



2024–2025 ANNUAL REPORT

OUTCOMES THAT REFLECT PROGRESS—AND THE PEOPLE BEHIND IT

A Message From the CEO

It has been a transformative year at Dairy Council of California, marked by innovation, strategic focus and forward-thinking leadership. I am deeply grateful to our dedicated team and trusted partners that elevate the health of communities across the Golden State.

This year, we deepened our commitment to financial stewardship, operational transformation and systems optimization, maximizing our productivity. Key changes include reducing our office footprint, transitioning to digital-first practices, streamlining our brand and web presence across platforms and increasing partner contributions toward shared goals. These efforts have made us more agile and responsive while maintaining the integrity and quality our partners rely on.

Our programs delivered meaningful impact, from convening a cross-sector dialogue to reimagine dairy's role in school meals to delivering science-based podium engagements, webinars and trusted resources. We strengthened our relationships and built credibility with education, nutrition, foodservice, health and dairy professionals. We published articles and newsletters, participated in podcasts and television segments, and submitted

public comments to advocate for dairy's unique role in health across the life span. During June Is Dairy Month, we launched the Dairy Around the World campaign connecting Californians to the important role dairy plays in health, culture and community.

This year, we also expanded strategic collaboration with state, national and international dairy organizations, reinforcing dairy as an essential component of nutrition security and sustainable food systems around the world. These partnerships amplified our collective impact through peer-reviewed publications on the dairy matrix and dairy's role in school meals, culturally relevant culinary medicine symposiums for health professionals and a joint conference on dairy sustainability for farmers and decision-makers. By sharing expertise and leveraging one another's networks and resources, we've extended the value of the dairy community's investment even further.

On behalf of the Dairy Council of California team and board of directors, I am honored to share our 2024–2025 Annual Report. I hope the stories and impacts within these pages reflect our unwavering commitment to public health and the dairy community and inspire continued collaboration toward a healthier, more nourished California.

This year's outcome-based report invites you to see how our collective efforts translate into measurable results—healthier behaviors, stronger partnerships, and lasting impact across the state.

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Dairy Council of California equips partners and communities to improve health through education, collaboration and science-based solutions.

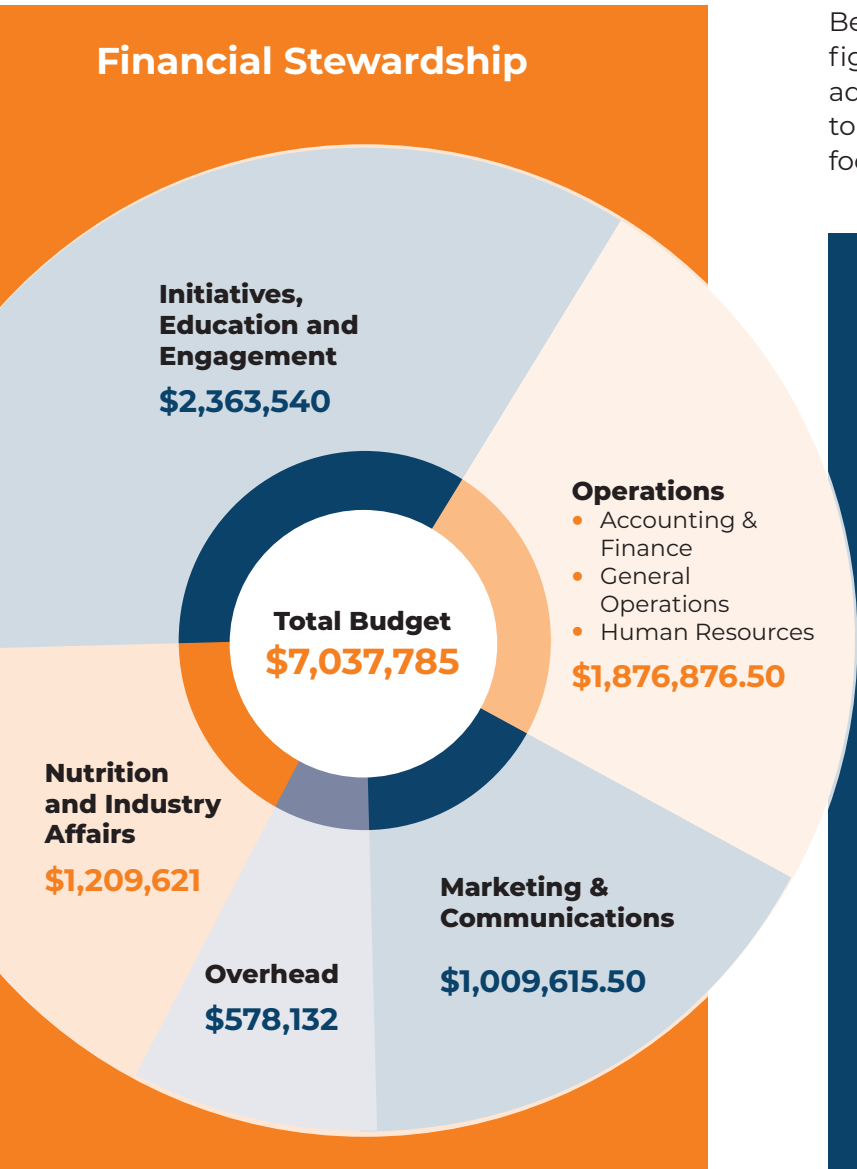
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Amy DeLisio
Amy DeLisio, MPH, RDN
Chief Executive Officer

