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Senate Bill Would Ban Non-Dairy Products From Using Dairy Terms

Bill Follows FDA's New Draft Guidance Allowing Plant-Based Alternatives To Be Called 'Milk'

Washington—Bipartisan legislation introduced in the US Senate on Tuesday would require plant-based dairy alternatives made from nuts, seeds, plants, and algae to no longer use dairy terms such as milk, cheese or yogurt.

The Defending Against Imitations and Replacements of Yogurt, milk, and cheese to Promote Regular Intake of Dairy Everyday Act (DAIRY PRIDE Act) of 2023 was introduced by US Sens. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Jim Risch (R-ID), Susan Collins (R-ME), and Peter Welch (D-VT).

The legislation follows the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) release last week of draft guidance for industry on the naming of plant-based foods that are marketed and sold as alternatives to milk. Under FDA's draft guidance, a plant-based milk alternative may be labeled with the term "milk," "beverage" or "drink."

The DAIRY PRIDE Act would require FDA to issue draft guidance for nationwide enforcement of mis-

labeled imitation dairy products within 90 days, issue final guidance within 180 days, and require the agency to report to Congress two years after enactment to hold the agency accountable for this update in their enforcement obligations.

The legislation would also nullify any guidance that is not consistent with dairy standards of identity, including the one released last week.

"DAIRY PRIDE is needed more than ever, now that FDA has offered guidance on the labeling of plant-based beverages that, while taking steps in the right direction, ultimately doesn't remedy the problem it seeks to solve, which is the proven confusion among consumers created when plant-based beverages steal dairy terms to make their products appear healthier than they really are," said Jim Mulhern, president and CEO of the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF).

"FDA has acknowledged the problem of nutritional confusion

without providing a complete solution," Mulhern continued. "DAIRY PRIDE solves the problem by requiring FDA to enforce what its own standards of identity state: that 'milk' is a term reserved for animal products and that plant-based drinks or beverages shouldn't be allowed to use dairy terms in their labeling."

"When consumers buy products labeled as milk or cheese, they're expecting delicious, nutritious foods made with the goodness of real dairy, not nuts, peas, or beans," commented John Umhoefer, executive director of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA).

"The Food and Drug Administration's disappointing draft guidance, allowing imitation products to co-opt dairy's reputation for their own sales benefit, will result in more consumer confusion — and we applaud Senator Tammy Baldwin and the bipartisan congressional coalition behind the DAIRY PRIDE Act, fighting for clear, accurate food labeling so

• See **Senate Bill**, p. 6

FDA, FSIS Withdraw Proposed Rule On Food Standards Modernization; Will Propose New Rule

Silver Spring, MD—The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) this week withdrew a 2005 proposed rule that was intended, in part, to establish a set of general principles for the agencies to use when considering whether to establish, revise, or eliminate a food standard.

That proposed rule was never finalized. Since it was published, FDA announced its Nutrition Innovation Strategy (NIS), which focused on, among other things, providing incentives for food manufacturers to produce products that have more healthful attributes.

Under the NIS, FDA was seeking to modernize food standards in a manner that would achieve three primary goals: protect consumers against economic adulteration; maintain the basic nature, essential characteristics, and nutritional integrity of food; and promote industry innovation and provide flexibility to encourage manufacturers to produce more healthful foods.

In July 2018, FDA held a public meeting on the NIS; that meeting included a breakout session to discuss the agency's food standards modernization goals and, among

• See **Standards Proposal**, p. 10

Glanbia Proposes To Sell Its Share of Mozzarella Joint Ventures To Partner Leprino Foods

Kilkenny, Ireland—Glanbia plc and Leprino Foods Company on Wednesday announced that they have signed a non-binding agreement for Leprino Foods to acquire full ownership of Glanbia Cheese, a leading Mozzarella maker in Europe, comprising Glanbia Cheese UK and Glanbia Cheese EU.

Glanbia Cheese is the leading Mozzarella manufacturer in Europe, providing tailored Mozzarella cheese solutions to companies in over 30 countries around the world, the company announcement noted. It has a total of 500 employees.

• See **Glanbia Cheese**, p. 17

Court Of Appeals Upholds Previous Decisions: 'Gruyere' Is A Generic Term

Richmond, VA—The US Court of appeals for the Fourth Circuit today upheld two prior judicial decisions in finding "Gruyere" to be a generic term for a cheese variety.

Both the US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia and the US Patent and Trademark Office's (USPTO) Trademark Trial and Appeal Board (TTAB) had earlier found that Gruyere is a generic term.

The appeals court's decision should put an end to the attempt by Swiss and French consortiums to expropriate a common food name through a US certification mark registration, according to the Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN), the US Dairy Export Council (USDEC) and the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), all of which

applauded the appeals court's decision.

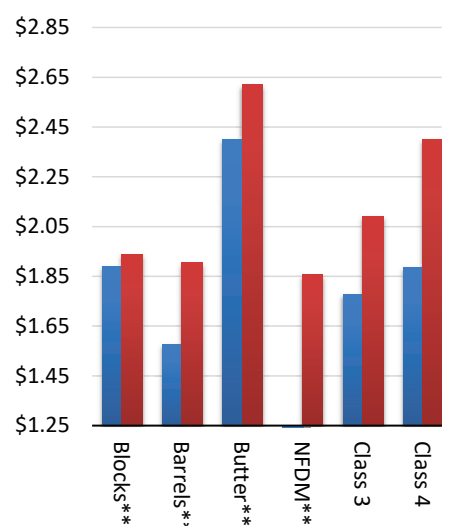
Appellants in this case are a Swiss consortium, Interprofession du Gruyere (IDG), and a French consortium, Syndicat Interprofessionnel du Gruyere (DIG), who believe that Gruyere should only be used to label cheese that is produced in the Gruyere region of Switzerland and France, the Court of Appeals explained in its decision. Seeking to enforce this limitation in the US, those two consortiums filed an application with the USPTO to register the word "GRUYERE" as a certification mark.

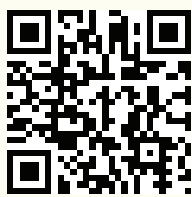
Appellees, USDEC, Atalanta Corporation, and Intercibus, Inc., opposed this certification mark because they believe the term is

• See **'Gruyere' Is Generic**, p. 13

Feb. Avg Prices - 2023 vs 2022

Average CME Prices**
Class 3 and Class 4 Milk Price x 10





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...the use of these statements is voluntary. So our guess is that the number of marketers of plant-based milk alternatives who include a descriptor...will be zero. No company will voluntarily acknowledge such a fact.

FDA's Plant-Based Milk Guidance Of No Help To Consumers

The US Food and Drug Administration last week issued a long-awaited draft guidance document on the labeling of plant-based milk alternatives and, frankly, this guidance doesn't really change anything. And it's certainly not going to be helpful to consumers.

As reported on our front page last week, under FDA's draft guidance, a plant-based milk alternative may be labeled with the term "milk," "beverage" or "drink." Thus, plant-based milk alternatives can continue to besmirch the good name of milk.

There are several points to keep in mind when looking over FDA's guidance. First, this is **draft** guidance. FDA is accepting comments on this draft guidance through Apr. 23, 2023. Electronic comments may be submitted at www.regulations.gov; the docket number is FDA-2023-D-0451.

Also, the purpose of the draft guidance is to provide FDA's current view on the naming of plant-based foods that are marketed and sold as alternatives for milk. The contents of the draft guidance document don't have the force and effect of law; the guidance is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law. FDA guidance documents should be viewed only as recommendations.

In other words, the plant-based industry can feel free to ignore everything in this guidance document, even after it becomes final.

Why is this important? There are at least a couple of points made in the guidance that would actually be meaningful if FDA had any plans to enforce them. Unfortunately, that's not the case.

For example, FDA recommends that plant-based milk alternatives that use the term "milk" in their name (such as "almond milk"), and have a nutrient composition that is different than milk, bear an additional nutrient statement on the product label describing how it is nutritionally different.

Specifically, FDA recommends that plant-based milk alternatives that use the term "milk" and have a nutrient composition that is different than milk bear a voluntary nutrient statement on the product label about the nutrient levels compared to milk, such as "Contains lower amounts of [nutrient name(s)] than milk."

As the guidance notes, the use of these statements is voluntary. So our guess is that the number of marketers of plant-based milk alternatives who include a descriptor that acknowledges the nutritional inferiority of their products (if they are in fact nutritionally inferior) will be **zero**. No company will voluntarily acknowledge such a fact.

This is a bummer for consumers. After all, earlier in its guidance document, FDA noted that several consumer studies submitted in response to a notice issued several years ago indicate that consumers do not understand the nutritional differences between milk and plant-based milk alternatives.

For example, one survey found that more than half of its respondents believe that plant-based milk alternatives labeled with the term "milk" in their name have a nutritional content similar to milk.

So FDA's response to this information is to allow marketers of plant-based milk alternatives to continue to use the term "milk" on their packages, and ask companies to voluntarily acknowledge the nutritional inferiority of those products, if that's the case.

Also, the voluntary nutrient statement recommendations pertain only to plant-based milk alternatives, not other plant-based dairy alternatives such as plant-based cheese or plant-based yogurt. But it seems logical to assume that this guidance will eventually apply to those plant-based products as well.

Regarding the use of the term "plant-based" or "plant" to describe a plant-based milk alternative,

FDA does not recommend using only these terms in the name of the food. Instead, the term "milk" should be qualified by the plant source of the food.

"Plant-based milk" is not the common or usual name of plant-based milk alternatives, FDA stated, while noting that the nature or source of the characterizing or predominant ingredients is important information for consumers and should be included in the name or statement of identity.

But here again, FDA notes that, in focus groups conducted by FDA with consumers of plant-based milk alternatives, frequent mentions were made that plant-based milk alternatives may be healthier than milk because they are lower in fat and cholesterol, and do not contain animal ingredients.

So we again have to wonder, will marketers of plant-based milk alternatives stop using or highlighting phrases such as "plant-based" because FDA's voluntary guidance doesn't think it's a good idea? We have our doubts.

FDA's draft guidance also notes that the agency has defined an imitation food as one that substitutes for and resembles another food and is nutritionally inferior to that food. Not all plant-based milk alternatives meet the definition of "imitation milk," but to the extent they do, based on FDA's current understanding, the agency intends to exercise enforcement discretion with respect to its definition of an imitation food. In other words, don't expect to see any of these plant-based "milks" bearing the term "imitation" on their label any time soon, if ever.

Maybe most upsetting about FDA's guidance is the headline on FDA's news release: "FDA Provides Draft Labeling Recommendations for Plant-based Milk Alternatives to Inform Consumers." Seems like FDA's recommendations are more likely to allow plant-based milk alternative marketers to continue to **misinform** consumers.

Legislation Introduced In Senate, House Aims To Reform Ag Checkoff Programs

Washington—Bipartisan legislation introduced in both the House and Senate this week is designed to reform and bring more accountability and transparency to agricultural commodity checkoff programs, its sponsors say.

The Opportunities for Fairness in Farming (OFF) Act of 2023 was introduced in the Senate by US Sens. Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Mike Lee (R-UT), joined by US Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Rand Paul (R-KY) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA); and in the House by US Reps. Nancy Mace (R-SC) and Dina Titus (D-NV).

Under the legislation, the term “checkoff program” means a program to promote and provide research and information for a particular agricultural commodity without reference to specific producers or brands, including a program carried out under, among other laws, the Dairy Production Stabilization Act of 1983, which created the National Dairy Promotion and Research Program; and the Fluid Milk Promotion Act of 1990, which created the National Fluid Milk Processor Promotion Program, which conducts business as the Milk Processor Education Program (MilkPEP).

The OFF Act would:

- Prohibit checkoff programs from contracting with any organization that lobbies on agricultural policy

- Prohibit employees and agents of the checkoff boards from engaging in activities that may involve a conflict of interest.

- Establish uniform standards for checkoff programs that prohibit anti-competitive activity, unfair or deceptive acts, or any practice that may be disparaging to another agricultural commodity or product.

To ensure further transparency, the bill requires the publication of checkoff program budgets and expenditures. Also, periodic audits of compliance with the act by the USDA Inspector General will be required, as will a General Accountability Office (GAO) audit of checkoff board compliance.

The OFF Act was first introduced in the 115th Congress by Titus and former US Rep. Dave Brat (R-VA) in the House and Lee and Booker in the Senate.

“The OFF Act was first introduced in the 115th Congress and here we are in the 118th Congress still working for transparency and accountability to reform the USDA’s commodity checkoff programs,” said Deborah Mills, chairwoman of the National Dairy Producers Organization.

“This speaks volumes about what frustrates producers who are

paying into checkoff programs,” Mills added. “The recipients of the checkoff dollars are the greatest proponents of maintaining the status quo. Producers are being denied the basic right to have their questions about their investment answered.”

“American family farmers are in peril and today, every cent counts,” said Taylor Haynes, president of the Organization for Competitive Markets. “If we’re going to be forced to pay into USDA’s checkoff programs then the very least we should expect is transparency, accountability, and oversight of our hard-earned dollars, and the OFF Act accomplishes just that.”

“I don’t want my hard-earned dollars funneled to a quasi-governmental organization that works

against my best interest and represents industrial agriculture’s continued movement toward the monopolization of farming,” said Will Harris, past president of the American Grassfed Association and proprietor of White Oak Pastures, Bluffton, GA.

“Farmers and ranchers are being forced to pay into checkoff programs that often advocate against their best interest and support food system consolidation. These programs need transparency and oversight so a farmer can be sure they aren’t required to fund their own demise,” Booker said. “That is why I am proud to introduce this bipartisan legislation that will help increase transparency and prohibit conflicts of interest and anti-competitive practices in these programs.”

“Checkoff programs are filled with waste and often abuse those who are forced to contribute to

their coffers,” Lee said. “These common-sense reforms will ensure that checkoff funds promote and protect all ag producers (big and small) who are meant to be served by these programs.”

“The current checkoff system does not provide enough transparency to our farmers on how their hard-earned dollars are used,” Gillibrand said.

“We need to make sure that these programs are operating in the best interest of our farmers and the agricultural industry as a whole,” Mace said. “This bill will help to address the transparency issues raised and ensure that checkoff programs are fulfilling their intended purpose.”

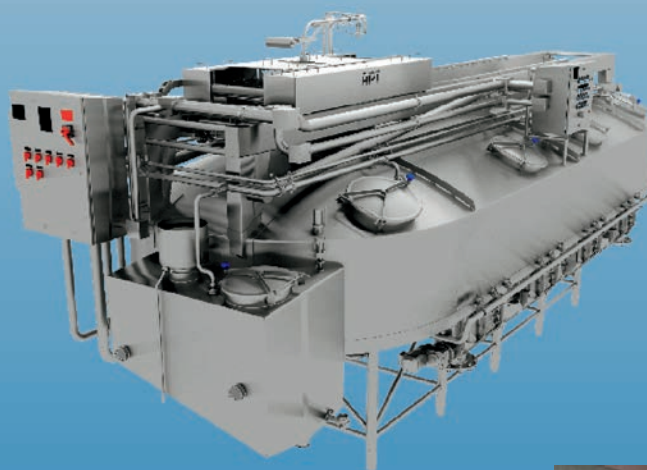
“I’m pushing this bipartisan legislation to increase federal oversight, prevent conflicts of interest, and stop ag lobbyists from squeezing small producers out of business,” Titus said.

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A Disappointing Guidance From FDA

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So, FDA has decided almonds do lactate.

The US Food and Drug Administration has issued a draft guidance in favor of labeling plant-based beverages as milk. The guidance has enough tortured logic and confounding conclusions to make plain that this is a shot across the bow of animal agriculture.

