

Dairy West **June 2026** Farmer Newsletter

Family recipes have a way of bringing people together, and dairy is often at the center of those special moments. In this issue, dairy farm families from across the region are sharing some of their favorite recipes and the stories behind them. We invite you to try a few of these family favorites and celebrate the traditions, memories and dairy products that help make them special.

Banana Bread Bars

Recipe by Sharon DeRuyter

Five D Farms | Pasco, Washington

Around the DeRuyter household, no banana goes to waste. When bananas become overripe, Sharon pops them into the freezer so they're ready whenever it's time to make one of her family's favorite treats: Banana Bread Bars.

Made with ripe bananas, sour cream and buttermilk, the bars are rich, moist and topped with a creamy cream cheese frosting. The recipe is also perfect for feeding a crowd, which comes in handy with Sharon's growing family of children and grandchildren.

What makes this recipe especially meaningful is that it came from Sharon's mother. Every time she bakes a batch, she's reminded of the recipes, traditions and love that are passed from one generation to the next.



[Click for Recipe](#)



Heather Webb

Heglar Creek Dairy
Declo, Idaho

Dark Chocolate Cake

[Click for Recipe](#)



David Roberts

Roberts Dairy
Beaver, Utah

Sour Cream Enchiladas

[Click for Recipe](#)



Deanna Poland

Poland Organic Dairy
Madras, Oregon

Three-Cheese Lasagna

[Click for Recipe](#)

A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

June Dairy Month is an opportunity to celebrate dairy and, most importantly, the farm families who make it all possible. Dairy is rooted in community and a commitment to producing nutritious foods that nourish people every day. This month, we recognize the dedication and leadership of dairy farmers across Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

This June also marks an important milestone for Dairy West as we approach the halfway point of our first year as a four-state region. We are seeing new opportunities to collaborate, align our efforts and strengthen the impact of your dairy checkoff investment. As we look ahead to the second half of the year, our focus is on building on what is working, driving demand and innovation, and directing our resources toward areas that create long-term opportunity for dairy.

Those priorities were reinforced during the May Dairy West Board Meeting in Portland. Throughout the discussions, three priorities consistently emerged: transparency, innovation and value. Those priorities reflect our commitment to maintaining strong two-way communication with farmers, pursuing opportunities that build demand and ensuring our investments remain focused on delivering meaningful impact. Several examples of that work are highlighted throughout this newsletter.

On a personal note, my family recently welcomed a baby girl, June, on April 21. As I think about the future for her and her generation, I am reminded of the values that have long defined dairy farming: hard work, stewardship, family and community. Those same values are reflected throughout this newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support and for the important role you play in shaping the future of dairy.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Seppi'.

Steve Seppi, CEO

FARMER UPDATES

Congratulations to Dr. Eric Bastian on His Upcoming Retirement

After a decade of service to Dairy West and a distinguished career dedicated to dairy science, innovation and workforce development, Dr. Eric Bastian will retire on July 1, 2026.

Eric joined Dairy West in 2016 as Vice President of Innovation Partnerships and became Director of the Western Dairy Center. During his tenure, he helped strengthen Dairy West's research and innovation efforts while building meaningful partnerships between dairy farmers, processors, universities and researchers.



Among his many contributions, Eric was instrumental in developing the BUILD Dairy program, a groundbreaking research and workforce development initiative designed to train the next generation of dairy scientists. Today, the program includes partnerships with more than a dozen universities and has supported more than 130 graduates, many of whom continue to work in the dairy industry.

Eric's impact extends far beyond Dairy West's region. Throughout his career, he has championed dairy research, fostered innovation and helped develop talent that will

strengthen the industry for years to come. His leadership, vision and commitment to connecting science with industry needs have left a lasting legacy.



Whatcom This Why Tours Held This Weekend

Whatcom This Why will return Saturday, June 20, giving the public a chance to experience modern dairy farming up close in Whatcom County. The free, self-guided event includes seven tour stops at participating dairy farms and creameries.

