Real Dairy

REAL DELICIOUS

Your Dairy Checkoff Check-In

second quarter 2022

THE DAIRY ALLIANCE
**Insulate & Innovate to Drive Incremental Dairy**

**A Note From CEO, Geri Berdak**

It’s hard to believe we are already halfway through 2022. We’ve made great progress against the strategic priorities we established and shared in 2021, and we are just getting started. I’d like to share an update on where we are and where we’re going for the remainder of the year – and beyond.

In May, DMI held their board meeting where CEO Barbara O’Brien provided an update on the checkoff’s vision to ASPIRE - creating action through sustainability, people, innovation, reputation, and exports by harnessing the full power of the checkoff on behalf of its dairy farmer and importer funders.

This three-year strategic framework helps ensure that our local plans are optimized with national, and international checkoff organizations and affiliated organizations are across the checkoff system. The Dairy Alliance strategies are aligned with this framework and our focus is on a three-year approach as well.

A component of the ASPIRE vision is “People” and like DMI, The Dairy Alliance is forging a path to improve our organizational work culture in a multi-phased approach. Earlier this year we began working with a third-party culture expert to help shape and transform the way we work with a goal of establishing our renewed “Culture DNA”. While having a defined strategic plan is of the utmost importance, a strong culture is the foundation for building a high performing and successful team. I’ll share more of our progress as we embark on this journey.

As part of our strategic plan to protect and grow milk sales, we continuously assess ways to improve the school milk experience and ensure milk is accessible for all school districts. Many of you are aware of recent dairy processing plant closures, making it harder for school districts in the Southeast to secure a milk bid due to distribution issues. The Dairy Alliance’s Youth Wellness team has helped mitigate bidding issues for districts in Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia. The team has leveraged relationships with the state level leads, local processors and school districts to troubleshoot barriers. Due to a lack of cold storage space, schools often require deliveries multiple times a week, which presents a distribution hurdle for processors and importer funders.

We will continue to advance our strategic initiatives, serving as a catalyst for the Southeast dairy industry while creating a sustainable demand for milk and value for our dairy farm families.

**What’s Driving Dairy Innovations?**

The Dairy Alliance and national checkoff work to create compelling campaigns and recipes that adhere to consumer interests using current trends and data. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers have continued their interest in discovering products that benefit their health.

**Wellness Snacking**

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers have developed a growing interest in prioritizing health and wellness in their daily lives. Many are seeking to improve their physical and mental health, fitness, nutrition habits, appearance, and sleep patterns. Transitioning to hybrid work schedule has allowed more freedom in meal choices throughout a busy day, driving many consumers to more snacking occasions than in previous years. This is a great opportunity to include healthy dairy foods like cheese cubed and nut mixes, milk and yogurt based ready-to-drink smoothies and savory cottage cheeses.

**Mood Marketing**

Emotion is poised to become a bigger differentiator as consumers look to products which prioritize their mental and emotional needs, such as foods that provide stress relief or focus. The ongoing Reset Yourself with Dairy campaign positions achieving calm as an easy goal by consuming dairy products.

**Gen Z**

While these are overall trends, targeting Gen Z is key to success. Coming of age during a pandemic and “the new normal,” this generation is seeking comfort, connection and reprieve from the struggles that have been highlighted in recent years. Gen Z is the most connected generation, yet the loneliest.

Because of this, Gen Z relies on rituals and moments of collective meaning, even if it changes consumer values. Gen Z seeks environmental sustainability and other benefits in their products that go against what they see as harmful practices. They seek products that somehow benefit them in their daily lives.

These values require checkoff to highlight the good of the dairy industry and its ongoing innovations to become even better in environmental sustainability, animal care, diversity, and more.

The Dairy Alliance and Marble Slab Creamery’s ongoing partnership has recently resulted in the Banana Toffee Ice Cream, which combines banana ice cream, crushed HEATH bar pieces and caramel. This combination drives consumers to look for unique ice cream flavors while combating the summer heat. Available as an ice cream or a shake, Marble Slab Creamery is promoting the offering through a giveaway and social media content. This nostalgic ice cream with a twist is available for a limited time this summer.
Strengthening the Power of Checkoff

Dairy Management Inc (DMI) has created a framework to aid national and local checkoff to ASPIRE, or create Action through Sustainability, People, Innovation, Reputation and Exports - in strengthening the power of checkoff on behalf of dairy farmers. The strategic framework guides how checkoff organizations and their affiliates improve collaboration on shared goals and priorities. It is a pathway to building sustainability and wellness science through translating evidence as the basis for new products and messaging to impact sales.

