NORTHEAST DAIRY

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHEAST DAIRY FOODS & SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATIONS



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The executive committees of the Northeast Dairy Foods Association and the Northeast Dairy Suppliers Association discuss the benefits of membership

ASSOCIATION NEWS
Recaps of the Dairy Blender, Clambake, and More

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Preparing for Our Annual Convention

DANIEL LAUSCH
PRESIDENT, NORTHEAST DAIRY FOODS ASSOCIATION

The first order of business is for me to welcome Alex Walsh as the new executive director of the Northeast Dairy Foods & Suppliers Associations. Alex re-joined us in June of this year (he is filling the position left vacant when Ozzie Orsillo departed last December for another job unrelated to the dairy business). His orientation will be super short as he already knows a lot about our membership from his prior years with our association.

Let's move on to preparing for our annual convention in Mount Pocono, Pennsylvania (Aug. 16, 17, and 18), and our other annual Northeast Dairy Foods events, like the Dairy Blender and Clambake.

One neat benefit of attending our industry events is that you cannot be sure who you will meet and strike up a business-related conversation with. That is why you need to be prepared by carrying a supply of business cards, so that poor spellers, like me, can get your email typed correctly the first time I enter it into my computer. There can also be planned meetings, like joining a group of four players for 18 holes of golf or meeting during some down time between events.

Regardless of how many years you have been in the dairy industry, there are always new people to meet because new employees are entering our businesses every year. Besides new folks to our industry, each year some employees move to other positions within the same or different company or cooperative, making for a fun new conversation from a different vantage point.

Throughout this issue of our quarterly magazine, you will find interesting recaps of this year's Dairy Blender, which took place in downtown Buffalo, New York, and our July Clambake and golf tournament. All fun northeast dairy events that are worth circling on your calendar.

READ MORE ON PAGE 34





Our Attention Now Turns to the Convention

MELISSA FRYER
PRESIDENT, NORTHEAST DAIRY SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION

By the time you read this column, we will all likely be recuperating from another successful Bruce W. Krupke Memorial Golf Tournament and Clambake. I am so happy that we are able to remember and honor our friend, long-time leader, and tireless industry advocate by continuing this event named in Bruce's memory. I know he would be pleased with the continued interest and popularity of our events as the association continues to grow.

This past May, the association experienced another very successful Dairy Blender. We enjoyed record attendance and saw increased engagement with the dairy foods presenters as well as the dairy suppliers' attendees. Valuable information was shared by the presenting companies, HP Hood, Lactalis, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, and Perry's Ice Cream, regarding their operations, future plans, challenges, and successes. Responses received from the post-event survey were very favourable, and we look forward to building on the success of this year's event as we plan for next year. If you have any suggestions or recommendations for 2024, please forward them to me or any board member.

With the Dairy Blender and annual Clambake behind us, our attention now turns to planning an association convention that will inform, entertain, and educate our members. The convention kicks off on Wednesday, Aug. 16 with speed networking and a cocktail party. Plans are underway to modify the speed networking based on suggestions from past events. Thursday's business session, following a morning of golf or sushi rolling, will include Ed Gallagher from Dairy Farmers of America, who will provide a general industry update. Kim Bukowski, from the Cornell University Department of Food Science, will update the membership regarding their workforce development program.

Panel discussions have always been a terrific way to provide a wealth of valuable information from a variety of industry professionals. Once again, our industry panels will not disappoint. The first panel is called *Got Leadership?* and it will be focused on perspectives from women working in the dairy industry. Dani Thon, director of operations at Dairy One, and Jayne Sebright, executive director at the Center for Dairy Excellence in Pennsylvania, will share their professional journeys and provide insights on their success in the dairy industry. This promises to be an insightful and encouraging discussion for all attendees. The second panel will spotlight a topic that is being discussed more and more in our industry: sustainability. This panel will address upcoming plant mandates, digester projects, and opportunities for community solar. Gloria Ford, senior energy advisor at Energy Partners, and Rasu Akki, owner of Ag-Grid Energy, will provide information on this important and timely subject.

We hope you plan to attend this year's convention and take advantage of the sessions, fun activities, and opportunities for professional exchange. Come prepared with questions to foster further dialogue on the highlighted topics being discussed. A list of registered attendees will be sent to you prior to the convention. Please reach out to a board member if there is a specific introduction you would like to have made, or if there anything we can do to assist you in making the most of your time at the convention. On behalf of the entire NDSA board and executive team, we look forward to seeing you in the Poconos in August!



A Brief Reintroduction

BY ALEX WALSH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What better time is there than summer in the northeast? After what always feels like a never-ending winter, and usually a cold, wet spring, beautiful weather is finally here to enjoy. Not to mention, the Northeast Dairy Foods and Suppliers Associations' major events are in full swing!

The associations held a very well attended Dairy Blender in May, followed by a successful Dairy Day celebration at the New York State Capitol. The Dairy Blender is a fairly new event added to the annual events calendar. This year, four processors – HP Hood, Lactalis, Perry's Ice Cream, and Upstate Niagara – gave updates and presentations to a packed room. This event has grown in popularity each year and is a fantastic way for NDSA members to hear directly from processors and manufacturers, as well as to network and meet with other supplier members.

The most popular event each year is the Northeast Dairy Foods Association's golf tournament and the Northeast Dairy Suppliers Association's clambake, where we sold more than 800 tickets! It truly is a relaxing, yet worthwhile event to attend to see old friends in the industry and make new connections. We see people from just about every one of our members, suppliers and manufacturers, and always end the day by meeting someone new, and seeing someone you haven't seen in years. Whether you send people from your company as an employee appreciation, to network and find new opportunities, or to hear directly from the association and our leadership about what the associations are doing for you, it is always a valuable event to attend each year.

We are very excited about this year's Northeast Dairy Convention at the Mount Airy Resort and Casino in Mt. Pocono, Pennsylvania! With the collaboration between Northeast Dairy Foods and Suppliers Associations, the New York State Cheese Manufacturers Association, and the



Pennsylvania Association of Milk Dealers, this provides for a more intimate environment to network with others in the dairy industry and receive important learning opportunities and information about what is currently happening in the market and beyond.

This year will mark my third year going through these events as a staff member of NDFSA. It would have been my fourth, however, COVID decided to throw a wrench into our 2020 events. While I know many of you through my previous roles with NDFSA, if you will allow me to give a brief reintroduction to those who may be newer to the association, or I haven't met yet.

I began with the associations in 2018 as the director of membership and communications, under then Executive Vice President Bruce Krupke. I oversaw the internal and external communications, provided services to current members, and was also tasked with bringing in new members to the respective associations. Much of what I have learned about the dairy industry I learned from Bruce. He was the executive vice president of the associations for over 25 years and spent his whole professional career in the industry. He was a true mentor and

great friend whom I miss dearly.

After Bruce passed away in early 2020, the association was under new leadership with Ozzie Orsillo taking over as executive vice president. With Ozzie being out of the Boston area and utilizing his strengths to oversee the association and work directly with the members and expand the memberships, I was promoted to associate vice president of regulatory affairs. I was charged with overseeing all of the associations' government relations, from monitoring issues and legislation, advocating on behalf of the membership, providing testimony at hearings, and engaging with legislators and agency officials on the issues impacting the dairy industry and our membership. I also continued to maintain the oversight of all communications and public relations for the association.

So, how did I get into the dairy industry you may ask? Well, my late grandfather was a dairy farmer. While I never worked on the farm itself, I took many visits to the farm growing up and saw firsthand the hard work and dedication it takes to work in the dairy industry. It was of great interest to me and developed into much more, obviously. I have a lot of family who are still involved in the agriculture business to this day in one facet or another.



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I look forward to a long and successful career with the associations, and also to working with the directors, members, and industry partners to continue the advocacy and other benefits of the association for the betterment of the dairy industry in the northeast.

I am a 2010 graduate of Oswego State University of New York. Upon graduation, I began as an unpaid intern for U.S. Senator Charles Schumer in the Syracuse regional office. After a few months of interning, I was hired by New York State Senator John DeFrancisco. During my tenure with Senator DeFrancisco, who at the time was the chair of the senate finance committee, I handled everything from legislative and state budget issues, including agriculture specific items, constituent services, and just about anything else in order to help keep a legislator's office moving. I traveled back and forth to Albany with the senator as well, and got a deep dive into the happenings of legislative sessions at the state capitol. From there, I was hired by Onondaga County Executive Joanie Mahoney, and was the Public Information Officer for the Department of Transportation and Department of Emergency Management.

After four years with the county, I had a short stint with a marketing firm as a public relations account manager, then accepted the role with the Northeast Dairy Foods and Suppliers Associations. During my brief time away from the associations, I worked for a specialty contractor, managing their government relations, communications, and marketing.

It's funny the paths we take in life, but I truly feel at home with the associations. I am honored and beyond grateful for the opportunity to serve as the fifth executive director in the associations' 95-year history. I look forward to a long and successful career with the associations, and also to working with the directors, members, and industry partners to continue the advocacy and other benefits of the association for the betterment of the dairy industry in the northeast.

My phone is always on, and I am always available to anyone who wants to meet or is in need of any of the services the associations provide. Never hesitate to reach out to me. We are here and ready to serve you, our members, to keep you informed, know that someone is fighting for you and your interests, and to help you grow and succeed.

Alex Walsh, the executive director of the Northeast Dairy Foods & Suppliers Associations, talks about the upcoming convention – and looks ahead to 2024.

10 QUESTIONS WITH Alex Walsh

1. Where is your hometown?

I am a lifelong Central New Yorker. I was born and raised in Skaneateles, a suburb of Syracuse, where my parents still live. I now call Camillus home, where I live with my wife, Laura, five-year-old son, Macklin, and our two-year-old daughter, Ella.

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2. What was your first job?

For those of you who know me, you won't be surprised to learn that my first job was working at a golf course. I worked out of the pro shop, washing carts, picking up range balls, making tee times, setting up tournaments…you name it!

3. What brought you back to the dairy industry?

I can't point to one specific reason that brought me back to the dairy industry, but I realized that during my first tenure with the NDFSA, I developed a true passion for it. I love the associations, the members, the role the associations play, the mission each of them has, our industry partners, and, of course, the people in this industry are undoubtedly the best. Plus, I get to think about milk, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream all day!

4. What is your favorite dairy food?

Do I have to pick just one? I'm a big fan of them all!

5. What is your favorite ice cream flavor?

I'm a huge black raspberry fan. Also, anything peanut butter.



6. What is your favorite food at the Clambake?

I'm not a huge seafood fan, but I do enjoy shrimp (and there's a long-running joke about shrimp at the Clambake with the NDSA board). Adding the pig roast to the menu gets a thumbs up from me!

7. What is your favorite memory from the Clambake or Convention?

Each of the Clambakes and Conventions has been great and unique. So far, my favorite memory was touring the battlefields in Gettysburg at the 2018 Convention (I'm also a big history nerd). I was also on the winning team of the golf tournament at the 2021 Convention, each year honoring Bruce Krupke, my first mentor in the industry. While I may not have attended as many Clambakes or Convention as some, I have a lot more to come!

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ▶







8. What are the most important issues facing the dairy industry right now?

The battles never end, and we continue to fight and advocate for the members on many, many issues, whether they are legislative or not. While most state legislatures are out of session for the remainder of the year, there are still numerous issues the associations continue to monitor and engage on: the Farm Bill and Federal Order reform, extended producer responsibility/recycling and sustainability regulations, costs of doing business, inflation, raw milk sales, labor and workforce issues. I am energized to take our fights to lawmakers and make it easier for our members to do business, and keep us more competitive.

9. What advice do you have for those just starting out in the dairy industry?

My advice to someone who is in the early stages or looking to start their career in the dairy industry is to work hard and be a sponge. The dairy industry is comprised of the hardest working people. Many don't get weekends or holidays off, or have to work nights. The milk keeps coming as cows don't have an "off switch." It can also be a complicated industry, so you have to be detail oriented. Learn as much as you can from those who have been around for a while. While the dairy industry is always evolving, veterans have the experience and knowledge, and often times, have a sense of which direction things are heading and can forecast the market really well. They all are also willing to share and provide support and guidance.

10. What do you like to do in your spare time?

Spare time? What's that? As the new executive director of the associations and a father to a five-year-old who is about to start kindergarten and two-and-a-half-year-old who's very cute but also quite a handful, there's not much for spare time these days (insert crying/laughing emoji here). I love spending time with my family, getting in a round of golf when I can, fishing, and working on my fitness. Some of you may also know that I am an ice hockey referee, officiating mostly Division 1 college games.

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Another Wild Ride Through the Legislative Session

BY ALEX WALSH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The summertime generally means that most state legislatures across the northeast are gaveled out for the remainder of the year. That is not to say that a surprise special session won't be called to bring legislators back to the capitol to pass one or more time-sensitive measures, so that is why the associations are always engaging and monitoring what is happening in the eight capitols under our footprint. Additionally, just because a state legislature is not in session, does not preclude a legislator from introducing legislation, so we always need to be on the lookout.

But while state legislators are more or less off for the rest of the calendar year, Congress has a short summer recess, but is in session all year. With that, we will dive into some issues going on at the federal level that the membership should be aware of, then give a recap of what has happened at the state level up until now.

The good news is that there have been some very positive issues moving in Congress that support the dairy industry. The first is the Whole Milk For Healthy Kids Act (HR 1147), which has been gaining traction through committees. This bill would allow whole and reduced fat milk to be served in schools. Since 2012, regulations from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have only allowed schools to serve low fat and nonfat milk. In turn, this would allow schools to purchase more milk options, benefiting processors. The association has been in support of this measure and will continue to voice that support as it hopefully continues its journey towards passage in Congress.

Along the lines of milk in schools is the *Milk is Indisputably Liked by Kids* Act of 2023 – or MILK Act for short. This would amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require schools to offer flavored milk under the school lunch program, and for other purposes. The MILK Act will prevent the Biden administration from excluding flavored milk in schools. This comes after the USDA issued a proposed rule in February that would set new nutrition standards for school meals, including limiting added sugars and sodium. If implemented, the new standards proposed could limit the amount of flavored milk, such as chocolate and strawberry, in high schools, while children in elementary and middle schools would be restricted to a variety of unflavored milk.

The Dairy Nutrition Incentives Program Act of 2023, introduced by U.S. Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) and Roger Marshall (R-Kan.), would provide SNAP participants with a dollar-for-dollar match for the purchase of nutritious dairy products. The program would expand the Healthy Fluid Milk Incentive Projects (HFMI), a 2018 Farm Bill program currently testing best practices for incentivizing milk purchases among SNAP beneficiaries to include additional nutritious dairy products, like cheese and yogurt. The bill incorporates recommendations, observations, and evaluation findings from current HFMI projects, respectively from the Baylor Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty, Auburn University's Hunger Solutions Institute, and the USDA.

To strengthen the safety net for Upstate New York dairy farmers by improving the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program. This bipartisan bill is being introduced after dairy farmers at Rep. Molinaro's Farm Bill Listening Session raised concerns with the DMC considering rising feed costs. Rep. Molinaro introduced this bill alongside U.S. Reps. Elissa Slotkin (D-MI-7), Van Orden (R-WI-3), and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA-7).

DMC is a federal insurance program that protects dairy farmers during volatile times when the cost of feed is high,

but revenue falls due to low milk prices. Since its creation in the 2018 Farm Bill, DMC has been received positively, but it needs updates that help it work better for the small and medium sized dairy farms that make up New York's 19th Congressional District. Namely, the level of production that farmers can cover under the program is still based on data from before 2014. This poses a serious risk for local farms who have grown since then, and now outproduce what their DMC plan covers, sometimes leaving millions of pounds of milk uninsured and farmers vulnerable to devastating financial losses.

The Dairy Farm Resiliency Act requires the production level be updated every five years to ensure dairy farmers are adequately insured for their milk production. The bill also allows medium-sized dairy producers to insure more of their milk.