Success by the Numbers

Financial Stewardship



Behind every number is a story of impact. These figures reflect how Dairy Council of California advances the health benefits of milk and dairy foods to help achieve nutrition security and sustainable food systems.

REACH ACROSS CALIFORNIA



1.7 million
children and families reached



6,400
trained professionals



3,600
engaged partners advancing
nutrition education



216
events statewide



24
nutrition guidelines informed

Engagement + Impact

Dairy Council of California conducted an annual engagement survey, with 850 responses collected.

Here are some highlights of the responses:

90%

rated Dairy Council of California's resources as effective in promoting healthy eating patterns

90%

improved understanding of how dairy farmers produce nutritious foods

96%

were satisfied with Dairy Council of California's podium and presentation content

92%

found value in nutrition education tools that included milk and dairy food topics

65%

of respondents were highly likely to recommend Dairy Council of California to others, showing strong trust and loyalty

Partners use dairy-inclusive nutrition to educate children and communities

Culinary Medicine Inspires Health Leaders

When partners champion dairy-inclusive nutrition, communities benefit. This year in the health care space, physicians, dietitians and public health leaders gained evidence-based resources that were culturally tailored to help guide families through the critical first 1,000 days of life and beyond.

At the National Hispanic Medical Association Annual Conference in Anaheim, Dairy Council of California partnered with the National Dairy Council to host a culinary medicine workshop blending science, culture and practical skills. The two organizations also hosted an informational booth and poster presentation, underscoring their shared leadership and influence on dairy's role in healthy eating patterns. Board member and dairy farmer Brad Scott shared firsthand the care behind quality dairy, while Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Crystal Orozco demonstrated recipes that honored Latin culinary heritage and supported patient health. Attendees prepared and tasted dishes, explored Dairy Council of California bilingual *Feeding Infants and Young Toddlers* resources and discussed ways to integrate them into patient counseling from pregnancy through early childhood.

Health care collaborations spanning Medi-Cal approved resources and partnerships with champion providers such as Dr. Kerstin Rosen showed how equipping leaders turns knowledge into action.



