



# **Dairy West *Farmer Newsletter***

## **August 2025**

*This newsletter's primary audience is current Idaho and Utah dairy farmers. Please share with family members and farm employees. Reach out to [Lacey Papageorge](#) to receive this directly to your inbox.*

## ***Farmer Updates***

### **July Dairy West Board Meeting – Key Takeaways**

The Dairy West Board met in July to discuss strategic priorities, program updates and progress toward unifying across Idaho, Utah, Oregon and Washington. Steve Seppi, newly appointed CEO, outlined his vision for Dairy West's future—one centered on driving greater collective impact for dairy farmers through scaled investment and operational efficiency. He emphasized the importance of aligning regional efforts to deliver stronger returns and broader influence in the marketplace. As part of this direction, Dairy West is grounding its strategic plan in the National Checkoff Shared Outcomes for 2026–2028:

- Drive Volume: Increase consumption of beverages, cultured and cheese products in key channels
- Drive Consumer Perception: Position dairy as a preferred health and wellness product
- Build Respect for the Dairy Industry: Earn visible and vocal support from key opinion leaders and consumers for U.S. dairy as part of sustainable food systems

Highlights from the meeting:

- Regional Integration: Plans remain on track to unify operations across all four states by 2026, with updated bylaws expanding the board to 20 seats
- Strategic Focus Areas: Continued investment in exports, retail, research, innovation, marketing and health professional engagement
- Dairy Protein Institute: Proposal introduced to accelerate R&D commercialization
- Farm Tour & Ag Tourism Grants: Starting in 2026, grants will be available for producers hosting consumer-facing farm tours

- BUILD Dairy: 118 graduates to date, \$5 million NSF grant secured and ongoing shift toward processor-led co-funding
- Retail & School Nutrition Impact:
  - C-store school meal pilot increased breakfast participation by up to 41%
  - Maverik promotion generated 31,000 redemptions across 854 stores
  - Dairy Fuels Adventure campaign delivered an 8:1 return on investment
  - Q2's lactose-free milk focus drove a 15% sales increase, more than double the national average

If you have any questions, please reach out to [CEO Steve Seppi](#) or your district board member representative.

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## Annual Meeting: Register Today!

You're invited to the 2025 Dairy West Annual Meeting, taking place November 5–6 at the Boise Centre. This year's theme—Intentional Impact—will shape a dynamic two-day agenda focused on collaboration, innovation and the future of dairy.

The event will feature inspiring speakers, in-depth discussions and opportunities to connect with peers from across Idaho and Utah.

Register by October 15 to receive the Grand Champion reimbursement of \$300. Registrations submitted between October 16 and October 31 will qualify for the Reserve Champion reimbursement of \$150.

[Learn more and register here!](#)



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## You're Invited to the Annual Ice Cream Festival!

Mark your calendars for Monday, September 8 from 3:00–7:00 p.m. for one of the sweetest traditions of the year, the Ice Cream Festival at the Utah State Fair.

It is the perfect chance to relax, connect with fellow farmers and enjoy a scoop (or two!) of delicious local ice cream. No need to volunteer, just come for the fun, the flavor and the community. September 8 is also the open dairy show at the fair, so it is a great day to celebrate all things dairy.

For any farmers planning to join us, [please complete this form](#) or call Lacey by August 22 to reserve your free day passes and parking passes.



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## Join Us for the Young Farmer Social - Jerome, Idaho

The Young Farmer Social will be held Wednesday, August 27 from 4:00–8:00 p.m. at Blue Lakes Country Club in Jerome, Idaho, with a dinner buffet served from 5:00–7:00 p.m. This casual, family-friendly, open-house-style event will include dinner, drinks and plenty of time to connect. Guests can enjoy both indoor and outdoor spaces, yard games and visit with Dairy West and IDA team members.

There will be no formal presentations, just good company and conversation. Stop by for dinner and a short visit or stay to enjoy the full evening.