“This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law,” FDA states in the opening of this guidance. Here’s some clarity: FDA itself declared in 1973 that “milk is the lacteal secretion, practically free from colostrum, obtained by the complete milking of one or more healthy cows.”

Now the agency is proposing to defy their own regulation — implying that any regulation can simply be ignored.

“Plant-based milk alternatives are not milk; they are made from plant materials rather than the lacteal secretion of cows,” FDA states in the guidance. “Consequently, under the FD&C Act, they may not be offered for sale as ‘milk,’” FDA adds. And then this tortured twist: “Although many plant-based milk alternatives are labeled with names that bear the term ‘milk,’ they do not purport to be nor are they represented as milk.”

Say what?

FDA intends to let peas, walnuts and oats use the word “milk,” because they feel that consumers know those beverages aren’t dairy milk. In their words: “The comments and information we reviewed indicate that consumers, generally, do not mistake plant-based milk alternatives for milk.”

In 2018, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, Edge Cooperative and Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin found otherwise, commissioning third-party consumer research on plant based foods that mimic dairy foods. In that study, one quarter of consumers mistakenly indicated that pasteurized milk was present in plant-based foods that mimic cheese and one quarter didn’t know what ingredients were in these mimics.

FDA did not report this finding, although this and additional data from our consumer study was submitted to the agency during its public comment period.

Plant-based imitation cheeses are not covered in FDA’s new draft guidance — they stuck with milk only — and get this: “The comments, other research reviewed, and our analysis of the data suggest a potential public health concern related to the substitution of milk with plant based milk alternatives that contain lower amounts of certain nutrients than found in milk,” FDA states in the guidance.

Flat out, FDA is stating that these imitation “milks” are a public health concern — but they still propose to green light the term “milk” for these imitators. Only an anti-animal-agriculture agenda would cause the agency to support these plant beverages, knowing they are often nutritionally inferior.

And they do know it: “Americans already consume less from the Dairy Group than what is recommended by the Dietary Guidelines and the nutritional composition of plant-based milk alternatives varies greatly and often is not similar to milk,” FDA writes in this guidance.

“Therefore,” FDA continues, “consistently consuming plant-based milk alternatives that do not have a similar nutritional composition to milk in place of milk, without the addition of other foods to supply the missing nutrients, could lead to further inadequate intakes of nutrients of public health concern and other nutrients that pose a special public health challenge.”

To paraphrase: We may be facing a public health challenge here, FDA says, but let’s let allow these plant slurries to be deemed “milk” anyway.

Laughably, the agency adds the idea of voluntary, negative nutrition statements that plant-based beverage makers can put on their labels. Here’s FDA’s example of a nutrition statement that, say, a soy milk company may want to emblazon on their carton:

- “Contains lower amounts of [nutrient name(s)] than milk.”

“This type of voluntary nutrient statement,” FDA notes, “will clearly communicate to consumers when a plant-based milk alternative is lower in nutrients in comparison to milk.” Look for these negative statements soon in your grocer’s oatmilk case. But don’t hold your breath.

The only solution to the public health challenge that FDA appears ready to endorse, is legislation. Congress can compel FDA to get its act together.

On February 28, Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Jim Risch (R-ID), Susan Collins (R-ME), and Peter Welch (D-VT) introduced bipartisan legislation to combat the unfair practice of mislabeling non-dairy products using dairy names. The DAIRY PRIDE Act of 2023 would require non-dairy products made from nuts, seeds, plants, and algae to no longer be mislabeled with dairy terms such as milk, yogurt or cheese.

The grocery store can be a marketplace of ideas, but when grains and seeds and legumes appropriate the word milk to prop up their nutritionally inferior beverages, consumers will favor simple truth and common sense over hidden agendas. **JU**

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

50 YEARS AGO

March 7, 1973: Evanston, IL—Roscoe Page, 79, retired vice president in charge of production for Kraft Corporation, died this week of a reported heart attack. Page retired from Kraft in 1959, culminating a career that spanned 44 years in the cheese industry.

Vancouver, British Columbia—Russian scientists are turning Antarctic shrimp into foodstuffs used as substitutes for cheese and butter. Russian housewives can now buy a reddish tinged krill paste that passes for cheese, and a pink product described as a butter substitute. Both are made from mashed, cleaned and blended krill shrimp.

25 YEARS AGO

March 6, 1998: Plymouth, WI—Joseph Sartori, 80, lifelong Italian cheese industry leader and co-founder of both Sartori Foods and Sargento Cheese Company, passed away. A Minnesota native, Sartori first made Italian cheese at the Stella plant in Campbellsport, WI, at age 16. Sartori, his father Paul, and Louis Rossini co-founded the S&R Cheese Corporation in 1939, now known as Sartori Foods.

Albany, NY—The New York State Senate approved the state’s participation in the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact with a 35-18 vote. The bill’s sponsor, Sen. John Kuhl, Jr., said the compact represents a rescue effort for milk producers beleaguered by a price plunge in the past year.

10 YEARS AGO

March 1, 2013: Marshfield, WI—Bernie Alberts of Kelley Supply received a Life Membership in the Central Wisconsin Cheesemakers & Buttermakers Association here this week. The award honors Alberts’ many years of service and support for the cheese industry.

Chilton, WI—Award-winning cheese manufacturer LaClare Farms announced the purchase of Sunshine Farms Distribution fluid goat milk operation as an effort to expand the lineup of LaClare Farms products. As of this month, all former Sunshine Farms bottled goat milk products will carry the LaClare Farms label. The goat milk will still be sourced from the same farms.



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Bipartisan House Bill Would Allow Unflavored, Flavored Whole Milk To Be Offered In Schools

Washington—US Reps. Glenn “GT” Thompson (R-PA), chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, and Kim Schrier (D-WA) recently introduced the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act, which would allow for unflavored and flavored whole milk to be offered in school cafeterias.

“Bad federal policy has kept whole milk out of our school cafeterias for too long,” Thompson said. “It is my hope the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act will give children a wide variety of milk options and bolster milk consumption — a win-win for growing children and America’s dairy farmers.”

“As a pediatrician, I have dedicated my career to the wellbeing of children. I know how important adequate nutrition is for growing kids,” Schrier said. “A good diet early in life leads to proper physical growth, helps improve academic performance, and lays a foundation for healthy eating habits as an adult. Milk is an essential part of that diet, providing critical protein, calcium, and vitamin D. It is a filling, nutritious option that will help ensure our children are well-fed and healthy.”

“The Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act would allow schools to provide a wider variety of nutritious milk options that children prefer,” said Michael Dykes, president and CEO of the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA). “A wide majority of parents and medical and nutrition professionals know that offering whole milk increases school meal participation, reduces food waste, and provides nutritionally valuable school meals for children and adolescents.”

“Milk plays a uniquely critical role in providing the nutrients kids need to grow and thrive, both in the classroom and beyond,” said Jim Mulhern, president and CEO of the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF). “By increasing the healthful milk options available to schools, the bill provides more tools to help ensure kids have access to dairy’s nutritional benefits as part of a healthy eating pattern.”

US Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY) recently reintroduced legislation that would ensure schools participating in the National School Lunch Program offer students at least one flavored milk option.

Both bills have been referred to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, which has jurisdiction over school lunch and child nutrition programs.

Foodservice Industry Sales Expected To Reach \$997 Billion In 2023

Washington—The foodservice industry is forecast to reach \$997 billion sales in 2023, driven in part by higher menu prices, according to the National Restaurant Association’s 2023 *State of the Restaurant Industry* report, released Tuesday.

The report examines factors impacting the foodservice industry, including the current state of the economy, operations, workforce, and food and menu trends to forecast sales and trends for the year. The report is based on a range of surveys of restaurant owners, operators, chefs, and consumers.

The restaurant and foodservice industry added 2.8 million jobs over the past 24 months, bringing the industry total to 15 million at the end of 2022. However, the foodservice industry remains 400,000 jobs below pre-pandemic levels, the report noted.

Most restaurant operators will be actively looking to boost staffing levels in 2023, while carefully balancing staffing needs with business conditions. Some 87 percent of operators say they’ll likely hire additional employees during the next six to 12 months if qualified applicants are available.

Figures on the workforce, according to the report, include:

—Between 2023 and 2030, the industry is projected to add an average of roughly 150,000 jobs a year, with total staffing levels projected to reach 16.5 million by 2030.

—Only one in 10 operators think recruiting and retaining employees will be easier in 2023.

—The restaurant industry has long been the primary training ground for new entrants to the

workforce and in 2022, almost a quarter of jobs were filled by first-time employees.

—Some 58 percent of operators say using technology and automation to alleviate labor shortages will become more common in their segment; however, technology is generally complementary to human labor and primarily intended to enhance rather than replace workers in the industry.

Coping With Rising Food Costs

Demand for restaurant experiences remains strong among consumers who are hungry to connect over shared meals, the report noted. Operators are taking creative cost-saving approaches to temper elevated expenses, including food, labor, occupancy, and utilities, by streamlining their menus.

With the rise of remote work blurring traditional meal times, operators are focusing on opportunities to entice customers at all hours with engaging offerings, including off-hours or slow-day value deals, flexible pricing, multi-course meal bundles, meal kits and subscriptions, apparel, and more.

Many operators plan to add to their menus more healthier and nutritious meal options, eco-friendly items, and dishes tailored to takeout in 2023, the report said.

Key data points on food and beverage trends, according to the report, include:

■ 93 percent of operators say their restaurant’s total food costs are higher than they were in 2019.

■ A majority of operators across all segments expect to keep their menus in 2023 similar in size.

■ 69 percent of adults say they are likely to purchase a meal kit (measured ingredients with cooking instructions), including more than eight in 10 Gen Z adults and millennials.

■ Eco-friendly business practices continue to draw consumers, especially millennials.

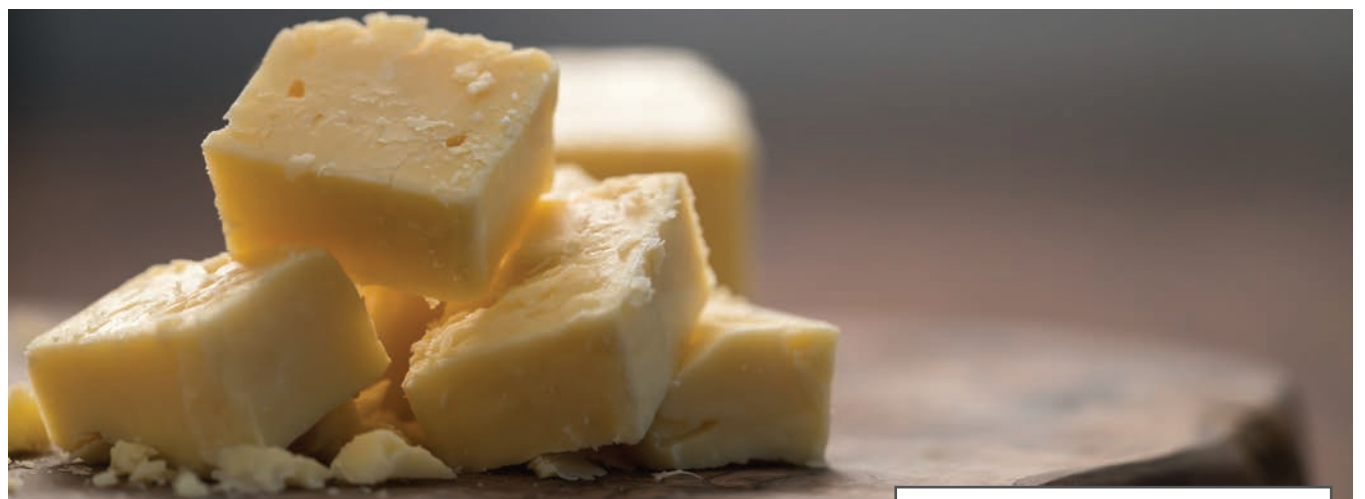
The temporary “pivots” developed during the pandemic — expanded delivery services, outdoor dining options, to-go alcohol offerings, and investments in technology — are the foundation of the industry’s “new normal,” the report noted. At least four in 10 operators in each of the three limited-service segments — quick-service, fast casual, and coffee and snack — believe the addition of drive-thru lanes will become more common in 2023.

Across all six major segments, more than nine in 10 operators plan to continue offering outdoor seating and the same number of operators are also likely to continue offering alcohol-to-go, if their jurisdiction allows it.

Despite widespread investment in technology in the last few years, the restaurant industry is still far from becoming a tech-centric sector.

Most operators still consider their use of technology as mainstream rather than leading edge, the report said.

In 2023, many operators want to keep moving toward the edge, with more than four in 10 planning investments in equipment or technology to increase front- and back-of-the-house productivity. These investments are anticipated mostly in the order and payment space, rather than automated systems or robots that prepare and serve food.



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Senate Bill

(Continued from p. 1)

Americans can make well-informed choices at the grocery store,” Umhoefer added.

FDA’s own rules make it clear that the term “milk” on product labels can only be used on dairy products, noted Steve Etko, policy director, Midwest Dairy Coalition.

“Unfortunately, FDA has chosen not to enforce their own rules,” Etko said. The Dairy PRIDE Act “will help ensure that products labeled as milk are indeed dairy products. Consumers and dairy farmers alike will be the beneficiaries of this effort.”

“Our nation’s dairy farmers deserve to have their products

treated fairly in the marketplace,” said Brody Stapel, president of Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative. “In light of FDA’s recent guidance disregarding the established standard of identity for milk, we need this legislation now more than ever.”

“For years, FarmFirst has been engaged on the issue to require FDA to enforce milk standards of identity, which prohibit using dairy terms on non-dairy products. We commend Senator Baldwin for her persistent efforts to hold the FDA accountable through her direct communication with FDA and the reintroduction of the Dairy Pride Act,” said Jeff Lyon, general manager of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative.

“It’s extremely frustrating that FDA’s recently released dairy draft guidance contradicts their own regulation and definitions, allowing non-dairy products to use dairy names,” Lyon added.

“Consumers deserve to be treated with respect, transparency, and provided with clear and accurate food labels on the food they buy,” commented John Rettler, Tin Valley Farms, Neosho, WI, and president of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative. “Further, our dairy farmers deserve recognition for producing such a wholesome, quality product. Milk is clearly defined by the FDA, and this definition should be enforced.”

“The DAIRY PRIDE Act is a positive step toward ensuring labels at the supermarket accurately represent the items consumers decide to put on their tables,” said Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation. “Families deserve to be fully informed on the products they purchase.”

“The FDA cannot choose which regulation to enforce and which it will ignore. In this case, federal regulations are clear and FDA still chose to issue guidance in conflict with their own definitions, hurting Wisconsin farmers in the process,” said Kevin Krentz, president of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation.

“If federal agencies are going to ignore their own regulations, Congress must act to force compliance and protect farmers,” Krentz continued. “Wisconsin Farm Bureau is in full support of Senator Tammy Baldwin’s introduction of the DAIRY PRIDE Act, which would force the FDA to abide by their own definitions.”

“Misleading labeling has run amok in the American food indus-

try, confusing consumers and putting dairy farmers at a disadvantage,” said Darin Von Ruden, president of Wisconsin Farmers Union. “It is time we clear up the confusion around food labels by recognizing that ‘milk’ originates from mammals and items masquerading as such are often not nutritionally interchangeable.

“Akin to the misleading labeling of ‘Product of the USA’ stamped on imported beef repackaged in the United States and the growing misuse of the ‘organic’ label, this squandering of the term ‘milk’ sours consumers’ ability to make informed nutrition decisions at the grocery store,” Von Ruden continued.

