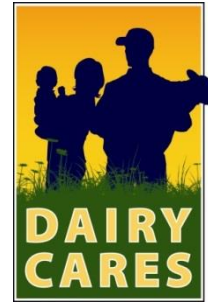


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Dairy Cares Newsletter

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California dairy families continue to raise the bar in sustainable livestock farming

It's no secret that the California dairy community has made tremendous progress when it comes to sustainability. In an effort to tell the positive sustainability story of dairy families, Dairy Cares coalition members continue to look for opportunities to share this story firsthand with community leaders, stakeholders and other interested parties.

To that end, Dairy Cares staff has been "out in the field" recently speaking to local groups and providing information on the advancements California dairy families have made – and continue to make – on sustainability issues. While these groups may receive information about dairy sustainability issues electronically (website, email, social media, etc.), updating stakeholders in-person about dairy farmers' sustainability advancements provides an opportunity to engage in dialogue and ultimately build trust.

In this month's column, we wanted to give you a brief synopsis of the information community groups are hearing about dairy farming and sustainability in California.

Guided by our values

Most importantly, community leaders and consumers are discovering that to dairy families, sustainability is a daily commitment to doing what's right. This means stewardship of our planet's natural resources, such as air, land and water. It means responsible, ethical care of animals on the farm. And it means improvement and innovation in the way that dairy products are produced and transported from farmers to consumers around the world, so that they can depend on dairy to sustain the health and wellness of their families. Finally, sustainability is also a commitment to supporting and strengthening the communities in which dairy families have farmed and lived for generations.

World-class environmental stewardship

From safeguarding air and water resources to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on fossil fuels, California dairy farmers continue to be leaders in environmental protection. Community leaders across

California are hearing about the progress dairy families are making in complying with the nation's strictest environmental standards. They are learning about the significant financial investment dairy families have made to protect and improve groundwater quality throughout the Central Valley – with the implementation of a representative groundwater monitoring program – as well as steps dairy farmers have taken to produce clean, green renewable energy on the farm. For all these reasons, Californians are becoming aware that dairy products produced here are a good choice for nutrition, affordability, a better environment and a better world.

Responsible, humane animal care

Dairy farmers have long valued and provided proper care and treatment of their animals. Quality nutrition, comfortable and safe housing, and attention by licensed veterinarians and well-trained animal caregivers is the foundation for animal health and wellness found on today's farms. California dairy families are also leaders in improving animal well-being. Community leaders across California are learning more and more how seriously dairy farmers take this issue, as evidenced by their successful efforts to lead the nation with implementation of an animal well-being verification program in our state.

Strengthening communities

The roots of California dairy families run deep in towns and cities all across California, with many having lived and farmed on the same land for generations. They invest time and resources in their communities, making them better places to live. Community leaders are learning that today's dairies, often larger and more efficient than farms of past generations, remain family owned and solidly grounded in the values that have made California dairies among the most successful in the world.

You can help

An important part of speaking to community groups is empowering them with credible, reliable and verifiable dairy sustainability information. In doing so, they can accurately inform those that are interested in the progress California dairy families have made in sustainable farming.

Do you know of a local group in your community that would be interested in hearing about dairy families' sustainability achievements? If so, Dairy Cares staff would like to hear your suggestions. Please contact James Garner, Dairy Cares Communications Director, at DairyCares@gmail.com.

With their efforts, California dairy families continue to be on the cutting edge of innovative sustainable practices that are good for people and good for the planet. Dairy Cares coalition members remain committed to spreading the news about these efforts to make California a better and more sustainable place to live today and for generations to come.

Dairy Cares is a statewide coalition supporting economic and environmental sustainability and responsible animal care. Our members include Bar 20 Dairy Farms, California Cattlemen's Association, California Dairies Inc., California Dairy Campaign, California Dairy Research Foundation, California Farm Bureau Federation, Dairy Farmers of America-Western Area Council, Dairy Institute of California, GHD, Inc., Hilmar Cheese Co., Joseph Gallo Farms, Land O'Lakes, Merck Animal Health, Milk Producers Council, Ruan Transport Corp., Western United Dairywomen, Yosemite Farm Credit and others. For information, visit DairyCares.com or call 916-441-3318.