



# Telling **Your** Story

sharing where dairy good comes from!

## FARM TOUR GUIDE

*Best Practices on Planning a Farm Tour*

# REFERENCES

**This farm tour guide was developed in part through the quality work of the following state and regional dairy promotion organizations:**

American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, Inc.

American Dairy Association of Indiana, Inc.

Dairy Council of Utah and Nevada

Dairy MAX

Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association

Midwest Dairy Association

New England Dairy Promotion Board

Western Dairy Association

Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHY SHOULD I CONDUCT A FARM TOUR? .....	5
TARGET YOUR TOUR TO YOUR AUDIENCE .....	6
TARGET YOUR MESSAGE TO YOUR AUDIENCE .....	7
FARM TOURS WITH SCHOOL GROUPS .....	8
FARM TOURS WITH ADULT GROUPS .....	10
PLANNING FOR A BIG EVENT .....	11
PLANNING FOR PROTESTORS .....	12
HOW TO INCREASE THE IMPACT OF YOUR FARM TOUR .....	13
PREPARE AND PRACTICE YOUR MESSAGE .....	14
BEGIN WITH A MEMORABLE INTRODUCTION .....	16
SELECT YOUR FARM TOUR STATIONS .....	17
DETERMINE WHAT YOU WILL TALK ABOUT AT EACH STATION .....	18
SAMPLE FARM TOUR PLAN .....	21
CREATE YOUR CHECKLIST .....	22
PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO POLICY .....	28
ENDING THE TOUR .....	29
NOTES .....	30
FARMERS RESOURCE GUIDE .....	A
STORYLINES .....	B
MESSAGES .....	C
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS .....	O
DAIRY INDUSTRY WEBSITES .....	R
STATE AND REGIONAL DAIRY PROMOTION ORGANIZATIONS .....	S
PRE-TOUR CONFIRMATION .....	Y
FARM TOUR CHART .....	Z
PHOTO WAIVER .....	AA
FARM FACT SHEET .....	AB
FARM TOUR EVALUATION .....	AC
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR FARM TOUR (TARGET: GRADE 4) .....	AD
DAIRY FARM SCAVENGER HUNT .....	AE
FUN FACTS ABOUT DAIRY .....	AF
ANNIE'S STORY (WITH ANSWERS) .....	AG
BLUEBERRY BANANA BLAST SMOOTHIE RECIPE .....	AH
FAVORITE GRILLED CHEESE RECIPE .....	AI
JUST FOR FUN: COW JOKES .....	AJ
NOTES .....	AK



# WHY SHOULD I CONDUCT A FARM TOUR?

When people visit a dairy farm, they can see firsthand the care you give your land and your animals. The experience ultimately will make them more confident in purchasing milk, cheese and yogurt for their families. They may share their positive experience with their family and friends, thus spreading dairy's story even further.

You have great stories to tell about your family, operation, and community involvement. This shows your authenticity, and, by opening your farm gate, you show consumers your transparency and commitment to providing safe, wholesome products.

Farm tours provide transparency, so they build trust. Michigan State University Extension manages a Breakfast on the Farm program that has attracted more than 50,000 participants since 2009. Exit surveys indicate over 90 percent of participants leave the event with positive impressions about modern dairy farming, increased trust in milk as a safe food and increased trust in farmers as a source of information about food production. According to the study, attendees reported increased purchases of dairy products as a result of attending an event.

*Source: Michigan State University Extension*

By showing your farm to your community, you are building their trust in you and dairy overall.

Be proactive in encouraging schools and local officials to contact you for a tour. Otherwise, they may not ask, or even know who to ask about visiting a dairy farm.

The materials in this toolkit will help you prepare your farm for tours for young children, school students, parents, school officials, health professionals, neighbors, town officials, local media, businesses that use dairy products (restaurants, chefs, food service workers), and foreign visitors.

**For assistance, promotional materials, or local information, contact your local dairy checkoff organization at [www.dairy.org/local-checkoff](http://www.dairy.org/local-checkoff).**

# TARGET YOUR TOUR TO YOUR AUDIENCE

In today's world, most consumers are three to four generations removed from the agriculture environment and understanding what farming is all about. Yet, consumers are increasingly interested in learning how food is produced. Because there is nothing like firsthand experience, tours of your dairy farm can make a difference in helping people understand how you care for your animals and land, and provide a safe and nutritious product.

Begin by creating goals for your tour. Your goals should be specific to your event, audience and the topics you want to stress. Below are examples of goals for specific audiences.

- **Young children** (under age 6) – The children have a positive experience and they share highlights of their day with their parents.
- **School children** (ages 7–12) – They understand the process of how milk is made (on the farm and not in the grocery store) and gets to their table (cow care, nutrition, keeping milk cold, transportation and processing). They understand the overall importance of dairy in the diet.
- **Teens** – They leave with a positive image of dairy farming and dairy products to help balance the misinformation they are subjected to on social media. Provide background to help them make good decisions about food choices.
- **Chaperones** – They leave the farm knowing you care for your animals, environment and community. This reassurance influences them to purchase dairy products for their families and tell others about the experience through face-to-face conversations and social media.
- **Health Professionals** – They understand the steps you take to ensure a safe, wholesome product. This leads to their continued or increased purchase of dairy products. They are now willing to share stories about their visit with clients, friends, and family and through social media.
- **Local government** – They appreciate and understand the economic contribution of dairy farm businesses, the roles of the family members/employees in running a farm, and the contribution they bring to a community. They also are aware of how local issues may affect the dairy.
- **General Community** – Reach as many community members as possible through an open house or “Breakfast on the Farm” event that educates them on how animals are cared for and how farmers produce safe and wholesome milk; how the land is nurtured for future generations; and how farm families and their employees contribute to the local economy. This reassurance will lead to people purchasing dairy products for their families. They will share stories about their visit to your farm with friends, family and through social media.
- **Farmers/Peers** – Sometimes you'll have the opportunity to open your farm to your peers. Given that they are in the same business as you, the areas you view and the topics you cover will need to reflect their knowledge of the agriculture industry. For example, during a farm tour with your community you may not show the manure storage but with other farmers you may want to show them to gather their feedback on how your system can be improved.

Take a moment to write a goal(s) for your tour: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# TARGET YOUR MESSAGE TO YOUR AUDIENCE

Look at your farm from a consumer's point of view. Consumers come in many varieties, from adventurous 5-year-old kindergarteners to 65-year-old retirees. You may see a feed bunk full of nutritious silage. Children may see animals eating stinky stuff off of the ground! Knowing the specific audience will help you personalize your messages and let your audience know that you are interested in them.

Learn about trends that may affect your audience. For example, teenagers, on average, don't consume adequate nutrients in their diet. What does this audience already know about dairy? Has this school class studied agriculture previously? Did that include studying the dairy industry?

This resource packet includes a variety of materials that you can adapt, based upon your audience. Remember that it takes people an average of seven times hearing the same message before it sinks in! Messages need to be delivered in simple terms – even to adults. In fact, it often is more difficult to change misperceptions in adults than it is in children.

You will find that most of the youth-directed materials in this packet are for the third- to fifth-grade range. Children in this age group are inquisitive, have an adequate attention span and can absorb more detailed information. Most schools' curriculums include food and agriculture-related topics during this time, which is why many of the dairy checkoff and Ag in the Classroom school materials are developed for these grade levels.



# FARM TOURS WITH SCHOOL GROUPS

Different audiences may require different styles of delivery and information. Each group has a different interest in the dairy industry. Some want to experience farm life, the media wants a good story, and international and college groups may be touring to see and learn something specific about your operation.

## School Tour with Young Children

In many states, fourth-grade is where many school children first become exposed to the dairy industry. As part of fourth-grade curriculum, children study the many industries your state has to offer, such as dairy farming.

- **Plan ahead with the teacher**
  - Talk to the teacher well in advance. Ask what the students are learning that relates to the dairy industry and what the teacher hopes to gain from the tour. Ask if there are specific things that the students would like to see.
  - Included in this kit are worksheets that can be photocopied and given out before, during or after the tour.
- **Talk in simple terms**
  - Try to limit your use of industry jargon. If you need to use a word students may not know, define it for them.
- **Keep the tour moving**
  - Don't spend too much time in one place. Kids tend to have short attention spans. Keep moving or introducing new things to keep their interest.
- **Use references they can understand**
  - Telling kids that cows drink approximately a bathtub of water per day means more to them than saying 50 gallons. When you can, use examples to demonstrate quantities.
- **Coordinate a behavior problem plan**
  - Occasionally children misbehave. This can be dangerous in a farm setting. Make it clear to adults and children that bad behavior will not be tolerated. Speak with the teacher and chaperones so that they know what is expected of them and create a plan of action for dealing with potential behavior problems.



## Grades 9-12 – Tips for Touring Teens

Students at this age may have been exposed to a dairy farm before. It is very important to find out what the group is hoping to accomplish. Talking to the teacher or point person is the best way to plan. Are the students members of an FFA group or agricultural class? How many students are being exposed to farm life for the first time? Knowing what to expect will help you better prepare and plan for your tour.

- **Be prepared for questions**
  - Kids at this age are very inquisitive. They will typically have more hard-to-answer questions for you. Answer them to the best of your ability in the simplest and most general terms.
- **Keep it moving**
  - You may get caught up in a number of questions at one area of your farm. To keep your tour on schedule, offer to field more questions at the end of the tour.
- **Use facts and figures**
  - For a middle or high school tour, consider asking a local teacher to staff a station about career opportunities in the agriculture industry.
  - At this age, kids understand figures and facts. Use your knowledge of the industry to impress. For example, there are 9.2 million milk cows in the United States. The average dairy farm has 159 cows.
- **Conservation and environmental issues**
  - High school students tend to have strong opinions about governmental, conservation and environmental issues. Discuss the dairy farmer as a steward of the land and things that you do on your farm to minimize environmental concerns.
- **Food safety, regulations and sanitary measures**
  - Talk about government regulations and safety inspections. Your audience may not realize what farmers do to provide healthy and wholesome milk to the consumer.
- **Discuss markets and prices**
  - Discuss how farmers don't set the price for their milk and that many economic factors determine what you receive. How does the price you are getting now compare to that of five or 10 years ago?
- **Discuss supply and demand**
  - Discuss how the supply and demand of milk and milk products affects your business.



# FARM TOURS WITH ADULT GROUPS

## College Groups

Typically, college groups consist of agricultural students and a professor coming to see a specific aspect of your operation. Many times these groups are interested in the genetics or breeding of your herd or in the technology or production practices being implemented on your farm. Discuss in advance what information the professor wants to cover. They may ask to see records on your animals or for information on genetics, AI, costs, etc., that may require ample time to collect and organize.

## International Groups

International groups can be tricky. Some groups speak English very well, while others find English challenging at best. Their experience with the dairy industry can vary as well. It is best to speak clearly and simply, at least until you get a feel for their level of dairy experience and familiarity with the English language. Contact the group organizer in the planning stages to determine if you need an interpreter.

## Local Visitors

Your local Chamber of Commerce may provide a list of area farms that are available for tours. If you enjoy giving tours, you may want to add your name to the list. School groups, clubs, and others often contact the Chamber about farm tours.

## Special Events

There are some occasions where you might be giving a tour as part of a special event, such as June Dairy Month or Ag Day. If you are giving a tour as part of a special event, or to find out how you can become more involved, contact your local state/regional dairy promotion organization ([www.dairy.org/local-checkoff](http://www.dairy.org/local-checkoff)).

