



The Economic Impact of the Dairy Industry On the State of Wisconsin

- **Wisconsin's dairy industry contributes \$26.5 billion a year to the state's economy.**
This translates into an industry which fuels the state's economy at more than \$50,000 per minute.
- **The average Wisconsin dairy cow generates more than \$20,000 a year in economic activity.**
These dollars circulate throughout the local community, helping to support schools, roads and local businesses.
- **Dairy is the largest segment of Wisconsin's \$59 billion agriculture industry.**
The dairy industry accounts for almost 40% of all Wisconsin agriculture jobs, employing 146,200 people in the state.
- **Dairy contributes more to Wisconsin's state economy than citrus does to Florida or potatoes to Idaho.**
Wisconsin's dairy industry contributes \$26.5 billion annually to the state's economy, while Florida's citrus industry has an economic impact of only \$9 billion and Idaho's potato industry contributes only \$2.7 billion.
- **Agriculture is Wisconsin's signature industry and has been for years.**
For more than 160 years, agriculture and dairy have driven the state's economy. It remains one of the state's largest industries, employing one of every ten people.
- **Wisconsin leads the nation in both the number and diversity of dairy farms.**
Our more than 12,700 dairy farms include rotational grazing operations, organic producers, and conventional dairy operations of all sizes.
- **Over 99 % of Wisconsin's farms are family owned.**
Many of our dairy farms have been in operation for generations, and are continuing to involve the next generation of family members.
- **Wisconsin leads the nation in the number of on-farm bio-energy systems with 31 methane digesters installed and more planned.**
Methane digesters are being used on farms to turn manure into renewable bio-energy. Using this technology, five cows can provide enough power for an average size home, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **The dairy industry is linked directly and indirectly to many businesses in Wisconsin, providing jobs and additional revenue for the state.**

Nearly every sector of Wisconsin's economy is linked to dairy. For example, every dollar of dairy income generates an additional \$1.54 for our communities and our state,

- **The direct contribution of dairying to Wisconsin – through dairy farming and dairy product manufacturing – is only part of the picture.**

The dairy industry also uses machinery, trucks, fuel, financial services and other goods and services from local industries, which generate additional jobs and income in non-dairy industries.

- **Wisconsin is home to more than 210 dairy plants – including 127 plants manufacturing Wisconsin cheese.**

Wisconsin cheesemakers produce more than 600 different varieties, types and styles of cheese.

- **If Wisconsin were a country, we would rank fourth in the world in terms of cheese production.**

And Wisconsin wins more awards for its cheese than any other state or country in national and international cheese competitions.

- **Wisconsin's cheese plants produce over 2.6 billion pounds of cheese every year – this accounts for nearly 26% of all the cheese made in the U.S.**

Wisconsin also produces nearly 45% of all specialty cheeses in the nation. And 90% of Wisconsin cheese is sold outside of our state's borders in major markets all across the country, bringing millions of dollars back into our economy.

- **During the past five years, Wisconsin dairy producers and dairy processing firms have invested more than \$2.5 billion in modernizing our farms, cheese plants and other infrastructure pieces.**

The dairy industry provides strength and stability to Wisconsin's economy, building on a strong tradition of land stewardship, the diversity of our dairy farms and or cheesemaking excellence.