

U.S. DAIRY

A GLOBAL LEADER IN SUSTAINABILITY

In Brief:

The U.S. dairy industry takes pride in the way its rich heritage of land stewardship and long-term commitment to sustainable dairy farming strengthens the industry's economic, environmental and social contributions. The dairy cow plays a key role in an environmentally-responsible, sustainable U.S. food system that serves the needs of current and future generations.

Environmental Stewardship: A commitment to continuous improvement

- The U.S. dairy community has reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 63% over the past 60 years, and has set a voluntary goal to reduce GHG emissions by 25% by 2020.
- The U.S. dairy industry accounts for approximately 2% of the total U.S. GHG emissions.
- Since 1944, milk production has quadrupled, but uses:
 - 90% less cropland
 - 76% less manure
 - 65% less water
- The U.S. dairy industry uses anaerobic digester systems to convert manure and commercial food waste into electricity, fuel for cars and trucks, and fertilizer and fiber.
- In 2014, the number of operating anaerobic digester systems in the U.S. reached a total of 247 on-farm systems with 82% located on dairy farms.
- Applying manure back to the land maintains soil fertility and reduces the need for synthetic fertilizer.
- By returning most nutrients from their feed back to the land, U.S. dairy cows create an efficient nutrient cycle. This recycling of nutrients helps make producing crops more sustainable.
- On dairy farms, water is typically re-used as many as five or six times. For example, water used to clean milking parlors is re-used to clean production areas and then to irrigate fields.
- From 2013 to 2014, milk production increased 2.4% to 91 billion litres. The rate per cow, at 9,809 litres, was 195 litres above 2013.
- To maintain a healthy and clean environment, many dairy farmers voluntarily participate in research efforts to help measure and monitor air quality more accurately.



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Social Responsibility: A commitment to future generations

- In 2013, 9.2 million dairy cows on 46,960 licensed dairy farms produced 88.6 billion litres of milk.
- 90% of U.S. schools provide low-fat and/or non-fat milk to their students.
- 18% of protein in the American diet is provided by dairy products.
- In 2014, 6,943 new milk, cheese and yogurt dairy product claims were introduced. Of these, 11.7% were low-calorie, low-fat, no-transfat, low-sodium, low-sugar, no added sugar and/or sugar free claims.
- According to 2013 Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) statistics, the rates of injuries on dairy farms and in dairy plants declined for the second year running.
- U.S. dairy farmers work closely with animal nutritionists and veterinarians to make sure their cows have the nutritious feed they need.
- U.S. dairy farms keep their cows comfortable in many ways, including using fans and water misters to keep cows cool during the summer.
- In 2014, the Great American Milk Drive, a charitable organization led by U.S. milk companies and dairy farmers, delivered 1.1 million litres of milk (and its nine essential nutrients) to families.



Economic Profitability: A commitment to long-term viability

- In 2011, industry stakeholders invested nearly 54,000 hours, reflecting an estimated \$6.2 million in business value.
- U.S. dairy products are affordable and readily available.
- Milk is the lowest-cost food source of dietary calcium.
- Adequate dairy consumption can lower risk of certain chronic diseases, which has the potential to lower healthcare costs by as much as \$200 billion over a five-year period.
- Dairy farms and businesses support rural economies in all 50 U.S. states and Puerto Rico.
- In 2012, 169 dairy farms completed energy audits with associated energy cost savings estimated at more than \$600,000.
- Since 2011, the Farm Energy Efficiency program has helped promote nearly 900 on-farm energy audits, resulting in more than \$2 million in potential cost savings.

Resources

2014 U.S. Dairy Sustainability Report, The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy
U.S. Dairy's Environmental Footprint, The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy
How One Cow Contributes to a Sustainable Food System, The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy



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