



2024 Annual Report



Maine Dairy Promotion Board
Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council
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On the Cover: 2024 Green Pastures Award Winner - Caverly Farms LLC, Clinton

Eleven families were nominated this year at the Maine Dairy Seminar and online as Maine representatives for the 2024 New England Green Pastures Award, and three operations were finalists. The selection committee visited these farms in mid-June and selected Caverly Farm for the 2024 Maine Dairy Farm and Family of the Year. Their owners, the Caverly family, were recognized at the 2024 Eastern States Exposition in Springfield, MA, along with winners of this award from the other five New England states.

The Caverly family's dedication to dairy farming spans three generations, beginning with Wyman Farm in Benton. Evelyn Wyman and Brainard Caverly, the family's founders, raised three sons: Frank, Pudge, and E.C. Frank and his brothers established Caverly Farm in 1962, after purchasing land in Clinton. Frank's marriage to Susie six years later marked the beginning of a family commitment to expanding the farm and its herd. The farm initially housed Ayrshire cows but transitioned to the Holstein breed in the mid-1990s, a move aimed at enhancing genetic selection and increasing milk production.

Currently, the farm is managed by Frank and Susie's son, Neal, and nephew, Brian, who came back to the farm in 2010. Brian has overseen the genetic selection of the herd since Richard Caverly's passing in February 2024 (Neal's cousin and E.C.'s son).



The Caverly family with Commissioner Amanda Beal and Dr. Jamie Garzon of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension. The Caverly's were recognized at Eastern States, along with the other New England Green Pastures Award winners.

Neal and his wife, Michele, say the farm's success is due to the combined work of the management team and farm crew, consisting of Alvin Winslow (agronomist), Greg Weber (nutritionist), Ethan Robertson (farm credit), Matthew Rolleston (veterinarian), and their 13 farm workers.

Caverly Farm has 1,300 acres in total. Of this area, 610 acres are dedicated to hay or haylage, 503 acres are devoted to corn crops for silage (200 acres to BMR corn), and 10 acres are established to grasses for silage.

The herd comprises 605 cows and 520 replacement young stock in six barns, all free stalls and deep bedding. The operation produces approximately 14,800,000 pounds of milk annually, with 4.1% fat, 3.02% protein, and 6.12 pounds components.

The Caverly family's deep-rooted connection with the community is truly inspiring. They have hosted numerous events collaborating with UMaine Extension, welcomed school visits, and organized open farm field days. Additionally, Neal Caverly was part of the MSAD #49 School Board and Building Committee from 2011 to 2023. Susie Caverly has 20 years of volunteer service at the Fairfield Interfaith Food Pantry, where she has been a Board Director since 2019.

Finally, Caverly Farm is a large and efficient dairy operation, but the Caverly's are looking for more. In addition to welcoming technological improvements and new management practices, Caverly Farm also has areas dedicated to testing new varieties of corn or novel crop products.

They plan to partner with Flood Farms to use their biodigester, and the DataMars® collar system on their herd supports more efficient management, improved reproduction, and ease for their workers. Frank was never afraid to use technology and try new things, and he transmitted this thought to his sons.

Congratulations to the Caverly family, Susie, Neal, Michele, Allie, Bryce, Brian, and Sally, on their continued hard work.

-Dr. Jamie Garzon (University of Maine Cooperative Extension)

Your Farmers' Perspective

It continues to be an honour and privilege to serve as the UDIA Director for the Maine Dairy Farmers and as Chair of Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council. Ensuring that our hard earned money is invested in the promotion and research that serves our farms, businesses and communities the best is my top priority. I am pleased to report that the work of our Checkoff dollars nationally continues to bolster the trust of our consumers and customers, deliver returns and options to our farms and farmers, and broaden our market opportunities locally, nationally, and globally. These investments continue to support and reflect the hard work of our Maine producers and funders and as long as they do I will continue to support them and steward our contributions. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments regarding our involvement in the Federation, the work of our of Checkoff dollars, locally or nationally, or simply about the dairy community never hesitate to reach out to me.



-Jenni Tilton-Flood, Chair Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council & UDIA Director

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Your Farmers' Perspective

Reputation = Trust = Sales

The dairy check off was created by farmers to build trust and the sales of dairy products. Trust is gained through showcasing the positive attributes of dairy. Building trust with consumers about dairy products, dairy farms, and dairy farmers is the key to our work.

