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TOAST FLORIDA'S HARDWORKING DAIRY FARMERS WITH A TALL GLASS OF MILK *This June Celebrate National Dairy Month with Milk, Cheese and Yogurt*

ORLANDO, Fla. (May 29, 2012) – In 1939, June was declared National Dairy Month as a way to promote drinking milk during the summer months. Today, it has become an annual tradition to celebrate the dairy industry and the 53,000 farms nationwide that make it possible.

Agriculture is Florida's second-largest industry and one in which dairy farming plays a major role. The Sunshine State is home to more than 130 dairy farms, including 118,000 dairy cows that produce about 250 million gallons of milk each year. Dairy farming is an around-the-clock job as well as a family affair. Farmers work 365 days a year – including holidays – to make sure people have fresh milk on their tables. About 98 percent of dairy farms in the United States are family-owned and operated.

Here are some quick facts about the dairy industry:

- About 85 percent of milk produced in Florida is sold as drinking milk.
- It takes about two to three days for milk to get from the farm to the grocery store.
- There are dairy farms in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.
- Most milk travels less than 100 miles to get from the dairy to your local grocery store.
- The average cow produces nearly seven gallons of milk a day.

Each Florida dairy farmer has a unique story to tell. Hardee County dairy farmer Kevin Moore explains how he shares his dairy story with the community: "Today it's not enough to be good stewards of the land and resources. You also have to be a positive ambassador to your community through local outreach and community involvement. It helps to demonstrate your investment to the community when you willingly and selflessly give of your time, talent and money."

Dairy farmers don't stand alone. They actively support and strengthen local and national economies. Jackson County dairy farmer Cindy Eade says, "We are all stakeholders in our communities. Each of us brings a unique perspective to the community, and the community can enhance our understanding of non-farm issues and concerns."

In addition, the foods that the dairy industry produces are some of the most economical sources of nutrition available. The USDA's [2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) recommends that adults and children (ages 9 and older) get at least three servings of low-fat or fat-free dairy every day. Currently, Americans are consuming about two dairy servings a day on average. Adding just one more serving can help fill America's dairy and nutrient gaps. And at just 25 cents a glass, milk's nine essential nutrients provide affordable nutrition for the whole family.

The grocer's dairy aisle offers something for everyone, from low-fat and fat-free varieties to lactose-free products. Beat the heat this summer with refreshing dairy treats like [frozen yogurt drops](#) or [banana berry frozen yogurt pops](#).

During June's "30 Days of Dairy," Florida Dairy Farmers will host a social media campaign to further raise awareness about the industry. Check out FDF's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for daily trivia, recipes, farmer facts, contests and prizes!

For more information about National Dairy Month and Florida's dairy farmers, visit www.floridamilk.com.

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About Florida Dairy Farmers

Florida Dairy Farmers is Florida's milk promotion group, working to enhance the image of the dairy farming industry and increase milk and dairy product sales statewide via education and marketing. FDF is one of 18 member organizations of the United Dairy Industry Association and carries out the programs of Dairy Management Inc., the umbrella organization based in Chicago, Ill. For more information, call 407-647-8899 or visit www.floridamilk.com.

Editor's Note: Please contact alaynar@floridamilk.com for high-resolution photography and detailed recipes.