The Dairy Pricing Opportunity Act of 2023 would require the Secretary of Agriculture to initiate a hearing to review Federal Milk Marketing Orders relating to pricing of Class I skim milk, and for other purposes. This would ensure that dairy farmers can price their products to reflect today's market environment. This bipartisan bill will help bring transparency and modernize the Federal Milk Marketing Order (FMMO) system so our farmers have confidence in their product pricing that is reflective of today's standards. The bill was introduced with Congressman Joe Morelle (NY-25) and has a Senate companion led by Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Susan Collins (R-ME).

At the individual state levels, there has certainly been a lot going on. As always, New York continues to be the most active state when it comes to proposals impacting businesses. Just a few of the issues that the NDFSA has been and is continually monitoring and advocating on behalf of the membership on include: the Extended Producer Responsibility Act, adjustments to minimum wage, and the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), specifically in regard to the industry's ability to comply with the regulations in the timetables. Another issue that was introduced this past session was S1604, the "Worksite Temperature Regulation Act." This bill could have serious implications on farm labor, warehouse operations, and other aspects towards dairy processor and supplier members.

Other issues that continue throughout the northeast include migrant justice, especially in Vermont, as well as bottle and recycling bills and regulations impacting labor.

The staff and board of directors will continue to be vocal, advocating on behalf of the membership on these and many other issues in all states under the association's footprint. There is always work to be done and the fight never stops. We will keep the pressure to make sure our members' voices are heard loud and clear.



Alex Walsh is the executive director of the Northeast Dairy Foods & Suppliers Associations. You can contact him by email at *alex.walsh@ndfsa.org*.



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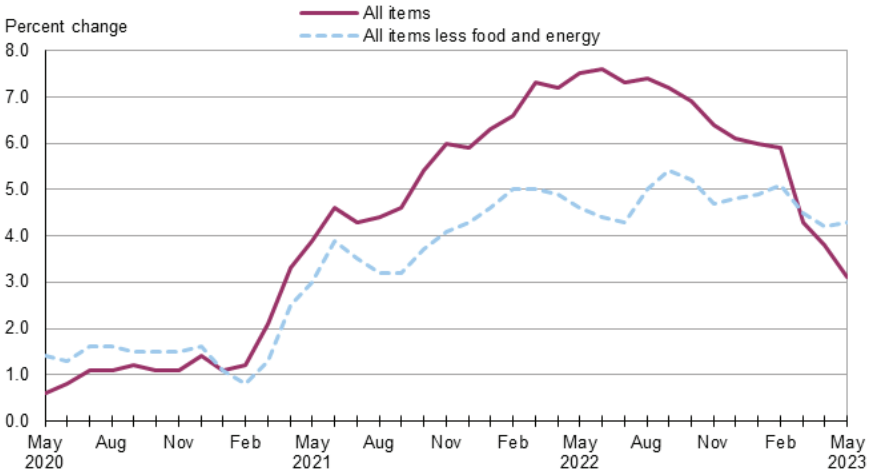
Domestic Dairy Demand Remains Strong

BY GARY LATTA

Milk prices have tumbled in recent months. U.S. dairy exports are down from last year, and global competition from the EU and New Zealand has increased. Last year's record high prices have kept culling the herd to a slower pace. There is a glut of milk in some regions causing loads to be dumped. Some plants in the Midwest are having trouble finding enough labor to keep their operations running on all shifts. All this, and schools being closed for the summer, have driven U.S. milk prices down. While domestic dairy demand in many countries has weakened due to inflationary pressure, in the U.S. it remains strong.

The Fed has raised its benchmark short-term interest rate ten times since March 2022, resulting in higher borrowing costs that are slowing economic growth. U.S. inflation has dropped down to 4.08%, but this is still twice as high as the Fed's target inflation figure of 2.00%. A majority of the 18 members that make up the Federal Reserve have indicated they will likely support two more rate increases before the end of this year.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Northeast region, May 2020–May 2023



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Many Americans are frustrated over the economy and inflation. Despite low jobless figures, it has become difficult for households to make ends meet. According to Mark Zandi, an economist from Moody's Analytics, an increasing number of Americans are dipping into their savings to survive. In "Around 25 million Americans are behind on their credit cards, auto loans, or personal loans," Zandi said in an article on *usatoday.com*. Average long term mortgage rates are now about 6.71%, more than double what it was two years ago.

Around the world, food prices are persistently and painfully high, despite lower global prices of dairy, grains, and oils. High food prices continue adding pain in the U.S., Europe, and especially developing countries. Joseph Glauber, a former chief economist with the USDA, explained that the price of specific agricultural commodities, like livestock, produce, grains, and milk, are just the

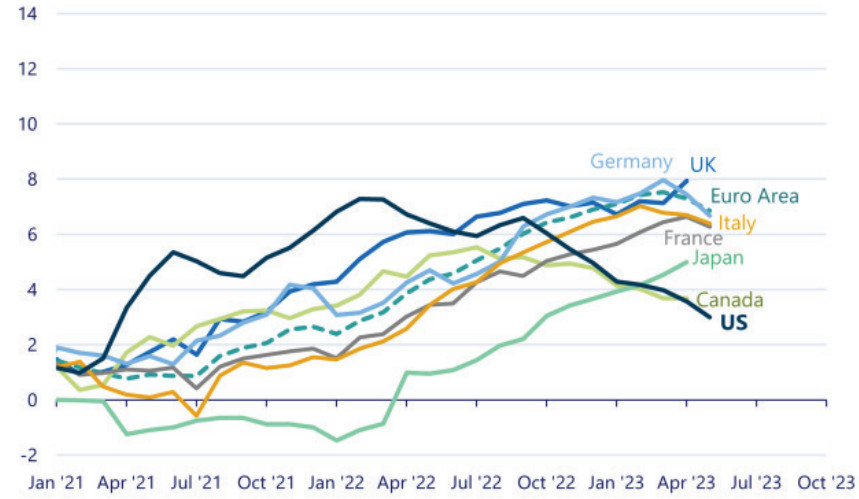
beginning. In an article on *apnews.com*, he said, "In the U.S., where food prices were up 8.5% last month from a year earlier, 75% of the costs are coming after it leaves the farm. It's energy costs. It's all the processing costs. All the transportation costs. All the labor costs." It is sad that so many state legislators refuse to recognize this. These types of costs are within what is called "core inflation" that excludes energy and food prices. These core costs are more resistant to being squeezed out of the economy.

The EU has riled U.S. food manufacturers in their attempts to hijack common names for products like feta, parmesan, bologna, chateau, and the like. So much so that in mid-May, a bipartisan group of members in Congress introduced the SAVE Act. The act stands for Safeguarding American Value-Added Exports (SAVE) and is to help promote the use and protection of such common names in the Farm Bill. This is the first-time action has been taken to protect common names within the Farm Bill. The SAVE Act amends the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 and directs the USDA's secretary to work with the U.S. Trade Representative to proactively defend the use of common names for ag products marketed internationally.

Other bipartisan dairy legislation introduced at the federal level includes the Dairy Nutrition Incentive Program Act that would allow SNAP participants to purchase more dairy, such as milk, cheese, yogurts, and the like with their benefits. The legislation is meant to increase access to nutritional dairy products for a healthy diet, while at the same time supporting U.S. producers and manufacturers. The act would provide SNAP participants with a dol-

Figure 2. Harmonized Core HICP Inflation in the G7

All items less energy and unprocessed food, HICP basis (Year-on-year percent)



Council of Economic Advisers

Sources: Eurostat, ONS, BLS, Statistics Canada, MEI, CEA analysis.
Note: Euro Area: Core HICP; UK: CPI ex. Energy & Unprocessed Food; US: Core R-HICP-U; Canada: CPI ex. Energy, Food Purchased at Stores, Mortgage Interest, Replacement Cost, & Property Taxes; Japan: CPI ex. Fresh Food, Energy, & Imputed Rent.
As of June 20, 2023 at 6:00pm.



lar-for-dollar match for the purchase of dairy products.

The MILK Act was introduced in early June and stands for Milk is Indisputably Like by Kids Act of 2023. It would require schools to offer flavored milks under the national school lunch program. The *Wall Street Journal* wrote a piece in early June, stating the USDA, under direction from the Biden Administration, was considering banning chocolate and other flavored milk from elementary and middle schools.

The Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act was introduced in early June by U.S. Rep. Glenn Thompson, the chair of the House Agriculture Committee. This act would permit schools to again offer full-fat whole milk (3.25%). Surveys show many youngsters do not like the taste of reduced and nonfat milks, and are driven to alternate beverages like soda. With 109 cosponsors, the House Education and Workforce Committee approved the legislation on June 6.

Another bipartisan group led by U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin and Jim Risch calls out the Biden Administration's draft guidance that allows non-dairy product imitators to use dairy names, like milk, when labeling their products. Their *letter* to Robert Califf, M.D. Commissioner Food and Drug Administration stated, "*Due to the proliferation of the plant-based alternative market, and the potential for consumer confusion over the nutritional content of these products compared to the original dairy products, we request that any final guidance clearly define the nutritional differences between plant-based imitation products and dairy products, and require accurate labeling requirements for plant-based producers to use in the marketplace that are compliant with the agency's own standards of identity for dairy.*"

Federal Milk Marketing Order national pricing petitions and revised proposals are listed on the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service website. There is a good deal of information on these websites that includes links to historical petitions:

- *https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/moa/dairy/petitions*
- *https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/moa/dairy*
- *Northeast Marketing Area - Federal Order 1 (fmmone.com)*

The Dairy Farm Resiliency Act was introduced on June 14 by U.S. Rep. Marc Molinaro. The act calls for renewal and enhancement of the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program to strengthen the safety net for producers. Molinaro has said DMC has been positively received by farmers but needs to be enhanced. The act would require production levels to be updated at least every five years to ensure producers are adequately covered. In addition, NYS Sen. Chuck Schumer has been actively calling for renewal of the DMC program as part of the Farm Bill.

The Small Farm Conservation Act was introduced on July 6 by NYS Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand and nine of her colleagues and would assist small farms in gaining access to USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP assists producers with soil health improvement, water quality, air quality, drought, and surface water. Gillibrand believes the complexity of the existing program's application process and other factors create difficulties for smaller producers to take advantage EQIP. Her proposal would create a subprogram within EQIP to specifically support smaller farms. NYS Sen. Gillibrand has also reintroduced the Dairy Pricing Opportunity Act of 2023 requiring the Secretary of Agriculture, within 180 days, to initiate hearings to review federal milk marketing orders relating to pricing of Class I skim milk, and for other purposes.

The current Farm Bill is set to expire in September of 2023. There are numerous predictions and comments about what could happen if we miss the deadline. While some predict gloom and doom, others feel we will likely see a short-term extension of the existing bill until a new one can be finalized. This has taken place in Farm Bills before. However, Rep. Glenn Thompson (R-PA), who chairs the House Agriculture Committee, keeps insisting he and his committee will get it done on time.

In early July, USMCA talks resumed in Cancun, Mexico. U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai were scheduled to meet with Mexican Economy Minister Raquel Buenrosto, and Canada's Trade Minister Mary Ng to discuss the state of the agreement and concerns. The U.S. and Canada are concerned over Mexico's energy and biotech policies, Canada is concerned over U.S. lumber duties, and, of course, the U.S. is still concerned over Canada's restrictions on its dairy products. Canada's dairy farm lobby has a lot of influence there. In addition to the U.S., New Zealand has also challenged Canadian dairy protectionist mechanisms. A USDA, Economic Research Service April 2023 report pointed out that U.S. cheese dominates the import market in Mexico, with 87% of Mexico's cheese imports coming from the United States in 2022. The five countries shown below have accounted for nearly two-thirds of U.S. cheese exports since 2019.

NORTHEAST DAIRY MEDIA

Is your business celebrating an anniversary in 2023?

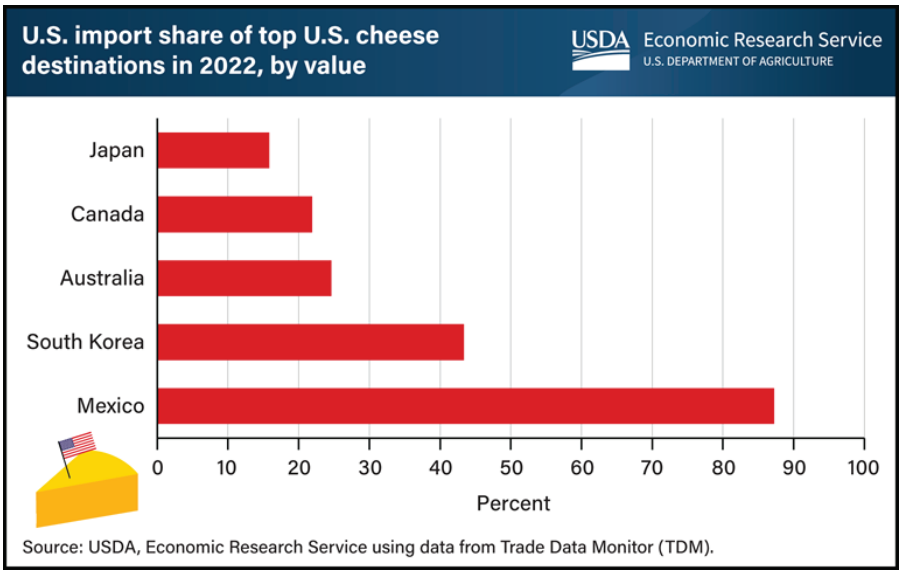
Let us know and be a part of the anniversary issue of *Northeast Dairy Magazine*

Below is our current list of members with anniversaries in 2023. If your company is missing contact courtneyknedairymedia.com to be added to our list.

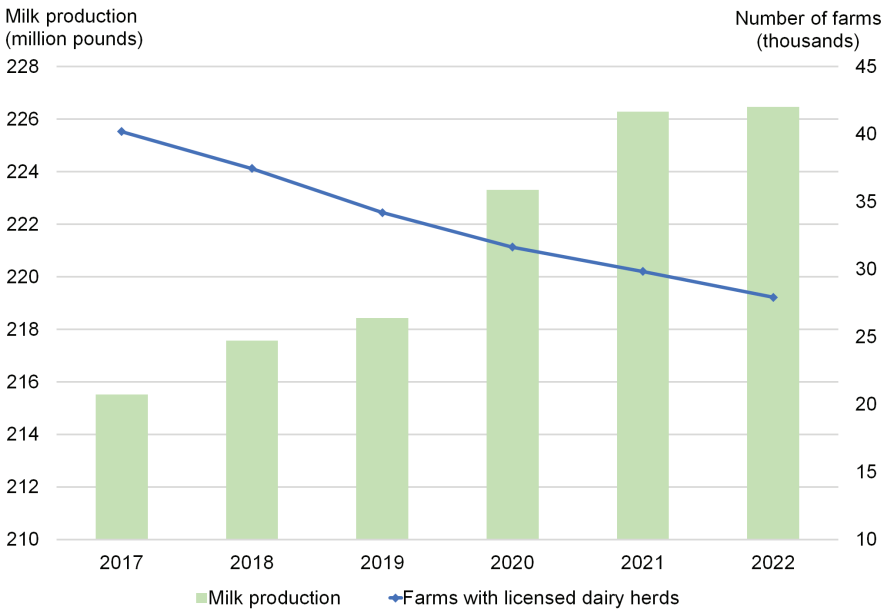
COMPANY	NUMBER OF YEARS IN BUSINESS
Wade's Dairy	130 years
Perry's Ice Cream	105 years
Byrne Dairy	90 years
Lactalis American Group	90 years
Cream-O-Land Dairies	80 years
Great Lakes Cheese	65 years
Bartlett Dairy	60 years
Steuben Foods	40 years
The Hudson Milk Company	30 years
Dora's Naturals	25 years
Midland Farms	20 years
Battenkill Valley Creamery	15 years
Black River Valley Natural	5 years
Alfa Laval	140 years
Americold	120 years
Ecolab Food & Beverage	100 years
United Dairy Machinery Corp	100 years
Virginia Dare	100 years
Haylor, Freyer & Coon	95 years
Kelley Supply Inc.	70 years
Rocket Products	70 years
All Star Purchasing	65 years

COMPANY	NUMBER OF YEARS IN BUSINESS
Buckeye Corrugated	65 years
Sessler Companies	65 years
Silgan Closures	65 years
Biomerieux	60 years
Koch Separations Solutions	60 years
Polytainers	55 years
D. Thomas & Associates	50 years
Northeast Great Dane	50 years
RAL Services	45 years
Dairy Ingredients, Inc.	40 years
Hansen Rice	40 years
Sweeteners Plus	40 years
CROPP-Organic Valley	35 years
Dairy Farmers of America	25 years
Integrated Packaging Machinery	25 years
Darifill	20 years
New Beginnings Farm	20 years
Sitzman Supply	20 years
Tretter Food Ingredients + Packaging	20 years
The Probst Group	15 years
Milk Moovement Inc.	5 years

United States serves up large chunks of cheese to top destinations.



