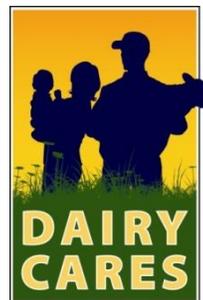


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## Dairy Cares Newsletter

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# Dairy families continue work for cleaner air, Valley sees record-low ozone for second summer

San Joaquin Valley air quality reached a historic milestone last year. For the first time since the adoption of the federal Clean Air Act, the region experienced zero annual violations of the 1-hour ozone standard. Now, it appears that the record-low levels of ozone were observed for a second straight summer.

“We are very pleased that the historically low ozone levels we saw last year were not just an anomaly,” Seyed Sadredin, executive director of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, told *The Bakersfield Californian*. “This year, we are on track to do even better than last year in the one-hour and eight-hour standards.”

San Joaquin Valley air quality officials are tasked with a tough job. With its bowl shape and hot summer days, the valley is nature’s perfect oven for “baking” the basic ingredients of smog, resulting in ozone formation.

Despite the fact that far less pollution is created in the valley per square mile than in the Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay areas, the valley has to work as hard – or even harder – to meet federally mandated air quality goals. This tough situation, compounded by above average summer temperatures, makes this 2-year ozone trend all the more impressive.

By comparison, the eight-county region experienced 281 and 321 violations of the 1-hour standard in 1996 and 1998, respectively. In 2004, the Environmental Protection Agency classified the region as being in “extreme” non-attainment of the standard, meaning that attainment was deemed impossible with existing technology.

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District board members have been quick to share credit for improved air quality with those who are making it happen, including dairy families. “We achieved this great milestone because valley farmers and dairy families have consistently proven to be great stewards of the environment and have done a lot more than their competitors throughout the nation and the rest of the world to improve air quality,” said Tony Barba, board member and Kings County Supervisor.

Most air emissions from dairies are entirely natural and consist of small amounts of alcohols and similar compounds that evaporate from silage, an important plant-based staple for dairy cow nutrition. While these compounds (known as volatile organic compounds or VOCs), are essentially harmless at ground level and emitted in relatively small amounts on dairies, the cumulative effect of 1,100 dairies in the valley is thought to contribute to ozone formation in the atmosphere, especially on very hot summer days.

The air district took the extraordinary step of requiring dairies to obtain operating permits that include requirements to adopt management measures to reduce VOC emissions. California dairies are the only dairies in the world to be regulated to reduce these types of smog-forming emissions. The regulations, first adopted in 2006 and known collectively as “Rule 4570,” have since resulted in more than a 30 percent reduction of emissions from valley dairies, helping to support the valley’s trend toward cleaner air.

Central to the success of dairy families’ reduced air emissions footprint has been the award winning [California Dairy Quality Assurance Program](#) (CDQAP) sponsored by the California Dairy Research Foundation (CDRF). This collaborative partnership between CDRF, government, academia and the dairy community launched an extensive education and outreach program for dairy farmers to help them understand air quality emissions and comply with regulatory requirements. Since 2006, more than 60 CDQAP air quality workshops have been conducted throughout every valley county, with attendance totaling more than 1,550 dairy farmers, employees and environmental compliance specialists.

California dairy families care about clean air, having lived and worked in the San Joaquin Valley for generations. They remain committed to doing their part to improving air quality, while continuing to produce local, sustainable and nutritious dairy products for millions of American families to enjoy.

*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](http://DairyCares.com) or call 916-441-3318.*