“Idaho’s dairy producers join with farmers all over the country in frustration that manufacturers of other products get to take advantage of dairy’s good name by using terms reserved for real dairy products on the labels of their packages,” said Rick Naerebout, CEO of the Idaho Dairymen’s Association. “The use of those terms is limited to real dairy products so that consumers can be assured they are getting the great taste and all of the nutrients they expect when they buy foods labeled ‘milk,’ ‘cheese and ‘yogurt’.”

FDA’s guidance that allows non-dairy products to use dairy names “is just wrong, and I’m proud to take a stand for Wisconsin farmers and the quality products they make,” Baldwin said. “Our bipartisan DAIRY PRIDE Act will protect our dairy farmers and ensure consumers know the nutritional value of what they are purchasing.”

“For too long, plant-based products with completely different nutritional values have wrongly masqueraded as dairy,” said Jim Risch (R-ID). “This dishonest branding is misleading to consumers and a disservice to the dairy farmers who have committed their lives to making milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream, and more nutritious products Idahoans enjoy every day.

“It is past time that the Food and Drug Administration enforce its own definitions for dairy terminology, prevent imitation products from deceiving consumers, and start advocating for the farmers who feed us,” Risch added.

Additional co-sponsors of the legislation include US Sens. Mike Crapo (R-ID), Angus King (I-ME), Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Roger Marshall (R-KS) and Tina Smith (D-MN).

“Ensuring quality, nutritional dairy is not challenged by inaccurately-labeled imitation products protects our farmers and the consumers as they can be sure they are purchasing the standard of value and quality found in real milk,” Crapo commented.

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Farm Bill Dairy Title Could Address Make Allowances, Class I Pricing

Washington—As work gets underway on the next farm bill, support appears to be growing for addressing two issues pertaining to federal milk marketing orders in that legislation: Class I milk pricing and make allowances.

In the 2018 farm bill, a Class I formula change resulted in nearly \$750 million less in the federal order pool during COVID-19 market disruptions, meaning lower checks for many dairy farmers across the US, Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), noted at a House Agriculture Committee hearing here Tuesday.

“It is essential that adjustments are made both legislatively and through the federal order hearing process to ensure the system works fairly for all dairy farmers,” Duvall said. “Switching back to the higher-of Class I pricing formula in the most expedient manner possible is necessary to provide farmers with more price certainty.”

For the American Dairy Coalition (ADC), the Class I pricing formula has been the topic of meetings, conference calls, producer surveys and other outreach for several years. Since early 2021, ADC has been calling for a change back to the “higher of” for the Class I mover formula.

“The change to the averaging method for Class I was passed by Congress with language that a hearing could be held to consider alternatives after two years. It has now been almost four years, and dairy farmers are still waiting, while having lost almost \$1 billion, net, in Class I value over the past 45 months,” said Laurie Fischer, ADC CEO.

ADC is “pleased” that US Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) recently re-introduced her Dairy Pricing Opportunity Act, which would require USDA to hold an administrative hearing on the Class I mover, including the “higher of” option, Fischer, continued. “However, farmers deserve to have a more immediate re-do of the Class I method, which would allow a future hearing to look at more comprehensive long-term solutions.

“Class I needs immediate attention because the change to it in the last farm bill puts all the risk on farmers with a cap on the benefit and no floor on the losses it can create in farm milk checks,” Fischer added.

Fischer continued: “It undermines the way their risk management tools function and leaves them vulnerable to increasingly volatile market shifts amid geopolitical uncertainty.”

At a recent House Agriculture Committee farm bill listening session in Tulare, CA, Brad Bosch, a southern California dairy farmer and California Dairies, Inc., and Dairy Farmers of America member-owner, highlighted the work National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) is doing to lead the dairy industry toward a consensus proposal for modernization of the federal order system, and also highlighted the need to return to the previous “higher of” Class I mover formula due to the asymmetric risk farmers bear under the current formula.

During his hearing testimony Tuesday, Duvall also discussed federal order make allowances, noting that they can be changed “using information from voluntary cost-of-processing surveys taken by different researchers across the country.”

Voluntary participation in these cost surveys “means some processors may be left out when establishing data points stakeholders then use to formulate milk checks, potentially skewing dairy farmers’ checks negatively,” Duvall mentioned.

“Mandatory processing cost surveying would provide farmers the assurance that any make allowance increase reflects true costs borne by processors,” AFBF’s Duvall said. “This will have to be done legislatively as USDA does not have the power to authorize without Congress.”

One of six federal order reform proposals endorsed late last year by the board of directors of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) is the adoption of dynamic make allowances for milk price formulas which incorporate regular cost of processing audits and current-cost price adjusters.

The Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association recommends mandatory US Department of Agriculture staff audits at dairy plants at regular intervals to determine costs to produce dairy products surveyed in the National Dairy Products Sales Report.

“ADC does not support make allowance increases for processors without fixing the change made to Class I and without a comprehensive national hearing with a report to Congress that looks at solutions for a sustainable pricing structure,” Fischer said.

Separately, the American Dairy Coalition has included in its 2023 priorities the push for a more comprehensive farm bill hearing on the future sustainability of federal orders as Class I pool revenues continue to decline and more manufacturers opt out of federal order participation.

The farm bill “is the vehicle needed to help shape a direction for longer-term federal milk pricing solutions that address the long-term sustainability of FMMOs that are based on Class I fluid milk utilization,” Fischer said.

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Great Kitchens Food Company Completes Acquisition Of Uno Foods

Chicago—Great Kitchens Food Company, a manufacturer of private label take-and-bake pizzas and flatbreads wholly owned by Brynwood Partners VIII L.P., has completed the acquisition of the Uno Foods division of Uno Restaurant Holdings Corporation from its owner, Newport Global Advisors.

Founded in 1943, Pizzeria Uno is an iconic brand that is recognized as the birthplace of Chicago-style deep dish pizza. The Uno Foods division was established in 1988 to continue the success and heritage of the famous Pizzeria Uno brand.

Uno Foods manufactures and distributes frozen and refrigerated branded pizzas, calzones, entrees and appetizers across the grocery store, wholesale club, foodservice and e-commerce channels. Uno Foods manufactures all products from its frozen foods facility in Brockton, MA.

Headquartered in Romeoville, IL, Great Kitchens was formed in December 2020 to acquire ARYZTA North America's take-and-bake pizza business. Great Kitchens manufactures take-and-bake pizzas and flatbreads sold nationally

to grocery, club and mass retailers, as well as into foodservice outlets. Great Kitchens operates a 165,000 square foot crust facility in Chicago Heights, IL and a 155,000 square foot toppings facility in Romeoville, IL, employing approximately 800 people across the two facilities, according to the company.

"We are pleased to announce the acquisition of Uno Foods into Great Kitchens Food Company," said Henk Hartong, chairman and CEO of Brynwood Partners. "We are delighted to add the iconic Pizzeria Uno brand to our frozen portfolio. We welcome the Brockton, MA, facility to our business and look forward to making investments into that location as we work to expand the reach of the Pizzeria Uno brand."

"On behalf of the Newport team, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Brynwood team for their partnership in bringing this transaction to fruition. As a Chicago-based business, Great Kitchens is the ideal new owner of the Uno Foods business," said Tim Janszen, CEO of Newport Global Advisors.

Lactalis Canada Announces Inaugural Winner Of Internal Innovation Program

Toronto, Ontario—Lactalis Canada recently announced the inaugural winner of the company's internal innovation program, Lactalis Canada NEXT Ventures.

The program received over 100 submissions focused around the theme of waste reduction in all its forms, including, but not limited to, time, abilities, financial resources, food, processing, packaging, energy and material resources in 2022.

The winning project focused on a fully digitized reporting system for quality assurance to facilitate greater efficiencies in collecting and analyzing quality and food safety information.

The idea was submitted by Nathalie Rey, a quality manager at Lactalis Canada's St. Claude Manitoba plant, as a solution to reduce significant paper, time, and resources allocated to the current reporting system and, in turn, reduce product wastage.

The winning project will now go into incubation with a dedicated project team, key resources, tools and external expertise to build and implement a new reporting system.

"We know that some of the best ideas can come from those who have the deepest knowledge of the business. The winning project is an example of just that — where a quality manager on the ground at one of our manufacturing facilities identified a way to make a process she routinely performed more efficient, effective and sustainable," said Mark Taylor, president and CEO, Lactalis Canada.

"The Lactalis Canada NEXT Ventures program has created an internal platform to bring new ideas forward within the organization as seen with the overwhelming number of submissions of great quality and inventiveness in 2022," Taylor continued.

"Lactalis Canada NEXT Ventures is a great opportunity for anyone across the organization to share, develop and potentially implement the next big idea for the company," Nathalie Rey commented. "I am thrilled to have participated in this process, meet and collaborate with so many leaders, experts and peers across the company and most importantly, see my idea transform into reality."

Launched in April 2022, Lactalis Canada NEXT Ventures is an annual program designed to spur and accelerate future thinking, innovation, and creativity by empowering the company's people and leveraging internal crowdsourcing to explore ideas and bring to market new products, processes, technologies or business models.

Following an open call to all employees in April 2022, more than 100 waste-reduction related submissions were received from across the organization, according to program officials.

The top three innovative ideas were selected based on the potential impact and feasibility of each proposal.

The top three finalists, who were each awarded a cash prize, participated in the Lactalis Canada Next Ventures Pitch Day held in Toronto, and presented their proposed projects to the NEXT Council, comprised of leaders from across the organization, including Lactalis Canada's president and CEO.

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Dairy Groups Criticize USDA's Proposal To Cut Dairy Access In WIC Program

Washington—The US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) proposed rule to revise regulations governing food packages provided under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) has been criticized by several dairy industry organizations.

In its proposed rule, which was released in November 2022, USDA proposed nine changes to milk and milk substitutions in the WIC food packages, including, among other things: reducing the amount of milk provided in all child, pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding participant food packages; adding substitution options for milk; and removing cheese from the fully breastfeeding food package.

USDA accepted comments on its proposal through Feb. 21, 2023. The agency received several thousand comments on its proposal, many of which addressed its dairy provisions.

The milk and dairy maximum monthly allotment should not be reduced, including the complete elimination of the specific cheese allotment for fully breastfeeding women, the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) said in its comments.

"The additive nature of USDA's proposed cuts to dairy means the elimination of several gallons of milk per month for some WIC families," IDFA stated. For example, a pregnant woman with two children under five years of age could lose the equivalent of up to three gallons of milk per month, depending on the age of the children.

This proposed reduction does not align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) recommendation to increase intake of this nutrient-rich food group, which provides three of the nutrients of public health concern that are under-consumed, including calcium, vitamin D and potassium, IDFA said.

Maintaining the milk and dairy allotment is nutritionally important for all participants, IDFA continued. WIC regulations that promote the dietary habit of dairy consumption as part of healthy diets is critical early in childhood, and maternal consumption habits have been found to strongly influence the foods and beverages consumed by their children. Dairy consumption, specifically cheese and yogurt, has been shown to be inversely associated with postpartum weight retention and risk of obesity.

In addition to the monthly milk allotment provided for all WIC participants, IDFA said the specific cheese allotment for fully

breastfeeding women should not be eliminated. One of the reasons to provide this additional cheese allotment was to help increase the attractiveness of this food package to help encourage breastfeeding among WIC mothers.

"By eliminating this specific cheese allotment, the food package is unlikely to be more attractive to mothers," IDFA said. "The nutritional loss of eliminating this specific allotment will also reduce the calcium, protein, and other essential nutrients that the food package is providing to breastfeeding women."

IDFA agrees with USDA's proposal to require states to offer lactose-free dairy products as an option in all WIC food packages. Lactose-free varieties of milk, along with dairy products that are naturally low in lactose, such as yogurt and natural cheese, are important options for consumers that need to avoid lactose in their diet, while also providing the same essential nutrients as their conventional dairy counterparts.

IDFA also agrees with the proposed rule's flexibility to permit states to authorize a variety of container sizes, including those that don't add up exactly to the maximum allotted amount for that product.

The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) supports some of USDA's proposed updates to the WIC food packages, but is "strongly opposed to the proposed dairy reductions. Reducing the amount of dairy available in WIC packages will decrease participants' access to valuable nutrients needed

during pivotal life stages, such as the first 1,000 days of a child's life and their mother's pregnancy and lactation, and those proposed reductions could lead to long-term negative health consequences."

Among the proposed changes that NMPF supports: requiring the authorization of lactose-free milk; increasing yogurt substitution amounts for milk; allowing reduced-fat yogurts for one-year-old children without restrictions; and additional flexibilities for yogurt size containers.

However, access to dairy should not be reduced in a program designed to serve the nutrition needs of participants at nutritional risk, especially considering the crucial nutrients dairy provides to WIC participants, NMPF stated.

Reducing the amount of dairy foods participants can access through WIC may well decrease overall WIC participation, according to NMPF. Milk, cheese and yogurt are three of the top five foods redeemed in WIC, with cheese being second only to eggs program-wide.

USDA requested comments on the availability of plant-based beverages that meet the nutrition criteria for dairy products. NMPF urged USDA to continue to allow only nutritionally equivalent products as acknowledged by the DGA to be substitutes for milk, cheese and yogurt. USDA should take no actions which would imply that plant-based beverages are nutritionally equivalent to real dairy, "since they are not."

Since dairy foods are popular with WIC participants, it is possible that overall participation in the program could suffer as a result of the significant cuts to dairy in the proposed rule, the National

Dairy Council (NDC) stated in its comments. Research has shown that participation in WIC is associated with better diet quality in children. Nutrient-dense dairy foods are central components of the WIC food packages for women and children and have been so throughout the program's history.

Consistent with the current DGA, WIC regulations limit milk to lowfat and fat-free varieties, other than whole milk for one-year-olds. At the same time, a large body of evidence indicates that total dairy consumption, whether full-fat or lowfat, does not increase risk of type 2 diabetes or cardiovascular disease, NDC pointed out.

The DGA is revised every five years. Moreover, several years can elapse between the receipt of expert outside recommendations for WIC food package changes and the actual implementation of those changes.

As DGA recommendations evolve, the timetable for incorporating these into WIC food packages means there can be a substantial lag and at any given time, WIC foods may not fully reflect all DGA recommendations, NDC explained. This would be the case if, consistent with emerging science, a future DGA edition modified the recommendation to consume only lowfat or fat-free milk.

"WIC is intended to supply key nutrients that are commonly deficient in the program's eligible population," NDC said. "Reductions in the amount of dairy foods offered through WIC would affect populations that already fall short of essential nutrients supplied by dairy and consume less than DGA-recommended amounts of dairy foods."



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Standards Proposal

(Continued from p. 1)

other things, learn from stakeholders what FDA should be aware of when reviewing its food standards regulations and exploring how to modernize.

Then in September 2019, FDA held a public meeting to give interested parties an opportunity to discuss the agency's effort to modernize food standards of identity and to provide information about changes the agency could make to existing standards.

Finally, in February 2020, FDA reopened the 2005 proposed rule to receive new data, information, or further comments only on FDA-specific aspects of the proposed rule, including the agency's 13 general principles.

Many of the comments submitted during the reopened comment period suggested that the general principles be revised and consolidated to make the principles easier to understand and implement.

FDA and Food Safety and Inspection Service agree, and are withdrawing the 2005 proposed rule to reconsider how best to approach general principles and food standards modernization to ensure any future revised general principles are consistent with the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, the Federal Meat Inspection Act, and the Poultry Products Inspection Act.

A joint FDA and USDA effort to publish a new proposed rule on principles for food standards modernization was included in the Biden administration's Fall Unified Agenda, which was released in early January 2023.

In its comments submitted during the 2020 reopened comment period, the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) stated that it has "continually supported efforts to develop a better mechanism to update current standards in a timely way," but that the 2005 proposed rule "does little" to advance the process by which standards are established, modified or eliminated.

