



CALIFORNIA DAIRY

A Foodservice Marketing Guide to Health & Wellness





CALIFORNIA DAIRY OVERVIEW

A FOCUS ON QUALITY

California is known for high-quality dairy products driven by strict regulations and industry adherence, as well as advances in technology.

Strict Standards

California enforces rigorous fluid milk quality standards that exceed federal requirements for the dairy industry.

Advanced Processing

Modern processing facilities utilize sophisticated technologies for pasteurization, ensuring food safety and extended shelf life.

Focus on Quality

California dairy farmers focus on cow comfort, which has a positive impact on milk composition, quality, and taste.

FACTS & FIGURES

- There are more than 1,000 dairy farms in California.
- California dairy farming is family farming; 99% of California dairy farms are family owned.
- Milk is the top agricultural commodity produced in California, providing economic benefits to farm families and the people they employ in diverse communities around the state.
- California has led the nation in milk production for more than 25 years.
- California's fluid milk standards exceed federal standards. California processors add nonfat milk solids, which offer improved taste and nutrition benefits, including greater calcium and protein content.
- Approximately one of every five dairy cows in the United States lives in California.
- About 40% of a California dairy cow's diet consists of byproducts from food and fiber production unusable for human consumption, like almond hulls and cottonseed, which reduces materials going into landfills and resources used to grow feed. This usage diverts the equivalent of more than 1,000 trucks from landfills every day.
- Over the past five decades, California dairy farmers have reduced the amount of water needed to produce a gallon of milk by over 88%.



FACTS & FIGURES - CHEESE

- Nearly half of all milk produced in California goes into cheese production.
- California has been making cheese for as long as it's been producing wine—more than 200 years.
- California is the leading producer of milk, butter and ice cream and the second largest cheese and yogurt producing state in the U.S.
- California leads the nation in mozzarella production, and is a leading producer of Hispanic-style cheeses.
- Today more than 40 cheesemakers are producing more than 250 varieties and styles of cow's milk cheeses. These cheeses vary in style, flavor, and aging. They range from soft to hard, can be spiced and flavored, washed rind and include artisan, American, European, Hispanic-style and Middle Eastern varieties.



CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE

CELEBRATING SUSTAINABLE DAIRY PRODUCTION IN CALIFORNIA

California is the leading dairy state in the nation, producing more milk than any other state and leading the world in environmental sustainability research, innovation, and impact. Sustainability is essential to the success and future of the California dairy community.

- The California dairy industry is a global leader in using technology and innovation to improve efficiency and sustainability.
- The carbon footprint of a glass of milk has reduced by 45% over the past five decades.

California farmers today use 88% less water and 89% less land to produce a gallon of milk than 50 years ago.

SOME OF THE KEY CLIMATE-SMART STRATEGIES & PRACTICES USED ON CALIFORNIA DAIRY FARMS TODAY

UPCYCLING

California dairy farms use byproducts from processing nuts, fruits, vegetables, and other crops to feed dairy cows. This practice, known as upcycling, offers a win-win situation for both industries, reducing the amount of waste going into landfills and reducing resources like water and land needed to produce feed for cows. Byproducts like almond hulls provide essential nutrients like fiber and protein, which contribute to the well-being of dairy cows.

DAIRY DIGESTERS

Anaerobic digesters capture methane emissions from manure and convert it into renewable energy sources like electricity, natural gas, or biogas for vehicles, reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

VALUABLE FERTILIZER

Smaller dairy farms that don't have access to dairy digesters can send manure to local farms to use as valuable fertilizer for crops.

WATER CONSERVATION

Water reuse is standard on California dairy farms with each drop used and reused up to four times from cooling tanks and cleaning to irrigating the land that produces feed for dairy cows.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Dairy farms are increasingly utilizing solar power to meet their energy needs for heating, cooling, and lighting.

These practices demonstrate California's ongoing commitment to balancing agricultural production with environmental responsibility. Through continuous innovation and collaboration, the state is redefining sustainable dairy farming for the future.



Did you know...?

Food waste in landfills is a significant source of methane gas. Feeding byproducts from food processing to dairy cows reduces methane gas emissions from landfills across the Golden State.



