

CONNECTICUT DAIRY DIGITAL AMBASSADOR SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

MAY: DAIRY SUSTAINABILITY

IN THIS TOOLKIT:

- Social Media Tips
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- Photo Examples



SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

- When speaking to sustainability facts or figures, referencing third-party sources will increase your credibility. For example, referencing the USDA, Agency of Natural Resources, local conservation districts, or CT universities and extension services including UConn.
- Feeling overwhelmed by the number of social media platforms? **Pick one and dig deeper.**
- **Remember the 80-20 Rule:** 80% of your content should entertain and educate, while 20% of your content should directly market your farm or business.
- You can try **breaking out of the “ag bubble”** by inviting new people to your page through small, targeted ad campaigns and individual invites on liked posts; taking risks to get to the next level; tagging other accounts or people outside of your typical group; or collaborating with others on social media to increase reach.
- When composing photos, **think of the Rule of Thirds.** Imagine your photo divided into 9 equal parts, with two vertical lines and two horizontal lines. The most important elements in the scene should be placed along the gridlines or where they intersect. You can configure your camera settings to show the gridlines to make it easier to create your composition.
- Try [Canva](#), a free graphic design tool you can use to create social media posts and templates.
- Ready to take a photo or capture video? **Wipe the lens first!**
- If you get a **tough question or comment** in response to one of your posts: read more about the individual’s perspective; thank them for reaching out; ask clarifying questions; craft your response with research and personal experience; find common ground; thank them for the conversation. You can be kind, too! It’s ok to agree to disagree. [Here is a document](#) with messaging to address negative comments/difficult questions.

MAY MESSAGING THEME

Being a dairy farmer takes a 24/7 commitment to our animals, community and land; and dairy farmers celebrate Earth Day, every day. We know that consumers are thinking about making sustainable choices all year, not just around Earth Day. This timeframe poses an opportunity to relevantly engage with consumers around sustainability messaging. Farmers can share their farm practices and what they are doing on the farm to care for their cows, the environment, and the community. Sharing real examples of progress on their farms while educating consumers about dairy's commitment to a more sustainable future.

Required Post Hashtags: #CTDairy #CTDairyAmbassador

Additional optional hashtags to include in your content as you see fit:
#CTGrown #UndeniablyDairy #GotMilk #Agvocate #NewEngland_IGers

PHOTO EXAMPLES



SAMPLE MESSAGING FOR INSPIRATION

FEEDING COWS, THE COMMUNITY, AND SUPPORTING THE PLANET

Below you'll find helpful messaging and thought starters. Support these data points with your own on-farm examples of environmental sustainability and climate change solutions.

2050 Sustainability Goals

Connecticut dairy farmers are committed to nourishing local communities while caring for the planet. The U.S. dairy industry has committed to achieving Greenhouse Gas neutrality. Dairy is a part of the climate solution and is an important contribution to a sustainable food system.

As part of its collective commitment to provide the world with responsibly produced dairy foods that nourish people, strengthen communities, and foster a sustainable future, the U.S. dairy industry has set aggressive new 2050 environmental sustainability goals. These 2050 goals support a vision that dairy can be an environmental solution.

Specifically, the goals are:

- Achieve GHG neutrality.
- Optimize water use while maximizing recycling.
- Improve water quality by optimizing utilization of manure and nutrients.

Net Zero Initiative

The Net Zero Initiative (NZI) is an industry-wide, on-farm effort that will play a key role in helping U.S. dairy continue to make progress toward these goals. Through foundational research, on-farm pilots, and the development of new product markets, NZI is breaking down barriers to make technology and best practices more accessible and affordable to farms of all sizes and geographies – recognizing there is no one-size-fits-all solution. NZI has four key areas of focus, including feed production, manure handling, and nutrient management, cow care and efficiency, on-farm energy efficiency and renewable energy use.



New England
Dairy

SAMPLE MESSAGING FOR INSPIRATION

Dairy and a Sustainable Food System

You may be asking questions about where your food comes from and how it impacts the environment. The key is to find the sweet spot – foods that together provide the greatest nutritional value to us, with a minimal environmental footprint. All food production comes with a footprint, and responsible food production works to minimize that impact.

Dairy is accessible, affordable, and its health benefits are supported by a robust body of science. The essential nutrients found in dairy products can be difficult to replace with other foods.

Water and Soil Management

Water is a vital resource on dairy farms for the many roles it plays, and farmers do what they can to make every drop count. On average, one gallon of water on a dairy farm can be reused up to four times. Reusing and recycling water is standard practice on today's dairy farms, starting with chilling milk. Because milk leaves a cow's body at 101 degrees, water is used in a cooling system in the farm's milking parlor to quickly chill it to about 38 degrees, keeping it fresh from the farm to your refrigerator. Water that is used to cool milk is then used to flush dairy barns and is recaptured as a natural, nutrient-rich resource to irrigate crops.

