese that carry the Real California Milk seal. The deadline for submissions is May 21.

All entries will be evaluated by an internal judging team with the

top four recipes in each category selected as finalists.

These 12 finalists will receive an all-expense paid trip to compete at a live bake-off event here Wednesday, Aug. 2 at the Culinary Institute of America-Copia.

Bakeoff finalists will be judged by a panel of award-winning pizza chefs.

Winners of the Cal-Mex, REAL Californian and Plant-Forward categories will each receive \$5,000. The best overall pizza recipe creator, as selected by the judging panel, will receive an additional \$10,000 grand prize award. All finalists who are not category winners will receive \$500 each.

For full contest requirements, recipe submission, and entry forms, visit www.realcalifornia-milk.com/foodservice.

Majority Of Consumers Familiar With Precision Fermentation View It Favorably

Bellevue, WA—A recent survey of more than 2,500 US adults found that 77 percent of those familiar with precision fermentation say they are likely to purchase products made with its ingredients.

The Hartman Group, a leader in food and beverage research and consultation, in partnership with precision fermentation leaders Perfect Day and Cargill, recently released a white paper that measures current consumer attitudes towards and perceptions of food and technology, and how these inform purchase intent and interest in the precision fermentation industry.

Survey results indicated that a majority of consumers have favorable opinions about the benefits that science and technology can have on the food system. Among these, younger consumers expressed the most enthusiasm for new technologies, such as precision fermentation, and want to support companies that align with their own values around the environment and animal welfare.

"While the use of precision fermentation to create ingredients has been around for decades, the ways in which fermentation is now being used are generating a lot of the recent buzz," commented Mark Fahlin, business development manager for Cargill.

"For many decades, fermentation has been used to make ingredients, from vitamin C to dairy cultures to citric acid, but it's not widely known," Fahlin continued. "However, I think that's about to change, and consumers are going to start learning more about all that these ingredients can do."

"We are excited to partner with The Hartman Group on this research to help us identify where consumers stand in relation to transformative food technologies like precision fermentation. It illuminates how companies like ours can meet them where they are with education and tasting opportunities," said Allison Fowler, CMO of Perfect Day. "The data validates that most Americans share our mission to create a kinder and greener future and that consumers are open to learning more about the positive impacts this will have on the environment."

"This research revealed an acceleration of the trends that we've been following in the food industry," said Laurie Demeritt, chief executive officer of The Hartman Group.

To download the white paper, visit www.hartman-group.com.

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Precision Fermentation Alliance Established To Champion Industry

Berkeley, CA—Nine precision fermentation leaders from around the world recently announced that they have joined forces to establish the Precision Fermentation Alliance, a new trade organization created to champion precision fermentation as a trusted solution for a more resilient and sustainable food system.

According to the Alliance, precision fermentation creates nature-identical, sustainable versions of ingredients and products consumers love by combining the natural ability of microorganisms to turn sugars into proteins and other complex organic molecules with modern biology.

Founding members of the Precision Fermentation Alliance include Perfect Day, Remilk, New Culture, Change Foods, Imagindairy, The EVERY Co., Helaina, Motif FoodWorks, and Onego Bio.

The Precision Fermentation Alliance founding members have aligned on the following goals:

- Promote understanding of precision fermentation technology. Establish global transparency around ingredients and foods made with precision fermentation to build trust and familiarity.

- Educate and engage key stakeholders throughout the food industry value chain to establish best practices regarding regulatory, manufacturing, food safety, and communications standards and compliance.

- Develop market access and the ability to operate and market products effectively by engaging with regulators. Unlock public funding and public-private partnerships to accelerate industry growth.

The Precision Fermentation Alliance will also focus on ensuring that science-based decision making and informed public policy are used in the regulation of precision fermentation products and technology that are used in food. The Alliance will also provide a forum to discuss global issues relevant to precision fermentation industry.

“There is a direct line between food production, climate, socio-economic opportunities, and equity. How we make our food is one of the foundational ways to change the world around us, and just the beginning of the vision for this group,” commented Nicki Briggs, vice president of corporate communications, Perfect Day, and chair, Precision Fermentation Alliance.

“This alliance codifies what we’ve always believed: a kinder, greener tomorrow is possible through collaboration,” Briggs

continued. “This ecosystem of mission-aligned leaders stands to exponentially accelerate what any one member could do alone.”

“Most of us have consumed foods that contain ingredients made using precision fermentation for decades, such as vitamins, enzymes and natural flavors, without much fanfare,” said Irina Gerry, chief marketing officer, Change Foods and vice chair, Precision Fermentation Alliance.

Several of the Alliance’s members are focusing at least in part on dairy ingredients. Perfect Day’s flagship product, what is described as animal-free milk protein, can now be found in ice creams,

cream cheese, baked goods and sports nutrition products in the US, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

New Culture makes animal-free dairy products that it says stretch, melt, and taste like the real deal. New Culture is slated to begin public tastings of its animal-free Mozzarella this year and then launch in pizzerias in early 2024.

Remilk said its animal-free protein is identical to cow-derived whey protein but produced without a single animal cell via precision fermentation. The company announced recently it has received both regulatory approval from the Singapore Food Authority (SFA) and a “no questions letter” from the US FDA. That letter indicates FDA accepted an expert panel’s unanimous conclusion that Remilk’s animal-free

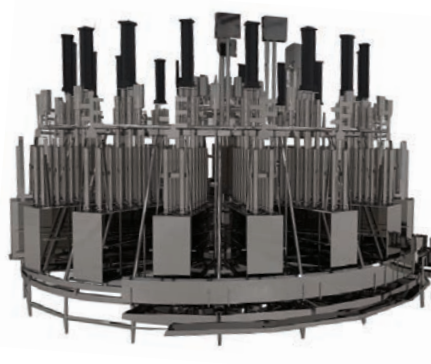
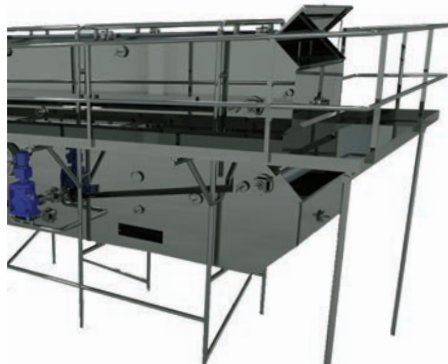
whey protein can be safely used in food products under its GRAS (Generally Recognized as Safe) standards, according to Remilk.

Change Foods is creating animal-free dairy foods by leveraging precision fermentation technology, starting with cheese. The company recently signed an agreement with KEZAD Group to design a dedicated commercial manufacturing plant for production of its animal-free dairy in Abu Dhabi.

Imagindairy said its proprietary computational technology has been developed by a group of researchers to increase the expression of milk proteins in microflora.

For more information about the Precision Fermentation Alliance, visit www.pfalliance.org.

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Evidence Of Cheesemaking Using Milk From Multiple Animals Found In Neolithic

York, England—A new study has found evidence of cheesemaking, using milk from multiple animals, in Late Neolithic Poland.

The research suggests that early farmers reduced the lactose content in milk by making it into cheese or other dairy products like yogurt, and used dairy products from a number of different animals, such as cows, sheep or goats.

Lactose intolerance was a common condition in almost everyone in Europe during the Neolithic and until the Late Bronze Age when the genetic mutation became widespread, enabling adults to produce lactase, the enzyme which breaks down lactose in the body, researchers explained.

Researchers looked at the practice of dairy processing in the Late Neolithic (defined as approximately 7000 to 5000 BC), identifying high curd-content residues in pottery indicating cheesemaking, and revealing that multiple dairy species were utilized.

“These results contribute significantly to our understanding of the use of dairy products by some of the earliest farmers of Central Europe,” said Dr. Harry Robson, from the Department of Archaeology at the University of York.

“Whilst previous research has shown that dairy products were

widely available in some European regions during this period, here, for the first time, we have clear evidence for a diversified dairy herd, including cattle, sheep and goats, from the analysis of ceramics,” Robson added.

The scientists and archaeologists from the Universities of York, Cambridge, Torun and Kraków used a multi-stranded proteomic and lipid-analysis approach to investigate ceramics and deposits on their surface, from the site of Sławecinek in central Poland.

The new development provides evidence that cheesemaking (and other curd-enriching dairy processing) can be directly detected by scrutinizing the proportion of curd proteins, by comparing proteomic data.

The results are also said to be the first of their kind in Europe.

Despite widespread lactose intolerance in the period, there is evidence of dairy being consumed during the Neolithic, such as animal bones with kill patterns expected for dairy herds, dairy lipids in ceramic vessels, and dairy proteins in ancient dental calculus or plaque.

“The proteomic results showed that the ancient residues closely resembled both the modern cheesemaking residues and cheese

itself and not whole milk,” said lead author, Miranda Evans, PhD student at Cambridge’s Department of Archaeology. “This reveals that the people of Sławecinek practiced cheesemaking or another form of curd-enriching dairy processing.”

Evidence of multiple species used for cheesemaking was backed up by the presence of both cow and sheep or goat bones on the site.

“This study highlights how complementary lipid and proteomic analyses are, particularly in understanding the use of the ceramic vessel over time,” commented Dr. Jasmine Lundy from the Department of Archaeology. “From this, for example, we could see that not only did some techniques waterproof or seal the ceramics but also what foods were being produced in them.”

The analysis of lipids extracted from ancient pottery has been instrumental in providing direct evidence for dairying in the archaeological record. Previous research has revealed the association between dairy fats and ceramic vessels in Southern Europe and the Near East, sub-Saharan Africa and Northern Europe.

Some researchers have argued that the presence of dairy lipid residues present in ceramic sieves demonstrates their specialized use in cheese production. Differences in fatty acid isotope values have

been reported between fermented and unfermented dairy products, although these are more likely explained by variation in modern farming practices, including corn silage in animal feed, the new study explained.

Currently, there are no reliable molecular or isotopic criteria to distinguish lipid residues derived from raw milk from those derived from fermented dairy products such as cheese, or yogurt or kefir.