Visitors can tour milking parlors and creameries, see cows and calves, sample dairy products and learn more about the people, care and practices behind local dairy production. The event also highlights modern dairy farming practices, including water recycling and protection, soil management, wildlife habitat preservation, manure management and food science.

This event helps build trust by creating meaningful conversations between consumers and farm families while showcasing the care that goes into producing dairy products.

Learn more and view the interactive tour map at wadairy.org/whatcomthiswhy.



Support Resources Available for Farmers and Farm Families

Farming comes with unique challenges, and several organizations are available to provide support, resources and assistance for farmers and their families.

AgriStress Helpline

Call or text: 833-897-2474

The AgriStress Helpline is a free, confidential resource created specifically for agricultural communities.



- Available 24/7 by call or text
- Calls are answered within 30 seconds
- Staff understand the unique stresses of agriculture and rural life
- Crisis intervention and local resource referrals available
- Follow-up support offered within 24 hours

Farm Aid Farmer Resource Network

Call: 1-800-FARM-AID (1-800-327-6243)

For 40 years, Farm Aid has connected farmers with resources and support tailored to their individual needs.



- One-on-one assistance and referrals
- Farm business and financial resources
- Funding opportunity database
- Disaster recovery resources
- Legal, stress management and farm transition guides

Western Regional Agricultural Stress Assistance Program

Website: farmstress.us

WRASAP is a regional network focused on strengthening resilience and well-being across agricultural communities.



- Connects farmers with stress management resources
- Provides education and outreach programs
- Offers tools and support for farmers, families and agricultural workers
- Works with partners across the West to improve access to assistance

Whether you're facing stress, navigating a challenge or simply looking for additional resources, support is available. Visit the websites above or reach out directly to learn more.

Red Robin Partnership Extended Through Summer

Dairy West partnered with Red Robin on a limited-time offer featuring the [Towering Double Cheeseburger Sliders](#), built with King's Hawaiian Rolls and layered with American cheese.

Originally planned as a spring promotion, the offer has been extended through the summer due to strong consumer demand and sales performance.

The promotion is available at more than 470 Red Robin locations nationwide and helps showcase cheese as a key ingredient in craveable, shareable menu items.



Dairy: A Staple of Summer Adventures

Dairy West's *Dairy Fuels Adventure* campaign is currently live, reminding consumers that real dairy belongs in everyday adventures—from road trips to family outings.

The campaign highlights milk, chocolate milk, yogurt, cheese and other convenient dairy snacks as nutritious options for active lifestyles.



The campaign is a collaborative effort between Dairy West and fellow dairy checkoff partners, including Dairy MAX, Midwest Dairy, Dairy Management West and American Dairy Association Northeast, extending dairy's reach across multiple regions of the country.

Campaign highlights include:

- Digital marketing and retail media promotions
- [Online shopping](#) and recipe inspiration through Instacart and Chicory
- In-store signage at approximately 200 Albertsons Mountain Division stores across Idaho, Montana, Colorado and Wyoming
- A coordinated consumer message focused on dairy's nutrition, convenience and versatility



NUTRITION PARTNERSHIPS



Fueling the Front Lines with Dairy

Dairy West is excited to introduce a new initiative: [a first responder nutrition program](#). The program connects dairy with an important audience—first responders and firefighters—by providing practical nutrition tools that support strength, recovery and performance on the job.

Developed in partnership with sports dietitian Erin Green, MS, RDN, CSSD, LD, the program includes on-demand training sessions, downloadable resources and high-protein recipes designed for the demands of frontline work. Topics range from hydration and energy to fueling before, during and after a shift.

Following a successful pilot with the Kimberly Fire Department, Dairy West's nutrition partnerships team expanded the program through a partnership with [Two In, Two Out](#), helping bring these resources directly to first responders across the Dairy West region.

This work is a strong example of how dairy checkoff can build trust and relevance in key spaces, positioning dairy as a trusted source of nutrition for performance, recovery and overall wellness.

Underscoring Dairy's Role in Heart Health and Weight Management

Heart health, weight management and the growing use of GLP-1 medications continue to be major topics in healthcare. To help ensure dairy remains part of those conversations, Dairy West partnered with health and wellness agency PULSE to develop a new provider education toolkit focused on evidence-based nutrition guidance.



