

IDF

DAIRY SUSTAINABILITY OUTLOOK

Research progress | Global insights | Expert opinion

Sustainable development is a collective effort that depends on collaboration between governments, international organisations and the private sectors, along with individuals. The International Dairy Federation (IDF) recognises the challenges and opportunities and is committed to contributing relevant scientific information and good practice to the discussion.

The second IDF Dairy Sustainability Outlook aims to provide a viewpoint on sustainable development of relevant importance for the dairy sector. It offers an opportunity for those involved in the field to share ongoing projects and new research on sustainability of importance for the dairy sector.

International Dairy Topics takes a look at some of the research and new initiatives that are taking place around the world.

South Africa:

Dairy changes its milk bottle to support the local recycling market

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Supporting the circular economy paradigm can be achieved simply by manufacturers understanding the pathway of their products and packaging through the consumer chain. A recent example in the Western Cape Province of South Africa relates specifically to post consumer recyclability of plastic PET milk bottles.

Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) is a type of plastic used to manufacture bottles which are typically used for water, juices and carbonated soft drinks. PET is recognised as a recyclable material and can be produced in a variety of colours and forms.

Due to the surplus availability of colour (pigmented) PET in the local recycling market, recyclers were opting to rather accept clear (non-colour) PET.

This meant that colour PET was being diverted to landfill sites. The

issue was reported to the dairy manufacturer, Fair Cape Dairies, by its consumers.

Consumers had experienced a reluctance by various recyclers to accept Fair Cape PET milk bottles which were uniquely pigmented white in colour.

Transitioning to a clear PET bottle, enabled the bottle manufacturer to incorporate recycled PET (rPET) into the final milk bottle composition. The new Fair Cape milk bottle is fully recyclable and is made using 50% recycled PET (rPET).

Recycled PET can be used to make a variety of new products. The polyester fibre produced through the thermal extrusion process has applications in clothing, home textiles, automobile parts and roof insulation.

Future opportunities include the development of a milk bottle comprised entirely (100%) of rPET. ■

India:

Enhancing participation of women dairy farmers in governance and management of dairy cooperatives

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Women account for around two-thirds of the total time spent on dairying by all the household members. While women spend more time on activities that can be done at home, men spend more time on activities that are performed outside the home.

The contribution of women members to dairying in the country does not receive due recognition.

Such imbalanced labour participation and management of resources hampers growth and progress of dairying at the household level because of differences in priorities.

Women, if they start controlling the resources beyond providing labour, can certainly ensure enhanced reinvestment in dairying and also ensure a better standard of living for the family.

Dairy cooperatives being farmer

owned organisations must initiate enhancing participation of women in various domains of governance, management and active ownership for greater sustainability.

In India about 17 million farmers are involved in cooperative dairying, of which 30% are women. This representation appears to be skewed in comparison to their contribution.

In India, there is a plan to take up target-based extension/training/capacity building programmes for enhancing the participation of women.

The incentivising of women farmers and women's collectives is key to encouraging greater participation. The next step is the enforcement of legislation, policies and mandates under the scheme to ensure the induction and sustained participation of women in dairying. ■

Chile:

Sustainability as the engine of the Chilean dairy sector

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The Consorcio Lechero is aware of the challenges that currently face the national dairy industry in matters of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Thus, it decided to draw a way of work through a collaborative project that has designed, convened and facilitated the development of the first Dairy Sustainability Agenda.

The Chilean Dairy Sustainability Agenda represents concrete proposals and clear challenges.

It looks at sustainability in a holistic way and enables coordination of actions that different companies are currently developing.

Some of the work priorities included in this agenda are:

● In the economic sphere, work will be done to improve the level of knowledge about the functioning of the dairy market in the dairy industry, generate greater market development and improve the

assessment of the sector's impact on the rural economy.

● In the social pillar of the agenda, the sector will seek to attract new generations and make the dairy sector a more attractive career option, promote greater recognition of animal welfare in our dairies, and continue to guarantee safety and food safety in the different sizes of industries, contributing to the evaluation of dairy products in consumers.

● In the environmental pillar, the sector will gain in the use and care of water, the treatment of waste and the management of greenhouse gases.

This work has allowed us to review the current situation of our industry, revealing the need to generate baselines that show us the gaps in our horizon and allow us to measure progress and the effectiveness of the actions we propose for a sustainable development. ■