## Media

There are different types of media—broadcast and print media, trade publications, consumer publications and Internet outlets. The following are a few things you may want to consider for a media group or tour:

- **The media has no obligation to write a story about your farm.** More pressing news may mean your story never appears. Use the experience of a farm tour to educate the media and create new relationships and opportunities.
- **Don't make the tour too long.** Most reporters have other stories to cover and daily deadlines to meet. Ask the reporter how much time he or she has and work to keep the tour length to a minimum if necessary. Keep your information basic and to the point unless the reporter is from an industry trade publication and wants more detail.
- **All of the information you give is a matter of interpretation.** You can't control how people interpret things, so think about what you are going to talk about carefully. Most journalists are fair and professional. If there is a mistake in an article or broadcast, ask politely to have it corrected. Keep in mind that although it may be simple to correct a mistake, it is not easy to change someone's opinion.
- **Send a thank you note.** A thank you note adds a nice touch. Thank reporters for their time, and ask them to contact you if they have any questions or if they are an industry source for future stories.

## Others

- If holding a tour for local businesses or chefs, you may want to end the tour at a local restaurant.

# PLANNING FOR A BIG EVENT

If you are holding an event that will be open to the public such as a “Breakfast on the Farm” event or an open house, it takes more planning and handling more details. Work with others (dietitian, food blogger, grocery store manager and others) to grow your audience. See the suggestions in the section **Farm Tour 2.0** on page 13. Here are a few considerations:

## To promote the event:

- Use your social media accounts.
- Invite dairy advocates who are bloggers.
- Contact local media.
- Put an ad in a local paper.
- Share flyers with neighbors.
- Invite local businesses and their customers.
- Contact your local dairy promotion organization.
- Inform local sheriff/authorities well in advance.

## Add to your checklist (See pages 22-27 for checklist):

- Create signs directing attendees to your farm.
- Consider hiring a photographer and/or videographer to document the day.
- Create signs or handouts to thank your sponsors.
- Obtain a food permit from the health department if you plan to serve food. Be prepared for an inspection.

# PLANNING FOR PROTESTORS:

Although it's rare, occasionally a well-publicized, on-farm event may attract protestors who are exercising First Amendment rights. Follow these tips if you expect protestors:

- **Leave it to law enforcement.** Protestors have a right to free speech. Law enforcement officials can help designate a place for protestors to gather on public ground away from the farm's entrance.
- **Protestors are not allowed to protest on your land.** The protestors may decide to enter the event with their signs and chants. They do not have the right to disrupt business on your farm.
- **Alert law enforcement officials.** Do not attempt to engage with protestors. A visual of a police officer stopping them demonstrates they are breaking the law. A visual of a dairy farmer stopping them says, "Get off of my property" and could be positioned to make you look like the bad guy.
- **Ask for help.** Call your state or regional dairy promotion organization, local veterinarian, nutritionist and others to assist you.
- **Tell everyone on your farm to leave the protestors alone.** Do not engage with the protestors through discussions, shouting, mimicking or violence. Engaging with them feeds into their goal and makes a great lead-in for the news. Speaking with them or trying to hold a conversation so they "see both sides" will not change their minds. Someone may use a videophone or flip camera to record your voice and give it to the media.

If challenged about issues such as animal rights and vegetarianism, don't take the bait. Make non-defensive, positive statements:

- "Yes, animals deserve kindness and good care. That's why farmers make sure their animals have warm barns, balanced diets and regular check-ups from a veterinarian."
- "It's true, some people choose not to eat animal products. Each person can make up his or her own mind."
- "We both have a passion for animals. I work every day to make sure my animals receive the best care."

# HOW TO INCREASE THE IMPACT OF YOUR FARM TOUR

## Work with others to grow your audience

Imagine yourself, a dairy farmer, on a grocery shopping tour with a dietitian and a blogger on the Internet. The dietitian, who offers consumers professional advice on how to get good nutrition in their diets, and the “mommy blogger,” who writes about how to buy and prepare good food affordably. And what if the dairy processor, who uses your milk to make consumer products, gets involved as well. What a rich conversation could come out of the day when the farmer, processor, consumer and health professional engage in an intelligent dialogue about where good food comes from, and how it is produced.

Then, imagine these people sharing their experiences with a much broader audience through video and the written word on the Internet. And, think of how the conversation could flow through consistent messaging positive to dairy.

Now, imagine that this conversation takes place not in a grocery store, but on a dairy farm. And imagine that the conversation reaches not hundreds, but thousands of people, largely through the Internet. How powerful and far-reaching that could be!

This is a great example of a way to bring the dairy farm to life, while educating consumers and thought leaders about farmers, dairy farming, and dairy foods in the context of a nutrient-rich diet. It could help bring dairy's total story to life through the eyes of an informed consumer, or health professional. And, it results in a total impact far greater than if you, the farmer, simply welcomed your neighbors over to view the farm.

Involving a health professional and a consumer who is active on the Internet gives you a larger megaphone to help connect more people to dairy farmers and their products, right on the farm. If you would like to invite a registered dietitian contact your local dairy promotion organization.

Create a hashtag for your farm tour for those that are active on social media. Encourage attendees to upload photos of your farm to Instagram or send Snapchats to friends. Volunteer to be part of a short video they can share on Facebook and Twitter.

Your farm could feature several “stations” with signage that celebrates a food that is local, fresh and simple, and produced in an environmentally friendly way. You could start by holding up a glass of milk and a pound of compost, and proceeding backward to how these products came about. Or, the signage could follow milk from farm to the consumer's table at home.

This on-farm experience could be extended to teachers, retailers, industry experts and other thought leaders. They can help educate a sizable audience about the resources available at the farm, in the store and online to help show how dairy is part of the solution to our nation's challenges in health and wellness, hunger and the environment. What a great place to deliver information on food that is nutritious, safe and good!

***For more information on how to amplify the impact of your farm tour and reach many more consumers, contact your state or regional dairy promotion organization. See the listing in the Resource guide on page R or see listings at [www.dairy.org/local-checkoff](http://www.dairy.org/local-checkoff)***

# PREPARE AND PRACTICE YOUR MESSAGES

## What should I say about what I do on my dairy?

Research shows that communicating with the public about today's modern dairy farms helps create a positive image of farmers and the industry, which, in turn, helps protect demand for and sales of U.S.-produced dairy products and ingredients.

That's why your dairy checkoff funds research on what consumers think about modern on-farm practices. This research helps to form key messages that resonate with the public on these topics: **animal care, environment, food safety, health and wellness, and community**. Have each person conducting the tour stress your farm's messages about these topics (See the resource guide on page B for the messages). This will ensure the visitors leave with a great impression of your farm. **Personal examples are important!**

*When communicating to the public about dairy farming, use this overall key message: Dairy farmers are dedicated to providing you with wholesome, nutritious milk and dairy foods. Our commitment also means caring for our animals and the land.*

## Things to Remember:

- Personalize the Key Messages: Use the consumer-tested key messages as a guide to help tell your farm's story.
- Keep It Simple: Don't use industry jargon or acronyms. You work in the dairy industry every day, but some people may not know that Holstein and Jersey refer to different breeds of cows. Explain everything in simple terms.
- Audience Point-of-View: Look at your farm from a consumer's point-of-view. Before your tour, think about how you are going to explain things in consumer-friendly terms. Knowing about the specific audience will help you personalize your messages and let your audience know that you are informed and interested in them.
- What to Say: No matter what the age or occupation, most tour participants won't be familiar with the farm terms you use on an everyday basis. Keep the following tips in mind when preparing for and giving a farm tour.
  - Instead of using lots of numbers and statistics, use comparisons they can relate to (i.e., cows drink about a bathtub full of water every day; our cows produce XX gallons {not pounds} of milk per day).
  - Stick with the basics. You don't have to explain every aspect of dairy farming, just the highlights that consumers need to understand.
  - Stay positive, even if you are challenged about animal care or production practices. Continually remind tour participants of how you care for your animals and the land. Give them specific examples.

Anticipate questions and prepare to answer them. Kids and adults can ask the darndest questions!  
Review the enclosed **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** on page N.

- Use the simplest terms possible to explain dairy terminology, using phrases suitable to the audience, and offering analogies. For example: only female cows give milk; a milk truck is like a big thermos on wheels; a newly born cow is a calf; the feed room is our cow's kitchen; the milking machine is like a vacuum; compare breeds of cows to breeds of dogs.
- Never venture into subjects such as breeding and artificial insemination with school-age children.
- Young children (ages 3-8) take your words literally. If you say a calf drinks from a bottle, show them a calf bottle or they will picture a baby bottle.
- Older children (ages 9-12) have lots of questions about the process of milking. Some of their ideas may be incorrect. Correct these ideas gently. A good technique is to ask them questions and then provide the "correct" answer.
- Teens and adults ask tough questions about the environment, animal care and product safety. Be sure to include some of the economics of dairy farming for this group to help them appreciate the contribution of modern farming to their community.
- Speak loudly and clearly; repeat any questions that may be asked so everyone can hear.



# BEGIN WITH A MEMORABLE INTRODUCTION

Before we discuss what to say about the farm, let's create an introduction that will welcome your visitors and set the tone for their tour. Include your family's story, the goals of your operation, your passion for the industry and members of your family who are involved in the operation.

Creating a simple, strong introduction that communicates who you are and what you stand for is an important element in sharing your dairy story with others. Whether speaking at a local meeting, hosting a farm tour or greeting a reporter for an on-farm interview, it's important that you convey the values that have built your family business. Below is an example to help you paint a picture of who you are and what you believe.

*"Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_. Our farm has been in the family since \_\_\_\_\_. At \_\_\_\_\_ Farms, we're a proud member of the \_\_\_\_\_ community. We pride ourselves in caring for our animals, contributing to the local community and, most important, producing healthy milk, cheese and yogurt for you and your family."*

(Customize your introduction by inserting three items you take the most pride in on your farm)

Here are a few words that may inspire you:

- ambition
- compassion
- commitment
- health
- honored
- integrity
- making a difference
- dependable
- giving back
- gratitude
- passion
- respect
- steward
- trust
- vision
- work ethic





# SELECT YOUR FARM TOUR STATIONS

Plan a specific route where you will take the participants and include areas you will avoid. (They don't have to see every aspect of the farm, such as the manure lagoon.) Use each area as an opportunity to talk about what takes place at that location. See the sample farm tour for inspiration.

Possible stations include:

- Calves – include calf care and how they are the future of your farm.
- Milking parlor/robotic milker – mention how milk never touches human hands; it travels directly from the cows to a refrigerated holding tank.
- Milk house/bulk tank/tanker truck – include milk testing, refrigeration, safety, transportation.
- Cow barn – include cow care, bedding, fans, misters.
- Feed stations – show what feed is provided to the cows and why; consider letting your guests touch the ingredients.
- Natural resources/environment, energy, recycling – talk about recycling water and nutrients, energy production and steps to protect air quality.
- Consider setting up a physical activity station to tie into the dairy checkoff's Fuel Up to Play 60 program. Have one station pertain to the importance of good nutrition and physical activity. Have the attendees move a feed sack or hay bale or carry a pail in a relay activity.
- Farm economics – if you have an adult audience, consider a station on farm economics. Use visuals to demonstrate how many dollars are generated in the community from each dairy cow.
- Have someone from your farm or your circle of experts at each station help provide specific messages.
  - Tailor your messages to the audience that is visiting the farm.
  - Provide each presenter with key messages.
  - Have each presenter practice his or her key messages. Encourage questions. If possible, conduct hands-on activities (touching the feed or holding the calf bottle).
  - Encourage them to avoid industry jargon (examples: TMR, days in milk, silage) Use verbiage friendly to the audience. For example:
    - Cows drink about a bathtub full of water every day.
    - Our cows produce XX gallons (or glasses) of milk each day. Avoid using pounds of milk.
    - Not all aspects of dairy or the farm need to be explained to each tour. For example, most consumer groups do not need to hear about your timed breeding program.
    - Tailor your messages to the audience visiting.
  - Provide farm shirts or hats to station presenters so they are easy to identify, and to help establish pride in your farm.
  - Have each presenter stress your farm's messages about animal care, environmental stewardship and milk quality and safety. This will ensure that your visitors leave with a great impression of your farm.
    - Personal examples are important!