The materials highlight dairy's role in supporting health goals and reinforce that dairy foods of all fat levels can fit within a balanced diet.

Key highlights include:

- Four new provider education resources, including a counseling tool, clinic poster and two patient handouts focused on heart health and healthy weight management
- Toolkits distributed to 2,000 healthcare providers across Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington
- Potential reach of approximately 200,000 patients and families throughout the region
- Resources include guidance for healthcare providers working with patients using GLP-1 medications

Toolkits are being distributed across the four-state region this month. Dairy West will continue evaluating provider feedback and program impact in the months ahead.

Watch Me Grow Partnership Reaches Washington Families



Through a long-standing partnership with the Washington State Department of Health, Dairy West continues to bring childhood nutrition education to families across Washington through the [Watch Me Grow](#) program. Reaching virtually every family and caregiver with children from birth through age 10 in the state, Watch Me Grow provides mailed resources that promote child well-visits, physical activity, school readiness, family support services and dairy-inclusive nutrition education.

Key highlights of the 2026 partnership include:

- Four updated Dairy West nutrition resources featuring messaging on the benefits of milk, yogurt and cheese for childhood growth and development
- Anticipated reach of more than 150,000 Washington families from July–December 2026, including translated materials for more than 5,000 Spanish-speaking households
- Digital promotion of Dairy West nutrition resources beginning in 2027



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



World Cup Campaign Connects Dairy with Global Sporting Event

With the FIFA World Cup returning to North America for the first time in more than 30 years—and Seattle serving as a host city—Dairy West has launched a new consumer campaign highlighting dairy as real fuel for performance and recovery.

The campaign features white and chocolate milk, yogurt and cheese as real fuel for performance and recovery, positioning dairy as a natural source of protein, B vitamins, probiotics and electrolytes.

Campaign highlights include:

- Billboards and transit advertising throughout the Seattle market
- Digital and social media advertising across the Dairy West region
- Shoppable Instacart experiences that connect consumers directly to dairy products
- A [campaign landing page](#) featuring dairy nutrition information, recipes and shopping opportunities

View [this document](#) to see all the campaign assets and placements.

By connecting dairy with a major cultural moment, Dairy West is helping keep dairy relevant, visible and top-of-mind with consumers while driving awareness and purchase intent across the region.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- June: National Dairy Month
- June 20: [Whatcom This Whey Dairy Tours](#) | Whatcom County, WA
- July: National Ice Cream Month
- July 14: Washington Emerging Leaders Program | Richland, WA
- July 14–15: Policy and Promotion Board Meetings | Richland, WA

DAIRY WEST RESOURCES

Need support? We're here to help.

Dairy West's farmer relations team is available to answer questions, connect you with resources and help you make the most of your dairy checkoff investment.

Farmer Relations Team

- **Bryce Chambers**, Director of Industry Relations
bchambers@dairywest.com | 435-992-4201
- **Celina Matuk Sarinana**, Manager – Farmer Relations & Training (Idaho)
cmatuk@dairywest.com | 520-450-0366
- **Allison Pratt**, Manager – Farmer Relations (Oregon)
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- **Lacey Papageorge**, Manager – Farmer Relations (Utah)
lpapageorge@dairywest.com | 208-869-0777
- **Kaysha Keel**, Manager – Farmer Relations (Washington)
kkeel@dairywest.com | 425-567-4313

Farmer Resources

Visit the Dairy West Farmer Portal to access resources and programs available to dairy farmers across the region, including:

- Product reimbursement
- Farm tour materials, swag and educational resources
- Grant writing support
- On-farm training opportunities
- Signage and promotional materials
- Community outreach resources
- Additional tools and information for dairy farmers

[Visit the Farmer Portal](#)

THANKS FOR READING!

This newsletter's primary audience is current Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington dairy farmers. Please share with family members and farm employees. Reach out to your local farmer relations staff to receive this directly to your inbox.

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