



Dairy Tour Toolkit

A GUIDE TO SHARING YOUR PASSION

Consumers are increasingly interested in where their food comes from, how farm animals are cared for and sustainability practices. The firsthand experience of touring a dairy can have a resounding impact on their mindsets and future purchases.

This guide is designed to help you prepare for and make the most out of your tours — whether you’re giving them in-person or virtually.



Contents

<i>Getting Started</i> Everything you need to think about and get done in advance to ensure a successful event	4
<i>Conversations That Connect</i> Tips on proactively telling your story and handling difficult questions	6
<i>Building Buzz</i> Ways to promote your tour on social media, plus statistics on dairy production in Idaho and Utah	9
<i>Your Game Plan</i> Where to take your visitors, what to talk about & how to use props and handouts; pick-and-choose to fit your farm and your audience	10
<i>Make It Virtual</i> Showcase your dairy directly from a smartphone or tablet	16
<i>Safety & Biosecurity</i> Guidelines to keep your visitors and animals safe	18



Keys To Success

By inviting community members to visit your farm, you are building their trust in you and dairy overall. Be proactive in encouraging schools and local officials to contact you for a tour. Once you’ve gotten a request, find out from the tour organizer:

- » How many people are attending?
- » What are the ages of the attendees?
- » How much time have they allotted? (Note: recognizing you are taking time out of your busy workday, it’s fine for you to limit it to an hour.)
- » What does the group want to see and learn?
- » What level of ag literacy do they have? Are there any preconceptions about dairy farms or specific concerns?
- » What other organizations are the attendees affiliated with?
- » Do attendees plan to capture photos, video and social media content?

If you’re expecting media, government officials, community leaders, international delegations, health professionals and/or members of the dairy community, contact Dairy West! We can help tailor your plans for any of these influential visitors, and we have pre- and post-tour surveys to automate your info-collecting efforts. If possible, we’ll send someone out to lend a hand during the tour.

Set the tour date as far in advance as possible — 3-4 weeks ahead is ideal — and choose a backup date in case of bad weather.

Keep visitor safety and farm biosecurity top-of-mind. Closed-toe shoes are a must. Don’t serve or allow anyone to sample raw milk from a cow or your milk tank.

For school tours, let the teacher and chaperones know cooperation and respect for the people and animals on the farm is expected. There should be an adult for every 10 children. Confirm that the adults on their end will take the responsibility for any potential behavior problems and forewarn them the kids may get dirty!

Visitor safety and farm biosecurity are paramount! See pages 18-19 for details.

Planning: The Essential Checklist

- ☐ What areas of your farm say the most when it comes to your goals and key messages?
- ☐ What issues do your visitors have concerns about, e.g., water quality, odor or animal care?
- ☐ What areas need to be off-limits for safety reasons?
- ☐ Does your insurance policy cover visitors?
- ☐ If you are going to provide snacks, only serve after everyone has washed or sanitized their hands.
- ☐ Determine needs for restrooms, hand-washing stations and garbage cans.
- ☐ Make sure everyone will be able to hear and see you. Divide into smaller groups with additional tour guides, if necessary.
- ☐ Inform your employees, and anyone scheduled to visit the farm that day, about the tour in advance.
- ☐ Be prepared to answer any questions that might come up. See the Dairy Community Talking Points Flip Book and Farm Tour FAQs (www.dairywest.com/for-farmers) for guidance.

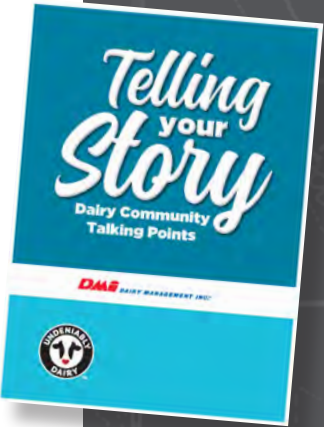
Planning: The Social Media Checklist

- ☐ Consider setting up a photo-taking station (with a calf, near a tractor with pasture in the background, etc.).
- ☐ Set up your farm in Facebook and other social media as a “Place” for check-ins; use your signs to remind guests to tag your farm properties (if applicable) and #unbottleyourgreatness.
- ☐ Decide whether you are going to feature the tour on your website or social media properties.
- ☐ If so, put some draft posts together in advance and ask your guests to sign a photo waiver, which can be downloaded at www.dairywest.com/for-farmers.

Count on Your Checkoff.