# DETERMINE WHAT YOU WILL TALK ABOUT AT EACH STATION

Below are messages to get you started in creating your farm tour. Once you create it, you can use variations of it as you wish. Always tailor it to your audience and your goals. Be sure to include lots of personal examples.

## General Introduction:

*Our farm has been in the family since xxxx. We are proud members of the community.*

*We are committed to providing people with safe, high-quality milk and compost (if applicable). Our commitment to quality means taking care of our cows and our land.*

## Barn:

- We care for our cows by providing a nutritious diet, good medical care, and healthy living conditions.
- Most of the cows are lying down and chewing their cud. This is a sign that they are comfortable. (Explain what “cud” is.)
- The fans and misters help keep the cows cool in the summer.
- In the winter we have curtains that lower to retain the heat.
- The cows sleep on mattresses/sand to help keep them comfortable.
- Explain other cow comfort methods:
  - Pedicures
  - Back scratchers
  - Daily herd checks
- “Once a day, we clean the stalls and fluff the sand. How often do you clean your bedroom?”
- While in the barn, the cows have 24/7 access to clean water and food.

## Feeding Area/Silos/Ag bag:

- Show the group the feed mixture – have them touch and smell it.
- Our farm has a nutritionist that helps plan a balanced diet for our cows.
  - Explain what is included and how each ingredient benefits the cow.
- A cow must be well cared for and content to be a good milk producer.

## Milking Parlor:

- Our cows are milked two to three times every day – including Christmas and all other holidays.
- Explain the process:
  - Cows walk into our parlor
  - We hook them up to the machine (demonstrate the process -- place thumbs into pulsating teat cup)
  - Watch milk move through the pipeline
- Show milk output display – “our cows produce 1 million pounds of milk, equal to 116,000 gallons.”
- From start to finish, it takes about 15 minutes to milk a cow.
- Milk leaves the cow at around 101°F and is quickly cooled to 38°F to ensure quality and freshness.
- Dairy cows must be healthy and well cared for in order to produce wholesome, quality milk. The welfare of our animals is our top priority.
- You can be confident that the milk and other dairy foods you buy are safe. Strict safety regulations are required at every step of production. Milk safety is very important to every farmer.

## Milk Tank Room:

- The milk is piped to these tanks and is kept cool (allow visitors to feel the tank’s coolness).
- A milk truck comes \_\_\_\_ times a week to take the milk to the processing facility where it is made into \_\_\_\_\_.
- Milk is strictly tested for antibiotics on the farm and at the processing plant. Any milk that tests positive for antibiotics cannot be sold to the public.

## Maternity Ward:

- This is where cows give birth to calves.
- Nursery calves are fed from bottles.
- Dairy calves receive daily nutritious diets and medical care when needed.
- We provide comfortable, safe, and clean conditions for the cow and calf during the birthing process and afterward.
- Before giving birth, the pregnant cow is housed in a birthing pen where she is given individual care and attention.

## Veterinary Care:

- We work closely with veterinarians to keep our cows healthy and comfortable. Dairy cows receive periodic checkups, vaccinations, and prompt treatment of illness.
- If a cow becomes ill, it is sometimes necessary for us to treat her with antibiotics, just as when people sometimes need medication when they are sick.
- Milk is strictly tested for antibiotics on the farm and at the processing plant. Any milk that tests positive for antibiotics cannot be sold to the public.

## Calf Area:

- Calves are separated from their mothers to ensure the best individual care and monitoring.
- To ensure good nutrition, all calves are fed individually.
- The hutch keeps the calves warm in the winter and protects them from harsh elements.

## Fields:

- Dairy farming involves a nutrient cycle that depends on crops, water, soil and, of course, the cow.
- Farmers are the original recyclers. We are constantly finding ways to reuse water and manure.
- To help our crops grow, we put cow manure on our fields. Similar to fertilizer you might put on your garden or flowers at home, the manure helps our land grow the crops we need to feed our animals.

## General Environment:

- We live on the land that we farm. We understand the importance of protecting our natural resources.
- Our family has been here for X generations/years. We want to be here for many more. That means we need to take care of our land so it is in good shape for future generations.
- Water quality is important to us. We live where we work and we work where we live. The cows also need quality water to produce wholesome milk.
- Farmers have always had respect for the land. We protect it not only for our children and grandchildren, but also for our overall community.

# SAMPLE FARM TOUR PLAN

Create a map or chart to help organize what will be discussed at each station. See the following example.  
Find a blank farm tour chart in the Farmer Resource section on page Y.

Location/Activity	Messages	Materials Needed
ON SCHOOL BUS ✓ Introduction to tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dairy foods like milk, cheese and yogurt are very nutritious and taste great.</li> <li>✓ Dairy cows must be healthy and well cared for in order to produce wholesome, quality milk. The welfare of our animals is top priority.</li> <li>✓ Dairy farmers are committed to being good stewards of the environment.</li> <li>✓ Farmers have always had respect for the land. We protect it not only for our own children and grandchildren, but for our community.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Parking Area sign
FEEDING AREA ✓ Explain that this is the cow kitchen where all the feeds are mixed together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A cow must be well cared for and content to be a good milk producer. So raising healthy livestock is simply good business for dairy farmers.</li> <li>✓ Dairy cows receive daily nutritious diets and medical care when needed.</li> <li>✓ Farmers are the original recyclers. We are constantly finding ways to reuse water and manure.</li> <li>✓ Water quality is important to us and our families. We live where we work and we work where we live. The cows also need quality water to produce wholesome milk.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Feeding Area sign <input type="checkbox"/> Feed samples
MATERNITY WARD ✓ where cows give birth to calves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dairy cows receive daily nutritious diets and medical care when needed.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Maternity Ward sign
NURSERY ✓ Calves are fed from bottles ✓ NO touching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dairy calves receive daily nutritious diets and medical care when needed.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Nursery sign <input type="checkbox"/> Feeding bottle
HAND WASHING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dairy cleanliness is very important for our visitors, too.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Antibacterial wipes <input type="checkbox"/> Trash bin
PASTURE ✓ Touch soil ✓ Smell grass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Farmers have always had respect for the land. We protect it not only for our own children and grandchildren, but for our community.</li> <li>✓ Land is one of our most precious assets. Farmers have always been environmentalists.</li> <li>✓ Farmers are the original recyclers. We are constantly finding ways to reuse water and manure.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Hull samples <input type="checkbox"/> Bag of lawn manure fertilizer
HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A cow must be well cared for and content to be a good milk producer. These barns provide easy access to feed and clean water as well as shade and protection from bad weather.</li> <li>✓ Cow comfort is important to dairy farmers because a comfortable cow will give more milk. Dairy farmers provide clean dry bedding and access to food and water 24-hours a day.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Barn sign
MILKING PARLOR ✓ Demonstrate process ✓ Thumbs into pulsating teat cup ✓ Watch milk move through pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dairy cows must be healthy and well cared for in order to produce wholesome, quality milk. The welfare of our animals is top priority.</li> <li>✓ Consumers can be confident that the milk and other dairy foods they buy are safe. Strict safety regulations are required at every step of production. Safety of our products is very important to every farmer.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Milking Parlor sign
MILK STORAGE ROOM ✓ Feel tanks ✓ NO sampling of raw milk!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Consumers can be confident that the milk and other dairy foods they buy are safe. Strict safety regulations are required at every step of production. Safety of our products is very important to every farmer.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Milk Storage sign <input type="checkbox"/> Empty cartons of milk, flavored milks, yogurt, cheese products
SNACKS ✓ Do an activity ✓ WASH HANDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Dairy farmers are dedicated to producing wholesome, quality milk and dairy products.</li> <li>✓ Dairy foods like milk, cheese and yogurt are very nutritious and taste great. Calcium is a nutrient we all need for strong bones and dairy foods are the number one source of calcium in our food supply.</li> <li>✓ Dairy cows must be healthy and well cared for in order to produce wholesome, quality milk</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yogurt, flavored milk bottles & string cheese <input type="checkbox"/> Signs thanking sponsors <input type="checkbox"/> Tables and chairs
EVALUATION ✓ Review day with helpers ✓ Call tour contact and get input ✓ Write down how to improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Thank the tour contact. Tell them that they can contact you if they have any questions about dairy farming.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tour feedback form

*Adapted from the Midwest Dairy Association's Farm Tour Guide.*

# CREATE YOUR CHECKLIST

Checklists will help ensure that you and your visitors have a great experience. When customizing your checklist, consider the size of the group, their ages and the topics they want to cover while visiting your farm.

## ONE MONTH BEFORE THE TOUR

- ☐ Work with the organization leader or teacher to determine logistics:
  - ☐ Set the date.
  - ☐ How much time will they have for the tour?
    - Does this include travel time to and from the farm?
    - Learn when the participants will arrive.
  - ☐ Find out how many people will be attending.
    - If this is a school tour, have one adult chaperone for every 10 children; ask the teacher or organization leader to bring volunteers.
    - The chaperones, who by and large are the food buyers in their households, will have a different set of questions from the group they are with. You will want to keep them confident in the dairy products they buy.
    - For adults, you don't need chaperones, but you should have someone from the farm walking with the group to answer questions – one for every 15 adults.
  - ☐ What do they want to see and learn? Tie this into writing your own goals. (see page 6 for tips on how to determine event goals)
    - If a fourth-grade class is focusing on agriculture in your state, it may be a general tour. But a high school agriculture class may want to focus on how you grow crops and feed them to your animals.
  - ☐ Establish with the leader that certain areas of your farm need to be off limits because of insurance liability.
    - For example, you may want to say, "I'd rather not have the group visit the manure lagoon because we haul manure a few days a week and I want to keep the group out of the way of the big tractors."
  - ☐ If your farm is hard to find, discuss meeting the group in town and escorting it to your farm.
  - ☐ Discuss snacks/food. Some groups will welcome a snack but be aware of visitors with food allergies.
    - Important note: Never serve raw milk to visitors.
  - ☐ If children may see a cow calving or breeding, let the teacher and parents know before the tour.
- ☐ Send the pre-tour confirmation to your tour organizer on page X in the Farmer Resources.
- ☐ Ask your tour organizer if anyone with special needs is visiting your farm. Make arrangements accordingly.
- ☐ Inform the tour leader of your on-farm biosecurity measures, and why those are important to your farm, your animals, and to your guests.
  - ☐ Discuss having the visitors wear plastic boots, and who will provide.
  - ☐ Consider having a sign-in sheet so you can keep track of who visits your farm each year.



- ☐ If you are giving a tour to children and plan to use photos of their faces on social media or for advertising, send a photo waiver to the tour organizer for parents and guardians to sign.
- ☐ Check with your insurance agent about your farm's liability insurance policy.
  - ☐ Ask if each participant or a guardian needs to sign a liability form.
- ☐ Determine which areas of your farm will be off-limits and communicate that with the tour organizer or teacher, explain why you may want to keep the group away from the large equipment or manure lagoon.

