



Southwest/Southland Dairy Farmers'

# DAIRY LINE

A Quarterly Newsletter published by the Southwest Dairy Museum  
January 2020 • Volume 11 Issue 1 • [www.southwestdairyfarmers.com](http://www.southwestdairyfarmers.com)

INSIDE: Sharing Dairy With Fairgoers



## What's Up With Dairy?

*An opinion-editorial by James C. Hill, Chief Executive Officer of Southwest and Southland Dairy Farmers*

It seems that lately in the "news de jour" there is frequently something about dairy foods or the dairy business. For example, on November 12 of this year, Dean Foods Co. filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. Since that date, anyone who even casually keeps up with the news would have seen story after story about the reasons the nation's largest milk processing company was failing. Even Saturday Night Live aired a skit about Dean's dilemma a week after the filing. But — and here's the funny thing — it seems that almost as many positive stories about milk and dairy have appeared in the news lately, opposite the speculation about "the decline of the milk industry." So, what is up with dairy?

Some of the answers to that question (as with most things that have a "side") depends on who's providing the answers and their personal points of view. If you're a committed vegan or happen to think milk from a cow is bad for you, then your answer is somewhere along the lines of, "I told you so... milk alternatives like soy, oat, almond, and coconut have destroyed the dairy milk business." Conversely, if you're a dairy lover and eat and/or cook with milk, butter, cheese, ice cream, and other dairy products, then your answer is somewhere along the lines of, "I've been hearing these horror stories for years; for every article written that says dairy is bad, I read one that says it's good."

So, what is the truth? Yes, Dean Foods Company was failing financially. And yes, part of that failure was due to a slow but consistent decline in demand for fluid milk. But there were a lot of other reasons that contributed to that bankruptcy, most of which can be found in recent news articles. It wasn't ALL due to declining milk sales. And for the most part, dairy products have received

some very good reports recently from health and nutrition experts, and that has generated renewed consumer confidence in most dairy products, including whole milk. Across the board, it seems the dairy industry is enjoying some good product news lately. At least, these reports have helped to debunk some "theories" that were either factually false or misleading. And all of this has helped consumers get back to thinking about milk and dairy as good, wholesome products for them and their families.

Some of the good news about dairy is that it's still one of the best ways to meet your needs for nine essential vitamins and minerals: phosphorous, B12, calcium, magnesium, vitamin A, vitamin D, riboflavin, niacin, and protein. That's been known for many years, but it's interesting that this fact is now becoming better known because consumers are comparing these values to milk alternatives. Most non-dairy "milk" (soy, almond, oat, coconut, and others) contain only one or two natural vitamins or minerals. The rest are artificially added, and some add sugar. Most all of them lack protein. Grade A, natural whole milk has more naturally occurring vitamins and minerals than any of the milk alternatives, and no added sugar. So, the comparison is favorable, and consumers are taking notice.

Other good news that has made a resurgence lately is that milk is excellent for women's health (including skin, bones, teeth, and heart), as well as early childhood development.

In addition, while the Dean Foods filing and the ongoing "anti-milk" group news has created some negative speculation about milk, it's interesting to note the real numbers against that speculation. The U. S. fluid milk category has (Continued on Page 2)

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declined about 4% year over year (through September of this year). But that's NOT because of some massive hit to real milk sales by milk alternatives. According to data presented in a report from the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), for the six weeks ending September 8, 2019, about 400 million gallons of milk were sold versus fewer than 100 million gallons of plant-based milk alternatives. Based on those numbers, the score is real milk 4, alternatives 1.

Actually, a drop in cereal sales and a decline in the number of households with children are big factors in falling milk consumption. That's easy to see in today's world, with younger households and healthier eating habits that don't include sugar-coated cereals, plus, a much larger choice in drinks. In fact, a 2017 study from IRI, a data and analytics company, found that 53% of the volume milk lost went to bottled water drinkers. Not sodas, not milk alternatives. Water. Still, 94% of all U. S. households have dairy products in their refrigerators, and dairy consumption overall has risen by nearly 20%. In fact, volume sales of cheese and yogurt are up significantly this year and chocolate milk continues to be a staple for athletes as a recovery drink.

As I stated earlier in this letter, the dairy industry will always have consumers on the "anti-" side as well as on the "pro-" side. It's telling that for decades, there have always been a lot more people on pro side — and that group continues to grow. Evidence of that growth are the recent comebacks of a number of dairy categories, and the resurgence of "good news" about dairy products has given consumers new perspectives about why milk can, and should be, a part of good things in their lives. 🐄

# Sharing Dairy With Fairgoers

The 2019 Fall Fair season has come to an end and we look back on the excitement of sharing dairy with fairgoers all over the country. The numerous fairs we attend give us the opportunity to share the importance of dairy through our Mobile Dairy Classroom demonstrations and providing delicious and nutritious dairy products for sampling. During the 2019 fair season, our MDC gave over 930 presentations and taught over 67,000 children and adults where their milk comes from. More than 186,800 yogurt samples were distributed at many state fairs. By attending local and state fairs, we are able to spread the message of dairy to large numbers of the public who

would not normally be able to see our presentations and share the importance of dairy in a daily diet.