Be sure to contact Dairy West 2-3 weeks in advance for free educational materials, age-appropriate activities and promotional items, including Unbottled merchandise. And we’ll reimburse you for dairy products you purchase for tour groups.

www.dairywest.com/for-farmers



Telling Your Story

Give some advance thought to your introduction to make it memorable. Kicking off with a few questions gets everyone engaged from the start: “Where are you from?” “How many of you have toured a farm before?” “Who likes baby calves?”

When you introduce yourself, share your family’s story, the goals of your operation and what drives your passion for dairy. Point out the roles of family members. You can also talk about what you like to do off-the-farm, to find common ground with your visitors. For example:

“Hello, I’m _____. In 2050, we will have nine billion mouths to feed. As a dairy farmer here in _____, my goal is to feed your family and others while caring for a growing world. I do this by producing milk, which we can enjoy as a glass of milk, a slice of cheese, a cup of yogurt and lots of other dairy foods. By using new technologies, I’m able to grow more food on less land to protect natural resources and help keep your milk affordable.”

Is it important to you that farmers produce more food using fewer natural resources? My grandfather passed this farm onto me with the understanding that I would leave it in even better condition than I received it, and I think about that every day.

Off the farm, I’m a volunteer firefighter and a Girl Scout troop leader.”

Work these themes into your tour:

- » Animal care
- » Environmental stewardship
- » Milk safety and quality
- » Local, fresh and simple
- » Dairy’s powerful nutrient package

Determine which areas of your farm will be off-limits, such as machinery storage and the manure lagoon. Keep in mind, this may be the first time your visitors step foot on a dairy farm. Take a walk around the farm, examining it from that point of view. If something doesn’t look right, either remove it from sight or fix it. Make sure chemicals of any kind — cleaners, pesticides and antibiotics — are safely contained.

Pro Tips: Public Speaking

- » Know your audience: Ask yourself “what would I want to know if I were in their shoes?” And make the tour as age appropriate as possible.
- » Use consumer-tested key messages: Use the messages as a guide — not a script!, weaving in personal stories. And don’t worry about repeating yourself. It takes people an average of seven times hearing the same message before it sinks in!
- » Don’t get technical: Don’t use jargon or acronyms without explaining the meaning. You work in dairy every day, but not everyone knows “Holstein” and “Jersey” are breeds of cows. Explain everything in simple terms.
- » Have statistics on hand: Share how many gallons (not pounds!) of milk a cow produces each day, how many cows are on your farm, how many times a week vets/nutritionists are on your farm.
- » Use props to make your point: Bring out calf bottles, inspection sheets, calf blankets, etc.
- » Stay positive: If challenged about animal care or production practices, stay calm, polite and refrain from getting into a debate. Continually remind tour participants of how you care for your animals and the land. Give them specific examples.



Handling Difficult Questions

Theodore Roosevelt once said, “Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.” That’s why “Sharing Your Passion” is the ultimate goal of your tour.

- » Listen actively, and ask follow up questions to make sure you understand where the person is coming from before you answer.
- » If you can find common ground as a parent, nature-lover, Scout leader or a dog owner, that’s a good place to start.
 - Remember the skepticism about food production isn’t personal
 - Consider it a privilege to be asked
 - Avoid getting defensive
- » Share your story and the personal examples, passion, enthusiasm and tone that bring your story to life, demonstrating authenticity and sincerity.
- » Avoid repeating negative statements. For example, if you’re asked about cows being mistreated, don’t say “No, farmers don’t mistreat their cows.” Instead, say, “I’m glad you asked. Farmers are very focused on giving every animal the best care possible.”

If you are challenged on topics such as animal rights and veganism, don’t take the bait. Make non-defensive, positive statements:

- » “Yes, animals deserve kindness and good care. That’s why farmers make sure their animals have warm barns, balanced diets and regular check-ups from a veterinarian.”
- » “It’s true, some people choose not to eat animal products. Each person can make up his or her own mind.”
- » “We both have a passion for animals. I work every day to make sure my animals receive the best care.”

You probably won’t change the person’s mind who came in with strong opinions. And that is OK!

Refer to the Dairy Community Talking Points Flip Book and Farm Tour FAQs (www.dairywest.com/for-farmers) for consumer-tested responses to questions you may field.

unbottled.

As Dairy West’s consumer facing brand, Unbottled seeks to establish genuine connections with community members by providing inspirational and nutritional information.

Through Unbottled, Dairy West engages consumers through relatable experiences, authenticity and transparency. The brand is designed to be fun, motivational and inclusive, giving people permission to become the best version of themselves.

