



Dairy West *Farmer Newsletter*

December 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.

Annual Meeting Recap

Thank you to everyone who attended the 2025 Dairy West & Idaho Dairymen's Association Annual Meeting. It was an incredible time connecting, engaging in meaningful discussions and, of course, having fun! Your dedication and passion for the dairy industry and ongoing support in checkoff are what continue to drive Dairy West's success.

Continue to scroll to see some of the highlights from annual meeting!



Utah Hall of Fame: Hal & Cindy Olsen

Hal and Cindy Olsen have dedicated their lives to building a thriving family dairy rooted in hard work, integrity and love for agriculture. From their early days on the family farm to decades of partnership in both life and business, the Olsens have embodied the values that define Utah's dairy community. Their legacy reflects a deep commitment to family, faith and the enduring spirit of dairy farming.

[Watch Video](#)



Idaho Hall of Fame: Jack & Tena Petter

Jack and Tena Petter built their dairy from humble beginnings through hard work, determination and unwavering faith in the dairy way of life. From restoring their first small operation to establishing a successful farm in Idaho, the Petters have shown resilience and partnership at every step. Their legacy reflects a lifelong dedication to building opportunity, supporting others and strengthening Idaho's dairy community.

[Watch Video](#)



Telling Your Story: Siska Reece

Siska Reece is dedicated to helping others understand the truth of dairy farming through hands-on learning, community connection and genuine transparency. From hosting farm camps to leading countless tours, she brings people closer to the care and science behind modern dairying. Her work reflects a deep passion for education, authenticity and strengthening trust in the dairy community.

[Watch Video](#)

Friend of the Industry: Steve Ewing

Steve Ewing has spent his career supporting dairy producers with honesty, hard work and a steadfast commitment to people. From decades of service in the field to the relationships built over countless farm visits and early-morning conversations, he has been a trusted presence in Idaho's dairy community. His legacy reflects loyalty, humility and serving others.

[Watch Video](#)



Congratulations to the 2025 Idaho and Utah Milk Quality Award winners!

Recognized and nominated by their respective processors for their milk quality, these dairies were honored at the 2025 Dairy West and Idaho Dairymen's Association Annual Meeting.

The Idaho nominees were as follows:

- Bettencourt Dairy #4-2, nominated by Idaho Milk Products
- Branch Farms LLC, nominated by Darigold
- Jerseyland Dairy, nominated by Gossner Foods
- Knott Run Farms, nominated by Glanbia Nutritionals
- Petterson Dairy #2, nominated by Agropur
- Powell Brothers Dairy, Inc., nominated by Snake River Dairyman's Association
- SunRidge Dairy LLC, nominated by Lactalis USA*
- Top Notch Milk, nominated by High Desert Milk
- Veenstra Home Dairy #1, nominated by Magic Valley Quality Milk Producers
- Whitesides Dairy South, nominated by Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
- Webb Basin Dairy, nominated by Innovative Food Solutions

The Utah nominees were as follows:

- Bown Dairy, nominated by Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
- Circle B Dairy, nominated by Gossner Foods
- Denise C. Earl Dairy, nominated by Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
- Pappys Farms, nominated by Gossner Foods*
- Sun Ray Dairy Inc., nominated by Innovative Food Solutions

** designates the overall winner for their respective state*

Congratulations to the 2025 Farmer Ambassador Class!

The purpose of the ambassador program is to help prepare farmers for the responsibilities of

industry leadership through board involvement, participation in industry meetings and attending related events. This year's class included the following individuals:

- Logan Bown – Bown Dairy
- Michael Brubaker – Knott Run Farms
- Launa Fowler – TLK Dairy
- Holly Hull – Hull Dairy
- Braden Munk – Munk Family Farms
- Preston Roberts – Roberts Dairy

Dairy West is incredibly proud of what this group has accomplished and excited to see where their leadership journeys take them next!

Looking Ahead

The ambassador program will continue in 2026 with a fresh new name: the Dairy West Emerging Leaders Program. This update aligns with our national and regional partners and reflects our continued commitment to developing passionate dairy advocates. While the name is new, the experience remains the same—engaging, impactful and rooted in elevating farmer voices.

Stay tuned for more on the 2026 class as recruitment has begun.



View and download photos from the annual meeting photo library. If you have any additional annual meeting photo needs, reach out to [Preston Olsen](#), Dairy West's manager of marketing.

[View Photo Library](#)

Farmer Updates

Dairy West Offers AEDs at Half Cost to Dairy Farmers

A cardiac emergency can happen in a heartbeat. Having an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) nearby and people who know how to use it can turn that moment into a second chance at life.



To strengthen farm safety and protect the people who make dairy farming possible, Dairy West is offering AEDs at half price to dairymen in Idaho and Utah. Each licensed dairy is eligible for one AED per permit.

In Idaho and Utah, most dairies are family owned and operated, supported by hardworking teams who care deeply for their animals, land and communities. By equipping farms with life-saving devices, Dairy West aims to help every dairy be ready when seconds matter most.

The University of Idaho is partnering on this effort by providing educational support to expand CPR and emergency response training for dairy workers, ensuring farms are not only equipped but also prepared.

Complete [this form to secure an AED](#) for your farm. Payment for your portion (50% of total cost) will be collected securely by credit card when completing the registration.

For questions, contact [Bryce Chambers](#), Dairy West's director of industry relations, at (435) 994-4201.



Dairy Convention: Register Today!

Start the new year with inspiration and connection at the 2026 Dairy Convention, January 7–8 in Provo, Utah.

