



# NEW ENGLAND DAIRY ANNUAL REPORT

**2023**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Chair	2
Letter from the CEO	3
2023 Overview	4
Dairy Sales Inside Schools	5
Dairy Sales Outside Schools	6
Building Trust with Millennial Moms	7
Building Trust with Gen Z	8
Building Trust with Thought Leaders	9
Delivering Exceptional Farmer Relations	10
National Partners: Dairy Management Inc.	11
Financials	12
Board of Directors	13

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



## Heidi Dolloff

BOARD CHAIR  
Springfield, VT  
*Dairy Farmers of America*

Welcome to New England Dairy's 2023 Annual Report. It is an honor to serve as the chairwoman of the New England Dairy Promotion Board and New England Dairy & Food Council Board of Directors.

2023 was the last year of our current strategic plan that focuses on the three key goals of

- #1: Accelerate incremental dairy sales growth,
- #2: Build dairy trust (of products, farmers, and farming) in New England target audiences, and
- #3: Deliver exceptional farmer relations.

As a dairy farmer, I am impressed by the team at New England Dairy that delivers results on these goals. It is my hope that you are too, as you read through the highlights included in our annual report. The work that is done on our behalf, throughout our local and national checkoff, is a collaboration that leads us all to success.

As always, thank you for your support, and please reach out to any of your local farmers on our Board or a team member from New England Dairy if you have any questions or comments.

Best Regards,

Heidi Dolloff

# LETTER FROM THE CEO



## Jenny Karl

CEO OF NEW ENGLAND DAIRY

I've been honored to serve as your CEO and want to thank you for all you do to support our organization and share your passion for dairy promotion with others.

Our organization is here to grow dairy sales and trust in dairy products, farmers and farming. We do this by being grounded in research and insights, which helps us work smarter and your dollars work harder. We need to understand why people choose dairy and what is holding them back from consuming even more dairy. Understanding the consumer perspective helps us better craft and target our messaging, outreach and engagement. It helps us break down barriers and create even more opportunities for dairy enjoyment.

I am pleased to share that 2023 was a stand-out year for our dairy promotion efforts. We used consumer insights and improved our digital presence (through our website, social media channels, influencer engagement, and e-commerce), in a way that led to exceptional reach and engagement and surpassed not only our own expectations, but also industry standards. In other words, we reached more people in more places and in a more deeply relevant way.

I hope you like what you see and appreciate your interest and support of dairy promotion. As always, we would love to hear your feedback and connect with you.

Best Regards,

Jenny Karl

# LOOKING BACK: 2023 OVERVIEW

New England Dairy works to build trust and grow sales of dairy, and we strategically focus your checkoff investment in the areas that create the greatest impact on those goals.

We base our programs on research and insights to deliver the information and experiences that meet our target audience’s needs and wants. We must hit on the values and benefits they seek from their food choices. We continue to target Millennial Moms, Generation Z, and Thought Leaders such as health experts and school nutrition professionals.



Our overarching theme is: **Keep it Real, Enjoy the Good.** It is supported by three program pillars—health, planet, community—to focus our work with key messages based on the time of year. The pillar theme for that time period (see below) is the lead message with the remaining pillars as supporting messages.

## Keep it Real, Enjoy the Good

*Real Foods, Real Farms, Real Good*

<p><b>Health</b> <i>January-March</i> <b>Good for You and Your Family</b> Holistic Wellness (Immunity, Calm, Energy, Digestion) Feeding Your Family Fueling the Four Quarters of Your Day</p>	<p><b>Planet</b> <i>April-July</i> <b>Good for the Planet</b> Stewardship Practices Climate Change 2050 Goals</p>	<p><b>Community</b> <i>August-December</i> <b>Good for the Community</b> Giving Back Hunger Relief Connectedness</p>
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# GOAL 1: DAIRY SALES INSIDE SCHOOLS

## Why School Meals?

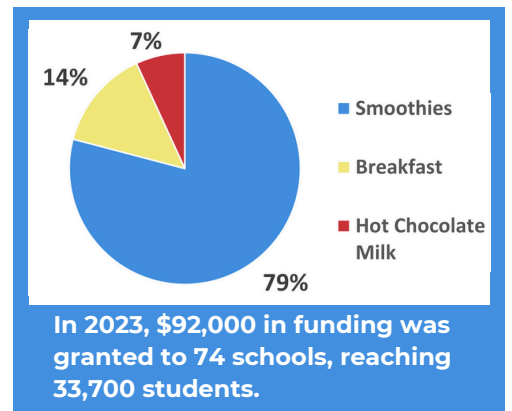
School meals are the second largest food assistance program in the country, with the potential to reach 1.9 million students in New England every school day. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), children ages 2-19 consume more dairy at school than they do in any other location.

- **66 percent** of students who eat school lunch consume milk versus only 23 percent of students who eat lunch from home.
- For low-income students, **77 percent** of their milk intake is from school meals

Supporting school meal participation, optimizing the dairy served, and educating school nutrition professionals helps promote dairy sales in schools.

## School Nutrition Grants

Our grants are available to all schools on a competitive basis. Funding supports equipment and marketing for programs that are proven to increase meal participation and dairy sales. To lower costs and simplify the application process for schools, we offered grant equipment packages for hot chocolate milk, bulk milk, and smoothies this year. Final data from grants provided in 2022 showed an **11 percent increase in dairy sales**. This exceeded our five percent goal for the year.



## Collaborating with School Nutrition Professionals

We held our third annual School Nutrition Experts Forum. The 22 attendees, including USDA and state school nutrition and hunger stakeholders, discussed marketing to Gen Z and provided feedback and guidance on our school nutrition resources.

Fifty-two school nutrition thought leaders viewed our *Where Our Milk Comes From* webinar featuring dairy farmer Melissa Griffin from Clessons River Farm in Massachusetts. This webinar addressed key questions about dairy farming and animal care and highlighted technology and sustainable practices dairy farms use throughout New England. Attendees' positive perception of dairy increased from **89 to 95 percent** following the webinar.



In 2022, we provided grant funding to Boston Public Schools to purchase equipment to serve smoothies in 20 high schools. Since then, they have expanded smoothies to nearly all of their 125 schools, reaching **54,000 students** every day. The result was a **6 percent increase** in breakfast participation.

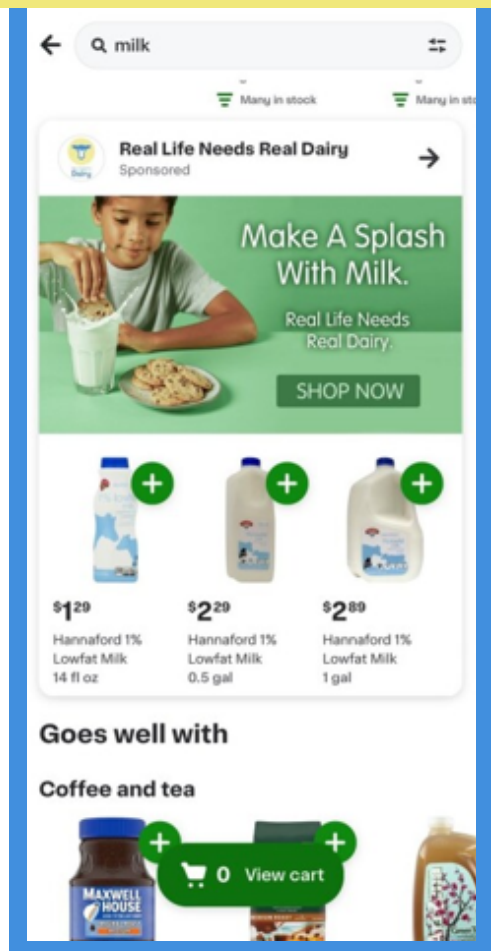
# GOAL 1: DAIRY SALES OUTSIDE SCHOOLS

This Instacart ad encouraged people to shop for cheese to top their grilled hamburgers with a click of the button.



We ran two ecommerce campaigns through Instacart. The first was timed with Cabot Creamery's efforts promoting cheese during grilling season featuring cheese produced in New England and the Northeast. The second campaign ran from late November through early December, encouraging milk at occasions around the holiday season. In total, the two campaigns led to **\$390,000 in dairy sales**.

The second Instacart campaign used shoppable ads that enabled people to purchase milk directly from the ad with a simple click on the plus sign.



NED collaborated with DFA brand Garelick Farms on a Massachusetts-based consumer campaign that educated consumers on how purchasing milk supports local dairy farmers and their role as part of the climate change solution. The campaign featured a newly designed Garelick Farms milk label, totaling **2 million labels**, that directed consumers to farmer stories about their sustainability efforts. The campaign also included social media, generating **300,000 impressions and 56,000 engagements**, as well as pop-up events at Stop & Shop locations.



The Garelick Farms campaign label included a special planet health inspired design that directed people to a website about dairy sustainability.

# GOAL 2: BUILDING TRUST WITH MILLENNIAL MOMS

## Engaging Millennial Mom Through Digital and In-person Experiences

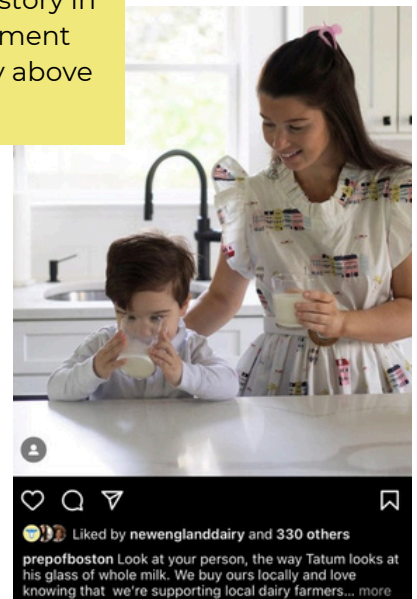
This year was a record year for our social media **impressions** and **engagements**. We had content go **viral** and saw significant results after shifting more advertising dollars towards social media on Instagram and Facebook. In these paid social media ads, we focus on one to two topics per month that we know this audience cares about such as cow care or foods that support a healthy immune system. Short, fast-paced videos with trendy audio were key to our success.

<b>Impressions</b>	Eyes and ears seeing and/or hearing content
<b>Engagement</b>	When a person interacts with social media content Includes likes, comments, saves, shares, and link clicks
<b>Viral</b>	1 million or more video views

We also continued to work with social media influencers who can tell the dairy story in a way that is authentic and relevant to today's consumers. The average engagement rate for our collaborations in 2023 was strong at **8.8 percent**. This is significantly above the 1-3 percent standard for high-quality engagement.



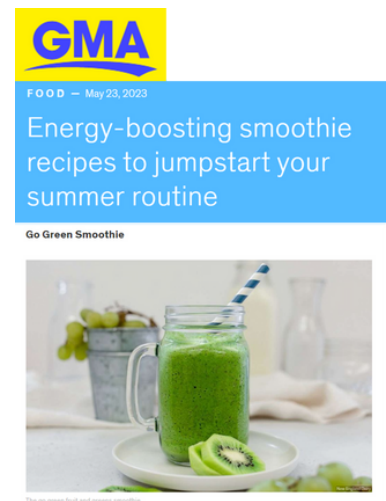
The Mobile Dairy Bar attended 40 events where we distributed **26,000 samples** and interacted with **32,000 people**. Events included road races, family-friendly events at high-traffic locations, on-farm and agritourism events, and more.



We create in-person experiences with our Mobile Dairy Bar that support the messages in our online and social media work. We see growing interest in having our team at events across the region to educate and engage the public.

## Dairy in the News

Our media relations efforts generated stories and impressions at a level not seen in at least five years. New England Dairy accumulated **4.9 million media impressions** throughout 2023. The value of this coverage totaled **\$1.4 million worth of publicity**.

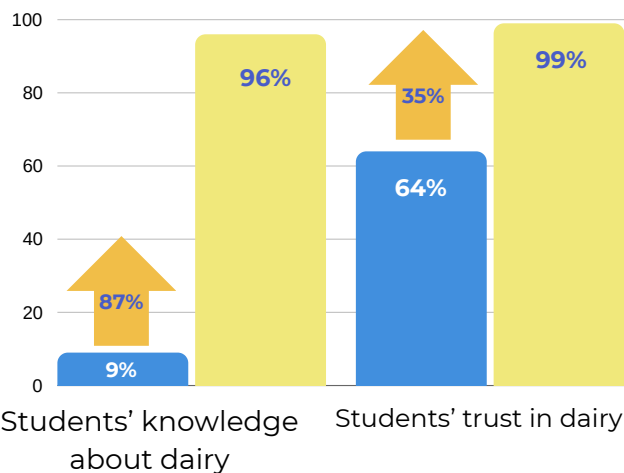




# GOAL 2: BUILDING TRUST WITH GENERATION Z

## Adopt a Cow

We partnered with the Dairy Excellence Foundation on Adopt a Cow, a year-long virtual program that connects classrooms to a local dairy farm. Students learn about dairy cows and dairy farming through photos, stories, a virtual farm tour, and a live virtual chat with a dairy farmer. Over **2,800 educators** from across New England enrolled in the program for the 2023-24 school year, reaching **91,000 students** (50 percent more students than last year).



Pine Grove School students in Rowley, MA met their adopted cow, Celestial, from MacGlaflin Farm in NH.



Adopt A Cow survey results showed that students' knowledge about dairy grew by 87 percent and trust in dairy grew by 35 percent.

## Digital Outreach

We expanded our work to reach Gen Z in the digital space using the popular social media platform TikTok. To celebrate Earth Day, we collaborated with three Gen Z influencers to create videos with positive messages about dairy and dairy farming. Additionally, we worked with New England Patriots player Kyle Dugger to reach this audience with messages about the health benefits of dairy. Both campaigns exceeded our expectations, driving over **1.6 million impressions** and **40,000 engagements** (likes, comments, and shares).



Gen Z Influencer Sistersnacking churned butter at Freund's Farm Market & Bakery for an Earth Day TikTok video.



The New England Patriots created and shared a video of Patriots Player Kyle Dugger visiting a dairy farm, resulting in **500,000 impressions** and **27,000 engagements**. The video focused on how milk goes from farm to fridge and was posted on Instagram Reels, Facebook, and YouTube.

You can click on this QR code using your phone's camera to view the Kyle Dugger video.



# GOAL 2: BUILDING TRUST WITH THOUGHT LEADERS

## Pediatric Care Provider Outreach

While pediatricians have a generally positive attitude about dairy milk, our research shows that they do view dairy as less essential than other food groups. We launched a year-long initiative to stay front and center with health professionals. We armed them with science, so they can recommend dairy with confidence and provided them with the resources to educate their clients.



We reached **3,200 Pediatricians** and **1,100 Advanced Practice Registered Nurses** with eight digital communications on child brain health, bone health, immunity, and growth. Each communication contained research-backed messaging and promoted our new *Dairy Every Day is a Healthy Way* resource. The communications saw an average 4 percent click-through rate, well above the industry standard for health professionals of 0.9 percent.

## Pediatric Care Provider Outreach

Through live webinars, webinar recordings, and live in-person sessions, we educate health professionals on the newest dairy research. We offered webinars on topics ranging from sustainability, lactose intolerance, and the dairy matrix. We also sponsored in-person sessions on sports nutrition, food insecurity, and dairy farming. Average positive perception of dairy increased from 68 to 96 percent after the education sessions.



The *Lactose Intolerance Considerations Across Diverse Populations* webinar featured Constance Brown-Riggs, MEd, RDN, CDCES, CDN and Tessa Nguyen, MEd, RD.

## Next Generation Health Professionals

We worked with major hospitals and universities in each of our five states to provide workshops, farm tours, and internships to nutrition and food system interns and students who are in the final stages of their training. Our goal is to ensure that these future thought leaders are anchoring their guidance in science, not hearsay.



“My favorite part was seeing how much the farmers cared about the animals.”

“The tour made me feel more informed and educated on the sustainable, ethical, and safe practices in dairy farming.”

# GOAL 3: Delivering Exceptional Farmer Relations

## Dairy Promotion Grants

Dairy Promotion Grants support farmer-led activities that build trust and increase consumption of New England dairy products. We awarded the most grants since the inception of the program three years ago. We funded 28 activities with grant awards totaling **\$43,000**. Grant funded activities – which included open farm days, agricultural career tours, and on-farm camps – reached over **21,500 consumers**.



Fairholm Farm in Woodstock, CT used our dairy promotion grant program to support their youth farm camp, which hosted 60 children.

## Digital Dairy Ambassadors



Through our Digital Dairy Ambassador program, we trained **18 dairy farmers** to share their story through social media. Ambassadors received training and toolkits to facilitate the creation of dairy-positive images and messaging on topics like health & wellness, sustainability, and community. Ambassadors generated 254 posts and **13,300 likes and comments**.

## Connecting with Dairy Farmers

New England Dairy explored opportunities to engage farmers in conversations about our work and ways we can collaborate on dairy promotion activities. We worked alongside farmers for events like Vermont Breakfast on the Farm, which welcomed **1,400 visitors** to Sunderland Farm. We hosted several trainings, attended watershed meetings, presented our work at co-op regional meetings, and improved our farmer newsletter which resulted in a **4 percent click-through rate** (nearly three times the industry average of 1.4 percent).



## Engaging Farmers in Dairy Promotion

Dairy farmers are the best people to address consumer questions and concerns. In 2023, New England Dairy engaged **56 farmers** in **68 dairy promotion activities** reaching consumers, including school events, earned media, and consumer engagement events.

Jane Clifford, dairy farmer from Starksboro, VT, was one of many farmers who supported dairy promotion activities alongside New England Dairy in 2023



# NATIONAL PARTNERS: DAIRY MANAGEMENT INC.

Our partner, Dairy Management Inc. (DMI), complements our efforts to build trust and drives sales through partnerships and nationwide programming in the areas of:

## Sustainability

By means of pilot programs and partnership-building, DMI developed and identified measurement tools and resources, such as videos, articles, online courses, and podcasts, to help farmers with sustainability planning and decisions. DMI also secured **\$10M in partner funding** commitments and engaged with stakeholders to prioritize sustainability research, communicating results to increase consumer trust.



A collaboration with 8 research institutions gathered data on yield, soil health, greenhouse gas emissions, and water quality to inform the industry.



## Innovation

Utilizing modern technology, nutrition research, and collaborations, DMI supported product innovation. These efforts included projects on fermentation and filtration and uncovering new health benefits and potential claims related to dairy. DMI proactively shares new dairy science on multiple platforms including podcasts, leadership events, lectures, webinars, and articles.



In 2023, DMI's ongoing Mayo Clinic partnership yielded research projects on dairy's health benefits and nearly 30 joint activations, reaching over 80,000 health care professionals, and generating over 7.2 million consumer impressions.

## Exports

DMI continues to partner with U.S. foodservice companies and co-ops to drive innovation in several markets. In 2023, Pizza Hut launched 10 new items in Japan and Indonesia. Pizza Hut Indonesia reached **1.7 million** consumers with US Dairy Exports Council's "Made with US Cheese" logo. Engagement with Yum! Brand in China is nearly 10% ahead of target, delivering **10.84 million** cheese pounds through December 2023.



# FINANCIALS

## New England Dairy & Food Council Operating Statement

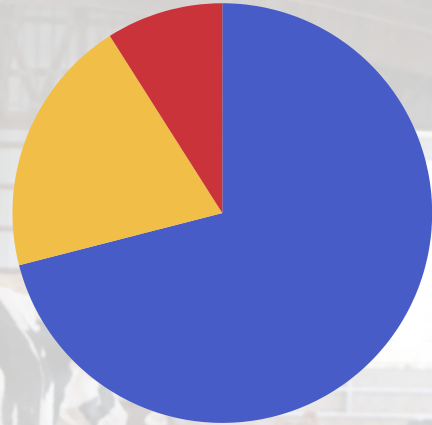
Jan. 01 - Dec. 31, 2023\*

### INCOME

Unrestricted Farmer Contributions	\$ 1,300,000
Restricted Farmer Contributions	\$ 38,421
DMI Supplemental Funding	\$ 800,000
Fundraising	\$ 10,110
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 2,148,531</b>

### NEW ENGLAND DAIRY & FOOD COUNCIL EXPENDITURES

- 71% Youth Wellness
- 20% Sustainable Nutrition & Research
- 9% Administrative



## New England Dairy Promotion Board Operating Statement

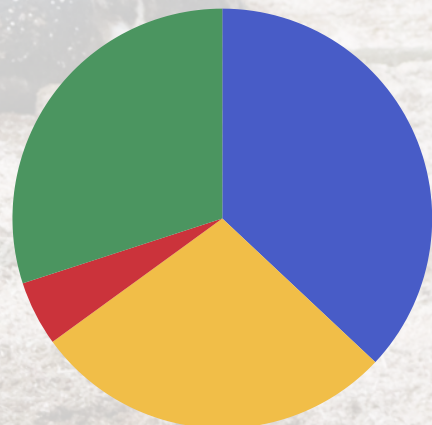
Jan. 01 - Dec. 31, 2023\*

### INCOME

Unrestricted Farmer Contributions	\$ 3,968,911
Restricted Farmer Contributions	\$ 311,200
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 4,280,111</b>

### NEW ENGLAND DAIRY PROMOTION BOARD EXPENDITURES

- 37% Marketing Communications
- 28% Nationwide Programs
- 30% NEDFC Funding
- 5% Administrative



\*At the time of publication, the audit of Operating Statements was pending.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## NEW ENGLAND DAIRY & FOOD COUNCIL AND NEW ENGLAND DAIRY PROMOTION BOARD 2023-2024 BOARD OFFICERS



**Heidi Dolloff**  
CHAIR  
Springfield, VT

*Dairy Farmers of America*



**Paul Doton**  
VICE CHAIR  
Woodstock, VT

*Agri-Mark*



**Harold Howrigan, Jr.**  
TREASURER  
Sheldon, VT

*Dairy Farmers of America*



**Mike Barnes**  
SECRETARY  
Mount Upton, NY

*Agri-Mark*

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East Montpelier, VT  
*Agri-Mark*

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Upton, NY  
*Agri-Mark*

**Ray Brands**  
Ferrisburgh, VT  
*Dairy Farmers of America*

**Heidi Dolloff**  
Springfield, VT  
*Dairy Farmers of America*

**Paul Doton**  
Woodstock, VT  
*Agri-Mark*

**Mark Duffy**  
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**Marcella Guillette**  
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**Harold Howrigan, Jr.**  
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**Robin Sweet**  
Cambridge, VT  
*Dairy Farmers of America*

**Suszyne Burch**  
Fort Ann, NY  
*Dairy Farmers of America*

## 2023-2024 MANAGEMENT TEAM

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Chief Executive Officer  
*Boston, MA*

**Lisa Robinson, RD, LDN, SNS**  
Vice President, Operations  
*Boston, MA*

**Michael DeAngelis, MS, MPH, RD**  
Vice President, Integrated  
Marketing Communications  
*Boston, MA*





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