Milk production and number of dairy farms from 2017 to 2022



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service calculations using information from USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Percentage of 2022 U.S. Totals

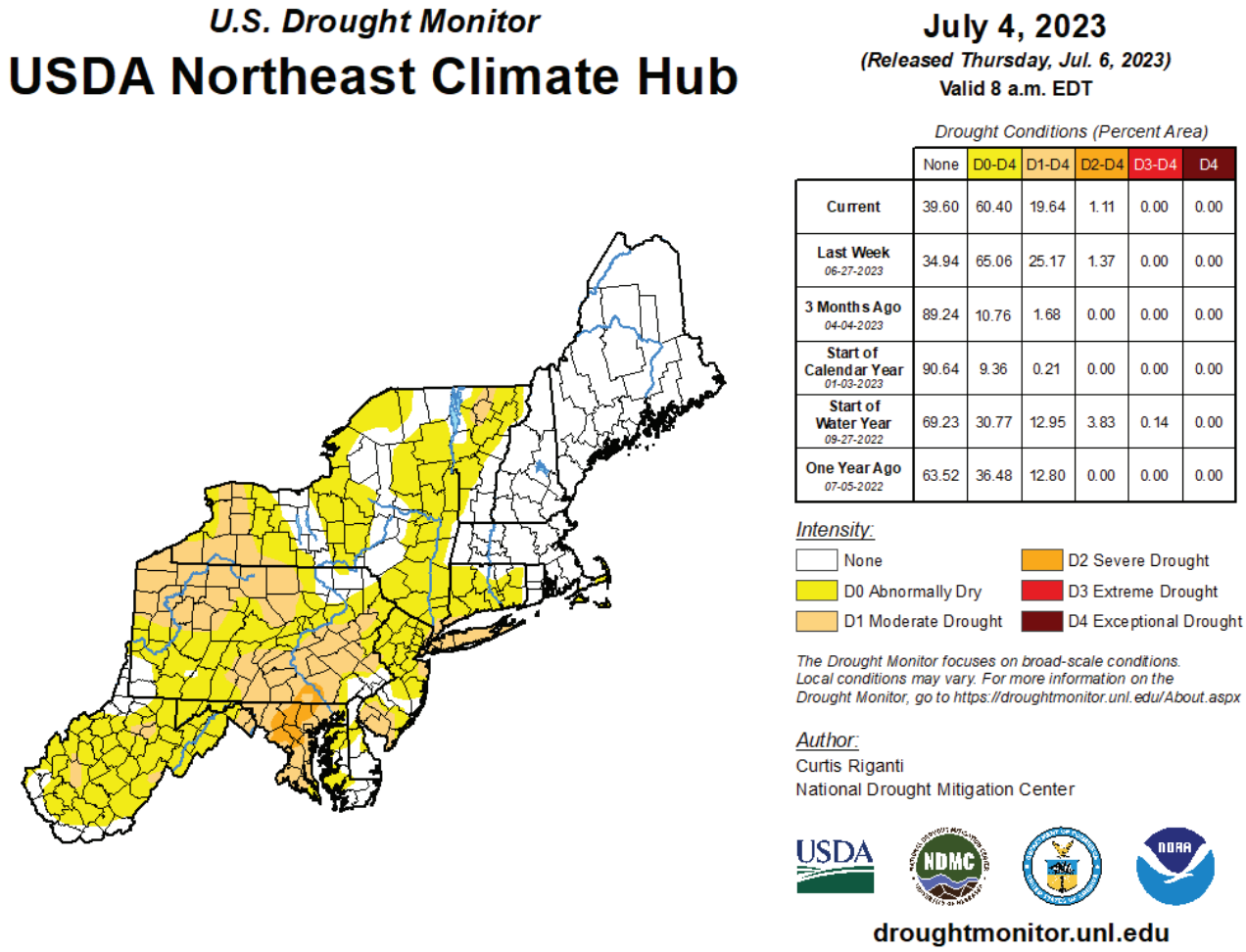
	U.S. Milk Production	U. S. Population Estimate
California	18.45	11.71
Wisconsin	14.08	1.77
Idaho	7.34	0.58
Texas	7.30	9.01
New York	6.92	5.90
5-State Total	**54.09**	**28.97**

In April, USDA's Research Service released a report titled "Farm Milk Production," describing the top five milk producing states in 2022. They were: California, Wisconsin, Idaho, Texas, and New York. Together, these five states produce over half of the milk supply annually in our country. Monthly milk production reports typically highlight trends for both the United States and the 24 major states. The 24 major states collectively represent about 95% of the number of cows and milk production in the United States.

In its June report, the USDA had milk production for May 2023 at 19.9 billion pounds for the United States, and at 19.0 billion pounds for the 24 major states. The number of milk cows were 9.43 million head for the United States, with 8.95 million head within the 24 major states. These figures give us some idea of the concentration of dairy farming within the United States. While dairy farming can be found in all states, it typically does better in those with cooler temperatures.

For May 2023, milk production in the 24 major states was up 0.8% to 19.0 billion pounds from May of 2022. Production per cow was up 11 pounds from last year, averaging 2,126 pounds. The number of cows within the 24 major states of 9.43 million head was an increase of 24,000 from May 2022.

Production within the top states was mixed as heat, drought, and heavy rains ravaged some regions. May production in California and Arizona was down 0.7% and 1.4% respectively. Minnesota and Wisconsin were up 2.5% and 1.3% respectively. Idaho was up 3.1% and Texas was up just 0.8%. Vermont was up 0.5 % and New York was up 2.1%. Pennsylvania milk production was down 0.6% for May, showing both a decrease in the number of milk cows and production per cow. According to the National Drought Mitigation Center, most of Pennsylvania is in an abnormally dry to moderate drought situation. New York, with both an increase in the number of milk cows and an increase in production per cow, continues to



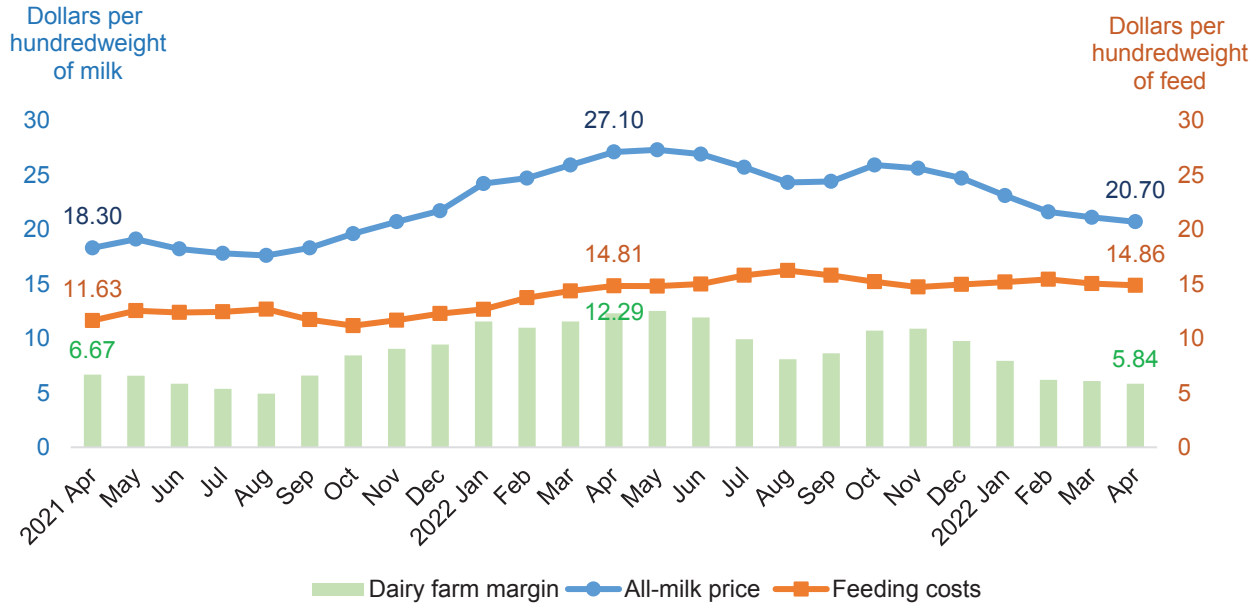
demonstrate robust dairy growth. June's USDA Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Outlook described wholesale dairy product price trends as "mixed," with weakening cheese and dry whey, but firm butter and nonfat dry milk. The dairy product prices USDA uses in its calculation of monthly milk prices are announced in the National Dairy products Sales Report (NDPSR). Here is a short recap of how these prices have moved since the beginning of this year:

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ▶

NATIONAL DAIRY PRODUCT SALES REPORT
USDA-AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

	Jan. 7	Apr. 15	July 1
Butter	2.4949	2.3885	2.4248
Cheese Blocks	2.1125	1.9710	1.4714
Cheese Barrels	1.8637	1.8808	1.5644
Dry Whey	0.4430	0.4472	0.2892
Nonfat Dry Milk	1.4077	1.1754	1.1535

Figure 4. All-milk price versus feeding costs



Source:USDA, Economic Research Service using information from USDA, Farm Service Agency, Dairy Margin Coverage Program.

The weekly prices the USDA announces in the NDPSR tend to follow the daily cash prices announced at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME). Here in the early weeks of July, CME trading has prices at $2.4725 for butter, $1.3750 for blocks, $1.3506 for barrels, $0.2344 for dry whey, and $1.1056 for nonfat dry milk.

The June Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Outlook described the prices of cheese and dry whey on a downward trend, but a slight upward trend for butter and stable nonfat dry milk. Lower milk prices and higher feed costs lowered the April milk-feed ration reported by USDA-NASS to 1.48, down 0.47 points from April last year.

Domestic dairy product sales within the U.S. are strong. The U.S. Census Bureau claims that sales for foodservice and grocery stores increased in the first four months of 2023 compared to the same period last year. The USDA's Weekly Dairy Market News reported that grocery store dairy product promotions increased from January to May 2023 compared to the same period last year, resulting in increased sales of cheese, sour cream, yogurt, butter, and ice cream.

The USDA's latest 2023 forecast, announced in June, has the size of the U.S. milking herd remaining steady at 9.415 million head. The expected milk output per cow was lowered by 20 pounds to 24,260. The USDA expects lower output per cow in the second and final quarter of this year. With cow numbers remaining steady, and lowering output per cow, the USDA has reduced the production forecast for 2023 by 0.2 billion pounds to 228.4 billion pounds from last month's forecast.

The USDA projects lower exports of butter and lactose, but higher exports of dry skim milk products. Overall export volume has been reduced on both a milkfat and skim solids basis. Import expectations were mixed, with an increase in butter but lower cheese and milk protein concentrate. Some industry observers feel U.S. dairy exports will pick up later in the year as it becomes more competitive on price.

The 2023 price projection for cheese has been lowered to $1.730 per pound and dry whey to $0.370 per pound. However, butter and nonfat dry milk prices have been raised to $2.435 and $1.190 per pound respectively.

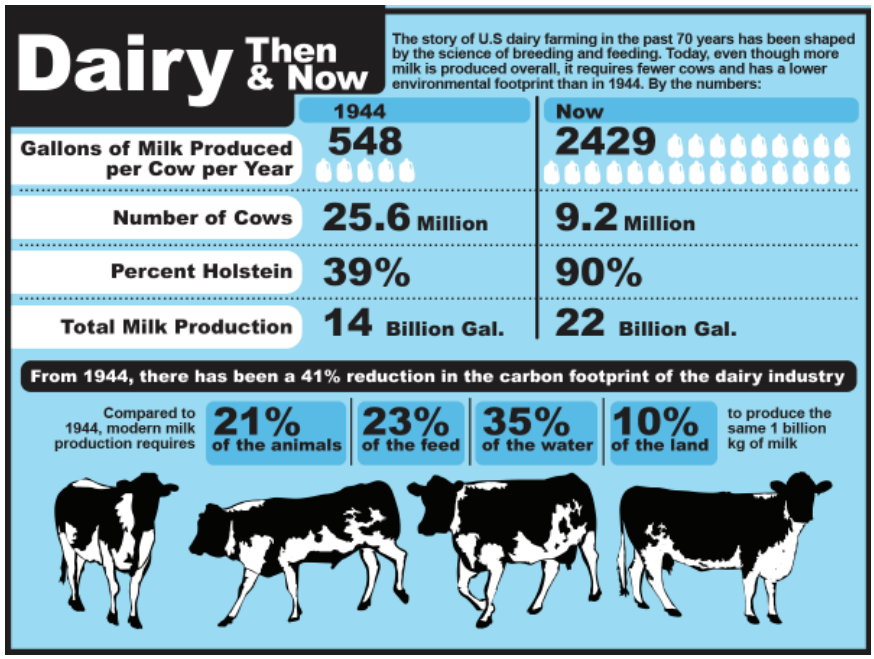
Lower projections for cheese and dry whey decrease the 2023 Class III forecast to $16.70 per cwt, down $1.05 from the previous estimate. Higher projections for both butter and nonfat dry milk prices raise the Class IV forecast by $0.05 to $18.35 per cwt. The 2023 all-milk price forecast therefore has been adjusted lower by $0.55 to $19.95 per cwt.

The USDA made little adjustment to its long range 2024 forecast for supply and domestic use, leaving most of it unchanged from the previous month. They did, however, adjust cheese and dry whey lower, left butter unchanged, and raised the nonfat dry milk price.

Lowering their expectations for cheese and dry whey prices in 2024, the USDA decreased their previous forecast for Class III by $0.50 to $17.00 per cwt. Expected higher prices for nonfat dry milk in 2024 raised the Class IV forecast by $0.10 to $17.45 per cwt. With these updated projections, the 2024 all-milk price was lowered $0.25 and is now forecast at $19.65 per cwt.



Gary Latta is a dairy product specialist consultant for the Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc. He has more than 30 years of experience in providing economic analysis, statistics, and information to the dairy processing industry.



Source: Cornell CALS, Charting New York's milky way, Alexandra Chang. *Charting New York's milky way | CALS (cornell.edu).*







How a New York Dairy Farmer Became a Music Icon

BY GARY LATTA

If you were to list New York's most famous dairy farms, undoubtedly Max Yasgur's operation in Bethel would be at or near the top. Yasgur is the only dairy farmer, and one of a few non-musicians, to be honored with a full-page obituary in *Rolling Stone Magazine* following his death in 1973.

With the 54-year anniversary of the Woodstock Music and Art Fair that took place from Aug. 15-18, 1969 approaching, let's look at the circumstances leading up to the famous festival and the Catskills dairy farmer that rescued the event when its sponsors desperately needed a location.

