

# CT Milk Promotion Board

## March 10 Special Meeting

### Windsor CT

When asked why producers came to this meeting they said:

- Want to see how my checkoff dollars are spent
- Push CT dairy farms more than they are now
- See if we can make dollars go further
- Get better PR for CT farmers
- Tell our story how we contribute to local lifestyles and community
- People need to know about cows and dairy farms
- Ag education is important, need more of it
- Help us promote our non-fluid milk products and events and efforts (tours, cheese)
- It's important for young farmers to be at the table and offer their thoughts
- CT Dairy Council is very supportive and wants to help as much they can!

#### \$ Available

- Goes to NE Dairy Promotion- \$360,000.00 total from CT farmers
- \$60,000 coming back to CT Board
- Must be broad use for promotion education and research, not brand specific
- Accountable to USDA via detailed reporting

WHERE do my dollars go?

- CT gets:
  - Fuel to Play 60 – 800 schools in CT
  - 2 fulltime dieticians in schools
  - Dairy image work
    - Keep Local Farms
  - Research from New England regional perspective

#### **Question 1 – What do you like about other states efforts**

##### Examples

DMI – what does the national website have  
New England Dairy Promotion Board – connections to Dairy and Food Council  
Calif – big dollars, real people, reach out nationwide  
NH – website user friendly, face book connections,  
VT – recipes, events & promotions, cow named Vermontica, blogs  
FL – all have the link to “Fuel Up” campaign

What do you like/need:

- Website a must
- Logo needed to help brand CT milk and dairy products

- NH site is nice, who did their design
- Need to use social networking and figure out how to post and monitor. Can take an hour a day or 5 hours a week. Tracking mechanisms to help focus on what people are looking at
  - face book
  - blogs
  - twitter
  - YouTube with email feed
- Need some sort of staff to support Board
- Need up to date relevant content!!!
- CT Dairy Council should be a partner
- NE Milk Promotion should be a partner
- Promote best kept secrets
  - 1) to the CT farmers → leads to free stuff, stats, recipes, editorial materials, etc.
  - 2) to the CT consumers
    - farms
    - products
    - tours
    - stories

## **Question 2 - How can we best conduct activities regarding CT dairy farms, milk products, consumer needs and perceptions**

### Research

- Too few dollars to do meaningful research unless you partner with others to collaborate, must be good at leveraging
- 20 years ago almost 100% milk came from CT today 40% of our milk is instate. Should research a do a baseline of what current consumers know about CT dairy and milk
- What will CT look like without intervention?
- Whose milk is being used in schools? Trends of milk consumption in schools, what do kids and teens think/know about milk
- Research best way to provide clear concise info on types of dairy products including chocolate milk which is getting a bad rap, yet has a UConn study saying its ok
- Research the eco-services that dairy farms provide to CT
- Research food security for dairy products in CT
- Research social media and how to best utilize it

### Promotion

- Identify ways to leverage PR efforts
- Promotional signage with logo – have a contest to design
- have real pictures not cartoonish look
- Fairs and other public events
- Must have a well developed plan so money is not wasted
- Work and collaborate with in store promotions

- Create newsletters and handouts
- Create virtual internet tours and videos for schools on CT dairy farms (partner with UConn and UHart on student project ideas)
- Make various social media outlets all part of the PR plan
- Get studio time at public access cable TV produce shows and distribute
- Create a Dairy Trail via DoAG and DOT
- Get greater coverage on the Tourism trail
- Billboards (talk to Bob) a big possibility
- Leverage! co-promotion
- CT has more people attend Big E than any other state – use it to dairy’s advantage
- Tie Ag in the Classroom book reading to CT ice cream & other coupons
- PSA (public service announcement)
- Promote a clean well managed working farm image, not a perfect farm image
- Ag day at Capitol can be used to promote to elected officials
- Use farm-to-school to promote dairy
- Governor to other New England Governor challenges on consuming dairy

### Education

- Leverage \$ with/from PTA/PTOs
- ID and use school curriculum’s available nationally or other states and then match to state standards
- ID low cost generic materials (buy & distribute)
- Tool kit for farmers on tours, etc.
- Educate on WIC rules
- Promote CT milk as local, do not differentiate between conventional and organic

### **Question 3 – What is the look and feel of a campaign that appeals to consumers?**

- ability to actually meet and know farmers - open houses, tours
- town farm days, have ag commissions or others in town arrange a day of activity
- real cows
- demonstrate sustainability
- Really focus on local
- teach kids young when impressionable, they will bring in parents
- teach kids young, you can keep them as life long consumers
- produce farm brochures, specific to your farm
- produce generic brochures that people can just add their farm name to
- provide opportunity to get “give away’s” like cups, pencils, magnets
- a good marketing consultant can help identify what consumers are looking for
- Branding: How should it feel, conduct focus groups - Moms, youth, seniors and others
- Animal/wellness-show we take good care of our animals
- Realistic, who has buying power – mid thirty’s woman?
- Make it familiar, CT culture and feel – Charter Oak, Nutmeg State

- Can we create relationships with Basketball and Football team's
- CT Family Farms to CT families "we are all family here"

#### **Question 4 – How do we get the word out?**

- ID and play on popularity of CT Grown Products
- What is CT Grown, native, locally grown?
- Look for places where promotion opportunities may be reduced by regs
- Milk Board can not lobby, so must fix challenges via legislative actions
- Bradley Airport or other state owned venues?
- Billboards via DoAG
- Contests - Logo design, recipes, test dairy knowledge- give dairy items/coupons as prizes
- Get info to grocery stores (Big Y, etc) can use both audio and visual methods
- Write Op Ed pieces, create a relationship with the press so you can go to them to get PR and they will know to come to you as a resource. Educate editors of papers etc.

#### **Question 5 - How do you want budget spent**

- Billboards
- School education
- Identify realistic costs
- Logo & website design and implantation including social network
- Videos
- Ads – TV New England
- Fairs and Eastern States
- Sporting Events
- Provide opportunity to put CT ID on label of containers
- Coordinate with stores and processors
- Identify how to balance local versus national
- Promote the fact that CT milk is about local not conventional vs organic