MOO-VING TO NET ZERO EMISSIONS

The U.S. Dairy Net Zero Initiative (NZI) is an industry-wide effort that is playing a key role in helping U.S. dairy producers continue to make progress toward greenhouse gas emission reductions by 2050.

As the global leader, the California dairy community is working toward “net zero” emissions with three focused strategies:

METHANE REDUCTION

Capturing methane from manure through digesters and converting it to clean energy sources.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Utilizing solar power on farms and collaborating with biogas companies for fuel.

SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE USE

Implementing water conservation methods, using recycled water, and employing efficient feed utilization.

With these strategies and continued research, California’s dairy sector is well on its way to achieving climate neutrality, setting a precedent for sustainable dairy production worldwide.



Did you know...?

California dairies have reduced the carbon footprint of each glass of milk produced by more than 45% during the past five decades.

DAIRY PRODUCT FOOD SCIENCE & NUTRITION INFORMATION

REAL CALIFORNIA MILK

- **Just one serving of Real California Milk is a nutrient-rich source of 13 essential nutrients—including calcium, potassium, and vitamin D, three nutrients most Americans don't get enough of each day.**
- All the fat is removed from milk before it is bottled. The fat is then added back to the milk in various percentages to create whole, reduced fat, low-fat, or nonfat milk. No water is ever added to dairy milk.
- Regardless of the fat level, all types of real dairy milk contain the same essential nutrients; the only difference is the amount of butterfat they contain.
 - Whole Milk contains 3.5% butterfat
 - 2% Reduced Fat Milk contains 2% butterfat
 - 1% Low-Fat Milk contains 1% butterfat
 - Nonfat (Skim) Milk contains less than 0.2% butterfat
- The sugar in dairy milk is a naturally occurring sugar called lactose. Sugar is not added to regular white milk, but sugar may be added to flavored milk.

FLAVORED MILK

- Flavored milk like chocolate or strawberry milk contains the same 13 essential nutrients of regular milk.
- Flavored milk is typically made with low-fat or non-fat milk with flavor and sugar added. Some flavored milks include non-nutritive sweeteners to add sweetness instead of sugar.
- **Leading health and nutrition organizations support that the small amounts of added sugar in flavored milk is a worthwhile trade-off for the 13 essential nutrients found in milk.**
- If your diners love flavored milk, offer it knowing you're giving them many essential nutrients—especially calcium, potassium, and vitamin D—nutrients many Americans don't consume enough of each day.
- Is your restaurant near a gym or fitness center? Emerging research shows that **drinking real dairy milk after exercise can help the body refuel, recover, and rehydrate.** Offering post-workout beverages like milk or smoothies made with Real California Milk may bring in local customers, eager to refuel after their workouts.

TEMPERATURE CONTROL

Measure and monitor the temperature of dairy storage equipment to help maintain temperature and quality.

COMPOSTING

If possible, compost suitable dairy waste (e.g., yogurt, cheese rinds) to turn it into nutrient-rich fertilizer.

DONATING

Explore partnerships with local food banks or donation programs to redistribute unused dairy products nearing their expiration dates.

By implementing these strategies, foodservice operations can significantly reduce dairy waste, minimize environmental impact, and potentially save costs.



Did You Know...?

Dairy foods like milk, cottage cheese, and ricotta cheese can lose one day of shelf life for every hour their temperature exceeds 40°F.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To access more information about Real California Milk and dairy products made with milk from California dairy farm families for foodservice, visit RealCaliforniaMilkFoodservice.com

For recipes featuring California dairy products, visit RealCaliforniaMilkFoodservice.com/recipe-search

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

International Food Information Council.
2023 Food & Health Survey, May 2023:
<https://foodinsight.org/2023-food-health-survey>

Food Waste Resources from Lean Path:
www.leanpath.com/resources

Industry Resources from Datassential:
<https://datassential.com/resource-center>

Dairy Nutrition Research & Resources
from National Dairy Council:
[Dairy Nutrition & Vitamins | U.S. Dairy \(usdairy.com\)](https://usdairy.com)