We know that dairy foods provide a unique nutrient package for people of all ages. Science tells us that dairy can help us achieve our health and wellness goals in a variety of ways. We also know that dairy farmers have a long standing commitment to the environment. As farmers we have made the commitment to implement sustainable agricultural practices that will help to reduce our



carbon footprint, and to more wisely use our natural resources. Nutrition, science, and sustainability are all ways to connect with and educate consumers, to gain their trust. Educating and storytelling are also part of building trust with consumers. It is important that we talk about the steps we take to give our animals the best care, and the things that we are doing to care for our land. Dairy farmers are “more than just farmers”, wearing many hats, and doing many different types of tasks daily to run our operations in the best way possible. In this same way it is important for us to use a variety of tools to reach consumers. These include telling our stories as farmers, using trained social influencers, having scientists tell our truths, and collaborating with educated medical professionals.

Work in the reputation areas also involves consumer research. Consumers are complex, being different ages, having different beliefs, consuming information in different ways, and being different in who they trust. Gathering this information makes sure that we are using the best tactics, and showing up in the right places, to build trust, and insure a return on our investments.

For the last four years I have had the chance to be a farmer voice on the DMI Reputation Committee, chairing the committee for the last two. I have been able to see and participate in a variety of the work that is being done nationally and locally. If you want to learn more about the reputation work being done to build consumer trust visit dairycheckoff.com.

*-Kate Fogler, National Dairy Board Director, DMI Board of Directors, Maine Dairy and Nutrition Council Board Member
Kfogler2948@gmail.com*

Message from the Director

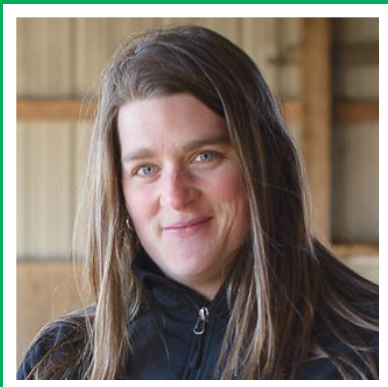
As you look over the 2024 Annual Report you will see the work that our team does to tell your story of Maine Dairy. Every school visit, every farm visit, and every event we attend has your work on the farm and the benefits of your nutritious dairy products highlighted. The team that is working to promote dairy on your behalf both locally and nationally are passionate and dedicated to our mission of driving dairy consumption.



Sarah Littlefield speaking at the Governor's house at the June National Dairy Month milk toast.

My favorite moment of 2024 is captured on page 17 of this report. After running skill drills on the field with some local kids at Meet The Bears, the UMaine Football players ran across the field to refuel. They first came to four coolers filled with sports drinks, their faces showed disappointment as they looked around to us and said, "Where is the chocolate milk?" We had a cooler of chocolate milk at the ready and they emptied it! I consider that a Maine Dairy win!

If you have questions or would like to participate in our work please reach out to me directly. We would love to have you experience the dairy excitement with us!



-Sarah Littlefield, Executive Director
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Joint Board of Directors

Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council



Jenni Tilton-Flood
Flood Brothers Farm



Steve Keene
Conant Acres



Dustin Lagrange
Oakhurst Dairy



Jacob Bragg
Rainbow Valley Farm

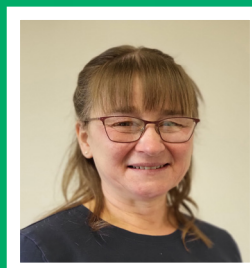


Kate Fogler
Stonyvale Farm

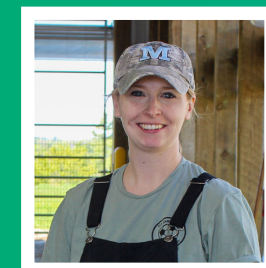
Maine Dairy Promotion Board



Heath Miller
Green Valle Farm



Teresa Hardy
Hardy Farm



Patricia Henderson
J.F Witter Farm



Betsy Bullard
Brigeen Farms



Julie-Marie Bickford
MDACF

Maine Dairy and Nutrition Council
2024 Audited Financial Statement

INCOME		EXPENSES	
Carried forward from previous year (restated)	\$ 50,618		
Current Year Income:		Local Marketing Implementation:	
Transfer from Maine Dairy Promotion Board	\$ 107,350	Operating Expenses	\$ 198,719
Dealer Fee	87,801	Unified Marketing Plan Programs	\$ 11,788
Donations/Grants	2,057		
Interest Income	29		
Total Current Year Income	\$ 197,236	Total Expenses	\$ 210,507
Total Current Income & Carryover	\$ 247,854	Funds available for future year programs	\$ 37,347

