



U.S. Dairy Sustainability



Legacy of Progress Vital to Sustainable Food Systems

As a global leader in sustainability, the U.S. dairy industry has a long-standing commitment to healthy people, a healthy planet and healthy communities. The progress is striking. In 1944, the United States was home to 25 million dairy cows. In comparison, the United States produced 60 percent more milk in 2007 than in 1944 but with only 9 million cows—a third of the herd size. Thanks to U.S. dairy farmers’ relentless use of careful management and continuous adoption of innovative practices such as those related to cow comfort, improved feed and genetics and modern barn design, milk is being produced in the United States in an especially efficient way, using significantly less water, land and other resources than ever before.

For generations, the U.S. dairy industry has demonstrated the unwavering pursuit of implementing best farming practices and uses technology and advanced management techniques to reduce the environmental footprint of milk

production and processing. U.S. dairy farmers have a long history of being excellent stewards of their land and animals, protecting and conserving natural resources and optimizing cow comfort. Milk and dairy product processors in the United States are

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- In 2017, producing 3.79 liters (1 gallon) of milk involved 30% less water, 21% less land and a 19% smaller carbon footprint than in 2007.
- According to a 2008 life cycle assessment for fluid milk, U.S. Dairy contributes only 2% of all U.S. GHG emissions. The U.S. dairy community is taking proactive steps to reduce that even further. For comparison, the transportation sector generates 28.9% of GHG in the United States.
- The U.S. leads the world by producing more with less:
 - ◇ The United States is a global leader in herd efficiency, producing four times more milk per-cow than the average global cow.
 - ◇ The average GHG footprint per 3.79 liters (1 gallon) of U.S. milk is nearly 50 percent lower than the world average.



U.S. Dairy Sustainability

Committed to Environmental Stewardship and Continuous Improvement

also fully invested in efforts to minimize water and energy use, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and turn waste into value.

This passion across the supply chain positions U.S. Dairy to help food and beverage manufacturers worldwide capitalize on the growing demand for more nutritious and delicious products made from socially, environmentally and economically responsible sources. A wide range of wholesome and natural U.S. dairy products and ingredients that help foster global health and wellness across all age groups starts with the nutritious milk that dairy cows produce. Successful production depends not only on top-notch cow care, but also on clean air and water, healthy soil and vibrant ecosystems.

Dairy's unique contributions to sustainable food systems help feed a growing global population that is expected to reach 9 billion by 2050 in the most environmentally responsible way possible. This includes a commitment to continuous improvement in areas that align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, specifically those focused on food security, human health and responsible stewardship of natural resources, including animals.

U.S. dairy farmers also strive to achieve these environmental goals in an economically viable way.

DAIRY COWS: THE ORIGINAL UPCYCLERS

A single U.S. dairy cow produces an average of 144 servings of milk per day (250 ml per serving) that contain key nutrients essential to human health such as calcium, vitamin D, potassium and protein.

To maximize nutrition, U.S. dairy cows eat a specially designed diet formulated to provide optimal nourishment while also providing benefits across the food chain. Cows' ability to process materials that humans can't digest, like byproducts from food processing such as citrus pulp and almond hulls, minimizes the waste associated with food production.

ANIMAL CARE

95% of U.S. dairy farms are family-owned and operated businesses. Whether small or large, U.S. dairy farms care about providing the best products possible to families everywhere. One of the main priorities for U.S. dairy farmers is the health and comfort of their cows—the biggest driver of their business.

