

DFC UPDATE

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Meetings with Parliamentarians

Dairy farmer leaders from every province were in town in April, and took the opportunity to meet with parliamentarians to maintain ongoing dialogue on issues concerning the Canadian dairy industry. Many also had the opportunity to meet with various Ministers' offices and members of the Committees on Agriculture, International Trade, Health and the Environment.

Canadian dairy farmers continue to share with parliamentarians the good story of supply management in Canada, not only for providing the dairy industry and individual producers with stability, but also for what it offers to Canada in return.

The Canadian dairy industry currently generates **more than \$5 billion in revenue at the farm gate**, **sustains \$30 billion in economic activity** and generates employment for 160,000 Canadians from coast to coast. Further to this, it is **one of the top 2 agriculture commodities in 7 of 10 provinces**.

Supply management has allowed Canada's dairy farmers to be leaders in the areas of sustainable development, animal welfare, innovative research as well as health and nutrition.

DFC's registered dietitians specifically addressed the health and nutrition topics in meetings with members of the Health Committee, by reinforcing the role of dairy products in a healthy lifestyle.



*Dairy Farmers of Canada
invites you to join farmers from
across Canada to celebrate*

"100% Canadian Milk: A Source of Pride from Farm to Table"

Tuesday, April 20, 2010
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Adam Room
Fairmont Château Laurier
1 Rideau Street, Ottawa

Please RSVP by April 15, 2010
to elizabeth.cork@dfc-plc.ca or
by phone at (613) 236-9997 ext. 2760

A SOURCE OF PRIDE

*DFC's invitation to the April reception for
Parliamentarians and industry members
under the theme, "100% Canadian Milk: A
Source of Pride from Farm to Table."*

Reception features Canada's best dishes made with 100% Canadian Milk!"

The day wrapped up with a reception showcasing cheese made from 100% Canadian milk and displays of DFC's award winning marketing and nutrition programs.

Reception guests had a chance to explore great displays where they could learn about various dairy nutrition programs and educational tools, as well as sample some recipes developed with the Fairmont Chateau Laurier, using 100% Canadian Milk.

The highlight of the night were the buttermints made with real butter, specially prepared by the Chateau Laurier's Executive Chef using 100% Canadian butter.



Dairy farmer leaders from across Canada were proud to promote cheeses made with 100% Canadian Milk.



DFC's logo promoting dairy products made with 100% Canadian Milk.



Chefs at the Chateau Laurier could barely keep up with the demand for the scallops with Roasted Corn, Lime and Cilantro Creamy Succotash.



Just some of the promotional items available to learn about the goodness of dairy, including take home post-cards with recipes of the foods they were able to sample that night; all featuring 100% Canadian Milk as an ingredient.

Competitiveness Report: Supply Management is a System that Works!

DFC was pleased to see the much anticipated report by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food entitled “Competitiveness of Canadian Agriculture” tabled in the House of Commons recently, with detailed recommendations aiming “to improve the competitiveness of the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector, while protecting and enhancing returns to farmers.”

Most importantly, Canadian dairy farmers welcome the Committee's recommendation that “the federal government continue to maintain supply management and its three pillars – producer pricing, import controls and production discipline – as an integral business risk management program in Canada, and that market access for Canada's agricultural exporters is strengthened so that all sectors can continue to provide producers with a fair and equitable income.” DFC stated to the Committee, which was referred to in the report, that in the agriculture industry the true definition of competitiveness is profitability, something which has been guaranteed by Canada's supply management system.

The report references testimony from Richard Doyle, Executive Director of DFC, and Peter Clark, President of Grey, Clark, Shih and Associates, confirming that the Committee has heard the good stories resulting from supply management in Canada's dairy system. Everything from the stability experienced by Canadian dairy farmers in the wake of the international economic crisis of 2009, to the fair returns experienced by dairy producers, shows that supply management is a system that works!

DFC also believes that supply management benefits Canadian consumers, who receive safe, quality dairy products at fair prices, and continues to work with government to ensure that this value be fulfilled. That is why DFC welcomes the recommendation that the Government introduce a policy of systemic evaluation of the effects of labelling and food safety regulations, which DFC believes would address misleading labelling practices, and increasing consumer confusion and distrust of food products.

DFC also agrees with the recommendation that the Government undertake a study to determine which imported agricultural products do not meet the same standards required of Canadian producers in order to protect Canadian producers from losing their competitive edge.

