



June is National Dairy Month and a time to celebrate the dairy farmers who are so vital to our nation. National Dairy Month started out in 1937 as National Milk Month as a way to promote drinking milk. It was initially created to stabilize the dairy demand when production was at a surplus, but has now developed into an annual tradition that celebrates the contributions the dairy industry has made to the world. After the National Dairy Council stepped in to promote the cause, the name soon changed to National Dairy Month.

DAIRY COW FACTS

- The average dairy cow weighs about 1,400 lbs.
- Cows have 32 teeth, all of them on the bottom with a dental pad on top.
- Cows have an acute sense of smell, and can smell something up to six miles away.
- A cow eats 90–100 pounds of food and drinks about 35 gallons of water every day.
- A cow spends about six hours eating and eight hours chewing its cud every day.
- A cow produces an average of 6.3 gallons of milk daily. That's more than 2,300 gallons each year and 350,000 glasses of milk in a lifetime.
- There are six main breeds of dairy cows. The main breeds are Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Holstein, Jersey, and Milking Short-horn. A seventh, Red and White, is a variation of the Holstein breed.

MILK FACTS

- U.S. dairy farms produce roughly 21 billion gallons of milk annually.
- All 50 states in the U.S. have dairy farms.
- Dairy farmers are paid by the hundredweight (100 pounds), not by the gallon. There are approximately 8.6 pounds of milk per gallon.
- The average American consumes almost 25 gallons of milk each year.
- About 72 percent of the calcium in the U.S. food supply comes from dairy foods.
- To get the amount of calcium in an 8-ounce glass of milk, you'd have to eat seven oranges or six slices of wheat bread.
- Fresh milk will stay fresher longer if you add a pinch of salt to each quart.

CHEESE & DAIRY FACTS

- The natural yellow color of butter comes mainly from the beta-carotene found in the grass cows eat.
- Americans eat more than 300,000 tons of yogurt per year.
- About 300 varieties of cheese are sold in the United States.
- The most popular cheese in America is cheddar.
- Vanilla is America's favorite ice cream flavor.
- It takes about 50 licks to finish a single ice cream scoop.
- It takes 10 pounds of milk to make one pound of cheese.
- It takes 12 pounds of whole milk to make one gallon of ice cream.
- It takes 21.8 pounds of milk to make one pound of butter.



Dairy cows take time out from feeding time to pose for a photo at the Moose Dairy Farm in Minneota. Mascot photo by Brittany Moore.

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