The analysis of milk proteins has also emerged as a powerful tool for understanding ancient dairying and dairy consumption, with ceramic vessels and their residues, and ancient dental calculus often targeted.

Previously, it has been proposed that the earliest dairy processing in the Near East was linked to cattle herding, based on correspondence between faunal and lipid data. In this study, researchers showed that this does not seem to be true for the Northern European, Neolithic, nor previously at Catalhoyuk on the Anatolian plain, where, in both cases, dairy products from multiple taxa were processed, sometimes in the same vessel.

Proteomic analysis of dental calculus also supports the exploitation of multiple taxa for dairy during the Neolithic, rather than a single species, the study noted.

This study was published in the *Royal Society Open Science*.



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DFA Directed 65.4 Billion Pounds Of Milk From Members, Others In 2022

Kansas City KS—In 2022, Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) directed 65.4 billion pounds of milk for both its farmer-owners and others through the cooperative’s consolidated businesses, which represents approximately 29 percent of total US milk production, DFA reported at its annual meeting here this week.

DFA reported a net income of \$107.9 million for 2022. DFA’s net sales totaled \$24.5 billion for 2022, compared to \$19.3 billion in 2021, an increase of \$5.2 billion or 26.8 percent. The increase is a result of higher US milk prices and higher overall product prices.

The average price paid to DFA farmer-owners was \$25.53 per hundredweight in 2022, compared to \$18.37 in 2021.

“Like so many industries, this has been a challenging year for dairy with labor shortages, global supply chain disruptions, record-level energy costs and inflation. Yet through the challenges, we focused on driving performance and greater efficiencies across the enterprise to bring short- and long-term value to our farmer-owners,” commented Dennis Rodenbaugh, DFA’s president and chief executive officer.

“From driving milk marketing efficiencies, expanding member services, enhancing our farmer-owners’ milk markets through new product innovations, investing in food and beverage manufacturing assets and growing our global presence, we are and will always be dedicated to working alongside our farmer-owners to make choices and investments that bring them value and ensure their right to farm for generations to come,” Rodenbaugh added.

DFA continued to expand its commercial investments in 2022. The cooperative acquired two extended shelf-life (ESL) beverage processing facilities, located in Richmond, IN, and Pacific, MO, from SmithFoods. The facilities contribute to a broader strategic initiative to optimize the DFA beverage network in the shelf-stable space.

Also, to further accelerate the development of DFA’s ingredients business in the Middle East and North African markets, DFA invested in a joint venture with Mana Agro, based in Dubai, as a sales and marketing company of dairy ingredients in the region.

DFA’s farmer-owners and employees continued the co-op’s commitment to drive forward its environmental, social and governance efforts through on-farm sustainability initiatives, continuing the “DFA Nerd Herd” consumer educational campaign around

sustainable farming practices and an ongoing commitment to cultivate an inclusive workplace that values and promotes diversity of thought, perspectives, life experiences, backgrounds and cultures.

In the fall of 2022, DFA was also selected to receive a Climate-Smart Commodities grant from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to pilot projects to scale methane emissions reductions and increase soil carbon sequestration on US dairy farms, as well as develop and market climate-smart dairy products.

Under that project, DFA will use its cooperative business model to ensure that the collective financial benefits are captured at the

farm, creating an opportunity to establish a self-sustaining circular economy model benefiting US agriculture.

Finally, DFA’s commercial operations continued their growth and success in 2022, the co-op reported. A few highlights included:

—DFA’s Plugrá® Premium Butter brand launched a new, spreadable butter containing olive oil and sea salt. The new butter is available in a convenient, table-friendly tub and is perfect for those who want a softer butter for spreading, the co-op said.

—DFA’s Ingredient Solutions plant in Zumbrota, MN, celebrated a significant expansion with a new specialty dryer, which allows continued focus domestically and across global markets on growing the taste and flavor

application segments that are used as flavoring ingredients in snacks, beverages and prepared foods.

—DFA introduced several limited-edition ice cream flavors over the summer, including Kemps® Orange Dream and Cotton Candy flavors, Mayfield Dairy Farms® Cherry Chocolate Chip and Banana Pudding flavors and Friendly’s® Unicorn Power, a pink, fruity ice cream with a blue, sour raspberry swirl, marshmallow ribbon and glittery candy pieces.

—DFA’s Ingredient Solutions facility in Fallon, NV, continued to focus on innovation in the product, packaging and promotion of fluid milk by expanding its milk powder capabilities to meet customer application needs, particularly in the beverage space in existing and emerging global markets.



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EU Food Industry Organization Seeks Investments To Ensure Green Growth

Brussels, Belgium—The European Union (EU) has recently announced several initiatives, including the Green Deal Industrial Plan, to enhance its competitiveness and resilience in the face of challenges such as climate change, geopolitical instability, energy prices, supply chain disruptions, labor shortages, and an innovation gap.

But FoodDrinkEurope, the organization for the European food and drink industry, is concerned that the agri-food sector has been ignored in the EU's latest plans, despite its crucial role in the EU economy and its potential to contribute to the objectives of the European Green Deal.

That's why FoodDrinkEurope has written to several top EU officials, urging them to establish an EU Food Investment and Resilience Plan that would ensure Europe's long-term food security and international competitiveness while reducing carbon emissions to net zero.

Currently, the EU Farm to Fork Strategy is not properly resourced or equipped to deal with today's market realities and future pressures, FoodDrinkEurope's letter noted. Funding instruments, such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the EU Recovery Fund, are insufficient to scale-up and de-risk the transition to more sustainable agricultural practices while safeguarding farmers' incomes and to provide fundamental conditions to move to truly circular, sustainable food systems.

"Consequently, the EU agri-food sector is suffering from an

investment deficit which harms its competitiveness and hinders innovation to accelerate the sustainability transition," the letter stated. "The private sector is willing to play its part, but cannot progress sufficiently without further public support. Success will only be possible with enabling conditions that allow businesses along the food value chain to be real solution providers at scale."

An EU Food Investment and Resilience Plan must put competitiveness and resilience of the agri-food sector central, according to the letter, by:

Stimulating public-private investment to facilitate the transition to sustainable food systems. The letter noted that the US Inflation Reduction Act foresees a \$20 billion investment in agricultural conservation programs that offer substantial opportunities to tackle climate change, and provide huge down payments to bolster regenerative agriculture and soil health as tools for combatting the climate crisis.

In order to create competitive carbon markets in agri-food in the EU, it is estimated that the transition to regenerative agricultural practices would require an injection of roughly 8 billion euros of new money on average per year in the EU.

Another example is food and drink packaging circularity, where the EU has to close an investment gap of at least 6.7 billion euros to meet its target of reaching 10 million tons of plastic recyclates in products on the EU market by 2025, according to a new study from the European Investment

Bank. Priority access for the food and drink sector is needed to ensure food grade recycles and full food and drink circularity instead of downcycling.

Encouraging innovations that will give farmers and food operators confidence to invest in cutting-edge technology. Societally beneficial new genomic and breeding techniques, novel foods, chemical recycling, new nutritious product development and digital solutions are essential to cut emissions, protect nature and produce quality food products, and the agri-food sector needs them now.

Unlocking new trade opportunities through an ambitious EU trade agenda to promote European agri-food products. Rules-based international trade and the EU's network of trade agreements provide the EU agri-food sector with significant opportunities to internationalize and diversify, as well as the necessary legal certainty and predictability to take effective trade and investment decisions.

A plan to promote globally the excellence of the EU's agri-food production should be developed, similar to agri-food promotion by other regions in the world.

Integrating a "Farm to Fork" approach into the governance of the European Commission. A directorate for food, or similar, which takes an integrated "Farm to Fork" approach, should resolve the scattering of food-related policies across various Commission directorates, which is leading to policy inconsistency.

"We cannot afford to let the food sector wither on the vine. It's time for the EU to take bold action and invest in the future of Europe's food before it's too late," commented Dirk Jacobs, FoodDrinkEurope's director general.

Unilever Teams With Reese's For Frozen Novelty Line

Englewood Cliffs, NJ—A new line of ice cream novelties featuring the union of chocolate and peanut butter is hitting frozen dessert cases across the US.

Major US retailers have started carrying the latest collaboration between Unilever Ice Cream North America and Hershey, which includes seven frozen treat varieties.

New products include **Reese's Peanut Butter Sandwich** features a peanut butter frozen dairy dessert filling between two chocolate wafers; **Reese's Peanut Butter Light Ice Cream** with chunks of Reese's Peanut Butter Cups and a peanut butter swirl; **Reese's Chocolate Frozen Dairy Dessert** features a chocolate base with chunks of Reese's Peanut Butter Cups and peanut butter swirl; **Reese's Mini Pieces Light Ice Cream** with vanilla light ice cream mixed with Reese's mini pieces candy.

Novelties in the line include **Reese's Peanut Butter Frozen Dairy Dessert Bar** is a peanut butter frozen dairy dessert blended with Reese's peanut butter sauce and covered in a chocolate coating and cake crumbs; **Reese's Peanut Butter & Chocolate Cones** include a peanut butter frozen dairy dessert base and wafer cone drizzled with a chocolate flavored coating; **Reese's Chocolate Cones** include a chocolate frozen dairy dessert base paired with a peanut butter swirl, wafer cone and chocolate drizzle; and **Reese's Peanut Butter Frozen Dessert Cup** – a frozen take on the iconic Reese's Peanut Butter Cup.

Partnering with Reese's to launch a new line of frozen treats that have the same swirls of peanut butter, chocolate drizzles and chunks found in America's favorite candy is something worth screaming about, said Russel Lilly, president, Unilever Ice Cream North America.


"We're excited to be bringing more Reese's frozen treats to our fans than ever before – giving them exactly the kind of sweet treat they've been looking for," Lilly said.


"At Reese's, we're always inventing new ways for fans to enjoy our iconic combination of chocolate and peanut butter," said Ian Norton, senior director, Reese's brand.

The new line is the latest addition to Unilever Ice Cream's portfolio and partnership with The Hershey Company.