Yasgur was born to Jewish immigrants in New York City on Dec. 15, 1919. He and his brother, Isadore, grew up working at two family businesses: a farm and a hotel in Maplewood, New York. Yasgur met Miriam Miller, of Monticello, and they were married in 1940. He attended New York University, studying real estate law. Realizing that farming was his first love, Yasgur returned to the Maplewood family farm. Around 1948, he purchased two farms in Bethel and operated these along with the Maplewood farm. In 1952, he sold Maplewood and concentrated his efforts in Bethel, eventually buying six to eight more farms. He became a producer-dealer (PD) with an on-site pasteurizing plant to bottle his own label distributing to area residents, stores, restaurants, hotels, and schools.

Yasgur Farms grew to 600 acres and 650 cows by the mid '60s and was the top producer of milk in Sullivan County. Some reports credit the farm for raising Holsteins, while others say Yasgur had mostly Guernsey cows. It is likely he had a combination of both at various times.

In early 1969, four young men about age 27, Artie Kornfeld, Joel Rosenman, Michael Lang, and John Roberts, formed Woodstock Ventures, Inc. to produce a music festival in the town of Woodstock in Ulster County. The original site of Woodstock is northwest of Kingston, about 53 miles south of Albany, off Route 87 South.

Just when Woodstock was looking to be the final event location, resistance



Click to watch "Woodstock '69: The sad, true story of Max Yasgur" on YouTube

from the town's residents forced the promoters to seek an alternate site 10 miles to the east in Saugerties. Residents and town officials in Saugerties also refused the event, believing the large numbers of people expected would be too much for their community.

Now turned away by the town of Woodstock and its neighbor Saugerties, the young capitalists looked 35 miles south along I-87 to the town of Wallkill, where they signed an agreement to rent 300 acres at the Howard Mills Industrial Park. By late spring, opposition from Wallkill residents emerged as new estimates for the size of the festival went from 4,000 to more than 40,000 attendees. Then, in mid-July, a month before the advertised start of the festival, officials revoked Woodstock Ventures' permit, declaring the portable restrooms prescribed failed to meet Wallkill code. Frustrated, and with barely a month to go before the event, the four promoters were desperate to find a suitable location. By this time, event tickets were briskly being sold and posters for the event were distributed. Time was running out.

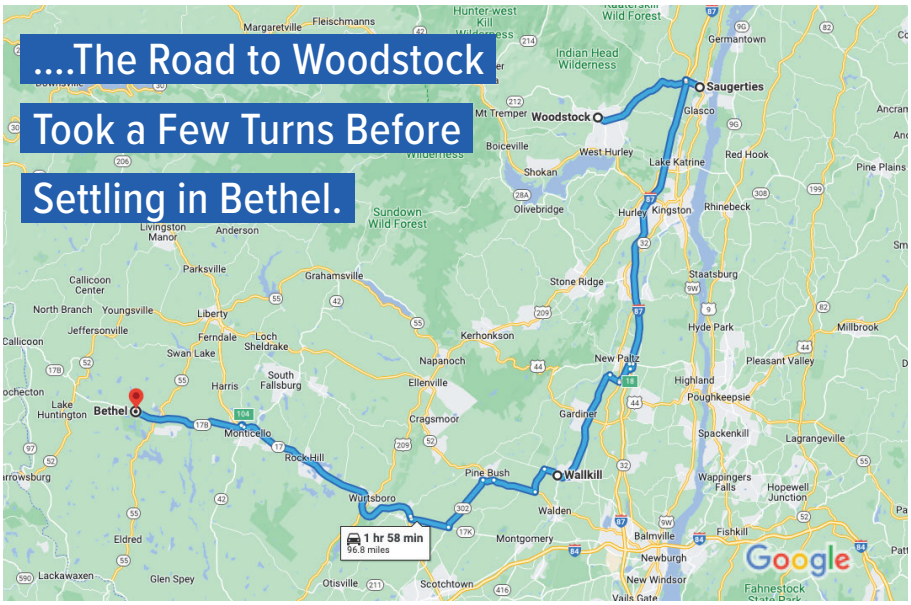
About 43 miles to the east of Wallkill, in the hamlet of White Lake, Elliot Tiber, son of the owners of the El Monaco Motel, read of the Wallkill rejection. According to Tiber, his motel had a permit for the White Lake Music and Arts Festival, and he thought to host the Woodstock event on 15 acres in White Lake near his motel. Tiber contacted Woodstock Ventures and met with Lang around July 18 to pitch his idea. Lang decided that 15 acres would not be enough.

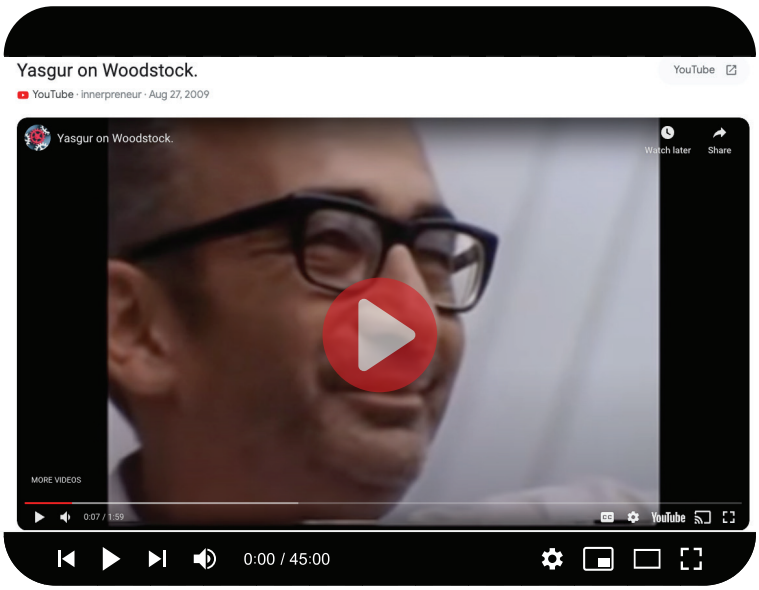
At this point, the history and recollections get a little fuzzy. Tiber claims to have put Lang in touch with 49-year-old Yasgur. Lang however



Attribution: By Unknown Source (1969), HMdb.org







Click to watch "Woodstock '69: The sad, true story of Max Yasgur" on YouTube

recounts that Tiber put him touch with a real estate salesman, who then introduced him to Yasgur. Later, Yasgur's wife, Miriam, and son, Sam, concurred with Lang, saying Yasgur never knew Tiber. Kornfeld, one of the four partners in Woodstock Ventures, said that it was he who learned of Yasgur's farm from his network of sources.

Three miles east of White Lake was Yasgur's dairy operation in the town of Bethel. Yasgur had heard about Woodstock Ventures' difficulties securing a site for their festival. Yasgur was also aware that event organizers were running short of time and barely had a month left before the advertised start on Aug. 15. Lang met Yasgur for the first time in one of his freshly cut alfalfa fields. They had a general discussion and Yasgur pointed to the near 300-acre parcel of land he may be willing to rent. According to Lang, the land was perfectly shaped in the form of a gently sloping amphitheater with a rise near the bottom for a stage. The two agreed to meet again after Lang spoke with his partners.

For their second meeting, Yasgur and Lang repeated their walk in the alfalfa field. This time Yasgur brought a pencil and paper to estimate the potential loss he would incur and the cost to reseed the land after the expected 40,000 hippies trampled his land in a weekend of fun. A key factor influencing Yasgur's decision was the unusually wet summer in 1969. The extra money from the land rental would help purchase hay for his cows. The deal was agreed to and signed right there in the alfalfa field. Some accounts report that Yasgur received $50,000 for the use of his land. Other, more numerous, reports claim that it was $75,000.

Word swiftly spread in and around Bethel of Yasgur's deal to bring the festival to their little rural community. Not all were thrilled over the idea and Yasgur began to receive nasty calls, letters, and threats. Signs popped up saying, "Don't Buy Yasgur's Milk"…. He Loves Hippies." The threats and attacks, however, served to strengthen Yasgur's resolve. According to his wife, Miriam, "When Max saw that, I knew he was going to let them have their festival." Yasgur also believed that the older and younger generations needed to work together to help understand each other. In 1969, the country was deep into the Vietnam War, and there was abundant controversy over drug use.

Over the next few weeks, Yasgur developed a rapport with the festival organizers and attendees. The Yasgur family occasionally offered free food and water. Yasgur was outraged that some members of the community began selling water for profit to attendees. He said, "How can anyone ask money

for water?" So, Yasgur put up a large sign on his barn along Route 17B that said, "Free Water." He also provided bottled water, milk, and other dairy products from his operations. Yasgur later remarked to the *New York Times*, "If the generation gap is to be closed, we older people have to do more than we have done." Yasgur was not pleased, however, with the open use of drugs on his property. To festival organizers and attendees, he was their hero.

Rumors circulated of a 'free concert and festival' happening in upstate New York with some of the biggest rock music acts at the time. The expected 40,000 attendees ended up being somewhere between 400,00 and 500,000. The crowd sprawled over most of Yasgur's land. While the festival was magic in many ways, the unexpected massive crowd strained everything nearby. Highways and roads were blocked. Helicopters had to bring in supplies and attend to the sick. Police were brought in from neighboring counties to help keep control. By Sunday Aug. 17, Governor Nelson Rockefeller declared the festival a disaster area and considered sending in the National Guard.

Yasgur was a folk hero and father figure to the attendees that weekend. Rumors that he fought through local opposition to help make this concert happen made him revered among the crowd. On the third day, Yasgur himself took to the stage and spoke directly to the crowd in his lauded "I am a farmer" speech ending in thunderous applause. There seem to be no records that mention how the cows were attended to or the impact the three-day festival had on local dairy operations. No doubt the cows were listening and were treated to some of the finest rock music acts of the day.

In the weeks following the festival, Yasgur's name was raked over the coals by most members of the community around Bethel and he was no longer welcome at the local general store. Yasgur ended up being sued for $35,000 in property damages by the owners of neighboring farms. Later, Yasgur Farms themselves were awarded $50,000 in compensation for damage to their dairy farm.

According to reports, Yasgur never regretted his decision. The following year, in 1970, he refused a second attempt to rent his land for a reunion concert. Yasgur responded, "As far as I know, I'm going back to running a dairy farm."

Yasgur had his first heart attack in the mid-1960s, and around 1970, he was given directions by his doctor to retire. So, in 1971, the family sold the farm and moved to Florida, where Yasgur lived for a year and a half before suffering a fatal heart attack at age 53.

In June of 2017, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo officially recognized and designated an 800-acre area surrounding the original site of the dairy farm to be added to the National Register of Historic Places, calling the festival a "pivotal moment in both New York and American history."



Gary Latta is a dairy product specialist consultant for the Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc. He has more than 30 years of experience in providing economic analysis, statistics, and information to the dairy processing industry.

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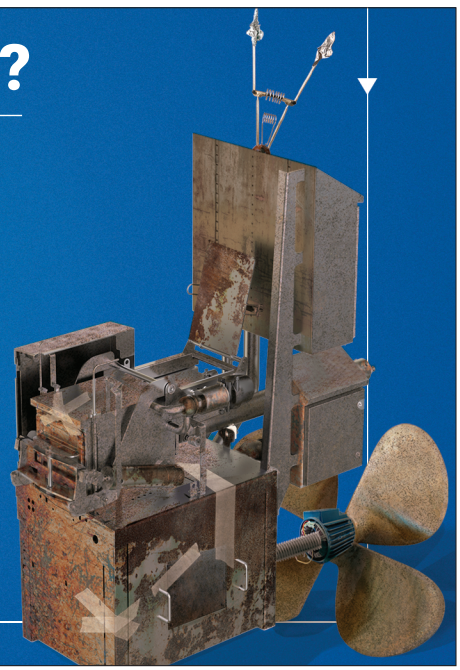
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2023 Dairy Blender

The Northeast Dairy Foods and Northeast Dairy Suppliers Associations hosted the fourth annual Dairy Blender on May 17. More than 140 dairy professionals met at the Aloft Hotel in Downtown Buffalo. The four-hour event featured a two-hour business session with speakers from HP Hood, Lactalis, Perry's Ice Cream, and the Upstate Niagara Cooperative. Topics included best practices, hiring and retaining employees, emerging dairy trends, and supplier partnerships. After the presentation, there was a two-hour networking event, which included an open bar and buffet-style foods.












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Welcome to the 2023
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Thank you to our all sponsors,
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May 17, 2023
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NORTHEAST DAIRY FOODS
AND
SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATIONS
DairyBlender

2023 Dairy Day

Members of the dairy industry and New York State lawmakers once again came together to celebrate Dairy Day on May 23 at the State Capitol in Albany. The event was sponsored by NYS Senator Michelle Hinchey, chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and NYS Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo, chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee. Thank you to our members that participated and provided samples of their products!










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2023 Bruce W. Krupke Memorial Golf Tournament and Clambake

The Northeast Dairy Foods and Suppliers Associations hosted the annual Bruce W. Krupke Memorial Golf Tournament and Clambake on July 12. The day began with golf at Rogues Roost Golf Club, and was followed by the clambake and pig roast at the Spinning Wheel Event Center in North Syracuse (there was also a silent auction and raffle prizes).

"The 2023 Annual Bruce W. Krupke Memorial Golf Tournament and Clambake was an outstanding success!" said Alex Walsh, executive director of the Northeast Dairy Foods and Suppliers Associations. "We had perfect weather for over 190 golfers in the tournament and sold over 900 tickets to the Clambake this year. This day is a great way to show appreciation for your employees or customers, see old friends, and make new connections in the industry. We look forward to seeing you again on July 10, 2024!"

















































NORTHEAST DAIRY CONVENTION



Aug 16-18

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HELD AT THE

Mount Airy Resort & Casino

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2023 NORTHEAST DAIRY CONVENTION

AGENDA

Wednesday, Aug. 16	
Noon	Registration and vendor table setup
3-5 p.m.	NYSCM board meeting
4 p.m.	Hotel check-in
5:30-7 p.m.	Speed networking and cocktail party
7-8 p.m	Dinner with special guest, PA Ag Secretary, Russell Redding
Thursday, Aug. 17	
7:30-9:30 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.	Golf Tournament (includes lunch)
11 a.m.-1 p.m.	Sushi rolling class (includes lunch)
3-5 p.m.	BUSINESS SESSION • *Ed Gallagher, Dairy Farmers of America – Dairy Industry Update* • *Kim Bukowski, Cornell University Department of Food Science – Workforce Development Program*
6-7 p.m.	Cocktail Party
7-9 p.m.	Banquet dinner – Guest Speaker Russell Redding, Secretary Dept of Agriculture
Friday, Aug. 18	
7:30-9:30 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30-10:30 a.m.	PANEL DISCUSSIONS • *Got Leadership? Perspectives from Women in the Dairy Industry.* • *Sustainability – Upcoming plant mandates, digester projects and community solar.*
10:30 a.m.	Vendor table teardown
11 a.m.-1 p.m.	• NDFA board meeting • PAMD board meeting



Meet the SPEAKERS

Business Session – Thursday, Aug. 17



KIM BUKOWSKI

Cornell University Department of Food Science – Workforce Development Program

Kimberly Bukowski is part of the Dairy Food Science Extension team at Cornell University, where she provides leadership for the Dairy Foods Certificate Program, including program oversight, marketing, and development. Kim also provides Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) consulting and training to the industry. She is a certified Safe Quality Foods (SQF) Auditor and Trainer. She is a lead instructor for FSPCA Preventive Controls and FSVP. Kim's career in the dairy food industry includes working in dairy quality and processing, plant management, brand development, and building a facility to manufacture and sell ice cream. She managed the Borden's Ice Cream Plant, the Cornell Dairy Plant, Kimberly's Ice Cream and has performed 3rd party audits in over 150 plants in the U.S. Most recently helping the Dairy Industry with workforce development, including a "new" Cornell Dairy Bootcamp for high school graduates.