A large segment of the food standards of identity are for dairy products, IDFA noted. These standards "are significantly outdated and stand in the way of using new technologies, ingredients, and novel processes for dairy foods."

IDFA has submitted or signed onto numerous petitions to FDA requesting flexibility in the dairy standards. But meaningful standards modernization "has been hindered not by the quality or content of citizen petitions, but rather, as the agency has acknowledged, by a lack of resources and prioritization. Quite simply, the agency does not have the resources to make decisions in a timely manner on a standard-by-standard basis through notice and comment rulemaking."

The 2005 proposed rule, however, doesn't address FDA's resource dilemma, IDFA pointed out. It would have continued to approach standards modernization in a "vertical," standard-by-standard manner. It would have imposed additional hurdles for standards modernization by imposing an additional layer of requirements, rather than reducing those that currently exist. And it would not have cleared the backlog of pending citizen petitions.

Finalizing the 2005 proposed rule "would leave us with the same and quite possibly worsen the gridlock we have today," IDFA noted in its 2020 comments.

The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), in comments submitted to FDA in 2020, said it is "supportive" of the proposed action FDA was planning to take, which has two primary components: the establishment of a set of principles that FDA would use when assessing food standards; and a statement of the system by which FDA intends to revise, eliminate, or establish standards in response to petitions submitted by external parties or on FDA's own initiative.

However, NMPF also expressed concerns that "given the lack of enforcement of the standards already in place, any moves towards 'modernization' will prove of limited value. While the general principles are largely sound and

unobjectionable, we question the utility of setting abstract principles for standards of identity if FDA does not intend to enforce standards where they already exist."

In its 2020 comments, NMPF suggested that completing its analysis of comments received on the use of dairy terms for plant-based dairy alternatives and then providing definitive guidance on the proper use of these names "should be a higher priority for Food and Drug Administration than reopening a proposed rule that has lain dormant since 2005.

"More specifically, if FDA sincerely believes the employment of general principles is a sound and logical approach, the agency needs to acknowledge that the marketing of plant-based imitation dairy products utilizing standardized dairy terms is inconsistent with virtually every one of the principles," NMPF added. (FDA last week released draft guidance on the naming of plant-based foods that are marketed and sold as alternatives to milk.)

The Specialty Food Association (SFA) doesn't believe that the 2005 proposed standards rule provides an "appropriate path" for modernizing standards of identity, the organization stated in its 2020 comments.

The proposed rule "raises both legal concerns, in principle, and practical problems in its application," the SFA commented.

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Maine Accepting Dairy Improvement Fund Applications

Augusta, ME—The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) recently announced that Dairy Improvement Fund (DIF) applications are now being accepted.

DIF, a partnership between the DACF and the Finance Authority of Maine, provides financing to help Maine dairy businesses undertake projects to enhance their viability and vitality and improve product manufacturing, marketability, and production. DIF provides eligible borrowers loans of up to \$250,000 at a 1 percent fixed interest rate for capital improvements.

To be eligible for a DIF loan, borrowers must be a dairy enterprise, farm, or business making milk products. Eligible borrowers must: keep cows, sheep, or goats that contribute milk to their products; be in Maine and currently producing milk products that are sold commercially; and propose a project that is an eligible use of the fund.

Eligible uses include:

- Designing, constructing or improving milking parlors, dairy barns, and structures, and dairy feed storage structures; or
- Purchasing, constructing, or renovating buildings, land, and equipment to maintain and enhance the viability of an established dairy enterprise, dairy farm, or business making milk products

DIF has financed improvements at a dozen Maine dairy businesses. Past funded projects range from purchasing a vat/pasteurizer, cooling tanks, ice cream maker, and storage tanks; to constructing a cheese cave; to creating a milking parlor, milk storage space, and new animal housing.

Heather and Doug Donahue, the owners of Balfour Farm, Pittsfield, ME, applied for DIF financing because of the interest rate and interest-only period, and because they have aged out of some USDA Farm Service Agency programs. They used their loan to increase solar power on the farm, upgrade well pumps, and scale-up cheese-making equipment.

Caitlin Frame and Andy Smith, the owners of The Milkhouse Dairy Farm and Creamery, Monmouth, ME, applied for DIF financing because of the low interest rate. They used the loan to build a new milking parlor and to purchase a pickup truck and loader tractor to improve their hay operation.

Potential applicants are invited to contact DACF's Agricultural Resource Development Division by emailing questions to dacf@maine.gov; or by calling (207) 287-3491.

Open House Kicks Off 10-Year Anniversary Celebrations For Taste NY

Geneva, NY—New York Gov. Kathy Hochul recently kicked off the state's 10-year anniversary celebrations for Taste NY, New York's official "eat local, drink local" program, at a special open house at the Finger Lakes Welcome Center in Geneva, NY.

The Geneva celebration marked the first in a series of events that are planned across the state in recognition of the 2023 10-year milestone and the Grow NY program's success.

Taste NY highlights the quality, diversity, and economic impact of food and beverages grown, produced, or processed in New York state. Taste NY aims to create new opportunities for producers through events, retail locations, and partnerships, such as at the Great New York State Fair and the Barclays Tournament at Bethpage State Park.

Over the last 10 years, Taste NY has supported nearly 2,000 food and beverage producers participating in the program through retail outlets, events, and sponsorships.

Taste NY has grown significantly since its launch and products can now be found at nearly 70 locations across New York state, including the 11 regional Welcome Centers, airports, state parks, the Javits Center, and more. Over the last decade Taste NY has also partnered with major sports venues, such as MVP Arena and the Blue Cross Arena, and formed partnerships with high-profile event organizers to bring Taste NY products to major sporting events such as the PGA Tour, the 2023 FISU World University Games, and the Saratoga Race Course.

The recent kick-off celebration event at the Finger Lakes Welcome Center brought together regional agricultural, tourism, and supporting partners to introduce visitors to the New York farmers and producers whose products are available at the Welcome Center. Vendors sampling at the event included, among others, Muranda Cheese, the Gourmet Butter Shop, and New York Kitchen.

The Welcome Center offered 10 percent off all purchases, 99-cent ice cream, and the chance to win a special giveaway basket in celebration of the 10-year milestone.

First opened in 2018, the Taste NY Market at the Finger Lakes Welcome Center works closely with area craft beverage, agriculture, and culinary vendors to promote food and beverage producers from the Finger Lakes area and from across the state.

Since its opening, the Finger Lakes Welcome Center has brought in over 1,900 New York products into the market from over 280 vendors.

"Over the last decade, Taste NY has become a recognizable brand known for quality, creativity, and passion," Hochul said. "Taste NY is a cornerstone of our mission to promote New York's farmers and producers, showcasing the best food, beverage, and gift products from businesses in every corner of our great state."

"For 10 years, Taste NY has been promoting all the best products New York has to offer, from cheese and ice cream to jams and jellies, maple syrup, craft beverages, candies, and even gift items like candles and soap," said Richard A.

Ball, New York's agriculture commissioner.

"The program has had such a huge impact on our producers, helping to spotlight their hard work and introduce new consumers to their offerings," Ball added. "I'm excited to be celebrating a decade of Taste NY this year and look forward to an exciting year ahead."

"Muranda Cheese has been a proud partner of Taste NY since its inception," said Tom Murray, partner, Muranda Cheese, Waterloo, NY. "The partnership has allowed our business to grow. The Taste NY program enables visitors to be connected with unique opportunities here in central New York and elsewhere."

"This flavorful initiative has served to showcase all of the state's top-quality agricultural products and has proven to be incredibly successful, growing the tourism industry and supporting the overall economy of New York state," said Hope Knight, president, CEO and commissioner of Empire State Development.

"The Finger Lakes Welcome Center team is honored to have been selected as the starting location for the yearlong Taste 10th celebrations," said Jennifer Kime, market manager, Finger Lakes Welcome Center. "Being part of the Taste NY program is a rewarding experience as we showcase the bounty of New York State, focusing on the Finger Lakes region."

"The 10-year anniversary of Taste NY marks a decade of dedication to New York's agricultural sector. We are grateful for the positive impact it has had on the farmers and producers in our communities across the state," said Vanessa Petrossian, program director, Cornell Cooperative Extension Sullivan county.



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Companies Making Dairy Proteins In Plants Offer Input On US Biotech Regs

Washington—Two companies that produce dairy proteins in plants have offered their input on the federal government’s regulation of biotechnology.

Last September, President Biden issued Executive Order 14081, “Advancing Biomanufacturing and Biotechnology Innovation for a Sustainable, Safe, and Secure Bioeconomy,” with the goal of accelerating biotechnology innovation and growing America’s bioeconomy across multiple sectors, including agriculture, energy and health.

Two months ago, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) — on behalf of the primary agencies that regulate the products of biotechnology, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) — requested relevant data and information that may assist in identifying any regulatory ambiguities, gaps, inefficiencies, or uncertainties in the Coordinated Framework for the Regulation of Biotechnology, particularly with regard to new and emerging biotechnology products.

Interested parties had until Feb. 3, to send comments in response to OSTP’s Request for Information.

Mozza Foods is a Los Angeles-based biotech company that engineers soybeans to produce casein.

“Using our casein, we can make cheese and other products that match the taste, texture and functional characteristics of products made from cow’s milk,” Mozza Foods said in its comments. “By

producing dairy proteins in plants instead of cows, our cheese can be made with less water, less land, and fewer greenhouse gas emissions than cheese from cow’s milk.”

Within the next five years, Mozza Foods said it aims to make its biotechnology-based dairy alternatives available to US consumers.

While Mozza Foods said its products “have immense potential to address pressing challenges, create new opportunities in our food and agricultural systems, and further advance innovation as part of America’s bioeconomy,” the company also understands that “the production process for food crops containing animal proteins can pose potential risks without implementation of appropriate segregation measures and controls, given the allergenic nature of such proteins.

“That’s why we’ve built food safety, grain segregation, and a dedication to advanced controls into everything we do at Mozza Foods,” the company added. “For this sector to grow and deliver on its enormous potential as a key facet of the US bioeconomy, robust controls and proper regulatory oversight will be absolutely essential.”

Mozza Foods said the oversight responsibilities and regulatory programs of FDA, USDA, and EPA for biotech crops, as outlined in the Coordinated Framework, “are extensive, clear, and well understood, and provide more than adequate authority to ensure the safety of biotech crops, including food crops like ours.”

To mitigate the potential commingling and allergen cross-con-

tact risks relating to the production of food crops containing animal proteins, regulatory agencies and industry stakeholders should adopt science- and risk-based standards for segregation and other controls, Mozza Foods said.

“FDA and USDA should work with crop developers and other stakeholders to develop and adopt science-risk-based standards for food crop segregation, grain management, and other controls to mitigate risks relating to the production of biotech food crops produced to contain dairy or other allergenic proteins,” Mozza Foods stated. “These controls should aim to protect human health while promoting innovation and employ physiological, record keeping, technological, and other tools, building off of successful existing crop segregation and grain management systems currently in use for identity preserved crops.”

Founded in 2016, Nobell Foods, Inc., is a plant-grown protein company that uses genetic engineering to make animal proteins in plants. Nobell Foods is currently producing dairy proteins traditionally found in cow’s milk in soybeans.

After processing the soybeans to isolate the dairy proteins, Nobell uses those proteins to formulate food products, like cheese, “that have the same or similar properties as their animal-based counterparts,” the company explained in its comments.

“Because the proteins Nobell is producing are understood to cause allergic reactions in sensitive individuals, Nobell intends to maintain strict control over all aspects of the protein that will be used as a food ingredient, along with the soybeans used to produce it,” the company added. “Nobell is also

actively engaging with the relevant regulatory agencies to ensure that the protein, which is intended for use as a food ingredient, reaches the market safely and with appropriate labeling.”

Plant-grown proteins can provide affordable and accessible alternative proteins to Americans while providing economic opportunities to growers, easing reliance on foreign countries for food production, and increasing food security, Nobell Foods said.

“Using plants, like soybeans, to make these proteins has many advantages over other methods, including precision fermentation,” the company continued. “Precision fermentation is being used by many companies within the alternative protein space to also create animal proteins from sources outside of the animal, but it comes with drawbacks. The key drawbacks are that it is an expensive way to produce affordable food grade proteins, and it is a difficult technology to scale, as bioreactor capacities are limited and expensive to run.”

The food protein expressed in Nobell’s plants, and intended for use as a food ingredient, “has a history of safe use in the food supply, is well-characterized in terms of food safety and allergenicity, and will remain throughout its life cycle subject to all appropriate food safety regulations,” the company said. “In the coming months, Nobell will continue to engage with FDA regarding its food ingredient and will work with FDA under its allergen labeling authorities to ensure that products containing Nobell’s proteins are appropriately labeled for consumers and others in the value chain.”

In recognition of the allergenic profile of the protein it produces, Nobell said its commercialization plans “turn on use of a closed-loop system based on familiar principles of identity preservation and stewardship used in the production of other identity preserved beans. Nobell’s intended product is the processed protein for use as a food ingredient; it has no intent to commercialize or market the soybean seeds themselves.”

The current regulatory framework under which Nobell operates “is without gaps and is otherwise sufficiently comprehensive to allow for the safe commercialization of its product,” the company said. USDA’s regulatory framework currently requires Nobell to grow its soybeans under permits that impose conditions to ensure containment during and after movement and environmental release.

And FDA’s Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act authorities “provide comprehensive oversight over the resulting food ingredients and soy byproducts, including by requiring appropriate labeling under FDA’s allergen labeling authorities,” the company noted.



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'Gruyere' Is Generic

(Continued from p. 1)

generic and therefore ineligible for such protection.

The TTAB agreed with the opposers and held that "GRUYERE" could not be registered as a certification mark because it is generic, the appeals court explained. The Swiss and French consortiums filed a complaint challenging the TTAB's decision in US district court, which granted summary judgment for the opposers on the same grounds as articulated in the TTAB's decision.

The appeal to the US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit followed the district court's decision.

Switzerland and France have approved "Gruyere" as a protected designation of origin (PDO) and a protected geographical indication (PGI) respectively, the appeals court noted. Those designations each set forth detailed requirements that dictate the process of Gruyere production, including that the cheese be produced in specified areas of Switzerland and France.

Parallel protections do not exist in the US, the appeals court explained. While the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a standard of identity for "Gruyere cheese," which sets forth requirements that must be met for cheese to be labeled as such, those requirements are "far less stringent" than those governing Gruyere production in Switzerland and France.

"As a result, cheese — regardless of its location of production — has been labeled and sold as gruyere in America for decades," the appeals court noted. In addition to US-produced gruyere-labeled cheese, there is evidence that cheese has been imported from numerous countries and sold in the US as gruyere.

The appeals court believes the FDA standard of identity for "Gruyere cheese" is evidence that the term "GRUYERE" is generic. To start, while consumers may not be aware of specific FDA regulations, as the TTAB recognized, "consumers are affected by the regulations because they govern the labels that consumers see in stores, advertising and on webpages."

And because the FDA standard of identity for "Gruyere cheese" has set constraints for labeling products as gruyere since 1977, it follows that its requirements, which do not prescribe any limitations on where the cheese must be produced, "accord with consumer expectations about the gruyere label," the appeals court stated.

The Swiss and French consortiums noted that other cheese products, such as Roquefort and Reggiano, are the subject of both an FDA standard of identity and a protected certification mark. But that "demonstrates only that

FDA standards of identity should not be used as conclusive evidence of genericness, not that standards of identity are irrelevant to the genericness inquiry," the appeals court said.

The court did not hold that the FDA standard of identity for the term "Gruyere cheese" prevents its registration as a certification mark, the appeals court noted. Rather, the court found that "the FDA's standard of identity for GRUYERE presents strong evidence that GRUYERE is a generic term."

