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Continuing to Create Value for Your Checkoff Investment

I would like to wish each Midwest Dairy farm family a [Happy New Year](#). I am excited for the opportunities that lie ahead to continue giving consumers an excellent dairy experience. We know that dairy remains an important part of a balanced diet and a staple in 94 percent of U.S. households today. Cheese consumption is also at its highest point ever and butter is at a 50-year consumption high. The entire dairy category is well positioned for future growth as a nutritious, safe and sustainable food source.

We will continue to build demand in 2020 by increasing our focus on the future. We will think about our next strategic, plan "One Team, One Plan" and how customization and innovation will help us succeed in meeting the changing tastes and needs of today's consumer. At the same time, we remain focused on what is best for Midwest Dairy farmers and exploring what will create the most value for your checkoff investment. Read on to learn more about what checkoff is doing to build demand.

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Checkoff Makes its Mark on Top 10 New Dairy Products List

Three products named among *Dairy Foods* "[Top 10 Best New Dairy Products for 2019](#)" are the result of Dairy Management, Inc. collaboration: Shamrock Farms Rockin' Protein Energy, Live Real Farms Milk Blends and Darigold FIT.

Both Darigold FIT and another product on the readers' Top 10 - Organic Valley ultra-filtered milk - are examples of the catalytic impact taking place within the fluid category based on checkoff's original investment in fairlife and high-protein milk.

Readers also took notice of Midwest-based Prairie Farms by listing its small batch cottage cheese in their top 10.

These achievements speak to the success of checkoff's investment in partnerships to increase trust in dairy and drive dairy sales.



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Dairy Will Benefit from McDonald's Chocolate Milk Makeover

An [article](#) in *Hoard's* announced this month's launch of a new and improved chocolate milk at McDonald's. The revamped beverage has 25 percent less sugar and is low-fat (the previous chocolate milk option was fat-free). This marks a welcome return for the beverage, which was officially dropped from the menu in 2018 in an effort to cut calories in Happy Meals.

A checkoff partnership with Dairy Management Inc. (DMI) allowed the restaurant to develop a dairy beverage option to put back on the menu for their kids' meals. DMI first supplied information on consumer trends and preferences. They then worked with the McDonald's team and provided support from food scientists to make the reformulated chocolate milk a reality.

McDonald's is already a huge buyer of dairy, with around 80 percent of their menu featuring milk, cheese or butter. Now, by offering an improved milk to its customers (of whom the company serves over 60 million around the world each day), dairy consumption is sure to reach even new heights. The redesign could also signal to other restaurants the value of fluid milk when served with the consumer in mind.



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Greenhouse Gas Guru Sets Record Straight About Dairy's GHG Emissions

In a new episode of [Dairy on the Air](#), Dr. Frank Mitloehner, animal science professor and air quality specialist at the University of California, Davis, shares insights to paint an accurate, positive picture of the dairy industry's contributions to greenhouse gas emissions.

During the conversation with podcast host Andy Vance, Mitloehner explains how dairy cows contribute only 1.2 percent of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. What's more, methane—the type of GHG which cows emit—has a lifespan of only 10 years, compared to that of GHG carbon dioxide, which is a GHG emitted by fossil fuels and has a lifespan of 1,000 years.

Mitloehner claims GHGs are dairy farmers' achilles heel. He urges them to be more vocal about the GHG reductions they've made as well as their commitment to further reduce them by 25 percent in 2020. He also calls for more fact-sharing to dispel the myths spread by animal activists who claim a vegan diet is the most sustainable. To gather more facts, listen to the full episode and follow Mitloehner on Twitter @GHGGuru.



[Dairy on the Air](#) is a monthly podcast. Find all episodes online at [MidwestDairy.com](#) or on podcast platforms including iTunes, iHeartRadio, Google Play, Stitcher, Spotify and more.

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Funds to Bring Undeniably Dairy to Your Community

[Dairy Promotion Funding](#) opportunities are available through Midwest Dairy. Apply for funds to bring dairy to unexpected places, host on-farm events and/or engage with K-12 youth. Last year, Midwest Dairy supported about 130 applications reaching over 700,000 consumers.

Here's some highlights from 2019 to help spark inspiration:

- **Brew & Moo:** Farmers partnered with a local brewery that brings in a food truck and live music every Friday in the summer to host an undeniably dairy event.
- **Breakfast for Champions:** Farmers partnered with a local wrestling tournament to refuel with milk.
- **Ag Literacy Project:** Farmers partnered with local schools and libraries to purchase dairy-themed books and hosted story time.
- **Lunch on the Farm:** Farmers partnered with a local grocery store and National Resources Conservation Service to target inner city adults and children for a lunch on the farm.
- **Farmers Market:** Farmers setup an engaging exhibit at a farmers market letting consumers know dairy is local.
- **Bulk Milk Dispensing:** Farmers worked with a school district to purchase and implement bulk milk dispensers in all five schools.
- **Holiday Fun:** Farmers opened their farm for visits with Santa, brought the farm to others in a local community Christmas tree



display and even hosted hot chocolate stations at a Light up the Night Thanksgiving event.

- **Refueling Stations:** Farmers partnered with a triathlon and 10K to showcase the power of milk.

It's exciting to see all the fun and creative ways dairy is being brought to to life! The first funding deadline is March 2, 2020. These are competitive; [learn more and apply today](#).

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