

DAIRY INDUSTRY IN CACHE COUNTY

Cache Counties 20,000 dairy cows are impressive to me. They may appear to be slow and lazy, but they work night and day converting forages and concentrates into nutritious dairy foods for human consumption. Of course, these dairy cows don't do this all by themselves. The whole process includes ambitious dairy farmers, trained nutritionists, capable veterinarians, reproductive specialists, dairy processors, research leaders, equipment dealers, repair technicians, accountants, legal experts, environmental consultants and trusting lenders. Others could be added to this list.

Products from dairy cows -milk and meat- are vital to a balanced diet. Milk is especially important to our diets because of protein, riboflavin and calcium. Milk has been described as "nature's most nearly perfect food". Additional dairy products like cheese, ice cream and butter are also exceptional foods. The protein that milk contains is special because it is made of amino acids, the building blocks for protein. The amino acids in milk are usually not found in grains like wheat, corn or rice. Riboflavin and vitamin A are the vitamins most often lacking in human diets. Adults and growing children who drink one quart of milk daily, get all the riboflavin they need. That same quart of milk also provides about one-third the vitamin A that we need in our diets. People who do not drink milk or eat dairy products can be very short of calcium. It is almost impossible to get adequate calcium if milk is left out of our diets. Milk is especially important for growing children and young adults to develop strong bones and teeth. Older people also need milk. Perhaps there would be fewer broken hips or fractured vertebrae if we all consumed more dairy products.

Dairy production in Utah began July 24, 1847, when the pioneers brought with them 41 cows, 3 bulls, 7 calves and 90 oxen. During the early years of our state most families had their own cow which produced milk, butter and cheese for individual families. The nature of the industry has evolved over time with such things as artificial insemination, computerized DHIA records, modern facilities, specialized equipment and keen business sense. Today there are approximately 88,000 dairy cows in Utah with the majority of the milk being produced in Cache, Millard, Box Elder, Utah and San Pete Counties.

Successful dairy producers, men and women, have of necessity become skilled business operators. Our Cache Valley dairy producers have invested millions of dollars into their animals, facilities, equipment and land, all in an effort to generate sufficient profits to provide for their respective families and the families of their employees. It is not an easy thing to manage a dairy farm in today's environment. Profit margins continue to narrow and regulations continue to expand. We have fewer dairy farms in the valley now, but the size of our remaining dairies has continually increased. There is every indication that this trend will continue.

The majority of the \$121.6 million our county farms generate in direct farm receipts comes from our local dairy industry. Those initial dollars are multiplied again and again as they move through our local economic system. Dairy farmers buy food, vehicles, entertainment, and education, just like other citizens. They also hire labor, pay taxes and

support other businesses in the process of producing healthy dairy products. Data from the Bridgerland Applied Technology Center Farm/Ranch Management annual report shows that the typical Cache County farmer spends over half a million dollars each year just to keep their respective farm businesses operating. These dollars, infused into our local economy, have a profound impact on the standard of living for all of us.

The annual DHIA awards banquet, held at the Copper Mill Restaurant this week, provided numerous examples of successful dairy production. Average annual milk production for Holstein herds in our region last year was 22,891 pounds. The Jersey herds are averaging 15,585 pounds. In 1940, cows averaged 5,730 pounds of milk per cow per year.

The highest producing Holstein herd in the county is managed by Don and Laurie Baldwin from Lewiston. Average production on their 400 cow dairy is almost 29,000 pounds of milk. They are closely followed by dairies owned and managed by Ken Munk and Sons, Darrell and Heather Jensen, Gibbons Brothers, Calvin and Richard Maughan and Robert Munk and Sons. The highest producing Jersey dairy is owned by Reed and Diane Zaugg of Lewiston. Garrick and Holly Hall and John and Julie Allen also manage impressive Jersey dairies.

It was fun to recognize Delbert and Joycelyn Tarbet from Lewiston who have raised a wonderful family and built a successful dairy. Raised in Benson with lots of brothers and 3 sisters, Del learned the value of hard work and of family loyalty. Following graduation from North Cache and service in the military, Del married Joycelyn and they bought a small home in Smithfield. A few years later they purchased a farm in Lewiston where they moved their 13 cows. Since then they have worked together as a family to expand to their 250 cow dairy. Not only are the Tarbets good dairymen, they are also great neighbors, wonderful contributors to society and leaders in their community. We are grateful for other young dairymen and dairywomen who are following in their footsteps to continue providing quality dairy products for our health and enjoyment.