



Board of Directors Meeting

Friday, June 13, 2025 | 8:30 a.m.-11:55 a.m.

DCC Office (3900 Lennane Dr, Ste 225, Sacramento) | Stever Miller Conference Room

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87104309161?pwd=fxg2w5ULMqSY8yFipV6HWYZu9vaR7C.1>

Dial: 1 (669) 444-9171 | Meeting ID: 871 0430 9161 | Passcode: 473517

VISION: Milk and dairy are globally accepted as an essential solution to achieve nutrition security and sustainable food systems.

CAUSE: Elevating the health of children and communities in California by promoting lifelong healthy eating patterns that include milk and dairy foods.

Thursday, June 12, 2025 – Open House + Gallery Walk (3:00-5:00 p.m.)

Join us for an Open House at the Dairy Council of CA office at 3900 Lennane Dr, Ste 225, in Sacramento! The event includes a Gallery Walk for the FY 24-25 Successes with poster session, meet partners and enjoy hors d'oeuvres.

Friday, June 13, 2025 – Steve Miller Conference Room

1. Call to Order – *Curt DeGroot, Chairman* 8:30 a.m.
2. Standards of Performance, Anti-Trust Statement and Approval of the March 20-21, 2025, Minutes – **Tab 1** 8:40 a.m.
(Motion to approve the March 20-21, 2025, full Board Minutes)
3. Public Comments 8:45 a.m.
4. CEO Report – *Amy DeLisio, CEO* – **Tab 2** 8:50 a.m.
 - Poster presentations
5. 2024-2025 Financial Report through May 31, 2025 – **Tab 3** 9:05 a.m.
Matt Delgado, Operations Officer
(Motion to approve the 2024-2025 Financial Report & Cash Investments through May 31, 2025)
6. Research Projects Update with California Dairy Research Foundation 9:20 a.m.
Ashley Rosales, Nutrition & Industry Affairs Officer
Kevin Comerford, PhD, Chief Science Officer, CA Dairy Research Foundation
Jennifer Smilowitz, PhD, Assistant Professor Department of Nutrition, UC Davis
7. Nominating Committee Report – *John Dolan, Committee Chairman* 10:05 a.m.
- BREAK** 10:20 a.m.
8. 2025-2026 Strategic Success Plan – **Tab 4** 10:35 a.m.

Amy DeLisio, CEO
Shannan Young, Initiatives, Education & Engagement Officer
Ashley Rosales, Nutrition & Industry Affairs Officer
(Motion to approve the 2025-2026 Strategic Success Plan)

9. Closed Session pursuant to California Government Code 11126(a) and 11126(e) regarding the evaluation of performance and a Closed Session pursuant to California Government Code 11126(e)2024-2025
(Motion to approve) 10:55 a.m.
10. Open Session – Report on Closed Session 11:05 a.m.
11. 2025-2026 Proposed Budget, Organizational Salary Schedule and Assessment Rate – **Tab 5** 11:10 a.m.
Amy DeLisio, CEO
Matt Delgado, Operations Officer
(Motion to approve the 2025-2026 Organizational Salary and 2025-2026 Proposed Budget and Assessment Rate)
12. CDFA Report – *Dennis Manderfield, Senior Agricultural Economist* 11:25 a.m.
13. Board Meeting Evaluation Poll 11:30 a.m.
14. Chairman’s Report – *Curt DeGroot, Chairman* 11:40 a.m.
15. Additional Public Comments 11:50 a.m.
16. Adjourn 11:55 a.m.

Next Board of Directors Meeting - November 17-18, 2025, Carmel Valley Ranch

Anti-trust Statement - The Dairy Council of California, its members and its staff, strictly comply with all State and federal antitrust laws. Discussions regarding setting prices and price terms, restrictions on competition, and boycotts are prohibited at all program functions. Should any meeting attendee observe discussions that involve antitrust sensitivity, the attendee should raise his or her concern and request the discussion be stopped. If the discussion continues, the discussion should be reported to the program CEO and Department staff.

Members of the public are encouraged to provide comments to the Board and may suggest items to be placed on the agenda for discussion at the next Board meeting. While the Board values the participation of the public, the Board Chair reserves the right to limit the time for public comment depending on the length of the agenda and the number of commenters.

