



Dairy West Farmer Newsletter ***September 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

Progress Toward Regional Integration

Dairy West, alongside the Checkoff organizations in Washington and Oregon, is making steady progress toward unification of programming and operations as an expanded region by January 1, 2026. This work goes beyond collaboration—it is laying the foundation for a successful partnership that will align strategy, resources and governance across all four states.

On August 11, the teams held their first joint planning meeting, bringing together staff from across the region to align on priorities and set the stage for unified planning. This important step ensures the combined organization will launch with clarity and momentum.

Key updates:

- **Unified Direction:** Our strategic planning is aligned with DMI's Unified Plan and driven by our shared purpose to inspire trust, build demand and foster innovation for a thriving dairy industry now and in the future.
- **Data & Insights:** Decisions are being grounded in research and consumer insights to maximize impact.
- **Target Audiences:** Collective efforts will prioritize moms (ages 25–44) with children in the home and teens—both critical groups for shaping dairy habits and perceptions.
- **Business Planning:** Each business unit is engaging in zero-based budgeting to ensure every investment directly supports shared goals.

- **Forward Thinking:** Teams are encouraged to balance bold, aspirational ideas with practical stewardship of farmer investments.

By aligning now, we're preparing for a smooth and effective integration in 2026—one that will deliver stronger returns, greater reach and an even louder voice for dairy farmers across our region.

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!](#)



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 Supercenters 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

Dairy15 Mid-Year Fact Book 2025

From July 2024–July 2025, sales of 15 dairy product categories across food/grocery, mass merchandiser, drug, c-store and other retail outlets reached **\$102.4 billion, up 4.8% from this same period a year ago**. Declines in drug and convenience stores were outweighed by growth in all other channels.

Category Highlights:

- Strong growth in kefir (+21.7%), cottage cheese (+14.4%) and yogurt/yogurt drinks (+9.9%).
- Natural cheese (+3.1%), cream/creamers (+2.7%) and staples like sour cream, cream cheese and butter posted modest gains.
- Processed cheese (-2.9%), plant-based beverages (-6%) and indulgence categories such as ice cream, frozen novelties and desserts saw declines.
- Channel shifts matter: losses in drug and c-store sales contrast with growth across food and mass retail.

Overall, fresh and functional dairy categories are fueling growth, while processed and indulgent items are growing more slowly, reflecting consumers' rising demand for wellness, clean labels and whole foods.

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

Business Development & Health Promotions

Replenish with Chocolate Milk Program: Applications Open for 2025–2026!

High school athletic programs across Idaho and Utah can now apply for the Replenish with Chocolate Milk Program!

Approved schools will receive one pallet of shelf-stable, whole chocolate milk to help their athletes optimize recovery and refuel after practices and games.



Program Eligibility

- Applications are open to all high school athletic programs in Idaho and Utah.
- A least one team from each participating school must complete a 15-minute virtual "Game Winning Fueling Strategies" team talk.
- Completion of this short session ensures eligibility for milk delivery.

How to Apply

Share this opportunity with local schools, coaches and athletic directors so they can [apply and](#)

[secure milk for their teams.](#)

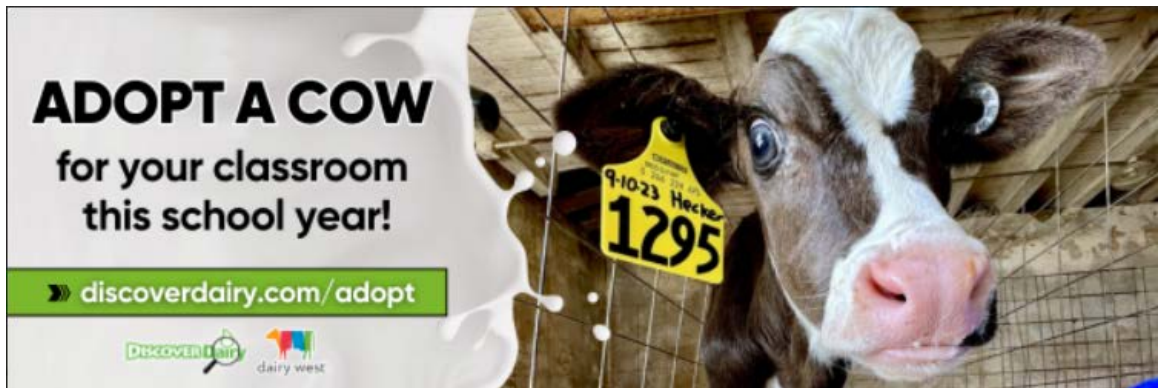
Questions? Contact [Gabby Elledge](#), Dairy West's coordinator – health promotions.

Know a Teacher? Tell Them to Adopt a Cow

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

Learning Dairy Breeds in a Fun, Memorable Way

A new feature on Unbottled.com takes a fresh approach to teaching consumers about the breeds of dairy cows. Instead of just listing facts, the story highlights each breed's unique features, like Ayrshires, known as the "world travelers" for their adaptability, or Holsteins, the "overachievers" of milk production.

Each week, Unbottled's social channels are spotlighting a new breed, helping consumers connect with dairy cows in a fun, memorable way.

The marketing team found that consumers are visiting the Unbottled website for a variety of reasons, including recipes, tips on healthy living and to learn more about the local dairy industry. By sharing content like this, Dairy West continues to meet those demands while educating audiences on dairy farming.

Want to see how your favorite breed is featured? [Check out the full story.](#)



On Social



Dairy West joined Chobani for "Dairy Day" in Twin Falls to help ensure [children have access to nutritious food](#) throughout the summer months.



Talk about stepping out of your comfort zone! Utah dairy farmer [Mattie laced up for her first-ever speedskating session](#) with an Olympic hopeful.



When you're so popular, everyone can't get enough. Thanks to TikTok creators, [cottage cheese is having a major moment](#) and it's not slowing down.

Mark Your Calendars

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

[Farm Tour Materials](#)

Product Reimbursement

This program supports the community engagement efforts of Idaho and Utah dairy 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](#).

National Dairy Industry Resources

Your Dairy Checkoff Podcast

Episode 40 – Revitalizing the Dairy Aisle: How ADANE Boosts Sales & Strengthens Retail Partnerships

In this inaugural Regional Rundown segment of the Your Dairy Checkoff Podcast, DMI's Theresa Reps is joined by Nick DePalma and Kim Villani from the American Dairy Association Northeast (ADANE) to spotlight their impactful work with retailers.



They discuss two major initiatives – the Dairy Aisle Performance Program and the Dairy Aisle Reinvention Program – and how these efforts [drive sales, improve product availability and create better shopping experiences](#) for consumers.

From tackling out-of-stock challenges and enhancing dairy case hygiene to using data-driven insights to expand dairy shelf space, Nick and Kim share how these programs help prioritize milk and dairy products in more than 40 retail chains across the Northeast. Farmers will also hear how these strong retailer relationships benefit their bottom line and how consumer trends like protein snacking and local farm storytelling are shaping dairy's future in stores.

[DMI Website](#)[Podcast Episodes](#)[NMPF Website](#)[IDFA Website](#)[MilkPEP Website](#)[USDEC Website](#)

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