

Promotion IN ACTION



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COMMENTS FROM OUR CEO

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those dairy farmer leaders in attendance at the 2023 Annual Meeting held earlier this month. We appreciate that you shared your vision for dairy checkoff based on what you hear from the dairy farmers you represent in our 10-state region. This meeting is especially unique because it is the only time each year that all division board members can gather in the same location and discuss dairy promotion and research efforts led by the checkoff.

Midwest Dairy is proud to be farmer-led. Our dairy farmer board leaders give our staff an inside look into what dairy farmers feel is important regarding checkoff. The Corporate and Division boards are made up of dairy farmers from across the 10-state region who bring their peers' voices to the table. These boards give Midwest Dairy staff direction and insight so we can plan promotion and research efforts that resonate with what is important to dairy farmers. Many staff from Midwest Dairy were also present at this meeting and learned a great deal from the farmers in attendance.

In addition to the division and corporate board meetings hosted during this event, Midwest Dairy staff were also able to highlight checkoff work in three hands-on breakout sessions this year. These breakout sessions were highly appreciated by the farmers in attendance, [click here](#) to read about their experiences and learnings.



MOLLY PELZER

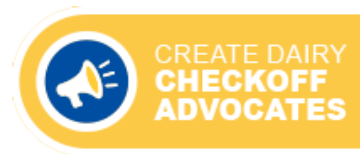
New resources available in the Midwest Dairy Promo Center



Looking for tools to help share your dairy story? Be sure to check out our [Promo Center](#). Those dairy farmers who provide funding to Midwest Dairy are encouraged to take advantage of various promotional materials, including poster sets, coloring books, farm tour booties, and more. New this year include Undeniably Dairy sunglasses and Undeniably Dairy mechanical pencils. These materials and more are designed for you to bring dairy to life in your communities, on your farm, or wherever you connect with consumers.

When placing an order, please allow two weeks for shipping. Be sure to check out [MidwestDairy.com](#) to see all the resources available to help you share your dairy story locally.

Leadership grants available to dairy farmers



Dairy farmers who contribute to the Midwest Dairy checkoff are encouraged to apply for dairy farmer leadership grants. These grant dollars can be used towards becoming a leader in the dairy industry and developing skills that allow you to share your story with consumers. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Leadership programs, including Young Dairy Leadership Institute, Minnesota Agricultural, and Rural Leadership Program, South Dakota Ag and Rural Leadership, etc.
- Leadership conferences, ag or non-ag
- Virtual or in-person classes

Through authorizing statutes, these dollars cannot be used towards any activity that increases production.

Dairy farmers can apply for up to \$1,000 in funding in one calendar year. The grant dollars cannot exceed the leadership class or event cost. The grants are approved on a rolling basis and are subject to fund availability. To learn more and to apply, visit [MidwestDairy.com](#).



Midwest Dairy recently submitted a fact-based public response to USDA's proposed rule, "Child Nutrition Programs: Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans". In addition, checkoff shared information and research citations about the role of dairy in school meal programs, specifically flavored milk. The research-based comments stressed the importance of school meals and their contribution to the health and wellness of students, the critical role dairy foods play, and that the proposed rule's added sugar provisions could reduce dairy consumption in schools.

While federation members may not engage in advocacy, public comments on the proposed rule may be shared if they are educational and based on science. Comments may not support or oppose a particular government policy or action. In addition, comments may not disparage another agricultural product. Midwest Dairy's public comment can be viewed using this link [Regulations.gov](#).

Smoothie Toolkits for schools



Over the past 3 years, Midwest Dairy has funded school equipment grants for opportunities that go beyond the milk carton. The **Beyond the Milk Carton** series is designed to help school nutrition professionals plan, promote, and implement exciting dairy applications *beyond the milk carton*, to increase student participation in foodservice programs. Each toolkit showcases dairy foods as nutritional powerhouses that add flavor and variety to school meals. We hope that sharing knowledge that helps schools make decisions about purchasing equipment on their own will drive sales.

Our new **Smoothie Success Guide** is now available to help schools add Smoothies —packed full of nutritious dairy, fruits, and vegetables — to their food service program and fuel students every day. The toolkit includes preparation and serving tips, recipe ideas, and promotional materials for serving smoothies as part of reimbursable meals.

All Midwest schools will be able to use this information to bring innovative dairy programs to their schools. The toolkits are available on [MidwestDairy.com](#).

Milk transition video eases educational burden on pediatric providers



Research indicates that parents trust pediatricians and pediatric registered dietitians most when it comes to questions about feeding their children. We have also learned that in our ever-changing world of technology, parents want information in engaging ways beyond paper handouts. For this reason, Midwest Dairy has focused on supporting these influential health thought leaders working with children and providing them with more engaging resources.

During conversations with Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) clinics throughout our Midwest region, it was identified that providers struggle with educating parents on the why, how, and when to transition their children from whole to skim or 1 percent milk. The American Academy of Pediatrics and Dietary Guidelines recommends children transition children to lower-fat milk at age two, but this can be an adjustment for little tastebuds and a big challenge for parents. Midwest Dairy set out to be a solution for WIC providers by developing a fun yet educational video for providers to walk through best practices for transitioning children. Utilizing animations, this video teaches parents how to make the transition slowly and at their child's pace. It also educates parents that although the fat and calories differ, all milk (including lactose-free) contains the same 13 essential nutrients to nourish their growing child. Providers noted language as a barrier to providing care, so videos were also translated into Spanish.

These [videos](#) have been adopted by clinics throughout the Midwest Dairy states and shared with the National Dairy Council and all state and regional organizations for adoption with partners nationwide.