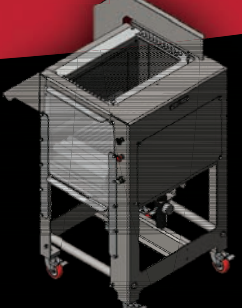
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TurtleTree Debuts Precision Fermentation-Produced Lactoferrin

Woodland, CA—TurtleTree, a global leader in animal-free dairy proteins, recently debuted what it calls the world's first precision produced lactoferrin, LF+.

TurtleTree hosted a tasting event recently in San Francisco that gave investors and food partners a sneak peek at the protein's potential ahead of its launch later this year.

Lactoferrin is naturally found in cow's milk but the low concentrations and current resource-intensive extraction processes limit access for many people, according to TurtleTree.

While lactoferrin is already used in supplements and infant formulas, supply scarcity means that demand cannot be met for other segments like sports nutrition, TurtleTree said. Further, for consumers who make the switch to plant-based milk, where lactoferrin is not inherently present, maintaining intake of this important nutrient can be a struggle.

Through the use of precision fermentation, TurtleTree said it is removing cows from the lactoferrin supply chain and unlocking an abundant, sustainable, and affordable source of the nutrient. In doing so, TurtleTree said it is enabling the fortification of plant-based dairy products and other everyday foods.

"By unlocking access to one of the most powerful and multi-functional proteins in milk, we are envisioning a better food future where more people than ever before can improve their personal nutrition sustainably," commented Fengru Lin, TurtleTree's founder and CEO.

"Harnessing the power of precision fermentation will provide us with an abundant supply of these vital nutrients that can be enjoyed by all segments of the population through everyday food products," Lin added.

"The development and debut of this highly valuable animal-free dairy protein is yet another innovative breakthrough that creates more sustainable food choices and a more sustainable food system," said Bruce Friedrich, co-founder and president of the Good Food Institute.

"Consumers deserve nutritious, affordable options that are produced in efficient, better-for-the-planet ways," Friedrich continued. "With more private sector and public sector support, precision fermentation is one of the brilliant alternative protein technologies that can open up a world of possibilities on this front."

International Dairy Federation Sets Second Dairy Innovation Awards

Brussels, Belgium—The International Dairy Federation (IDF) recently announced the launch of the IDF Dairy Innovation Awards 2023.

The awards will be hosted by IDF in partnership with Zenith Global. Tetra Pak is the headline sponsor of the IDF Dairy Innovation Awards 2023.

The second annual awards are designed to demonstrate the engagement and dynamism of the dairy sector worldwide, offering a unique platform to showcase innovative processes, practices and products that improve efficiency and contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In its inaugural edition, the awards attracted over 140 entries worldwide, with participation from every continent.

"We are excited to sponsor the IDF Dairy Innovation awards once again. Innovation has been a part of our DNA ever since our inception, as we pioneered aseptic technology and integrated solutions to help increase food

availability, especially for dairy, without the need for preservatives or refrigeration," said Charles Brand, executive vice president Processing Solutions and Equipment, Tetra Pak.

"Over the past 70 years, we have had a history of breakthroughs and we remain committed to driving collaborative innovation, working with the dairy industry to develop processing and packaging solutions that increase access to safe food, reduce food loss and waste and help build more resilient and sustainable food systems," Brand added.

"Innovation is certainly one of the dairy sector's outstanding features and one of the reasons why milk and dairy have remained at the very core of sustainable and healthy nutrition since the beginning of times," commented Caroline Emond, IDF's director general.

"This is something that the 2022 edition of the IDF DIA has proven through its amazing set of entries. Now we aim for even

more innovative breakthroughs and greater participation in 2023," Emond continued.

Entries will be invited with a focus on sustainable and community-led initiatives, as well as new product development and innovative practices:

- Innovation in sustainable farming practices: environment, animal care, socio-economic
- Innovation in sustainable processing;
- Innovation in sustainable packaging;
- Innovation in new product development with a focus on food safety and consumers nutrition;
- Innovation in Women empowerment in the dairy sector, which aims to highlight the growing female leadership in the dairy value chain;
- Innovation in Climate Action;
- Innovation in Marketing and Communication initiatives building the dairy category.

The IDF World Dairy Innovation Awards opened Mar. 15; the deadline is June 1. The winners will be announced on Oct. 16 in a ceremony at the IDF World Dairy Summit hosted in Chicago.



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IDFA Now Accepting Applications For Workplace Safety Excellence Awards

Washington—The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) is now accepting applications for its 20th Dairy Industry Safety Recognition Awards.

Companies must be an IDFA member to enter. The submission deadline is May 16, and winners will be notified this summer.

The awards honor processing facilities and trucking operations for outstanding worker safety performance and management.

As with last year, IDFA is placing equal weight to an applicant's essay and statistical data as health and safety experts recommend more emphasis on leading indicators and EHS management as essential components of a worker safety program.

Examples of leading indicators include number of inspections conducted, number of safety and health hazards identified, decreased time for hazard abatement, increased employing training, safety suggestions implemented, and job hazard analyses completed.

"The Dairy Industry Safety Recognition Awards spotlights dairy businesses that have gone above and beyond in proactive workplace safety programs to prevent illness and injuries and implement programs aimed at achieving

meaningful worker health and safety goals," said Danielle Quist, IDFA vice president of regulatory affairs and counsel.

"We look forward to recognizing the innovative safety management practices that dairy companies have put in place and progressed over the past year," she continued.

Dairy processing and trucking operations will be judged on occupational injury and illness performance rates, which are recorded in each operation's "Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses" report.

Companies are required to post their OSHA 300A forms from Feb. 1 through April 30 following the year covered by the form. Applicants will also provide a written essay explaining the components of their safety and health programs and how the company is using leading indicators as an essential driver of worker safety.

To be eligible for an award, a processing facility or transportation operation must implement an effective and innovative health and safety program and have illness and injury rates below industry averages reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

For details, contact Quist at dquist@idfa.org or (202) 220-3508.

OBITUARIES

DAVID METZIG, 72, and his wife, JAN METZIG, 71, owners of Union Star Cheese Factory in Fremont, WI, passed away Saturday, March 18, 2023. In 1980, David and Jan became the third generation of Metzigs to own and operate Union Star Cheese, raising their five sons in a home above the factory. Arrangements have been made through Lewin Funeral Home in Fremont. A memorial visitation will take place Friday, March 24 from 4 to 7 p.m. at Calvary Bible Church in Neenah. Visitation will continue at the church on Saturday, March 25, from 1 to 3 p.m., followed by a Celebration of Life service at 3 p.m.

PERSONNEL

JOSEPH SCIMECA, senior vice president of regulatory and scientific affairs for the **International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA)**, recently announced plans to retire this summer following nearly 40 years of service in the food industry. The Association has begun a national search for Scimeca's successor to lead its Regulatory and scientific affairs team. Scimeca joined IDFA in 2020 after serving 16 years with Cargill, Inc., most recently as the company's vice president of global regulatory and scientific affairs. He also held leadership positions with Kraft Foods Inc., The Pillsbury Company, and General Mills. In his role at IDFA, Scimeca provided guidance and consultation to members in the areas of food safety, food defense, federal standards of identity, labeling, nutrition policy, sustainability, and environmental and worker safety. He guided IDFA through pandemic-related disruption and changing regulations.

The **Australian Dairy Products Federation (ADPF)** named John Williams as executive president, succeeding long-time industry leader GRANT CROTHERS. Williams most recently served as general manager and vice president, domestic sales, government and industry strategy, at Saputo Dairy Australia from 2018 to 2022. Before that, he spent almost 20 years at Warrnambool Cheese and Butter (WCB), taking on several leadership positions. His career also includes top positions at Pacific Foods and Mitsui & Co., Ltd. Williams likewise served as a non-executive director of the Australian Dairy Industry Council from 2004 to 2022, and vice president of the Australian Dairy Products Federation from 2016 to 2022.

The **Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA)** has hired Ryan Dunn as manager of business operations, supporting a growing membership base and portfolio of services. Dunn succeeds SARA SCHMIDT, who will now serve as member engagement manager. Dunn previously worked as grants manager for the WDATCP within its Division of Agricultural Development.

JAN DERCK VAN KARNEBEEK has been tapped to succeed HEIN SCHUMACHER as CEO of **FrieslandCampina N.V.**, effective June 1. Schumacher will join Unilever as CEO on May 1. Derck van Karnebeek is currently CEO of GreenV, the international operating group of companies active in the horticultural sector. He spent most of his career at Heineken N.V. in commercial, marketing and general management positions.

Wixon has hired JESSICA LOPEZ to join its research and development team as a flavor chemist, responsible for growing the company's flavor department capabilities and supporting all product divisions. Lopez brings more than 10 years of flavor industry experience to her new role, recently completing her flavor chemist certification with the Society of Flavor Chemists in 2020.

New Culture has hired JAMES JONES to lead its food science and product development team. In his new role, Jones will lead research, development and marketing efforts for New Culture's inaugural product: animal-free Mozzarella. Looking ahead, Jones will also oversee future product launches, including process and package development, manufacturing, scale-up, and partnering with New Culture's bio-technical and business teams to grow the company's line of plant-based cheeses. Jones comes to New Culture with more than 30 years of experience, most recently serving as vice president of innovation for Follow Your Heart, maker of plant-based cheeses and spreads.

RECOGNITION

CYBERTROL ENGINEERING has earned the inaugural **Rockwell Automation Sustainability Award** for its commitment to deliver innovative solutions that optimize the use of resources, reduce waste and energy consumption, and minimize environmental impact. Cybertrol's sustainable approach has also helped its clients to achieve significant cost savings while reducing their carbon footprint.

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Food Standards Australia New Zealand OKs Lactoferrin In Infant Formula

Wellington, New Zealand—Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) recently approved an application from Synlait Milk Ltd. to amend the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code to permit the voluntary use of bovine lactoferrin (bLf) as a nutritive substance in infant formula products.

Bovine lactoferrin use as a nutritive substance in infant formula products is currently not permitted in the Australian and New Zealand food supply and any addition in infant formula products (IFP) requires express permission via an application to FSANZ to amend the Food Standards Code. Synlait also requested an exclusive use permission for its brand of bLf for a period of 15 months after gazettal, FSANZ noted.

