



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

There is no denying the challenges our dairy farms and families have faced throughout the past year, but there is also no denying the strength that comes from being united and our energies being pooled as they are under the umbrella of our Checkoff. Representing ALL of Maine's dairy farms and farmers as our



Jenni Tilton-Flood (right) with Hillary Knight of Smiling Hill Farm and Patriots player Duron Harmon at a Fuel Up to Play 60 event at Westbrook High School.

State & Region UDIA Director this past year has been an honor and privilege. Advocating on behalf of our farms at the national level and working to ensure that our hard earned Checkoff contributions are spent wisely, invested in a manner that raises up our industry and helps grow consumption and markets has been challenging and rewarding.

Our farmer led board has strengthened partnerships, forged ahead with new ones and bold strategies to increase consumption, building upon the trust of the consumer, innovated, entered new markets and more in order to strengthen the value of the dairy we produce. As much as we work on communicating with our consumers, old and new, we must make sure the lines of communications for our farmers are open too. Never hesitate to contact myself or our staff if you have concerns, suggestions or questions because our Checkoff works because we are in this together, and it works even better because of our diversity of farms and opinions.

Jenni Tilton-Flood
Maine United Dairy Industry Director
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Baby Boomers are no longer the key target audience for most advertisers. Not by a long shot. To have a real impact, you must grab the attention of Millennials, Urban Moms, and now Gen Z among others. Fortunately DMI has contracted with Edelman - a leading global communications marketing firm - for market research into how to best interact with these groups. What's important to them, what grabs their attention, and what do they think about dairy?



Teresa Hardy and her husband Henry in the hayfields on their farm in Farmington.

This information has allowed DMI and all the states and regions in Dairy Checkoff, including Maine, to continually update their messages and methods for speaking to consumers. Above all, the purpose of these messages is to instill trust in the dairy industry, share science that highlights the sustainable nutrition of dairy, and ultimately increase consumption.

But while we are focused on increasing others' consumption of dairy, I think we as dairy farmers need to take make sure we are practicing what we preach. Do you make smoothies with yogurt, milk and fruit for breakfast or oatmeal with milk? Do you have a glass of milk when you sit down to a meal, or are you more apt to drink soda? Is that dessert you take to family gatherings every year made with imitation whipped cream or the real thing? If you are active on social media, are you sharing recipes that include dairy rather than eliminate it? I think we need to first lead by example if we are going to expect others to embrace dairy.

***Teresa Hardy, Hardy Farm, Farmington
Chair, Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council
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The dairy consumer of today is influenced more and different ways than in the past, therefore dairy promotion activities are not the same as they once were. Traditional TV and print advertising is being replaced with partnerships and grassroot efforts to better utilize farmers' money. We also need to remember that we, as farmers, are not the target audience and therefore may not always see the efforts of our promotion organizations. Foodies, bloggers, mothers, and youth are the groups that we seek to influence to educate, purchase, and consume nutrient rich dairy products. The end goal is to get farmers the largest return for their promotion dollars.

Our staff here in Maine continues to work hard to create new programs to educate consumers and encourage the consumption of dairy. They work closely with schools, health professionals, and are active on social media. They have risen to the challenges of educating different generations and demographics in different ways. Fuel Up To Play 60, the Moo Squad, farm tours with dietitians, participating in Health and Wellness conferences,



Kate Fogler (right) speaks to members of FUTP60 touchdown schools who attended the Maine Dairy Night at UMaine Hockey.

along with including real Maine Dairy Farmers in their programs have all been successful ways to connect with our target audiences.

**Kathryn Fogler, Stonyvale Farm, Exeter
Chair, Maine Dairy Promotion Board
tkfogler@tds.net**

Exec. Dir. Cheryl Beyeler to retire after 50 years

This year's Annual Report message is a bit different from previous years for me, as I am planning to retire from Maine Dairy Promotion Board/Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council on June 30, 2018. It has been an honor and privilege working for Maine's dairy industry.