DMI also is working with GENYOUTH, Global Dairy Platform, Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, Newtrient and U.S. Dairy Export Council to align around shared strategic plans.

Strengthen Local Relationships & Support

Inform annual plans and budgets to ensure outcomes are resourced appropriately
Build and strengthen partnerships, trust and influence to anticipate opportunities and threats, drive results and use the collective experiences of staff
Align capabilities so organizations understand their specific roles and how their work fits across checkoff organizations
Establish goals to measure progress against shared priorities
Centering work around the ASPIRE priorities will:

Experiment with Videos: Take a moment to share your point of view of a farm chore, like milking the cows or fixing equipment. Sharing short video content helps you pull in new followers. Summer is a great time to share videos of ice cream being scooped or cows cooling off under misters.

Choose Appropriate Hashtags: Use relevant hashtags that consumers are searching for on social media to help your post gain traction. Use #NationalDairyMonth or #IceCreamMonth in place of a full event as a hashtag. Remember there are variations of hashtags you can explore for the most popular, like versions that include the year. Capitalization does not matter, but make sure to avoid spaces between words.

Know Your Audience: Whether you are sharing your favorite ice cream flavor or a picture of a cow sunning, remember to keep your message on a level that consumers will understand. Avoid jargon or getting too into the details of a farm practice when speaking to consumers instead of other farmers.

Encourage Interaction, Not Negativity: Asking followers to comment or tag your account is a great way to boost engagement with your brand. If someone comes into the comment section with misinformation, do not go on the attack. You can respond, but it’s ok to hide negative comments. If you wish to address common misinformation you see in comments, create a general post about the topic that more people will see. If you do not want to create additional content, The Dairy Alliance has plenty planned for this summer that is perfect to share with your followers.

Share Influencer Videos: The Dairy Alliance is working with influencers to create compelling video content this summer. This June, Emily Shaw of Dairy Girl Fitness shared short videos about reasons to love milk for the health conscious. Other influencers will share videos this summer, with Phillip Pryman of Southern Fatty sharing recipes in July.

Promote The Dairy Alliance Giveaways: The Dairy Alliance will hold several giveaways this summer. The June giveaway will award 15 lucky winners a portable blender and an Enhance Your Smoothies with Real Dairy recipe book, sharing dairy’s goodness with consumers choosing a plant-based diet. June’s National Dairy Month giveaway encourages consumers to share their experiences visiting dairy farms for a chance to win dairy-themed swag. Though this giveaway is focused on events in June, similar giveaways will continue and is a great way to promote visits to your dairy farm.

A extension of The Dairy Alliance’s WaveMakers community outreach program, Digital Dairy Ambassadors are dairy farmers selected to represent the Southeast dairy industry online in 6-month increments. Forming connections with consumers, these farmers have been trained to advocate on their preferred platform.

Any dairy farmer living in The Dairy Alliance’s 8-state region is eligible to participate in the program.


Be sure to follow our stories on The Dairy Alliance social media pages to see what our Ambassadors are posting each month! We are excited to have Southeast farmers share their unique stories from the farm. Registration for Ambassadors in 2023 will open in January, so be sure to apply if you are interested in our new program!!
The Dairy Alliance will run a Fuel Up to Play 60 funded pilot program in 8 Virginia Afterschool locations this fall. The pilot will provide after-school students with the opportunity to learn how to make delicious dairy smoothies and recipes, provide nutrition lessons, stay active on the smoothie bikes, and receive flag football kits. Students will have a take home cooking kit, including a blender and other cooking tools, to prepare dairy recipes at home.