Let’s Be Friends!

If your farm is on social media, we encourage you to share Unbottled’s Facebook, Instagram and Twitter posts on a regular basis. And use your tour to build your online presence by sharing interesting tidbits and photos of your farm before, during and after the tour takes place. On “tour day,” prompt your visitors to become fans and followers of your social media properties, established dairy advocates and the Unbottled properties. Ask them to tag posts from their farm visit with your hashtag (if you have one) and #unbottleyourgreatness.

If you need help getting started on social media, contact Dairy West.



Join Us on the JOURNEY

Follow us on social to #unbottleyourgreatness every day.



Dairy West Facts & Figures

Here are statistics to underscore the importance of dairy to our region’s economy:

IDAHO

Ranks 3rd of 50 states in milk production

Produces more than 15 billion pounds of milk each year

Home to 430 dairy farms, 99% of them family owned

Dairy is the No. 1 ag sector in terms of economic value to the state

UTAH

Ranks 21st of 50 states in milk production

Produces more than 2 billion pounds of milk each year

Home to 155 dairy farms, 99% of them family owned

Dairy is the No. 3 ag sector in terms of economic value to the state

Updated: August 2020

YOUR GAME PLAN

GATHERING AREA

Messages

- » Our farm and dairy farms across the country deliver exceptional animal care, sustainable nutrition and a great-tasting, fresh product.
- » Dairy foods are wholesome, delicious and nutritious.
- » Milk is often “local” since most people live within 100 miles of a dairy farm.
- » Our practices exemplify the farm-to-table movement and have a positive impact on local communities.

Notes/activity

- » For children, tell them the rules before they get off the bus
- » Have everyone introduce themselves
- » Point out restrooms, hand-washing stations and garbage cans

Materials

- » Welcome sign at entrance, to let anyone coming onto the dairy know there is a tour today
- » Protective booties

HOUSING

Messages

- » We care for our cows by providing a nutritious diet, good medical care and healthy living conditions.
“Dairy farms are like all-inclusive resorts — all-you-can-eat, all-you-can-drink, beds made and rooms cleaned every day.”
- » Most of the cows are lying down and chewing their cud. This is a sign they are comfortable. Explain what “cud” is.
- » In the barn, the cows have 24/7 access to clean water and food. Once a day, we clean the stalls and fluff the sand. *“How often do you clean your bedroom?”*

Notes/activity

- » Mention which areas of the farm are off-limits for safety reasons
- » Remind group of your point-of-view on touching the animals
- » Explain how you keep the cows cool in the summer and warm in the winter

Materials

- » Barn signage

FEEDING AREA

Messages

- » Like food that’s locally sourced? Dairy cows do too. Talk about whether crops for feed are grown right on the farm and/or by nearby crop farmers.
- » Our farm has a nutritionist that helps plan a balanced diet for our cows.
“I’d love to have my diet formulated perfectly for me each day!”
“TMR is a ‘cow salad’ with all the nutrients they need.”
“The feed wagon is like your mom’s Kitchen Aid mixer.”
- » Cows can be fed agricultural by-products, such as citrus pulp and almond hulls, which they can digest and turn into dairy products.

Notes/activity

- » Explain that this is the kitchen where all the feeds are mixed together
- » Have them touch and smell the feed mixture

Materials

- » Feeding area sign
- » Feed samples

MATERNITY WARD

Messages

- » This is where cows give birth to calves.
- » We provide comfortable, safe and clean conditions for the cow and calf during the birthing process and afterward.
- » Before giving birth, the pregnant cow is housed in a birthing pen where she is given individual care and attention.

Notes/activity

- » If group may see a cow calving (or breeding), let your contact know before the tour

Materials

- » Maternity ward sign



CALVES

Messages

- » To ensure good nutrition, all calves are fed individually — from bottles or buckets.
- » Calves receive nutritious diets and medical care when needed.
- » The hutch keeps the calves warm in the winter and protects them from harsh elements.
- » IF ASKED: Calves are separated from their mothers to ensure the best individual care and monitoring, for their health and safety.

Notes/activity

- » Based on your previously established point-of-view, let visitors know if they can touch and interact with a calf while you supervise

Materials

- » Bottle-feeding demo



MILK STORAGE ROOM

Messages

- » Milk comes out of the cow at around 101°F and is quickly cooled to 38°F to ensure quality and freshness.
- » The milk is piped to these tanks and is kept cool.
- » A milk truck comes __ times a week to take the milk to the processing facility where it is made into _____.
- » After the milk leaves the farm, it is tested at the plant for the most commonly used antibiotics. Any milk that tests positive cannot be sold to the public.