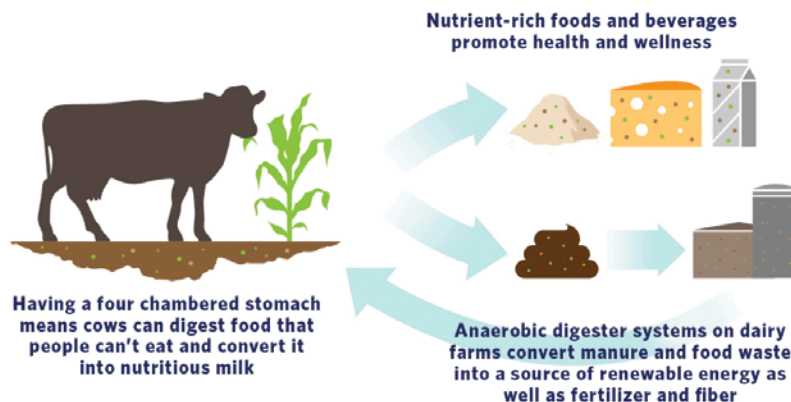
99% of U.S. milk comes from dairies participating in Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) Animal Care, the first livestock animal care program in the world to be recognized by the International Organization for Standardization.

U.S. DAIRY'S COMMITMENT

The U.S. dairy industry takes pride in its rich heritage of land stewardship and long-term commitment to sustainable dairy farming. The [Dairy Sustainability Alliance](#)[®] has brought together more than 125 organizations from across the value chain to proactively and pre-competitively address environmental and sustainability challenges. Companies adopting the [U.S. Dairy Stewardship Commitment](#) report on defined criteria for important areas like animal care,



How U.S. Dairy Delivers Sustainable Nutrition



environmental stewardship, food safety and traceability and community contributions.

By adopting new farming practices and technologies as they advance, U.S. dairy farmers and processors continue to produce safe and nutritious products and use fewer resources to do so. This production model has positioned U.S. dairy farmers as global leaders in herd efficiency. According to USDA data, annual milk production per cow in the United States was 10,785 kg in 2020, compared to per-cow production of 6,959 kg in the European Union, 6,408 kg in Australia and 4,466 kg in New Zealand.

A 2019 [report](#) from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Global Dairy Platform on climate change found that North America is leading the world when it comes to efforts to reduce dairy GHG. North America was the only region of the seven studied where both emissions intensity and absolute emissions fell for the timeframe of the report (2005-2015) while overall milk production rose.¹

GHG INTENSITY BY REGION

REGION	PERCENT CHANGE IN ABSOLUTE EMISSIONS (2005-2015)
North America	-0.5%
Russian Federation	3.0%
Western Europe	7.0%
Eastern Europe	11.0%
Central & South America	14.0%
Oceania	16.0%
South Asia	20.0%
East Asia	30.0%
West Asia & Northern Africa	32.0%
Sub-Saharan Africa	33.0%

Source: FAO and GDP¹

GOAL—GHG NEUTRALITY

The U.S. dairy industry takes an open, transparent and science-based approach to measuring and communicating its progress. In 2008, U.S. dairy farmers formed the Innovation Center for U.S.

Dairy (IC) to advance a collective social responsibility platform toward an economically viable and socially responsible U.S. dairy community from farm to table. As a result, life cycle assessments were completed to understand environmental impacts. Of all GHG in the United States, the dairy industry from feed production to post-consumer waste contributes only 2%.

U.S. Dairy set aggressive new environmental stewardship goals to advance its role in building a sustainable future. These ambitions include to achieve GHG neutrality, and improve water usage and quality by optimizing utilization of manure and nutrients by 2050. These goals will help U.S. Dairy build upon and quantify progress towards its vision to be an environmental solution.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP, SCIENCE-BASED MEASUREMENTS

In 2019, the U.S. dairy [GHG Accounting & Reporting](#) resource became the first agricultural guidance to earn [World Resources Institute \(WRI\)](#) endorsement. Extensive reviews were required for this prestigious designation.



REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE—U.S. DAIRY STYLE

The U.S. dairy community is refining and improving efficiency and technologies to reduce waste further, and turning it into value.

One byproduct of U.S. dairy farms with sustainability potential is cow manure, a natural fertilizer that also converts into a renewable energy source. Nutrient-rich cow manure fertilizes croplands to improve growth yields of crops for people and animals alike. One cow produces 64 liters (17 gallons) of manure per day. That's enough fertilizer to grow 25 kilograms (56 pounds) of corn or 38 kilograms (84 pounds) of tomatoes.