Maine Dairy Promotion Board
2024 Audited Financial Statement

INCOME		EXPENSES	
Carried forward from previous year (restated)	\$ 283,227		
Current Year Income:		Local Marketing Implementation:	
Producer Checkoff Remittance	\$ 538,369	Operating Expenses	\$ 216,870
Transfer to Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council	(107,350)	UDIA Dues	125,000
		Total Local Marketing Implementation	\$ 341,870
Net Checkoff Income	\$ 431,019	National Program Funding Commitment	\$ 135,628
Interest Income	\$ 142	Unified Marketing Plan Programs	\$ 78,112
MEMIC Dividend	125		
Other Income	25	Total Expenses	\$ 555,610
Supplemental Funding (Restricted)	135,200		
Total Current Year Income	\$ 566,511	Funds available for future year programs	\$ 294,130
Total Current Income & Carryover	\$ 849,738		

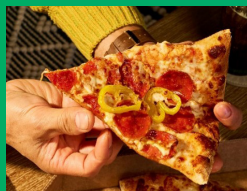
YOUR DAIRY CHECKOFF HIGHLIGHTS

Driving Innovation that Grows Sales & Identifies New Opportunities



Partnerships with the largest burger (McDonald's), pizza (Domino's) and Mexican (Taco Bell) quick-serve restaurant chains continue to **deliver results through dairy innovation.** This year, McDonald's

launched the Grandma McFlurry, Domino's introduced the 5-Cheese Mac & Cheese and relaunched the New York Style Pizza, and Taco Bell launched the Cheesy Street Chalupas.



National Dairy Council continues its collaboration with Mayo Clinic to explore research and consumer outreach that **improves public health and advances dairy's benefits**, including the role full-fat dairy may play in cardiovascular and metabolic conditions.



International foodservice partners deliver on short-term volume and long-term opportunities for U.S. cheese growth.



Pizza Hut Indonesia launched Cheese Overflow, across all menu items to deliver the **best performing limited-time offer ever.**

Dairy exports have grown **10 times** since United States Dairy Export Council was formed in 1995. Today, exports represent 17 percent of total U.S. production.



DairyCheckoff.com

MAKING EVERY DROP COUNT

your DAIRY CHECKOFF

YOUR DAIRY CHECKOFF HIGHLIGHTS

Advancing Dairy as a Solution for Consumers & Society

The first 1,000 days of a baby's life - encompassing pregnancy through the child's second birthday - is a critical period for brain development. During this time, a baby's brain grows from about 10,000 brain cells in the first month of pregnancy to a staggering 10 billion by the sixth month. **Seven of the 14 nutrients that are critical to early brain development are found in dairy.** Given the growing body of science around cognitive development, these insights were shared with **35,000** pediatricians and pediatric caregivers across the country.



"See Dairy Differently" has garnered over **2.02 million total impressions** with thought leaders and consumers to shift the narrative and grow public understanding of US Dairy's sustainability practices.

Building Science & Proof of Dairy's Role as Sustainability Solution



Checkoff is partnering with top retail food brands like Starbucks and Nestlé to secure funding for pilot projects and research aimed at reinforcing the shared commitment to the environment. In 2023 and 2024, **\$24 million** of partner funding was secured.



The checkoff-funded Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy and the Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research jointly **developed the Greener Cattle Initiative** as the first multi-partner, international research consortium dedicated exclusively to mitigating enteric methane emissions from cattle. This initiative includes stakeholders from across the dairy and beef value chains and supporting nonprofit organizations.