Lactoferrin is an iron-binding protein that is naturally present in the body. Lactoferrin is present in mammalian milks, notably at high levels in human milk, at significantly lower levels in bovine milk, and at low levels in infant formula products not fortified with bLf. The purpose for adding bLf to IFP is to more closely reflect the lactoferrin content in human milk, and to provide a reduced risk of infection in formula-fed infants.

Human lactoferrin and bLf are not identical; however the reported differences in structure result in only small differences in cellular uptake and functionality, and bLf has been shown to provide physiological outcomes similar to those provided by hLf, FSANZ noted.

Synlait's application stated that bLf has a history of safe consumption by humans and that bLf can reduce the risk of infections in infants without potential adverse effects.

Bovine lactoferrin is derived from cow's milk, which is a food allergen, FSANZ pointed out. The allergenicity assessment concluded that there is evidence some individuals with cow's milk allergy have IgE antibodies to bovine lactoferrin, indicating sensitization.

FSANZ's risk and technical assessment identified no additional public health and safety concerns with the addition of bovine lactoferrin to infant formula products up to a maximum permitted amount of 40 milligrams per 100 kilojoules.

FSANZ also undertook an assessment to substantiate the beneficial role, which found results from in vitro and animal studies supporting a plausible mechanism by which bovine lactoferrin can reduce the risk of bacterial and

viral infection. FSANZ found that the proposed maximum permitted amount of 40 milligrams per 100 kilojoules brings bovine lactoferrin in infant formula products closer to human lactoferrin levels in mature human milk, aligns with relevant international regulations and adds only that which is necessary to achieve a potential beneficial outcome.

Following assessment and the preparation of a draft variation, FSANZ called for submissions regarding the draft variation late last year. Nineteen submissions were received, four from jurisdictions, 14 from industry and one from a consumer group. Also, one

late submission was received from an industry body which did not raise any additional issues.

Submissions supported permitting the voluntary addition of bLf to IFP. Several issues were raised in relation to the draft specification, classification of bLf as a nutritive substance, and the granting of an exclusive use permission.

After consideration of submissions, FSANZ approved the draft variation to the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code with minor amendments to the identity and purity specifications. The approved variation will permit the voluntary addition of bovine lactoferrin as a nutritive substance in infant formula products in accordance with the Code.

Regarding exclusivity, an applicant may request an exclusive use

permission to use and sell a food (including a nutritive substance) for a certain period of time to recognize the investment made in developing a novel food or nutritive substance and the need to achieve return on this investment, thereby supporting innovation, FSANZ explained.

Synlait requested an exclusive use permission and provided evidence of its investment in preparing its application. This included research and expenditure on ingredient processes, development of patented technology, manufacturing capital expenditure and trials, and conducting sensory, shelf-life and safety trials. Much of this was confidential commercial information (CCI) and was critical in informing FSANZ's assessment.

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QualiTru Sampling Systems Offers Non-Sterile Single Sampler

Oakdale, MN—QualiTru Sampling Systems (formerly known as QMI), a leader in the science of aseptic and representative sampling equipment for the dairy and food industries, has announced the release of the TruDraw® Non-Sterile Single Sampler.

The TruDraw Non-Sterile single Sampler reduces operation expenses by providing a cost-effective single-sample option when an aseptic sample is not required, QualiTru noted. Just like the original TruDraw Sterile, the TruDraw Non-Sterile single sampler still meets the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) requirements for farm, milk hauler and pre-pasteurization sample collection.

“Accurate sampling is of utmost importance in the dairy industry for food safety and quality,” said Ian Davis, QualiTru’s CEO. “Our TruDraw Non-Sterile Single Sampler delivers on our commitment to serving dairy farms, haulers and food processing plants around the world that are determined to provide safe, high-quality products in the dairy and liquid food industries.”

Comprised of a disposable blue cap with a two-ounce container and detached 18g needle, the TruDraw is easily assembled for leak-proof samples while providing the highest possible protection against environmental exposure affecting a sample’s accuracy, QualiTru noted. The non-sterile single

sampler works with all QualiTru TruStream Ports and TruStream Septa to monitor system hygiene through a proactive sampling and testing protocol.

Benefits of the TruDraw Non-Sterile Single Sampler, include: the versatility of a non-sterile version reduces operation expenses when a sterile sample is not required; virtually eliminates the risk of external contaminant exposure, ensuring sampling accuracy; and incorporates a tamper-evident cap to help ensure a controlled chain of custody at the start of the process.

Known for its expertise and commitment to building awareness of aseptic sampling, QualiTru’s sampling technologies are used to help the dairy and liquid food industries produce safe, high-quality products.

For more information, visit www.qualitru.com.

Americold Invests In Dubai Cold Storage Company

Atlanta, GA, and Dubai, United Arab Emirates—Americold Realty Trust, Inc. recently announced a strategic investment into RSA Cold Chain in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

At close, Americold’s investment is \$3.9 million for the company’s share (49 percent) of RSA Cold Chain equity.

This partnership will provide a scalable, investable operating platform for market entry and expansion in the Middle East and India, Americold said. RSA Cold Chain is an established cold storage operator in Dubai that began operations in 2017 and is a subsidiary of the parent company RSA Global.

Americold will take a minority ownership position in RSA Cold Chain with immediate plans to expand locally, connect RSA to its global network, and pursue strategic development opportunities in the Middle East and surrounding markets.

“Our partnership with RSA Cold Chain, combined with our recently announced partnership with DP World, provides us an ideal platform to provide supply chain solutions and cold storage capacity in the Middle East and India,” commented George Chappelle, Americold’s chief executive officer. “These relationships highlight why Americold is a global leader and preferred partner in the temperature-controlled storage warehousing and logistics industry.

“We are excited to bring our innovative solutions to the region and support our mission to help our customers feed the world,” Chappelle added.

“We are absolutely thrilled to partner with Americold, a global player that can connect the world’s food production markets to our region with a seamless service at origin and destination,” said Abhishek Shah, RSA Cold Chain’s co-founder and CEO. “We are excited to create a regional brand across our markets that our customers can trust.”

Americold is said to be the world’s largest publicly traded real estate investment trust (REIT) focused on the ownership, operation, acquisition and development of temperature-controlled warehouses. Based in Atlanta, Americold owns and/or operates 242 temperature-controlled warehouses, with approximately 1.4 billion refrigerated cubic feet of storage, in North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific, and South America.

RSA Cold Chain is a HACCP and ISO 22000 certified cold storage arm of RSA Global.

RGF Anti-Microbial Air Purification Systems Available From Valcour

Peru, NY—The REME ATS-HO Air Purification System, which is said to reduce airborne microbes by up to 99 percent, is now available from Valcour Process Technologies.

The system, which was developed by RGF Environmental Group, Inc., is made for washdown environments, and is said to be ideal for most food production areas, storage rooms, manufacturing facilities, grocery stores and more. RGF first developed

its advanced oxidation technology over 20 years ago, and today, over 4 million RGF cells are in use around the world.

Most facilities do not check the air for microorganisms on a daily or monthly basis, RGF noted. Bacteria and mold can continuously breed in ducts and on the evaporator coils of refrigeration systems.

As a result, mold and bacteria settling out of the air can contaminate product and equipment. Storage rooms,

refrigerated coolers, and employee changing rooms are particularly susceptible to these airborne problems.

Air passes through a REME/PHI oxidation chamber, which destroys airborne microbes with high intensity UV light rays targeted on a quad-metallic compound, RGF explained. The process develops a highly charged atmosphere of hydroxyl radicals, hydro-peroxides and super oxide ions.

This atmosphere oxidizes contaminants in the air with “friendly oxidizers,” which are oxidizers that revert back to oxygen and hydrogen after the oxidation process.

For more information, visit www.valcourprocesstech.com.



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The advertisement displays the Cheese Reporter content across multiple platforms. At the top, a print magazine cover is shown with the headline "Global Dairy Market Expected To Remain Tight For Next Six Months". Below it, a desktop monitor displays the website version of the same article. To the right, a tablet and a smartphone show the mobile app interface, which includes a "Look at cheese differently." button. The background features a stylized globe graphic.

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Northeast Dairy Foods & Suppliers Associations Details Events, Website

Cicero, NY—The Northeast Dairy Foods & Suppliers Associations (NDFSA) have launched a new website with online registration for upcoming spring and summer events.

The site is a joint effort between the Northeast Dairy Foods Association (NDFSA) and Northeast Dairy Suppliers Association, Inc. (NDSA). It also features information on scholarships and career opportunities, contact information and a buyer's guide.

NDFSA Calendar Of Events

May 17: Dairy Blender, The Aloft Hotel, Buffalo, NY. Beginning at 3 p.m., the event will feature management representatives from HP Hood, Lactalis American Group, Perry's Ice Cream and Upstate Niagara Cooperative, discussing what they look for in supplier and vendor partnerships.

Immediately following the presentations, the event will flow into the networking segment where presenters mingle with attendees in a very casual atmosphere, allowing opportunities to make new connections.

There will be multiple attendees from these companies, along with members of Northeast Dairy Foods Association and New York State Cheese Manufacturers Association. Cost to attend is \$125 per person, and several types of sponsorships are available.

May 23: Dairy Day Celebration, The Well of the New York State Capitol Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY. Set-up begins at 7 a.m. and participants should be ready by 10:15 a.m. Six-foot tables will be provided, allowing companies to provide samples of real dairy products processed and manufactured in New York State.

Sampling is an excellent way to reach key Albany legislators, staff, state workers, and capitol visitors, as well as local and regional media, who will all be in attendance. All samples must be served with gloves, per OGS Guidelines.

Participation forms must be returned by May 11. For questions, contact Paul Harvey via email at ph@nedairyfoods.org.

July 12: Bruce W. Krupke Golf Tournament & Clambake, Rogues Roost Golf Course and Spinning Wheel Event Center, Syracuse, NY. The tournament will be an 8 a.m. shotgun start of foursomes, best individual team ball. Individuals may register and form their own foursomes or be placed in one by tournament director.

