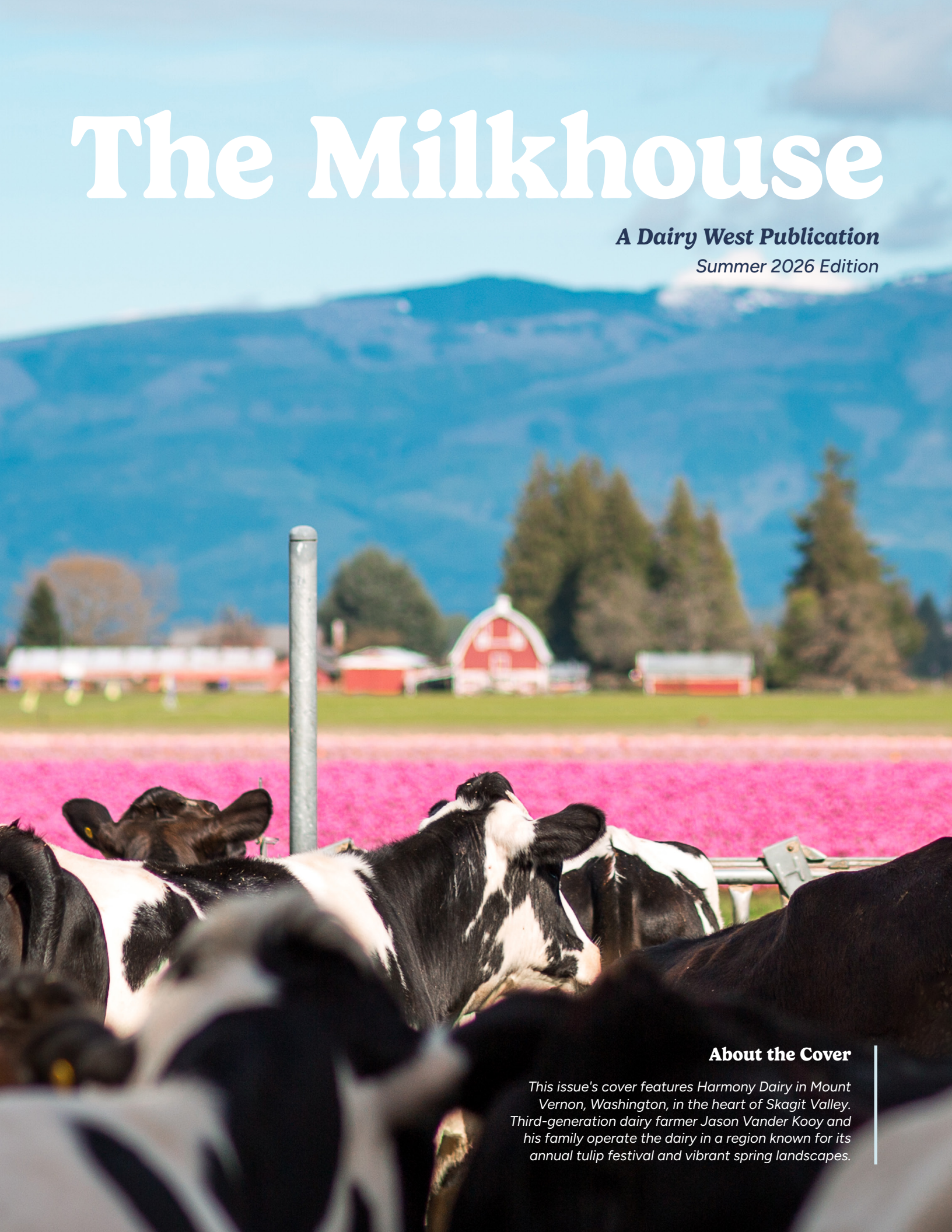


The Milkhouse

A Dairy West Publication

Summer 2026 Edition



About the Cover

This issue's cover features Harmony Dairy in Mount Vernon, Washington, in the heart of Skagit Valley. Third-generation dairy farmer Jason Vander Kooy and his family operate the dairy in a region known for its annual tulip festival and vibrant spring landscapes.

About The Milkhouse

The Milkhouse is Dairy West's semiannual publication designed to keep dairy farmers across Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington informed about how their checkoff investment is being put to work. Inside, you'll find updates on programs, partnerships, industry insights and opportunities supporting dairy across the region.

For more timely updates and in-depth coverage of Dairy West's work, be sure to read the bi-monthly farmer email newsletter from your local farmer relations representative.