EDWARD GALLAGHER

President, DFA Risk Management

As president of DFA Risk Management, Ed leads the DFA division that offers price risk management programs to members, DFA-owned plants and customers and that offers the Federal Dairy Revenue Protection insurance program. Ed has worked in the dairy industry his whole life, having been raised on his family's dairy farm in Central New York. He spent 13 years at the Northeast Milk Market Administrators office and joined Dairylea Cooperative Inc. in 1996, where he served in a variety of senior management roles. He has been in his present role since 2010. Ed is a frequent industry speaker imparting his knowledge of milk pricing, risk management, and the dairy industry. He is a member of the National Milk Producers Federation board of directors. He serves on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission's Agricultural Advisory Committee, the Risk Management Committee for the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, the National Milk Producers Federation Cheese Pricing Task Force and the New York Commissioner of Agriculture's Milk Marketing Advisory Council. He holds a BS degree from Cornell University and an MS degree from The Ohio State University.

Panel Discussions – Friday, Aug. 18

WOMEN IN DAIRY



DANIELLE THON

Director of Operations and Marketing, Dairy One Cooperative, Inc.

Dani began her career at Dairy One in 1990 as a Sales and Marketing Specialist, educating farms and the agribusiness community on the value of DHI records. Although unplanned, she quickly became immersed in the rapid adoption

Click here, or visit
NDFSA.ORG/EVENTS/
for the most updated
convention information.

of herd management software and computers on farms. The next 18 years were dominated by traveling the Northeast, supporting dairies as well as the Agri service community optimizing herd management software and other technology tools to make better decisions.

In the mid 2000's Dairy One formed a partnership with a company focused on providing environmental planning and crop consulting services. Dani shifted into a leadership role to assist with the overall management of this new endeavor. Over the next several years, she helped with integrating the teams as well as the processes and overall operations into Dairy One. Dani's responsibilities continued to evolve, providing the foundation for today's role as Director of Operations and Marketing. Currently, she oversees several departments including Facilities, Sample Transportation and Marketing.

Dani is a graduate of Cornell University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science.



JAYNE SEBRIGHT

Executive Director for Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania

Jayne Sebright is the executive director for the Center for Dairy Excellence and the Dairy Excellence Foundation. She leads a team of eight individuals who work to strengthen and support Pennsylvania's dairy industry through creating connections, providing resources, and offering grants that focus on business transformation, transition, and success. On the Foundation side, they support the next generation of dairy through offering scholarships, supporting on-farm internships, and providing curriculum for students in K – 12. Jayne has been with the Center since September 2006. She graduated with highest distinction from Penn State and has more than 25 years of experience in strategic marketing and communications, holding positions with Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association & Land O'Lakes. Jayne and her husband Robby have a dairy and crop farm in East Berlin, Adams County, Pennsylvania.

SUSTAINABILITY



GLORIA FORD

Senior Energy Consultant, Energy Partner Consultants

Gloria has been a Senior Energy Advisor with Energy Partner Consultants since 2021. Since then, she has leveraged her experience and her large network of relationships from her previous job as the Director of Business Development for a large construction company to help small businesses, corporations, organizations, and individuals save thousands of dollars on their utility bills.

If you ask Gloria why she enjoys this type of work, she will tell you that it brings her joy to know that her clients are not paying more to their utility company than absolutely necessary. She knows this stems from her days of receiving $400+ electric bills for her tiny apartment when money was incredibly tight. If Gloria represents you, she does it with a passion.



RASHI AKKI

Owner, Ag-Grid Energy

What does your Organization Do? "Ag-Grid Energy has a vision to drive dairy farm sustainability by converting agricultural and organic waste to energy, enhance nutrient management practices thereby improving farm viability and financial stability." ***Accelerating Waste Conversion to Renewable Energy***

Rashi Akki launched Ag-Grid Energy in 2016 with a vision to drive dairy farm sustainability by converting agricultural and organic waste to renewable energy, enhance farm management practices thereby improving farm viability and financial stability. Prior to launching Ag-Grid Energy LLC, Dr. Akki worked for 20 years at the chemical company DuPont. Dr. Akki held senior positions in central R&D, DuPont Titanium Technologies, Nonwovens and Industrial Biosciences. The experience at Industrial Biosciences introduced Dr. Akki to advanced biofuels and biogas. Currently Dr. Akki is a member of American Biogas Council. Dr. Akki received her B.S. in Chemical Engineering from Osmania University, M.S from University of Connecticut and Ph.D. from Georgia Institute of Technology.

The biggest impact that Ag-Grid Energy is making is working with the farmers and food processors and supporting them in their sustainability journey. Creating a self-managed business with a family-oriented perspective.

Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc.

NDSA Northeast Dairy Suppliers Association, Inc.

NDFA NDSA NORTHEAST DAIRY FOODS AND SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATIONS

ASK A BOARD MEMBER

What do you do ahead of the convention to ensure that you and your team can most effectively make use of your time? If you are bringing new employees to this year's convention, what pieces of advice will you offer them? And what will you do after the convention to follow up on what you learned or who you networked with?

For this issue, we asked board members from the Northeast Dairy Foods Association and the Northeast Dairy Suppliers Association about how they make the most of the annual convention. This is what they said.

And make sure to read the Q4 issue for our next "Ask Your Board" column!

Editor's note: *These answers were edited for clarity.*



Daniel Lausch, Director, Milk Procurement, Lactalis USA Inc.

Show up with a plentiful supply of business cards. Follow up on any business connections made during the convention and share business cards with co-workers in other areas of our dairy business.



Ryan T. Elliott, Esq., Management, Byrne Dairy, Inc.

The convention is a healthy mixture of entertainment, networking, and learning amongst dairy professionals. So, my advice for any attendee is to have fun with it all.

Which shouldn't be difficult. As a general rule, dairy folks are the best kind of people and company. They

wake up early, work long hours, and are passionate about their work.

To me, the convention represents a respite from the daily dairy grind. The venues and entertainment are first-rate, and the industry connections and learnings can't be matched.



Tony Nassar, Senior Dairy Procurement Manager, Chobani

First, I check the attendee list. Folks coming that are part of my world, I prepare some questions and talking points. Second, I reach out to those folks in advance and schedule some time at the conference to meet. Third, I make some take-away notes from our meetings. I often talk with some folks that don't directly interact with my role. I put them in contact with some of my other folks at Chobani.



Nathan Pistner, Plant Manager, Great Lakes Cheese

Review the list of attendees or reach out to those of interest ahead of time to see if they are attending.

Let folks know you will be attending; once you meet up with them, chances are an introduction to someone new will be made. And if you're golfing, have a good time and don't worry about your score.

Ensure contact is made sooner than later with those individuals you are interested in.



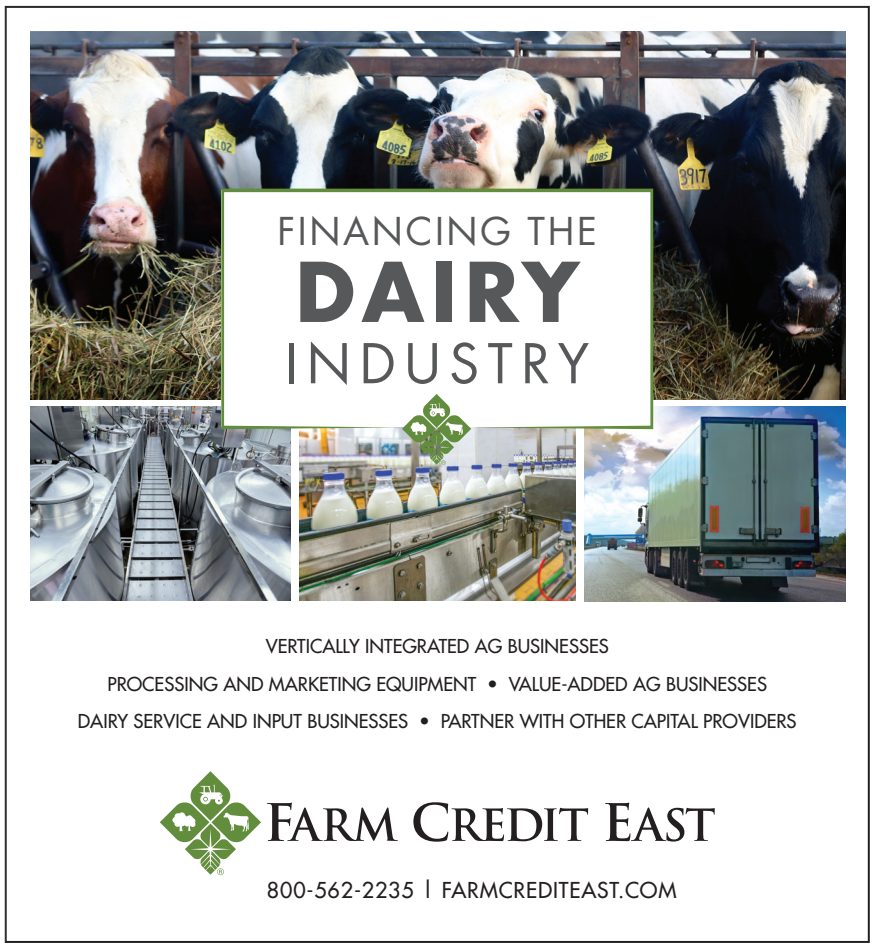
Melissa Fryer, Sanitary Heat Transfer Business Development Manager, Alfa Laval

Prior to the convention, I like to review the topics being discussed/presented to prepare any questions I may have on these topics. I also review the registered attendee list to see if there is anyone specific I would like to connect or reconnect with. After the convention, I follow up with any information that has been requested, as well as stay in touch with the connections made.



John Bucklin, Business Unit Sales Manager, WestRock

Since our business serves several dairy processors, our team will meet to identify specific challenges, as well as industry trends impacting our cus-





tomers' businesses, so we can offer solutions where possible.

The best advice for first time attendees is to take advantage of this casual and collaborative setting by being an active listener, and engage with individuals with whom you can easily connect with.

New contacts and specific business opportunities will generate follow-up meetings by our account managers. Longer range topics may involve WestRock technical or sales team members from our other divisions, whose resources we will access.



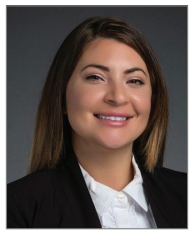
Glenn Emory, General Manager, Weidenhammer New Packaging

The convention represents a significant moment in time for both commitment of financial and people resources. Preparing for "just attending" is really important.

Yes, it is a genuinely enjoyable event; however, there is also a real need for active engagement by all attendees to ensure the needs of the group are collected, shared, and actions to address are outlined. As a mature industry, ours faces some significant headwinds that can best be addressed through shared learnings. I am thinking of the challenges of labor recruitment, retention, and development; changes in the regulatory environment; evolution of health/diet-management impacts on consumer buying traits; the macro forces of inflation and recession-risk; etc. In preparing for the convention, I run through these topics and build my list of information I hope to learn. That then shapes the questions I mentally prepare for the speakers and the companies I seek out during the exhibition times.

Another excellent tool to consider is the speed-networking event again this year. I do not look at that solely as an opportunity to talk with a company I want to buy from/sell to. Rather, the burst introductions are an excellent way to initiate contact with a company or person that can also exchange that shared knowledge of how to address our common industry issues. The networking event is a great vehicle to get to speak with a company outside of our normal buy/sell spheres.

After the convention, one of the more valuable steps to take is providing feedback to the boards and organizations themselves. So much time and focus are applied in preparing for the convention. Active feedback is necessary to continuously improve the "product" for the future.



Lisa Magro, Agri-Business Insurance Specialist, Brown & Brown Insurance

The convention is the perfect venue to network with members, discuss industry successes and challenges, and the opportunity to share your business's value proposition with a target audience. In preparation, I craft a gameplan with actionable objectives I will achieve – it could be to introduce myself to a certain individual or to ask a question at every panel session. Craft a gameplan that aligns with your business objectives, refine your pitch, stretch outside of your comfort zone, and the best piece of advice I can share: **master the art of active listening.** *You're Not Listening* by Kate Murphy is a quick read that cultivates better communication skills for the upcoming convention – and there's plenty of time to read it before August.



Laura McCranie, Director of Fluid Milk Marketing, Dairy Farmers of America

To prepare for the convention, I reach out to key customers to see if they will be in attendance and then plan a time to meet with them. Then, once the attendee list is out, I look to see if there are any other meetings I should add or people I just want to make sure that I say hello to. If new employees are attending, I always encourage them to make a plan in advance as well, so that they can make the most of the networking. Following the convention, I make sure to pass on any new information that I learned to my team and follow-up on any open items for customers.



Daniel Seitzer, Senior Corporate Account Manager, Ecolab Inc.

Have a plan. Knowing who is attending and signing up for activities in advance helps make it a smoother event for me and the rest of my team. There are a number of people I plan ahead to make time with, but also people I don't know but hope to meet. If I know them, I reach out with an email or text in advance asking for a few minutes between sessions or in the morning/evening when the events aren't taking place. I also make sure that my team knows the schedule of events and has reached out to their contacts to let them know we'd like to connect.

Have fun and engage in learning about the industry and its people. Also, to make an effort to connect with at least 10 people during the event. Walk up and introduce yourself; we all are there for the same reason – to connect.

Communicate with follow up on requests or to just say, "Hello, it was great to meet you." Internally, sharing trends with my organization's marketing and technical teams to help us better assess the needs of the industry and how we can best align with those.





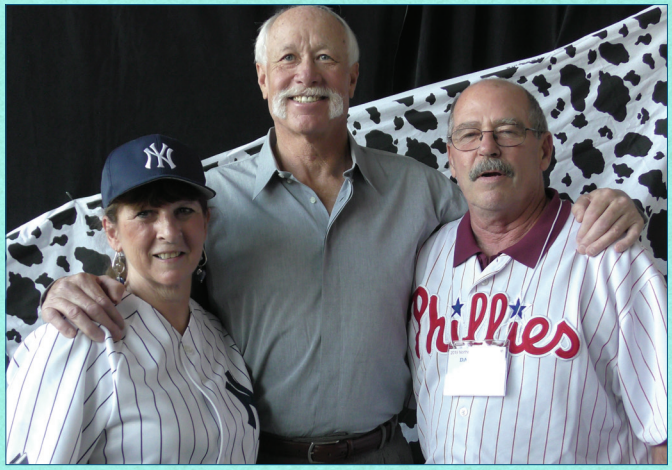
A Trip Down Memory Lane

Here is a look back at some previous Northeast Dairy Conventions















Why Join?

The executive committees of the Northeast Dairy Foods Association and the Northeast Dairy Suppliers Association discuss the benefits of membership

BY COURTNEY KLESS

This year, we decided to focus our Q3 issue on membership and networking.

With that in mind, we asked the executive committees of the Northeast Dairy Foods Association and the Northeast Dairy Supplies Association to answer some questions about the benefits of joining.

1. FOR YOU AND YOUR COMPANY, WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST BENEFIT OF BEING IN THE NDFA/NDSA?



Melissa Fryer (NDSA President): The biggest benefit is the opportunity to connect with processors and suppliers in the dairy industry.

Daniel Lausch (NDFA President): Networking and education.

Ryan Elliott (NDFA Secretary): Being a NDFA member means having access to a forum where organizations of all sizes work to address shared challenges and opportunities, which generally results in stronger working relationships and business outcomes for those participating members.

2. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO JOIN THE ASSOCIATION?

MF: The clambake was the initial reason for joining the association.



RE: Byrne's decision to join NDFA predates my time with our company. I became more involved with the association, when our former president, Bill Byrne, Jr., retired from our company and resigned from a number of boards, including the NDFA. Around that time, I was nominated by our senior leadership team to serve in Bill's place. It was, and remains, an honor to represent Byrne, and serve the Association in a leadership capacity.

3. WHAT BRINGS YOU BACK YEAR AFTER YEAR?

MF: The networking, camaraderie, and information exchange.



DL: I'm on the board of directors, so I rarely miss a convention.