In 2019, our organization decided to become Associate Members of the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) in order to have the ability to expand our reach to fairs. We attended the annual IAFE Convention the first week of December, located in San Antonio, TX, which hosted thousands of attendees from fairs all over the world. We look forward to booking fairs that take place during our slower season and spreading the Southwest and Southland Dairy Farmers message about the goodness of dairy. 🐄



Yogurt giveaway during the State Fair of Texas



Live milking demonstrations during the Kentucky State Fair



# Southwest Dairy Farmers Honored With Business Appreciation Award

Southwest Dairy Farmers is the recipient of the 2019 K-State Research and Extension Johnson County Business Appreciation Award.

The Business Appreciation Award is a prestigious award decided by the Johnson County Extension Council Board. The purpose



of the award is to honor a business that has made an important impact on Extension programs within Johnson County. This award expresses Johnson County Extension Services appreciation for our dedication to the nutrition and ag literacy programs in this area. Southwest Dairy Farmers has provided Johnson County Extension with years of support through multiple programs.

Recognition was given during the 2019 Extension Council Annual Meeting held on November 6, 2019 at the Johnson County Extension Office in Olathe, KS. Ralph Keel, Director of the Mobile Dairy Classroom, accepted the award from Nancy Carr, School Enrichment Coordinator for Johnson County K-State Research and Extension.

The Southwest Dairy Farmers are proud and privileged to accept this award. We continuously strive to better our organization to provide dairy education and service to the dairy industry. 🐄

*Nancy Carr, School Enrichment Coordinator for Johnson County K-State Research and Extension, and Ralph Keel, Director of the Mobile Dairy Classroom.*

# Southwest Dairy Farmers Welcome New MDC Instructor

Southwest Dairy Farmers welcomes Jessica Harrington as the new Mobile Dairy Classroom Instructor for Southeast Texas. Jessica graduated from Vidor High School where she was very active in FFA and 4H and introduced to the dairy industry through her Dairy Cattle Evaluation Team. She went on to study Animal Science at McNeese State University. In her free time, Jessica enjoys reading books, listening to music and attending concerts. She brings a lot of agricultural experience to Southwest Dairy Farmers and looks forward to serving Southeast Texas as a Mobile Dairy Classroom Instructor. Please help welcome Jessica to the Southwest Dairy Farmers Family. She will be a great addition to our MDC staff. 🐄



# Mobile Dairy Classroom Established In Ohio



Southland Dairy Farmers continues to grow and make a dairy impact in the Southeast. Our Mobile Dairy Classroom program has expanded its reach and placed a unit in the State of Ohio. We continue to be optimistic about all the growth in the Southeast area where our Mobile Dairy Classroom program has proven to be successful.

Southland Dairy Farmers is pleased to introduce Shelby Schelling as the Mobile Dairy Classroom Instructor for the State of Ohio. Shelby is an Ohio native and a graduate of Wilmington College with a bachelor's degree in Agribusiness. She is also a graduate of Bowling Green State University where she earned her master's degree in Workforce Education and Development.

Shelby was raised on a farm with a tobacco, hay, and grain background. She and her husband, Levi, currently live on and own a dairy farm in Ohio. Shelby enjoys advocating for agriculture and educating the public about agriculture. She is a board member for her local Farm Bureau and was also 2019 Mrs. Agriculture USA for Adams County, Ohio. Her hobbies include watching movies, being outdoors, photography, and playing sports. Shelby will be a wonderful asset for our company. 🐄

# Save The Dates

## JANUARY 2020

January 17-February 8  
Ft. Worth Stock Show & Rodeo - Ft. Worth, TX  
January 30-31  
Kids, Kows, & More, - Tulsa, OK

## FEBRUARY 2020

February 6-23  
San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo - San Antonio, TX

## MARCH 2020

March 2-6  
Kids, Kows, & More, - El Paso, TX  
March 3-22  
Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo-Houston, TX  
March 14-28  
Star of Texas Fair & Rodeo- Austin, TX  
March 26-April 5  
South Texas State Fair- Beaumont, TX

March 27-April 5  
Montgomery County Fair- Conroe, TX  
March 28  
Red River Wine Festival- Wichita Falls, TX

## APRIL 2020

April 4  
Get Kidz Fit- Dallas, TX



It's not too late to get your  
**FREE 2020 Cooking with Dairy  
Calendar!**

**Just call (903) 439-6455 (MILK)**

Check out our newly designed website at [www.southwestdairyfarmers.com](http://www.southwestdairyfarmers.com)

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