### **With your farm tour team:**

- ☐ Hosting farm tours takes a team, just like running a dairy farm. While you have a well-oiled machine to operate your dairy each day, hosting farm tours also needs a devoted team. When deciding who to help plan and host the tour, think about involving others outside of your immediate farm team. You may also include:
  - ☐ Family members
  - ☐ Employees
  - ☐ Your veterinarian
    - Kids, especially teens, can be more exposed to negative sentiment toward agriculture; having a veterinarian present may help reassure them.
  - ☐ Nutritionists
  - ☐ Co-op/processor
  - ☐ Local dairy checkoff
  - ☐ Local youth organizations – these organizations often look for volunteer opportunities for their members and can help with various activities during the farm tour.
    - 4-H groups
    - FFA groups
    - Dairy college students
    - Girl/Boy Scouts
  - ☐ Local businesses you work with (equipment dealer, feed dealer, banker, etc.)
- ☐ Draft an outline of how you plan to conduct the farm tour; identify your goals (see Goals Section on page 6).
  - ☐ Determine if your timing is the appropriate length, and if you have enough team members to help.
- ☐ Consider if you need tents, sun shades, portable toilets, tables and chairs, podium and microphone, sound system, portable lights, trash barrels, orange construction fencing.
  - ☐ Test the sound system and lights ahead of time.
  - ☐ Also, be prepared for how to handle inclement weather.
- ☐ Select your farm tour stations (see section on Farm Tour Stations, on page 17).
  - ☐ Consider stations showing how milk flows on the farm. For example, begin in a field where crops are grown, then move to the feed storage, then the barn, milking parlor, etc.
- ☐ Consider creating signs for each station with a brief description of that area.
  - ☐ Contact your local dairy promotion organization; they may be able to assist with various aspects of your tour. ([www.dairy.org/local-checkoff](http://www.dairy.org/local-checkoff))

- ☐ Be sure that everyone will be able to hear and see. You may need to separate into smaller groups and include additional tour guides. Or, consider renting a portable microphone or standing on an elevated surface.
  - ☐ If the group stays together, have someone from your team bring up the rear to ensure that no one strays from the group and to answer questions from people in the back of the group.
- ☐ Include your own farm-specific steps:
  - ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☐ \_\_\_\_\_



## ONE WEEK BEFORE THE TOUR

- ☐ Connect with the group leader to finalize details:
  - Timing
  - Number of people
  - Where the group will park when they arrive
  - Etc.

### With your farm tour team:

- ☐ Conduct a walkthrough of the farm tour.
  - Pick up wires, tires, etc., that the visitors could trip over.
  - Remove anything that can be knocked down or rubbed up against, especially sharp objects. Pull out nails or screws that might catch on clothing, and look for sharp shelf corners or unstable objects.
  - Employees who are helping should practice their roles.
- ☐ Make sure chemicals of any kind – cleaners, pesticides, and antibiotics – are safely contained.
- ☐ Saws, drills, files, needles, blades, and other similar items should be put away and kept out of sight.
- ☐ This may be the first time your visitors step foot on a dairy farm. Try to look at the farm through their perspective. If something doesn't look right, either remove it from sight or fix it. Remove anything that does not look sanitary (e.g., dirty rags, rusty pieces of equipment, trash, etc.).
  - Consider asking one of your non-farming family members or friends to accompany you on a walk-through to provide their perspective.
- ☐ Hold an employee meeting a few days before the tour.
  - Review roles of those helping.
  - Talk with employees who are not playing a role in the tour.
    - Notify them of the timing of the tour.
    - Remind them to be aware of the visitors as they conduct their normal routines.
    - Remind them to act respectful of animals and equipment.
- ☐ Provide for sanitation needs, such as hand washing and restrooms.
  - Hand-washing is very important! Running water, soap and disposable towels should be available so that participants can wash their hands immediately after contact with the animals.
  - If running water is not available, a waterless cleaner or antibacterial wipes can be substituted, but these substances have not been tested for their ability to inactivate pathogens under farm conditions.
  - Provide adult supervision, especially for children under 5 years old.
- ☐ Determine restrooms they can use.
- ☐ Place waste cans throughout the farm tour.
- ☐ Consider water stations, especially if you are hosting the tour on a warm day.
- ☐ Include your own farm-specific steps:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

## DAY OF THE TOUR

- ☐ Conduct a final walk-through to confirm cleanliness and safety – make sure paths are clear, animals are fed/watered and looking healthy.
- ☐ Establish a place where vehicles will park.
  - ☐ Have a clearly marked entrance and exit for visitors and have someone direct vehicles.
  - ☐ Do not let vehicles drive near the animals, or in the path of large farm equipment.
- ☐ Your visitors will be curious about your farm, what you see every day is new and intriguing to them so you'll want to give extra thought into keeping them safe around these areas:
  - ☐ Keep people – and especially children – away from electric fencing. If it is necessary to have your guests near an electric fence, mark wires with a rag tie or tape. People should see where the wires are so they can be avoided.
    - ☐ Explain why you have electric fencing, what happens when you touch it, and that it is not harmful to the animals.
  - ☐ Haymows and chutes are enticing to children. Unfortunately, it doesn't take much for a child who is unfamiliar with the surroundings to fall down a chute or leap off something too high and hurt themselves. Show the haymow to demonstrate where you store cow feed but refrain from letting people walk around or play in the area.
  - ☐ Avoid taking your guests through rocky or slippery terrain. If barn floors are slick, take measures to dry them by using barn lime, straw or wood shavings.
  - ☐ Keep the groups away from large equipment.
    - ☐ If you raise crops, consider planning tours around the busy spring planting and fall harvest to ensure large equipment is not making frequent trips through the areas where the tour will be held.
  - ☐ Do not run machinery, tractors, wagons, trucks, etc., while guests are on the tour. Pull keys out of the tractors.
- ☐ Make sure your farm is neat and tidy; remember that first impressions are lasting ones!
- ☐ Set up a hand washing station.

### Right before your visitors arrive:

- ☐ Change into clean clothes – perhaps a shirt with the farm's name (no stains).
  - ☐ Have others who are helping you with the tour do the same.
  - ☐ First impressions are extremely important, how you present your farm and yourself will leave a lasting memory on the group, and possibly their future dairy purchases.
- ☐ Smile and have fun! You are the best person to tell your story!
- ☐ Include your own farm-specific steps:

- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

## SNACKS/MILK

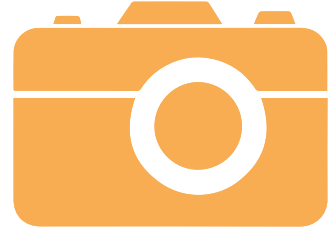
Providing a dairy snack at the end of the tour provides an opportunity to highlight products that come from cow's milk. It also provides a final opportunity for visitors to ask questions of your team.

- ☐ If serving milk, determine how you will keep it cold.
- ☐ Do not provide raw milk.
  - The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommend that no one consume unpasteurized milk. According to health experts, pasteurized milk offers the same health benefits as raw milk, without the risks.
- ☐ If food is provided, have everyone wash hands again before the food is served.
- ☐ Provide new dairy foods that require little effort to serve and are not messy (e.g. single-serve Greek yogurt, packaged cheese sticks).
- ☐ Contact your cooperative; it may be willing to donate the products.
- ☐ Contact your local dairy checkoff for additional product donation information, including contacts for checkoff strategic partners. See the listings on page R in the Farmer Resource guide.
- ☐ Include your own farm-specific steps:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

# PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO POLICY

Encourage photos to be taken and posted on social media. As consumers are more removed from farms, we want to encourage them to have positive conversations with their family and friends about their experiences. By sharing photos and status updates on their social media accounts, they are helping to tell dairy's positive story.

- Look for scenarios you would not want to be photographed during the pre-tour walk-through with your team.
  - Either remove the concern or divert the tour from that particular area.
- Consider a photo-taking station (with the farmer or a calf, near a tractor, etc.)
  - Remove the keys from the equipment if visitors will be allowed to pose near it.
  - Wash the animal the morning of the tour.
- Remember that you are not authorized to post faces of people on the tour on social media unless you have their written permission. A sample photo waiver is included on page Z in the Farmer Resource section.



# ENDING THE TOUR

- Thank the audience for attending.
- Answer any final questions.
- Provide handouts/resources, such as a farm brochure or farm fact sheet.
- Provide your contact information for additional questions.
- Encourage tour participants to 'like' or 'follow' your farm online.
- Refer tour participants to DairyGood.org.
- Thank the audience for attending.
- Contact your local promotion organization to have giveaway items available.
- Ask tour participants to complete an evaluation (either via mobile or print).

## After the Tour

- Meet with all station managers and other volunteers to evaluate the day.
  - What worked?
  - What didn't work?
  - Ask for suggestions for the next tour.
  - Thank your team for their time.
  - Celebrate your successful farm tour!
- Send a thank you note to the classroom or group that visited. Add some personal notes about specific questions they asked, or include photos of a calf that was born during their visit or of the entire group and your staff.

# NOTES

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical margin lines, no text, and no other markings on the page. It appears to be a standard piece of notebook paper or a template for writing practice.



Telling **Your** Story  
sharing where dairy good comes from!

## RESOURCES FOR FARMERS

These resources are intended to assist you in giving a farm tour. We recommend you study the appropriate messages, read through the Frequently-Asked-Questions, and look at some of the websites listed. You may want to create a Farm Fact Sheet prior to your tour to distribute to the adults. A guide is provided to help you create one.

You'll also find Educational Resources for your Farm Tour. Feel free to copy one or all of these as handouts for the students or give them to the teacher. There are quizzes, corny jokes for you to use on the tour, a story, and recipes.

# STORYLINES



In addition to using the consumer-tested messages, the following storylines will help you connect with specific audiences.

## Storyline 1: Lifetime of Goodness

A good life begins with good purpose. And good purpose means doing the right thing-- for your family, for your community, and for the world around you. Choosing good foods that connect you to a good place.

A place where you can taste creamy yogurt in your homemade smoothie. A place where you can still feel that ice cream headache on a hot summer day, and you don't even mind. A place where there's a cold glass of milk at the end of a long day. A place that has always been good for you.

You know that dairy foods are more than good nutrients, and they have been all your life. Dairy foods connect to that place you love, where you share good things with family and friends. Dairy foods connect you to a lifetime of goodness. And you know this is where good comes from.

**DAIRY PROVIDES A LIFETIME OF GOODNESS.**

## Storyline 2: Real. Fresh. Simple.

As a third generation dairy farmer, I feel a strong connection to the land and to the animals. This is my home and it's the greatest asset I can give to my children. I want to do what is right with every choice I make for this farm. I want to do what's right so the foods I bring you every day are safe, nutritious and sustainably produced. I know it's the most important thing I do.

I believe good choices are simple. Foods that are natural, wholesome, and fresh are one of those simple choices. Whether you pick up dairy foods at the local farmers' market or the grocery store, I work hard to make sure you can feel good about your choice. I am proud to be part of providing the many milk, cheese and yogurt options to meet your needs – for the here and now, and for the good you want to do in the long run. I believe milk is one great ingredient, connecting you to what is real.

**REAL FOOD, SIMPLE STORY, FRESH REASONS TO LOVE DAIRY.**

## Storyline 3: Powered by Dairy.

You are capable of amazing things. You have the power to decide where you will go, the good you will accomplish, and how you will get there. Peak performance starts with good fuel. Dairy is a nutritional powerhouse that can help fuel the body and nourish the mind. The combination of protein and carbohydrates, and other essential nutrients in dairy, provides lasting satisfaction to help keep your body strong and power you through life.

