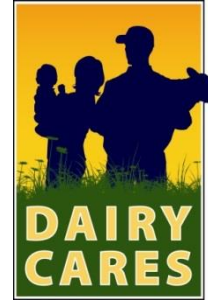


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Dairy Cares Newsletter

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Dairy families recognized for contributions to Valley's cleanest ozone season on record

There's no doubt that 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 makes a recent announcement by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Air District) regarding valley ozone levels all the more impressive.

On November 14, the Air District announced that for the first time, the San Joaquin Valley had zero annual violations of the 1-hour ozone standard established under the federal Clean Air Act.

By comparison, the eight-county region experienced 281 and 321 violations of the 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.

The air district is quick to share the 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, Air District Board member and Kings County Supervisor.

At the November 14 public meeting in Modesto, Kevin Abernathy, environmental director of Milk Producers Council and a Dairy Cares board member, publicly thanked the air district governing board and staff for their leadership to improve air quality.

"San Joaquin Valley dairy families care about clean air in our region," said Abernathy following the meeting. "Through investments in scientific research, education, and on-farm management practices to reduce dust,

ammonia and smog-forming gases, valley dairy families have been important partners in the district's air quality management strategies. We're pleased to hear that the efforts of valley businesses, including dairy families, has resulted in such a historic accomplishment. We heartily congratulate the district for reaching this difficult and important milestone in air quality. Their job is never done and we will continue our efforts to partner with them toward our shared vision of a valley where all of us can share the benefits of clean air and a strong economy."

According to a [report](#) from air district Executive Officer Seyed Sadredin, billions of dollars have been invested by valley businesses and farms to reduce emissions through the installation of new, clean technology. This investment by businesses and farms, along with the efforts of valley residents, has resulted in an 80 percent decrease of emissions from stationary sources.

Dairy families continue work for cleaner air

Most air emissions from dairies are entirely natural and consist of small amounts of alcohols and similar compounds that evaporate from animal feed (silage), such as corn, wheat, oats or other similar plant materials. While these compounds are essentially harmless at ground level and emitted in relatively small amounts on dairies, the cumulative effect of 1,200 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 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 25 percent reduction of emissions from valley dairies, helping to support the valley's trend toward cleaner air.

California dairy families have lived and worked in the San Joaquin Valley for generations. That's why they remain committed to doing their part to improve air quality, while continuing to produce local sustainable 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 or call 916-441-3318.