Notes/activity

- » Touch pipes before cooling and touch tank after cooling to feel the difference
- » No sampling of raw milk!

Materials

- » Milk storage sign
- » Empty cartons of milk, flavored milks, yogurt, cheese



MILKING PARLOR

Messages

- » Dairy cows must be healthy and well cared for in order to produce wholesome, quality milk. The welfare of our animals is our top priority.
- » Our cows are milked __ times every day — including Christmas and other holidays.
- » From start to finish, it takes about __ minutes to milk a cow.
- » All milk handling equipment must be sanitary and there are procedures in place to keep it clean.
- » You can be confident that the milk and other dairy foods you buy are safe.
- » Strict safety regulations are required at every step of production.
- » Milk safety is very important to every farmer.

Notes/activity

- » Explain the process:
 - Cows walk into our parlor
 - We hook them up to the machine (demo the process — place thumbs into pulsating teat cup)
- » Watch milk move through the pipeline
- » Show milk output display — e.g., our cows produce 1 million pounds of milk, equal to 116,000 gallons

Materials

- » Milk storage sign
- » Empty cartons of milk, flavored milks, yogurt, cheese



PASTURE

Messages

- » Dairy farming involves a nutrient cycle that depends on crops, water, soil and, of course, the cow.
- » Farmers are the original recyclers. We are constantly finding ways to reuse water and manure.
- » To help our crops grow, we put cow manure on our fields. Similar to fertilizer you might put on your garden or flowers at home, the manure helps our land grow the crops we need to feed our animals.

Notes/activity

- » Touch soil
- » Smell grass

Materials

- » Hull samples
- » Bag of lawn manure fertilizer

GATHERING AREA

Messages

- » Talk about how you work with your veterinarian to keep the cows healthy and comfortable.
- » Explain the Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM: www.nationaldairyfarm.com) program.
- » Talk about government regulations and safety inspections. Your visitors may not realize what farmers do to provide healthy and wholesome milk to the consumer.
- » Describe how the COVID-19 pandemic affected your operations and the dairy industry at-large.
- » Talk about recycling water and nutrients, energy production and steps to protect air quality.
- » Talk about dairy’s contributions to Idaho or Utah’s economy.
- » Discuss how the supply of and demand for milk and milk products affects your business.
- » Explain that farmers don’t set the price for their milk and that many economic factors determine what you receive. How does the price you are getting now compare to that of five or 10 years ago?

Notes/activity

- » Revisit specific areas of interest in more depth such as:
 - Veterinary Care
 - Animal Care Standards (FARM)
 - Milk Quality & Safety
 - Sustainability
 - Farm Economic Contributions (for adults)
 - Dairy Economics
- » Be sure to leave time for Q&A and thank-yous!

Materials

- » Handouts including farm fact sheet or brochure and a list of social media properties to follow
- » Promotional items from Dairy West

SNACKS

Messages

- » Milk’s powerful nutrient package of calcium, plus eight other essential nutrients, helps nourish your body, not just your bones.
- » The protein naturally found in milk helps to build strong muscles for your active lifestyle.
- » Milk is high in calcium and vitamin D. It’s a good source of protein, and one glass has as much potassium as a small banana.
- » Science indicates eating nutritious dairy foods — such as milk, cheese and yogurt — improves bone health, especially in children and adolescents. They also are associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes and lower blood pressure in adults.

Notes/activity

- » Wash hands
- » For school groups, do an activity! Contact Dairy West for age-appropriate ideas and download handouts at: www.dairywest.com/health-and-wellness/

Materials

- » Handwashing station and/or hand sanitizer
- » Yogurt, flavored milk & string cheese
- » Tables and chairs

EVALUATION

Messages

- » Review the day with your team — thank everyone who went above-and-beyond!
- » Reflect on areas that went well and what can be improved for the next tour. Write down ideas and make adjustments next time.

Notes/activity

- » If your visitors posted positive comments and photos on their social media channels, share them via your farm or personal channels
- » Ask attendees to complete post-tour survey, available from Dairy West

Materials

- » Send thank you note to the group’s contact person and encourage honest feedback



Taking the Farm to the Classroom

As we work to teach more children about dairy farming and give them a glimpse into the world of agriculture, we realize it is impossible for every child to visit a dairy farm in person. With ZOOM, you can showcase your dairy and engage students in discussion — all within 30-45 minutes, directly from a smartphone or tablet.