You have the power to choose what to buy, or not to buy. So think about choosing dairy, nature's performance food.

**DAIRY EMPOWERS WITH HIGH-QUALITY PROTEIN THAT BUILDS MUSCLES AND FUELS YOUR BODY.**



# MESSAGES



**When communicating with the public about modern dairy farming, use these overall key messages:**

- America's dairy farmers are committed to providing you with safe, high-quality milk and dairy products. Our commitment to quality means taking good care of our cows and the land.
- According to USDA, 97% of U.S. dairy farms are family owned and operated, often by multiple generations of the family.
- The same values of caring for the land and animals still exist, but the look of the family farm and the technologies have changed.
- Dairy farms have modernized and become larger to allow siblings, children or other family members to join the dairy.
- Dairy farming requires a large investment in land, buildings, equipment and feed for the animals. Today, many banks require that dairy farmers incorporate to protect assets and provide a formal succession plan for family members.

# MESSAGES - ANIMAL CARE



## **General**

- Dairy farmers' commitment to providing high-quality milk begins with taking good care of their cows.
- Dairy farmers care for their cows by providing a nutritious diet, good medical care and healthy living conditions.
- Dairy farmers work closely with veterinarians and nutritionists to keep their cows healthy and comfortable. Dairy cows receive periodic check-ups, vaccinations and prompt treatment of illness.

## **Animal Housing**

- Cow comfort is important to dairy farmers because it leads to high-quality, wholesome milk.
- Dairy farmers provide clean, dry bedding to their cows and access to food and water 24 hours a day.
- Many farmers house their animals in freestall barns, which allows the cows to move about to eat, drink or rest whenever they like. These barns let in fresh air and sunshine, and also provide shade and protection from the wind, cold or rain.

## **Antibiotic Residue**

- Strict government standards and industry protocols ensure that pasteurized milk is wholesome, safe and nutritious.
- Sometimes it's necessary for farmers to treat cows with antibiotics when they are ill, just as people sometimes need medication when they are sick.
- A cow being treated for illness is separated from the milking herd to ensure that its milk does not go into the milk supply.
- All milk is tested for the most commonly-used antibiotics upon delivery at the dairy plant. Any milk that tests positive cannot be sold to the public.

## **Antibiotic Use and Resistance**

- Healthy animals are the foundation of a safe and abundant food supply.
- Dairy farmers work with their veterinarians to judiciously administer antibiotics.
- Regarding antibiotic-resistant bacteria, strict measures are in place to minimize any potential risks. Dairy farms only use FDA-approved antibiotics, and they follow protocols to limit antibiotic use and keep residues out of the food supply.

# MESSAGES - ANIMAL CARE



## **Cow/Calf Care, Calf Separation**

- Calves grow up to become the cows that produce milk, so farmers make it a priority to get them off to a healthy start.
- Prior to giving birth, the pregnant cow is housed in a birthing pen filled with soft and dry bedding such as straw, sand or sawdust. She is given individual care and attention.
- During the birth, dairy farmers, their employees and/or their veterinarians keep a close eye on the animals to assure a healthy delivery.
- Calves are separated from their mothers to ensure the best individual care and monitoring of both animals, especially in the first 24 hours.
- Farmers bottle-feed calves individually to make sure they receive good nutrition.
- For the first three months, most calves live in clean, dry individual pens called calf hutches that have ample space for the calf to freely move about. Hutches protect them from other members of the herd and bad weather.

## **FARM (Farmers Assuring Responsible Management)**

- The dairy industry has worked with veterinarians and other experts to establish guidelines for the proper care of dairy cows.
- The National Dairy FARM Program™ is a nationwide, verifiable animal well-being program that brings consistency and uniformity to on-farm animal care and production practices: [www.nationaldairyfarm.com](http://www.nationaldairyfarm.com).
- The dairy community has a proven track record of responsible management practices.

## **Feed Additives (Rumensin)**

- Farmers and animal nutritionists use feed additives to help cows absorb the most nutrients from their diet.
- Rumensin is an FDA-approved, medicated feed additive that helps cows produce more milk per pound of feed, thus contributing to an efficient and plentiful milk supply.
- The active ingredient in Rumensin is not used in human medicine.
- Scientific studies, reviewed by FDA, confirm that milk from cows that receive recommended levels of feed additives is safe.

## **Feed Ingredients**

- Professional nutritionists help dairy farmers develop a balanced and nutritious diet for their cows.
- The ingredients in the cows' feed vary by season and geography. They are typically hay, grains (soybeans and corn), protein sources (alfalfa and canola) and vitamins and minerals.
- Dairy cows on USDA-certified organic farms and "grass-fed" cows spend the grazing season (at least 120 days per year) on green pasture. They usually eat supplemental feed, too, to make sure they get enough protein. In the winter, cows on organic farms eat the same type of feed as cows on other farms, except the ingredients must be certified organic.

### **GMOs in Feed**

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have all confirmed the safety of food and animal feed that contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs), which are made through biotechnology.
- Biotechnology allows farmers to grow more crops using the same amount of land, water and other natural resources.
- On organic dairy farms, the cows eat only grass and certified-organic feed, so consumers who wish to avoid GMOs can choose certified-organic dairy foods.

### **Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) – If Asked**

- The World Health Organization, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and other major health organizations have affirmed and reaffirmed that milk and dairy products are considered safe.
- Dairy farmers work with state and federal officials to maintain and monitor the health and well-being of dairy cows.
- Dairy farmers are vigilant about what they feed cows and strictly follow the protective measures put in place to prevent the spread of BSE in the United States.

### **Bovine TB – If Asked about an Outbreak**

- The quality and safety of pasteurized milk products in [insert specific location] are not threatened by this animal disease.
- Pasteurization is effective against the bacterium that causes Bovine TB.
- Stringent standards in the U.S. ensure that milk is safe. Milk and milk products undergo a number of safety, quality and sanitation procedures, including pasteurization.

### **Cull Cows/Non-ambulatory Cows – If Asked**

- Meat from cows that are no longer productive for milking is a valuable source of safe and nutritious food.
- Culling cows – or removing some cows from the dairy herd – is a common practice that allows a dairy farm to bring new, more productive cows into the herd, thus ensuring a steady supply of milk.
- All dairy cows sent to market are inspected by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) veterinarians and are subject to the same federal food safety regulations as other cattle.
- A very small percent of cows become permanently disabled. When this happens, the cow is humanely euthanized and the meat from that animal does not enter the human food supply.
- Animals that are sick or injured are placed in special pens, away from other animals, where they receive prompt medical care by a veterinarian.

### **Dehorning – If Asked**

- Dehorning is a practice used for decades to help reduce the risk of injury to cows and people.
- Dairy farmers use a variety of dehorning techniques. “Disbudding” of non-developed horn buds is a fairly simple procedure that is typically conducted in the first few weeks of a calf being born.
- For a cow with developed horns, dairy farmers and veterinarians using best industry practices will ensure the comfort and safety of an animal through sedation or anesthesia.

### **Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) – If Asked**

- Foot-and-Mouth Disease is an animal disease that does not affect food safety.
- The United States has been free of Foot-and-Mouth Disease since 1929.
- Farmers, veterinarians and government officials are on the alert for any signs of Foot-and-Mouth Disease to keep it out of the United States.

### **Johne’s Disease – If Asked**

- Johne’s is a bacterial disease that infects the intestines of cattle.
- There is an expansive industry-wide detection and education effort under way in the United States to control the spread of Johne’s among cattle.
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has affirmed that standard pasteurization in the U.S. is effective against the bacterium that causes Johne’s.
- The National Academy of Sciences has stated that there is no conclusive evidence that Johne’s in cows is linked to Crohn’s disease in humans, and has recommended more research on this topic.

### **Tail docking – If Asked**

- Historically, some dairy farmers have cropped the tails of their animals to promote cleanliness and protect the people who are in close contact with the cows.
- In recent years, animal scientists and veterinarians have re-evaluated research on tail-docking; some have concluded that tail docking should be phased out.
- The National Dairy FARM program endorses switch trimming, which is the removal of the hair at the end of the cow’s tail for hygiene purposes.

### **Undercover video – If Asked**

- The dairy community takes any claim about animal mistreatment very seriously. Any evidence of animal abuse should be taken to the appropriate state and local authorities whose job it is to investigate those claims.
- Animal care is one of the most important aspects of a dairy farmer’s job: [insert personal on-farm examples].

# MESSAGES - ENVIRONMENT



## **General**

- Dairy farmers live on or near the land that they farm. They understand the importance of protecting natural resources.
- Caring for the land, air and water is a responsibility dairy farmers share with the local community.
- Dairy farms work with experts to find new ways to reduce the energy they use, conserve water and develop renewable energy sources.
- The best way to preserve land is to keep farms in business. Farmers understand and appreciate nature and take good care of their property.

## **Manure Management**

- Dairy farmers are adopting new ways to manage cow manure to help improve air and water quality and public health.
- Farmers have a stake in following regulations and best management practices to protect the health of their family, their cows and the environment.
- By law, manure must be stored in secure, on-farm facilities to help reduce odor and hasten decomposition.
- Often farmers recycle the cow manure and use it as fertilizer for crops. Federal, state and local clean water laws regulate how manure is applied on cropland, so nutrients go into crops, not groundwater.
- In order for local authorities to approve expansion, a dairy farm must show that it has adequate manure storage and recycling systems to handle more cows.
- Some dairy farms are using new technology that converts manure to electricity, which can power their farms, their homes and their neighbors' homes.

## **Odor and Air Quality**

- Dairy farmers care about air quality. Their families live and work on their farms and breathe the air, too. They understand the importance of clean air for future generations.
- Naturally, there are odors associated with livestock farming. Dairy farmers recycle manure to help control odor in the community.
- Dairy farmers help protect air quality by following proper manure storage practices and by maintaining clean farms.
- Dairy farmers invest in new technologies to protect and improve air quality: [Insert examples].

## **Sustainability**

- Dairy farm families have a long-term commitment to environmental care and their communities.
- Dairy farmers support practices that make economic sense, help the environment and are socially responsible to our communities and our world – e.g., reducing energy and water use, reducing cooling and packaging costs and recycling manure into renewable energy. [Insert personal examples.]
- The latest research shows that the United States dairy industry accounts for only about 2% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Dairy farmers are working on ways to reduce that figure even more.
- The dairy industry is on track to meet a goal set in 2008 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by the year 2020: [www.usdairy.com/sustainability](http://www.usdairy.com/sustainability).

## **Water Quality**

- Quality water is essential to a dairy farm. Dairy farmers provide their cows with clean water which contributes to high-quality milk.
- State and local government agencies regularly inspect and test the water on dairy farms.
- The federal government also helps dairy farmers protect the water supply. For example, many farmers receive technical assistance when they upgrade their irrigation systems and manure storage facilities.
- Dairy farmers continually look for innovative ways to protect and conserve the water supply. They often partner with government agencies and university experts to develop better management practices and adopt the latest technologies.

## **Water Usage**

- It is certainly understandable that communities want to protect their water supply. Dairy farmers feel the same way. Dairy farmers are finding new ways to conserve water: [Insert examples].
- Dairy farmers use water responsibly and often recycle it to use on their crops or to clean their milking parlors and barns.
- Dairy farmers work with industry organizations, government and local civic groups to address water use issues.