Dairy in Schools

We focus a lot of our efforts in forming strong relationships in school nutrition and encouraging the consumption of dairy in schools. We offer school nutrition equipment grants to place equipment into schools to help increase dairy consumption. We visit schools throughout the year to hear feedback from students and faculty about the equipment. Our 2023 School Nutrition Equipment Grants Year-End Report (collected

June 2024 for the 2023-24 school year) stated that students at grant-funded schools consumed 1,250,896 oz. more milk and 81,648 oz. more yogurt than the prior year.



School Nutrition Equipment Grants

- 12 grants awarded representing 11 districts, plus 3 bulk milk dispensers from RSU 35 placed into 3 additional schools
- 6 Movable Milk Barrel Awards (11 barrels total)
- 5 Fuel Up Stations
- 1 Bulk Milk Dispenser
- 3 Bulk Milk Dispensers (new units from Marshwood School District)
- Student Impact: 6,617

Summer Meals Cooler Grants

- 14 Grants Awarded representing 14 districts
- Sets of 3 Sterno soft-sided coolers
- Student Impact: 195,143 meals served



Fuel Up & GenYOUth

**external funds*

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

Funding Awards*

- 10 grants awarded representing 10 districts
- 6 Smoothie Stations
- 4 Mobile Meal Carts
- Student Impact: 2,592

NFL FLAG Kits*

- 16 Maine Schools
- Student Impact: 1,000

Fuel Up Resources

- 17 downloads in 2 weeks since measurement
- Student Impact: 1,000



National School Breakfast Week (March)

Harvest of the Month (April)

- Digital assets developed in March as part of our University of Maine Athletics partnership.
- Electronic school mailing featuring digital resources in April.



School Lunch Hero Day (May)

- School Lunch Hero thank you packages with letters of appreciation sent to school nutrition staff around the state.



School Nutrition Expert Forum (May)

- Collaboration with New England Dairy
- Four Maine school nutrition directors attended. Serves as a time for nutrition directors to help brainstorm ways to overcome barriers to bulk milk adoption and how to increase access to dairy for students who are lactose intolerant.

School Nutrition Expert Forum attendees toured Smith's Country Cheese in Winchendon, MA.

National School Lunch Week

National Farm to School Month (October)

- School Visits: Camden Hills HS; Spruce Mt. MS; Falmouth HS; Easton Elementary-MS-HS; Madawaska Elementary School; Connor Consolidated School; Buckfield Jr-Sr HS; Mt. View MS-HS

Quotes from School Nutrition

The Fuel Up Station that was granted to Falmouth High School has been a huge success!! The students absolutely love it. It has been so positive that a staff member has to man it throughout each meal period. Breakfast meals served are up 22.49% over last year and the consensus is that a great reason for this is the Fuel Up Station. The variety makes it very appealing, and many students comment on it every day.

-Paul Milliken, School Nutrition Director, Falmouth High School

We were able to set up (the Mobile Meal Carts) during our “advisory” block and the kids were able to grab a breakfast to take to that block. This has doubled our participation.

-Heather Drew Clark, Lawrence High School

The Smoothie Bar allowed the school to offer an additional healthy option for the learners. The learners loved the idea of being able to have an additional option.

-Melanie Lagasse, Madawaska Elementary School & Fort Kent Elementary School

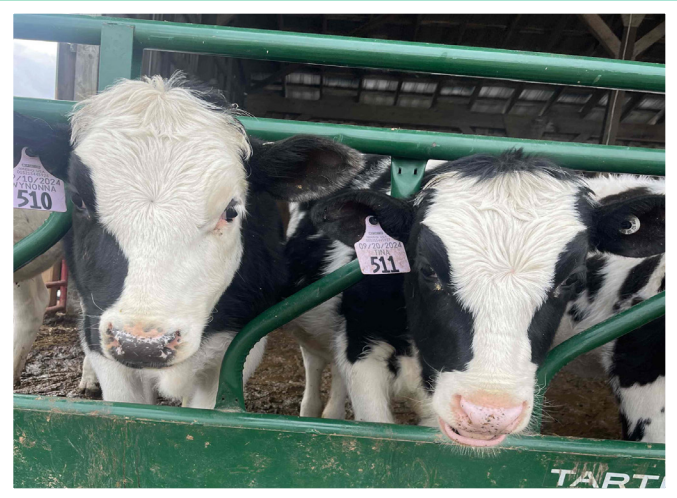
They were essential in serving our community during the summer months, allowing our program to focus on meal quality without worrying about limited cooler space. Portland wants to thank the Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council for supporting Portland Public Schools with our summer meals program!