In sum, the Swiss and French consortiums "cannot overcome what the record makes clear: cheese consumers in the United States understand 'GRUYERE' to refer to a type of cheese, which renders the term generic," the appeals court said.

"The United States remains a bastion for the defense of consumers' and producers' property rights that have been trampled in Europe and many countries around the world," said Jaime Castaneda, CCFN's executive director. "The court has sent a clear message that European attempts to stop American producers from using generic food names in the US will be firmly rejected. It is a momentous victory for American consumers, farmers and food manufacturers."

With support from USDEC, NMPF, CCFN member companies and other allies, CCFN said it committed the necessary resources to show the widespread use of Gruyere in the US marketplace, and craft the successful argument that non-European consumers and companies should retain their

rights to consume produce and sell Gruyere in the US.

"This is an outstanding result for manufacturers and farmers here in the United States," commented Krysta Harden, USDEC's president and CEO. "This sets a terrific precedent for the right to use common food names in the United States. Now we need other countries to likewise stand up for what's right and defend that use just as strongly."

"Today's announcement represents a significant win for America's dairy farmers," commented Jim Mulhern, NMPF's president and CEO. "NMPF rejects blatant European attempts to unjustly limit competition from American companies and will continue to fight alongside our allies to oppose efforts to monopolize common name foods."



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FDA Updates Proposed Human Foods Program, ORA Restructuring

Silver Spring, MD—The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Tuesday announced that it has begun a national search for a new deputy commissioner for human foods and also provided an update on the proposed restructuring of the agency's Human Foods Program and Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA).

FDA Commissioner Robert M. Califf last month had announced a new vision for the agency's Human Foods Program, and also announced what he called a "transformative vision" for ORA, FDA's field-based operations.

For the proposed Human Foods Program, one key to success will be an empowered deputy commissioner for human foods who will report directly to the FDA commissioner, FDA noted. The agency is focused on identifying a candidate that has the expertise to provide leadership over FDA's nutrition and food safety programs (including programs aimed at preventing and responding to chemical, microbial, and other hazards).

The ideal candidate will have executive-level and real-world experience sufficient to lead the newly envisioned Human Foods Program and its vast remit. This individual will also have clear line of authority over the proposed Human Foods Program, which would include the existing components of the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), the Office of Food Policy and Response (OFPR), and certain human foods-related components of ORA.

To ensure the new Human Foods Program and all other regulatory programs at FDA are successful, work on an agency-wide transformation effort of how the programs and field functions are organized and operate is underway.

FDA's proposal will create a new model that the agency said better integrates ORA's enterprise-wide expertise in field-based operations with product subject matter experts who sit in all the agency's programs.

The deputy commissioner for human foods and other program leads will be charged with setting strategic direction for food inspections and have authority over program resource allocation.

To achieve these goals, the agency has started the process of:

- Assessing specific functions of ORA, CFSAN and OFPR to be unified into a new Office of Integrated Food Safety Systems Partnerships that will engage with state, local, tribal, and territorial food safety regulatory partners. The assessment will also include how best to enhance connectivity with international food safety partnership programs.

- Analyzing inspection and compliance functions that sit within both ORA and program offices across the agency to determine opportunities to streamline operations and clarify decision-making authority at each step of the inspection process as well as integrate new automation and information technology (IT) support.

The new processes will enable ORA and program personnel to function as a multidisciplinary team, eliminating sequential steps,

immediately bringing the best expertise to bear on the problem at hand, and speeding decisions.

- Determining how best to empower the deputy commissioner for human foods and leaders of other programs, along with the associate commissioner for regulatory affairs, to oversee program and field resource allocation, including publicly mapping the budget to functional activities to provide clarity on resource allocation.

- Ensuring seamless coordination across FDA and state-operated food laboratory operations by evaluating the foods laboratory programs, including the relationships, roles, and responsibilities among CFSAN, the Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), ORA and state-operated laboratories.

- Improving FDA's ability to conduct risk prioritization to deliver the highest public health benefit by performing an extensive evaluation of how the Human Foods Program accomplishes risk management, particularly risk prioritization, given the multitude of demands and the scarce resources, and how this can be used to guide dynamic work planning and resource allocation.

- Planning for greater enterprise transformation of certain ORA IT functions, which will be coordinated with the FDA's Office of Digital Transformation (ODT). This move builds on an existing project to create an enterprise-wide platform for managing inspections and compliance activities.

- Evaluating training programs, including for FDA investigators, to see how they can best serve the needs of both FDA, regulatory partners and regulated industry. This will include assessing whether some training functions or roles should be unified into the Human Foods Program and other product programs.

FDA also announced that this vision will include moving cosmetics regulation and color certification functions out of CFSAN and into the Office of the Chief Scientist.

FDA is seeking to finalize its proposal this fall. This process includes the development of a reorganization package that contains the newly designed structure, an established budget, and a detailed mapping and crosswalk of staff from the current to new organization.

The package then undergoes a thorough review before advancing to Congress for a 30-day notification period where members may raise any concerns that the FDA may need to address.

Afterwards, FDA will issue a *Federal Register* notice, provide notification to and engage, as needed, in negotiations with the unions for impacted staff, prior to initiation of the new proposal.



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Land O'Lakes Receives Patent For System, Method For Producing Concentrated Cream

Washington—The US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) recently awarded a patent for a system and method for producing concentrated cream.

Inventors are Thomas A. Glenn, III, Richard Dinesen, Clint Garoutte, and Jason Thompson. The patent was assigned to Land O'Lakes.

The patent disclosure provides concentrated cream products and methods for producing concentrated cream products from cream and involves removing water from the liquid cream while retaining native cream constituents.

As a result, concentrated creams are produced with essentially no by-products, the patent summary explained. More specifically, the concentrated creams and processes for producing concentrated cream result in a water-only by-product stream, which does not require further processing or costly disposal. By retaining native cream constituents, the concentrated cream may provide health benefits to the consumer.

According to one implementation of the invention, a method of producing concentrated cream involves providing a cream composition in a homogenous, oil-in-water emulsion. The cream composition including fat globules, phospholipid membrane components, nonfat solids, and initial fat content of between about 35 to about 55 percent by weight.

Moisture is removed through evaporative processing to produce the concentrated cream, which remains in a homogenous state, retains the fat globules, phospholipid membrane components, nonfat solids, and includes a concentrated fat content of at least about 70 percent by weight.

The concentrated cream products of this invention may be used as stand-alone products, or may be used in combination with other food components to form cream-containing products. While some creams used as a component in food products may contain about 50 percent moisture by weight, the concentrated cream products of this invention include a substantially reduced moisture content, which allows them to be incorporated into food products having strict moisture requirements.

In process cheese, the concentrated cream may be used as an added fat source while delivering increased milk solids and improved flavor characteristics over dried sources of cream, the patent added.

Danone North America To Invest Up To \$65 Million In FL Bottle Production Line

Broomfield, CO, and White Plains, NY—Danone North America recently announced that it will invest up to \$65 million over the next two years to create a new bottle production line in Jacksonville, FL.

The investment will support Danone North America's long-term growth strategy and will deliver key benefits across the US business, including advancing operational excellence, enabling flexibility in bottle design, accelerating the company's sustainability goals, and driving cost efficiencies, the company said.

The new investment will increase production of several of

Danone North America's coffee and creamer brands in the US, including International Delight, Silk, and SToK.

It also serves to meet consumer demand in these categories while supporting the company's sustainability goal by reducing overall water consumption, reducing carbon emissions and accelerating the company's goal of packaging circularity, the company added.

"We are delighted to announce this investment in our North American business, which will allow us to capitalize on consumer demand in key beverage categories including coffee creamers plant-based creamers, and ready-to-drink

coffee, while also supporting our long-term growth agenda," said Shane Grant, group deputy CEO, CEO Americas.

"This investment will help us keep our products on our customers' shelves and give more American consumers the Danone products they love," Grant continued.

"We are thrilled to be investing in the people and economy of Jacksonville, creating 40 new jobs in addition to supporting our approximately 110 existing employees, all with competitive wages and benefits," said Mike Sloboda, Danone North America's chief operations officer. "This investment will allow us to better serve our customers and operate our business in an even more efficient and sustainable way."



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Gen Z-Owned Skyr Co. Reaches Younger Customers With Quality, Media & Merch

Westfield, PA—A new organic farmstead operation founded by two Gen Z sisters is taking the specialty yogurt sector by storm with its line of Icelandic skyr.

In business less than a year, Painterland Sisters Organic Farmstead is a “certified woman-owned business on a mission,” according to co-founders Hayley and Stephanie Painter.

That mission was to launch an environmentally-responsible, farmstead business using organic milk from the sisters’ family-owned Northern Pennsylvania farm.

A few years back, Hayley and Stephanie had the opportunity to meet a 10th-generation Icelandic skyr yogurt maker.

“We teamed up with him to learn the in’s and out’s of skyr, quickly identifying the space for it in the market and recognizing how we could use our family’s dairy farm to create it,” Hayley Painter said.

The company officially launched in March of 2022, and its skyr yogurt is now sold nationwide in Natural Grocers, Central Market, MOMs Organic Market, Giant Eagle Market District, and Giant Carlisle.

Painterland Sisters announced its Organic Skyr Yogurt is now available at over 370 Sprouts Farmers Market locations nationwide.

The distribution win is the biggest to date, reaching supermarket shelves in 23 states.

“We couldn’t ask for a better, more trusted partner than Sprouts Farmers Market to introduce our skyr to people in the West, Midwest and Southeast,” said Hayley Painter said.

So Why Skyr?

A variety of factors make skyr different from other yogurt products, beginning with the milk source, Haley and Stephanie noted.

“Growing up on our family’s fourth-generation organic dairy farm, we learned the importance of sourcing exceptional milk produced via regenerative farming,” they said.

“High quality milk is one of the reasons our skyr is much thicker and creamier than typical brands,” they continued.

By using double cream with 6 percent milk-fat, we’re able to produce a taste that is much more decadent than most yogurts, the sisters noted.

With 65 percent of the population struggling with lactose digestion, Painterland wanted to fill the market gap for a full-fat dairy yogurt that was also lactose-free.

In adding a lactase enzyme to break down lactose, the company was able to maintain high levels of protein and probiotics.

In doing so, Painterland has created the only lactose-free, organic skyr yogurt in the US market, the company continued.

“Finally, we only sweeten our yogurt naturally and organically – using the sweetness nature provides – without adding non-nutritives,” the sisters said.

Flavors include Blueberry Lemon, Vanilla Bean, Plain, Meadow Berry and Strawberry.

With a focus on regenerative agriculture, the operation produces roughly 55,000 5.3-ounce cups of yogurt every two weeks, sourcing milk from the family’s fourth-generation organic dairy farm.

“We source from other local farms as well,” the sisters said. “The quality of our milk is exceptional, making our yogurt that much more high quality.”

Painterland’s consumer base is largely female, Hayley and Stephanie noted. The brand is especially attractive to “mothers with an interest in wellness and nutrition.”



Young women on a mission: Painterland Sisters co-founders Hayley and Stephanie Painter are working to connect consumers with the direct source of their food – American dairy farmers. Less than a year old, their Painterland Sisters Organic Skyr is now available nationwide.

Deciding factors include quality ingredients, a connection with farmers, traceability, nutrients and convenience, they continued. Lactose-free and nutrient-dense attributes are likewise important.

“Our consumers are looking for a product that has quality ingredients and traceability to the source, along with an approachability that’s suitable for their on-the-go lifestyle,” the sisters said.

Targeting Gen Z: Media & ‘Merch’

Not surprisingly, the Gen Z consumer base – those born in the mid-to-late 1990s to the early 2010s – has also responded well to the brand.

“The younger consumer base identifies with our company because we ARE the younger consumer base,” the sisters said.

“We aim to make agriculture relatable and fun-loving, while utilizing social media to show what’s going on with the farm itself,” Haley and Stephanie continued.

Along with social media, another tool to connect with a younger demographic is “merchandise specifically marketed to a particular fan base.

“We feel that merch is super important to connect people to the very pulse of our mission,” Hayley and Stephanie said. “It deepens

the relatability and emotional connection to the brand.”

“It’s beyond yogurt,” they continued. “We say ‘yogurt is the conduit for our mission.’ Every time we can put a yogurt or merch into someone’s hand, we open up a conversation about the importance of sustainable agriculture and transparency.”

Painterland’s successful start up wasn’t without challenges, however.

The biggest hurdle remains “navigating through the unknowns,” the two said.

“As we grow, it’s balancing our passion for education with our need to sell dairy products in order to utilize the milk that’s produced on our family’s farm.”

“We aim to find new avenues to connect consumers to the source of their food, and to continue educating them on the importance of nutrient-dense, sustainable animal products for their body and for mother earth herself,” the sisters said.

“We’ll continue to come out with other organic dairy products to ensure that our family’s dairy farm is not another statistic in the dwindling number,” the sisters continued.

For more information, visit www.painterlandsisters.com.

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Glanbia Cheese

(Continued from p. 1)

Glanbia Cheese UK has two manufacturing facilities in the United Kingdom — Llangefni in Wales and Magheralin in Northern Ireland — as well as a corporate office in Northwich, UK.

The original Glanbia Cheese Limited Joint Venture was established between Glanbia and Leprino Foods in 2000.

Glanbia Cheese EU is located in Portlaoise, Ireland. It was established in 2018 and commenced production in 2021.

Post completion of the transaction, the existing team will continue to manage the business, led by CEO Paul Vernon and his senior management team, with no disruption to day-to-day operations.

“Having successfully partnered with Glanbia since 2000, we are proud of the high-quality business that we have helped build. We look forward to working with Paul Vernon and the local team to ensure a seamless transition for our employees, customers and suppliers,” commented Mike Durkin, president and CEO of Leprino Foods.

“We intend to take advantage of our combined expertise, knowledge and strengths to further enhance the business and are committed to ongoing investments

in the core capabilities and the talented people that set us apart from our competition,” Durkin continued. “We thank Glanbia for their valued partnership and wish them continued success.”

“Glanbia Cheese is a strong, well invested business with an excellent team and deep customer and supplier relationships. We are excited by this proposed transaction which will see us align our business into Leprino Foods, the largest and most successful Mozzarella business in the world,” Vernon said.

“Glanbia Cheese will be a strong fit within Leprino Foods, with its strategic focus on our category,” Vernon added. “We look forward to working with Leprino Foods to build on our success as a trusted supplier and business partner to our customers in the pizza category across the UK and Europe.”

“Glanbia and Leprino Foods have enjoyed many years of successful partnership since our first joint venture was established. As we have evolved our portfolio at Glanbia in recent years, we have become very focused on our nutrition strategy, serving consumer health and wellness categories through our brands and ingredient solutions business,” said Siobhan Talbot, group managing director, Glanbia plc.

“From the plc’s perspective the logic of this transaction is clear as it allows us to focus on our core better nutrition strategy and to allocate further capital to our global growth businesses,” Talbot continued. “We have had a long and successful partnership with Leprino Foods, and we wish Paul and the entire team every success for the next chapter of the business.”

Subject to the completion of due diligence and execution of definitive agreements, it is expected that the potential transaction will close in the first half of 2023.

It is expected that Glanbia plc will receive initial cash consideration in excess of 160 million euros (inclusive of repayment of shareholder loans) for the sale of its stake in Glanbia Cheese, with the possibility of additional contingent consideration of up to 25 million euros over the next three years, dependent on business performance.

Leprino Foods Company, headquartered in Denver, CO, is the largest Mozzarella producer in the world, and is also a leading supplier of lactose, whey protein and sweet whey. Leprino Foods employs approximately 5,000 people worldwide and has global sales in over 55 countries.