To complement the virtual farm tour, Dairy West provides teachers with an agriculture and nutrition curriculum tailored for their classroom's age group. This way we can connect students to where their food comes from and show how dairy and agriculture relate to various school subjects. One teacher described the experience as “taking students on a field trip without leaving the classroom.”

Time Commitment

We respect your time, and class time is often limited as well. Plan to spend about 30 minutes giving your “tour,” followed by Q&A.

What To Cover

Pick 1-2 areas to focus on. It's up to you. Here are ideas used by other farmers:

- » Family history, why you farm, farm location, generations, size
- » Why you like farming, favorite things to do on the farm, how your kids contribute
- » Calves (kids love anything calf) — where they live, importance to dairy, care (NO live births)
- » Breeds of cattle, why you raise one breed versus another
- » Milking barn, milking procedure, milk tank (sometimes reception cuts out in the barn)
- » Cow Fun Facts — funny things, curiosity, creatures of habit, favorite cow
- » Feed — what you feed them, how you feed, importance of good nutrition, types of feed
- » Technology — cow “Fitbits,” robotics, cow monitoring
- » Cow care and comfort — beds, pedicures, vet care

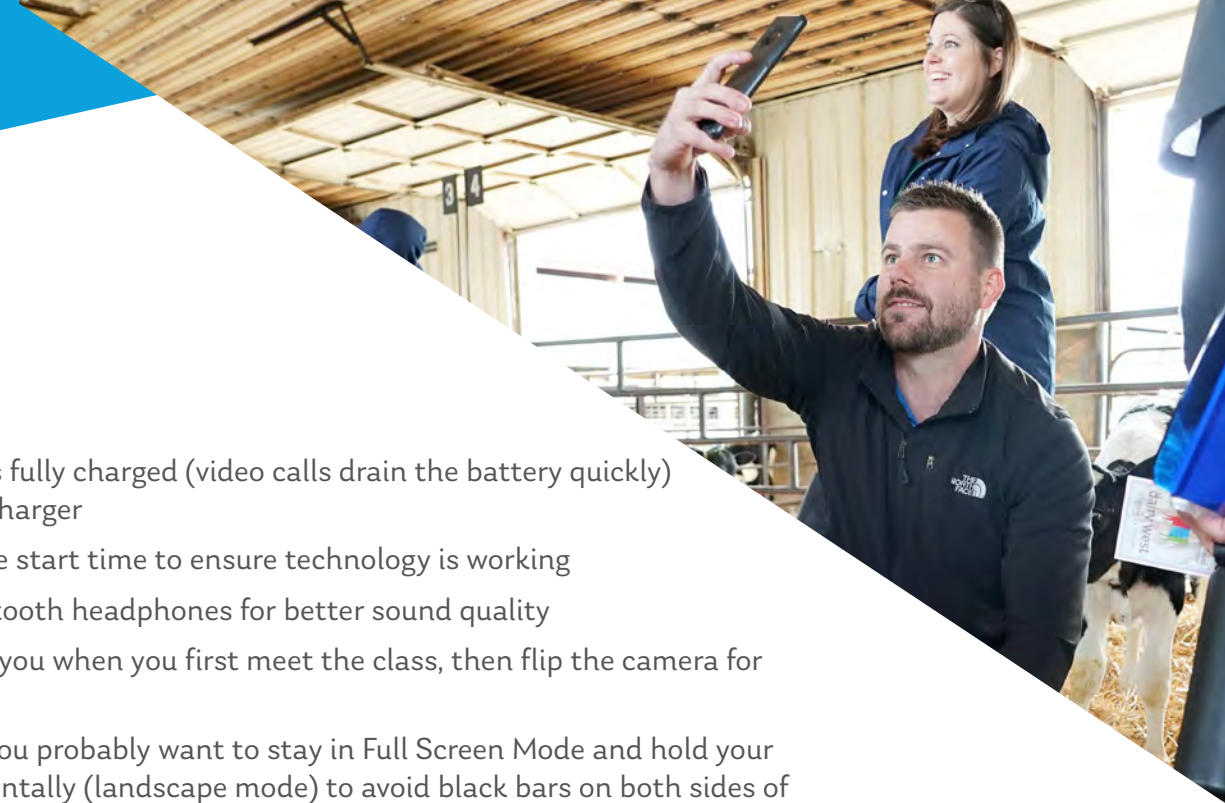
Pro Tips

- » Be sure your battery is fully charged (video calls drain the battery quickly) and bring a portable charger
- » Connect shortly before start time to ensure technology is working
- » Wear earbuds or Bluetooth headphones for better sound quality
- » Have the camera face you when you first meet the class, then flip the camera for the tour
- » Check your settings; you probably want to stay in Full Screen Mode and hold your phone or tablet horizontally (landscape mode) to avoid black bars on both sides of your video and give students the best view
- » Use your finger in front of the camera to point out details you want kids to focus on
- » If it's windy or stormy, consider rescheduling. If that's not possible, stay indoors or in a protected area to help block the wind and avoid excess movement as it takes longer for the signal to stabilize
- » Keep answers and concepts simple

We're happy to help you set up and test ZOOM, and determine the best locations to ZOOM on your farm, prior to your first tour. We can also provide you a portable phone charger and Bluetooth headphones. To volunteer, or if you need help with set up or planning, contact:

- » Rashel Clark: (801) 668-8642, rclark@dairywest.com
- » Lacey Papageorge: (208) 869-0777, lpapageorge@dairywest.com

**Above all...have fun!
The kids absolutely
love you!**



Keeping Visitors & Animals Safe

Your visitors will be even more attuned to food safety and farm biosecurity in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Interacting with farm animals will probably be everyone's favorite part of the tour but it does pose some risks to both visitors and animals. Follow these biosecurity guidelines to help ensure your tour is safe for your visitors and your farm.

Disease Transmission