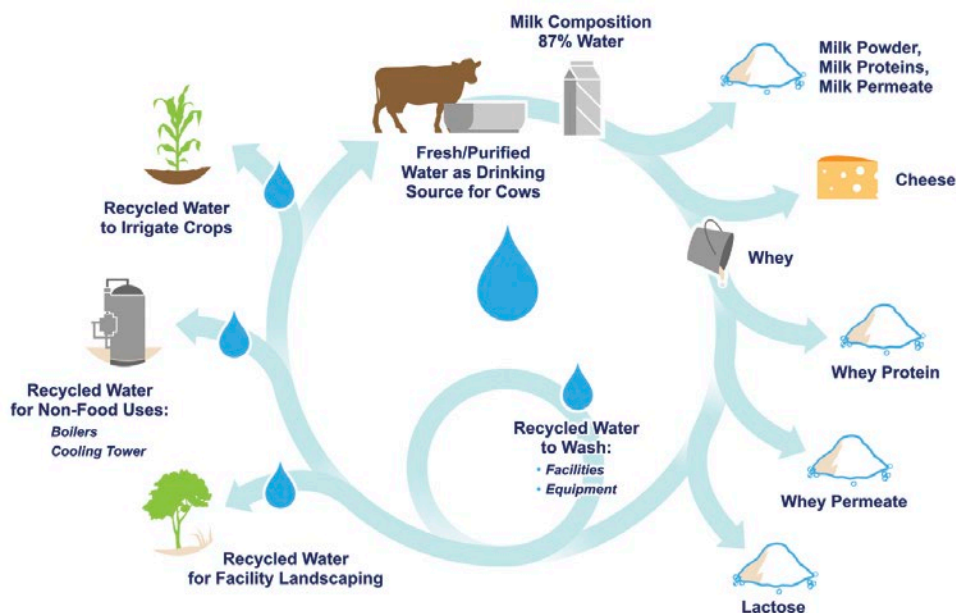
The U.S. dairy industry takes sustainability one step further to create additional value from manure. Anaerobic digester systems and evaporative technology reduce emissions while converting manure and commercial food waste into electricity, fuel for cars and trucks, fiber and, of course, fertilizer.

¹ FAO and GDP. 2018. Climate change and the global dairy cattle sector - The role of the dairy sector in a low-carbon future. Rome. 36 pp. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA- 3.0 IGO





Example of Water Reclamation in the U.S. Dairy Industry



WATER RECLAMATION

Water conservation is a key opportunity area. At dairy farms, water is re-used many ways—from running through piping to help cool the milk to flushing barns as part of cleaning and irrigating crops. And since about 87% of milk is water, with the help of new technologies, processors find ways to recover and reuse it when cheesemaking and milk powder drying is complete.

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

U.S. Dairy is working with the wider U.S. agriculture community to invest in practices improving soil health and avoiding/capturing carbon emissions. Dairy farms are increasingly adopting these practices such as conservation tillage, diverse crop rotations and cover crops. For example, a combination of no-till and strip-till

methods have helped dairy farmers in drought-ridden regions manage for water scarcity while allowing reductions of chemical use, fuel use and the amount of dust particles in the air. These practices large and small not only focus on the environment but add up to promote the health and well-being of consumers, communities, cows, employees, business and ultimately, the planet. ■

People have an interest in who grows their food, where it comes from and how it's made, looking to the entire food chain for these answers. The U.S. dairy industry is dedicated to responsible production practices and continuous improvement across the value chain, demonstrating its positive impact from farm to table.



GET IN TOUCH

USDEC GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS

2107 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22201
USA

CONTACT US

p: +1 (703) 528-3049
e: info@thinkusadairy.org

ONLINE

ThinkUSAdairy.org

To learn more and find a USDEC representative near you, go to ThinkUSAdairy.org/global-presence.

