



DAIRY PRODUCERS COMMUNICATE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

The dairy checkoff has launched a new program to help dairy producers communicate with the public about modern dairy farming practices. The new program, called myDairy, encourages dairy producers and industry leaders who are engaged in social media efforts to help tell the positive on-farm story of milk production through this growing medium, which includes blogs, social networking sites and positive dairy videos and photos.

Dairy Management Inc.™ (DMI), which manages the national dairy checkoff program, launched the myDairy program to more than 350 dairy producers and industry representatives who are interested in online communications.

“The fact that most people are three to four generations removed from

the farm means a big information gap exists today,” said David Pelzer, senior vice president of industry image and relations at DMI. “The U.S. dairy industry has a great story to tell — and social media gives us the means to tell it in a unique and engaging way to millions of consumers,” according to Pelzer.

The myDairy program helps the dairy checkoff mobilize dairy advocates across the nation to engage in social media networks and online communities to help protect the image of dairy farmers and the dairy industry. Building a strong, positive online presence for the dairy industry helps counter negative, uninformed attacks and maintains public confidence in dairy foods and the people

who produce them. The program also provides a secure blog for dairy advocates to share their social media experiences.

“Not only does myDairy teach us how to use social media sites, but it also gives us key messages to use to make us more effective communicators,” said Will Gilmer, an Alabama dairy producer and creator of “The Dairyman’s Blog,” www.gilmerdairy.blogspot.com, since 2007. “It’s important for producers to share our own unique perspective and experiences with modern dairy farming, and present a unified voice with the public.”

Producers interested in becoming online dairy advocates should e-mail: myDairy@rosedmi.com for more information.

myDairy

FOUR WAYS TO ADVOCATE FOR DAIRY ONLINE

Here are just a few ways that you can advocate for dairy online and reach an audience beyond your neighborhood and your local community.

1) FACEBOOK: Establish a circle of friends and connect with others about dairy. Although Facebook doesn’t necessarily connect you directly with consumers, it provides a conduit for getting more information about dairy farming out onto the web. **Here’s what you can do once you are on Facebook:**

- Become a fan of Dairy Farming Today on Facebook – and encourage others to

do the same. Also consider joining other Facebook groups where dairy advocates and dairy consumers can come together; you can search for these using the key words “dairy”, “milk” or “cows”. Be sure to review the description of the group type or fan page sponsor before joining.

- Participate in discussions within these groups and post questions that encourage conversation about dairy (if it’s relevant to the group topic and mission).

- Share dairy farming facts through status updates. For example, “Melissa is wondering if most people know that 99%

of all dairy farms are family owned” or “Jim is letting everyone know that June is Dairy Month – enjoy some ice cream or cheese today!”

2) BLOGS: Maintain an online journal of your dairy experiences. A blog (originally known as a “Web log”) is simply an online journal. There are more than 112 million active blogs worldwide written by journalists, marketers, experts of all kinds and everyday folks. Some focus on specific topics; others address whatever topic the author has on his or her mind on a given day. **How do you start a blog?** It’s easy: Use any of the following free services to get your blog up and running