# MESSAGES - FOOD SAFETY



## General

- From the dairy to you, milk goes through strict quality controls to ensure freshness, purity and great taste.
- Milking equipment delivers milk directly from the cows to a refrigerated holding tank to preserve freshness and safety. The milk is then quickly transported to processing plants for continued freshness and safety.
- Since its introduction over a century ago, pasteurization has been recognized around the world as an essential tool for ensuring that milk and dairy products are safe.

## Food Security/Defense

- Dairy farmers are committed to providing a safe, steady supply of dairy products.
- Dairy farmers work diligently to implement a wide range of measures to secure facilities and the milk supply. Measures in place on my farm include: [Insert personal examples such as biosecurity signs, maintaining a closed herd, quarantining new animals or placing locks on milk tanks.]
- Dairy farmers and the dairy industry overall have a history of providing safe and healthy products.

## Organic

- There is no scientific evidence concluding that organic dairy products are safer or healthier than conventional dairy products.
- Strict government standards ensure that both regular and organic milk are wholesome, safe and nutritious.
- Organic and regular dairy products both contain the same combination of nutrients — such as calcium, vitamin D and potassium — that make dairy products an important part of a healthy diet.
- Whether people choose regular or organic, they should feel good about consuming all varieties of milk, cheese and yogurt as part of a healthy, balanced diet.

## Raw Milk

- According to health experts, pasteurized milk offers the same health benefits as raw milk, without the risks.
- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommend that no one consume unpasteurized milk.
- Pasteurization is a simple, effective method to kill potentially harmful bacteria. It does not affect the nutritional value of milk in any meaningful way.



### **Pesticides – If Asked**

- Pesticides are used sparingly in crop production and do not pose a health concern in U.S. dairy products.
- It's important to keep in mind that modern equipment can detect residues at levels far lower than those that pose a health risk.
- Strict government standards ensure that milk is safe, wholesome and nutritious.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has strict regulations about farm practices involving the use of pesticides, and the FDA monitors foods for pesticides. Dairy farmers consistently meet or exceed these regulations.

### **Somatic Cell Counts (If asked about “pus in milk”)**

- All milk naturally contains some somatic cells, which are white blood cells that fight infection.
- Farmers and milk processors routinely test their milk for somatic cell counts in accordance with standards set by the federal Pasteurized Milk Ordinance.
- Milk processing and pasteurization eliminate most somatic cells; however, these cells are a perfectly safe part of milk.

### **Supplemental Hormones – If Asked**

- Some dairy farmers choose to use rbST as a tool to help cows produce more milk.
- Studies show that milk from cows treated with the supplemental hormone rbST is the same wholesome product that we have enjoyed for generations. This has been affirmed and reaffirmed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), among other leading health organizations.
- All milk naturally contains very small amounts of hormones, and studies show that the hormone levels of milk from cows that are treated with rbST are within the normal range.
- Milk companies have responded to consumer requests for choices in the dairy aisle, and many now offer milk from cows not supplemented with rbST. This decision is due to market demand and is not related to any health or safety issue. Milk is wholesome, safe and nutritious.

# MESSAGES - HEALTH & WELLNESS



## **Childhood Nutrition**

- Drinking milk and eating dairy foods make it easy for kids to get the bone-building calcium and other nutrients their growing bodies need.
- Dairy farmers' commitment to kids began in 1915 with the founding of the National Dairy Council®. Decades of nutrition research and in-school programs have helped National Dairy Council take a leading role in the fight against poor nutrition, inactivity and overweight/obesity among our nation's youth.
- The National Dairy Council® (NDC), the nutrition research and education arm of the dairy checkoff, and the National Football League are founding partners of Fuel Up to Play 60 – an in-school health and wellness program that encourages physical activity and good nutrition (including dairy consumption) among youth.

## **Flavored Milk**

- The dairy industry is committed to improving children's health by developing dairy products for schools that are nutritious and great-tasting.
- The dairy industry has reduced the added sugar in the flavored milk offered in schools by nearly 40 percent (from 4 teaspoons of added sugar in each serving to 2.4 teaspoons) over the last five years.
- Chocolate milk is a popular choice and kids drink less milk – and get fewer essential nutrients – if it's taken away.

## **Food Security**

- One of the great challenges of the next generation will be providing nutritious, affordable food to a global population expected to grow to 9 billion by 2050 — while using fewer resources.
- More people are struggling for access to healthy, nutritious food. Dairy farmers have a shared responsibility in the health of future generations. They recognize there are serious challenges and are committed to being a part of the solution.
- Food security is a shared responsibility that dairy farmers commit to seven days a week. We need to double our food production over the next 40 years. Not only are people going hungry around the world, but there are 37 million Americans who are at risk of not knowing where their next meal will come from.
- Dairy farmers partner with Feeding America, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and National Dairy Council to help fight hunger in America and promote healthy food choices.

## **Low-fat options**

- The dairy case has something for everyone — including low-fat and fat-free varieties, as well as lactose-free products. Families can choose from a variety of milk, cheese and yogurt products to meet their taste and nutritional goals.

## Nutrition

- Simple and natural, milk contains essential nutrients including calcium, potassium, protein and phosphorus; plus, it's fortified with Vitamins A and D.
- Milk's powerful nutrient package of calcium, plus eight other essential nutrients, helps nourish your body, not just your bones.
- The protein naturally found in milk helps to build strong muscles for your active lifestyle.
- Milk is high in calcium and Vitamin D. It's a good source of protein, and one glass has as much potassium as a small banana.
- On average, Americans only consume about two servings of dairy daily. Adding one serving of dairy every day can help Americans get the nutrients they need in an easy and affordable way.
- Three to four servings of milk and other dairy foods daily have a potential estimated health care cost savings of more than \$214 billion over five years.
- Dairy is irreplaceable in the diet as a source of essential nutrients. Milk, cheese and yogurt are nutrient-rich and contribute significant nutrition to Americans' diets.
- Dairy foods offer high nutrition and economic value.
- Few foods deliver dairy's powerhouse of nutrients in such an affordable, appealing and readily available way. For example, milk, at about 25 cents a glass, is a nutritional bargain.

# MESSAGES - COMMUNITY



## General

- Dairy farmers care about the health and well-being of their communities. They have been active members of their communities for many generations, and create jobs that help sustain the local economy.
- America's dairy industry is an important contributor to our nation's overall economy. Dairy farmers purchase machinery, trucks, fuel, and more from local companies. This creates jobs and produces revenue for their local communities.
- Where milk goes, jobs follow. In addition to providing and distributing nutritious products, the dairy industry generates substantial economic benefits at the local, regional and national levels through employment, local tax revenues and purchases of products and services. Jobs follow milk as it moves from farm to processing, distribution and retail. Jobs are also created within the supply and service sectors that support the industry.

## Local Community Contributions

- Every glass of milk contributes jobs, income and vitality to the community.
- Dairies support the economic well-being of rural America; every dollar spent locally by a dairy farmer creates a multiplier effect of more than two and a half times the original dollar spent.
- Dairy farmers and dairy companies are local small business owners, parents, school supporters, and active members of community organizations.
- Dairy farms are typically passed down from generation to generation, meaning farm families have often lived in their community for decades and will continue to do so as long as the farm exists. They are committed to seeing the area they live in thrive, and they volunteer in many areas to make that happen.
- My family and I are involved in \_\_\_\_\_ organizations in our community and sponsor the local \_\_\_\_\_. We strive every day to ensure that our community thrives.

## U.S. Economic Contributions

- Dairy farms and dairy businesses help grow and build rural America. Even under the nation's current economic challenges, dairy farmers and companies are a lifeline to 900,000 jobs in the United States.
- U.S. dairy farms employ about 138,000 people, and many of these are skilled jobs. These employees perform a wide variety of on-farm jobs, including: cultivating crops; milking cows; mixing feed rations; assisting with calf birthing; keeping herd health records; administering vaccinations; maintaining a nutrient management plan; and operating and maintaining equipment. Dairy cattle are tended to around the clock.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



The most amazing questions come up during farm tours. By knowing the Key Messages, you will be prepared for most of them. As you answer specific questions, also work in your key messages.

Here are examples of questions often asked. Remember to explain jargon.

## Q: When do cows have calves?

A: A heifer (girl) calf grows up and when she is about two years old has a calf. Then she produces milk for ten months. Next she is dry (does not produce milk) for two months and rests prior to having another calf. Then the cycle starts again.

## Q: How much does a cow eat and drink?

A: The average dairy cow drinks between 25 to 50 gallons of water per day or nearly a bathtub full! A cow will eat about 90 lbs. of feed, hay and silage every day. The average American eats about 4 lbs. of food each day.

## Q: What temperature is milk?

A: Milk comes from the cow at 101° F and is then quickly chilled to 38-40° F.

## Q: How do I know the milk I drink is safe?

A: Milk and dairy products are among the most highly regulated foods. Milk and dairy foods are subject to around 17 government-required or voluntary industry safety checks from farm to table. Pasteurization is the most important food safety tool in use in the world today. It is further assurance that the milk and dairy foods you purchase and consume are safe.

## Q: Are dairy farms inspected?

A: Federal and/or state regulations require, and periodic inspections verify, that milk is produced by healthy cows. Dairy farmers must also provide healthful housing conditions for the cows. All milk handling equipment must be sanitary and there are procedures in place to keep it clean. Several times each year, dairy farms are subject to unannounced inspections by state and/or federal regulators in addition to the routine inspections.

## Q: Why are antibiotics necessary? Does it get into the milk?

A: Sometimes cows get sick just like people do. When that happens, we sometimes give them an antibiotic to help make them well again. The milk from that cow does not go into the milk supply until she is well again and the antibiotic is no longer in her body. Milk is tested several times before it is bottled. In the rare event that inspectors find any antibiotic residues in a tanker of milk, the entire load is dumped to make sure the milk you drink is safe.

### Q: Isn't it cruel to keep cows locked up in a barn?

A: Actually, the cows like to be in the barn where there is shade in the summer and warmth in the winter. Between milkings they go outside to walk around. Cows produce more milk when they are kept clean and comfortable so it's in the dairy farmer's best interest to keep them that way.

### Q: Do you use bST in your cows?

A: (Whether your answer is yes or no,) bST is a management tool that helps some dairy farmers produce more milk but the quality of the milk is not changed. All the world's leading health organizations have concluded that milk from cows treated with bST is safe and nutritious, just like milk from cows that haven't been given bST.

### Q: Do dairy farmers help protect the environment?

A: Dairy farmers are committed to being good stewards of their environment. Just as we need to take good care of our animals, we also need to take good care of our natural resources. In addition, dairy farmers abide by strict laws and regulations to protect our earth, water and air. To do that, America's dairy farmers work in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state government regulators to ensure that their farms remain clean and employ environmentally sound production practices. There are serious consequences, like fines, if farms are not in compliance with the laws. Through a combination of regulations and voluntary programs, farming practices are environmentally sound. Farmers are committed to protecting and preserving air, soil and water quality for future generations.

### Q: How is the local water supply protected against dairy waste runoff?

A: Quality groundwater is essential to our dairy farm, because if we don't give our cows clean water, they will not produce quality milk. Water quality is very important to producing safe, wholesome milk, and so it is routinely monitored and regulated on all dairy farms. Dairy producers must abide by clean water laws that regulate application of manure on cropland. We are required to have technically sound manure recycling plans based on the physical characteristics of our individual farms. We follow many state and local water quality regulations to avoid the contamination of surface and ground water on and around our dairy.

### Q: Why can't you do something about those horrible odors?

A: The smells on a dairy farm are natural and do not pose any harm to the animals, my family (or employees) or to those who visit the farm. Any odor you smell is from the manure, not the cows themselves. We do our best to control the odor through technology and good manure management. At the same time, it's important to remember that this is a working farm.