-Tyler Guerin, Portland Public Schools Nutrition Program



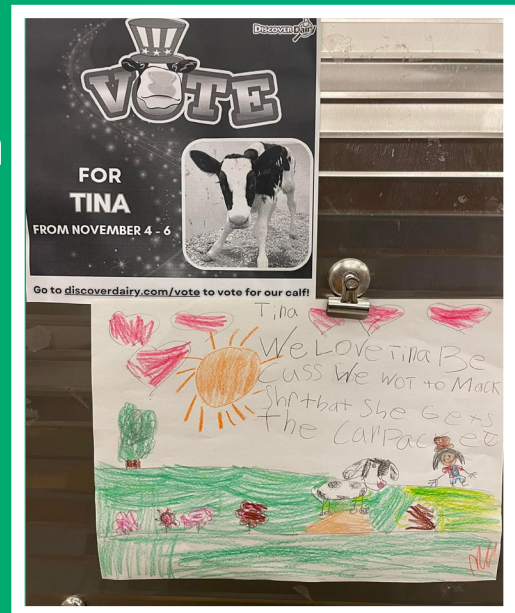
Adopt a Cow Program

For the third year we partnered with the Dairy Excellence Foundation on the Adopt a Cow program, a year-long, free, virtual program that connects classrooms to a local dairy farm. Through photo and video updates, hands-on learning activities, and a live virtual chat with a dairy farmer, students gained a deeper understanding of dairy farming, dairy cows, and how milk is produced.



For the 2024-25 school year, Maine's farm came from Orono - Witter Farm, which is a part of the University of Maine campus. We had 502 registrants and Farm Superintendent, Patricia Henderson took on the responsibility of being the host farm. This includes taking photos and measurements, filling out update forms, answering emails, recording videos, offering farm tours in person and virtually, and more. It was a huge commitment, and we are grateful for the time and effort this entails.

Thank you to Farm Credit East for providing us with a grant that made it possible to provide field trip resources (stickers and bookmarks) to the classrooms that visit the farm.



Partnership with UMaine Athletics

For over 15 years, we have had a partnership with the University of Maine Athletics, giving us opportunities to connect with key demographics - families and college aged students. In addition to our two events we sponsor with the Black Bears, they also provide

us with our logo placement and links to our website on their athletics page (goblackbears.com) and in their Football virtual "Yearbook". This year we were also able to help provide dairy forward sports nutrition messaging in their brand new 'Fueling Station' for athletes. This was created to assist student-athletes in keeping their bodies nourished on a day-to-day basis. UMaine has also been able to provide us with assets for us to distribute during National School Lunch Week and National School Breakfast Week. This assets are available for school nutrition staff to use around their cafeteria's as well as promoted on our social media pages.



Meet the Bears with Football



Our 'Meet the Bears' event with Maine Football started in 2022. This is a free event to the public for kids to come and practice with the UMaine football team for free. Kids run through drills, with dairy educational messaging on the jumbotron throughout the day. The children - and players - then get to enjoy pizza and chocolate milk at the end. The Black Bears also have a player give a speech to the kids where they mention the importance of dairy in your diet.

Attendance for this event was 80 families with elementary-age children. This year the players were extra enthusiastic about the chocolate milk, choosing milk over electrolyte based drinks for their post workout beverage.



Dairy Night with Black Bear Hockey

Every year we sponsor a UMaine Men's Hockey game. Over the course of the game we have a table where we can interact with fans as well as have a dairy farmer be interviewed on both the radio and ESPN +. We also get several mentions throughout the game. This year our game was to a sold out crowd, where the arena holds 5,043 fans.



Future Dietitians Intern with Maine Dairy & Nutrition Council

Separate from our relationship with UMaine athletics, MDPB and MDNC have formed a long-standing relationship within the dietetic intern program at University of Maine. This year, we hosted one intern, sharing them with the Department of Education's Child Nutrition. Each intern does multiple dairy-centric projects with us and always tours one or two dairy farms, focusing on cow health and nutrition and/or sustainability on that farm.



Our intern took a tour of Brigeen Farms where she learned about dairy farming and sustainability