Each of the noticed agenda items will include discussion and public comment. Noticed items will be considered for possible action by the Board. Any item not so noticed will not be considered or discussed. Items listed on the agenda may be considered in any order at the discretion of the Board Chair. All meeting agendas and notices are available on the California Department of Food and Agricultural website at: <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/mkt/mkt/>. (*select Meeting Notices*)

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Rachel Otter, 916-263-3560.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

All meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. If you need reasonable accommodation as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, or if you have questions regarding the public meeting, please contact Rachel Otter at 916-263-3560. Requests for reasonable accommodation should be made no later than three (3) days before the meeting.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DAIRY COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA
STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

The Board's responsibilities will be fulfilled when the following are accomplished and appropriate feedback is given to the C.E.O.

At its regularly scheduled summer meeting:

1. Review current financial statement against budget and act on Executive Committee's recommendation
2. Receive program progress reports
3. Review actions taken by the Executive Committee
4. Review other recommendations brought forth by the Executive Committee and/or the C.E.O. and take appropriate action
5. Approve program goals and budget for the coming fiscal year after receiving Executive Committee's recommendation
6. Recommend to the Secretary Industry assessments necessary to execute the programs
7. Review and approve the cause, vision and strategic priorities of DCC for next fiscal year
8. Examine organization's delegation of authority and approve policies for guiding decision of officers of the Board and staff
9. Review organization structure of the Board and staff
10. Determine C.E.O.'s salary after receiving review and recommendation from the Executive Committee

Minutes of the Meeting of the
Board of Directors
Dairy Council of California
March 20-21, 2025
The Cassara Carlsbad, Carlsbad, CA

PRESENT:

Vance Ahlem	Michael Oosten
Chuck Ahlem	Jim O'Shea
Curt DeGroot	Patrick Schallberger
Preston Fernandes	Brad Scott
Stacy Heaton	Hem Shah
Maureen Lemos	Richard Shehadey
Justin Leyendekker	Arlene VanderEyck
Steve Maddox	John VanderPoel, Jr.
Mike Newell	

ABSENT:

Laura Bosch	Tyler Ribeiro
Domenic Carinalli, Jr.	Leaine Souza
John Dolan	

OTHERS

PRESENT:

Matt Delgado, Dairy Council of California
Amy DeLisio, Dairy Council of California
Kendall House, Dairy Council of California
Dennis Manderfield, California Department of Food and Agriculture
Kim Miller, Guest (3/20/2025)
Rachel Otter, Dairy Council of California
Ashley Rosales, Dairy Council of California
Trina Robertson, Dairy Council of California
Teresa Siles, Nuffer, Smith, Tucker (3/21/2025)
Efrain Valenzuela, Dairy Council of California
Shannan Young, Dairy Council of California

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Call to Order

Chairman Curt DeGroot called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Standards of Performance, Anti-Trust Statement and Approval of November 11-12, 2024, Minutes

Chairman DeGroot asked the Board members to review the Standards of Performance, Anti-Trust Statement and meeting minutes from November 11-12, 2024.

IT WAS MOVED BY RICHARD SHEHADEY AND SECONDED BY VANCE AHLEM TO APPROVE THE FULL BOARD MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 11-12, 2024. THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED. AYES: CHUCK AHLEM, VANCE AHLEM, CURT DEGROOT, MAUREEN LEMOS, STACY HEATON, STEVE MADDOX, JIM O'SHEA, RICHARD SHEHADEY, PATRICK SCHALLBERGER, JUSTIN LEYENDEKKER, BRAD SCOTT, HEM SHAH, ARLENE VANDEREYK, PRESTON FERNANDES, JOHN VANDERPOEL, JR. NAYS: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: LAURA BOSCH, JOHN DOLAN, TYLER RIBEIRO, DOMENIC CARINALLI, JR., MIKE NEWELL, LEAINE SOUZA, MICHAEL OOSTEN (BOARD MOTION 2025-03-20 BD#1).

Public Comments: None

CEO Report

Ms. Amy DeLisio shared updates about the Mobile Dairy Classroom's (MDC) pivots including redirecting MDC savings to conduct formative evaluation for new fourth grade curriculum. Ms. DeLisio shared the Dairy Council of CA has provided public comments on the California Health and Human Services' ultra-processed foods executive summary. A Dairy Dialogue event was hosted in Sacramento, CA which was comprised of school nutrition directors, students and dairy producers who gathered to share knowledge and learn from each other.