Contact with farm animals has been demonstrated to be a risk factor for the transmissions of many organisms that can cause disease in humans. Various pathogens can be shed in manure or raw milk even from some healthy animals and then transmitted to humans. Most people become infected with E.coli O157:H7 by ingesting food or water contaminated by animal feces. People can also become infected by touching farm animals or their surroundings that have come in contact with animal feces, then putting their unwashed hand in or around their mouth.

General Guidelines

- » Provide prior instruction to the tour organizer about your on-farm biosecurity measures.
- » Visitors can introduce biological hazards to your farm and vice-versa. Instruct all visitors to wear clean, closed-toe shoes. Provide protective shoe booties for visitors to wear.
- » Control where vehicles and people go. Restrict access to animal protection areas. Visitors should park on a hard surface that is not contaminated by dairy vehicles and enter the dairy through only one entrance.
- » Don't allow access to potential safety hazards including machinery and equipment.
- » Put pets away, no matter how friendly they are.
- » Provide a hand washing station or hand sanitizer at the end of the tour and before any food or beverages are offered.
- » Do not serve raw milk under any circumstances. Raw, or unpasteurized, milk may contain pathogens such as Listeria, Salmonella, E. coli and Campylobacter. See FDA's milk safety information at: www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/dangers-raw-milk-unpasteurized-milk-can-pose-serious-health-risk.

Liability waivers are available from Dairy West.

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)

FMD affects only cloven-hoofed animals and has no impact on human health. Even though this disease has not been in the U.S. for several decades, it still plagues other countries. Today germs and viruses can become ticketless travelers on commercial air flight and freight shipments. Therefore, precautions are required in all areas to keep this devastating animal disease away:

- » Do not allow international visitors on the farm unless they've been through decontamination including a footbath & clean clothing. Clean footwear with normal household disinfectant, washing liquid or vinegar.
- » Allow at least 14 days to pass before permitting individuals to come on your farm if they have had any contact with livestock outside the U.S.

COVID-19

Cattle are not known to contract COVID-19 or to spread it. While that means it is unlikely the virus would be present in raw milk, FDA has confirmed pasteurization inactivates the COVID-19 virus.



Contacts

Lacey Papageorge

Producer & Community
Relations Manager
(208) 869-0777 Mobile
lpapageorge@dairywest.com

Rashel Clark

Health & Wellness Manager
(801) 668-8642 Mobile
rclark@dairywest.com

Digital Resources

Your dairy checkoff:
www.dairywest.com

Farm to School program and educational
resources:
www.dairywest.com/farmtoschool/

Digital farm tour resources and to request
reimbursement for product used during
tours, visit:
www.dairywest.com/for-farmers

Request a farm tour for 10 or more people:
www.dairywest.com/farms/
(scroll to bottom)

Dairy West destination for consumers:
www.unbottled.com

National destination for consumers:
www.usdairy.com



dairy west®