Morinaga Nutritional Foods Acquires Moocho, Tofurky

Hood River, OR—Tofurky, a US manufacturer of plant-based meats, recently announced that Morinaga Nutritional Foods, the US-based manufacturer of Mori-Nu Silken Tofu, has acquired the company and its sister brand, Moocho.

Founded in 2019, Moocho produces dairy-free cheeses, including dairy-free cheese-style shreds and dairy-free Cream cheese-style spreads. Tofurky, founded in 1980, is a manufacturer of plant-based meats.

Tofurky and Morinaga Nutritional Foods have a long-standing relationship, as Morinaga has been a tofu supplier for Tofurky products for 17 years.

The acquisition of Tofurky and Moocho will help strengthen the integrated supply chain and future category growth for the brands, according to the recent announcement.

Tofurky will continue manufacturing products at its facility in Hood River, OR.

In addition to Tofurky’s facility in Hood River, Morinaga Nutritional Foods operates a tofu manufacturing facility in Tualatin, OR, and a sales and R&D office in Torrance, CA.

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Coalition Of Nutrition Leaders Urge Scale-Up Of Small-Quantity Lipid-Based Supplements

New York—Through a joint statement in *Nature Food*, a coalition of nutrition leaders is calling for rapid scale-up of what is described as a relatively new cost-effective and highly impactful preventive intervention in populations in which child undernutrition is highly prevalent and dietary quality is very poor.

Used to enrich the diets of children six to 23 months of age, small-quantity lipid-based nutrient supplements would help children facing undernutrition survive and thrive, according to the joint statement.

Small quantity lipid-based nutrient supplements are small packets of a nutrient-dense paste that can be added to the food the family already feeds the young child or be consumed directly as a snack. Randomized trials in low- and middle-income countries showed that these supplements reduced mortality by 27 percent, severe wasting by 31 percent, severe stunting by 17 percent, iron deficiency anemia by 64 percent, and developmental delay by 16 to 19 percent for children between six and 23 months of age.

Typically composed of peanut butter, oil, milk powder, vitamins, and other essential nutrients, these

supplements are similar to the ready-to-use foods used to treat children with acute malnutrition, but this preventive intervention requires a much smaller quantity: only four teaspoons per day.

The nutrition leaders who authored the joint statement were from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Helen Keller Intl, UNICEF, US Agency for International Development (USAID), University of California Davis, the World Bank, and the World Food Programme.

“Preventing malnutrition can avert needless deaths and save generations of children from a future of illness, poor school results, and poverty,” said Abigail Perry, director of nutrition at World Food Programme. “This important work shows that by expanding access to small quantity lipid-based supplements for children who need it most, we have the ability to enhance child survival and development.”

“This new evidence shows that small-quantity lipid-based nutrient supplements can have a massive impact on reducing child mortality, severe wasting, stunting, and iron deficiency,” said Meera Shekar, global lead for nutrition, World Bank.

PERSONNEL

David Haaf Tapped As New IDDBA CEO

Madison—The International Dairy Deli Bakery Association (IDDBA) announced Tuesday the appointment of David Haaf as its new president and CEO, effective late next month.

Haaf will succeed current IDDBA president and CEO Michael Eardley, who announced plans to retire in October 2022 after leading the organization since 2014.

Haaf, who most recently served as vice president of foodservice and Starbucks operations for K-VA-T Food Stores, Inc., brings over 30 years of retail foodservice and culinary experience to his new post. He has been an active supporter of IDDBA for over 15 years.

After a nationwide search, David was the clear choice to our next leader, said IDDBA board chair Dominique Delugeau.

“David’s expansive merchandising and operations experience provides him unique insight into the needs and challenges of our member base and industry,” he continued.

Former Sartori CEO Jeff Schwager To Succeed Auricchio As New CCFN Chair

Arlington, VA—Jeff Schwager has been tapped as the new Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN) chair, succeeding Errico Auricchio, who led CCFN since its founding in 2012.

For over a decade, Auricchio has advocated for the defense of common cheese and dairy product names through CCFN. Last year, the Consortium earned a victory when a US federal court determined that “Gruyere” is considered a generic name.

Auricchio said when he agreed to leading CCFN as chair, he couldn’t have imagined all it would turn into.

“I’m proud of everything we’ve accomplished, and have full faith that Jeff will continue to lead the fight,” he said.

Schwager brings decades of cheese industry experience to his new role, most recently serving as CEO of Sartori Company, Plymouth, WI, from 2009 to 2022.

“I’m thankful for Errico and his years of service,” Schwager said. “His fierceness and passion for doing what’s right has set a tone and put CCFN in a position to succeed.”

“While we face many challenges around the world, I’m

optimistic because of the foundation that Errico has laid, and because of the commitment that our members have for this issue.”

CARL GERLACH will step into the role of president and CEO of **Norseland, Inc.**, immediately, succeeding CEO and current president JOHN SULLIVAN. Sullivan has worked for Norseland, Inc./TINE SA for more than 32 years, including the last 17 years as president and CEO. He will transition to the role of strategic advisor for Norseland/TINE. Gerlach comes to Norseland with extensive dairy industry experience, having held several senior leadership roles at Kraft Foods, Sara Lee, Unilever, and most recently, CEO of Maple Hill Creamery.

DAVID LYNN has been named president and CEO of **Agri-Mark, Inc.**, after serving as the organization’s interim CEO since September 2022. Lynn joined Agri-Mark in 2018 as senior vice president of operations, and was promoted to senior vice president, top operations in September 2020. Lynn has nearly 28 years of experience in consumer packaged goods and food manufacturing. Prior to Agri-Mark, Lynn worked for the Kroger Company for 12 years, including three years as vice president of operations for Kroger’s subsidiary, Turkey Hill Dairy.

RICK BEAMAN has been tapped to succeed GARY AGGUS as president of **Hiland Dairy Foods Company**, effective April 1. Aggus joined Hiland Dairy in 1984 as a district sales manager, working his way up the ranks to become president in 2003. In 2006, Aggus was promoted to Prairie Farms’ chief operating officer and president of joint ventures. He has also served as a board member of the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), MilkPEP, Quality Check Dairies, Inc., and the Missouri Dairy Products Association, among others. Beaman has spent his entire career in the dairy industry, holding executive positions with other national dairy companies before joining Hiland Dairy in 2012. In 2014, Beaman was promoted to vice president of Hiland Dairy and joint ventures.

BRIGETTE WOLF has joined **My/Mochi** as chief marketing officer, responsible for introducing the LA-based mochi brand into new categories and markets. Wolf arrives at her new post with more than 20 years of marketing experience for global brands like DiGiorno and Oreo.

USDA News

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*USDA Project Number 13377

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IDFA Foundation Grants Aim To Reduce Hunger, Boost Minority Students In Ag

Washington—The IDFA (International Dairy Foods Association) Foundation has completed its first fiscal year by awarding three grants totaling more than \$63,000 to nonprofits working to reduce food insecurity and advance and empower minority students entering careers in food and agriculture.

The IDFA Foundation seeks to make an important contribution to people and communities on behalf of the US dairy industry by providing grants to support individuals and organizations that work to advance human health and nutrition, improve environmental stewardship and sustainability, and enhance the welfare of people working in food manufacturing.

Established in 1958 as the Dairy Recognition and Education Foundation, today the IDFA Foundation is charting a new path for people and communities.

“Working to make a difference for people and communities on behalf of America’s dairy processors, the IDFA Foundation is putting our limited resources to work with committed, creative partners who are reducing hunger, promoting environmental stewardship, and contributing to a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce within the US dairy industry,” commented Matt Herrick, executive director of the IDFA Foundation and IDFA’s senior vice president, public affairs and communications. “I am grateful to our partners and donors.”

Last month, the IDFA Foundation launched the IDFA Foundation Future Fund in partnership with Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) to help make career opportunities in the dairy industry available to MANRRS students engaged in or recently graduated from college, graduate school, or technical school.

The IDFA Foundation Future Fund helps current or recent graduates enter internships or career pathways programs with dairy processing companies.

The Future Fund provides \$7,500 in living expenses to MANRRS members who are attending or recently graduated from a school with an active MANRRS chapter, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), other Minority Serving Institutions, and other higher education systems, as well as a \$1,000 travel scholarship to attend the annual MANRRS Training Conference & Career Expo.

The overall value of the funding opportunity for each student is \$8,500 and may be applied to an internship of up to 15 weeks or a career pathways program offered

by a dairy processor anywhere in the US.

The IDFA Foundation collaborates with MANRRS to identify processing companies with suitable opportunities and connects those potential employers with interested MANRRS candidates.

For more information, visit www.manrrs.org.

“The IDFA Foundation Future Fund will help us connect more MANRRS students with career opportunities in dairy by reducing or removing the burden of relocation costs, housing and living expenses, and other barriers,” said Ebony Webber, chief operating officer of MANRRS.

Last September, the IDFA Foundation presented a charitable grant to Edesia Nutrition for \$28,100 to offset the costs for sourcing and/or transporting US dairy products used by Edesia in the manufacture of nutrient dense, ready-to-use foods (RUFs).

At the time, the grant would support approximately four truckloads of dairy ingredients used in the manufacture of RUF products, including Plumpy’Nut, a product specifically formulated with peanuts and dairy ingredients for the nutritional rehabilitation of children from six months of age and adults suffering from malnutrition.

Edesia was founded in 2009 as a social enterprise with the mission to help treat and prevent malnutrition in the world’s most vulnerable populations. Edesia produces

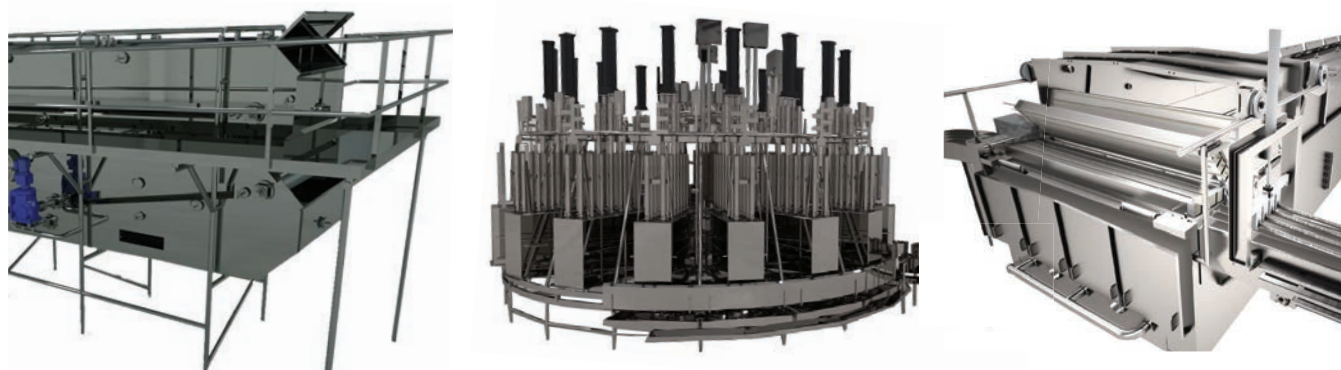
enough nutrient dense RUFs to help transform the lives of over 2.5 million malnourished children worldwide each year.

To learn more about Edesia’s work, visit www.edesianutrition.org.

“We are grateful for your support in helping Edesia offset some of the costs for sourcing and transporting US dairy products — a key ingredient in the life-saving foods we produce,” said Navyn Salem, founder and CEO of Edesia Nutrition.

In October 2022, the IDFA Foundation presented a charitable donation in the amount of \$5,000 to Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida in response to Hurricane Ian. The financial support helped to provide more than 20,000 meals to individuals facing hunger due to the storm’s impact on the region.

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COMING EVENTS

www.cheesereporter.com/events.htm

Popular Vermont, Oregon Cheese Festivals Return With New Venues

Greensboro, VT and Central Point, OR—Cheese fans are celebrating the return of two long-time favorite cheese festivals, both of which have new venues to accommodate larger crowds.

Tickets are still available for the Oregon Cheese Festival, which returns to its new venue here March 11-12 at the Jackson County Expo/Seven Feathers Event Center.

Hosted by the Oregon Cheese Guild for 16 years, the festival returned in 2022 with a new site able to welcome a greater number of attendees.

The festival is limited to participants 21 and over, and Sunday is open to all ages. Tickets purchased online are \$20 for adults and \$5

per child. Tickets purchased on-site are \$25 and \$10, respectively.

Admission includes all cheese, food, and non-alcoholic beverage samples.

Vermont Festival Set For Aug. 13

The Vermont Cheese Council (VCC) announced the return of the Vermont Cheesemakers Festival Aug. 13 at Highland Center for the Arts in Greensboro, VT.

Now in its 12th year, the often sold-out festival had previously been held at Shelburne Farms in Shelburne, VT.

More than 30 artisan cheese makers will be in attendance, along with artisan food producers, and local wine, beer and spirit makers.

Cornell Will Offer Free Four-Hour Online Dairy Lab Seminar April 26

Ithaca, NY—Cornell University will host a free, virtual Dairy Lab Seminar via Zoom on Thursday, April 26 starting at 9 a.m. EST.

The four-hour, instructor-led seminar provides dairy laboratory personnel with regulatory, procedural, and scientific updates

Curriculum is designed for those actively working in dairy product testing and quality assurance programs, but may be of interest to Certified Milk Inspectors, plant receivers, and other plant personnel.

Topics of discussion include split sample review, current lab trends

and issues, *Food Safety Culture for Laboratory Workers*, and *Rapid Methods for Pathogens and Spoilage*.

There will be no in-person sessions for the seminar, and registrations must be received by April 12, 2023.

Upon receipt of registration, participants will receive an automatic email confirmation. Substitute registrants are accepted at any time.

To sign up for the seminar and check out Cornell's complete course schedule for 2023, visit www.cals.cornell.edu/dairy-extension/course-calendar.

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Tickets for industry members – employees of distributors, retailers, groceries, restaurants, food writers influencers, and other industry organizations – are \$90.

These tickets grant access to industry sampling and sales, and educational sessions between 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., plus the remainder of the festival hours.

A general admission ticket is \$69.50 and includes all sampling, education, tasting and pairing sessions; food trucks, and a curated swag bag with an exclusive branded festival wine glass.

For more information, exhibit details or to purchase tickets online, visit www.vtcheesefest.com.

NCCIA Conference Set For Oct. 10-12 In Sioux Falls, SD

Sioux Falls, SD—The 2023 annual meeting of the North Central Cheese Industries Association (NCCIA) will take place here Oct. 10-12 at the Ramkota Best Western Hotel.

The three-day conference offers educational and networking opportunities for cheese and dairy professionals, along with special events like the cheese judging contest, cheese auction, and a banquet dinner. More details will be available in the months ahead. For updates and online registration, visit www.northcentralcheese.org.

PLANNING GUIDE

NYSCMA Spring Meeting: March 6-7, 2023, DoubleTree Hotel, Syracuse, NY. Registration will kick off early next year at www.nyscheesemakers.com.

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 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. Registration is available at www.adsa.org.

WDPA Dairy Symposium: July 10-11, Landmark Resort, Door County, WI. Visit www.wdpa.net for updates and registration.

IFT Expo: July 16-19, McCormick Place, Chicago. Visit www.iftevent.org for future updates.

ACS Conference: July 18-21, Des Moines, IA. Updates are available at www.cheesesociety.org.

IMPA Conference: Aug. 10-11, Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, ID. Visit www.impa.us for more information closer to event date.

Pack Expo Las Vegas: Sept. 11-13, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV. Registration opens April 3 at www.packexpolasvegas.com.

