

Quality and Safety of Milk

- I. **DAIRY FARMERS ARE VIGILANT ABOUT THE QUALITY AND SAFETY OF THE MILK YOU DRINK**
 - a. Dairy foods are among the safest foods you and your family can eat or drink, thanks in large part to the American dairy farmer, as well as government and industry regulatory and quality control programs
 - b. From the farm all the way to the processing plant, government officials keep a close watch on milk, with regular inspections to ensure that stringent sanitation guidelines are followed
 - c. Beyond following the laws regulating the production and processing of milk, many farmers and processors also take up voluntary procedures to further ensure the safety of dairy foods
 - d. If these high standards for quality and safety are not met when milk arrives at the cooperative or milk plant, the entire tanker load of milk – which can hold up to 6,000 gallons of milk – is discarded. The farm of origin must pay for the whole load of milk
 - e. To ensure the safety of each drop of milk, it is pasteurized at the dairy processing plant
 - f. Did you know that milk is among the most regulated and inspected foods in our country?
- II. **IT STARTS AT THE SOURCE: TO PRODUCE HIGH QUALITY MILK, THE DAIRY COW MUST BE HEALTHY**
 - a. Cows are a dairy farmer's livelihood, so the health of each cow is the most important factor in producing high quality milk
 - b. Some of the most important ways dairy farmers maintain healthy and high-producing dairy herds include feeding their cows nourishing diets, providing them with good living conditions – such as secure, comfortable shelter and bedding – and high-quality medical care
 - c. The more times a cow is milked, the less stress is placed on the udder, so dairy farmers usually milk cows two or three times each day
- III. **DAIRY FARMERS ARE PROUD OF THEIR ROLE AS STEWARDS OF THE LAND, AIR, AND WATER**
 - a. Every dairy farm, from the largest to the smallest, is required to hold permits displaying their duty and obligation to care for the land, air, and water
 - b. To ensure our nation's natural resources are protected, dairies work with many governmental agencies and organizations, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), as well as state departments of agriculture and local governments
 - c. State and federal inspectors routinely visit dairy operations, unannounced, to test for clean water and to monitor and modify environmental practices. Most dairy farm wastewater is recycled to flush feed alleys and irrigate fields, while methods and plans to reduce runoff are established. Larger farms must follow detailed waste management plans



Milk. A part of everything
that's good.