Cash prizes will be awarded for top team winners, longest drive and closest to the pin. Sponsorships are available. Golf registration is \$125 per person, which includes cart, snacks and refresh-

ments. Registration must be received by July 7. The Clambake begins at 1 p.m. at the Spinning Wheel Event Center. Tickets are \$100 for all day, all-you-can-eat. New this year is the return of the lobster, available for \$125. Ticket price increases by \$25 each for orders received after July 1.

Aug. 16-18: Northeast Dairy Convention, Mount Airy Resort & Casino, Mt. Pocono, PA. Online registration for this event kicks off April 1.

Bruce Krupke Scholarship Fund

The NDSA will be awarding up to \$20,000 in gold (\$2,000) and silver (\$1,000) scholarships for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Applicants must be enrolled full-time in the 2023-2024 academic year in an accredited US college, university or trade school undergraduate program. Post-graduate applications will not be eligible.

Applicants must also be an immediate family member of a current 2023 NDSA or NDFSA member; applicants can also apply as a student member of NDSA. They likewise must maintain a GPA of 2.50 or higher. The application deadline is June 1, 2023.

History Of NDFSA, NDSA

The Northeast Dairy Foods Association was founded in 1928 as New York State Milk Distributors Association. In the 1970s, the association expanded its membership base from fluid processors to all types of dairy companies and changed its name to the New York State Dairy Foods Association.

In 2008, the board of directors expanded the scope of work and geographic boundary to seven additional states, and changed the organization's name to the current Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc.

The NDFSA is a full-service trade association with members in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont. Members represent all four federal call product companies, including fluid milk processors, distributors, by-product manufacturers, ice cream plants, yogurt plants and dairy producers.

The Northeast Dairy Suppliers Association (NDSA) consists of over 200 dairy vendor and supplier member companies.

Membership is administered by a board of directors elected bi-annually from the general membership. Director meetings are held four times a year, including a virtual annual meeting, held in the spring each year. To check out the new site, visit www.ndfsa.org.

COMING EVENTS

www.cheesereporter.com/events.htm

Registration For CDR Certificate In Dairy Processing Course Ends April 6

Madison—Students looking to sign up for the Center for Dairy Research (CDR) Certificate in Dairy Processing fully virtual short course have until April 6 to register online.

The Certificate in Dairy Processing short course is a dairy industry training program focused on providing promising dairy plant workers and operators with a clear understanding of dairy plant processes.

Administered by CDR and led by some of the leading experts in the industry, the program will use a practical applications approach to educate students on the basic aspects of dairy processing.

Specifically, the virtual course will feature a 10-week series of modules covering key aspects of dairy processing through short, online learning sessions.

Course content will be composed of 10 modules, each covering an important aspect of dairy product manufacturing. They include Module 1: Understanding Milk; Module 2: Dairy Microbiology; Module 3: Processing Equipment; Module 4: Milk Quality

from Farm to Plant; Module 5: Food Safety and Sanitation; Module 6: Production of Cheese; Module 7: Cheese Ripening and Defects; Module 8: Cheese Usage, Evaluation and Functionality; Module 9: Production, Functionality and Applications of Ingredients; and Module 10: Production of Other Dairy Products.

A learning management system (EventsAir) will also be used. This will allow for access of learning materials, interactive discussion posts between all members of the program, and upload of assignments and quizzes.

Recordings of the lectures will be housed there for those unable to attend during the live video calls.

As a part of this program, each participant needs to have a mentor. The mentor provides additional guidance and support to the participants during the course.

Ideally, this person should be someone with significant experience in the dairy industry.

To sign up online or for more information, visit www.cdr.wisc.edu/short-courses.

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COMING EVENTS

www.cheesereporter.com/events.htm

IMPA Annual Meeting Theme Is 'Labor & Workforce Development': Aug. 10-11

Sun Valley, ID—Online registration is open for the 97th Idaho Milk Processors Association (IMPA) Conference here Aug. 10-11 at the Sun Valley Resort.

The theme for this year's event is *Labor & Workforce Development*, highlighting the effects and challenges COVID-19 brought to the dairy industry, including staffing shortages at all levels.

Attendees will hear from expert speakers on this topic, along with opportunities to connect with other dairy industry representatives. A tentative agenda includes confirmed speakers Julie Winans, technical account manager for Chr. Hansen, Inc.; and Mike Ragsdale, milkfat commercialization manager, Idaho Milk Products.

The two-day conference kicks off Thursday, Aug. 10 with opening remarks, keynote address and motivational speaker, former pro football player Karl Mecklenburg.

Nathan Foss of Lightcast, a global leader in labor market analytics, will lead the industry/tech-

nical session, followed by the new product development segment after lunch.

Thursday will wrap with a fly fishing class, wine and cheese social, and student dinner/industry meet-and-greet.

Friday begins with a company profile session on Schreiber Foods, Hall of Fame presentation and panel discussion on the current state of today's labor and workforce.

Friday afternoon is reserved for activities including, trap tournament (\$150 fee), mountain trail hike (\$35 fee), guided fishing excursion (\$300) or solo fishing (\$35), white water rafting on the Main Salmon River in nearby Stanley, ID (\$15); and golf scramble tournament (\$275).

Attendees will reconvene at 7 p.m. for the cocktail hour, followed with a special awards banquet.

To register online, information on sponsorship opportunities and full conference details, visit www.impaconference.com.

Cornell's Dair Foods Extension Virtual HTST Course, More Events Announced

Ithaca, NY—A virtual, instructor-led High-Temperature, Short-Time (HTST) course is planned for April 11-13.

Cornell University's Dairy Foods Extension has partnered with the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets, Division of Milk Control, to host the event.

The two-day course is ideally suited for pasteurizer operators, production personnel, quality assurance/quality control personnel, engineers and those responsible for HTST maintenance.

The live video-conference will be led by members of Cornell Dairy Foods Extension and the NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets.

The course will include UHT components, sequence logic, UHT charts, HTST equipment design, instrumentation, maintenance of HTST systems, regulatory tests, and broken seal requirements.

Participants will also receive instruction on cleaning and sanitizing, recording charts, and dairy microbiology. The registration fee

is \$880 for New York State residents, and \$1,100 for out-of-state, organizer announced..

Future Dates, Attendance Options

Cornell Dairy Extension will also offer the HTST workshop in person July 18-20 on campus.

All required regulatory tests for HTST pasteurizers will be discussed and presented in a hands-on format to meet the training requirements for performing HTST system testing under the New York State Broken Seal Policy.

Additional topics include UHT systems, dairy microbiology, product safety, and cleaning and sanitizing.

The early registration deadline is July 13. Cost to attend for New York State residents is \$725 and \$880 for out-of-state.

Finally, a second live video conference will take place Oct. 10-12. The early registration deadline is Sept. 12.

For details on attendance options and registration, visit www.cals.cornell.edu.

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ACS Webinar Series Looks At Life After Cheese Mongering

Englewood, CO—The American Cheese Society (ACS) is offering a two-part webinar series for members on "Life After Mongering – Finding Your Own Path in the Cheese Industry."

The first session will take place on Thursday, March 30 at 3 p.m. EST. Speakers Erin Clancy and Courtney Johnson will talk about career options and ways to build a profession beyond cheese mongering and being behind the counter.

The session will include brief presentations and conversation from each speaker, followed by a short question-answer time with the live audience.

The second session on Thursday, April 26 will be a live networking event, also at 3 p.m. EST. Participants will be placed in small groups with speakers from the previous event to ask questions and network with peers that are interested in learning and growing within their area of focus.

The webinar will wrap with a large, lighthearted group networking session.

A recording of the presentation webinar will be made available in the American Cheese Society's Learning Center afterward. The networking event will not be recorded. To register for the event online, visit www.cheesesociety.org.

PLANNING GUIDE

NCIMS Conference: April 3-7, 2023, J.W. Marriott, Indianapolis, IN. Details available in the coming months at www.ncims.org.

CheeseCon 23: April 5-6, Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI. Official event website now live at www.CheeseCon.org.

ADPI/ABI Joint Annual Conference: April 23-25, Sheraton Grand Chicago. Visit www.adpi.org for future updates.

DairyTech Conference: May 17-18, Minneapolis, MN. Registration is now available online at www.dairytechconference.com.

IDDBA 2023: June 4-6, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, CA. Check www.iddba.org for more details.

Summer Fancy Food Show: June 25-27, Javits Center, New York, NY. For information, visit www.specialtyfood.com.

ADSA Annual Meeting: June 25-28, Ottawa, Ontario. Early registration will kick off soon online at www.adsa.org.

WDPA Dairy Symposium: July 10-11, Landmark Resort, Door County, WI. Visit www.wdpa.net for updates and registration and other events throughout the year.

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Dairy Product Stocks in Cold Storage

TOTAL STOCKS AS REPORTED BY USDA (in 1000s of pounds unless indicated)

	Stocks in All Warehouses			February 28, 2023 as a % of		Public Warehouse Stocks
	Feb 28 2022	Jan 31 2023	Feb 28 2023	Feb 28 2022	Jan 31 2023	Feb 28 2023
Butter	263,028	264,293	295,004	112	112	279,564
Cheese						
American	831,198	823,405	816,949	98	99	
Swiss	25,206	23,334	23,868	95	102	
Other	610,581	599,762	605,450	99	101	
Total	1,466,985	1,446,501	1,446,267	99	100	1,166,340

Federal Order Class 1 Minimum Prices & Other Advanced Prices - April 2023

Class I Base Price (3.5%)	\$18.85 (cwt)
Base Skim Milk Price for Class I	\$9.66 (cwt)
Advanced Class III Skim Milk Pricing Factor	\$8.46 (cwt)
Advanced Class IV Skim Milk Pricing Factor	\$9.37 (cwt)
Advanced Butterfat Pricing Factor	\$2.7217 (lb.)
Class II Skim Milk Price	\$10.07 (cwt)
Class II Nonfat Solids Price	\$1.1189 (lb.)
Two-week Product Price Averages:	
Butter	\$2.4190 lb.
Nonfat Dry Milk	\$1.2197 lb.
Cheese	\$1.8012 lb.
Cheese, US 40-pound blocks	\$1.9489 lb.
Cheese, US 500-pound barrels	\$1.6492 lb.
Dry Whey	\$0.4221 lb.