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

For more information:
John Haugen
WSU Creamery Manager
jfhaugen@wsu.edu
509-335-5737

For registration help:
Cathy Blood
blood@wsu.edu
509-335-2845

2023 Washington State University Creamery Educational Opportunities

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March 7 - 9, 2023
Pullman, Washington
Before Feb. 3 Fee: \$925.00 ■ After Feb 3 Fee: \$1000

Pasteurization Workshop
April 25 - 27, 2023
Pullman, Washington
Three-Day Training: Before Mar 24 Fee: \$620.00 ■ After Mar 24 Fee: \$650
Two-Day Training: Before Mar 24 Fee: \$470.00 ■ After Mar 24 Fee: \$500

For more information and online registration please visit our website:
<https://creamery.wsu.edu/about-us/upcoming-events/>

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Class Milk & Component Prices

February 2023 with comparisons to February 2022

Class III - Cheese Milk Price	2022	2023
PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$20.91	\$17.78
SKIM PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$10.71	\$8.57
Class II - Soft Dairy Products	2022	2023
PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$23.79	\$20.83
BUTTERFAT PRICE (per pound)	\$3.0288	\$2.7248
SKIM MILK PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$13.67	\$11.70
Class IV - Butter, MP	2022	2023
PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$24.00	\$18.86
SKIM MILK PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$13.91	\$9.69
BUTTERFAT PRICE (per pound)	\$3.0218	\$2.7178
NONFAT SOLIDS PRICE (per pound)	\$1.5450	\$1.0766
PROTEIN PRICE (per pound)	\$2.3168	\$2.3650
OTHER SOLIDS PRICE (per pound)	\$0.5983	\$0.2101
SOMATIC CELL Adjust. rate (per 1,000 scc)	\$0.00095	\$0.00091
AMS Survey Product Price Averages	2022	2023
Cheese	\$1.9068	\$1.8224
Cheese, US 40-pound blocks	\$1.9091	\$1.9874
Cheese, US 500-pound barrels	\$1.8746	\$1.6602
Butter, CME	\$2.6668	\$2.4158
Nonfat Dry Milk	\$1.7284	\$1.2553
Dry Whey	\$0.7800	\$0.4031

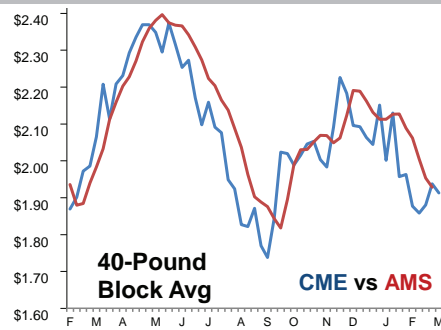
Dairy Product Stocks in Cold Storage

TOTAL STOCKS AS REPORTED BY USDA (in thousands of pounds unless indicated)

	Stocks in All Warehouses			January 31, 2023 as a % of		Public Warehouse Stocks
	Jan 31 2022	Dec 31 2022	Jan 31 2023	Jan 31 2022	Dec 31 2022	
Butter	219,353	216,295	262,671	120	121	237,000
Cheese						
American	837,609	825,285	818,774	98	99	
Swiss	23,530	24,218	23,342	99	98	
Other	583,951	595,630	598,905	103	101	
Total	1,445,090	1,445,133	1,441,021	100	100	1,114,819

DAIRY PRODUCT SALES

March 1, 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.



Week Ending	Feb. 25	Feb. 18	Feb. 11	Feb. 4
40-Pound Block Cheddar Cheese Prices and Sales				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.9285	1.9531	2.0050	2.0623
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	11,107,349	13,153,277	11,701,710	11,937,097
500-Pound Barrel Cheddar Cheese Prices, Sales & Moisture Contest				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.7023	1.7293	1.7571	1.7940
Adjusted to 38% Moisture	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.6173	1.6440	1.6760	1.7063
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	15,085,345	15,616,293	14,942,894	14,414,590
Weighted Moisture Content	Percent			
US	34.74	34.78	35.00	34.82
AA Butter				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	2.4364	2.4378	2.4101	2.3798
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	3,940,659	3,082,223	3,913,310	3,520,084
Extra Grade Dry Whey Prices				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	0.4028	0.3990	0.3987	0.4137
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	6,917,597	6,803,353	6,023,719	5,226,097
Extra Grade or USPHS Grade A Nonfat Dry Milk				
Average Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.2297	1.2480	1.2419	1.3069
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	23,133,403	27,003,727	26,846,952	21,820,050

DAIRY FUTURES PRICES

SETTLING PRICE

*Cash Settled

Date	Month	Class III	Class IV	Dry Whey	NDM	Block Cheese	Cheese*	Butter*
2-24	Mar 23	17.86	18.80	41.000	123.000	1.910	1.8120	245.000
2-27	Mar 23	17.85	18.80	41.000	122.750	1.910	1.8310	244.450
2-28	Mar 23	17.85	18.65	40.125	122.250	1.930	1.8510	243.500
3-1	Mar 23	17.75	18.55	40.125	122.250	1.928	1.8240	240.000
3-2	Mar 23	17.71	18.51	40.375	122.250	1.928	1.8240	237.000
2-24	Apr 23	17.72	18.97	40.320	123.425	1.920	1.8050	248.500
2-27	Apr 23	17.86	18.95	40.000	122.750	1.920	1.8070	247.975
2-28	Apr 23	18.03	18.66	39.500	120.800	1.920	1.8140	244.200
3-1	Apr 23	17.59	18.38	40.400	120.025	1.920	1.8070	240.000
3-2	Apr 23	17.45	18.38	38.250	121.000	1.920	1.8080	238.150
2-24	May 23	17.60	19.27	40.300	125.675	1.925	1.8600	250.025
2-27	May 23	17.66	19.27	40.075	125.000	1.925	1.8530	250.025
2-28	May 23	17.67	18.98	39.850	125.525	1.925	1.8520	247.250
3-1	May 23	17.90	18.63	39.500	121.825	1.925	1.8450	242.500
3-2	May 23	17.80	18.63	48.400	122.250	1.899	1.8420	241.650
2-24	June 23	18.15	19.60	40.500	128.750	1.950	1.9100	250.800
2-27	June 23	18.07	19.50	40.500	128.000	1.950	1.9060	250.800
2-28	June 22	18.04	19.36	40.400	126.600	1.950	1.9070	248.500
3-1	June 23	18.45	19.00	39.900	125.000	1.950	1.8950	244.000
3-2	June 23	18.32	19.00	37.500	125.300	1.935	1.8936	242.775
2-24	July 23	18.64	19.85	41.250	131.000	2.027	1.9620	253.000
2-27	July 23	18.68	19.85	41.250	131.000	1.990	1.9590	253.000
2-28	July 23	18.58	19.60	41.250	128.800	1.990	1.9590	242.450
3-1	July 23	19.02	19.36	40.875	127.500	1.990	1.9500	242.000
3-2	July 23	18.91	19.27	39.825	128.000	1.990	1.9590	246.250
2-24	Aug 23	19.18	20.20	41.500	133.025	2.078	2.0020	254.000
2-27	Aug 23	19.15	20.14	41.500	132.025	2.051	2.0050	252.500
2-28	Aug 23	19.18	19.88	41.500	132.750	2.044	2.0050	251.500
3-1	Aug 23	19.52	19.68	41.500	128.500	2.044	2.0000	247.000
3-2	Aug 23	19.42	19.60	40.500	129.700	2.036	2.0010	248.000
2-24	Sept 23	19.55	20.19	42.500	135.200	2.087	2.0290	254.574
2-27	Sept 23	19.59	20.19	42.500	134.000	2.065	2.0250	254.575
2-28	Sept 23	19.58	20.04	42.500	134.725	2.060	2.0250	254.575
3-1	Sept 23	19.70	19.86	42.500	131.975	2.055	2.0170	250.500
3-2	Sept 23	19.67	19.79	41.775	131.975	2.051	2.0160	250.000
2-24	Oct 23	19.80	20.10	43.000	135.800	2.081	2.0280	254.500
2-27	Oct 23	19.80	20.10	43.000	134.700	2.079	2.0270	254.500
2-28	Oct 23	19.78	20.10	43.000	134.650	2.070	2.0350	254.500
3-1	Oct 23	19.85	20.10	43.000	133.000	2.065	2.0260	253.000
3-2	Oct 23	19.85	20.09	43.000	133.000	2.055	2.0200	252.750
2-24	Nov 23	19.88	20.12	42.600	136.000	2.070	2.0300	255.000
2-27	Nov 23	19.88	20.16	42.600	135.750	2.065	2.0300	255.000
2-28	Nov 23	19.90	20.16	42.600	134.750	2.065	2.0300	255.000
3-1	Nov 23	19.82	20.16	42.600	134.500	2.060	2.0250	253.000
3-2	Nov 23	19.80	20.16	42.600	135.500	2.055	2.0160	253.000
2-24	Dec 23	19.83	20.02	43.550	136.000	2.048	2.0000	252.000
2-27	Dec 23	18.83	20.00	43.550	136.000	2.035	1.9980	252.000
2-28	Dec 23	19.88	19.95	43.550	135.000	2.035	1.9980	252.000
3-1	Dec 23	19.54	19.95	43.550	135.000	2.029	1.9710	250.000
3-2	Dec 23	19.50	19.95	43.550	135.500	2.021	1.8910	250.000
2-24	Jan 24	19.60	19.30	43.000	136.250	1.747	1.9800	240.000
2-27	Jan 24	19.60	19.40	43.000	136.250	1.747	1.9800	241.000
2-28	Jan 24	19.20	19.40	43.000	136.000	1.747	1.9800	245.000
3-1	Jan 24	19.20	19.40	43.000	136.000	1.747	1.9720	245.000
3-2	Jan 24	19.13	19.40	43.000	136.000	1.747	1.9620	245.000
Mar. 2		22,423	5,730	2,294	8,027	584	18,809	8,333

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DAIRY PRODUCT MARKETS

AS REPORTED BY THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WHOLESALE CHEESE MARKETS

NORTHEAST - MARCH 1: Milk is readily available in the eastern region. Manufacturers are operating strong production schedules despite persistent regional labor shortages. Market prices for cheese blocks on industry cash exchanges reached \$1.96 last Wednesday but have decreased to \$1.91 as of reporting. Some market contacts have reported that Cream cheese production and demand has increased in recent weeks. Demand for Italian-type cheeses remains stronger than Cheddar. Retail and foodservice demands are steady. In the Northeast, wholesale cheese prices for both Cheddar and Muenster are up \$0.0575.

Wholesale prices, delivered, dollars per/lb:

Cheddar 40-lb block:	\$2.4025 - \$2.6900	Process 5-lb sliced:	\$1.6700 - \$2.1500
Muenster:	\$2.3900 - \$2.7400	Swiss Cuts 10-14 lbs:	\$3.8200 - \$6.1425

MIDWEST AREA - MARCH 1: Demand notes from Midwestern cheese processors range from steady to strong. Cheddar and Italian style cheese makers both say demand needs are being met, while production is busy with ample milk availability. As has been more regularly reported since the early days of the pandemic, more plant managers are reporting extra downtime sporadically during the work-week. However, most plant contacts say production is fairly busy. Curd producers continue to report softer demand and their expectations for 2023 are mixed. Barrel producers have said they are finding some balance in inventories. They say customer needs are being met, but any buildups of cheese are usually alleviated within two weeks of production. As was mentioned, spot milk is widely available at similar price points to previous weeks. Despite the relatively large price gap on the CME between blocks and barrels, cheese market tones are more neutral than bullish or bearish.

Wholesale prices delivered, dollars per/lb:

Blue 5# Loaf :	\$2.4450 - \$3.6550	Mozzarella 5-6#:	\$1.9750 - \$3.0625
Brick 5# Loaf:	\$2.1750 - \$2.7425	Muenster 5#:	\$2.1750 - \$2.7425
Cheddar 40# Block:	\$1.8975 - \$2.4400	Process 5# Loaf:	\$1.5475 - \$2.0150
Monterey Jack 10#:	\$2.1500 - \$2.4975	Swiss 6-9# Cuts:	\$3.3350 - \$3.4375

WEST - MARCH 1: Domestic cheese demand is steady by retail and foodservice purchasers. However, some pizza producers lightened their demand and relay below forecasted sales levels. Contract sales keep steady pace finishing Q2 bookings. Some contacts report sold out inventories for contract sales through May. Export market demand stays mixed. Despite some stakeholders reporting strong Asian market demand, others note lighter than strong export market demand. Spot market demand is steady. Sales continued the previous week theme, with more barrel sales than block sales. Despite the increased spot market activity for barrels, contacts report barrel inventories stay ahead of block inventories. Cheese production remains strong to steady. Plentiful to ample milk volumes are regionally available for cheese makers to continue strong production schedules.

Wholesale prices delivered, dollars per/lb:

Cheddar 10# Cuts:	\$2.2775 - \$2.4775	Process 5# Loaf:	\$1.6725 - \$1.8275
Cheddar 40# Block:	\$2.0300 - \$2.5200	Swiss 6-9# Cuts:	\$2.6275 - \$4.0575

EEX Weekly European Cheese Indices (WECI): Price Per/lb (US Converted)

Variety	Date: 3/1	2/22	Variety	Date: 3/1	2/22
Cheddar Curd	\$1.95	\$1.90	Mild Cheddar	\$2.00	\$1.96
Young Gouda	\$1.56	\$1.55	Mozzarella	\$1.48	\$1.44

FOREIGN -TYPE CHEESE - MARCH 1: Industry sources suggest cheese prices are trending higher in several European markets. Amid higher prices, some purchasers are looking to secure loads for shipment later, though some sellers are hesitant. Retail and foodservice demands for foreign type cheese are strengthening. Exports of cheese outside of the EU have been trending higher in recent weeks. Some market information suggests current demand is lagging production as cheese makers have limited availability for immediate shipment, and stocks are declining. Milk production is strengthening, following seasonal trends, and cheesemakers are operating active production schedules.

Selling prices, delivered, dollars per/lb:

	Imported	Domestic
Blue:	\$2.6400 - 5.2300	\$2.2600 - 3.7475
Gorgonzola:	\$3.6900 - 5.7400	\$2.7675 - 3.4850
Parmesan (Italy):	0	\$3.6475 - 5.7375
Romano (Cows Milk):	0	\$3.4500 - 5.6050
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	\$3.8550 - 4.1800
Swiss Cuts Finnish:	\$2.6700- 2.9300	0

NDM PRODUCTS - MARCH 2

NDM - CENTRAL: There are and have been ample amounts of condensed skim available for drying. End users are clearly aware of this, as they are buying on more of a necessity basis now. Notes are mixed on Mexican demand. Last week, contacts suggest more trucks headed south, whereas this week trading was quieter, in general. High heat inventories are still considered tight, but trading activity was quiet.

NDM - WEST: Low/medium heat NDM demand is steady to lighter from domestic purchasers. Some contacts note lower prices for skim milk powder in international markets are contributing to softer export demand. Stakeholders say this shift is putting downward pressure on low/medium heat NDM prices, which moved lower across the range and mostly price series. Low/medium heat NDM prices have dropped by 3.75 cents since last Wednesday. Loads of low/medium heat NDM remain available for spot

purchasing. Drying operations are operating busy schedules, working through strong regional milk supplies. While low/medium heat NDM production is strong, plant managers say high heat NDM production is limited. Demand for high heat NDM is steady, and spot inventories remain tight. Despite this, high heat NDM prices moved lower, following the lead of low/medium heat NDM.

