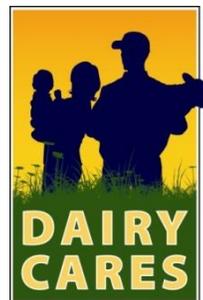


Funding provided by:



Dairy Cares Newsletter

September 2018

DairyCares.com

California Dairy Sustainability Summit: Further improving economic and environmental sustainability

Leading dairy organizations have united to host the inaugural California Dairy Sustainability Summit on November 27-28, 2018 at the Sacramento Convention Center. The summit will showcase California's innovative and sustainable dairy farm practices, while highlighting cost-effective ways to meet ongoing challenges. A key focus will be developing partnerships and strategies to improve the economic sustainability of the state's family dairy farms.

"California dairy farmers have a long history of raising the bar," said Charles "Chuck" Ahlem, a dairy farmer in Hilmar and a board member for three of the hosting organizations. "In good times, and even now with difficult market conditions, our farmers continue to improve by supporting research and adopting new technologies. The California Dairy Sustainability Summit will help develop strong partnerships and solutions that are good for the environment and can help sustain our family farms."



California leads the world in planet-smart dairy practices—reducing greenhouse gas emissions, cleaning the air, protecting and conserving water, and more. Dairy families have made great strides through their dedication to continual improvement, producing more milk using fewer natural resources, while providing hundreds of thousands of in-state jobs. Recent progress is due in large part to the implementation of cost-effective technologies through incentive programs. California is the first dairy region in the world to set a goal for a 40% reduction of methane emissions from dairy manure. Through ongoing research and funding incentives, dairy farmers are well on their way to achieving the state's goal.

With continued funding through the Dairy Digester Research and Development Program (DDRDP), the state is on its way to having between 100 and 120 dairy digesters operating within the next four to five years. These digesters are [capturing methane and creating clean, renewable energy](#). At a cost of \$8 per metric ton of CO2 equivalent reduced (not including the matching private funding), the DDRDP is the third most cost-effective out of the state's 48 climate action programs.

The [Alternative Manure Management Program \(AMMP\)](#) has now awarded funding to a total of 58 dairy farms across the state. A variety of technologies and strategies are being funded through the AMMP, all aimed to decrease methane emissions by reducing the amount of manure solids stored in wet conditions. Ongoing research continues to verify and quantify how these technologies can reduce methane emissions, while improving overall air and water quality.

California's dairy farms continue to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and improve the air. A growing number of dairy farms are working with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District to convert diesel-powered feed mixers to electric. Each conversion can save up to 20 tons of nitrogen oxides (NOx) per year—equivalent to taking more than 1,200 cars off the road. Additionally, dairy farmers are partnering with their local utility providers and utilizing incentive and rebate programs to [invest in the most energy-efficient technologies](#)—reducing energy use up to 20%. More than 100 California dairy farms have also installed solar energy systems to meet their energy needs and help the state meet its clean energy goals.

While incentive programs are helping dairies to clean the air and reduce greenhouse gases, similar programs to help with water quality challenges must still be developed. The dairy community is working in an organized and collaborative manner to chart a path toward improvements to the protection of groundwater resources. Since 2010, Central Valley dairy farmers have been funding and managing a comprehensive water monitoring program. They plan to continue working with academic institutions, private industry innovators, and other partners to find new and enhanced ways to minimize the costs of enhancing water protection on dairies, and to maximize the value of manure and manure-based products. The goal is to identify cost-effective long-term strategies. These will take time and financial commitments to implement.

California dairy farms have a long history of increasing water-use efficiency. With fast-approaching groundwater management regulations and the threat of significant decreases of both surface and groundwater availability, farmers know they must do more to best utilize this increasingly scarce resource. They are working collaboratively with technology companies and non-profit organizations to [develop innovative models for water conservation](#).

California's dairy farms are making technological advancements that will allow them to continue their way of life. This includes [investing in robotic milking equipment](#) and other automated technologies that help reduce costs and address ongoing labor challenges. While these decisions are difficult and costly, dairy families are planning for long-term success, aiming to pass their farms to the next generation.

“California dairy farms adhere to the strictest environmental regulations in the nation,” said Cornell Kasbergen, a dairy farmer in Tulare. “It’s a tough place to dairy farm, but California is our home. We’re committed to working with our state’s leaders to find economically and environmentally sustainable solutions.”

California dairy farmers continue to improve the environment and provide nutritious and affordable foods, creating a model of sustainable farming for the world to follow. It is critical that continued progress be made in a way that is sustainable for the environment and for our farms. To be a part of the conversation, join California dairy farmers, state leaders, and other stakeholders at the California Dairy Sustainability Summit.

To learn more about how California dairy farmers are leading the way in planet-smart farming and to register, visit CADairySummit.com.

Dairy Cares is a statewide coalition supporting economic and environmental sustainability and responsible animal care. Our members include Bar 20 Dairy Farms, California Cattlemen's Association, California Dairies Inc., California Dairy Campaign, California Dairy Research Foundation, California Farm Bureau Federation, Dairy Farmers of America-Western Area, Dairy Institute of California, F & R Ag Services, GHD, Inc., Hilmar Cheese Co., Joseph Gallo Farms, Land O'Lakes, Merck Animal Health, Milk Producers Council, Ruan Transport Corp., Western United Dairymen, Yosemite Farm Credit, Zenith Insurance Company, and others. For information, visit DairyCares.com or call 916-441-3318. To subscribe to the monthly e-newsletter, contact dairycares@gmail.com.