



For Immediate Release

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“ADOPT A COW” PROGRAM IMPACTS MORE THAN 2.1 MILLION STUDENTS, NOW OPEN FOR ENROLLMENT

The Program Reaches Thousands of Classrooms Across the U.S. Thanks to Partner Support

Harrisburg, Pa. – With the school year coming to a close, Discover Dairy’s “Adopt a Cow” program continued to expand its reach this school year. Thanks to support from partners and donors, a total of 48,000+ classrooms participated and more than 2.1 million students across the globe were impacted by the year-long dairy education program. The program continues to be free for teachers and groups who use it and gives students an inside look at a dairy farm in the United States by “adopting” a cow to follow throughout the year.

The Adopt a Cow program is made possible through the generous support of Dairy Excellence Foundation donors and program partners, including American Dairy Association Northeast, American Dairy Association Indiana, Midwest Dairy, The Dairy Alliance, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Dairy Management West, Dairy West, New England Dairy, Dairy Farmers of Washington, American Dairy Association Mideast, Dairy Council of Florida, United Dairy Industry of Michigan, Maine Dairy and Nutrition Council, and Oregon Dairy Council.

“We had the highest number of students participate in Adopt a Cow in program history this school year, and since 2020, we have impacted more than 9.4 million students across the globe. We hope to continue building on this momentum as we start another school year in the fall,” shared Brittany Snyder, Dairy Education Program Manager at the Dairy Excellence Foundation. “It’s so exciting to see the trust these students now have for dairy farmers and the milk they drink. After completing the program, over 99% of the teachers we surveyed say their students completely trust the care farmers provide to their cows, they trust the milk they drink is safe, and they trust that dairy farmers are taking great care of our environment and natural resources. We couldn’t make this kind of impact without the support from our donors and dairy check-off partners.”

In the Adopt a Cow pre-assessment that is completed at the start of the school year before the program begins, 64 percent of the teachers surveyed said they were from urban or suburban areas, with about 75 percent saying their students are not knowledgeable about the dairy industry. After completing a post-assessment at the conclusion of this year’s program, the Adopt a Cow program helped drive the following results:

- 26 percent of teachers surveyed say their students are eating more dairy foods with meals or choosing more dairy-friendly snacks because of what they learned through the program.
- 60 percent of teachers surveyed say their students talk more about dairy and are curious to learn more as a result of the AAC program.
- 96 percent of teachers surveyed say their students feel knowledgeable about the dairy industry after participating in the program.

Several types of teachers and educators used the program to expand on their subject areas and make connections with their students. The following types of groups have used the program:

- **STEM classrooms** – *“I live in a rural area and used to have cows across the street from my home. I am Lead Teacher for an after-school STEM program now which is about 30 minutes away. The students have very limited knowledge of farms nearby. This program has been perfect!”* –Lori, STEM teacher and Adopt a Cow participant
- **Art classrooms** – *“I liked the idea of using this [cow] theme as an ongoing mascot of sorts in my art program. It helped us celebrate our rural location and learn more about our community.”* –Abby, art teacher and Adopt a Cow participant
- **School cafeterias** – *“We loved seeing our adopted calf each day and watching her growth when the updates came in. Our Lunchroom Lady posted pictures and fun facts on the café walls. Some of our classes were able to make butter, overnight oats and yogurt.”* –Tracey, elementary school teacher and Adopt a Cow participant
- **Preschools** – *“Our pre-k class loved the updates about our cow. The Adopt a Cow Program is a wonderful way to show the very young who do not live in a farming community that not all baby animals are meant to be pets – some of them have jobs that make items we use every day. Discover Dairy provides a meaningful yet charming science unit.”* –Angela, pre-school teacher and Adopt a Cow participant
- **Senior living facilities** – *“When they saw the virtual farm tour [with their adopted calf], a resident talked about growing up on a farm. It was really good for her to deeply connect to her memory. Getting that spark in residents was fun.”* –Kyoko, activity director at a senior living facility that participated in the program
- **Science classrooms** – *“This year we had an information board set up in our science center so the students could constantly see their adopted calves’ pictures. Thank you for offering these types of programs to bring awareness to not only dairy cows but the dairy industry!”* –Kristie, kindergarten teacher and Adopt a Cow participant
- **Math classrooms** – *“Adopting a calf transformed my third grade classroom. We got a chance to graph height and weight, make predictions, and do real math to find growth. We are so grateful to Discover Dairy for making dairy farm life accessible to us all.”* –Kaycie, elementary school teacher and Adopt a Cow participant
- **4-H groups** – *“We have been learning about dairy cows and tracking their adopted cow’s growth in 4-H club meetings. This has been a great resource for them and makes them feel like real 4-H members that have their own project.”* –Jess, 4-H educator and Adopt a Cow participant

Each classroom that enrolls in the Adopt a Cow program is paired with a calf from a dairy farm. Teachers and students receive photos, video updates, and activity sheets throughout the school year that allow them to watch their calf grow. Through immersive, hands-on learning activities and free curriculum provided by Discover Dairy, students gain a deeper understanding of the dairy industry and where their food comes from. Several of the lessons in the curriculum follow Common CORE standards in Math, Reading, and Science. The Adopt a Cow program also offers live virtual chats and farm tours. These chats allow students to talk directly with a dairy farmer, meet their calves, tour the farm, and ask questions about milk production.

Classrooms from all 50 states participated in the program along with a total of 45 countries. Schools from both rural and urban areas can enroll, bringing dairy farming to life for students of all ages and demographics.

The Adopt a Cow program is now open for enrollment for the 2026-27 school year. Individuals can enroll in the free program anytime between May 1 and January 31. Those who enroll by September 1 will receive a mailed welcome packet. To share the program with a family or classroom you know, visit www.discoverdairy.com/adopt or contact the Dairy Excellence Foundation at 717-346-0849 for more information. Contact Brittany Snyder at bsnyder@centerfordairyexcellence.org or 717-346-0849 for promotional material to help spread the word about the program.

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The Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax deductible organization that is Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) approved. Established in 2010, the foundation's mission is to build and invest in programs that cultivate and empower the next generation of producers, consumers, and advocates for the Pennsylvania dairy industry. Learn more at centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation/.