Have feedback?

Scan the QR code and let us know what you'd like to see in future editions.

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Photo: Van Es Dairy of Marsing, Idaho



From Our Leadership

Welcome to the first edition of *The Milkhouse*.

We created *The Milkhouse* to be a central place where dairy farmers across Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington can stay informed about the work being done on their behalf by Dairy West. More importantly, it's part of our commitment to showing you how your checkoff investment is creating impact and strengthening the future of dairy.

As we reach the halfway point of our first year as a four-state region, we're already seeing the benefits. It's enabled Dairy West to build stronger partnerships, pursue larger opportunities and increase the impact of every dollar.

Our responsibility is to create greater opportunity for dairy farmers. That means delivering results now while laying the foundation for future demand. Today, we're building trust and driving sales through consumer marketing and strategic partnerships.

At the same time, we're advancing the research and science that reinforce dairy's position as an unmatched solution for health and wellness. That scientific foundation fuels innovation and strengthens our ability to build trust with consumers, ensuring dairy continues to earn its place as an essential part of people's diets.

Throughout this issue, you'll see that work reflected in the programs and partnerships underway across Dairy West. Behind every one of those efforts is the team you have working on your behalf, representing your voice throughout the dairy value chain and delivering results that matter.

Thank you for the trust you place in Dairy West. We're grateful for the opportunity to represent you and remain committed to creating meaningful value for the dairy farmers we serve.



Steve Seppi, CEO



Chace Fullmer, Chairman

Dairy West Board

The Dairy West Board is made up of elected dairy farmers from Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington who provide oversight and direction to help ensure Dairy West's programs and investments align with the needs of dairy farmers across the region.

Visit dairywest.com/about-us/board-members to view current Dairy West and state promotion board members.

Dairy West Production at a Glance

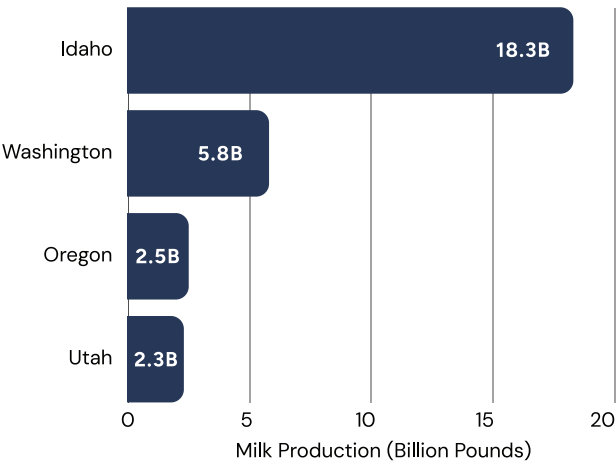
A snapshot of milk production and dairy manufacturing across Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington in 2025.

Dairy Farming Across the Region

State	Dairies	Avg. Cows per farm
Idaho	350	2,000
Washington	260	900
Oregon	140	900
Utah	130	650

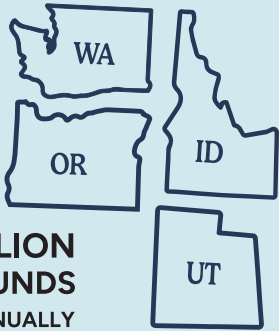
Dairy West states are home to nearly 13% of the U.S. dairy herd.

Milk Production Across the Region



Dairy West by the Numbers

12.5%
OF TOTAL U.S.
MILK PRODUCTION



28.9 BILLION
POUNDS
OF MILK PRODUCED ANNUALLY

Bottled milk accounts for the largest share of dairy product movement at retail across the four-state region.