Please RSVP to [Lacey](#) by August 23.

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## Soil & Water Regeneration Field Day - Kimberly, Idaho

Farmers are invited to attend the USDA Agricultural Research Station's Dairy Soil & Water Regeneration (DSWR) Field Day on Wednesday, September 3 in Kimberly, Idaho. This free event runs from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and will showcase the latest DSWR research on how dairy feed production impacts soil health, water quality, greenhouse gas emissions and crop yields.

Highlights include sessions on:

- Manure byproducts as fertilizers
- Manure priming
- Deficit irrigation
- Phosphorus drawdown
- Methane potential of manure
- Results from Idaho's statewide soil health survey

Attendees will hear from USDA-ARS scientists, the Idaho Dairymen's Association and the Soil Health Institute, with time for Q&A and networking over lunch.

RSVP and learn more [here](#).

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## Dairy Extension Conference - Logan, Utah

Dairy producers and industry members are invited to attend the USU Dairy Extension Conference on Tuesday, August 19, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Extension Building at the Cache County Fairgrounds in Logan, Utah. The event is free to attend, with lunch provided by IFA.

This year's agenda features a mix of practical and cutting-edge topics, including:

- Drone use on dairy farms
- Camera-based technology for detecting hoof lesions
- Insights from dairies affected by HPAI/H5N1 in four states
- New dairy cattle nutrition research from USU
- How forage choices affect other feed inputs

Attendees will hear from USU Extension faculty, industry experts and researchers who will share the latest findings from their work and field observations.

More information and the schedule can be found [here](#).

## Retail

### Coming This September: Taste Local Utah at Walmart

The first-ever Taste Local Utah campaign will launch this September in partnership with 32 Walmart stores across Utah. This in-store promotion will shine a spotlight on locally made products, with a special emphasis on Utah-made dairy.

Dairy West is providing all in-store Taste Local Utah signage, which will be displayed throughout participating Walmart locations, especially in the dairy department. The campaign is supported by the Utah Department of Agriculture, Utah's Own, Farm to Fork and Charlie's Produce, all working together to elevate the presence of local producers on retail shelves.

The goal is to build awareness and boost demand for local dairy products where it matters most—at the point of purchase. This milestone reflects strong collaboration and momentum in promoting Utah's dairy industry. Consumers are encouraged to visit their local Walmart in September and look for the Taste Local Utah signage.



## Insights Corner

### Dairy Retail Sales Summary: Quarter Two

Overall dairy sales remain steady, with yogurt leading growth and premium milk types gaining traction. Here's a snapshot of key Q2 takeaways:

- Yogurt posted significant volume growth across all types and fat levels.
- Milk segments with notable gains included lactose-free, high-protein, grass-fed, organic and whole milk.
- The Dairy West region continued to outperform overall U.S. growth trends.
- Declines were observed in A2 milk, flavored milk, pint-size milks and organic cheese.

**New Product Spotlight:** Darigold Nutrition+ Whole Milk meets several high-demand attributes—high protein, less sugar, whole milk—with added prebiotic fiber (for digestive health) and choline (for brain health). Distribution is still limited, and retail pricing is approximately \$5.50 per gallon.

Have questions or want more insights? Reach out to [Ann Lokuta](#), director of insights and innovation.

## ***Business Development & Health Promotions***

### **Dairy West Partners with Chobani to Support Summer Meals**

On August 1, Dairy West joined Chobani for a special “Dairy Day” at the Chobani Summer Meals Program in Twin Falls. The event is part of Chobani’s effort to combat childhood hunger during the summer months.

Twin Falls School District’s Child Nutrition Program provides free weekday meals to children ages 1–18. To help on weekends, Chobani sponsors a backpack program that sends home meal kits with milk, cheese and yogurt. These backpacks are an essential way for kids to continue receiving nutritious food over the weekends, offering a quick, approachable and stigma-free way for families to access what they need.

