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Contact: Elizabeth Hockerman
262-938-5565
ehockerman@bader-rutter.com

Milk Does a Planet Good

Rosemont, Ill. — In honor of Earth Month, here are five facts about dairy:

- 1. Cow power.** In addition to producing enough milk each day to fill six one-gallon jugs,¹ an average dairy cow produces enough manure to help dairy farmers fertilize their fields naturally. And now, farmers are finding even more ways to recycle manure, such as turning it into power for their farms and their communities.
- 2. From farm to glass.** Experts² are measuring the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions produced from milking a cow to delivering a fresh glass of milk, and every step in between. They estimate that the dairy industry accounts for less than 2 percent of total U.S. GHG emissions, an amount that the industry continues working to reduce. And dairy foods provide essential nutrients including nearly 75 percent of the calcium naturally available in the food supply,³ making every glass of milk a good choice for people *and* the planet.
- 3. Less is more.** Over the past 60 years, the dairy industry has reduced the carbon footprint of its products by 63 percent,⁴ thanks to production efficiencies, nutrition management and other improvements. Today, dairy farmers, dairy processors, milk delivery companies and local retailers are all working together to reduce GHG emissions of fluid milk by 25 percent by 2020 — equivalent to taking 1.25 million passenger cars off the road every year.
- 4. Mother (Nature) says drink your milk.** A healthy planet and healthy people go hand in hand. More than 17 million gallons of milk are consumed in the U.S. each day.⁵ And mom does know best. Dairy foods provide a unique package of nine essential nutrients for growing children and teens, including protein, calcium, vitamin D and potassium. Lifelong dairy consumption helps to sustain and enrich a healthy, productive lifestyle.
- 5. Care and feeding of the land.** In many ways, farmers are the original environmentalists. They live on the land; they drink the water; and they care for their animals and the soil. Farm families and the dairy industry are committed to the health and wellness of people, communities and the earth. See www.dairyfarmingtoday.org on the Web, Facebook or YouTube for more information.

Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy provides a forum for the dairy industry to work together pre-competitively to address barriers and opportunities to foster innovation and increase sales. The Innovation Center aligns the collective resources of the industry to offer consumers nutritious dairy products and ingredients, and promote the health of people, communities, the planet and the industry. The Board of Directors for the Innovation Center represents leaders of more than 30 key U.S. producer organizations, dairy cooperatives, processors, manufacturers and brands. The Innovation Center is supported and staffed by Dairy Management Inc.™ For more information, please contact innovationcenter@rosedmi.com.

¹ USDA Economic Research Services

² University of Arkansas Applied Sustainability Center

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. 6th edition, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 2005

⁴ Judith L. Capper, Euridice Castanada-Gutierrez, Roger A. Cady, and Dale E. Bauman, *Journal of Animal Science*. Published online first on March 13, 2009

⁵ NMPF Dairy Highlights (source data USDA Economic Research Services)