

Reuse and Renewal

Sustainability through Conservation

Water Wise

Water is never wasted—dairy farmers use every drop to its maximum benefit. Clean water is used to cool milk and wash cows and then is recycled to flush manure from barn floors. Nothing goes to waste as the water is then used to irrigate feed crops like corn and alfalfa.

Locally Grown

Dairies grow much of their own cattle feed, such as corn, oats and alfalfa. This locally grown product means less reliance on transporting feed long distances and reduced dependence on synthetic fertilizers produced with fossil fuels.

Waste Watchers

Here's some food for thought in a society where so much food is wasted—cows help pick up the slack through their natural ability to digest many types of vegetation. Many farming and food by-products that were once sent to landfills or burned in the fields are now a “moo-vable feast” for cows, from cotton seeds and bakery crumbs, to culled tomatoes, oranges, carrots, almond hulls, and much more.

Waste Not

Manure is anything but waste. Dairy farmers incorporate manure into soil, enriching the land with organic nutrients to fertilize crops. The nutrients are naturally taken up in crops, reducing water and fertilizer use and improving air quality. Balancing the nutrient needs of cows and crops means an environmentally and economically sustainable future for dairies.

Powering Up

More and more dairies are exploring the opportunities of bio-gas digestion. While still an emerging technology, renewable “cow power” provides a sustainable way to generate power for the dairy and its neighboring communities, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on fossil fuels. So while dairies power up, our planet can cool off.



Sustainability starts on California dairies with efficient use, re-use and renewal of resources. Conservation is a way of life for California dairy families. They squeeze value from every resource, and in the process, they minimize environmental impacts, reduce dependence on fossil fuels and increase sustainability. Dairies can be thought of as resource recycling centers, where people work in harmony with nature to grow crops, produce healthy dairy products and protect our planet's limited resources.