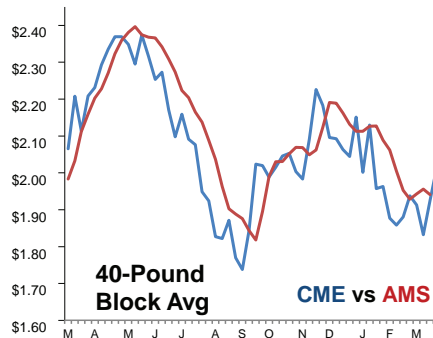
HISTORICAL MILK PRICES - CLASS I

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'15	18.58	16.24	15.56	15.50	15.83	16.14	16.53	16.25	16.34	15.84	16.48	16.71
'16	16.04	13.64	13.78	13.74	13.70	13.14	13.70	15.07	16.56	16.60	14.78	16.88
'17	17.45	16.73	16.90	16.05	15.20	15.31	16.59	16.72	16.71	16.44	16.41	16.88
'18	15.44	14.25	13.36	14.10	14.44	15.25	15.36	14.15	14.85	16.33	15.52	15.05
'19	15.12	15.30	15.98	15.76	16.42	17.07	17.18	17.89	17.85	17.84	18.14	19.33
'20	19.01	17.55	17.46	16.64	12.95	11.42	16.56	19.78	18.44	15.20	18.04	19.87
'21	15.14	15.54	15.20	15.51	17.10	18.29	17.42	16.90	16.59	17.08	17.98	19.17
'22	19.71	21.64	22.88	24.38	25.45	25.87	25.87	25.13	23.62	22.71	24.09	22.58
'23	22.41	20.78	18.99	18.85								

DAIRY PRODUCT SALES

March 22, 2023—AMS' National Dairy Products Sales Report. Prices included are provided each week by manufacturers. Prices collected are for the (wholesale) point of sale for natural, unaged Cheddar; boxes of butter meeting USDA standards; Extra Grade edible dry whey; and Extra Grade and USPH Grade A nonfortified NFDM.

•Revised



Week Ending	Mar. 18	Mar. 11	Mar. 4	Feb. 25
40-Pound Block Cheddar Cheese Prices and Sales				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.9411	1.9559	1.9426	1.9285
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	12,219,435	13,511,722	12,128,291	11,107,349
500-Pound Barrel Cheddar Cheese Prices, Sales & Moisture Content				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.7746	1.6998	1.7053	1.7023
Adjusted to 38% Moisture				
US	1.6855	1.6174	1.6202	1.6173
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	14,537,833	16,632,152	15,897,716	15,085,345
Weighted Moisture Content	Percent			
US	34.72	34.84	34.74	34.74
AA Butter				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	2.4056	2.4364	2.4427	2.4417
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	4,851,306	3,718,419	3,965,087	3,940,659
Extra Grade Dry Whey Prices				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	0.4195	0.4246	0.4083	0.4030
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	6,430,178	6,866,135	7,002,824	7,046,953
Extra Grade or USPHS Grade A Nonfat Dry Milk				
Average Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.2249	1.2145	1.2026	1.2298
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	20,087,753	20,023,065	32,019,034	23,089,481

DAIRY FUTURES PRICES

SETTLING PRICE							*Cash Settled		
Date	Month	Class III	Class IV	Dry Whey	NDM	Block Cheese	Cheese*	Butter*	
3-17	Mar 23	18.07	18.39	42.050	120.250	1.925	1.8370	241.750	
3-20	Mar 23	18.05	18.41	42.250	120.250	1.927	1.8370	241.750	
3-21	Mar 23	18.05	18.41	42.250	119.775	1.927	1.8370	241.750	
3-22	Mar 23	18.04	18.41	42.250	119.775	1.927	1.8370	242.075	
3-23	Mar 23	18.10	18.41	41.750	120.150	1.927	1.8470	242.075	
3-17	Apr 23	19.17	18.10	42.400	118.550	1.999	1.9570	237.500	
3-20	Apr 23	19.02	18.12	42.000	119.000	1.999	1.9430	238.250	
3-21	Apr 23	18.99	18.04	41.775	116.850	1.999	1.9430	238.900	
3-22	Apr 23	19.36	18.04	41.750	117.025	2.010	1.9760	236.500	
3-23	Apr 23	19.76	17.97	41.750	117.500	2.075	2.0130	235.000	
3-17	May 23	18.86	18.29	41.250	118.500	1.999	1.9300	240.500	
3-20	May 23	18.51	18.39	40.000	119.000	1.998	1.9000	241.000	
3-21	May 23	18.44	18.18	39.725	116.550	1.990	1.8940	240.750	
3-22	May 23	18.67	17.98	39.400	116.550	2.010	1.9230	238.000	
3-23	May 23	18.95	17.98	39.300	116.850	2.000	1.9530	236.150	
3-17	June 23	19.00	18.63	40.325	121.000	1.990	1.9450	242.750	
3-20	June 23	18.64	18.63	39.250	120.875	1.974	1.9250	244.000	
3-21	June 22	18.50	18.47	38.225	119.200	1.957	1.9100	243.750	
3-22	June 23	18.60	18.37	37.725	119.000	1.965	1.9250	241.000	
3-23	June 23	18.66	18.35	37.725	119.000	1.965	1.9380	240.725	
3-17	July 23	19.32	18.85	39.050	123.000	2.015	1.9800	245.750	
3-20	July 23	19.03	18.85	39.900	123.350	2.010	1.9560	245.750	
3-21	July 23	18.95	18.70	39.800	122.100	1.991	1.9430	244.000	
3-22	July 23	18.83	18.55	39.750	121.250	1.991	1.9410	243.000	
3-23	July 23	18.83	18.55	39.000	121.375	1.990	1.9550	243.000	
3-17	Aug 23	19.60	19.27	39.500	126.000	2.039	2.0050	248.375	
3-20	Aug 23	19.24	19.27	39.900	126.250	2.038	2.0000	248.500	
3-21	Aug 23	19.38	19.18	39.900	124.500	2.038	1.9900	248.500	
3-22	Aug 23	19.34	18.95	39.750	124.000	2.033	1.9990	245.250	
3-23	Aug 23	19.17	18.88	39.750	124.000	2.027	1.9930	245.000	
3-17	Sept 23	19.75	19.58	39.900	128.500	2.052	2.0180	249.000	
3-20	Sept 23	19.66	19.54	40.375	128.025	2.052	2.0150	250.000	
3-21	Sept 23	19.63	19.39	40.375	127.200	2.052	2.0120	249.500	
3-22	Sept 23	19.53	19.23	40.375	127.000	2.047	2.0050	246.750	
3-23	Sept 23	19.35	19.21	40.375	127.000	2.044	2.0000	245.500	
3-17	Oct 23	19.84	19.86	41.850	131.025	2.054	2.0250	249.500	
3-20	Oct 23	19.80	19.84	41.850	131.000	2.054	2.0250	249.500	
3-21	Oct 23	19.64	19.60	41.850	130.000	2.054	2.0200	250.000	
3-22	Oct 23	19.57	19.55	41.850	129.200	2.054	2.0100	249.800	
3-23	Oct 23	19.50	19.45	41.850	129.000	2.049	2.0090	246.025	
3-17	Nov 23	19.75	20.05	41.975	133.025	2.047	2.0200	250.000	
3-20	Nov 23	19.59	20.00	41.975	133.025	2.047	2.0170	250.000	
3-21	Nov 23	19.60	19.77	42.250	131.525	2.047	2.0120	250.000	
3-22	Nov 23	19.46	19.70	42.250	131.500	2.045	2.0110	250.000	
3-23	Nov 23	19.38	19.65	42.250	131.475	2.043	2.0090	250.000	
3-17	Dec 23	19.40	19.92	42.975	135.250	2.011	1.9830	248.500	
3-20	Dec 23	19.27	19.85	42.975	134.875	2.011	1.9700	248.500	
3-21	Dec 23	19.27	19.70	43.250	133.125	2.011	1.9700	248.500	
3-22	Dec 23	19.19	19.65	43.000	132.500	2.011	1.9680	245.250	
3-23	Dec 23	19.07	19.65	43.000	132.000	2.010	1.9650	245.250	
3-17	Jan 24	19.00	19.50	43.000	136.000	1.986	1.9430	245.000	
3-20	Jan 24	19.00	19.50	43.000	136.000	1.986	1.9420	245.000	
3-21	Jan 24	19.00	19.50	43.000	136.000	1.986	1.9450	245.000	
3-22	Jan 24	18.95	19.50	43.000	135.500	1.986	1.9450	244.250	
3-23	Jan 24	18.95	19.50	43.000	135.000	1.986	1.9470	244.250	
Mar. 23		23,113	6,008	2,742	9,540	717	20,562	9,648	

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DAIRY PRODUCT MARKETS

AS REPORTED BY THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WHOLESALE CHEESE MARKETS

NORTHEAST - MARCH 22: Milk is readily available in the East. Regional dryer challenges persist and condensed skim milk supplies, originally intended for nonfat dry milk manufacturing, have increased available milk supplies. Cheese plant contacts report strong production schedules, with some relaying that increased milk availability has added to existing cheese inventories. Retail and foodservice demands are noted to be steady. Market prices for cheese blocks on the CME reached \$1.9600 last Wednesday and increased to \$1.9850 as of reporting.

Wholesale prices, delivered, dollars per/lb:

Cheddar 40-lb block:	\$2.3950 - \$2.6825	Process 5-lb sliced:	\$1.9700 - \$2.4525
Muenster:	\$2.3825 - \$2.7325	Swiss Cuts 10-14 lbs:	\$3.7625 - \$6.0850

MIDWEST AREA - MARCH 22: Midwestern cheese makers are still locating spot milk loads as low as \$11 under Class III. The spot milk price ranges from \$11 to \$4 under Class at report time. Clearly, there is no shortage of milk in the Midwest. That said, some cheese makers who have been reporting heavily discounted spot milk in recent weeks relayed they are not getting those offers this week. Cheese inventories, despite milk availability, are balanced to tight. Some cheese makers say they are running behind schedule, as demand has returned. Barrel cheese producers suggest similar sentiment. Some have said they are anywhere from 20 to 40 percent "behind normal" in regards to weekly cheese production. Cheese market tones have firmed, particularly as the block to barrel price gap has contracted to what contacts suggest is a more comfortable spread, regarding a healthy market tone.