## Be prepared to also answer the following questions:

- ☐ How many cows are on the farm?
- ☐ What breeds of cows do you have?
- ☐ Why are cows just girls?
- ☐ Why do cows wear ear tags? Does ear tagging hurt?
- ☐ How long does it take to milk a cow?
- ☐ Does milking hurt the cow?
- ☐ How many cows do you milk each day or milking times?
- ☐ What happens to the manure?
- ☐ Is the calf hurt when it is taken away from the mother?
- ☐ Why are calves taken from the cow and fed from a bottle?
- ☐ What are “veal” calves?
- ☐ Where do cows go when you’re done with them?
- ☐ Which cows give chocolate milk?
- ☐ Why do you cut the tails?
- ☐ Why don’t these cows have horns?
- ☐ Where are the daddy cows?
- ☐ How many family members work on the farm?
- ☐ Is this a family farm and how long has it been in the family?
- ☐ What is the average weight of a cow?

# DAIRY INDUSTRY WEBSITES



A number of informative dairy-related websites provide consumers, dairy farmers and others with a ready resource on a variety of dairy topics. Some of the sites are related to specific products such as cheese, milk or butter, while others provide information about dairy organizations and their services, dietary and nutrition information, recipes, or virtual tours.

Your local promotion organization website may offer additional resources (local industry statistics). Contact them for more information. Their website address can be found on the local promotion organization listing.

## [nationaldairycouncil.org](http://nationaldairycouncil.org)

National Dairy Council® (NDC) is the nutrition research, education and communications arm of Dairy Management Inc™. On behalf of U.S. dairy farmers, NDC provides science-based nutrition information to, and in collaboration with, a variety of stakeholders committed to fostering a healthier society, including health professionals, educators, school nutrition directors, academia, industry, consumers, and media.

## [dairygood.org](http://dairygood.org)

Dairygood.org helps connect consumers with the dairy farm families who work hard every day caring for their animals and the land. Here you also can find information on to companies dedicated to turning nutritious milk into milk, cheese, yogurt, and dairy ingredients. The website shares how farmers and the dairy industry work together to help secure a bright future by providing healthy products, healthy communities and a healthy planet for future generations.

## [fueluptoplay60.com](http://fueluptoplay60.com)

The National Dairy Council® has teamed up with the National Football League (NFL) to help America's students eat right and stay active with Fuel Up to Play 60. Check out the website for contests and school promotions.



# STATE AND REGIONAL DAIRY PROMOTION ORGANIZATIONS



## Alabama

**Southeast United Dairy Industry Association, Inc.**  
5340 W. Fayetteville Road  
Atlanta, GA 30349-5416  
(770) 996-6085  
(770) 996-6925 Fax  
southeastdairy.org

## Alaska

**Washington Dairy Products Commission**  
4201 198th St. SW  
Suite 101  
Lynnwood, WA 98036-6751  
(425) 672-0687  
(425) 672-0674 Fax  
havemilk.com

## Arizona

**Arizona Milk Producers**  
510 S. 52nd Street #101  
Tempe, AZ 85281  
(480) 966-7211  
(480) 829-7491 Fax  
dairycouncilofaz.org

## Arkansas

**Midwest Dairy Association**  
2015 Rice St.  
St. Paul, MN 55113  
(651) 488-0261  
(651) 488-0265 Fax  
midwestdairy.com

## California

**California Milk Advisory Board**  
400 Oyster Point Blvd.  
Suite 211  
South San Francisco, CA 94080  
(650) 871-6455  
(650) 583-7328 Fax  
realcaliforniamilk.com

## Colorado

**Western Dairy Association**  
12000 N. Washington St.  
Suite 175  
Thornton, CO 80241  
(303) 451-7711  
(303) 451-0411 Fax  
westerndairyassociation.org

## Connecticut

**New England Dairy Promotion Board**  
1034 Commonwealth Ave.  
Boston, MA 02215  
(617) 734-6750  
(617) 232-0229 Fax  
newenglanddairy.com

## Delaware

**Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association**  
325 Chestnut St.  
Suite 600  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
(215) 627-8800  
(215) 627-8887 Fax  
dairyspot.com

## District of Columbia

**Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association**  
325 Chestnut St.  
Suite 600  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
(215) 627-8800  
(215) 627-8887 Fax  
dairyspot.com

## Florida

### **Florida Dairy Farmers**

1003 Orienta Avenue  
Altamonte Springs, FL 32701  
(407) 647-8899  
(407) 647-0606 Fax  
floridamilk.com

## Georgia

### **Southeast United Dairy Industry Association, Inc.**

5340 W. Fayetteville Road  
Atlanta, GA 30349-5416  
(770) 996-6085  
(770) 996-6925 Fax  
southeastdairy.org

## Hawaii

### **California Milk Advisory Board**

400 Oyster Point Blvd.  
Suite 211  
South San Francisco, CA 94080  
(650) 871-6455  
(650) 583-7328 Fax  
realcaliforniamilk.com

## Idaho

### **United Dairymen of Idaho**

743 North Touchmark Avenue  
Meridian, ID 83642  
208-327-7050  
(208) 327-7054 Fax  
idahodairycouncil.org

## Illinois

### **Midwest Dairy Association**

2015 Rice St.  
St. Paul, MN 55113  
(651) 488-0261  
(651) 488-0265 Fax  
midwestdairy.com

## Indiana

### **Milk Promotion Services of Indiana, Inc.**

9360 Castlegate Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46256  
(317) 842-3060  
(317) 842-3065 Fax  
indianadairycouncil.org

## Iowa

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## Kansas

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## Kentucky

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## Louisiana

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Atlanta, GA 30349-5416  
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(770) 996-6925 Fax  
southeastdairy.org

## Maine

### Maine Dairy Promotion Board

333 Cony Road  
Augusta, ME 04330  
(207) 287-3621  
(207) 287-7161 Fax  
drinkmainemilk.org

## Maryland

### Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association

325 Chestnut St.  
Suite 600  
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(215) 627-8800  
(215) 627-8887 Fax  
dairyspot.com

## Massachusetts

### New England Dairy Promotion Board

1034 Commonwealth Ave.  
Boston, MA 02215  
(617) 734-6750  
(617) 232-0229 Fax  
newenglanddairy.com

## Michigan

### United Dairy Industry of Michigan

2163 Jolly Road  
Okemos, MI 48864  
(517) 349-8923  
(517) 349-6218 Fax  
udim.org  
michigandairynewsbureau.org

## Minnesota

### Midwest Dairy Association

2015 Rice St.  
St. Paul, MN 55113  
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(651) 488-0265 Fax  
midwestdairy.com

## Mississippi

### Southeast United Dairy Industry Association, Inc.

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## Missouri

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midwestdairy.com

## Montana

### Western Dairy Association

12000 N. Washington St.  
Suite 175  
Thornton, CO 80241  
(303) 451-7711  
(303) 451-0411 Fax  
westerndairyassociation.org

## Nebraska

### Midwest Dairy Association

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St. Paul, MN 55113  
(651) 488-0261  
(651) 488-0265 Fax  
midwestdairy.com

## Nevada

### Dairy Council of Utah and Nevada

1213 East 2100 South  
Salt Lake City, UT 84106  
(801) 487-9976  
(801) 487-6975 Fax  
dairyutnv.com

## New Hampshire

### **New England Dairy Promotion Board**

1034 Commonwealth Ave.  
Boston, MA 02215  
(617) 734-6750  
(617) 232-0229 Fax > (425) 672-0674 Fax  
newenglanddairy.com

## New Jersey

### **American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, Inc.**

Interstate Place II  
100 Elwood Davis Road  
North Syracuse, NY 13212  
(315) 472-9143  
(315) 472-0506 Fax  
adadc.com

### **Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association**

325 Chestnut St.  
Suite 600  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
(215) 627-8800  
(215) 627-8887 Fax  
dairyspot.com

## New Mexico

### **Dairy Max**

2214 Paddock Way Drive  
Suite 600  
Grand Prairie, TX 75050  
(972) 603-4700  
(972) 641-0269 Fax  
havemilk.com

## New York

### **American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, Inc.**

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(315) 472-0506 Fax  
adadc.com

## North Carolina

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southeastdairy.org

## North Dakota

### **Midwest Dairy Association**

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(651) 488-0265 Fax  
midwestdairy.com

## Ohio

### **American Dairy Association Mideast**

5950 Sharon Woods Blvd.  
Columbus, OH 43229  
(614) 890-1800  
(614) 890-1636 Fax  
drink-milk.com

## Oklahoma

### **Dairy Max**

2214 Paddock Way Drive  
Suite 600  
Grand Prairie, TX 75050  
(972) 603-4700  
(972) 641-0269 Fax  
dairymax.org

### **Midwest Dairy Association 2015 Rice St.**

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(651) 488-0261  
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midwestdairy.com

## Oregon

### **Oregon Dairy Products Commission**

10505 SW Barbur Blvd.  
Portland, OR 97219  
(503) 229-5033  
(503) 245-7916 Fax  
dairyfarmersor.com

## Pennsylvania

### **American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, Inc.**

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100 Elwood Davis Road  
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(315) 472-0506 Fax  
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(215) 627-8887 Fax  
dairyspot.com

## Rhode Island

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## South Carolina

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## South Dakota

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midwestdairy.com

## Tennessee

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Atlanta, GA 30349-5416  
(770) 996-6085  
(770) 996-6925 Fax  
southeastdairy.org

## Texas

### **Dairy Max**

2214 Paddock Way Drive  
Suite 600  
Grand Prairie, TX 75050  
(972) 603-4700  
(972) 641-0269 Fax  
dairymax.org

## Utah

### **Dairy Council of Utah and Nevada**

1213 East 2100 South  
Salt Lake City, UT 84106  
(801) 487-9976  
(801) 487-6975 Fax  
dairyutnv.com

## Vermont

### **New England Dairy Promotion Board**

1034 Commonwealth Ave.  
Boston, MA 02215  
(617) 734-6750  
(617) 232-0229 Fax  
newenglanddairy.com

## Virginia

### **Southeast United Dairy Industry Association, Inc.**

5340 W. Fayetteville Road  
Atlanta, GA 30349-5416  
(770) 996-6085  
(770) 996-6925 Fax  
southeastdairy.org

## Washington

### **Washington Dairy Products Commission**

4201 198th St. SW  
Lynnwood, WA 98036-6751  
(425) 672-0687  
(425) 672-0674 Fax  
havemilk.com

## West Virginia

### **American Dairy Association Mideast**

5950 Sharon Woods Blvd.  
Columbus, OH 43229  
(614) 890-1800  
(614) 890-1636 Fax  
drink-milk.com

## Wisconsin

### **Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, Inc.**

8418 Excelsior Drive  
Madison, WI 53717  
(608) 836-8820  
(608) 836-5822 Fax  
wmmb.com

## Wyoming

### **Western Dairy Association**

12000 N. Washington St.  
Suite 175  
Thornton, CO 80241  
(303) 451-7711  
(303) 451-0411 Fax  
westerndairyassociation.org

# PRE-TOUR CONFIRMATION

To confirm the details and make sure your tour starts on the right foot, consider sending the tour organizer a pre-tour confirmation letter. It might look something like this:

## Get Ready for Your Dairy Farm Visit!

*We are looking forward to your tour of our dairy farm! In preparation for your visit on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_*  
(date) (time)

### ***Here are things that are very important for you and your group to do:***

- If you or anyone in your family has been traveling outside of the U.S. within the past two weeks, please tell us before coming to our farm.
- Wear closed-toe shoes – no sandals, please. Remember, we will be outside, so wear clothes appropriate for outside conditions.
- Please park in the area we have marked for your visit and we will meet you there.
- Remember that cows and other farm animals are not pets! You will be new to them and they will be new to you. Listen closely to the directions the guide gives about being near the animals.
- Don't bring food or drinks onto the farm.
- We work hard to keep everything as clean as possible, but this is a working farm! We recommend keeping your hands away from your face and mouth as you touch animals or other parts of the farm. Be sure to wash your hands very well afterward and before eating.
- You may notice it does not smell like school, the shopping mall or your backyard. It smells like a farm.
- Please ask permission before taking photographs or videos.
- We are looking forward to your visit. During the session, we're excited to show you [insert two to three specific areas you plan to cover on your tour]. Due to safety, we will not [examples: learn how to milk a cow or ride on a tractor].
- Only service dogs are allowed on our farm

# FARM TOUR CHART



Location/Activity	Messages	Materials Needed



# PHOTO WAIVER



## Name and address of farm

I the undersigned, do agree to waive all rights and/or residual payments for the use of my name and/or likeness of me however created, as well as reproductions in any form, with or without alteration or omissions by

\_\_\_\_\_ for advertising, trade, and art purposes, in any and all publications,  
*(insert your farm name)*

online and other media, without limitations or reservations.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*If under 18 parent or guardian must sign.*

# FARM FACT SHEET

Use whatever is appropriate from the list below to create a farm fact sheet. It can be distributed on farm tours and also to neighbors and community members.