South Dakota division awards \$10,000 in scholarships



The South Dakota Division of Midwest Dairy recently presented scholarships totaling \$10,000.00 to five students at the South Dakota State University Department of Dairy & Food Science Scholarship Banquet. This year's recipients were Alyson Dieball, Kendra Ericson, Ambrea Kjos, Jacob Schaefer, and Caitlin Swanson. South Dakota Division Board members Marv Post and Annelies Seffrood presented the awards. This marks the 13th year of the Midwest Dairy South Dakota Division's annual commitment to dairy science students initiated in 2010.



Pictured above, Marv Post, Alyson Dieball, Caitlin Swanson, Ambrea Kjos, and Annelies Seffrood as scholarships are received.

Chalk Talk with the Chicago Bears and the Illinois High School Association

The Chicago Bears, Midwest Dairy, and the Illinois High School Association brought high school coaches together to talk about nutrition, strength, training, and how to fuel their athletes properly. Brent Salazar, Blair Hitchcock, and Jeff Joniak of the Bears Staff gave an educational and entertaining Chalk Talk. In addition, they discussed how important dairy is to proper nutrition for athletes. The Kilgus Dairy Farm Family were also present and talked about their farm and business. They brought chocolate milk with them and discussed how great it is for refueling after athletic competitions.

Over 60 High School Coaches attended or viewed the presentation virtually. This is the second full year of the partnership with the Illinois High School Association, where we work together to bring nutrition messages that include the benefits of dairy through various activations to thousands of students and coaches.

NFL Hometown Grant supports middle school girls flag league

In its ninth year, the 'Hometown Grant' program developed by Fuel Up to Play 60 and the NFL provides all 32 NFL teams the opportunity to award deserving schools in their area \$10,000 to support physical activity and nutrition programs.

The Vikings and Midwest Dairy mutually agreed to offer \$2,000 to five districts that are participating in the new Girls Flag League started by the Minnesota Vikings. Offering this additional funding encouraged over 200 middle school girls to stay involved in physical activity. It is well documented that girls' participation in physical activity is particularly challenged as they move into middle and high school with low self-confidence, body image, and lack of encouragement and support.

Midwest Dairy brought Remi Famodu-Jackson, Ph.D., RDN, CSSD, Minnesota Vikings Lead Dietitian, to provide Nutrition 101 training to 25 coaches attending the Flag Coach Training workshop in early April. Each coach received additional resources on performance nutrition principles addressing the Lactose intolerant athlete, strong bones, and fueling for recovery. Additionally, chocolate Milk Recovery Posters were provided, and promotion of the [Root4Her Curriculum](#) was developed by GENYOUth and the NFL Foundation in 2022 to support the 6-8th grade girl's flag. Remi also recorded five short student-focused videos the coaches can use to support nutrition/wellness topics in the curriculum, including My Plate, Food & Mood, Hydration, Body Image/Confidence, and Sleep. The videos are available to students and coaches via a [Playlist](#) on our YouTube Channel.

The Bears are committed to getting Girl's Flag Football recognized as a sport and part of the Illinois High School Association, and this was a significant step in that plan. The event received [media coverage](#), and an [article](#) was posted on the Chicago Bears website. David Montgomery also did live social media updates during the event to promote it further.

Minnesota Ag in the Classroom & Vikings successfully collaborate

For the third year in a row, Midwest Dairy was able to use one of our Fuel Up to Play 60 player visits to support the Minnesota Ag in the Classroom (MAITC) Farm and Book Week in February. Harrison Phillips, defensive tackle, had the opportunity to share the book "Clarabelle: Making Milk and So Much More" by Cris Peterson with students. To create excitement, Harrison [tweeted](#) the registration information to his 50,000 followers, contributing to 160 classrooms signing up. Harrison loves all dairy foods, which he often shared during the reading. He also recalled many childhood experiences he had spending time on his grandparents' dairy farm in Nebraska.

Snowstorms forced many schools to close on the day of the reading, but Midwest Dairy was happy to have 66 classrooms still participate. Harrison brought energy and excitement to the classroom, and the kids asked more questions than he could answer in the allotted time. MAITC is a great power partner in youth trust with shared values. Their established network of teachers across the state, combined with our NFL star power assets, is a strong combination.

Educating urban youth about dairy's sustainable practices

Midwest Dairy was approached by Omaha Public School's Bryan High School Urban Ag Academy to provide an educational opportunity for students to learn about dairy and the sustainable practices of dairy farmers. This diverse student audience were all urban with no background or experience in agriculture.

At the beginning of class, students brainstormed and filled out an [Undeniably Dairy bingo card](#) with various dairy-related terms. Throughout the 40-minute session, students crossed off any words they heard and received a prize when completing their entire card. Students watched a farm tour from Prairieland Dairy in Firth, Nebraska, and learned about technology on the farm, composting and manure use, animal care, antibiotic testing, and the milking process. Over 50 students were engaged in the two sessions.

Following each short video, students discussed details of the Net Zero commitment, sustainability practices, and the specifics of each dairy word that students heard. Following the session, students shared that they were surprised at the vast number of ways farmers work to be good stewards of the land and how manure serves as a natural fertilizer. They were eager to try recipes from the booklets they were provided.



High School Coaches participating in the Chalf Talk with the Chicago Bears.

Remember that eating for activity means...

- Balance
 - Eating all food groups
 - Getting the right amount of food
- Variety
 - Eating all colors
- Consistency
 - Eating 3 meals and 1-2 snacks

Girls Flag Football Videos - Minnesota Vikings Head Sports...

Midwest Dairy

A visual from one of the five videos created by the Viking's Dietitian to support wellness for female athletes.



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