Nominating Committee Report

Chairman DeGroot started by welcoming Mr. Jim O'Shea to his first Board meeting and went on to announce the resignation of Board member Mr. Dennis Roberts of Crystal Creamery. He noted that Mr. Roberts had suggested considering Mr. Greg Weston of Crystal Creamer for filling his handler vacancy. It was further noted that Mr. Weston had submitted a Self-Nomination Form. The Board members subsequently reviewed Mr. Weston's Self-Nomination Form and considered him for filling the vacant handler position with a 3-year term (2024-2027) on the Board of Directors.

Chairman DeGroot noted that if Mr. Weston is appointed to the Board there would still be one more vacant handler position still available. Clover Sonoma has indicated that it may be interested in putting forward a suggested representative of their firm for filling the last remaining handler vacancy on the Board.

IT WAS MOVED BY MIKE NEWELL AND SECONDED BY RICHARD SHEHADEY FOR THE BOARD TO RECOMMEND TO CDFA THE APPOINTMENT OF MR. GREG WESTON, CRYSTAL CREAMERY, FOR FILLING THE VACANT HANDLER POSITION ON THE DAIRY COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FOR THE 2024-2027 TERM, AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED. AYES: CHUCK AHLEM, VANCE AHLEM, CURT DEGROOT, MAUREEN LEMOS, STACY HEATON, STEVE MADDOX, MIKE NEWELL, JIM O'SHEA, RICHARD SHEHADEY, PATRICK SCHALLBERGER, JUSTIN LEYENDEKKER, MICHAEL OOSTEN, BRAD SCOTT, HEM SHAH, ARLENE VANDEREYK, PRESTON FERNANDES, JOHN VANDERPOEL, JR. NAYS: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: LAURA BOSCH, JOHN DOLAN, TYLER RIBEIRO, DOMENIC CARINALLI, JR., LEAINE SOUZA (BOARD MOTION 2025-03-20 BD#2).

Financial Reports (FY 2024-2025 Report through February 28, 2025, Cash and Investments, Audit Firm Selection, Budget Reallocation of Funds Proposal)
FY 2024-2025 Report through February 28, 2025

Mr. Delgado reported that the Dairy Council of CA is capitalizing on CDs while interest rates are higher. Mr. Delgado continued to provide high-level overviews of the statements of net position, changes in assets and expenses.

Cash & Investments as of February 28, 2025 and February 29, 2024

Mr. Delgado reported that Dairy Council of CA shifted some short-term CDs to long-term that will mature in 2027. From previous Executive Committee discussions, Mr. Delgado reported on findings from CalPERS that Dairy Council of CA must continue to offer CalPERS to new employees. If the Dairy Council of CA were to close its doors, another organization would have to take over the unfunded liabilities.

Audit Firm Selection

Mr. Delgado shared that he had received bids from four auditing firms for conducting the Dairy Council's required annual financial and compliance audits. He highlighted several positive aspects of their current auditing firm, MUN, which included their low price, their experience with GASB requirements and their ability to meet all proposal requirements. Ms. DeLisio and Mr. Delgado suggested continuing with MUN CPAs as the Dairy Council of CA's auditing firm for the next three years. The Board agreed.

Budget Allocation of Funds Proposal

Mr. Delgado reported on the current fiscal year cost savings and proposed a reallocation of expenses to better utilize underspent line items. Mr. Delgado proposed moving some of the cost-saving funds to be utilized by the Initiatives, Engagement and Education department to support the creation of a video series through KLCS PBS, and Operations for small office equipment and for networks/web maintenance.

IT WAS MOVED BY MICHAEL OOSTEN AND SECONDED BY CHUCK AHLEM TO APPROVE THE 2024-2025 FINANCIAL REPORT THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2025, CASH AND INVESTMENTS AS OF FEBRUARY 28, 2025 AND FEBRUARY 29, 2024, THE SELECTION OF MUN CPAS AUDITING FIRM FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS AND THE PROPOSED BUDGET ALLOCATION OF FUNDS, AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED. AYES: CHUCK AHLEM, VANCE AHLEM, CURT DEGROOT, STACY HEATON, JUSTIN LEYENDEKKER, MAUREEN LEMOS, PATRICK SCHALLBERGER, HEM SHAH, STEVE MADDOX, MIKE NEWELL, MICHAEL OOSTEN, JIM O'SHEA, BRAD SCOTT, RICHARD SHEHADEY, ARLENE VANDEREYK, PRESTON FERNANDES, JOHN VANDERPOEL, JR. NAYS: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: LAURA BOSCH, TYLER RIBEIRO, JOHN DOLAN, LEAINE SOUZA, DOMENIC CARINALLI, JR. (BOARD MOTION 2025-03-20 BD#3).