Brad Scott, DCC Board Member



Bilingual resource for families



NHMA Annual Conference, Anaheim



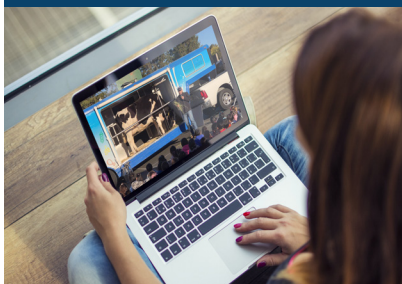
Culinary Medicine Workshop



Crystal Orozco, RDN



English and Spanish-language virtual field trips



Dairy Agricultural Literacy

Alongside these efforts, Dairy Council of California's agricultural education has grown from traditional lessons into a dynamic, multi-modal experience that reflects the needs of today's students and communities. Through the Mobile Dairy Classroom, Spanish-language virtual field trips and culturally relevant resources, agricultural education extended further into classrooms, homes and online. New additions during the year such as the co-created Toolkit for Farm-to-You Tours and the Dairy Around the World activity highlighted this evolution by making agriculture more accessible and culturally diverse. Together, these efforts showed how partnerships extend dairy nutrition education into every corner of the community.



Mobile Dairy Classroom



Explore more dairy-inclusive nutrition resources

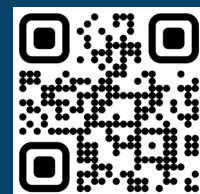


< Farm-to-You: Dairy

Co-created new classroom resource with California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom, helping students explore sustainability, upcycling and the full nutrient matrix of dairy foods.

Virtual Field Trips >

Reached nearly 50,000 students statewide, including more than 1,500 in the first Spanish-language tour.

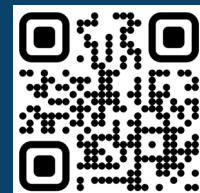


< Mobile Dairy Classroom

Engaged approximately 280,000 students across counties with hands-on dairy and nutrition education.

Dairy Around the World >

Shared new activity sheet exploring global dairy traditions, resulting in nearly 3,500 downloads; featured during June Is Dairy Month.



< Farm-to-You Tours Toolkit

Co-created toolkit with the California Beef Council, offering step-by-step guidance for impactful field trips across the state.

Community members develop skills to advocate for dairy-inclusive nutrition

Dairy Dialogue Elevates Advocacy

When communities gain skills to advocate for dairy-inclusive nutrition, their voices carry further. This year, Dairy Council of California hosted Well-Nourished, Brighter Futures: Dairy Dialogue, creating a collaborative space that connected educators, health professionals, farmers, processors, youth and school nutrition leaders around solutions that support child and community nutrition through dairy.

At the event, participants shared strategies to strengthen school meal programs, highlighting evidence-based solutions that improve access to nourishing foods. The companion report elevated these ideas more broadly, reaching stakeholders statewide and beyond.

The Dairy Dialogue built on this momentum, engaging school nutrition professionals, health sector leaders and community partners in meaningful conversations about nutrition equity, trends and practical solutions to support all students with healthy meals at school. Through Community of Practice webinars and forums—from culinary skills to nutrition security—educators and partners built upon their own skills, shared strategies, and strengthened their confidence to speak about dairy-inclusive nutrition in schools and communities.



Well-Nourished, Brighter Futures: Dairy Dialogue Event Attendees



Advocacy efforts were amplified through podiums, publications and public comments, where Dairy Council of California provided science-based insights—such as perspectives on ultra-processed foods—that built trust and helped shape conversations in broader nutrition spaces. By equipping partners with knowledge and platforms, we fostered community advocacy that advanced dairy-inclusive nutrition for children and families.



Dairy Dialogue: Participants shared strategies on school meals.



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OF CALIFORNIA
— 1933 —
DairyCouncil@CA.org



Flavorful Beginnings:
Resources for Introducing Cultural Foods to Infants and Toddlers.

