



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
EASTERN MOUNTAIN REGIONAL FIELD OFFICE
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USDA celebrates 79th Annual National Dairy Month

RICHMOND, Va. – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) celebrates the 79th annual National Dairy Month this June, highlighting the hard work and dedication of dairy farmers and the valuable nutrition milk and milk products add to Americans' diets.

Virginia has 603 licensed dairy farms¹, and USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service's most recent annual data on milk cows and milk production show that 91,000 milk cows produced more than a 1.7 billion pounds of milk, or 208 million gallons, in Virginia in 2015. Each cow produced more than 2,300 gallons of milk last year. Two million pounds of Virginia-produced milk was used to make cream and butter.

"Dairy farming is an important economic activity for Virginia agriculture, generating more than \$342 million in cash receipts to Commonwealth farms in 2015," said David Knopf, director of the NASS Eastern Mountain Regional Office, which serves Virginia. "Farm families work tirelessly to provide a safe, healthy and plentiful source of milk and dairy products."

"Often these dairy farms are third- or fourth-generation farms," said Anne Cain, communications director for Southeast United Dairy Industry Association. "These farmers are invested in their land and their communities. They value their way of life, working with their families, teaching their children hard work and the importance of caring for things and the environment."

SUDIA also partners with the USDA, National Dairy Council and others to promote the largest in-school health program, Fuel Up to Play 60. Cain said Fuel Up to Play 60 emphasizes the importance of physical activity along with a healthy diet and access to nutritious foods, like dairy products.

"Fuel Up to Play 60 works in 73,000 schools nationwide," Cain said. "We also work with schools for their breakfast programs, as well as health professionals across the southeast to promote the current research on the health benefits of milk."

Did You Know?

A gallon of milk weighs about 8.5 pounds.

An 8-ounce glass of milk contains about eight grams of protein and 275 milligrams of calcium.

According to the USDA Economic Research Service, the average American ate 8.5

pounds of ice cream in 2013, adding up to Virginians consuming more than 71 million pounds of the frozen treat that year. That's nearly 134 million ice cream sundaes! The average American eats 8.1 pounds of cheddar cheese each year; Virginia consumed nearly 68 million pounds in 2013.

The average American eats 10.4 pounds of yogurt, meaning Virginians ate 87 million pounds of yogurt in 2013.

For more facts and figures about America's consumption of all things dairy, visit [http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/.aspx#26705](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/.aspx#26705).

To find out more about dairy farms and tour one in your state, visit <http://www.southeastdairy.org/dairy-farming/farm-tours/>.

NASS produces a comprehensive annual dairy report due out in April each year, and quarterly milk production reports throughout the year.

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1. Information courtesy of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.