



Retail partnerships showcase dairy's sustainability story in celebration of Earth Day



Dairy farmers have a long history of environmental stewardship. It is important to share this story with consumers because research shows that in 2020, 70% of adults made purchase decisions based on sustainability at least some of the time.

This presents an opportunity to showcase dairy farmers' commitment to the land, animals and communities while driving dairy sales.

As communities across the globe celebrated Earth Day on April 22, Midwest Dairy shared in the celebration by building dairy demand at retail through campaigns with Coborn's, Cub and Dierbergs that demonstrated how dairy products are sustainably produced.

- In our fourth year of partnership with Minnesota-based retailer Coborn's, Midwest Dairy worked alongside this retailer on an integrated "Shop Green" campaign that highlighted dairy's sustainability story across 52 stores. The campaign included a gas station "at-the-pump" commercial at 27 Little Duke's gas stations, social media activations, three e-commerce banners on consumer and partner-facing websites and temporary price reductions on dairy food items.



INCREASE DAIRY SALES

- With Missouri-based retailer Dierbergs, which has 25 stores in our region, Midwest Dairy partnered to share sustainability messages both online and in-store that will generate more than one million impressions. The campaign consisted of an updated website landing page on Dierbergs.com, social media content on Facebook and Instagram, in-store sustainability videos and in-store signage with dairy sustainability messages.

- Minnesota-based Cub Foods, joined in the Earth Day celebration with social media outreach focused on sharing sustainability facts about dairy in an interactive way with a "Fresh Facts" campaign. This opportunity with Cub Foods is helping Midwest Dairy reach consumers across 81 stores throughout Minnesota.



While results for these activations will not be available until June, they allow us to share dairy's environmental stewardship story at a critical decision-making moment for consumers – the point of sale – and drive sales with today's consumers who are increasingly looking for food options that are good for them and also good for the planet.



Exploring creative ways to bring dairy to life and build trust

Midwest Dairy staff continue to work with and through partners to share dairy's story and build trust with consumers through new opportunities and ongoing relationships.

These creative collaborations have resulted in both virtual and in-person experiences that have not only brought dairy to life for partners, but given them valuable information to share with their audiences and consumers in support of dairy.

Here are a few highlights:

- Midwest Dairy announced a partnership with the Science Museum of Minnesota to create a **new food experience** that will explore agriculture, food security, food systems and more. The partnership will assemble a team of partners, scientists and experts to explore how science is used in creating a more sustainable, equitable, locally sourced food supply.



- Downtown Sioux Falls (South Dakota) held its **Restaurant Week in March**. At the kickoff event, Midwest Dairy Board Chair Allen Merrill and his wife, Kristi, and South Dakota Division Board member Doug Ode, with wife Amy, interacted with guests, talking about sustainability efforts, production, and farm-to-table stories.
- Through our partnership with Grant's Farm in St. Louis, Missouri, a **new exhibit featuring an interactive milking cow** opens Memorial Day weekend. In addition, for the first time, Grant's Farm will add 12 dairy calves onsite for families to meet.

- As part of a new partnership with The Regnier Family Wonderscope Children's Museum of Kansas City, Midwest Dairy co-created an **indoor/outdoor Undeniably Dairy-designed exhibit**. The museum also hosted a viewing of a virtual Missouri dairy farm tour in April.



- A **virtual Cheese Board Chat** was held in February in partnership with the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce in North Dakota. Over 30 business and organization leaders joined for conversations on dairy, sustainable nutrition and farming. Guest speakers included dairy farmer Conny van Bedaf and her daughter, Maartje Murphy, who owns Duchessa Gelato.



Each of these collaborations has generated positive feedback from partners with amplification on a variety of their social media platforms and to their specific audiences. In addition, they've led to discussions around future opportunities that will allow Midwest Dairy to continue working with these partners to build trust in dairy.



MDFRC webinar series provides updates on dairy-related research



The Midwest Dairy Foods Research Center (MDFRC) webinar series continued with a session in April focused on research looking at the transfer and control of *Listeria* in dairy manufacturing plants to improve plant sanitation protocols and dairy food safety. The results of the study will inform continuous improvement in dairy

manufacturing plant sanitation protocols and better inform the dairy industry to improve training materials while providing quantitative data for future risk assessment research around this topic.

Listeria is a foodborne pathogen, which can be found in various areas of dairy manufacturing plants, particularly in moist environments, areas with condensation, standing water and/or food residues. Once the *Listeria* pathogen has been established in the processing facility, it can easily be transferred to the environment by personnel and personal protective equipment (PPE). The bacteria can

survive a wide pH range and moisture content, in anaerobic or aerobic conditions. The organism can grow at low temperatures which becomes an issue in refrigerated products like milk, and other frozen novelties.

During the webinar, Andreia Bianchini, Ph.D., from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln, shared information from her team's study assessing the consecutive transfer of *Listeria* from contaminated PPE such as gloves, aprons, and boots to various food contact and non-food contact surfaces after consecutive touches.

Results indicated that *Listeria* transfer was different depending upon PPE and surface combinations. Higher transfer microbial counts were observed in glove-mediated transfer to dairy products such as queso fresco, followed by cheddar cheese. As a follow-up study, the effectiveness of sanitizers against the *Listeria* contamination were evaluated. Peroxyacetic acid proved to be the best sanitizer for aprons, however, the presence of organic matter, such as skim milk, reduced the antimicrobial effect of sanitizers. Overall, encouraging results were obtained with an extensive cleaning protocol, emphasizing the need for scrubbing and cleaning for effective *Listeria* control and reduction.