Dairy Dialogue

Ms. Shannan Young introduced the Dairy Dialogue event, held on January 15, 2025, to promote dairy in school meals, aligning with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines and California laws. The event emphasized nutrition education, sustainability, and equity, while addressing regulatory and staffing challenges. Stakeholders explored solutions like local sourcing, product diversification, and student engagement and empowered youth in meal planning.

California Department of Food and Agriculture Report

Mr. Dennis Manderfield announced that the California Milk Advisory Board will have a new Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Bob Carroll, officially as of May 7, 2025, after Mr. John Talbot retires. Mr. Manderfield informed the Board that the recent producer referendum conducted by CDFA to consider amendments to the Quota Implementation Plan (QIP) had failed. He noted further that CDFA had received a valid petition to terminate the QIP which requires CDFA to now conduct a referendum of California market milk producers to determine whether the QIP should be immediately terminated. He added that, as in the past, the referendum process will begin with a public hearing to give producers the opportunity to provide input about the proposal prior to the actual vote. He stated that CDFA anticipates that ballots for the QIP termination referendum will be mailed to producers in late Spring. Additionally, Mr. Manderfield reminded those on the Board who have terms of office expiring this year.

2024-2025 Dairy Council of CA Success Plan Updates and Pivots

Mr. Efrain Valenzuela highlighted Dairy Council of CA supporting school nutrition through events like the Santa Barbara Wellness Summit and Elk Grove Unified School District's Collective Action Day. Staff supported National Dairy Council with their "Made with School Lunch" campaign and presented at the USDA Healthy Meals Summit emphasized dairy inclusive opportunities in youth engagement, farm-to-school efforts and local partnerships, aiming to improve school meal quality and promote healthy eating year-round.

Ms. Trina Robertson shared how Dairy Council of CA advanced nutrition education and advocacy through events, publications and public comments. Efforts focused on health equity, culturally relevant resources, and dairy's role in nutrition security. Highlights include National Milk Day, support for underserved communities, collaboration with schools and research on identifying opportunities for increasing access to fermented dairy for families with young children. Dairy Council of CA also promoted dairy in public health forums and advocated for inclusive dietary guidelines and sustainable farming practices.

Ms. Kendall House highlighted key successes under the Thriving Organization strategy. She reported that Dairy Council of CA continues to strengthen its fiscal stability and outreach through strategic partnerships, impactful events and staff development. Notable accomplishments include securing \$48K in in-kind support, saving \$30K through the recent office move and generating \$32K in revenue from asset sales. Marketing & Communication efforts yielded nearly 500,000 impressions, with strong engagement during events such as National Milk Day. Ongoing staff development and media coverage further supported organizational growth and expanded the Dairy Council of CA's impact across diverse communities.

Let's Eat Healthy Celebration and Awards

Ms. Young, Mr. Valenzuela and Ms. DeLisio shared that the Let's Eat Healthy initiative continues to make a strong impact across California through community grants and leadership awards that elevate local champions advancing nutrition education and dairy literacy. Dairy Council of CA awarded 2024-2025 Community Grants to three organizations that support dairy education and access projects including youth empowerment, parent engagement, dairy in school meals and agricultural literacy.

Four individuals were honored with the sixth annual Let's Eat Healthy Leadership Awards, including a high school student from Pleasanton. A special Legacy Award was posthumously presented to Mr. Steve Miller, a beloved MDC instructor who dedicated 22 years to agricultural education. The award was accepted by his wife, Kim Miller, in honor of his enduring impact and commitment.

Additional Public Comments: None

Adjourn

Chairman DeGroot adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

Friday, March 21, 2025

Call to Order

Chairman DeGroot reconvened the meeting at 8:05 a.m.

Public Comments: None

Trends, Food Foresight and Policy Scan

Trends and Food Foresight

Ms. DeLisio introduced Ms. Teresa Siles, Nuffer, Smith, Tucker, who reviewed the top industry trend insights and explained their implications. California agriculture is evolving through three major trends: increased collaboration for problem-solving, particularly in data, artificial intelligence and nutrition advocacy; a shift away from traditional academic-led research toward industry-driven innovation due to funding cuts and inefficiencies; and a growing reliance on community colleges and vocational training to address labor shortages and develop future talent. These trends reflect the sector's need for strategic partnerships, workforce development and adaptive approaches to maintain resilience and national relevance amid ongoing challenges.