This year's keynote speaker, Captain Charlie Plumb, a U.S. naval aviator and former prisoner of war in Vietnam, will share his remarkable story of courage, resilience and leadership. His message is sure to leave you inspired and ready to tackle the year ahead.

Co-hosted by Dairy West and the Dairy Producers of Utah, the convention will feature valuable updates and discussions shaping the future of our dairy community, including:

- On-farm safety
- Reports and updates from DPU and Dairy West
- A look at Dairy West's future direction

For the full agenda, click [here](#).

Attendees will also enjoy plenty of time to connect with fellow farmers, exchange ideas and unwind at the always-popular ice cream social.

Register by December 12 to receive a \$150 gift card, and don't forget to book your room using the exclusive room block by the same date.

[Register here!](#)

Insights Corner



Sustainability Insights: What Do Consumers Care About?

The Hartman Group's Sustainability 2025 report shows that consumers still care about sustainability, but confusion around the term, tradeoffs and daily realities shape what they actually buy. Sustainability is not a top purchase driver, but it is gaining influence with younger shoppers.

Here's what matters most when sharing a farm story that resonates (and why the word "sustainability" may not always be needed):

- **"Overused buzzword."** Many consumers tune out the term because it feels vague or inflated. They want proof of progress and clear examples of animal care, food safety and healthy soil.
- **Needs come first.** Sustainability only factors in after taste, quality, price and convenience are met.
- **Sustainable = healthy.** More shoppers connect environmental care to personal wellbeing, so pairing dairy's health benefits with farm practices makes messages feel more relevant to everyday choices.

The Dairy West team will use these insights to shape 2026 communications that highlight dairy's progress and align with what shoppers value most: affordability, quality and health.

Marketing

Now Live: Holiday Campaign Spotlighting Local Dairy

Dairy West's new holiday campaign, The Toast, is now live. The concept celebrates the role of local dairy in bringing people together during the holiday season.

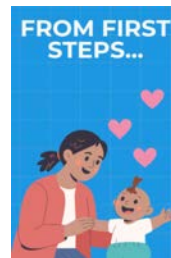
The video pairs heartfelt moments from a local dairy farm with scenes of families gathering around their tables, highlighting how local dairy helps make holiday traditions special. The campaign's goal is to help Idaho and Utah moms feel good about choosing local dairy—seeing it as a wholesome, meaningful part of their celebrations.

A special thank-you goes to TLK Dairy in Mountain Home, Idaho, for representing both Idaho and Utah farm families in this production. Featuring one farm across both markets helped reduce production costs while showcasing a dairy that reflects the shared values and practices of producers throughout our region.

The campaign is running throughout November and December on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and streaming platforms. There is a version for both [Idaho](#) and [Utah](#) markets. Click any of the below images to watch.



Regional Results: First 1,000 Days Campaign



In October, Dairy West partnered with Oregon and Washington on the first unified four-state campaign promoting the [importance of early childhood nutrition](#). Across the region, the campaign reached millions of moms, generated strong video completion rates and delivered above-average engagement on social platforms—clear signs that the message resonated.

Here are a few quick state-by-state highlights:

Idaho & Utah:

Delivered the strongest overall reach, with high video completion rates on YouTube and strong performance on streaming platforms. Messaging resonated particularly well with moms ages 25–44.

Oregon:

Generated the highest social media engagement, with above-average click-through rates on Facebook and Instagram and strong interest in the educational content.

Washington:

Saw the best cost efficiency across paid placements, reaching large audiences at lower cost while maintaining strong video performance.

These insights will help shape even more effective multi-state campaigns in 2026.

On Social



We shared a Thanksgiving recipe takeover featuring a compound-butter turkey and a [full menu of dairy-rich dishes](#). It's a delicious way to bring real comfort food to the holiday table.

\$10 Billion in New or Expanded Dairy Processing



The State of the Industry Report shows that [dairy is entering one of its most transformative chapters](#).

Across the country, the industry is experiencing new and expanded facilities



Welcome Sarah Orr, Dairy West's director of human resources! With a [strong commitment to our mission](#), [Sarah brings experience](#) in workforce strategy and organizational development.

Mark Your Calendars

November – December | Marketing 'The Toast' Campaign
January 7-8 | Dairy Convention | Provo, Utah

Dairy West Farmer Resources

Farm Tour Materials

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

Product Reimbursement

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

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

Farm Tour Materials

Farmer Portal

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

Farmer Portal

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.

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

Product Reimbursement

National Dairy Industry Resources



Your Dairy Checkoff Podcast Episode 43 – The Dairy Difference: Advocating for Better School Meals With Smart Swaps

DMI's Katie Bambacht, vice president of nutrition affairs at the NDC, speaks on how [checkoff is working with schools to improve school lunches](#) (with dairy being front and center).

Katie explains that nearly 30 million students participate in school meal programs daily, with dairy providing significant nutrients, while emphasizing the critical role of school meals in addressing food insecurity and improving academic performance.

She also covers the "Made with School Lunch" campaign, which aims to change perceptions of school meals, and the "Smart Swaps" initiative, which helps schools meet evolving USDA standards while maintaining dairy offerings.

The discussion also touches on the potential of whole milk in schools and future projects with the School Nutrition Association.



DMI Website

Podcast Episodes

NMPF Website



IDFA
International
Dairy Foods Association



U.S. DAIRY
EXPORT COUNCIL

IDFA Website

MilkPEP Website

USDEC Website

Dairy West | 743 North Touchmark Avenue, Meridian, ID 83642

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