Wholesale prices delivered, dollars per/lb:

Blue 5# Loaf :	\$2.4375 - \$3.6475	Mozzarella 5-6#:	\$1.9675 - \$3.0550
Brick 5# Loaf:	\$2.1675 - \$2.7350	Muenster 5#:	\$2.1675 - \$2.7350
Cheddar 40# Block:	\$1.8900 - \$2.4325	Process 5# Loaf:	\$1.8500 - \$2.3175
Monterey Jack 10#:	\$2.1425 - \$2.4900	Swiss 6-9# Cuts:	\$3.2775 - \$3.3800

WEST - MARCH 22: Varietal cheese demand from retail and foodservice purchasers is steady. Close to sold-out inventories for contract sales continue to be noted by some contacts. Demand from spot market purchasers is steady and loads are available to accommodate current spot market demand. The theme of heavier barrel sales activity and lighter block sales activity continued onward this week. Despite barrel sales outpacing block sales again, barrel inventories remain ahead of block inventories. Export demand is mixed. Some stakeholders report strong to steady demand from Asian markets and more consistent sale prices holding. Export demand to other areas is reportedly steady to light and less competitive current prices compared to European and Global Dairy Trading pricing is noted. Ample milk volumes are available for cheese makers to keep regional cheese production strong.

Wholesale prices delivered, dollars per/lb:

Monterey Jack 10#:	\$2.2575 - \$2.5325
Cheddar 10# Cuts:	\$2.2700 - \$2.4700
Cheddar 40# Block:	\$2.0225 - \$2.5125
Process 5# Loaf:	\$1.9750 - \$2.1300
Swiss 6-9# Cuts:	\$2.5700 - \$4.0000

EEX Weekly European Cheese Indices (WECI): Price Per/lb (US Converted)

Variety	Date: 3/22	3/15	Variety	Date: 3/22	3/15
Cheddar Curd	\$1.99	\$1.94	Mild Cheddar	\$2.04	\$1.99
Young Gouda	\$1.57	\$1.54	Mozzarella	\$1.54	\$1.47

FOREIGN -TYPE CHEESE - MARCH 22: European milk production is trending higher, and some stakeholders anticipate further increases now that spring has sprung. Cheese production is keeping up with strong seasonal demand, though some processors report cold and snowy weather has had a negative impact on milk deliveries and cheese production. Industry sources say retail cheese demand is largely affected by sales being offered by various grocers as keen shoppers are purchasing more cheese when sales are being offered. Upcoming spring holidays are contributing to stronger export cheese demand. Foodservice and Mozzarella cheese sales are also strong ahead of the spring holidays. Cheese inventories are stable and available for spot purchasing, though some contacts report difficulty finding transportation for loads needing to ship immediately.

Selling prices, delivered, dollars per/lb:

	Imported	Domestic
Blue:	\$2.6400 - 5.2300	\$2.2525 - 3.7400
Gorgonzola:	\$3.6900 - 5.7400	\$2.7600 - 3.4775
Parmesan (Italy):	0	\$3.6400 - 5.7300
Romano (Cows Milk):	0	\$3.4425 - 5.5925
Sardo Romano (Argentine):	\$2.8500 - 4.7800	0
Reggianito (Argentine):	\$3.2900 - 4.7800	0
Jarlsberg (Brand):	\$2.9500 - 6.4500	0
Swiss Cuts Switzerland:	0	\$3.7975 - 4.1225
Swiss Cuts Finnish:	\$2.6700 - 2.9300	0

NDM PRODUCTS - MARCH 23

CENTRAL: Regional and import buyers are aware of the widely available amounts of condensed milk being reported week in week out. Production is regular and consistent. Dryers suggest offers of condensed skim are flowing in, and pricing is favorable for ample production. End users who can interchange protein uses are finding high protein whey protein concentrates at a value, therefore market sentiment is somewhat bearish.

EAST: Eastern low/medium heat NDM prices slipped lower. Spot market activity was somewhat quiet, as customer interests have ebbed in recent weeks. Inventories are far from tight, and domestic end users are aware of that. In the East, though, contacts continue to point out disruptions at the plant level, as milk handlers offer plentiful condensed skim volumes. High heat NDM prices slipped on the top end of the range,

although trading is and has been somewhat quiet for most of March. NDM market sentiment is somewhat bearish, as prices continue to move closer to a potential basement.

WEST: Demand for low/medium heat NDM is light. Export sales of low/medium heat NDM are softening as purchasers are hesitant to buy at current prices. Spot purchasers say loads of low/medium heat NDM are available. Milk production is strong, and plant managers are operating steady schedules to work through available volumes. Schedules are being focused on the shorter drying times of low/medium heat NDM, limiting production of high heat NDM. Contacts report strengthening demand for high heat NDM ahead of the holidays. High heat NDM spot inventories are tight, and some spot sellers say they could move loads at higher prices if they had inventory available.

NATIONAL - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY PRODUCTS

Total conventional dairy ads decreased by 10 percent, and total organic dairy ads decreased by 12 percent. Ice cream in 48- to 64-ounce containers was the most advertised dairy product, with an average price of \$3.72, down 23 cents. Gallons of organic milk was the most advertised organic dairy item, with an average price of \$5.37, up 8 cents from last week. Conventional butter in one-pound packages appeared in 175 percent more ads, with a weighted average advertised price of \$3.41, down 81 cents from last week.

Total conventional cheese ad numbers decreased 44 percent. Shredded cheese in 6- to 8-ounce packages was the most advertised conventional cheese, with an average advertised price of \$2.76, up 8 cents. Organic 6- to 8-ounce blocks of cheese was the most advertised organic cheese, with a weighted average advertised price of \$7.34, up 96 cents.

Greek yogurt in 4-6 ounce containers was the most advertised conventional yogurt item, with an average price of \$1.12, up 6 cents. Conventional regular yogurt in 32-ounce containers appeared in 186 percent more ads with an average advertised price of \$3.16, up 11 cents.

RETAIL PRICES - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY - MARCH 24

Commodity	US	NE	SE	MID	SC	SW	NW
Butter 8 oz	3.22	3.41	2.95	NA	NA	3.00	NA
Butter 1#	3.41	3.86	3.21	3.06	3.55	3.22	3.68
Cheese 6-8 oz block	2.64	2.48	3.01	2.64	4.46	2.71	1.87
Cheese 6-8 oz shred	2.76	2.71	3.08	2.61	2.98	2.41	2.05
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced	2.79	3.35	3.17	2.69	2.76	2.40	1.83
Cheese 1# block	4.52	NA	NA	3.50	NA	3.99	6.99
Cheese 1# shred	NA	4.99	NA	3.50	NA	NA	NA
Cheese 1# sliced	3.99	7.99	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Cheese 2# block	7.08	7.99	NA	NA	NA	6.99	6.00
Cheese 2# shred	8.66	9.99	8.14	NA	8.99	6.99	6.49
Cottage Cheese 16 oz	2.54	3.05	2.29	1.99	1.99	NA	NA
Cottage Cheese 24 oz	3.31	3.00	2.99	4.00	3.58	NA	2.79
Cream Cheese 8 oz	4.39	3.28	NA	2.50	1.87	2.12	2.99
Ice Cream 14-16 oz	3.83	3.89	3.90	3.44	3.33	4.07	3.95
Ice Cream 48-64 oz	3.72	3.56	4.15	2.79	4.99	3.44	2.40
Milk 1/2 gallon	2.33	3.29	NA	NA	2.50	1.83	1.27
Milk gallon	3.18	2.95	NA	NA	5.99	3.05	2.16
Sour Cream 16 oz	2.15	2.09	1.87	1.99	2.01	2.40	2.50

US: National **Northeast (NE):** CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT; **Southeast (SE):** AL, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV; **Midwest (MID):** IA, IL, IN, KY, MI, MN, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI; **South Central (SC):** AK, CO, KS, LA, MO, NM, OK, TX; **Southwest (SW):** AZ, CA, NV, UT; **Northwest (NW):** ID, MT, OR, WA, WY

ORGANIC DAIRY - RETAIL OVERVIEW

National Weighted Retail Avg Price:			
Butter 8 oz:	\$4.49	Cheese 6-8 oz sliced:	\$4.99
Butter 1 lb:	\$5.63	Yogurt 32 oz:	\$4.38
Cream Cheese 8 oz:	\$4.49	Yogurt 4-6 oz:	\$1.12
Cottage Cheese 16 oz:	\$4.85	Greek Yogurt 32 oz:	\$5.89
Cheese shreds 6-8 oz:	\$5.13	Milk 1/2 gallon:	\$4.46
Cheese 6-8 oz block:	\$7.34	Milk gallon:	\$5.37
		Ice Cream 48-64 oz:	\$8.74

WHOLESALE BUTTER MARKETS - MARCH 22

NATIONAL: Cream volumes have begun to tighten in the East and Central regions amid strengthening demand from Cream cheese and ice cream makers. Cream is available in the West, while demand remains steady to light in the region. Some butter makers in the East say they are operating seven-day production schedules, despite tightening regional cream availability.

WEST: Available cream volumes are plentiful. Demand steady to light. Although heavy to ample supplies compared to production needs are reported overall, some stakeholders note bringing in limited cream volumes to keep production at max capacity. Cream multiplies slid down on the top end this week. Butter production is strong to steady. Some stakeholders remain at a decreased processing capacity with continued equipment repairs being done. Retail demand is steady, with spring holiday season orders picking up some momentum. Contract sales are steady, while the spot load market is on the lighter side. Export demand is steady for Asian markets, while lighter for European markets with current domestic prices being less competitive. Unsalted butter inventories outpace salted butter inventories.