Hope Wills, MA RD, CSP, IBCLC
Bessie O'Connor, RDN

Community of Practice Webinar

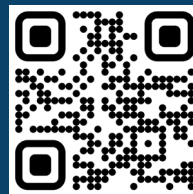


59 Publications
reaching 160,000 professionals

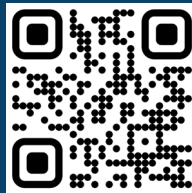
Including two co-authored publications in peer-reviewed journals:



◀ The Dairy Matrix: Its Importance, Definition, and Current Application in the Context of Nutrition and Health (Nutrients, 2024)



◀ The state of milk and milk products in school programmes around the world - Contributing to global child nutrition and development (International Dairy Federation, 2024)



◀ Professional Development - NACCHO Webinar

The National Association of County & City Health Officials Webinar equipped health professionals with culturally relevant resources to integrate dairy into patient counseling and gave them tools for dairy-inclusive nutrition during the first 1,000 days of life.



Trends Report ➤

Explored the latest food and nutrition trends shaping health conversations around dairy's role in health and wellness.



◀ Public Comments

Elevated science-based perspectives to ensure dairy's role is accurately represented in policy discussions, including why food-based dietary guidelines are important.

Champions engage in actions to advance milk and dairy foods

First 1,000 Days Champions in Action

When Dairy Council of California's champions take action to advance its cause and vision, systems shift. This year, Dairy Council of California and its partners advanced nutrition security during the critical first 1,000 days of life—pregnancy through age 2—by equipping families, health professionals and community organizations with practical, culturally relevant resources.

Through cross-sector leadership, interventions by Dairy Council of California champions leveraged external funding, digital accessibility, community partnerships and tailored messaging, moving from education to create policy, systems and environmental change that improved nutrition security. Evaluation results revealed increased frequency and diversity of dairy intake and improved perceived access to nutritious foods by participants. Results confirm that equipping families with dairy-inclusive nutrition tools supports healthier habits during the first 1,000 days of life.

From advancing local school wellness policies to hosting community events and classroom programs, champions reinforced this impact across California. Insights from the annual partner engagement survey showed that 90% of educators and health professionals found Dairy Council of California's resources effective in promoting healthy eating patterns, while nearly half reported resulting policy, systems or environmental change in their organizations. Educators continued to extend this impact by volunteering to teach dairy-inclusive nutrition education, ensuring lessons reached beyond the classrooms and into communities statewide.



+ADD Milk Event, Mother's Nutritional Center, Los Angeles



Head Start Health Summit 2024: Hope Wills MA, RD, CSP, IBCLC, CNSC; Bessie O'Connor, RDN



California Sustainability Summit 2025: Kevin Comerford, PhD; Mitch Kanter, PhD; Ashley Rosales, RDN (above) & Dairy Council of California staff (below)





By pairing strong science with committed champions, this initiative demonstrated how collective action can create measurable change in systems that shape family health. From advancing school wellness policies and supporting community events to equipping health professionals and partnering with retailers, champions acted at every level to advance dairy-inclusive solutions. Together, champion efforts ensured that California's youngest children and their families had greater access to nutritious foods and healthier futures.



Grateful Grazing | California School Nutrition Association

Helped connect 120+ school nutrition leaders with sustainably raised and produced California agriculture.



California Local School Wellness Policy Collaborative

Partnered with California Department of Education to strengthen dairy-inclusive school wellness policies statewide.

Add Milk Event

Elevated milk's role in nutrition security through partnership engagement and community outreach.



California Dairy Sustainability Summit 2025

Joined with statewide dairy organizations to host the summit, highlighting collaboration across the industry to advance sustainability.

Leadership Awards

Honored districts, health leaders and community partners advancing dairy-inclusive nutrition.



Let's Eat Healthy
An initiative of Dairy Council of California

Powered by Expertise: What Sets Dairy Council of California Apart

Collaborative Teamwork

At Dairy Council of California, success is fueled by people. Registered dietitians, public health educators and communications and marketing staff bring distinct expertise and perspectives, working across disciplines to create stronger outcomes together. This teamwork ensures that every program, campaign and resource is grounded in science, shaped by practical application and responsive to partner needs.

