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## Milk, dairy’s nutrition front and center during National Nutrition Month

March marks National Nutrition Month – and there’s no better time to celebrate the vital role milk and dairy play in a nutritious diet. On your behalf, checkoff is at work to leverage dairy’s nutrition to grow trust in dairy and increase dairy sales in a variety of ways, from working with retailers to encourage customers to purchase dairy products as part of their health and wellness goals, to building relationships with current and future health care professionals.

National initiatives are also underway, and are highlighted in this issue, including:

- MilkPEP, Dairy Management Inc., National Milk Producers Federation and International Dairy Foods Association collaboration to share new data supporting milk as nature’s wellness drink. We’re able to claim 13 nutrients in milk’s powerhouse with the addition of iodine, potassium, selenium and zinc.
- Midwest Dairy is again partnering with GENYOUth to lead a second schools-focused national forum, “Issues and Action Steps: National Forum on Expanding Healthier School Communities”, on March 24.

## Farming to the Future virtual field trip

A new [Undeniably Dairy “Farming to the Future” Virtual Field Trip](#) just launched, in partnership with Discovery Education, to showcase dairy’s sustainability story. The field trip includes four videos along with classroom curriculum for grades 5-8 along with a family activity guide. The videos include a visit with Leslie Bonci, a sports dietitian and National Dairy Council ambassador, who speaks to how dairy can help build strong bodies. Also participating is celebrity chef Carla Hall, who delivers a message of how dairy farmers are helping to feed our growing population and the importance of fresh, nutritious foods.

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[Learn more about your checkoff investment at work!](#)

Please share these resources with your local schools, families and even after-school clubs looking to learn more about how dairy is good for the land and our bodies. As farmers, you may also want to watch them yourselves as you may pick up a few new sound bites and key messages for your own tours coming up this summer!

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## Bone Health Across the Lifespan webinar

It has been said that osteoporosis is a pediatric disease with geriatric consequences. While osteoporosis and low bone mass affect about 54 million Americans, the good news is childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood are prime times to build bone density. Bones require ongoing support as they are continuously remodeled throughout life. Join National Dairy Council and bone health expert Taylor Wallace, Ph.D. on March 31 for an in-depth look at building healthy bones across the lifespan. [Register here](#).

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## Powerful new ways to talk about milk

MilkPEP, Dairy Management Inc., National Milk Producers Federation and International Dairy Foods Association worked together to share new data available on milk's nutrients.

Milk is still milk. What's inside is what's always been inside. We just have more data available in USDA databases (i.e., FoodData Central) that show more nutrients in milk meet the threshold of being a good or excellent source. The good news is that we can now substantiate that there are even more nutrients important to wellness in every serving of milk.

**Iodine, potassium, selenium, and zinc** have joined protein, calcium, phosphorus, vitamin A, vitamin D, riboflavin (B2), niacin (B3), pantothenic acid (B5), and cobalamin (B12) as essential nutrients in milk. What's most important are the additional benefits these nutrients allow us to share that are relevant to consumers.

- **Zinc** and **selenium** are both important to normal (healthy) immune function, along with the vitamin A, vitamin D, and protein in milk.
- **Potassium** is an electrolyte that's important in performance due to the regulation of fluid balance and its role in muscle function. It is also important to blood pressure regulation, supports heart health and is a nutrient of public health concern because people aren't getting enough of it in their diets.
- **Iodine** is a nutrient important for pregnant and lactating moms due to the increased need to support the child's cognitive development.

So, you can be confident that milk truly is nature's wellness drink. It has been around for centuries, but with 13 nutrients in every glass, the benefits are far from old-fashioned. We've updated our infographic [Is Milk Good for You](#). Check it out.

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## Ideas for sharing your sustainability story

In April, our focus turns to Earth Day and sharing how the dairy industry is implementing more sustainable farm practices, ensuring our legacy will thrive for generations to come. As you think about how to communicate and engage your community on the subject, let's work together to share the progress we've made and our commitment for the future.

Protecting our planet has never been more front and center than it is today. Climate change leads conversations around the globe daily, and agriculture is a major player in our planet's future.

From national trends such as regenerative ag and carbon capture, to daily water and soil conversation and renewable energy, dairies have an opportunity to set a new agenda to meet our global environmental objectives.

And, while consumers are doing everyday tasks such as energy-saving lighting and food waste management, dairy farmers are practicing some of the exact same things, and then some!

Let's showcase those steps by sharing on social media, engaging local school classes studying our climate, conducting a virtual farm tour, or leading community conversations about how dairy is becoming a bigger part of the solution by providing nutrition, sustainably.

For tips on how to help tell your sustainability story on social media and beyond, our friends at FarmHER captured some best practices in a new video. [Check it out here](#) and then look for ways you can personalize your own sustainability stories. You can also find additional inspiration that's ready for sharing in this [new sustainability video series](#).

For more information and resources on how we're tackling these pressing issues, please visit the U.S. Dairy Sustainability web pages [here](#) and our 2050 net zero/carbon neutral industry goal [here](#).

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## Lloyd Metzger talks cheese on the History channel

Dr. Lloyd Metzger, former professor and Alfred Chair at South Dakota State University is featured as a speaker in the "American Cheese" episode as part of History channel's "The Food That Built America" series.

In this episode, Metzger and other speakers talk about the history of pasteurized processed cheese and how it gained popularity in America. In the early 20th century, cheese was essentially only a locally-distributed product due to its refrigeration and shelf-life constraints. The innovation of a pasteurized processed cheese product made it possible for cheese to be distributed nationally as the product was shelf-stable and the shelf-life of cheese much longer than that of natural cheese.

The episode features the company that introduced pasteurized processed cheese and how pasteurized cheese has evolved since then. To view the episode, please click on the [link here](#).

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## Expanding Healthier School Communities Part 2

One year ago, COVID-19 emerged, devastating communities across the world. As you well know, schools are facing unprecedented challenges and responding with extraordinary innovations. Following a thought-provoking virtual forum with school leaders last December, [GENYOUth](#) is again teaming up with **Midwest Dairy** for a second national forum, which we are calling [\*\*\*Issues and Action Steps: National Forum on Expanding Healthier School Communities\*\*\*](#).

This action-oriented, thought-leadership virtual forum will take place on **Wednesday, March 24 from 2:00-5:30 p.m. ET** and takes our discussion one step further —focusing on whole-child wellness, post-pandemic readiness, and building community partnerships.

We'll be sharing the results from our latest **Youth Insights Survey on COVID, One Year Later**. Using an action-oriented format, attendees will collaborate and create commitments to action for both the short and long term (30/90's) to rebuild and strengthen their communities.

**We look forward to you joining us and appreciate your help in amplifying** this event with your peers, colleagues and partners! Register today at <https://hscforum.genyouthnow.org>.

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