

ONLINE FARM EXPERIENCE

GRADES 7-9 DISCUSSION GUIDE

Time: 30 minutes to complete tour and questions.
Additional activities can add 5+ minutes.



Instructions: Visit www.midwestdairy.com/farm-life/ for a 10-stop (11-video) tour to help you experience how milk from real cows, on a real Midwestern farm, becomes the fresh, naturally nutrient-rich dairy foods you love.

INTRO/WELCOME

What is a dairy food?

Answer: Any food made with milk, such as cheese and yogurt.

Note: Foods such as margarine and eggs are not dairy foods.

What dairy foods do you eat regularly?

What foods are made from milk?

Answer: Cheese, yogurt, butter, sour cream, cottage cheese, cream cheese, ice cream, whipped cream, etc.

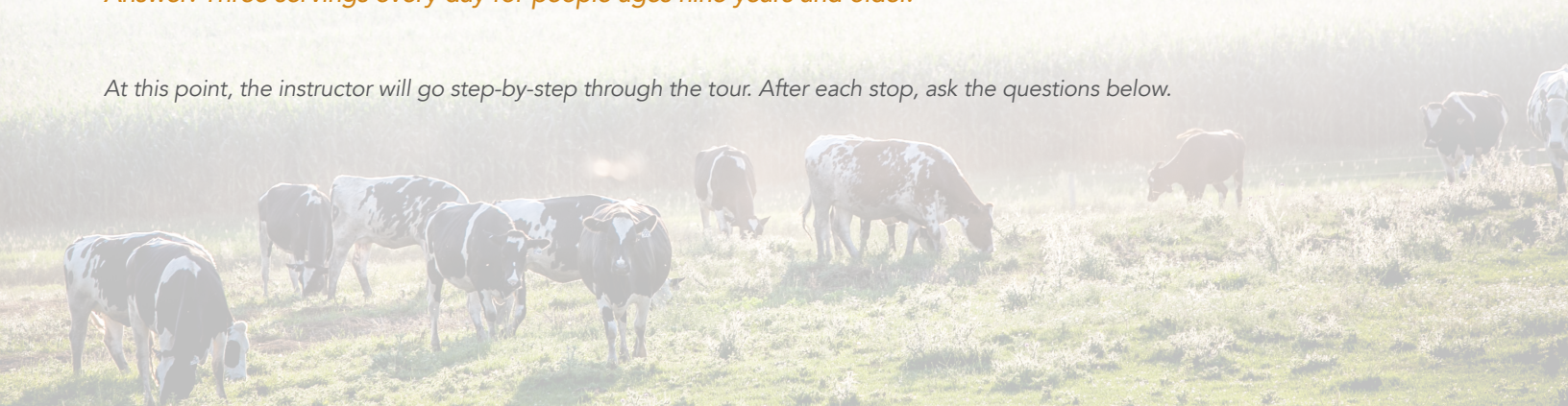
Why is it important for you to drink milk and eat dairy foods?

Answer: Dietary guidelines recommend nutrient-rich foods for a balanced diet. Milk, cheese and yogurt provide a unique package of nine essential nutrients.

How many servings of dairy should you have each day?

Answer: Three servings every day for people ages nine years and older.

At this point, the instructor will go step-by-step through the tour. After each stop, ask the questions below.



FAMILY

Have you visited a dairy farm in real-life? If yes, what was your favorite part? If no, what would you expect to see on the farm?

How are dairy farm families like your own family? How are they different?

In addition to knowledge about animals, what business skills do dairy farmers need to have?

Answer: They need to have skills relating to accounting/finance, employee management, science, food safety, selling products, repairing equipment and facilities, etc.

KITCHEN

The cows have animal nutritionists and farmers planning their diet to make sure they get the nutrition they need. How do you get the nutrition you need?

To get enough calcium you need at least three servings of milk each day. What will you pick for your three servings?

VACATION

Cows lay down up to 14 hours a day. What is your favorite way to relax or rest?

Why is it important for cows to take a vacation?

Answer: The cows have three months of not being milked so they can prepare to give birth to a calf.

RECYCLING

What do you think are the biggest challenges regarding sustainability practices facing businesses today?

What three things can you do to practice better environmental stewardship?

Answer: Recycle, reduce food waste (when grocery shopping, storing and preparing foods), maximize shelf life of dairy foods through correct storage and being creative with leftovers.

DAIRY BREEDS

How many different dairy cow breeds are there in the U.S.?

Answer: Seven.

Can you name all the different dairy breeds?

Answer: Holstein, Jersey, Guernsey, Brown Swiss, Ayrshire, Milking Shorthorn, and Red and White Holstein.

Why is it important there is more than one breed of dairy cow?

Answer: Each breed gives a slightly different product that varies in nutrient content (i.e., protein and vitamins).



Contact Midwest Dairy at psc@midwestdairy.com to receive a free Dairy Breed poster.

NURSERY

What do the dairy calves do in the nursery?

Answer: Eat and drink so they can grow up healthy and strong.

Have you ever bottle-fed a dairy calf?

HOME

What is another name for the dairy cows' home?

Answer: Free stall barn.

What do the cows do in this area?

Answer: Eat, drink, socialize, rest and sleep.

What kind of bedding do the cows sleep on?

Answer: Sand.

TRANSPORT

How long does it take for the milk to get to your grocery store?

Answer: About 48 hours.

What are the benefits of local foods, such as milk?

Answer: They are fresh, benefit the local community and help the economy.

WORK

What do the dairy cows do when they go to "work"?

Answer: They're milked by machines that gently squeeze the milk from their udders.

How many times are the cows milked per day?

Answer: Two or three times per day.

How much milk does a cow produce each day (in terms of gallons)?

Answer: Seven to 10 gallons each day.

FRIDGE

What does homogenize mean and why is it important to dairy?

Answer: It's a process that breaks down the fat molecules so they don't separate and rise to the top of the container to form a layer of cream. This process produces a uniform consistency.

What does pasteurize mean and why is it important to dairy?

Answer: Pasteurization kills harmful bacteria such as E. coli, listeria and salmonella, which can be found in raw milk. All milk intended for consumption is pasteurized so it's safe to drink.

What kinds of dairy foods are in your fridge at home?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

In class:

Discuss the question, "What is the importance of milk in a nutritious diet?"

Divide the class into small groups. Each group selects a type of dairy food and gives clues to the others until they guess the correct answer.

Write a paragraph sharing how you would persuade someone to visit a dairy farm.

After class:

Research and select a recipe that features milk or your favorite dairy food. Write it down and share with the class.

Split the class into small teams and have them compile a report with details about nutrition, care and necessary conditions for healthy dairy cows.

Research potential career options available in the dairy industry. Then write a report about your favorite and why that career is of interest to you.