Dairy Champion Network Model

Unlike consumer-facing organizations, Dairy Council of California's strategy integrates education, advocacy and cross-sector collaboration to build dairy nutrition champions through strategic partnership with organizations and trusted messengers like school nutrition leaders, educators and health professionals. Local champions are activated with evidence-based culturally responsive tools to inspire healthy eating within their spheres of influence. This dual approach drives institutional change and meaningful impact for dairy in California and beyond.

Data-Driven Outreach

Evaluation and feedback guide the organization's approach. Satisfaction surveys, pilot testing and outcome assessments ensure that initiatives remain relevant, measurable and responsive to evolving community needs.

Science in Action

Science drives Dairy Council of California's work. The latest nutrition research is translated into real-world tools and campaigns used in classroom, health care and community programs. This year, staff co-authored two publications with the International Dairy Federation on the dairy matrix and school milk programs, reinforcing dairy's unique role in health and child nutrition globally.

Nutrition science also came to life through dozens of podium addresses, 59 publications and policy engagements that reached well over 160,000 professionals. Staff advanced conversations through formal presentations and public comments on timely topics like the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the definition of ultra-processed foods, ensuring dairy's role is accurately represented in both policy and practice.

Together, these efforts demonstrate the growing demand for credible, evidence-based information, and they position Dairy Council of California as a trusted leader advancing nutrition security and sustainable food systems that include dairy.

“The information is accurate and reliable. We get flooded with false information through the media and social media. I know that the resources and information I get through Dairy Council of California are factual.”

—High School Teacher, Education Sector



“Dairy Council always has been backed in scientific research, making the information valid.”

—Professor, Academia Sector



About Dairy Council of California

Dairy Council of California is a leading nutrition organization working to elevate the health of children and communities through multisector collaborations to foster lifelong healthy eating patterns.

Focusing on education, advocacy and partnerships, Dairy Council of California advances the health benefits of milk and dairy foods in achieving nutrition security and sustainable food systems.

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.

A Letter From the Board Chair

As I reflect on the past year, I am proud of the strength and commitment of the people who make Dairy Council of California what it is. Our registered dietitians, health educators and behind-the-scenes staff embody a shared purpose: advancing the health of children and communities through dairy's role in nutrition security and sustainable food systems. From classroom resources to the Mobile Dairy Classroom experience, their work brings nutrition and agricultural education to life for students statewide. Their expertise continues to power the organization's impact.

This year required resilience and adaptability. Dairy Council of California demonstrated remarkable flexibility in navigating disruptions caused by Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, shifting in-person assemblies to virtual learning and modifying community outreach strategies. Amid uncertainty, the organization ensured its work remained timely, relevant and impactful, meeting the needs of partners and the communities they serve.

Looking ahead, I am encouraged by the momentum we have built. National conversations about nutrition security, health outcomes and sustainability are elevating the importance of our cause. With staff expertise, trusted partnerships and a reputation for evidence-based resources, Dairy Council of California is well-positioned to lead in these dialogues in California and across the nation.

On behalf of the board, I extend sincere gratitude to the staff, partners and supporters who make this work possible. Together, we are building a healthier future for California, powered by the dedication and contributions of dairy producers and processors who invest in stronger communities through their support of Dairy Council of California.



Curt DeGroot
Chair, Board of Directors
Dairy Council of California



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Chief Executive Officer

Matt Delgado

Operations Officer

Ashley Rosales

Nutrition and Industry Affairs Officer

Shannan Young

Initiatives, Education and
Engagement Officer

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dairy Council of California is a nutrition organization under the California Department of Food and Agriculture and guided by a board of directors representing California dairy farmers and processors. We would like to acknowledge and thank the following board members for their guidance and continued support during the 2024–2025 fiscal year.

Amy DeLisio

CEO, Dairy Council of California

Curt DeGroot

Rockview Farms

Chair

Arlene VanderEyck

Robert VanderEyck Dairy

Vice-Chair

Chuck Ahlem

Charles Ahlem Ranch

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