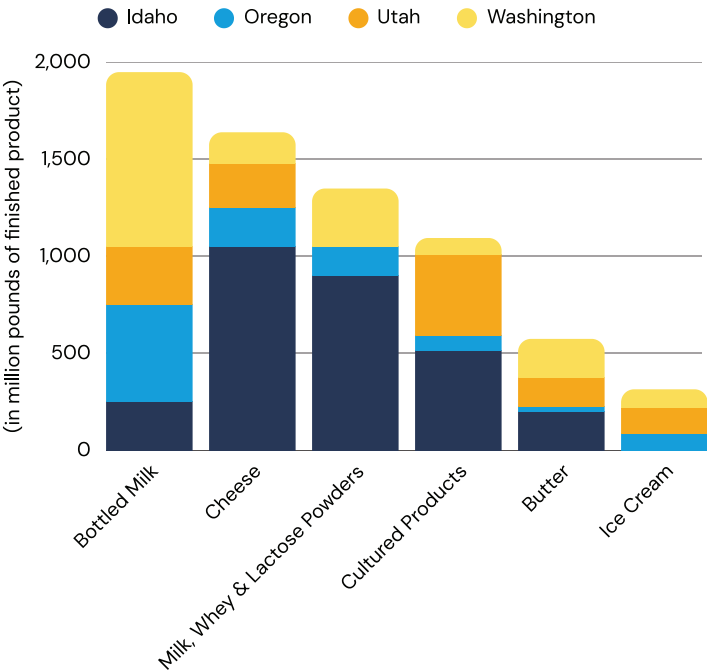
The region produces over **1.6 billion pounds of cheese** annually.

Approximately **1/3 of regional cheese consumption** occurs through restaurants and foodservice.

Approximately **70% of dairy products** produced in the region are consumed outside the four-state region.

Nearly **24% of regional dairy production** is exported internationally with Japan, South Korea and Mexico being the top markets.

Milk Produced in Our Region Becomes a Diverse Mix of Dairy Products



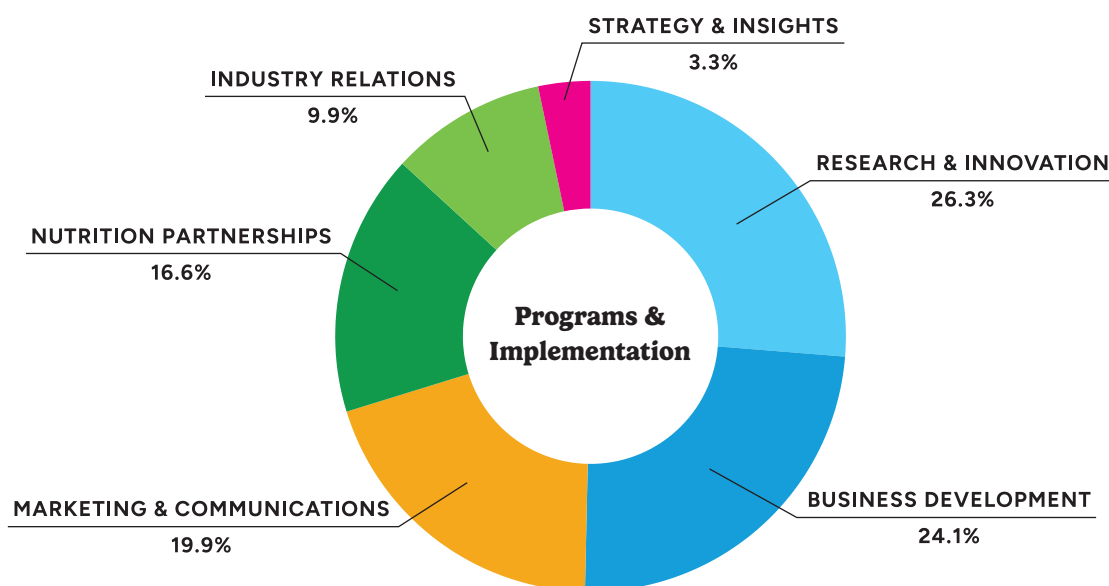
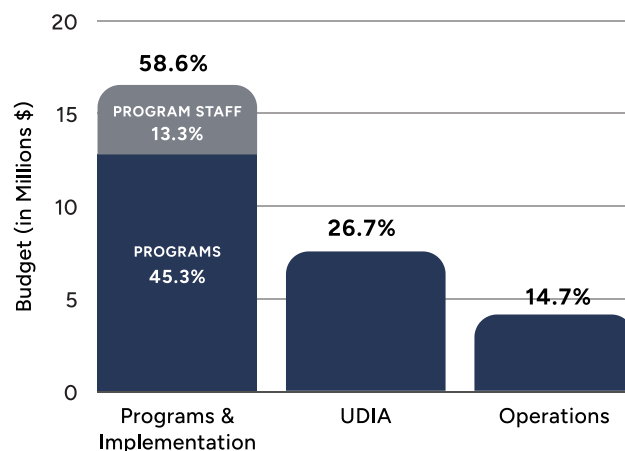
Dairy West Financials

Dairy West is funded through the 10-cent dairy promotion assessment on milk produced in Idaho, Oregon, Utah and Washington. Those funds support Dairy West programs, operations and UDIA dues.