Dairy West's involvement in Dairy Day included:

- Local connection: Dairy farmer Deb Easterday Reeves brought two calves for children to meet and answered questions about dairy farming.
- Hands-on learning: Kids worked together on a giant floor puzzle showing milk’s journey from farm to fridge, led by Dairy West’s Deena Benson.
- Community engagement: Dairy West’s Eric Bastian and Celina Matuk shared nutrition information and interacted with children and parents.
- Educational resources: Families received educational resources on dairy’s role in healthy diets.

With over 550 meal kits distributed weekly and more than 50,000 meals expected the summer, the program is making a real impact. Dairy West is proud to stand alongside Chobani and the Twin Falls School District to nourish families and celebrate local dairy.




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**Know a Teacher? Tell Them to Adopt a Cow**

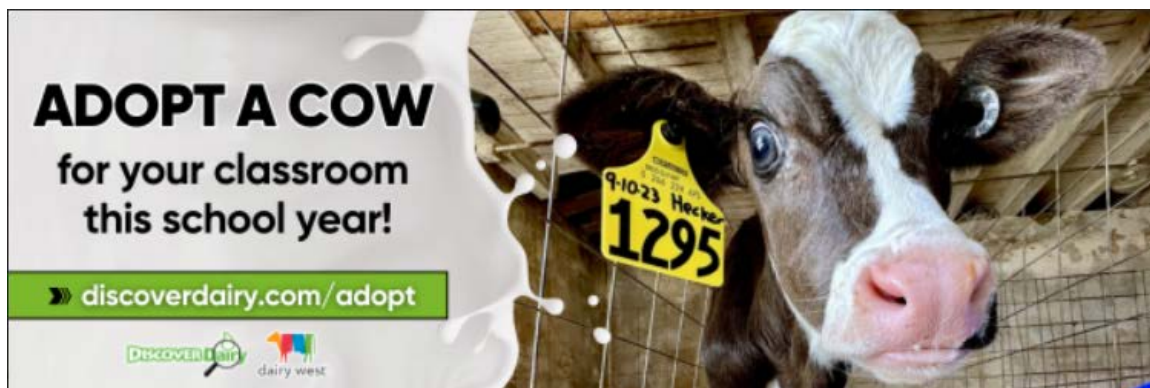


Forget the guinea pig—how about adopting a cute calf for the classroom?

The Adopt A Cow Program is a free, year-long experience that brings dairy farming to life for students. Teachers are paired with a real calf on a working dairy farm and receive regular updates, photos, live chats, classroom activities and even the chance for students to write to their calf. It's a fun, meaningful way to connect classrooms with agriculture and teach kids where their food comes from.

Enrollment is open now through September 15 for the 2025–2026 school year. Encourage a teacher you know to join the fun! [Discover more and sign up here.](#)

Thank you to Clark Family Dairy of Morgan, Utah for hosting the program this coming school year!



## Marketing

### Adventure Swap: Speedskating Meets Dairy Farming

Do you ever wish you could swap lives with someone? That's exactly what happened in our first-ever Unbottled Adventure Swap, where Utah dairy farmer Mattie Skeen traded routines with U.S. speedskater Greta Myers for a day of unexpected discovery.

Greta traded in her blades for boots to spend the day on Mattie's family dairy, getting an up-close look at life on the farm. Then Mattie laced up skates and hit the rink to learn how Greta trains, competes and fuels her performance as a world-class athlete. From conversations about values and overcoming misconceptions, both women found common ground in places they didn't expect.

This new video series is part of our ongoing effort to connect people through shared experiences. It's also a fun way for our athlete partners to understand where their fuel comes from, while giving dairy farmers a window into how their product powers greatness.

Watch the full video on the [Unbottled website](#) and stay tuned for the next Adventure Swap this fall, featuring Boise State eSports!