I offer my sincere gratitude to our dairy checkoff families in Maine and across the country for affording me the opportunity to represent them for over fifty plus years, in a variety of dairy checkoff capacities. I have enjoyed the challenges, opportunities and new learnings that my positions within our two Checkoff organizations have brought. In the last eighteen years as Executive Director, I hope I have met your expectations in leading Maine Dairy Promotion Board/Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council forward.

Most of all, I will miss all the wonderful people I have had the opportunity to meet and get to know, both in Maine and across the country. The dairy community has supported me through many challenges and achievements, and for that, I will always be grateful.



**Cheryl L. Beyeler, CFCS Executive Director
Maine Dairy Promotion Board/Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council**



Ben Taylor,
Taylor Farms
St. Albans



Steve Keene
Conant Acres
Canton



Harold Larrabee
Treasurer
Aghaloma Farm
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Jenni Tilton-Flood
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Betsy Bullard
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DMI comes to Maine farms

In August, representatives from Dairy Management Inc Dwyer Williams (EVP, Strategic Counsel to the CEO) and Lorelei Andersen (CEO Communications Specialist) visited us in Maine to learn more about our organization and its farmer relations and to talk directly to a couple of Maine farmers to learn more about their concerns, opinions and thoughts about how Dairy Checkoff could better serve them. They talked to Peter Waterman of Waterman Farms in Sabattus and Steve Keene of Conant Acres in Canton. The information gathered is being used by DMI to identify priorities that apply to farmers in all the regions across the country.

After visiting several farms in several states, Williams said what stuck with her most was the progressive breeding practices at Conants and the fact that their genetics are impacting herds around the world, and how proud Pete was of his farm, cattle and land. "His energy and pride for dairying was infectious!" she said.

While Andersen said it was important for her to be able to see the differences in dairy farming from state to state or region to region, she also heard a similar theme with the top concern being finding a market for an over supply of milk.



2017 Audited Financial Statement

Maine Dairy Promotion Board

INCOME		EXPENSES	
Carried forward from previous year	\$ 103,244		
Current Year Income:		Local Marketing Implementation:	
Producer Checkoff Remittance	\$ 627,248	Operating Expenses	\$ 203,779
Transfer to Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council	(125,727)	UDIA Dues	<u>125,000</u>
		Total Local Marketing Implementation	\$ 328,779
Net Checkoff Income	<u>\$ 501,522</u>	National Program Funding Commitment	\$ 160,063
Interest Income	\$ 711	Unified Marketing Plan Programs	\$ 78,417
MEMIC Dividend	195		
Other Income	25	Total Expenses	<u>\$ 567,260</u>
Supplemental Funding (Restricted)	<u>125,200</u>		
Total Current Year Income	<u>\$ 627,653</u>	Funds available for future year programs	<u>\$ 163,637</u>
Total Current Income & Carryover	<u>\$ 730,897</u>		



Fuel Up to Play 60 grants fund healthy eating & physical activity

Each year, Fuel Up to Play 60 has two grant-funding cycles. Active schools apply for the grants, and applications are student-driven; they are the ones who identify a physical activity and healthy eating initiative to be funded.

Maine was able to award grant funds to four schools in 2017 for about \$6,600. Some of the projects included a refrigerator to keep dairy foods cold in a school food pantry, taste tests for yogurt smoothies and cheeses, a portable disc golf course, a smoothie machine, playground equipment, and a cafeteria video board to promote school meals.

In an attempt to remind schools and communities that Fuel Up



to Play 60 is funded by farmers, we arrange check presentations with an area dairy farmer whenever possible. Thank you to all those who have been willing to give of their time to visit the schools for these presentations. The grant monies are greatly appreciated by schools within your own communities, and purchases for the healthy eating play generally promote increased dairy consumption.