Farmers also pay a separate 5-cent assessment directly to the National Dairy Board. Those funds do not flow through Dairy West.

The information shown here reflects Dairy West's planned budget and mid-year true-up for the 2026 investment.

Total Budget: \$28.2M



Program Investments

Program investments include Dairy West's programs and the staff who implement them, building trust in dairy and growing demand across the region — from foodservice and consumer marketing to youth wellness and research. Through these programs, Dairy West reaches consumers, key opinion leaders and industry partners. Continue reading to see these programs in action.

Operations

Operations supports the day-to-day functions that keep Dairy West running, including personnel, facilities, technology, office operations, travel, fleet vehicles and professional services. These investments provide the foundation that enables Dairy West programs to operate effectively.

United Dairy Industry Association

UDIA includes \$125,000 in dues plus 2.5 cents of the 10-cent assessment to support development of Dairy Management Inc.'s Unified Marketing Plan. National Checkoff investments help fund dairy promotion, research, education and sales efforts across the U.S. and globally.

CONSUMER MARKETING

COMMUNICATIONS

CREATIVE SERVICES
& DIRECTION

Marketing & Communications

The marketing and communications team works to build trust and demand for dairy. By helping people better understand the nutrition, value and role of dairy in their everyday lives, the team supports more frequent use of dairy across our region.

This work aligns with national checkoff efforts to position dairy as a preferred health and wellness product, while also telling a strong local story about the people behind it.

Together, the team leads Dairy West's outward-facing work and supports other teams at Dairy West by bringing their programs to life.

2026 Goals & Progress

At the beginning of the year, each Dairy West team established priorities designed to create value for farmers, strengthen dairy demand and support long-term industry growth. Here are some of those goals:

GOAL 1:

Expand positive dairy media coverage

Progress:

Secured more than **20 earned media placements**, exceeding the annual goal. Highlights include coverage in KIRO, Hello Rose City, KTVB, Progressive Dairy, Capital Press and Hoard's Dairyman, helping share dairy stories with both consumer and industry audiences across the region and beyond.

GOAL 2:

Strengthen farmer communications

Progress:

Refined Dairy West's farmer communication strategy based on audience feedback. Updates include moving to a bi-monthly digital newsletter, tailoring content by state to feature local farmers and stories and introducing a twice-yearly print publication to improve relevance and engagement.

GOAL 3:

Build trust and relevance with consumers

Progress:

Reaching moms and teens across the region through campaigns highlighting dairy's role in protein, nutrition and active lifestyles. Consumer outreach includes a protein-focused campaign that **reached over 6 million people** and a World Cup-themed campaign promoting dairy as real fuel for performance and recovery.

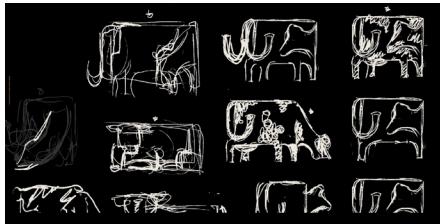


Share a story idea, topic or perspective that could support future farmer, consumer and public communications.



Share feedback on Dairy West communications to help ensure newsletters and content remain relevant and focused on the information farmers care about most.

The following examples highlight how Dairy West is putting farmer checkoff dollars to work to build trust, strengthen dairy demand and create opportunities for long-term industry growth.



New Dairy West Brand Launching This Fall

Dairy West is preparing to launch a refreshed brand this September designed to strengthen consumer connection to dairy and create a brand that reflects the values, people and products that define the region's dairy industry.

Built around the idea of *Real Good*, the brand highlights the everyday moments and shared values that connect dairy farmers with consumers. The new brand will help Dairy West tell dairy's story with greater consistency and impact across the four-state region.

Protein Campaign Reaches Millions of Consumers

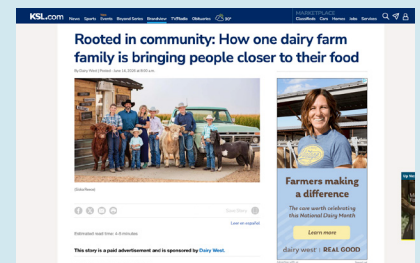
The first consumer campaign of the year highlighted dairy as a trusted, high-quality source of protein for families. Through digital advertising, recipes and social media content, consumers were reminded that dairy provides natural, nutrient-rich protein that fits easily into everyday meals and snacks.