CENTRAL: Butter demand notes range from on par to busy. Some plant managers say spring holiday demand has backed off, but others say certain retailers are still ordering somewhat actively. Despite increasing cream multiples for the past few weeks, including the current week, butter churning is noted as very active. Cream loads are available, locally, but offers are quieter and some regional plant managers are locating cream from the Western region to fulfill active churning schedules. Organic cream is reportedly widely available, in comparison to conventional cream. Butter market tones remain steadily in a range-bound status.

NORTHEAST: Cream supplies are tightening. As spring holidays approach, Cream cheese and ice cream manufacturing is picking up and is drawing upon existing cream supplies. Contacts relay they don't think cream will be tight for long once spring flush conditions renew cream availability. Despite tighter cream availability than in recent weeks, butter plant managers are still able to run robust production schedules and are both churning seven days a week and freezing some quantities of bulk butter.

WEEKLY COLD STORAGE HOLDINGS

SELECTED STORAGE CENTERS IN 1,000 POUNDS - INCLUDING GOVERNMENT

DATE	BUTTER	CHEESE
03/20/23	51,536	66,824
03/01/23	48,681	67,267
Change	2,855	-443
Percent Change	6	-1

CME CASH PRICES - MARCH 20 - 24, 2023

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for daily prices

	500-LB CHEDDAR	40-LB CHEDDAR	AA BUTTER	GRADE A NFDN	DRY WHEY
MONDAY March 20	\$1.9525 (-¾)	\$1.9900 (-¾)	\$2.4100 (+1)	\$1.1675 (-2)	\$0.4475 (-2)
TUESDAY March 21	\$1.9525 (NC)	\$1.9850 (½)	\$2.4050 (-½)	\$1.1550 (-1¼)	\$0.4475 (NC)
WEDNESDAY March 22	\$1.9400 (-1¼)	\$2.0150 (+3)	\$2.3825 (-2¼)	\$1.1500 (-½)	\$0.4475 (NC)
THURSDAY March 23	\$1.9600 (+2)	\$2.0550 (+4)	\$2.3475 (-3½)	\$1.1500 (NC)	\$0.4375 (-1)
FRIDAY March 24	\$1.9625 (+¼)	\$2.1000 (+4½)	\$2.3450 (-¼)	\$1.1500 (NC)	\$0.4450 (+¾)
Week's AVG \$ Change	\$1.9535 (+0.0795)	\$2.0290 (+0.1000)	\$2.3780 (-0.0100)	\$1.1545 (-0.0260)	\$0.4450 (-0.0060)
Last Week's AVG	\$1.8740	\$1.9290	\$2.3880	\$1.1805	\$0.4510
2022 AVG Same Week	\$2.1750	\$2.2205	\$2.7950	\$1.8650	\$0.7460

MARKET OPINION - CHEESE REPORTER

Cheese Comment: Three cars of blocks were sold Monday, the last at \$1.9900, which set the price. No blocks were sold Tuesday; the price declined on an uncovered offer of 1 car at \$1.9850. Five cars of blocks were sold Wednesday, the last at \$2.0150, which set the price. Three cars of blocks were sold Thursday, the last at \$2.0550, which set the price. On Friday, 3 cars of blocks were sold at \$2.1000, which set the price. The barrel price declined Monday on an uncovered offer at \$1.9525, fell Wednesday on a sale at \$1.9400, increased Thursday on a sale at \$1.9600, and rose Friday on an unfilled bid at \$1.9625.

Butter Comment: The price rose Monday on a sale at \$2.4100, fell Tuesday on an uncovered offer at \$2.4050, declined Wednesday on an uncovered offer at \$2.3825, dropped Thursday on an uncovered offer at \$2.3475, and fell Friday on an unfilled bid at \$2.3450 (following a sale at \$2.3300).

Nonfat Dry Milk Comment: The price fell Monday on a sale at \$1.1675, declined Tuesday on an uncovered offer of \$1.1550, and fell Wednesday on a sale at \$1.1500.

Dry Whey Comment: The price fell Monday on a sale at 44.75 cents, declined Thursday on an uncovered offer at 43.75 cents, then rose Friday on a sale at 44.50 cents.

WHEY MARKETS - MARCH 20 - 24, 2023

RELEASE DATE - MARCH 23, 2023

Animal Feed Whey—Central: Milk Replacer:	.3100 (-1) – .4000 (+1½)
Buttermilk Powder:	
Central & East:	1.0500 (-5) – 1.1500 (-7)
Mostly:	1.0700 (-1) – 1.1300 (-1)
West:	1.0300 (-2) – 1.1500 (-3)
Casein: Rennet:	5.7400 (NC) – 5.9000 (-10)
Acid:	5.9000 (-10) – 6.1500 (-20)
Dry Whey—Central (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.4000 (+1½) – .4600 (-½)
Mostly:	.4100 (-1) – .4500 (+1)
Dry Whey—West (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.4000 (-1) – .4850 (+½)
Mostly:	.4150 (-½) – .4650 (+½)
Dry Whey—NE:	.4050 (+1) – .4775 (+1)
Lactose—Central and West:	
Edible:	.1600 (NC) – .5400 (-2)
Mostly:	.2400 (-1) – .4300 (-2)
Nonfat Dry Milk —Central & East:	
Low/Medium Heat:	1.1500 (-2) – 1.2300 (-4)
High Heat:	1.3100 (NC) – 1.3700 (-2)
Mostly:	1.1700 (-2) – 1.2100 (-1)
Nonfat Dry Milk —Western:	
Low/Med Heat:	1.1000 (-2¼) – 1.2350 (-4¼)
High Heat:	1.2700 (-¼) – 1.4175 (-2)
Mostly:	1.1300 (-4¼) – 1.2000 (-4¼)
Whey Protein Concentrate—34% Protein:	
Central & West:	0.9000 (NC) – 1.5450 (-2)
Mostly:	1.1500 (NC) – 1.4850 (-4¼)
Whole Milk:	2.1000 (NC) – 2.2000 (NC)

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for historical dairy, cheese, butter, & whey prices

HISTORICAL MILK PRICES - CLASS III

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'09	10.78	9.31	10.44	10.78	9.84	9.97	9.97	11.20	12.11	12.82	14.08	14.98
'10	14.50	14.28	12.78	12.92	13.38	13.62	13.74	15.18	16.26	16.94	15.44	13.83
'11	13.48	17.00	19.40	16.87	16.52	19.11	21.39	21.67	19.07	18.03	19.07	18.77
'12	17.05	16.06	15.72	15.72	15.23	15.63	16.68	17.73	19.00	21.02	20.83	18.66
'13	18.14	17.25	16.93	17.59	18.52	18.02	17.38	17.91	18.14	18.22	18.83	18.95
'14	<u>21.15</u>	<u>23.35</u>	<u>23.33</u>	24.31	22.57	21.36	21.60	<u>22.25</u>	<u>24.60</u>	<u>23.82</u>	21.94	17.82
'15	16.18	15.46	15.56	15.81	16.19	16.72	16.33	16.27	15.82	15.46	15.30	14.44
'16	13.72	13.80	13.74	13.63	12.76	13.22	15.24	16.91	16.39	14.82	16.76	17.40
'17	16.77	16.88	15.81	15.22	15.57	16.44	15.45	16.57	16.36	16.69	16.88	15.44
'18	14.00	13.40	14.22	14.47	15.18	15.21	14.10	14.95	16.09	15.53	14.44	13.78
'19	13.96	13.89	15.04	15.96	16.38	16.27	17.55	17.60	18.31	18.72	20.45	<u>19.37</u>
'20	17.05	17.00	16.25	13.07	12.14	21.04	<u>24.54</u>	19.77	16.43	21.61	<u>23.34</u>	15.72
'21	16.04	15.75	16.15	17.67	18.96	17.21	16.49	15.95	16.53	17.83	18.03	18.36
'22	20.38	20.91	22.45	<u>24.42</u>	<u>25.21</u>	<u>24.33</u>	22.52	20.10	19.82	21.81	21.01	20.50
'23	19.43	17.78										

USDA Announces Awards For Fluid Milk Purchases For May Delivery

Washington—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the awarding of contracts to a number of companies for the purchase of fluid milk products for delivery in May.

The fluid milk is being purchased in support of child nutrition and other related domestic food distribution programs.

The purchases include 79,200 gallons and 291,600 half-gallons of 1 percent milk; 169,200 gallons and 170,100 half-gallons of 2 percent milk; and 18,000 gallons of skim milk. The total price of the fluid milk purchases is \$1,752,993.96.

A total of 30 trucks of fluid milk (94,500 pounds) was not purchased due to no offers and vendor constraints, USDA said.

Contracts were awarded to:

Anderson Erickson Dairy: 3,600 gallons of milk, at a total price of \$12,204.00.

Cream-O-Land Dairy: 10,800 gallons of milk, at a total price of \$34,035.12.

Dairy Farmers of America (DFA): 27,000 containers of milk, at a total price of \$67,521.60.

DFA Dairy Brands Fluid LLC: 109,800 containers of milk, at a total price of \$228,717.78.

Foster Dairy Farms: 91,800 containers of milk, at a total price of \$176,778.00.

GH Dairy, Ontario, CA: 73,800 containers of milk, at a total price of \$185,920.20.

GH Dairy, El Paso, TX: 69,300 containers of milk, at a total price of \$219,141.00.

HP Hood: 24,300 containers of milk, at a total price of \$41,796.00.

McArthur Next, LLC: 7,200 gallons of milk, at a total price of \$25,320.60.

New Dairy Opco, LLC: 81,000 containers of milk, at a total price of \$200,621.16.

Prairie Farms Dairy: 129,600 containers of milk, at a total price of \$314,640.00.

Royal Crest Dairy: 8,100 containers of milk, at a total price of \$16,584.75.

Smithfoods Inc.: 3,600 gallons of milk, at a total price of \$10,450.80.

United Dairy Inc.: 76,500 containers of milk, at a total price of \$193,761.00.

Upstate Niagara Cooperative: 11,700 containers of milk, at a total price of \$25,501.95.

For more information on selling milk or other dairy products to USDA, visit www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food.



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