



# Texas Association of Dairymen

**For Immediate Release**

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## **CHEERS TO CONSUMERS, PRODUCERS IN NATIONAL DAIRY MONTH**

By John Cowan

Prepare to uncap a jug of milk or dig into a big bowl of ice cream – just in time for the first uncomfortably warm Texas weather, June is National Dairy Month.

This is a time to thank the consumer for his or her support and recognize the state's dairy farmers for their hard work, day in and day out.

Milk and milk products have been an important part of our nation's diet and livelihood since the first cows were brought to Jamestown, Va., in 1611. Dairy Month has been celebrated annually in the United States since 1939.

Much has changed in the industry in the past decades. More products are available now than ever before. And the products are safer than ever before, thanks to advances in refrigeration, technology and food packaging. Technology has also had a tremendous impact on milk production, although some aspects of farming haven't changed for generations.

With so many beverage, especially soft drink, options available to consumers, they still haven't lost their desire for milk, nature's most nutritionally perfect food. They also are continuing to eat plenty of butter, cheese and ice cream, even though more are turning to lighter or lower fat versions.

The most recent statistics available show that each of us annually consumes about 22 gallons of fluid milk, almost 1 pound of yogurt, 4.5 pounds of butter, 30 pounds of cheese and almost 27 pounds of frozen dairy products.

Of course, without the commitment of our dairy producers, the stores' shelves would be bare.

In Texas, about 800 dairy farmers produce more than 656 million gallons of milk a year, ranking Texas 12th in milk production nationwide. Those same producers (and their cows) also help make Texas the fourth leading producer of ice cream in the country.

These farmers also are contributing to the Texas economy as a whole, and even more to their local communities. The economic impact of the dairy industry on Texas is estimated at \$772 million in goods produced and 10,926 jobs.

Dairy farming isn't easy. Cows don't take a day off – they always have to be fed and cared for. And the work isn't glamorous. These days, being a farmer also means coping with new technology, rising business costs and increasingly complex and stringent environmental regulations.

Yet our farm families wouldn't choose any other life.

The Texas Association of Dairymen thanks our farm families for their dedication to feeding our nation. And we thank those who drink milk and eat other dairy products for appreciating the fruits of our farmers' labor.

In appreciation to both, a toast by TAD with a glass of cold milk. We invite you to join us.

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*John Cowan is the executive director of the Texas Association of Dairymen, Inc. ([www.milk4texas.org](http://www.milk4texas.org)).*

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