RE: At a corporate level, Byrne remains a member of the NDFA because of the strength of its membership, which is comprised of many of the top processors in the Northeast. On a more personal level, I enjoy being a NDFA member – and serving on its board of directors – because it presents countless opportunities to think about, engage with, and influence the ever-changing "external environments" that impact our business and the industry at large.

4. FOR COMPANIES THAT AREN'T MEMBERS, WHAT ARE THEY MISSING OUT ON? WHY SHOULD THEY JOIN?

MF: I have been told by people attending the clambake for the first time that it is the best kept secret in the dairy industry. This has changed over the past few years, but the networking and information exchange opportunities at the associations events are something that should not be missed out on.

DL: Networking and education and some fun times out of the office.

RE: The reasons for joining the NDFA are many, and often vary from company to company. Personally, I believe the top three reasons to join the NDFA are: (1) Access to trusted advice and counsel from industry experts; (2) Greater access to industry news and information; and (3) Deeper understanding of proposed legislation and policies affecting the industry.

5. ASIDE FROM THE NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES, WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP?

MF: Aside from the networking opportunities, assisting with advocacy for the dairy industry in the northeast is something I consider a major benefit of membership.

DL: Learning and listening to the positions on current topics of others in the dairy business.

Alex Walsh, the executive director of the Northeast Dairy Foods & Suppliers Associations, talks about some of the benefits of being a member (including advocacy and representation of the membership).

NDFA
NDSA
NORTHEAST DAIRY FOODS AND SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATIONS

BENEFITS OF ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

VISIT **NDFSA.ORG** TO FIND OUT MORE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND INDUSTRY CONSULTANT SUPPORT	NDFA	NDSA
Legislative Representation Through Executive Lobbying and Networking	✓	✓
Safety and Environmental Information	✓	✓
Economic Analysis and Forecasting	✓	✓
Continuing Education and Certification Opportunities	✓	✓
Industry Spokesperson	✓	✓
Emergency Preparedness	✓	✓
NETWORKING AND MEETING EVENTS		
Annual Northeast Dairy Convention	✓	✓
Contact Booth at the Annual Convention		✓
Annual Dairy Industry Clambake	✓	✓
Hospitality and Sponsorship Opportunities		✓
Annual Charity Golf Outing Fundraiser	✓	✓
COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS		
Quarterly copy of Northeast Dairy Magazine	✓	✓
Direct Customer Advertising Opportunities		✓
Industry Scholarship Program	✓	✓
Membership Directory with Key Contacts in the Dairy Industry	✓	✓
Digital Buyers Guide	✓	
Weekly Dairy Newsletter	✓	✓

ADVOCACY

An association represents your interests before your government leaders, industry and business community. If your business/industry faces major threats or needs support, our association is right there on the front line fighting for you.

NETWORKING

Association events, meetings and member directories make networking a reality for you and your peers. This is the one advantage many view as the most important reason to join!



Atlas Automation Has 'A Sense of Family'

BY COURTNEY KLESS

Atlas Automation's roots can be traced back nearly three decades, when **Joe Scarfone** formed the company in the basement of his house and hired his first employee.

Fresh out of college with a degree in computer science, he began his career in the food industry by working for Fluid Operations and Equipment in North Chili, New York. The company was later purchased by Alfa Laval, and Scarfone went to Sweden to train on various food processes and learn how to control them.

During the 1980s and early 1990s, Scarfone worked on several projects for Alfa Laval, gaining even more knowledge about food processing. In the mid-1980s, he took a job with HP Hood out of Boston, but not wanting to be limited to dairy applications, returned to Alfa Laval after two years, and moved to Wisconsin.

Wishing to return home to Rochester, New York, Scarfone saw an opportunity with a company that was securing orders to upgrade a major beverage producers' syrup plants around the country. But during those upgrades, the company began having financial trouble and was headed toward bankruptcy. Scarfone had no choice but to leave that company and form Atlas Automation in 1994.

He continued to grow the company from there. Scarfone hired two controls engineers (**Mike Fabian** and **Trevor Henninger** are both still with the company today) and started a process piping division in 2008, with the vision of providing turn-key systems. Today, Atlas Automation serves dairy clients throughout the northeast.

Scarfone said the reason his company is so successful is because of its employees.

"Without them we never would have made it through 30 years," he said. "They are all wonderful people and I consider them family."

Headquartered in Rochester, New York, Atlas Automation describes itself as "a full-service turn-key system integration firm, specializing in food, beverage, and dairy processing and automation."

It has three major departments: a controls automation division, a process design/installation division, and a custom stainless fabrications division, which opened earlier this year, and recently became certified by the National Sanitation Foundation.

"This allows us to branch out into the commercial marketplace, providing restaurants, schools, municipalities and even consumers with custom stainless kitchen equipment meeting all national sanitary requirements," said Sales Manager **Joe West**.

Atlas Automation offers complete process and controls systems integration for companies in the dairy industry.

"Our expertise lies in batching, blending, pasteurization, and CIP (to name a few), and all forms of food processing, in the way of controls automation, process equipment manufacturing, piping, and systems installation," said West.





And the company's list of services is long. It includes: PLC/HMI programming; data base development; controls architecture design; panel/electrical design and build; process piping systems design and installation; process equipment design, build, and installation; sheet metal fabrication; and stainless structural (platform/walkway/staircase) design, build, and installation. Support is also available around the clock.

"Our services are unique in how we provide clients with one-stop shopping within our disciplines," said West. "Though we are generally a capital projects process and controls contractor, we go way beyond just bidding and executing large projects. We offer all of our services a-la-cart, with no limitations on project size. We consider small projects to be just as important as large. We offer project consultation and conceptualization services, emergency field trade services and, of course, customer service after the sale. Now that may sound cliché, but it's essential to building a solid (repeat business) relationship. Atlas Automation believes that it's the relationship between the provider and the client that is essential to doing business successfully. When the client is in need, you must respond to that client's request, even if it is above and beyond your original agreement. We consider ourselves an extension of the client and our job is to help them to achieve their goals on the factory floor."

Atlas Automation also has one of the most sophisticated controls departments known throughout the state, and technical knowledge of how a food manufacturing plant operates is crucial to its ability to provide support. Every engineer, technician, and tradesperson at Atlas Automation is a highly skilled individual in food process. Intimate knowledge of the dairy industry, the PMO, and NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets is important to the company, so they can work with the state and the client to ensure that proper design and installation standards are met. Projects range from general maintenance and repair to design and build of the process systems/controls in an entire plant, including plant floor layout and product flow.

The culture at Atlas Automation is another thing that sets it apart – and bringing ideas to life is a fundamental aspect.

"The core values that make up our culture are a sense of family among the employees, professionalism, and teamwork," said West. "Our employees work diligently together to bring our clients a positive outcome for every project. A win for the company and a win for the client. We have a great core group of engineers, technicians, and tradespeople; dedicated professionals who love what they do."

And they usually stay with the company for a while. Its 40 employees have an average tenure of 8-10 years.

"We like the ownership, and we like the culture," said West. "We hang out together. A lot of our employees have developed relationships outside of work, including management. It's what makes us a great team."

Concludes West, "A five-year projection for Atlas Automation would be to maintain and refine the current client base while engaging in steady managed growth in order to retain and execute the demands of existing and future clients. We look forward to working with our clients, meeting new ones, and the technological advancements and challenges that the future might bring."



Courtney Kless is the Managing Editor of *Northeast Dairy* Media.



MEMBER AND INDUSTRY NEWS

Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc.

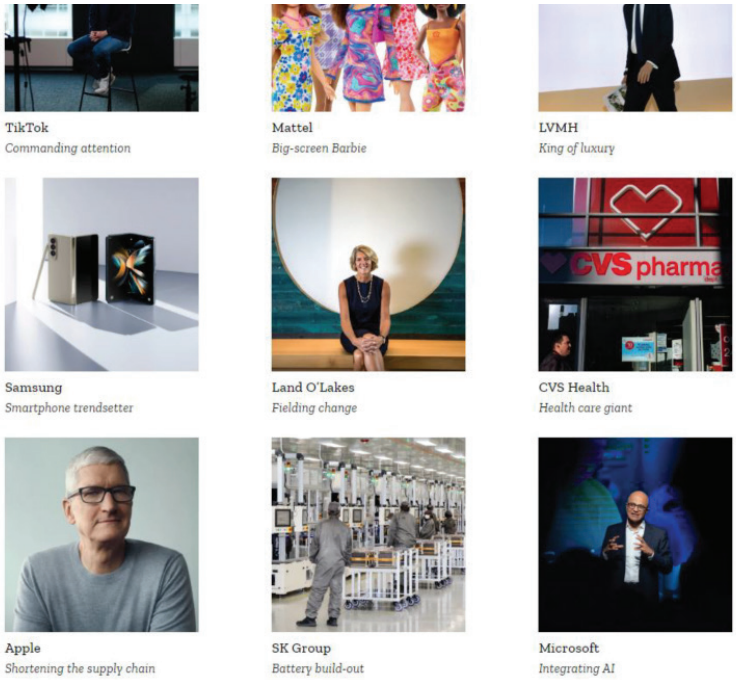
NORTHEAST DAIRY FOODS ASSOCIATION, INC.

AGRI-MARK COMPLETES MODERNIZATION PROJECT

New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced the completion of Agri-Mark's nearly $30 million expansion and modernization project at its cheese manufacturing facility in Chateaugay, Franklin County. Agri-Mark's North Country facility produces award-winning Cabot and McCadam cheese products.

The ribbon cutting marked the completion of a 9,600 square-foot expansion. The most recent addition was a state-of-the-art cheese production room, which has improved the facility's efficiency. The expansion project also included the rebuilding of the 110,000-square-foot manufacturing center, reconfiguring the layout of the facility, and purchasing new equipment and machinery.

"This is a special day for Agri-Mark, our plant and its employees, and especially for our 174 dairy farm families in the North Country," said Agri-Mark CEO David Lynn. "This modernization project solidifies our long-term presence in Chateaugay. It ensures that we'll have a sustainable facility that can process the milk our farmers produce, provide a safe, modern workplace for our employees, and continue to produce the award-winning cheeses our customers and consumers have to come to expect from our McCadam and Cabot brands."



LAND O'LAKES NAMED TO TIME100 MOST INFLUENTIAL COMPANIES LIST

TIME named Land O'Lakes, Inc. to its third-annual "TIME100 Most Influential Companies" list, which highlights companies making an extraordinary impact around the world. "For over 100 years, Land O'Lakes has been committed to ensuring global food security and supporting the efforts and the communities of the people who work hard to provide it," said Beth Ford, Land O'Lakes president and CEO. "It's an honor to be included among this list of leading global businesses. I'm proud of our team who delivers this work and is committed every day to continuing to tackle the most important issues facing our world together."



Land O'Lakes also donated nearly 40,000 pounds of LAND O LAKES® Macaroni & Cheese to Second Harvest Heartland through the Land O'Lakes First Run Program. The First Run Program has donated more than 6.5 million pounds of product since it was established in 2010. The program is committed to donating truckloads of fresh product year-round, made specifically for food banks to help alleviate hunger across the United States.

ABED ABDO JOINS ORGANIC VALLEY AS CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER



Organic Valley proudly welcomes Abed Abdo as the farmer-owned cooperative's new chief financial officer (CFO). With over 20 years of experience at the helm of finance, Abdo, a certified public accountant, holds a Bachelor of Science in Accounting & Business Administration from the University of Jordan and a track record of success at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and Abbott. Abdo's appointment as the CFO began on May 22.

Abdo comes to Organic Valley from the fundraising and awareness organization for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, where he served as the CFO since 2019. His remarkable leadership there played a critical role in the organization achieving recognition as the first charity in philanthropic history to raise $2B for a single cause. Before this, he led the finance function at ConvaTec Group (Americas) and several divisions of Abbott Laboratories, where he spent much of his career.

"We are thrilled to welcome Abed to our team," said Jeff Frank, CEO of Organic Valley. "His substantial experience in devising finance and business strategies and his demonstrated ability to lead top-tier finance functions with mission-driven organizations make him a powerful addition to the team. Abed has strong experience as a CFO, necessary technical skills, and clear philosophical compatibility with our cooperative culture, and I know he will make a difference working together with the farmers who own this cooperative."



STEWART'S SHOPS MAKE YOUR OWN SUNDAE CELEBRATES 75 YEARS

In 1948, Philly Dake had a simple idea — let people make ice cream sundaes the way they want them. Stewart's Shops' customers loved this idea and the Make Your Own Sundae was born (*a Make Your Own Sundae starts with the ice cream of choice from the cone counter. Customers can then choose as many or as few toppings as they prefer).*

The notoriety of the Make Your Own Sundae grew with the help of TV programs like *Stewart's Western Sundae* and as an early advertiser on shows like *Hopalong Cassidy*, *Hawkeye*, and *Whirlybirds*. This flagship sundae remains a customer favorite to this day, stirring a fond nostalgia with so many.

Gary Dake, president of Stewart's Shops, said, "My Aunt Philly truly left her mark on Stewart's Shops. She believed that ice cream should be an experience and the Make Your Own Sundae is one of her many legacies."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ▶

NORTHEAST DAIRY SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

HYDRITE® NAMED WINNER OF 2023 TOP WORKPLACES AWARD

Hydrite®, an integrated manufacturer and supplier of chemicals and related services, was recognized as a 2023 Top Workplaces award winner by the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* for creating high employee experience and exceptional workplaces. Hydrite has won Top Workplaces six other years in the past.

The Top Workplaces award is based on employee feedback gathered through a third-party engagement survey. The survey assesses an organization using several factors, including 15 research-based culture drivers and three statements that measure employee engagement.

"Winning a seventh Top Workplaces award is the ultimate compliment to being named 2023 Wisconsin Manufacturer of the Year," said Chief Human Resources Officer Dan Sager. "Manufacturer of the Year is essentially based on results. A Top Workplaces award is based on how those results are achieved – by highly engaged and dedicated individuals. Manufacturers are underrepresented on Top Workplaces lists, which makes this an extraordinary honor for the people of Hydrite."

ALL NEW ECO-PAK FILLING MACHINE FROM PACTIV EVERGREEN

The all-new N-200 gable top packaging machine is the newest machine in Pactiv Evergreen's lineup serving as the standing in the school milk industry. With over 225 N-8 machines manufactured and a majority still in operation, the N-8 remains a pillar of the filling industry.

Following in its footsteps, the N-200 model filler has been designed based upon extensive input from school milk filler operators, Pactiv Evergreen service technicians, and engineering staff. The result is a filler designed with the operator and plant in mind.

Maintenance time is reduced with servo-driven functionality, replacing many of the mechanical functions of previous fillers. A redesigned machine enclosure enables full sight of all machine functions and easier access to components by operators and maintenance staff. Auto lubrication also reduces maintenance and provides a longer shelf life of components. Optional features include SPOUT-PAK® system, lighting in bottom forming and under table areas, as well as ESL® options such as HEPA filtration and self-contained CIP.

SYRACUSE LABEL, MACARAN AND VAN ALSTINE ANNOUNCE NEW NAME AND CORPORATE BRANDING

Following a successful merger in June 2022, Syracuse Label, Macaran Printed Products, and W.N. Van Alstine & Sons have rebranded under a new group name and corporate identity.

The NextGen Label Group™ name and logo were unveiled at a company-wide meeting on May 17. The new brand combines the three operating units under one identity and better reflects the organization's commitment to its employee owners and the customer communities they serve. At the same time, it delivers on the promise to protect the rich corporate legacies that were brought together during the merger.

"We are excited to begin this new chapter together as NextGen Label Group," said President Tom Sargent. "Moving forward with a unified group name, while maintaining the visual identities of each business unit, is in direct alignment to the commitment we've made to our employee owners, and the proud legacies and brand equity established at those locations."

Have you recently won an award? Do you have any new products coming out? Are you planning an expansion?

Email courtneyk@nedairymedia.com with more information.