Keeping schools enthusiastic

Again and again we hear about how Fuel Up to Play 60 has provided students with opportunities they would not otherwise have. The program benefits many schools that have a majority of students receiving free and reduced lunch and schools whose nutrition program budgets are stretched to the max. However, the program does require adults who already have full schedules to give more of their time, but when they see the positive impact on their students, it makes it worthwhile. Schools have had visits from New England Patriots players, the opportunity to take students to Gillette Stadium for the New England Summit and work one-on-one with Patriot alumni, and a few Maine students get to travel to the national summit each year. Active schools are rewarded with a FUTP60 reception at a University of Maine Men's Ice Hockey Game. Some students who have served as state ambassadors have taken a real leadership role and have gone on to be involved with the FUTP60 National Youth Council.



Fuel Up to Play 60 Small Equipment Grants

Given an overwhelming response to the Fuel Up to Play 60 small equipment grant, we decided to focus on school breakfast. With yogurt and milk in smoothies, cheese on breakfast sandwiches, and milk on cereal and as a beverage option, school breakfast translates to a great deal of dairy. One elementary, middle and high school were selected, each proposing a different alternative model to increase breakfast participation: breakfast in the classroom with new coolers for elementary-aged students, a grab-n-go breakfast cart for middle school and a smoothie bar for high school aged

students. We had enough money left after these purchases to fulfill one additional request for a milk barrel to keep milk cold during meals.

To celebrate the new equipment, we arranged for a welcome celebration with each school, featuring a local dairy farmer as a special guest to again remind schools of who funded the grants and to familiarize students with a local dairy farmer. Sonja and Sonya Ginn of Willow Drive Farm in Winterport even brought a miniature heifer, which was a huge hit with students and staff. Maine Collegiate Dairy Princess Kristen Davis of Silver Valley Farm in New Sharon had the opportunity to make and serve smoothies at her alma mater - Mount Blue High School. Betsy Bullard of Brigeen Farms in Turner visited classrooms at Paris Elementary during breakfast in the classroom, talking about her farm and answering students' questions about dairy farms. Last but not least, Aaron Trundy of Twin Brook Dairy in West Minot was on hand to give out pencils and stickers as the rush of students came into Lewiston Middle School and grabbed their breakfast from the new cart.



Comments from School Nutrition Directors



Taking breakfast to the classroom- this cooler keeps milk nice and cold. The cooler is a great color to attract kids to check out what's inside and even might try milk when they didn't before.

I have heard great feed back from our teachers regarding the positive effect BIC has made. We have seen a large participation increase by bringing the food to the students instead of waiting for them come to the cafeteria. The older kids would rather socialize than eat and therefore, they were not coming to the cafeteria to eat. Now they can do it all. Thank you for the Coolers to make this happen!

~ Jodi Swasey, Food Service Manager Paris Elementary



The breakfast cart is a great way to greet students when they walk in the building. They can now grab a healthy breakfast on their way to class.



The smoothies have been hugely popular and are getting more students to eat breakfast.

Feeding children through the summer months

In Maine, 1 in 4 children is considered food insecure. During the school year, families are able to rely on their schools providing at least one, usually two, meals a day. The need has been so great in some districts that they have begun school food pantries or backpack programs that provide food for children to take home. Fuel Up to Play 60 has been able to help many districts through grants to provide equipment to make breakfast in the classroom or universal breakfast possible or by providing funds for small refrigerators to keep milk, cheese and yogurt cold for pantries.

In the summer months, many Maine families struggle to make up for those school meals. School districts and communities around the state are addressing that issue by offering summer meals, and the Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council has found a way to help.

Last spring, we offered Maine schools a chance to apply for up to three Fuel Up to Play 60 soft-sided insulated coolers for use in their summer meals

program. We collaborated with the Maine Department of Education Child Nutrition Program whose staff advised us and helped publicize the opportunity.

We had one stipulation that the summer meal program sponsor be a Fuel Up to Play 60 school, with the understanding that the coolers would be used during the school year, as well.

As part of the application, we asked school nutrition directors for their summer 2016 milk usage. At the end of the summer, we followed up and asked for their summer 2017 milk usage. All 14 school districts replied. These 14 districts served approximately 8,300 more cartons of milk in 2017 than the previous year. While we understand the increase in milk wasn't a direct result of the new coolers and was probably influenced by a number of factors, we were really pleased to be able to support a program that not only helped increase milk consumption among children, but made such a positive impact on alleviating child hunger during the summer months.