# Celebrating Local Dairy at the Twin Falls Ice Cream Funday

Dairy West was proud to participate in the Twin Falls Rotary's 14th Annual Ice Cream Funday on Saturday, July 19—a vibrant community celebration filled with creativity, connection and, of course, ice cream!



The Unbottled booth featured a unique ice cream flavor, Farm to Spoon, and the debut of the 'Thank a Farmer' Chalkboard, where eventgoers could leave notes of appreciation for local dairy farmers. The messages were fun, sincere and a great way to highlight the people behind the product.

Attendees also had the chance to enter a giveaway for a local dairy farm tour, helping people connect even more deeply with where their food comes from. One lucky winner will receive a behind-the-scenes visit to a dairy farm.

The event welcomed 846 attendees and helped Rotary raise \$19,984.14 for local causes, making this their most successful Ice Cream Funday yet!

## On Social



Whey protein is [driving profits for cheesemakers](#) and shaping the future of the dairy industry thanks to the rising demand from fitness and high-protein trends.



Are we late to the trend? Maybe. [Do summer meals matter?](#) Of course! Bonneville School District's team is showing up strong for summer meals.



Screaming for ice cream? [So is the rest of the country!](#) According to the latest consumer data, Americans love the classics but are curious for new flavors.

## Mark Your Calendars

**August 19** | Dairy Extension Conference | Logan, Utah

**August 22** | RSVP to Ice Cream Festival at the Utah State Fair | [Online](#)

**September 3** | Soil & Water Regeneration Field Day | Kimberly, Idaho

**September 8** | Ice Cream Festival at the Utah State Fair | Salt Lake City, Utah

**September 15** | Adopt a Cow Registration Due | [Online](#)

**October 15** | Dairy West Annual Meeting Registration Due | [Online](#)

**November 5-6** | Dairy West Annual Meeting | Boise, Idaho

## Dairy West Farmer Resources

### Farm Tour Materials

Visit the Dairy West website to [request educational material and swag](#) to give during

### Product Reimbursement

This program supports the community engagement efforts of Idaho and Utah dairy

a farm tour. To guarantee you will receive materials in time, please request at least two weeks prior to the event.

Farm Tour Materials

farm families by offering unlimited reimbursement for on-farm tours and a \$400 reimbursement per permit for dairy products purchased for community events. Dairy West reimburses dairy farmers in full for dairy products given during on-farm tours.

To be reimbursed, [please submit itemized receipts](#) through the Dairy West website within 30 days of purchase. Be sure to only include reimbursable dairy products on your receipts.

## Farmer Portal

Learn more about Dairy West's resources and offerings by visiting the [farmer portal](#) on the Dairy West website.

If you have any questions about Dairy West's product reimbursements, please contact [Lacey Papageorge](#).

Farmer Portal

Product Reimbursement

## National Dairy Industry Resources

WHERE DOES U.S. DAIRY  
WANT TO WIN  
WORLDWIDE?



### Your Dairy Checkoff Podcast

#### Episode 39: Where Does U.S. Dairy Want To Win Worldwide?

Learn about the top global markets targeted by the U.S. Dairy Export Council.

DMI's Scott Wallin explores how [dairy checkoff resources are driving global demand for U.S. dairy](#) with Becky Nyman, a fourth-generation California dairy farmer and chair of the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC), and Rick Ortman, USDEC's senior vice president of strategic insights.

Rick outlines USDEC's mission to make U.S. dairy the supplier of choice worldwide, backed by rigorous market research and strategic insights, while Becky shares the importance of uniting farmers, processors and manufacturers under one global voice.

With nearly 20% of all U.S. milk production already feeding international markets, they explain why exports are critical to sustaining dairy businesses and attracting the next generation to the farm.

From boosting dairy demand in Mexico to building strong ties in Southeast Asia through USDEC's Center for Dairy Excellence in Singapore, the conversation highlights how mission trips, health research and hands-on partnerships are strengthening trust in U.S. dairy across the globe.

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DROP  
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USDEC Website

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