Launched in 2019 to provide timely research updates on current MDFRC projects, these webinars are available as a benefit to MDFRC members. This year, three webinars have been held and have been attended by a combined 117 participants. The next MDFRC member webinar will be held in August and will feature a research update from South Dakota State University.





DEVELOP FARM & COMMUNITY LEADERS IN DAIRY

Midwest Dairy grants and Community Engagement Guide help farmers share dairy goodness



Dairy farmers are one of the most trusted sources with consumers, and more than 70% of consumers would like more information

about where dairy products come from. As National Dairy Month approaches, it's the perfect time to take advantage of a variety of grants offered by Midwest Dairy to give back to your community, food pantry or local schools. These include:

- **Undeniably Dairy Grants** – to host local promotion efforts to bring dairy to unexpected places, host on-farm events, or engage with K-12 youth.
- **Food Pantry Grants** – to help a food pantry in your community fund refrigerators for use when serving dairy foods to local families.
- **School Equipment Grants** – to help a local school district fund equipment to support school meal service to help grow dairy sales.

Midwest Dairy's new **Community Engagement Guide**, found on MidwestDairy.com, provides ideas on how to showcase the power of dairy in your community. National Dairy Month is a great time to put some of these ideas from the guide into action:

- Co-host a community BBQ with other farmers for leaders in your community.
- Provide hayrides and farm tours.
- Partner with a local business for a brew and moo or wine and cheese event.

Check out this resource each month for ideas about how you can bring Undeniably Dairy to your community. Applications for funding are competitive and are accepted throughout the year. Visit MidwestDairy.com to learn more and apply.





ADVANCE RESEARCH IN DAIRY



Meet Gen Z: Useful insights to grow dairy demand



On June 8, Midwest Dairy is inviting retail partners to join us for a webinar to explore Generation Z's (Gen Z) buying preferences and values as well as what's ahead for dairy when it comes to this unique group of consumers. Jason Dorsey, a generational expert, will provide insights about Gen Z and guide our partners on how to effectively communicate dairy's story in a meaningful way. **To register and for more information, visit MidwestDairy.com.**

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Midwest Dairy
2015 Rice Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55113
800-642-3895 – Toll Free
651-488-0261 – Phone

Editor
*Jo Grammond, manager,
Corporate Communications*
816-702-5665

Contributors
*Trish Scorpio, vice president,
Corporate Communications*

*Molly Weaver, manager,
Corporate Communications*

Midwest Dairy Resources

Visit MidwestDairy.com

- To stay up-to-date on checkoff efforts
- To access the Promo Center (or call 1-877-360-FARM (3276))

Questions can be directed to the Farmer Relations manager for your state, or call 1-800-642-3895

ARKANSAS/SOUTHERN MISSOURI/EASTERN OKLAHOMA

Stacy Dohle
417-267-5039
sdohle@midwestdairy.com

ILLINOIS

Kendra Anderson
309-825-2196
kanderson@midwestdairy.com

IOWA

Mitch Schulte
319-228-8503
mschulte@midwestdairy.com

NORTHERN MISSOURI/ KANSAS

Ron Grusenmeyer
816-873-0351
rgrusenmeyer@midwestdairy.com

MINNESOTA

Shannon Seifert
507-766-6864
sseifert@midwestdairy.com

LUCAS SJOSTROM

Lucas Sjostrom
320-346-2216
lsjostrom@midwestdairy.com

NEBRASKA

Tracy Behnken
531-207-4291
tbehnken@midwestdairy.com

NORTH DAKOTA

Amber Boeshans
701-712-1488
aboeshans@midwestdairy.com

SOUTH DAKOTA

Tom Peterson
605-251-2439
tpeterson@midwestdairy.com

Creatively working with others to give consumers an excellent dairy experience



Midwest Dairy continues to build momentum as we creatively collaborate with partners to bring Midwest Dairy's mission to life – working with others to give consumers an excellent dairy experience.

To capitalize on Earth Day and consumers' increasing interest in knowing where their food comes from, April provided a perfect time to work with retailers including Coborn's, Cub and Dierbergs to showcase the ongoing commitment dairy farmers have to producing nutritious dairy foods that are good for people, community and the planet. Whether it was through website banner ads or graphics, dairy sustainability facts or online recipes, or signage in-store or at the pump, shoppers throughout our region experienced dairy sustainability in fun and creative ways throughout their shopping experience.



We're also excited to be kicking off several partner relationships to showcase dairy-related content and displays with a number of well-known organizations throughout our region, including the Science Museum of Minnesota and several children's museums. These organizations appeal to young families, and our partnerships will help build trust with Gen Z children who are future dairy consumers.

With National Dairy Month upon us, I encourage you to join us in promoting dairy in your local communities. Check out activation ideas in this issue or at MidwestDairy.com so you can tell your story more broadly.

Molly Pelzer, CEO, Midwest Dairy



or call 1-877-360-FARM (3276)

Visit MidwestDairy.com
to access the
Promo Center

- Earth Day promotions with retailers
- Bringing dairy to life in creative ways
- Sharing insights with partners to grow dairy demand
- Learn more about Undenably Dairy grants now available

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2015 Rice Street
St. Paul, MN 55113