CAMPAIGN RESULTS:

- Nearly 30M impressions
- Over 766K engagements

Impression: the opportunity for someone to see your message or advertisement.

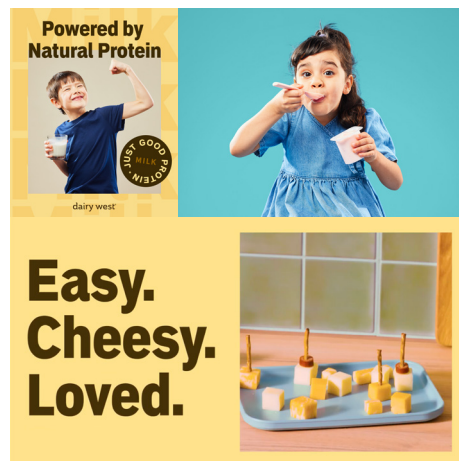
Engagement: an action someone takes after seeing your message, such as clicking, liking, commenting or sharing it.



Dairy Stories Reach Over 73,000 Reads

Through a partnership with KSL News, Dairy West shares weekly stories about dairy with consumers across the region. Topics have included dairy protein, school milk and farmer-led sustainability practices, with many stories also shared through Dairy West channels and picked up by additional media outlets and partners.

Full story collection at:
ksl.com/brandview/DairyWest



FOOD SERVICE

RETAIL

EXPORT MARKETS

INGREDIENTS & INNOVATION

Business Development

The business development team helps grow sales and demand for milk and dairy products produced in the Dairy West region by building strong partnerships and creating programs that support innovation and market growth.

The team works closely with dairy processors to understand their goals and provide insights, tools and opportunities that support growth. This includes retail and foodservice promotions, co-funded domestic

and export activities, market development grants and strategic partnerships.

Business development collaborates with Dairy West's research & innovation team, as well as DMI and state and regional partners, to maximize farmer investment.

This work extends across the Dairy West region through national partnerships and key export markets, including Southeast Asia, Canada and Latin America.

2026 Goals & Progress

At the beginning of the year, each Dairy West team established priorities designed to create value for farmers, strengthen dairy demand and support long-term industry growth. Here are some of those goals:

GOAL 1:

Increase dairy sales through foodservice partnerships

Progress:

Partnering with restaurants, coffee shops and industry events to increase dairy sales and menu usage. Highlights include a Beans & Brews promotion across **80-plus locations** that became a permanent menu item, an Idaho Pizza Company promotion that sold more than **3,000 pizzas** and a Red Robin limited-time offer that generated over **80,000 orders** in two months and was extended due to performance.

GOAL 2:

Increase dairy sales through retail promotions

Progress:

Partnering with retailers and dairy brands to drive dairy purchases through digital and in-store marketing campaigns. Recent efforts include a protein-focused promotion with Meadow Gold that generated a **38% sales lift**, digital activations that generated **\$897K in attributed sales** on a \$49K investment and the multi-state Fuel Your Adventure with Real Nutrition campaign.

GOAL 3:

Support dairy growth through innovation partnerships

Progress:

Developing new partnerships that create opportunities for additional milk utilization across the region. Already this year, Dairy West established a process for evaluating growth and innovation partnerships, secured farmer committee approval and approved its first partnership, which will be supported through Dairy Protein Institute expertise, Dairy West funding and in-kind resources.

The following examples highlight how Dairy West is putting farmer checkoff dollars to work to build trust, strengthen dairy demand and create opportunities for long-term industry growth.

Processor Relationships Strengthen Across the Region

The business development team spent the first half of the year strengthening relationships with processors and creating new opportunities to connect regional dairy products with foodservice operators. Through events such as FoodOvation and the Northwest Food Show, Dairy West helped facilitate conversations around menu innovation, ingredient applications and sourcing opportunities that can help grow demand for regional dairy. Several new partnership opportunities are expected to move forward during the second half of the year.



Export Strategy Expands Global Market Opportunities

In May, the Dairy West Board approved a comprehensive export strategy designed to help regional processors grow sales and build demand in international markets. The strategy focuses on priority markets including Latin America, South Korea, Japan, Australia and Canada.