Thanks to innovative practices related to cow comfort, improved feed and genetics, and modern barn design, dairy farmers produce 60 percent more milk than when the herd was nearly three times as large.

Research conducted in 2007 found dairy farms produce a gallon of milk using 95 percent less land and 65 percent less water while producing 76 percent less manure compared with 1944.

Dairy farmers are continually adopting new ways to manage cow manure to help improve air and water quality. Cropping practices like manure injection send important nutrients straight to crop roots underneath the surface of the soil and keep them out of local waterways. No-till cropping methods maintain the soil structure to allow the ground to act as a sponge, absorbing water and other nutrients to power plant growth and prevent runoff.



New England
Dairy

SAMPLE MESSAGING FOR INSPIRATION

Cows: The Original Recyclers

Dairy cows can eat and unlock the energy and nutrients in foods that we can't eat. Up to 75% of a cow's diet is not consumable by humans. Our farm partners with local food companies, retailers, and restaurants to recycle food scraps that are inedible to humans, avoiding landfills or incineration. Byproducts like citrus pulp, almond hulls or spent grains from breweries can all be part of a dairy cow's diet.

Personalize and share what your farm does to work with local partners to recycle and customize your cows' diets.

On Farm Practices to Recycle

Dairy farmers are committed to being an environmental solution. Nutritious, sustainable dairy products start with tending to our herds and cultivating our fields.

We're using innovative technology to turn cow manure and food waste from other industries into renewable energy. This renewable energy can power homes and businesses in your local community.

CT Dairy Farmers Preserving the Landscape

Connecticut dairy farmers work hard every day to produce high-quality and nutritious milk for us all to enjoy. We protect and preserve the beautiful open spaces throughout Connecticut and support our local economies.

Connecticut is home to 90 hardworking dairy farm families who strive to produce fresh, nutritious milk to feed their communities and state. The dairy industry accounts for more than 32,000 direct and indirect jobs in Connecticut.

Connecticut's dairy industry generates an annual impact of more than \$6.4 billion for the state.

Local dairy farmers maintain, protect, and enhance more than 67,000 acres of open space in Connecticut.



New England
Dairy

TAP INTO UPCOMING HOLIDAYS

MAY	JUNE	JULY
National Cheese Month	National Dairy Month	National Ice Cream Month
Osteoporosis Awareness & Prevention Month	National Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Month	National Grilling Month
Mental Health Awareness Month	National Great Outdoors Month	National Blueberry Month
5/3 National Teacher Appreciation Day	Pride Month	National Picnic Month
5/4 National Star Wars Day	Men's Health Month	7/1 National Creative Ice Cream Flavors Day
5/6 School Lunch Hero Day	6/1 World Milk Day	7/4 4th of July
5/8 Mother's Day	6/4 National Cheese Day	7/14 National Mac & Cheese Day
5/15 National Chocolate Chip Day	6/17 National Eat Your Vegetables Day	7/18 National Ice Cream Day
5/20 National Pizza Party Day	6/18 National Cheesemakers Day	7/23 National Vanilla Ice Cream Day
5/30 Memorial Day	6/19 Juneteenth	7/25 National Wine & Cheese Day
	6/20 First Day of Summer	7/25 National Hot Fudge Sundae Day
	6/20 Father's Day	7/28 National Milk Chocolate Day
	6/20 National Vanilla Milkshake Day	7/31 National Avocado Day
	6/21 National Smoothie Day	



GENERAL CONTENT IDEAS

Are you wondering what to show and tell about your farm or the dairy industry when posting on social media? Here are some ideas to get you started!

- Show us how you are **caring for the environment** in the course of your work.
- Show us **what you're working on throughout the day**. What's happening at the farm during this time of year? What is being harvested? What are you preparing?
- Share your **(favorite)** cow, machinery, barns, products, view of the landscape, etc.
- **Demonstrate processes**, like milking cows, packaging products, loading trucks, caring for cows, cleaning machinery, preparing food, etc.
- Share a 30-second video capturing the **sounds of the countryside**.
- Tell us about a **favorite family recipe** you like to enjoy.
- Tell us **how you got involved in dairy**.
- Share **how your farm or business got started**.
- What are some **"fun facts"** about the dairy industry? (e.g. how dairy cows are the ultimate recyclers and can eat spent brewers grain)
- Introduce us to the **people you farm or work with**.
- Show us **how your family gets involved** in the work of the farm or business.
- Show **what makes you proud** to do what you do and **what you value most**.

PLANNING PAGE

Use this page as a guide to plan out your social media content ideas.

I want to show: _____

☐ Photo ☐ Video

Caption:

I want to show: _____

☐ Photo ☐ Video

Caption:

I want to show: _____

☐ Photo ☐ Video

Caption: