



Share Your Story

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Producing safe and healthy dairy products is our number one goal. But with all the confusing media about milk alternatives, how can we get that message to consumers?

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REAL FACES
OF DAIRY

BALCHEM®

You are the Real Face of Dairy, the original environmentalist, the first to implement sustainable practices and the most passionate about caring for your animals.

As Balchem celebrates 50 years of service to agriculture, we look to bring the tools you need to share your story with your community and those who want to know you and your farm. Let's work together to bring transparency and understanding.

Join the Real Faces of Dairy celebration and be a part of securing the future.

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Focus on the Facts: Dairy Does a Body Good

by Joann Pipkin

In a matter of seconds, a simple Google search produces contradictory and confusing results to the question: *Is dairy good for me?* "Eating dairy foods increases your risk of heart disease." "Soy milk is more nutritious than cow's milk." "Consuming dairy products can lead to weight gain."

Born and raised on a dairy farm in southern Michigan, author Michele Payn, in her second book *Food Truths from Farm to Table*, focuses on the false claims and ways consumers are taught to fear their food, a commonality she said is shared by many grocery shoppers across the country.

"Consumers don't understand," Payn says. "That's the underlying cause of guilt in the grocery."

So, how can you help consumers get the *real* dairy message?

Drive it home like fellow dairy producer and dietitian Sarah Kuehnert. This Fort Wayne, Ind., farmwife and her family turned their 300-cow registered Holstein dairy into a vehicle that delivers dairy's

message to consumers in festival form every fall.

"This was my passion, my way of reaching more people, educating more," Kuehnert says. "I've always had the passion of tying the knot between agriculture and nutrition, and this is one way I could do it."

Now in its fifth year, the Kuehnert Dairy Fall Festival corners the market on building relationships with consumers.

For six weeks in September and October, some 25,000 consumers will visit the Kuehnert operation in open-door fashion to see what day-to-day life is like on the farm. "People really want to know," she says. "They want to see what you do. They want to learn. You build a relationship with them; they believe in you."

From the robotic milk parlor to the commodity barn, and every nook and cranny in between, fun dairy facts and activities abound at the Kuehnert festival. "You're not going to watch TV here. You are going to run around. You're going to jump," she says.

Consumers also get a taste of ice cream, milk and grilled cheese



sandwiches, all while learning dairy's gate-to-plate story.

"We do a hayride, which is a complete farm tour," Kuehnert says. "People will stand in line for an hour and a half to get the farm tour. A lot of people come here by word-of-mouth. Once they get here, it opens their eyes to a whole different world."

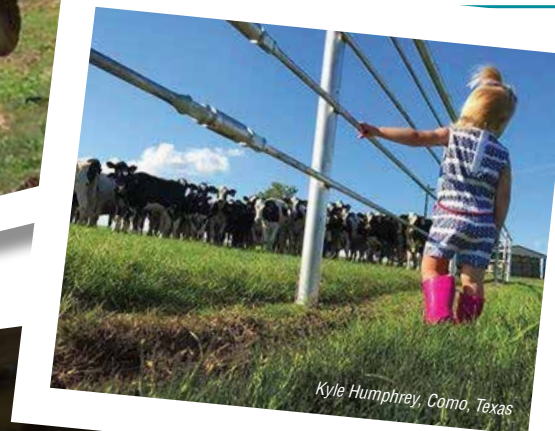
When visitors want to know how conventional milk compares to soy, almond or other alternatives, Kuehnert stresses the nutritional value in the dairy products her family produces.

"I have people who wanted almond milk because they liked it just for preference," she says. "Someone somewhere has told them there's less calories in it. Yes, there are, but there's really very little nutritional value."

Or when questioned about lactose intolerance and dairy products, Kuehnert emphasizes that milk distributors like Prairie Farms offer



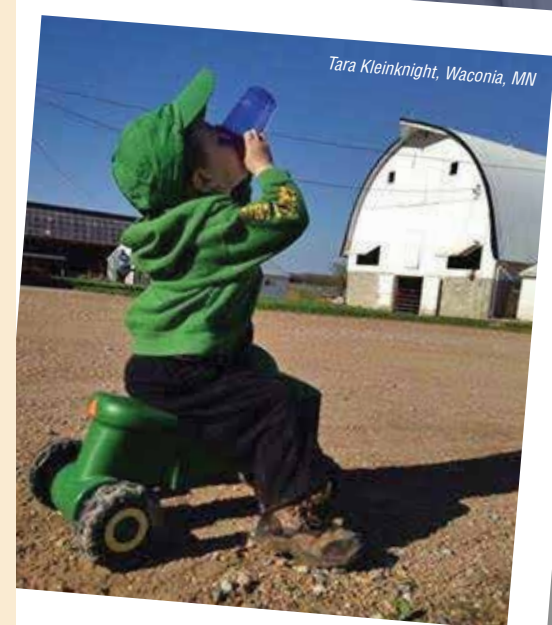
Melissa Foster Johns, Chapel Hill, TN



Kyle Humphrey, Coma, Texas



"You have the most authentic voice; it's just a matter of finding stories that connect with hearts rather than dumping data on them."
~ Sarah Kuehnert,
Fort Wayne, Indiana



Tara Kleinknight, Waconia, MN



Myra Miller, Shirleysburg, PA

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– Sarah Kuehnert, Kuehnert Dairy Farm, Fort Wayne, Ind.



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lactose-free milk. “Then, we talk about other ways they can get dairy,” Kuehnert says. “Most of the time people can tolerate cheese. They can tolerate flavored milk better, so we can talk about chocolate milk or strawberry milk.”

Set Science Aside

In addition to working on the family’s dairy, Kuehnert is a registered dietitian. She knows and understands the science behind dairy’s wholesome goodness.

“My family has worked for many generations to produce food,” she says. “In our opinion, milk is the purest and healthiest food there is.”

Dairy products pack a protein punch and chocolate milk is still the best sports recovery drink on the market.

“Kids need healthy fats,” Kuehnert says. “Milk provides healthy fats. We’re talking literally 40 calories and 2.5 g of fat. In the whole scheme of things, the only place the majority of kids get milk is at school. Let them have 2% chocolate, white, strawberry milk.”

Kuehnert says, “People don’t know why food is nutritious. They don’t know how they’re supposed to eat, and they don’t

know where to buy food. They all think it comes from fast food or it just appears in the grocery store.”

Getting and keeping consumers in the dairy aisle isn’t all about throwing the science in their face either.

In fact, Kuehnert says even dietitians are now sharing their message with less science because consumers are scared of technology and scientific terms. “They all want to go back to basic, and, really, food is as basic as you can get,” she says.

Build the Bridge

Getting the word out on dairy’s goodness is really about trust and relationships.

“You have to connect,” Kuehnert says simply. “You have to build a relationship. The other thing is that consumers are overwhelmed, and they go to the wrong sources for their information.”

An approach Kuehnert takes is, “Let me tell you my side of the story. This is why we do what we do; and [for] me as a dietitian, I know that it’s important to drink milk. [It’s] your ultimate choice, but you know [what] it provides you. Some people can’t drink it, but you should know that it’s safe.”



Payn recalled meeting a farmer once at a recent conference. He was complimentary of the job Payn had done delivering the message on combatting food myths, noting it was something he could never do.

“But, you are the best person to share agriculture’s story,” Payn replied. “The people working with the animals every day have a perspective that is a novelty to 98.5% of the population. You have the most authentic voice; it’s just a matter of finding stories that connect with hearts rather than dumping data on them.”

Kuehnert says, “Even in my career off the farm as a dietitian, I’m pretty much an open door. People come in and tell me how they eat or what their concerns are. [I tell them] you have to be willing to make a change. I tell people I don’t like the word diet. We have a lifestyle change. So 100% [of] everything is about building a relationship first: understanding them as a person and having empathy and then trying to build a relationship. Then they’ll believe in you.”

Nab the Naysayers

Dairy’s message is a healthy one.

Yes, dairy foods offer a powerhouse of nutrients in an affordable package. Yes, you can still manage your weight and enjoy dairy foods. Yes, you can enjoy dairy even if you’re lactose intolerant.

“We have to make it fun,” Payn says. “We have to show the humanity of farmers.”

Consumers want conversation. Get it started. Payn’s website, Causematters.com, offers tips on how you can connect with consumers through social media.

Dairy Management Inc., through its Undeniably Dairy program at dairygood.org, can help you zero in on the real health story behind milk and its related products.

Connecting with consumers is about building relationships.

“It doesn’t have to be opening up your farm for six weeks and bringing in 25,000 people,” Kuehnert says. “Maybe have a breakfast, maybe have a movie night [at your farm]. Maybe just start with something small with your farm bureau or FFA group or your church.”

And if the Kuehnerts can make a difference one consumer at a time, so can YOU.

“We are not too proud to say where our milk goes,” Kuehnert says. “We stand 100% behind our product. It’s all about a relationship and working together to support one another.”

As we feature the fourth pillar of the Real Faces of Dairy Pledge, we invite YOU to stand up with Kuehnert and show consumers that the milk products you produce are clean, safe AND healthy. Like Kuehnert, your dairy story proves to consumers you’re adapting to their needs with proven solutions.



CALORIES AND NUTRIENTS			
Calories	110	110	60
Protein	8g	8g	1g
Fat	2.5g	4.5g	2.5g
Carbohydrates	12g	9g	8g
VITAMINS AND MINERALS** (% DAILY VALUE*)			
Calcium	30%	45%	45%
Phosphorus	25%	25%	N/A***
Potassium	10%	10%	1%
Riboflavin	25%	30%	30%
Vitamin B-12	20%	50%	50%
Vitamin A	10%	10%	10%
Vitamin D	25%	30%	25%

Naturally Occurring

Good Source = 10%-19% DV Excellent Source = 20%+ DV

1. Cow’s Milk levels are per the USDA National Nutrition Database (NDB No. 01083 SR-27); available at: <http://ndb.nal.usda.gov/>
2. Silk Original Soy Milk, Original Almond Milk, Original Coconut Milk. Nutritional information per Silk® website www.silk.com
***Nutrient not listed on product website

Source: National Dairy Council © 2017 Dairy Management Inc.

Important dairy facts to share with your community, neighbors and customers.

- 1 Three servings of dairy a day can help heart health; it’s linked to a reduced risk of high blood pressure in adults as well as a reduced risk for cardiovascular disease, coronary disease and stroke.
- 2 Research indicates that the proteins in dairy may have a role in managing Type 2 diabetes.
- 3 Milk’s an easy way to get the nutrients your body needs. For example, one 8-oz. glass has the same amount of calcium as 10 cups of raw spinach and as much potassium as a small banana.
- 4 You can feel good knowing where your milk comes from. America’s dairy farmers know great milk comes from healthy cows, so cow care is their top priority.



Take the Pledge
Have you taken the pledge? Real Faces of Dairy wants YOU to step up and take the pledge. You can share YOUR dairy story with neighbors and friends so they understand how the five pillars are part of YOUR everyday life on the farm. Next month, we’ll explore how leaving a dairy legacy is imperative to consumers. We’d love to see your photos and stories and hear from you. Go to our website for more information: www.realfacesofdairy.com