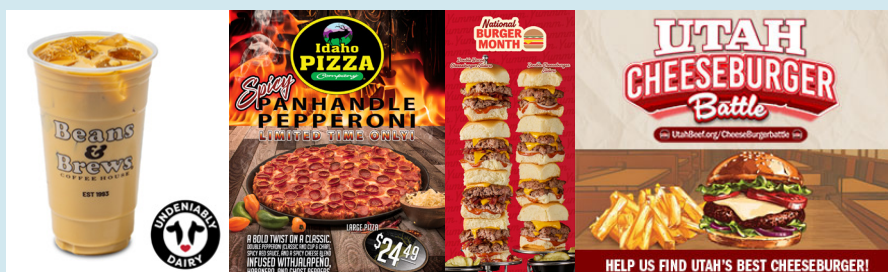
This work is designed to strengthen export capabilities, improve market access and support long-term demand for dairy products produced in the Dairy West region.

PLANNED 2026 ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Three trade shows
- Two inbound trade missions
- Three outbound trade missions
- In-market promotions
- Strategic partner collaborations

Partnerships & Promotions Driving Dairy Demand

Recent foodservice partnerships and retail promotions delivered measurable results, helping increase dairy sales, menu usage and consumer purchases.





Key Focus Areas

PEFORMANCE NUTRITION

HEALTH STAKEHOLDERS

NEXT GENERATION
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

YOUTH WELLNESS

Nutrition Partnerships

The nutrition partnerships team works to build trust in dairy and strengthen long-term demand by connecting health professionals, educators, students and athletes with credible dairy nutrition information and experiences.

Through science-based education, strategic partnerships and hands-on engagement opportunities, this work helps position dairy as an important part of healthy lifestyles while building confidence and advocacy among future health leaders, educators and consumers.

2026 Goals & Progress

At the beginning of the year, each Dairy West team established priorities designed to create value for farmers, strengthen dairy demand and support long-term industry growth. Here are some of those goals:

GOAL 1:

Expand dairy nutrition education for healthcare providers

Progress:

Providing healthcare professionals with science-based resources on dairy's role in heart health and weight management. Already this year, Dairy West distributed **2,000 provider toolkits** across the region, including educational materials, patient handouts and exam room resources that communicate evidence-based flexibility around full-fat dairy foods.

GOAL 2:

Strengthen dairy's connection to active lifestyles

Progress:

Dairy West partners with more than **20 collegiate performance programs** across the region to educate athletes and sports performance professionals about dairy's role in fueling. Complementing this work, consumer research with **800 moms and teams** is helping shape new messaging for Dairy West's expanded high school athletics programs and reinforce dairy's position as a trusted choice for active families.

GOAL 3:

Support school nutrition programs and dairy access

Progress:

Partnering with school nutrition professionals to strengthen meal programs and increase opportunities for dairy. So far this year, Dairy West engaged more than **700 school nutrition leaders** through conferences and events, including education supporting whole milk in school meals, and provided 18 school districts with cafeteria equipment to help expand dairy offerings and improve access to nutritious meals.

The following examples highlight how Dairy West is putting farmer checkoff dollars to work to build trust, strengthen dairy demand and create opportunities for long-term industry growth.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Four new provider education resources**, including a counseling tool, clinic poster and two patient handouts
- 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 providers working with patients using GLP-1 medications

Healthcare Provider Toolkit Expands Dairy Nutrition Education

New healthcare provider resources are helping ensure dairy remains part of conversations around heart health, weight management and GLP-1 medications. The toolkit provides evidence-based nutrition guidance and practical resources for patient education.

School Nutrition Programs Expand Dairy in School Meals

Dairy West continues to support innovative school nutrition programs that make it easier for students to choose nutritious school meals featuring dairy. One example is Gooding High School in Idaho, where a new "C-Store" pilot program **increased breakfast participation by 46%** and **lunch participation by 19%**. Yogurt parfaits and smoothies quickly became some of the most popular menu items, creating more opportunities for students to enjoy dairy.

Building on that success, Dairy West expanded similar efforts to additional schools across the region and supported **18 Power Up Pack Grants**, which provide schools with mobile meal carts to improve meal access and create more opportunities for dairy in school meals.



Virtual Reality Brings Students to the Farm

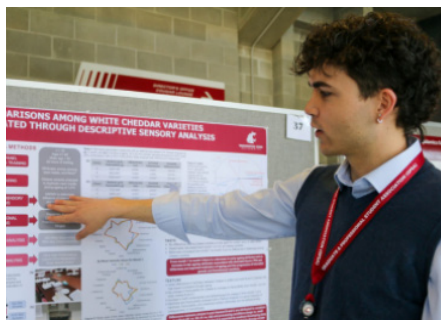
A new virtual reality dairy farm experience gives students a firsthand look at modern dairy farming, including animal care, sustainability, technology and how milk gets from farm to table. The program debuted at a STEM Fest in Utah, and opportunities are being explored to expand the experience across the region.



