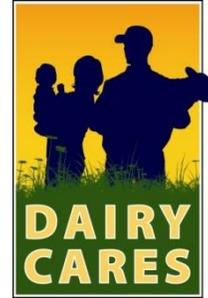


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## Dairy Cares Newsletter

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[DairyCares.com](http://DairyCares.com)

# Well monitoring program moves forward, as deadline for dairies to join draws near

Thanks to a two-year effort by the Dairy Cares coalition and a dedicated group of dairymen from around the Central Valley, a special program that will help protect the environment, while significantly cutting costs for dairy operators, is about to launch.

The Central Valley Dairy Representative Monitoring Program (CVDRMP) is a group that now comprises more than 960 Central Valley dairies. This not-for-profit effort will conduct groundwater monitoring at dozens of dairies around the valley, collecting important environmental data to evaluate management efforts aimed at protecting groundwater.

Dairies in the Central Valley already operate under the nation's strictest water quality regulations. Dairy families work hard every day to ensure that manure is managed properly to maximize the environmental benefits realized when using this important, natural, and organic resource as a fertilizer and soil builder. By doing so, they become even better farmers and stewards of the environment.

Groundwater monitoring is an important component of water quality protection. It not only verifies the improvements dairy operators are making to protect our water, but also can provide important information on trends in groundwater supplies and quality, information that can be used to ensure good practices now and in the future. For this reason, state water quality officials required installation of groundwater monitoring wells when adopting new regulations for dairies in 2007.

CVDRMP helps its member dairies meet these government requirements in a cost-effective way, by pooling monitoring resources and conducting monitoring in strategically selected locations. This not only improves the quality of data collected, but sharply lowers costs for all that participate in this voluntary program.

By now, most Central Valley dairies have heard of this important program and many – understanding the benefits its efficient approach offers toward convenience and cost savings – have chosen to join. But for dairies that have not yet joined, time will soon run. CVDRMP will begin its monitoring activities this August with

installation of the program's first wells at dairy sites in Merced and Stanislaus counties. Additional monitoring in other counties will continue next year.

As CVDRMP proceeds past the preparation phase and toward the implementation of wells, it is also preparing to close its membership. Although an exact deadline to join has not yet been set, it is anticipated that the program will announce closure of its membership in the next few weeks. A "last-chance" invitational mailing is being planned. Dairy owners and operators who wish to take advantage of this opportunity should apply soon and need not wait to receive another invitation in the mail (or risk missing it). Forms can be downloaded, free, at [www.dairycares.com](http://www.dairycares.com) or call your trade association, milk processor or Dairy Cares at 916-441-3318 if you have questions.

CVDRMP is a nonprofit organization overseen by a board of 12 dairy operators from around the Central Valley with the exclusive goal of assisting dairies by helping them save money and time in meeting this government requirement. CVDRMP board members are unpaid volunteers and have devoted hundreds of hours over the past two years to develop a strategic plan for monitoring, conduct a membership drive and otherwise lay the foundation for this critical effort. These dairymen – and the hundreds of dairies who have signed up to become members of this new organization – are to be congratulated for their pioneering efforts and investment to both protect the environment we all share, while helping each other remain economically viable. By working together, they are helping to guarantee a sustainable, long-term supply of affordable, nutritious dairy products for millions of families, and a healthy economy and environment in our state.

*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 Dairymen, Yosemite Farm Credit and others. For information, visit [DairyCares.com](http://DairyCares.com) or call 916-441-3318.*