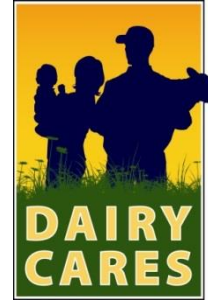


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## Dairy Cares Newsletter

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

# Dairy families taking key steps to earn and build trust with consumers

It's no secret public interest in today's food system is growing. From consumers and regulators to "foodies" and doctors, questions – and scrutiny – are on the rise about how food is grown, transported, processed and prepared.

Not surprisingly, many consumers and stakeholders have questions about the hows and whys of farm life. Less than 2 percent of the U.S. population is directly involved in the day-to-day production of our nation's abundant food supply. And with the use of cutting edge science and technology, farming looks profoundly different today than it did 50 or 100 years ago. This results in a public seeking assurance that their food remains safely and responsibly produced according to their values.

For generations, consumers have trusted and relied on California dairy families as a source of healthy, nutritious and safe food. Key to earning and maintaining that trust is consumers knowing dairy families are addressing the issues they care about. Protecting air, land and water resources and providing responsible animal care are examples and much of their progress is documented at [www.DairyCares.com](http://www.DairyCares.com).

Dairy Cares members know transparency is key to building trust, and therefore invest in resources such as [sustainability reports](#) and [short documentaries](#) that detail California dairy families' work on numerous sustainability issues.

Since 2009, Dairy Cares has maintained membership in [The Center for Food Integrity](#) (CFI), a not-for-profit coalition whose members represent all segments of the food chain, including farmers and ranchers, universities, food processors, restaurants, retailers and food companies. CFI works to build trust and confidence in today's food system by sharing accurate and balanced information while highlighting best practices that are ethically grounded, scientifically verified and economically viable.

A recent [blog entry](#) on the Huffington Post by Charlie Arnot, CEO of the Center for Food Integrity, outlines a seven-step process for building trust. Dairy Cares members remain committed to adhering to these values of

transparency while continuing to provide safe, affordable and nutritious dairy products for consumers around the globe.

An excerpt from the Huffington Post blog:

“**Be more transparent** about processes and products. We dove into defining transparency and what specifically consumers expect from trustworthy farms and food companies. We identified and measured the impact of seven basic elements of Trust Building Transparency.

1. **Accuracy** – Provide information that is credible, reliable and complete.
2. **Motivation** – Demonstrate that your motives are aligned with public interests and not exclusively driven by maximizing profits. (Consumers understand business needs to be profitable, but are skeptical that companies will put public interest ahead of maximizing profit.)
3. **Disclosure** – Publicly share both positive and negative information that helps your stakeholders make informed decisions. Make the information timely, easy to find and easy to understand.
4. **Stakeholder participation** – Ask your stakeholders for input on important issues. Make it easy for them to provide and acknowledge their feedback. Explain how and why you make decisions.
5. **Relevance** – Ask your stakeholders what information is important to them and provide information they deem relevant.
6. **Clarity** – Provide information that is easy for your stakeholders to understand.
7. **Credibility** – Take responsibility and apologize when you make mistakes. Involve stakeholders and explain plans for corrective action. Demonstrate you genuinely care about issues important to your stakeholders.

Trust in institutions is no longer granted, it has to be earned. These seven simple steps provide a clear path for building trust. The growing public skepticism about food is the perfect catalyst to drive a new level of transparency across the food system.”

*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.*