BUILD Dairy

Building Talent,
Research and Long-
Term Value for Dairy

When dairy farmers invest in research and innovation, the return is not always immediate. Sometimes, the return is a better product, a new processing solution or a student who becomes part of the dairy industry for decades to come. That is the purpose of BUILD Dairy.



Founded in 2014 by Dr. Eric Bastian and Dr. Donald McMahon with just seven students, BUILD Dairy was created to connect dairy companies, universities, researchers and students around a shared goal: strengthening the future of dairy. Through graduate research, coursework, internships and direct connections with industry partners, the program helps students gain real-world dairy experience while working on research that supports dairy foods, ingredients, processing, nutrition, packaging and sustainability.



Today, BUILD Dairy has grown into a leading workforce development program for the dairy industry. More than 130 students have graduated from the program, and nearly 60% continue working in dairy, while the remaining often stay in the food processing industry. The program now includes more than **20 industry partners, 30 faculty members and 12 universities**, helping preserve and grow dairy science expertise across the country.

BUILD Dairy also extends the impact of farmers' investment by attracting millions of dollars in partner-supported research funding. That collaboration allows farmer investment to go further while supporting projects that help address industry challenges and create new opportunities for dairy foods and ingredients.

This year marked an important moment for the program. BUILD Dairy held its largest annual meeting to date, bringing together approximately **180 students, faculty and dairy industry representatives**.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to recognize Dr. Bastian as he retired July 1 after shaping BUILD Dairy into the program it is today.

Earlier this year, Dr. Minto Michael joined Dairy West and will help lead BUILD Dairy's next chapter. As the program moves forward, its focus remains the same: developing future dairy scientists, strengthening industry partnerships and supporting research that helps dairy continue meeting consumer and marketplace needs.



BUILD DAIRY

Learn more at: **BuildDairy.com**

Dairy Protein Institute

Giving Farmers a Voice in Product Innovation

New dairy products don't appear on store shelves by accident. Behind every innovation is a process of research, product development, commercialization and industry collaboration. The Dairy Protein Institute (DPI) was created to help ensure dairy farmers have a place in that process and an opportunity to benefit from the value it creates.



DPI brings together dairy farmers, entrepreneurs, researchers, processors and industry partners to help move promising dairy-based ideas from concept to commercialization. By helping identify market opportunities, refine products and connect innovators with industry partners, DPI works to create new uses for dairy ingredients and new opportunities for milk utilization.

"Farmers are the foundation of dairy innovation," said DPI Co-Founder and CEO Jenny Nelson. "DPI was created to ensure producers are not only contributors to innovation, but direct beneficiaries of it."



Learn more at: DairyProteinInstitute.com

"Farmers are the foundation of dairy innovation. DPI was created to ensure producers are not only contributors to innovation, but direct beneficiaries of it."

Unlike many innovation models, DPI was designed with farmer participation at its core. Dairy farmers across the Dairy West region can become shareholders through a one-time stock share purchase, giving them an opportunity to participate in the value created through future commercialization efforts. DPI's goal is simple: create pathways for innovation while helping ensure the benefits flow back to the dairy farmers who make that innovation possible.

One example is DPI's partnership with Front Label Cottage Cheese, an emerging brand developing high-protein cottage cheese products and innovative blends that pair dairy with ingredients consumers are increasingly seeking, such as fiber and healthy fats. DPI is supporting product development, commercialization strategy, market access and growth planning as the company works toward bringing its products to market.

While Front Label represents one opportunity, the broader vision for DPI is much larger. By helping bridge the gap between great ideas and successful products, DPI is building a pipeline of innovation designed to create long-term value for dairy farmers and strengthen the future of the dairy industry.

Questions?

JENNY NELSON

Co-Founder & CEO, Dairy Protein Institute
801-918-6815

DMI Update



DMI's O'Brien to Retire This Fall

Barbara O'Brien, president and CEO of Dairy Management Inc. (DMI) and the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, announced she will retire this fall at the end of her five-year term. O'Brien has led the dairy check-off through a period of strategic alignment, innovation and growth on behalf of U.S. dairy farmers and importers.

The DMI Board has begun the search process for its next CEO,

with an announcement expected at the DMI and National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) Joint Annual Meeting in October. O'Brien will continue leading the organization throughout the transition.