NELSON-JAMESON TAPS INDUSTRY VETERAN FOR SENIOR EXECUTIVE SPOT, ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION



Nelson-Jameson, Inc., a leading distributor in the food processing industry, welcomed Peter Kempe to a new leadership position as senior vice president strategy and business development – ingredients, as part of a strategic firmwide expansion.

Kempe brings three decades of experience and in-depth industry knowledge to Nelson-Jameson, including 28 years at DSM, where he rose up through the ranks earning progressively senior positions. In his new role, Kempe's focus will be on further expanding Nelson-Jameson's leadership position through relationship building with business partners and principals across the dairy industry and additional food industry segments. Kempe will lead the development and execution of business growth strategies for the Ingredients division, including strategic sourcing, partnership management, and go-to-market programming. Additionally, he will collaborate with product management and procurement teams in strategic sourcing to ensure supplier integrity, maintain the highest standards of ingredient access and quality, and streamline supply/demand/delivery operations.

Nelson-Jameson also announced the acquisition of Sitzman Supply, LLC, a wholesale provider of process systems products located in Alden, New York.

"Nelson-Jameson is pleased to welcome Sitzman Supply to the family as a part of our national expansion," said Mike Rindy, Nelson-Jameson's president. "The synergies will allow us to better serve our customers, and the geographic growth demonstrates our commitment to the Eastern region. This expansion strengthens Nelson-Jameson's position as an industry leader that delivers supplies quickly, offers technical expertise, and adds additional value for our customers."

ECOLAB NAMES NICHOLAS ALFANO AS PRESIDENT OF GLOBAL INDUSTRIAL GROUP

Ecolab Inc. announced that Nick Alfano has been appointed as executive vice president and president of Ecolab's Global Industrial Group.



Ecolab's Global Industrial Group, which reported nearly $7 billion in revenue in 2022, includes Nalco Water – Ecolab's water and process management business – and Food & Beverage, a leading food safety provider. With its more than 11,000 associates worldwide, the Industrial Group provides digitally enabled, integrated water management solutions, food safety and cleaning and sanitizing solutions to help customers build world-class, resilient, profitable operations while advancing their sustainability goals.

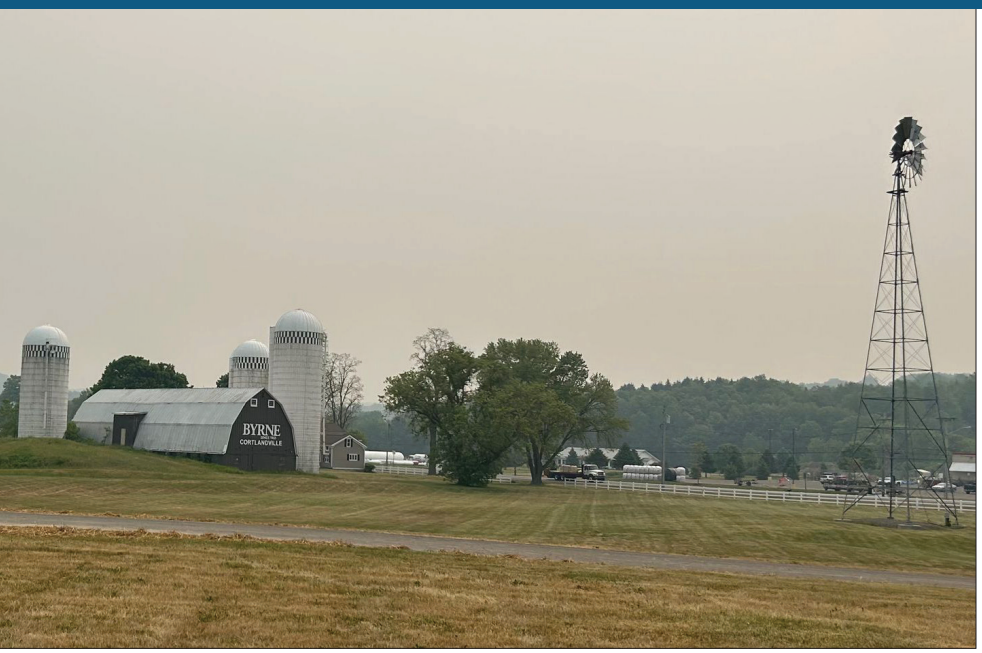
Alfano previously led the Global Light Industries business of Nalco Water that provides digitally enabled, integrated water management solutions for customers in high tech, food & beverage and manufacturing industries. He also held the role of executive vice president and general manager of the Food & Beverage business. He joined Ecolab in 1996 and has gained deep insights into customers' operations while performing roles in marketing, global corporate accounts, sales and management.

WESTROCK LANDS TOP INDUSTRY SPOT IN FORTUNE 500 RANKINGS

WestRock, a leading provider of sustainable paper and packaging solutions, has been ranked first in the "Packaging and Containers" industry category by *Fortune Magazine* on its 69th annual "Fortune 500" ranking list.

The prestigious list recognizes the 500 largest corporations in the United States by total revenue, for the 2022 fiscal year. WestRock rose to the top of its industry as the Company's 2022 revenue increased by 13.5%, with profit rising by 12.7%. WestRock currently places #183 on the overall list, up 9 points from the 2022 Fortune Ranking.

"WestRock believes our greatest business opportunity lies at the intersection of innovation and sustainability, and this recognition from Fortune is a testament to the success of putting sustainability at the core of our business," said Chief Executive Officer David B. Sewell. "I want to thank our WestRock team members for their commitment to excellence and dedication to helping WestRock reach our goals."





Byrne Celebrates Grand Re-opening of Cortlandville Facility

Byrne celebrated the grand re-opening of its facility in Cortlandville, New York on June 6. The event included a speech by company CEO Carl Byrne, lunch for attendees, and a birds-eye-view tour of their plant, from receiving to shipping.

"We're thrilled to have reopened the Cortlandville facility for ESL production," said James A. Gosier, general counsel. "Byrne has been in the dairy business for 90 years and in the ESL business since 2004. During that time, we've developed an extensive network of private label customers for ESL products along with our own Byrne brand. Our workforce in Cortlandville showed great dedication and resiliency during the transition to ESL production. As a result, we're poised to provide our customers with even better service and product offerings."







NDFA
NDSA
NORTHEAST DAIRY FOODS AND SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATIONS

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The following new members recently joined Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc., or the The Northeast Dairy Suppliers Association, Inc.

For more information about the benefits and services available from both the Northeast Dairy Suppliers Association, Inc., and the Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc., contact Leanne Ziemba at 315-452-MILK (6455) or lz@nedairyfoods.org.

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NEW PRODUCTS

HOOD® COTTAGE CHEESE LAUNCHES FIRST MIX-IN COTTAGE CHEESE DUO



Hood® announced the launch of Hood Cottage Cheese Medleys, an exciting new single serve, flavor-packed snack perfect for any on-the-go moment. The new product brings consumers a delicious way to enjoy cottage cheese and delivers crave-able flavor combinations and crunchy mix-ins in one convenient, protein-packed snack.

Hood Cottage Cheese Medleys are available in three delicious flavors: Pineapple with Honey Roasted Almonds, Strawberry with Graham Crackers and Chocolate Chips, and Blueberry with Crunchy Oat Granola.

"We're thrilled to announce the launch of Cottage Cheese Medleys," says Lynne Bohan, Spokesperson for HP Hood LLC "We know our consumers are seeking quick, easy, and exciting new ways to add protein into their diets in ways that are satisfying and delicious. Medleys meet that need while being delicious and convenient for any snacking moment."



CHOBANI EXPANDS ZERO SUGAR PLATFORM WITH THE LAUNCH OF CHOBANI® ZERO SUGAR DRINKS

Chobani announced the launch of Chobani® Zero Sugar Drinks, an innovative zero sugar offering in a convenient drink format, that provides consumers with a protein-packed on-the-go option made with natural ingredients.

"After a few years of being hyper-focused on optimizing our core portfolio and improving excellence in our supply chain and service levels, we are extremely excited to once again dazzle the shelves with the launch our new zero sugar drinks," said Niel Sandfort, chief innovation officer. "This latest innovation takes an already successful product line, made with natural ingredients, to the next level by evolving it into a drinkable format, perfect for the on-the-go consumer."

Chobani® Zero Sugar Drinks are made using natural fermentation, where live and active yogurt cultures and probiotics eat the sugars found in milk. It's sweetened with only natural sugar alternatives, free of lactose and preservatives, contains zero grams total sugar, serves as a good source of calcium, and is only 50 calories (per 7 fl oz). The Chobani® Zero Sugar Drink platform includes 7 fl oz single-serve bottles in Mixed Berry, Peaches & Cream, Strawberry Cheesecake and Milk & Cookies flavors.



NEW STREAMLINED ALFA LAVAL UNIQUE MIXPROOF CIP AND PROCESS VALVES MEET MARKET DEMAND

Alfa Laval unveiled two new hygienic valves, the Alfa Laval Unique Mixproof CIP and Unique Mixproof Process, extending its hygienic double-seat valve range to meet market demands. With the introduction of these two innovative mixproof valves, manufacturers concerned about product integrity now have a cost-effective way to enhance product safety while boosting process efficiency and sustainability.

These two newcomers are built on proven performance, yet refined for purpose. The Unique Mixproof CIP is a double-seat valve that safely and efficiently manages the flow of cleaning media during cleaning-in-place (CIP). The Unique Mixproof Process, a compact version of proven Alfa Laval double-seat valves, is configurable and available in various sizes to meet manufacturers' fundamental hygienic processing requirements. Both are capable of simultaneously routing two different fluids without the risk of cross-contamination, thereby contributing to more uptime and reduced total cost of ownership.

"These new Unique Mixproof valves deliver product safety, process flexibility, straightforward maintenance, and opportunities for water and CIP media savings," said Anders M. Lyhne, product portfolio manager.





Leanne's Kitchen

Comfort Food Made with Delicious Dairy



BANANA CREAM PIE Yogurt Parfait

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1 cup milk
- 1 1-ounce package sugar-free, fat-free Banana Cream or Vanilla pudding mix
- 2 cups crushed Nilla wafers or graham crackers
- 2 ripe bananas (sliced)
- 2 cups dairy whipped cream
- ¼ cup coconut flakes

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a medium bowl, stir yogurt, milk, and pudding mix together until creamy.
2. To assemble parfaits, add ¼ cup crushed Nilla wafers to the bottom of small glasses or mason jars, top that with ¼ cup banana cream filling and a layer of sliced bananas.
3. Repeat step one.
4. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
5. Dollop with whipped cream and toasted coconut before serving.

Many of our members may know Leanne Ziemba as the business operations manager for the Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc. and the Northeast Dairy Food Suppliers, Inc., in our N. Syracuse, New York office. But we've discovered she also is queen of the kitchen, as she has some delicious recipes that include fresh, wholesome dairy products.



Cheese, Cottage Cheese, and Celebrities

Dairy consumption is the highest it's been in 30 years – so we're sharing its benefits and the latest trends

BY MICHELLE NGO

The dairy shelves in the grocery store look a lot different than they used to. But with more options than ever, a recent *U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) report* says many plant-based milk alternatives don't have the same amount of calcium, vitamin D, or other nutrients as milk. In honor of June Dairy Month, we will take a deep dive into new studies that reveal the benefits of eating cheese, the cottage cheese craze taking over TikTok, and the celebrities coming out in support of drinking dairy milk.

NEW RESEARCH SAYS YOU CAN (CONTINUE) EATING CHEESE

Go to any social gathering and it's almost guaranteed there will be a cheese board on hand. However, cheese often gets a bad rap for being a food you should feel guilty about eating because it's blamed for causing weight gain and digestive issues like bloating. There's good news: new studies showcase what we already know – cheese isn't just delicious, it's also much more nutritious than you may think. A *Washington Post* article provided some of the findings and dairy industry insights, which include *the role cheese has in a healthy diet and the benefits of fermented foods to human gut-health, among other potential health benefits when eaten in moderation.*

"For many people, cheese is a significant source of calcium in their diet," said Maggie Maggio, culinary dietitian and nutrition expert at Land O'Lakes. "It's especially beneficial for picky eaters. Adding cheese to healthy proteins and vegetables can encourage both kids and adults to eat more balanced meals."

COTTAGE CHEESE MAKES A COMEBACK

Cottage cheese is finally getting the love it deserves, thanks to TikTok. There were over 240 million views for #cottagecheese on the social media app as of mid-May, with users sharing creative recipes. Cottage cheese can be divisive due to its texture. But TikTokers are sharing recipes like the viral *cottage cheese ice cream*, *cottage cheese pancakes*, *cottage cheese pizza toast*, *cottage cheese pasta*, *whipped cottage cheese dip,* and more. As many social media users say, "Don't knock it until you try it!"

CELEBRITIES SHARE THEIR LOVE FOR MILK

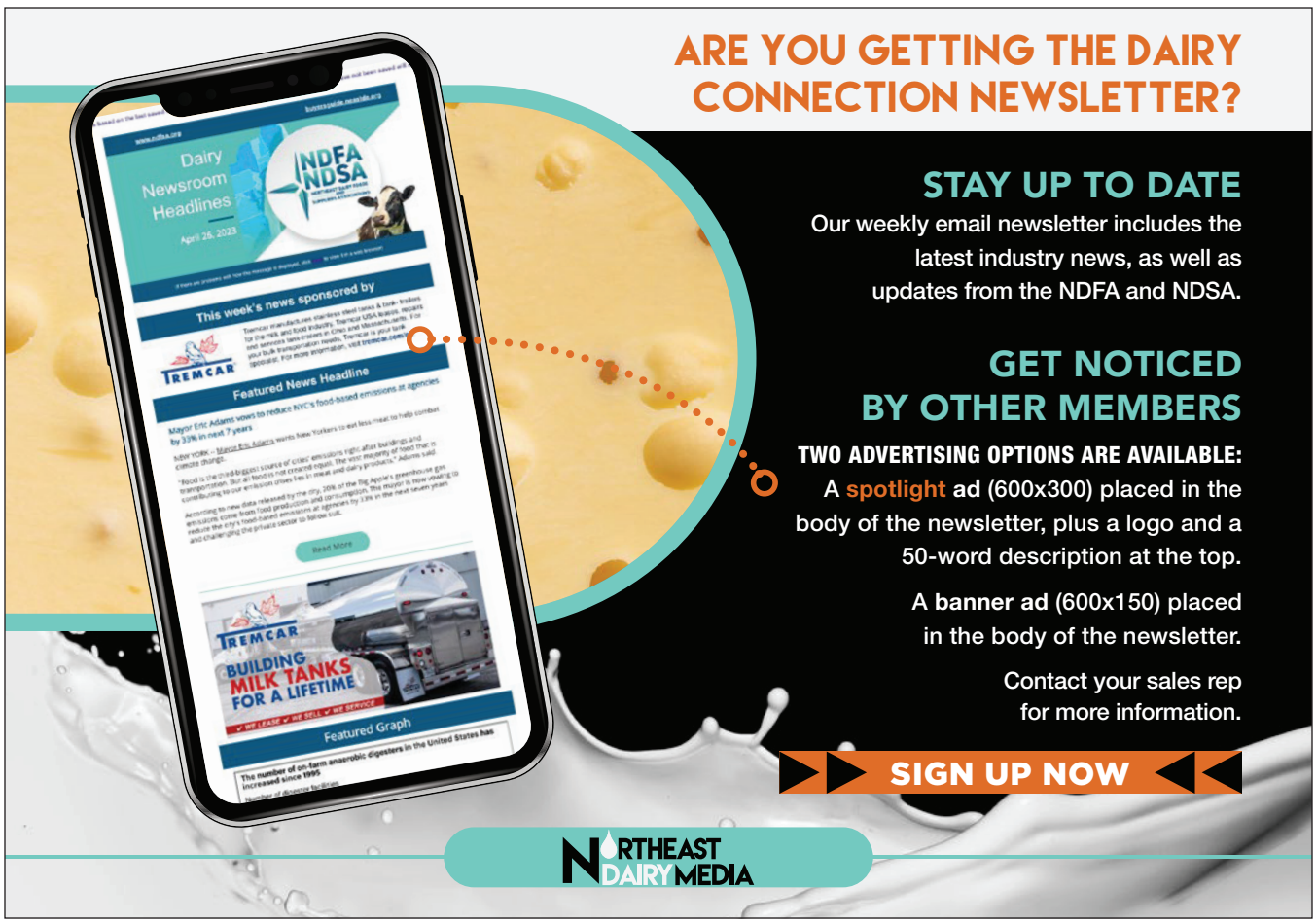
Two big Hollywood stars are showing their support for milk. A well-known actress was recently featured in a *milk campaign ad* in which she plays the founder of a fake company that milks trees to produce a gray, pulpy "Wood Milk." The viral spoof was created by *Milk Processor Education Program (PEP)*, which is the same group behind the iconic "Got Milk?" campaign.