Comments from School Nutrition Directors

My milk coolers really brighten up the serving spots and kids LOVE choosing icy cold milk from them!



The coolers were a fantastic addition to our program. They are very well made and kept our milk nice and cool, especially when taken off site on trips. Thank you so much!



We received three coolers and they were invaluable for use at the sites.



Having outside sites is a challenge to keep milk cold. These coolers are perfect for summer meal transportation and the easy flap on top helps keep cold in.

Maine School Nutrition Association Tours Flood Brothers Farm

School nutrition directors and food service staff have always been an important audience for us at the Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council. Their support is invaluable when it comes to things like including smoothies on their breakfast menu, keeping chocolate milk in their school, and making children lifelong fans of dairy. 2018 will be the third year in a row that we have taken Maine SNA members on a dairy farm tour during their annual conference. In 2017, we visited Flood Brothers Farm in Clinton and had a great response from those attending. We think it's important that these people know that dairy is coming from a good place because they will share that knowledge with students and staff.



JUNE DAIRY MONTH

We kicked Dairy Month off with a whirlwind tour of dairy farms across the state of Maine, starting in Smyrna and traveling South to Gorham then doubling back to end in Clinton. In all, we visited eight farms that day, sharing live videos on social media. We had our best day ever in regards to social media reach with tens of thousands of post views and a couple hundred new followers.

We then took registered dietitians on a tour of dairy farms in southern Maine - Wolfe's Neck, Winter Hill and Pineland, and also had a look at the cheese making operations at Winter Hill and Pineland. We finished the day with Cabot

farmer and board member Jenni Tilton-Flood at the Cabot Annex Store and Gilato Fiasco, which uses Maine milk, in the Old Port. We have maintained relationships with the dietitians, especially those who are active in social media, and they often tag us when they mention dairy in a post.

We were back in Portland at the end of the month for the Cowabunga 5K and Family Dairy Day, which we organized along with Ashley Sears as a part of her project for the Young Dairy Leaders Institute. We had 175 runners, which included several dairy folks. It was a fantastic race with a fantastic response from participants.



On the cover: Highland Farms, 2017 Green Pastures Winner

The New England Green Pastures winner for Maine 2017 was Highland Farms, Inc. in Cornish. Established in 1886 by Wyer and Fred Pike with three registered cows and one bull, Highland Farms has the oldest continuously registered Jersey herd in the U.S. Currently, the 4th, 5th and 6th generations are farming the land together with the 7th generation growing rapidly and work alongside their parents, grandparents and great-grandmother at times on the farm.

Highland Farms, Inc. is comprised of the dairy farm and logging and trucking operations, owned and operated by Libby Bleakney, her brother Daniel Palmer and their two cousins David and Lorie Pike with each responsible for a portion of the business.

The family milks 250 Jersey cattle twice a day in a double eight herringbone parlor. Cattle are fed a complete ration free choice consisting of forages grown on the farm's 300 acres of corn and grass supplemented with grains, minerals and vitamins.

Highland Farms has been a leader in conservation practices. With the farm on a sidehill, crops are grown

in strips of corn and grass. Water from the roofs and driveways is diverted away from the manure areas. Water and manure from the barns and feedlot areas are moved to a liquid manure pit for use as a fertilizer on cropland. A nutrient management plan specifies the amount of liquid manure needed for crops on each acre.

The herd at Highland Farms is closed and utilizes AI; most cows in the herd can be traced back to those originally purchased to start the farm. The farm has had a great impact on the Jersey breed, specifically with two notable bulls bred on the farm - Highland Magic Duncan and Highland Duncan Lester. They continue to work with national genetic programs to improve their milk production efficiency.

Libby Bleakney served as a director of the American Jersey Cattle Association (AJCA) as did her father, John Palmer, who also served as president of the Maine Jersey Cattle Club. The family has earned numerous awards from the AJCA over the years.

Maine Dairy Promotion Board and Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council Staff

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