The next CEO will be expected to build on DMI's momentum by advancing dairy demand, strengthening consumer trust and leading collaborative efforts that create value for U.S. dairy farmers.

'Dairy Does More' Platform Aims to Boost Consumption

Dairy Management Inc. recently launched Dairy Does More, a national marketing platform designed to grow dairy demand by expanding how consumers think about dairy foods.

Built around the tagline "So Many Reasons for Dairy," the campaign uses digital advertising, social media and in-market activations to highlight dairy's versatility, nutrition and relevance across more eating occasions and lifestyles.

The campaign is designed to help consumers see dairy beyond traditional uses and encourage them to incorporate dairy foods into more parts of their day.



Scan the QR code to learn more about these updates and other national programs.

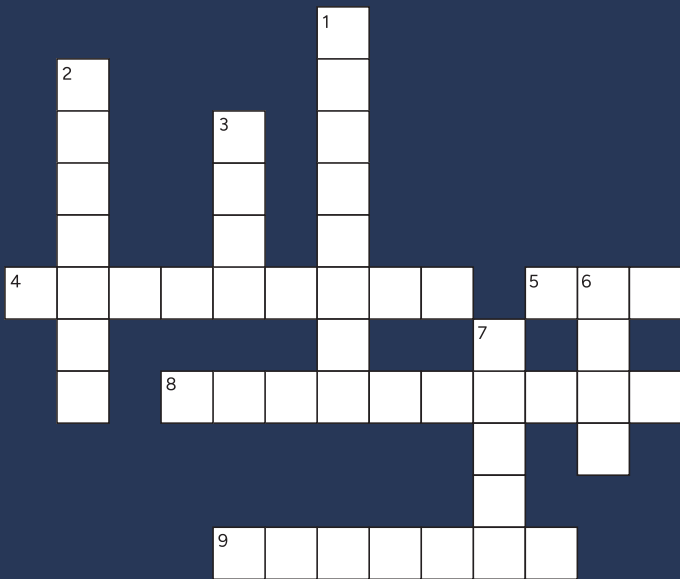
Crossword Puzzle

DOWN

- 1. Restaurant partnership extended due to strong performance
- 2. Primary focus of Dairy West's first consumer campaign of the year
- 3. DMI's new consumer campaign says Dairy Does ____
- 6. The dairy VR experience debuted at this type of fest
- 7. One of the priority export markets highlighted in the new export strategy

ACROSS

- 4. Month the refreshed Dairy West brand launches
- 5. News partner sharing weekly dairy stories with consumers
- 8. Cottage cheese brand working with the Dairy Protein Institute
- 9. Idaho high school where the C-Store pilot increased meal participation



Visit the
Dairy West Farmer Portal

[DAIRYWEST.COM/FARMER-PORTAL](https://dairywest.com/farmer-portal)

Access resources available to dairy farmers across the region, including:

- Product reimbursement information
- Farm tour and educational event resources
- Grant writing support
- Training opportunities
- Signage and promotional materials
- Additional tools and resources designed to support your farm and community outreach

Curious to learn more?

This magazine offers a snapshot of Dairy West's work. If you'd like more information about a story or program, contact your local farmer relations team and they'll connect you with the right staff member.

Farmer Resources

Meet Your Farmer Relations Team



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REPRESENTING DAIRY FARM FAMILIES IN
IDAHO, OREGON, UTAH AND WASHINGTON.

Upcoming Events:

JUNE-AUG | Dairy West Road Show | *UT*

AUG-SEPT | Washington Dairy Regional Meetings | *WA*

AUG-NOV | Oregon Dairy Area Meetings | *OR*

SEPT 14 | Ice Cream Festival at the Utah State Fair | *Salt Lake City, UT*

NOV 10 | Promotion and Policy Board Meetings | *Boise, ID*

NOV 11-12 | Joint Annual Meeting | *Boise, ID*



Share your farm through the lens

Dairy farmers have some of the best views around, and we want to see them!

Submit your favorite dairy farm photos for a chance to be featured by Dairy West and win a cash prize. Whether it's a beautiful sunrise, a hardworking team member, curious calves or a snapshot of everyday life on the farm, we want to see the moments that tell your story.

PRIZES:

- First place: \$150
- Second place: \$100
- Third place: \$50

Scan the QR code to submit your photos. Entries are due by August 31.



@THEDAIRYWEST



@DAIRY.WEST



/DAIRYWEST



@DAIRY.WEST