NDM - EAST: Trading activity seemed to slow down from last week, which was not necessarily busy. In fact, eastern NDM trading has been somewhat quiet for most weeks of the year, so far. Condensed skim has been notably available. Traders say there are and have been some concerns regarding NDM availability. Domestic end users, specifically Eastern region customers, are taking a wait-and-see approach. As spring flush season looms, buyers are aware that access to milk solids is not expected to decline anytime soon.

NATIONAL - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY PRODUCTS

Total dairy retail ads increased from week eight. Conventional ad numbers moved up by 7 percent, while organic ad numbers nearly tripled in totals from the previous week. Conventional ice cream in 48- to 64-ounce containers is the most advertised single dairy item this week. Milk, in 1-gallon containers, was the most advertised organic dairy item.

Conventional cheese ad totals increased 8percent, while organic cheese ad totals increased by nearly 600 percent. Conventional shredded cheese, 6- to 8-ounce packaging, was the most advertised cheese item. Block cheese, 6- to 8-ounce packaging, was the most advertised organic cheese item for the second week in a row. The average advertised price of conventional 6- to 8-ounce cheese blocks was \$2.66, up \$.05 from last week, but \$0.67 lower than its organic counterpart.

Total conventional yogurt ads decreased 3 percent, while organic yogurt ads declined 13 percent. Conventional Greek yogurt, in 6- to 8-ounce containers, was the most advertised yogurt item. The average price was \$1.12, up 4 cents from week eight.

RETAIL PRICES - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY - MARCH 3

Commodity	US	NE	SE	MID	SC	SW	NW
Butter 8 oz	3.50	3.50	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Butter 1#	4.08	4.08	5.49	3.88	3.65	4.12	4.17
Cheese 6-8 oz block	2.66	2.43	2.87	2.84	1.90	2.25	3.00
Cheese 6-8 oz shred	2.61	2.37	2.76	2.84	2.47	2.58	NA
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced	2.64	2.81	2.66	NA	2.35	1.99	3.00
Cheese 1# block	3.90	NA	3.44	NA	4.29	4.13	4.39
Cheese 1# shred	3.88	NA	3.20	NA	4.29	4.29	4.39
Cheese 1# sliced	4.99	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	4.99
Cheese 2# block	7.37	7.99	NA	NA	9.73	5.99	NA
Cheese 2# shred	6.97	7.99	9.99	6.98	6.99	6.88	NA
Cottage Cheese 16 oz	2.18	2.39	1.99	2.02	2.44	2.44	2.00
Cottage Cheese 24 oz	3.77	3.99	2.31	3.99	NA	NA	NA
Cream Cheese 8 oz	3.25	3.35	3.50	2.00	3.65	3.79	2.19
Ice Cream 14-16 oz	3.21	3.65	NA	3.17	2.77	2.66	3.26
Ice Cream 48-64 oz	3.93	3.78	3.84	3.24	3.96	3.66	4.46
Milk 1/2 gallon	2.32	NA	4.81	1.88	2.49	2.47	1.44
Milk gallon	3.45	3.68	1.29	NA	3.97	3.40	2.54
Sour Cream 16 oz	2.08	2.18	2.04	1.81	1.99	2.37	2.00

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:	Yogurt 4-6 oz:	\$2.19
Butter 1 lb:	Greek Yogurt 32 oz:	\$5.85
Cottage Cheese 16 oz:	Milk 1/2 gallon:	\$3.77
Cheese shreds 6-8 oz:	Milk gallon:	\$5.72
Cheese 6-8 oz block:	Sour Cream 16 oz:	\$3.00
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced:	Ice Cream 14-16 oz:	\$6.99
Yogurt 32 oz:	Ice Cream 48-64 oz:	\$9.53

WHOLESALE BUTTER MARKETS - MARCH 1

NATIONAL: Cream is plentiful, though contacts in the Central and West report steady to lighter demand. Butter makers in parts of the upper Midwest report winter storms may have an impact on production and require some cream handlers to look for different destinations for loads. In the Northeast, butter makers are running active schedules, and some manufacturers are churning butter on a seven-day schedule. Butter makers are producing strong amounts of butter, despite labor shortages. Central contacts say butter inventories are in sufficient shape for the spring.

WEST: Plentiful cream volumes are widely available. Demand is steady to light. Lower end cream multiplies moved up, but remain below a flat market. Butter producers run strong to steady production schedules working through cream volumes. Retail demand is light. Some stakeholders report heavy inventories from below forecasted retail sales levels. Contract sales are steady to light. Export market demand picked up some slightly bullish momentum to finish out last week. The slightly bullish market tones and light uptick in spot market activity has lessened. Unsalted butter inventories lag behind salted inventories and some stakeholders report decreased interest from bulk purchasers.

CENTRAL: Plant managers say demand tones have yet to shift in either direction, but they continue to edge on the slower side of the spectrum. Buyers have approached with caution as market prices have slipped from the \$3-plus range in late 2022. Butter availability has grown during the early months of the year, and bulk butter interests have slowed. Cream is widely available, and some Midwestern producers say they are full through next week. Butter contacts are expecting a seasonal demand push in the upcoming weeks, as spring holidays approach. Market tones are steady to slightly bearish.

NORTHEAST: Cream supplies are abundant in the eastern region. Butter processors report that they are actively churning seven days a week ahead of the upcoming spring holidays. Much of the butter being produced is either being frozen in bulk or is processed to meet contractual retail demands. Retail and foodservice demands are steady. Some stakeholders say retail demand is trending higher than this time last year. Market contacts have relayed that inventories are more comfortable in certain locales than in others. Spot loads are said to be harder to come by in certain areas of the East due to processors' preferences to freeze in bulk.

WEEKLY COLD STORAGE HOLDINGS

SELECTED STORAGE CENTERS IN 1,000 POUNDS - INCLUDING GOVERNMENT

DATE	BUTTER	CHEESE
02/27/23	48,367	67,872
02/01/23	42,381	75,492
Change	5,986	-7,620
Percent Change	14	-10

CME CASH PRICES - FEB. 27 - MARCH 3, 2023

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for daily prices

	500-LB CHEDDAR	40-LB CHEDDAR	AA BUTTER	GRADE A NFDM	DRY WHEY
MONDAY February 27	\$1.5900 (+5)	\$1.9100 (+3)	\$2.4500 (+2)	\$1.2000 (-1½)	\$0.4650 (NC)
TUESDAY February 28	\$1.5900 (NC)	\$1.9100 (NC)	\$2.4500 (NC)	\$1.1800 (-2)	\$0.4575 (-¾)
WEDNESDAY March 1	\$1.5525 (-3¾)	\$1.9000 (-1)	\$2.3800 (-7)	\$1.1775 (-¼)	\$0.4475 (-1)
THURSDAY March 2	\$1.5300 (-2¼)	\$1.9100 (+1)	\$2.3450 (-3½)	\$1.1800 (+¼)	\$0.4350 (-1¼)
FRIDAY March 3	\$1.5750 (+4½)	\$1.9500 (+4)	\$2.3450 (NC)	\$1.1775 (-¼)	\$0.4450 (+1)
Week's AVG \$ Change	\$1.5675 (-0.0050)	\$1.9160 (-0.0215)	\$2.3940 (+0.0015)	\$1.1830 (-0.0333)	\$0.4500 (-0.0094)
Last Week's AVG	\$1.5725	\$1.9375	\$2.3925	\$1.2163	\$0.4594
2022 AVG Same Week	\$1.9460	\$2.0655	\$2.6770	\$1.8665	\$0.7530

MARKET OPINION - CHEESE REPORTER

Cheese Comment: Two cars of blocks were sold Monday, 1 each at \$1.8725 and \$1.9000; an unfilled bid for 1 car at \$1.9100 then set the price. There was no block market activity at all on Tuesday. One car of blocks was sold Wednesday at \$1.9000, which set the price. Four cars of blocks were sold Thursday, the last at \$1.9100, which set the price. Two cars of blocks were sold Friday, the last at \$1.9500, which set the price. The barrel price rose Monday on an unfilled bid at \$1.5900, fell Wednesday on a sale at \$1.5525, dropped Thursday on a sale at \$1.5300, then increased Friday on a sale at \$1.5750.

Butter Comment: The price increased Monday on a sale at \$2.4500, dropped Wednesday on a sale at \$2.3800, and declined Thursday on a sale at \$2.3450.

Nonfat Dry Milk Comment: The price fell Monday on a sale at \$1.2000, declined Tuesday on a sale at \$1.1800, decreased Wednesday on a sale at \$1.1775, increased Thursday on a sale at \$1.1800, then fell Friday on a sale at \$1.1775.

Dry Whey Comment: The price declined Tuesday on an uncovered offer at 45.75 cents, fell Wednesday on an uncovered offer at 44.75 cents, dropped Thursday on a sale at 43.50 cents, then rose Friday on a sale at 44.50 cents.

WHEY MARKETS - FEB. 27 - MARCH 3, 2023

RELEASE DATE - MARCH 2, 2023

Animal Feed Whey—Central: Milk Replacer:	.2900 (+2) – .3100 (NC)
Buttermilk Powder:	
Central & East:	1.1600 (NC) – 1.2600 (NC) West: 1.1200 (-3) – 1.2100 (-3)
Mostly:	1.1400 (-2) – 1.1800 (-2)
Casein: Rennet:	5.7400 (NC) – 6.0000 (NC) Acid: 6.1500 (NC) – 6.3500 (NC)
Dry Whey—Central (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.3250 (-3) – .4600 (+1) Mostly: .4000 (+2) – .4300 (NC)
Dry Whey—West (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.3975 (+¾) – .4750 (+¾) Mostly: .4100 (+1¼) – .4500 (+1)
Dry Whey—NorthEast:	.3800 (+3) – .4525 (+2½)
Lactose—Central and West:	
Edible:	.1600 (-2) – .6000 (NC) Mostly: .2800 (-1) – .5000 (-2)
Nonfat Dry Milk —Central & East:	
Low/Medium Heat:	1.1800 (-1) – 1.2700 (-1) Mostly: 1.1900 (-1) – 1.2500 (NC)
High Heat:	1.3300 (NC) – 1.4200 (-1)
Nonfat Dry Milk —Western:	
Low/Medium Heat:	1.1675 (-1½) – 1.3000 (-4) Mostly: 1.2100 (-1) – 1.2800 (-¼)
High Heat:	1.3175 (-1½) – 1.4575 (-3)
Whey Protein Concentrate—34% Protein:	
Central & West:	1.0400 (-11) – 1.6500 (-5) Mostly: 1.2200 (-3) – 1.5800 (-8)
Whole Milk—National:	2.1000 (-4) – 2.2600 (NC)

HISTORICAL CME AVG BLOCK CHEESE PRICES

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'09	1.0883	1.2171	1.2455	1.2045	1.1394	1.1353	1.1516	1.3471	1.3294	1.4709	1.5788	1.6503
'10	1.4536	1.4526	1.2976	1.4182	1.4420	1.3961	1.5549	1.6367	1.7374	1.7246	1.4619	1.3807
'11	1.5140	1.9064	1.8125	1.6036	1.6858	2.0995	2.1150	1.9725	1.7561	1.7231	1.8716	1.6170
'12	1.5546	1.4793	1.5193	1.5039	1.5234	1.6313	1.6855	1.8262	1.9245	2.0757	1.9073	1.6619
'13	1.6965	1.6420	1.6240	1.8225	1.8052	1.7140	1.7074	1.7492	1.7956	1.8236	1.8478	1.9431
'14	2.2227	2.1945	2.3554	2.2439	2.0155	2.0237	1.9870	2.1820	2.3499	2.1932	1.9513	1.5938
'15	1.5218	1.5382	1.5549	1.5890	1.6308	1.7052	1.6659	1.7111	1.6605	1.6674	1.6175	1.4616
'16	1.4757	1.4744	1.4877	1.4194	1.3174	1.5005	1.6613	1.7826	1.6224	1.6035	1.8775	1.7335
'17	1.6866	1.6199	1.4342	1.4970	1.6264	1.6022	1.6586	1.6852	1.6370	1.7305	1.6590	1.4900
'18	1.4928	1.5157	1.5614	1.6062	1.6397	1.5617	1.5364	1.6341	1.6438	1.5874	1.3951	1.3764
'19	1.4087	1.5589	1.5908	1.6619	1.6799	1.7906	1.8180	1.8791	2.0395	2.0703	1.9664	1.8764
'20	1.9142	1.8343	1.7550	1.1019	1.6704	2.5620	2.6466	1.7730	2.3277	2.7103	2.0521	1.6249
'21	1.7470	1.5821	1.7362	1.7945	1.6778	1.4978	1.6370	1.7217	1.7601	1.7798	1.7408	1.8930
'22	1.9065	1.9379	2.1699	2.3399	2.3293	2.1902	2.0143	1.8104	1.9548	2.0260	2.1186	2.0860
'23	2.0024	1.8895										

Restaurant Performance Index Rose 0.9% In Jan.; Optimism Increasing

Washington—The National Restaurant Association's Restaurant Performance Index (RPI), a monthly composite index that tracks the health of the US restaurant industry, stood at 102.8 in January, up 0.9 percent from December and the strongest monthly increase in 15 months.

The RPI is constructed so that the health of the restaurant industry is measured in relation to a neutral level of 100. Index values above 100 indicate that key industry indicators are in a period of expansion, while index values below 100 represent a period of contraction.

The RPI consists of two components: the Current Situation Index and the Expectations Index. The Current Situation Index, which measures current trends in four industry indicators (same-store sales, traffic, labor and capital expenditures), stood at 103.0 in January, up 1.3 percent from December.

Some 75 percent of restaurant operators said their same-store sales rose between January 2022 (when sales were dampened due to the omicron variant) and Janu-

ary 2023, up from 63 percent who reported higher sales in December. Only 23 percent of operators said their sales were lower in January, down from 30 percent who reported a sales decline in December.

Restaurant operators also reported positive customer traffic readings in January. Some 60 percent of operators said their customer traffic rose between January 2022 and January 2023, up from 46 percent who reported higher traffic in December.

The Expectations Index, which measures restaurant operators' six-month outlook for four industry indicators (same-store sales, employees, capital expenditures and business conditions), stood at 102.6 in January, up 0.6 percent from December.

Restaurant operators are increasingly optimistic about sales growth in the months ahead, the association reported.

Some 58 percent of operators expect their sales volume in six months to be higher than it was during the same period in the previous year. That's up from 44 percent last month.

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Alliant Energy Center, Madison, Wisconsin

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Schedule at a Glance

Tuesday, April 4

WCMA Job Fair

3:00–5:00 p.m.

Tetra Pak Welcome Reception

5:00–7:00 p.m.

Young Professionals Reception*

7:00–9:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 5

Amcor Continental Breakfast

7:00–8:00 a.m.

Opening Keynote Exclusively sponsored by KSS/RELCO and Morning Seminars

8:00–11:00 a.m.

Collegiate Dairy Products Evaluation Contest

9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Tabletop Exhibits

10:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Complimentary Lunch

11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Ideas Showcase

12:30–4:30 p.m.

Recognition of WCMA Leadership Training Graduates

12:30–1:00 p.m.

Collegiate Contest Awards Ceremony

3:30–4:30 p.m.

Chr. Hansen Reception & Champion Cheese Auction

5:00–7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 6

WCMA Recognition Breakfast exclusively sponsored by DSM Food & Beverage

8:00–9:15 a.m.

Concurrent Seminars

9:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Complimentary Lunch

12:00–1:15 p.m.

Visit the New Center for Dairy Research

1:15–4:00 p.m.

U.S. Champions Reception exclusively sponsored by Ecolab

5:00–6:00 p.m.

U.S. Champions Awards Banquet*

6:00–8:30 p.m.

Custom Fabricating & Repair Afterglow Reception

9:00–11:59 p.m.

*Separate ticket purchase required

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