Finally, it is essential that the Government address the additional cost for beef and dairy producers arising from the disposal of specified risk materials caused by Canadian regulations on animal health. The 2010 Budget announcement of \$75 million was a step in the right direction and continued action needs to be seen in order to tackle the loss of competitiveness in this area.

A National Food Strategy: Securing the Future of Food in Canada

Canada does not have a food strategy, but rather a variety of policies and programs without a system allowing for the analysis of their collective impact; both positive and negative. Too often, the belief that farming and food production will always be there leads to a lack of coordinated and functional agricultural policies that may or may not be serving our long-term food interests.

Canada needs to develop an agricultural strategy for Canada that our nation, provinces, consumers, agri-business and producers can participate in, and that will create a healthier, environmentally sound and more economically stable nation. This needs to be done with all stakeholders at the table, including farm organizations, farm input suppliers, government, consumers, food processors and distributors.

We need to work together to map out the future of food in Canada and all that it entails, through a comprehensive strategy. It is for this reason that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture has taken the lead in the development of a National Food Strategy (NFS) for Canada, to be implemented over the course of 15 years beginning in April 2013 – when Growing Forward expires. It is expected that governments will continue to operate within 5 year budgeting envelopes; however, if done within a 15 year strategy, it will provide direction and purpose. The NFS is aimed to provide both strategic direction and concrete actions. It is expected to be a “living document” and to be revisited annually. The Initial Stakeholder Consultation for the NFS to be held in Toronto June 23 is aimed at developing the Mission and Strategic Objectives, initiating a dialogue on the process to develop and adopt the NFS and exchanging information between stakeholders.

Dairy Farmers of Canada supports the NFS, and has committed to working closely with the CFA and other stakeholders on this essential initiative.

The key aspect of the NFS is sustainability, and it is the consensus of the collaborating groups that “for our industry and food supply to be sustainable, farmers need to address three aspects: economic, environmental and social. Sustainability in this context meaning that the production of food and other renewable products must be in a manner that is economically viable, environmentally enhancing, and which contributes to the social fabric of this planet. Sustainable production should constantly be improving the food supply and enhancing Canadians lifestyle, ensuring that resources and the environment are adequate, and that the industry has a firm economic foundation.

DFC will also examine the Strategy in depth at its Annual General Meeting this July where Garnet Etsell, 1st Vice-president of the CFA will present the National Food Strategy during a panel on “The Future of Agriculture in Canada.”



VISION: To ensure safe, secure, accessible and healthy food through a diversified and sustainable Canadian agriculture and food sector.

Canadian Dairy Farmers on the Road to Sustainable Development

Dairy farmers were pleased to meet with several members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development in April to provide the latest findings of the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) report on greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in the dairy sector. **According to the FAO's report released in April 2010, North America has among the lowest greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) per kilogram of milk in the world and the global dairy sector (farming, processing and transportation) accounts for only 2.7% of global emissions.**



Richard Doyle, President of IDF signing the Declaration, A Global Dairy Agenda for Action

Parliamentarians were briefed on the importance of supply management to the stability it provides the dairy sector in Canada. This marketing system allows dairy farmers to earn a fair return for their labour and costs to produce milk and make long term plans. A part of their long term plans will include reinvestments in their farms to improve efficiencies and contribute steadily to reducing their impact on the environment. For example, carbon emissions from Canadian dairy farms dropped by **25% between 1981 and 2006 as a result of efficiency gains. The trend is showing a steady decrease of 1% in GHG emissions per year.**

Dairy producers also emphasized their strong commitment to reducing the industry's carbon footprint. Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) supports the Declaration on the Global Dairy Agenda for Action on the Environment established in fall of 2009. As a member of IDF, DFC has pledged to reduce carbon emissions to help address global warming.

What's more, DFC is taking the lead to develop a national strategy on sustainable development for the Canadian dairy industry to ensure Canadian consumers continue to receive nutritious, quality dairy products that are produced in a socially and environmentally responsible way.



DFC UPDATE is a publication of Dairy Farmers of Canada

For more information contact:

Rosemary MacLellan
Assistant Director, Government Relations
rosemary.maclellan@dfc-plc.ca
(613) 236-9997 x. 2772

Elizabeth Cork
A / Assistant Director, Communications
elizabeth.cork@dfc-plc.ca
(613) 236-9997 x.2760