Plus, you'll never guess which celebrity recently revealed she uses whole milk instead of milk alternatives in her morning lattes and getting sponsored by @gonnaneedmilk on Instagram. Check out the *post here*.

GET COOKING WITH DAIRY

At Land O'Lakes, we are excited about the future of dairy, as *per capita dairy consumption is at the highest it has been in 30 years*. Our teams are working to capitalize on these cultural moments by sharing how consumers can not only feel good about buying Land O'Lakes products that directly benefit over 1,000 dairy-farmer owners, but they should also feel good about consuming products that will fuel their bodies. Need some inspiration for meals featuring dairy that you can make at home? Check out our *June Dairy Month recipe collection* for ideas for breakfast, lunch, dinner, plus sweet treats, too!

Michelle Ngo is a communications specialist for Land O'Lakes, Inc., a member of the Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc. This article originally appeared on the company's *blog*.





What B2B Companies Need to Know About Local Search

BY BRIAN BLUFF

If your business has a physical storefront or if you want to do business with local partners, there's a huge opportunity to get in front of more buyers by levering your digital properties.

You've probably noticed by now Google's algorithm and its approach to search have changed dramatically over the years.

It's gotten smarter and a lot more sophisticated.

For local businesses, that means being able to be found more often by users, but only if positioned properly.

That's why it's important to think through your business's approach to local search engine optimization (SEO) and how you can be found more often for relevant search terms.

BACKGROUND

Google went through many changes, tweaks, and updates before it finally got it right with the current Google Maps and Google Business Profile (formerly Google My Business) products.

Google is now able to better understand and better serve users who perform geo-focused (location-based) searches.

Specifically, it looks at the search term, the users' location (if enabled), and signals from the web to create its ranking order. Naturally, it also distinguishes between ads, map listings, and organic rankings.

Because consumers and buyers search on Google regularly for local or regional information, there are a ton of searches performed each day that your business might be missing out on.

WHAT'S THE POTENTIAL?

One of our clients – a local car care company – has focused on local SEO for years now.

Why?

Because they get more traction on their Google My Business page than on their website.

In one month, they had 16,500 Google listing views (6,000 on search and 10,500 on maps) compared to just 800 website visitors.

Why such a difference?

Users are satisfied with the information they are finding directly in search via the company's Google Business Profile.

Name, address, phone, reviews, photos, recent posts, services, products, etc. It's what consumers need to help make a decision if they want to do business with them. In this case, the website is less important. The discrepancy in stats proves it.

Here's another case.

Our software partner, Yext, which we use to help manage local listings, provided us with these stats.

In one service industry alone, there were 4.6 million impressions in Google Maps, and 2.66 million impressions in Google search. Among those business listings, there were



77,600 "Get Direction" clicks, 205,000 phone calls, and 189,000 website clicks.

Those stats are shared among 668 dealer locations in just a 30-day period.

The potential exposure and traffic can't be overlooked.

It's time to get things right.

FIVE STEPS TOWARDS BUILDING A STRONGER LOCAL PRESENCE

Pretend it's 1985.

The market landscape was very different then. As a business, your formula for success was purely analog. A typical go-to-market strategy would have consisted of:

- Storefront signage
- Signs pointing folks to the right place
- Local radio and TV ads
- Community events and sponsorships
- And last but certainly not least, yellow page listings

Although most publishers have killed off their yellow page books, very few, if any, are still in print today. If any are floating around, they are probably being used for booster seats at Grandma's dinner table!

Today, the yellow pages have been replaced by digital marketing. In particular, local SEO.

Local search is a wonderful tactic because, although it comes at a cost in terms of time and labor, there are no direct advertising fees, it's appropriate for any local business regardless of size, and it's measurable.

If you're looking to improve your local search presence, get more visibility among buyers, drive more relevant local traffic, and get more conversions, focus on these five areas.

1. Google Business Profile

First, claim, set up e your Google Business Profile page(s).

As one might expect, Google gives its own Google Business Profile listings preferential treatment in the index, serving those listings higher than other listing sites like Facebook or Yelp.

Claim your profile and complete it with all the necessary information. Address, photos, services, website URLs, etc.

You should set up individual pages for each storefront you may have that has a physical address (and manage them all under the same parent brand account).

If you have more than a few, consider using a tool like Yext or the import tool, which allows for bulk changes or updates.

In recent years, Google has built out its Insights area, too. This allows you to keep tabs on how many impressions your listings are getting and how many are converting into phone calls and website clicks.

2. Citations

How does Google's algorithm rank its organic listings?

Well, that's been a mystery for two decades now, but most SEO professionals have a decent understanding – based on research, testing, and the recommendeput forth by Google's search team over the years.

For global/general searches, we know that a website's metadata, content, backlinks, and domain authority are just a few of the factors that play into the rankings.

At the local level, those same rules apply, but it takes into consideration a few additional elements, too. That includes the users' location, Google Business Profile information, as well as how well the business is optimized across the web for NAP (name, address, phone number).

Google scours the web for this information, so it's best for it to be both present and accurate.

There are more than 60 citation sites out there that it looks at. Amazon Alexa, MapQuest, EZLocal, Citysearch, and 123local are just a sliver of what it looks at. One could manage these listings and this information manually (which would take a while!) or use a third-party tool – like Yext – to manage in bulk from a central spot.

Not only that, but Yext can help suppress inaccurate information that's been submitted to the sites from users and remove duplicate listings to keep your web presence accurate at all times.

3. Optimized Local Pages

Local listings feature great information about your business.

They can provide – directly in search – the info that users are looking for without the need to click through to your website.

But that doesn't make your website any less important.

Not only does your website provide MORE information and the ability for users to convert in different ways (watch videos, download PDFs, review spec sheets and other product info, fill out a form, etc.), but local listing sites are LINKED to your website.

They don't compete against each other, but rather, they complement each other.

It's best to have a well-optimized website to go along with your local listing efforts.

Make sure you have local pages built out on your website for your individual locations – featuring photos, address, phone – and ensure your site is optimized around your local areas and local search terms.

4. Reviews

Reviews play a dual role.

First, there's certainly an argument to be made about reviews being used as a Google ranking signal. How much weight do they carry? It's hard to say exactly, considering sometimes a business with 20 reviews outranks a business with 40. But marketers are confident that they do act as a search signal, so it's important to have reviews and ensure they are positive.

Second, and more importantly, reviews help provide wonderful credibility and allow users to read about your business before they buy. If you're a great organization, those reviews will be positive and only do you favors in generating referral business.

Set up a review program.

Make sure auto emails or auto texts are sent to customers immediately after doing business with you, asking for a review, with direct links to your Google Business Profile page.

Also, make sure your sales or customer service reps are asking for reviews following a positive experience. This can go a long way.

5. Backlinks

Finally, just like a global search, Google will look at a website's backlink profile.

This is made up of links that are directed to your website. Larger, more well-known sites typically have more backlinks, which indicates a richer presence.

Build your backlink profile and keep other local websites in mind as ones that should link to you.

Use tactics like direct outreach (i.e ASK!), public and media relations, sponsorships, and content marketing to help generate links.

Remember that it's more about quality than quantity.

If you're actively seeking out links, focus on trusted, reputable websites rather than cheap, spammy sites. A link from an area college (.edu) or a local news site will carry A LOT more weight than a random irrelevant blog.

Finally, don't pay for backlinks. This could have a negative effect on your site, and you run the risk of Google pulling your site out of the index completely.

SUMMARY

Local SEO isn't a new game. But the rules have certainly changed in recent years.

Google Business Profile, local pages, and local reviews all need to work together to help allow your prospective business partners to find your digital properties when they are in the midst of their buying journey.

Take these tactics into consideration and decide whether or not a third-party local listing tool would be in your best interest.

If you need any support, make sure to reach out for help!



Brian Bluff is the CEO and co-founder of Site-Seeker. You can contact him by e-mail at *brianbluff@site-seeker.com*.



SEO Search Engine TRENDS for the Dairy Industry

Part of developing a comprehensive digital marketing campaign is understanding how customers and potential customers are using the Internet to find your products and your website. The graphs and information below all come from Google Trends, which analyzes the popularity of queries in Google Search across various regions and languages. The graphs scale "Interest Over Time," which represent search interest relative to the highest point in the chart for the given region and time-period. So, a value of 100 is the peak popularity for the term.

Another alternative is Google Keyword Planner. To use this tool, you must have a Google Ads account. The Keyword Planner lets you search keywords and suggests other words or phrases related to your products and services. It lets you research the trend information for how often certain words are searched and how those searches have changed over time and also gives you suggested bid estimates for each keyword, so you can determine your advertising budget.

In today's digital environment, we strongly encourage members to capitalize on this growing trend and ensure that your company is visible in the place where people search the most.

COTTAGE CHEESE



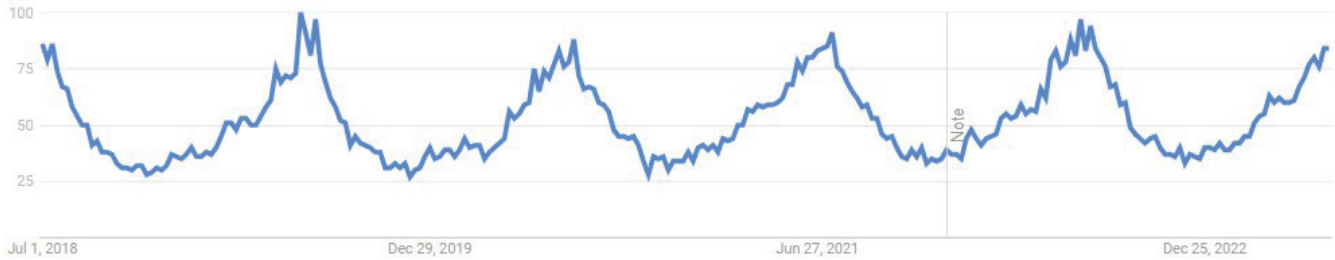
Average Search Volume has increased 92.3%

Average Search Volume has increased 132.6% over the past five years

RELATED SEARCH QUERIES

1. Cottage cheese recipe
2. Cottage cheese ice cream
3. Cottage cheese dip
4. Is cottage cheese good for you

ICE CREAM



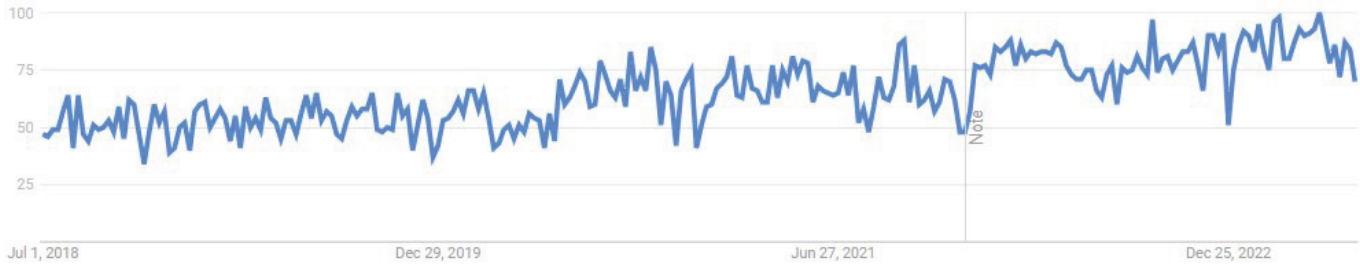
Average Search Volume has increased 3.6% YoY

Average Search Volume has decreased 2.3% over the past five years

RELATED SEARCH QUERIES

1. Ice cream near me
2. Best ice cream
3. Ice cream flavors
4. Ice cream bar

LOCAL SEARCH



Average Search Volume has increased 6.1% YoY

Average Search Volume has increased 52.2% over the past five years

RELATED SEARCH QUERIES

1. Google local search
2. Local search optimization
3. Local search marketing
4. Local search engine optimization

NETWORKING



Average Search Volume has increased 5.6% YoY

Average Search Volume has increased 5.5% over the past five years

RELATED SEARCH QUERIES

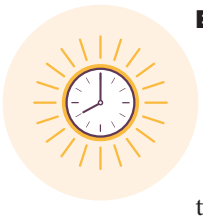
1. What is networking
2. Business networking
3. Networking definition
4. Networking skills



Prevent Heat Illness at Work

As temperatures rise, so does the risk of heat-related illnesses

WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS



Ease into Work

New and returning workers need to build tolerance to heat (acclimatize) and take frequent breaks. Follow the 20% Rule. On the first day, work no more than 20% of the shift's duration at full intensity in the heat. Increase the duration of time at full intensity by no more than 20% a day until workers are used to working in the heat.



Drink Cool Water

Drink cool water even if you are not thirsty — at least 1 cup every 20 minutes.

Dress for the Heat

Wear a hat and light-colored, loose-fitting, and breathable clothing if possible.



Take Rest Breaks

Take enough time to recover from heat given the temperature, humidity, and conditions.



Find Shade or a Cool Area

Take breaks in a designated shady or cool location.



Watch Out for Each Other

Monitor yourself and others for signs of heat illness.

If a worker experiences:

- Headache or nausea
- Weakness or dizziness
- Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin
- Elevated body temperature
- Thirst
- Decreased urine output

Take these actions:

- Give water to drink
- Remove unnecessary clothing
- Move to a cooler area
- Cool with water, ice, or a fan
- Do not leave alone
- Seek medical care if needed

Source: osha.gov.

Northeast Dairy Media is looking for an OSHA Consultant.
Email *courtneyknedairymedia.com* **for more information.**

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WestRock 2

NDFA
NDSA
NORTHEAST DAIRY FOODS AND SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATIONS

Join the Northeast Dairy Foods & Suppliers Associations

Dedicated to the growth and advancement of the dairy processing, manufacturing and distribution industry in the northeast US.

VISIT NDFSA.ORG

the LAST word

NDFA and NDSA members shared these posts on LinkedIn and Facebook

Berry Global, Inc.

Today, we celebrate ranking #284 on Fortune Magazine's #FORTUNE500, a ranking of the largest United States corporations by total revenue in its prior fiscal year. We are proud of this milestone as we continue to bring our customers innovative solutions that meet the needs of fast-growing markets, while harnessing the strength of our people around the world to help customers and communities we serve achieve their #sustainability goals.







Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.

We had the pleasure of welcoming FFA students from across New York State. They visited the Upstate Niagara Cultured Products Plant as a part of their 3-day State FFA Convention experience. Students engaged in interactive sessions that included a plant tour, a sensory profile evaluation activity, and enjoyed some yogurt parfaits!



Cabot Creamery Cooperative

Guinness Mac & Cheese made with Cabot cheese was recently awarded a "Pantry Staple" by People and featured on Good Morning America! This velvety macaroni & cheese blends Guinness stout with our award-winning Farmers' Reserve cheddar, which resulted in a Specialty Food Association sofi award-winning product!

Dopkins & Company, LLP

The topic of business succession is more than just compelling television. In a guest post in Buffalo Business First, Gregory Urban discusses the 5 critical elements essential for the health, continuity and long-term survival of a business: *https://lnkd.in/ejvSUXZc*