Ms. Ashley Rosales reviewed and summarized the highlights and implications from Dairy Council of CA's 2025 Trends publication. The U.S. health gap grows, cultural relevance is prioritized in health and nutrition initiatives and women's healthy aging is in the spotlight. Dairy foods, especially low-lactose and fermented options, meet health and wellness needs while fitting within cultural preferences. Dairy foods nutrient profiles align with consumer driven trends for quality protein, supporting digestive health and healthy aging. Women's health is a growing focus, emphasizing an opportunity to highlight dairy nutrition across all life stages.

Policy Scan

Ms. DeLisio shared that the U.S. faces rising food insecurity, poor diet quality and chronic disease, especially in vulnerable communities. State and federal regulatory shifts, high food costs and mistrust in government agencies add urgency. Nutrition programs like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Women, Infants and Children are vital, but funding is uncertain. Opportunities exist in policy, education and dairy's role in health and sustainability.

New Issues Management Process

Ms. Rosales and Ms. Stiles reviewed that Dairy Council of California is formalizing its Issues Management and Crisis Response systems to proactively address risks and opportunities that impact its mission and the dairy community. This structured approach, which has been a foundation of Dairy Council of CA's long-term success, distinguishes between issues and crises, integrates trend analysis and enhances strategic planning. The new system aims to ensure consistent, efficient responses, foster collaboration and support long-term success. Implementation begins in the new fiscal year, with training and ongoing refinement to optimize effectiveness.

2025-2026 Dairy Council of CA Success Plan Overview

Ms. DeLisio, Ms. Rosales, Ms. Young and Mr. Delgado reviewed key strategies focusing on sustaining dairy education through programs like the Mobile Dairy Classroom, advancing dairy's role in nutrition, translating research into advocacy, fostering multi-sector collaboration and promoting sustainable eating. Organizational goals include building equity, measuring impact, refining messaging, ensuring fiscal stability and investing in team and infrastructure.

2025-2026 Budget Projections, Salary Increase and Assessment Rate Projections

Mr. Delgado reported that assessment revenue for the current fiscal year is down due to decreased milk production caused by the bird flu. He noted that over the past few fiscal years assessment revenues have been relatively flat while the costs of goods and services have increased. After further discussion, the Board members agreed with the Executive Committee to approve a small cost of living staff salary increase and to maintain the current assessment rate for 2025-2026 budget planning.

IT WAS MOVED BY JOHN VANDERPOEL, JR. AND SECONDED BY RICHARD SHEHADY TO APPROVE THE 2025-2026 BUDGET PROJECTIONS, TO APPROVE A STAFF COST OF LIVING SALARY INCREASE AND TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT ASSESSMENT RATE FOR 2025-2026 BUDGET PLANNING, AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED. AYES: CHUCK AHLEM, VANCE AHLEM, CURT DEGROOT, STACY HEATON, JUSTIN LEYENDEKKER, MAUREEN LEMOS, PATRICK SCHALLBERGER, HEM SHAH, STEVE MADDOX, MICHAEL OOSTEN, JIM O'SHEA, BRAD SCOTT, RICHARD SHEHADEY, ARLENE VANDEREYK, PRESTON FERNANDES, JOHN VANDERPOEL, JR. NAYS: NONE. ABSTAIN: NONE. ABSENT: LAURA BOSCH, TYLER RIBEIRO, JOHN DOLAN, LEAINE SOUZA, DOMENIC CARINALLI, JR., MIKE NEWELL (BOARD MOTION 2025-03-21 BD#1).

Chairman's Report

Chairman DeGroot thanked Ms. DeLisio, her staff and the Board members for being present, sharing and participating. Mr. Chuck Ahlem thanked Chairman DeGroot for being a great Chair of the Board.

Additional Public Comments

Ms. Young noted the June Board of Directors meeting will be hybrid combining Zoom and in-person attendance at the new Dairy Council of CA office in Sacramento, CA. She invited all Board members to attend in-person.

Adjourn

Chairman DeGroot adjourned the meeting at 11:26 a.m.

Submitted By: 
Amy DeLisio
Chief Executive Officer

Certification

I, Amy DeLisio, Chief Executive Officer of the Dairy Council of California, do hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of a meeting of the Board of Directors held on March 20-21, 2025.

Submitted By: 
Amy DeLisio
Chief Executive Officer