In an effort to drive reconsideration of milk as a cool and relevant part of a modern lifestyle amongst millennial parents and Gen Z teens, we have to position it differently than in the past. As our research has shown, consumers are examining their food choices more intensely than ever before, with the “what’s in it for me?” question at the forefront. MilkPEP, in conjunction with our shared marketing agency, GALE, is shifting the narrative from “Milk fuels athletes” to “Milk fuels you and your family.” We’re focusing on research-grounded claims about milk to drill into factual yet unexpected benefits ranging from hydration, to wellness, to height. These claims broaden the milk story while continuing to move the needle on how milk can help people perform in all kinds of ways. The Dairy Alliance will leverage these new claims as part of our marketing and content strategy. Working with partners, like MilkPEP, processors and retailers, we will increase impact and efficiency of the messaging across multiple channels.

Modern Milk: Health Benefit Claims

- 8 Grams of Protein in an 8-Ounce Glass
- Essential Nutrients for Your Kid’s Growth
- Nutrients to Support a Healthy Immune System
- Hydrates Better Than Water
- Nature’s Recovery Drink
- Ready, Recover, Repeat
- Wellness by the glass
- Puts the PRO in protein
- High-performance protein
- Building blocks for building muscle

Fuel Up to Play 60 Grants Awarded for 2022-2023

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$434,986 in FUTP60 Grants
164 Schools Awarded
118 Schools Beginning Milk Focused Program

*Funds will be used to implement programs when classes resume this fall.

Sneak Peek: Bringing Sustainability within Reach

The Dairy Alliance is building a resource guide to share financial and technical information to help dairy farmers meet their conservation goals. This guide will be a compilation of resources, such as Newtrient information on manure management, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQUIP) and assets to help share sustainability stories and facts on social media. These resources, webinars, grant updates, and more will be available on The Dairy Alliance website as an interactive hub for dairy farmers across the region.

Further, The Dairy Alliance is sharing Southeast dairy farmers’ sustainability stories online, like the April Takeover Tuesdays which highlighted farmers sharing sustainable practices on The Dairy Alliance Facebook and Instagram or the virtual farm tour to the University of Tennessee’s Little River Animal and Environmental Unit discussing water management. Later this year we will unveil videos from four farms across the region sharing different environmental conservation practices to be used as ads for millennial moms, Gen Zer’s and people of color.

Be on the lookout for more information about these resources, or contact Mekenzie Panhans, Senior Manager of Farmer Communications & Sustainability, at mpanhans@thedairyalliance.com.
Summer Berry Cobbler

Cook Time: 45 minutes
Prep Time: 20 minutes
Total Time: 65 minutes

Ingredients:
- 4 cups mixed berries
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 1 1/2 cups sugar, divided
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 tablespoon confectioners’ sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cardamom

Instructions: Preheat oven to 350°F. Place berries in a large mixing bowl. Add 1/2 cup sugar, lemon juice and zest. Stir until well combined. Set aside to rest for about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, place milk and butter in a microwave-safe container and cook on HIGH just until butter is melted, about 1 minute. Stir until well combined. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together flour, remaining 1 cup sugar, baking powder and salt. Gradually pour in milk and butter mixture, whisking until smooth. Pour batter into a 13-x 9-inch baking dish, then spoon berries evenly on top. If desired, sprinkle top with about 2 tablespoons of sugar. Bake at 350° for 45-50 minutes or until crust is golden brown. While cobbler is baking, pour the heavy cream into a non-reactive metal or glass bowl. Add confectioners’ sugar and whip on medium speed with electric mixer until soft peaks form. Sprinkle in cardamom and whip again until stiff peaks form. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. Serve cobbler warm or at room temperature with the spiced whipped cream.

About the Authors:

**Audri Crews**
Alabama, Georgia & Mississippi
toll free (800) 343 4693
(770) 996 6085

**Denise Jones**
Kentucky & Tennessee
djones@thedairyalliance.com
(270) 970 4792

**Elizabeth Moretz**
North and South Carolina & Virginia
emoretz@thedairyalliance.com
(828) 406 9482

This Summer Berry Cobbler created by The Dairy Alliance was promoted by Erica Thomas of Eating with Erica. Erica created a recipe video and a blog post for the cobbler, positioning it to her followers as the perfect recipe to enjoy in honor of June’s National Dairy Month.

Use a mix of sweet summer berries to make this cobbler stand out. The buttery cake-like base sets this cobbler apart from others. Top with a cardamom-spiced whipped cream or your favorite vanilla ice cream.

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