Your fact sheet does not have to be fancy. It can be an introductory paragraph followed by bulleted items, including information about your operation. A farm fact sheet ensures the public has accurate information about your dairy.

**Name:**

**Contact information:** (Include home phone, office phone, e-mail address, and website address. Optional information: cell phone and home address.)

**History/family:** (Tell the story of your dairy farm — who started it, what year it started, how long it's been in the family, and anything unique or unusual about it. Also provide some personal information about your family — such as how many children and/or grandchildren you have, any history of dairy farming or farming in the family.)

**Visual description:** (Paint a picture of your dairy — describe the color of the outbuildings, your house, landscaping or gardens, wooden fences, green pastures, streams or ponds.)

**Community involvement:** (List membership or leadership roles you or your spouse hold in the community, such as positions in ag organizations, school organizations, civic groups, business groups, and local/state organizations.)

**Awards:** (Mention awards you have earned for yourself or your dairy, including milk quality, milk safety, conservation/stewardship, and breed associations.)

**Hobbies:** (List a couple of your favorite hobbies, as well as your spouse's, to help your neighbors and community members get to know you.)

**Education:** (List college degrees and higher education courses, as well as any specific training courses you have completed.)

**Dairy information:** (Provide basic details about your operation, such as how many cows you milk, the type of milking parlor you use, how often and what times you milk each day, where your milk is sold, what label it is sold under, breed associations you belong to, specific animal care measures you employ on the farm, and example of on-farm technologies you practice.)

**Other agricultural production:** (Mention other livestock and crops produced on your farm.)

**Farm employees:** (Consider sharing how many people your dairy employs to show the value of your farm to the local economy.)

**Environmental initiatives:** (Provide specific details about any environmental initiatives on your farm, such as recycling efforts, conservation measures, and energy efficient technologies.)

**Other items of interest:** (List any other information you think would help establish a connection between community members and you and your dairy.)

**Photo:** (Find a recent photo of yourself or your family to include on the fact sheet.)

# FARM TOUR EVALUATION



*It was a pleasure having you and your group at our dairy farm. We want to make future visits even more enjoyable and informative. We would appreciate your feedback.*

*Please fill out this form and return it to me, at the address below. If you have any questions, or would like to provide your feedback via phone, please call me at \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Sincerely,*

Where and when was your farm tour?

Date \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

What did the group most enjoy during the tour?

What could we improve?

What did the group learn about caring for dairy cows, the environment and producing milk?

What additional questions do you have?

Would you recommend this tour to others?

Other comments:



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# EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR FARM TOUR (TARGET: GRADE 4)

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# DAIRY FARM SCAVENGER HUNT

Check off the items you saw while touring the farm today:

☐ Cows eating. Name two ingredients in their feed.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_



☐ Cows being milked. How many times a day are they milked? \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Something being recycled. What was it? \_\_\_\_\_



☐ People working on the farm.  
Name three different jobs that dairy farm workers perform.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



☐ Hay. What is one type of plant from which farmers make hay?  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Calves. Can newborn calves walk the same day they are born? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_



☐ Milk tank. Name one thing a farmer does to make sure milk is safe before transporting to the processing plant.  
\_\_\_\_\_

# FUN FACTS ABOUT DAIRY



**96%** of all homes have **MILK** in the fridge, and  
**94%** of all homes have **CHEESE**.

George Washington enjoyed **ICE CREAM** so much that he ran up  
a **\$200 ICE CREAM** bill in 1774. That's more than **\$5,000** today!



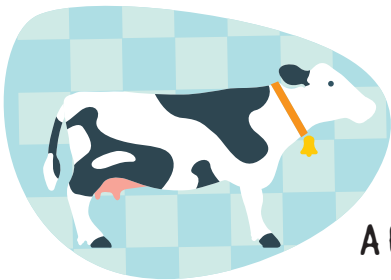
Did you eat something super spicy? **MILK** is better for cooling your  
mouth than water because of the protein casein. It cleanses the taste buds.

- A gallon of **MILK** weighs **8.59** pounds! •

The average cow makes **6-8** gallons of **MILK** each day.

To get the same amount of **CALCIUM** provided by **1 QUART** of **MILK**, you would have  
to eat 3.5 pounds of peas, **27** **ORANGES** or 50 slices of whole wheat bread.

**27 x**  **= 1 Quart of MILK!**



There are **4** compartments in a cow's stomach.

A Holstein calf weighs **90** pounds at birth and grows to **1500** pounds.

Together, low-fat and fat-free milk, cheese, and yogurt provide a unique  
package of **9** essential nutrients, including calcium, potassium, phosphorus,  
protein, vitamins A, D and B12, riboflavin, and niacin (niacin equivalents).

**And milk tastes great!**



# ANNIE'S STORY (WITH ANSWERS)

Fill in the blanks with the vocabulary words below to complete Annie's story.

Annie lives on a dairy farm with her parents. She has helped on the farm since she was six years old. Annie likes to feed the (calves) with a bottle. They are kept in special pens and given special care by a (veterinarian). Calves are born after a (gestation) period of about 10 months.

Annie also likes to visit the (heifers), young female calves that have not given birth yet. Her favorite cow is Daisy who likes to nuzzle Annie with her nose. Like all cows, Daisy has four (compartments) in her stomach and regurgitates and chews part of her food, called (cud).

Annie watches her mom mix the cattle's feed, made from vitamins, protein, (hay) and (silage). Sometimes Annie helps in the (milking parlor) where cows are washed, milked by attaching a milker to their (teats). After milking, the cows' milk goes through the process of (pasteurization) which kills any germs that might be in the milk.

When Annie is older, she will help her dad and drive a tractor to mix (compost) into the soil. She thinks that someday she will be a (dairy farmer) too.

## Word Bank:

- ☐ **Compost:** A mixture of decaying organic matters, as from leaves and manure, used to improve soil structure and provide nutrients.
- ☐ **Cud:** The portion of food that a ruminant returns from the first stomach to the mouth to chew a second time.
- ☐ **Dairy farmer:** A person who specializes in raising cattle, specifically dairy cattle for the production of milk.
- ☐ **Gestation:** The amount of time through development of the offspring during pregnancy.
- ☐ **Hay:** A dried feed ingredient such as rye, alfalfa, clover, grass and oats usually bundled in bales.
- ☐ **Heifers:** Young female calves that has not given birth.
- ☐ **Silage:** Fermented corn or grass.
- ☐ **Calves:** the young of a cow or other bovine animal.
- ☐ **Teats:** Udders of a female mammal through which milk is excreted.
- ☐ **Veterinarian:** A doctor for animals.
- ☐ **Milking Parlor:** A room or separate building to which cows are taken for milking
- ☐ **Compartments:** The four parts of a cow's stomach, called the rumen, reticulum, omasum, and abomasum.
- ☐ **Pasteurization:** the process of heating a beverage or other food, such as milk, to a specific temperature for a specific period of time in order to kill micro-organisms that could cause disease or spoilage. The process was named after its creator in 1862, French chemist and microbiologist, Louis Pasteur.

# BLUEBERRY BANANA BLAST SMOOTHIE RECIPE



Makes 2 Servings

Recipe Prep Time: 5 minutes

## Ingredients:

- 1 cup milk (skim or 2%)
- ½ cup Greek style vanilla yogurt
- 1 cup frozen or fresh blueberries
- 1 fresh banana, peeled
- 4 ice cubes
- 1-2 teaspoons chocolate syrup (optional)

## Instructions:

Place all ingredients into a blender carafe. Cover the blender and mix on high speed for one minute, or until creamy and smooth. Serve immediately.



# FAVORITE GRILLED CHEESE RECIPE



Makes one Sandwich

Recipe Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 6 minutes

## Ingredients:

- 2 slices whole wheat bread
- 2 slices of cheese
- carrot sticks
- apple slices

## Instructions:

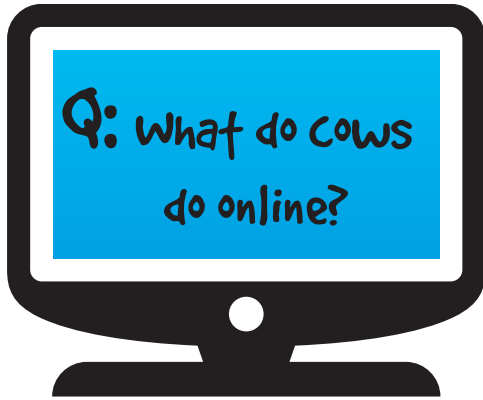
Top 1 of the bread slices with cheese; cover with remaining bread slice. Spray small skillet with cooking spray. Add sandwich; cook on medium heat 3 minutes on each side or until lightly browned on both sides.

Serve with the remaining ingredients.

## Variation:

Just about any fruit and vegetable combination goes well with grilled cheese. Try serving with oranges, bananas, broccoli and/or cauliflower.

# JUST FOR FUN: COW JOKES



A: They instant moo-sage each other.



Q: How does a farmer count a herd of cows?

A: With a cowculator.



Q: What did the cow say when she woke up in the morning?

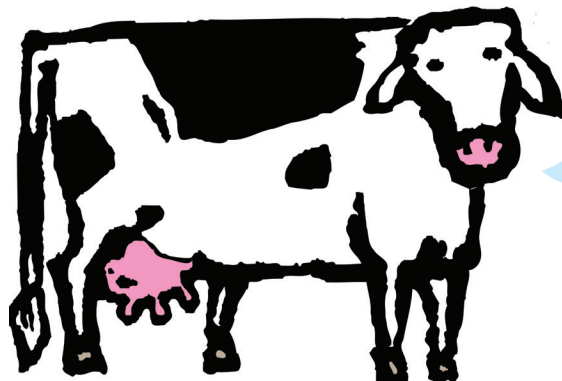
A: It's just an udder day.



Q: Which job is a cow best at?

A: Baker. Because they're always making cow pies.

Q: Why should you never tell a cow a secret?



A: It will just go in one ear and out the udder.

[illegible]



Telling **Your** Story  
sharing where dairy good comes from!