Consumers reign.
INNOVATION IS KEY.
IMPEDIMENTS TO GROWTH MUST GO.
These simple truths — consumers reign, innovation is key and impediments to growth must go — capture the clarion call issued by Connie Tipton, IDFA president and CEO, at this year’s Dairy Forum.

These truths also propelled IDFA’s progress on priorities, commitment to key issues and continued collaboration with federal and state officials, dairy colleagues and others in the food and beverage industry. In fact, this was a year of collaboration, cooperation and communication that led IDFA to strategic advancement and, in many cases, wins for dairy foods companies. Join us for a brief journey through the numerous advocacy efforts, challenges and successes that marked our progress this year.

“Whether the impediments are milk pricing, outdated product standards of identity or restrictive labeling requirements, they all add up to a straitjacket on innovation and marketing, which we can ill afford in today’s dynamic global marketplace.”
IGNITING CALLS FOR PRICING REFORM

While global demand is a boon to the dairy industry, the U.S. federal milk pricing system continues to have a chilling effect on the fluid milk sector. IDFA is working to persuade Administration officials, consumer organizations, taxpayer protection advocates and others in the dairy industry that now is the time to move away from the regulated pricing system and to allow milk to flow to its highest value use as dictated by market forces, not regulations.

In comments filed this spring with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, IDFA demonstrated that the Federal Milk Marketing Order (FMMO) system is particularly burdensome to the industry’s small business customers and small dairy processors because it increases costs, makes small companies less competitive and hurts the fluid milk business. Consumer and taxpayer groups separately noted that their constituents are also adversely affected by government-regulated milk pricing. IDFA expects to ramp up activity considerably on this issue during 2015, so stay tuned.

“FMMOs were created to address the U.S. dairy industry of the 1930s. Simply put, there is no longer a need for the federal government to require fluid milk bottlers to pay a higher price for milk than manufacturers of other products.”
DELIVERING MESSAGES ON DECLINING MILK CONSUMPTION

One of the most pressing issues affecting milk companies is the continued decline in milk consumption and its effect on nutrition among Americans, especially children. This year, IDFA and members of the Milk Industry Foundation (MIF) spoke loudly and clearly about the nutritional dangers of falling consumption. Member representatives and IDFA legislative staff met with top Administration officials, from Secretary Tom Vilsack at the U.S. Department of Agriculture to Sam Kass, former senior policy advisor for nutrition policy at the White House. They made sure that the Obama Administration is aware of current consumption trends that show Americans falling short of federal milk intake guidelines and losing valuable nutrients that could have adverse long-term effects on public health.

IDFA and the National Milk Producers Federation strongly supported a bill introduced by Representatives Glenn “GT” Thompson (R–PA) and Joe Courtney (D–CT) to help reverse the decline of milk consumption in schools. The School Milk Nutrition Act of 2015 would reaffirm the requirement for milk to be offered with each school meal, consistent with current law and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

IDFA arranged for educational briefings on Capitol Hill to discuss the Great American Milk Drive, a program developed by the Milk Processor Education Program (MilkPEP) to provide milk to food banks across the nation. Working with IDFA, Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D–NY) and Saxby Chambliss (R–GA) hosted the Senate briefing, and the Congressional Dairy Farmer Caucus hosted the House briefing. The briefings documented the decline in milk consumption and highlighted the strong demand for milk at food banks.
INTRODUCING MEMBERS TO LEGISLATORS AND REGULATORS

IDFA’s legislative fly-in, now called Advocacy Days, provided an excellent opportunity for members to meet face to face with members of Congress on Capitol Hill. Armed with talking points provided by IDFA, they visited nearly 80 congressional offices to discuss the completed Farm Bill, labeling products containing ingredients made with genetically modified organisms (GMOs), raw milk, school nutrition programs, immigration, truck weights and ethanol, among other issues.

The fly-in is capped each year by the popular Annual Capitol Hill Ice Cream Party, and the 2014 event drew thousands of Hill staffers, as well as members of Congress, their families and other special guests. The party, which typically serves more than 6,000 bowls of ice cream using 30 cases of sundae toppings and 2,000 root beer floats, helps to keep the name and priorities of IDFA top of mind for many in the nation’s capital.
David Ahlem of Hilmar Cheese Company, Brian Perry of Perry’s Ice Cream Company, and Tom Arata of Ecolab Inc. stopped by the office of Representative Mike Conaway (R-TX), now chairman of the House Agriculture Committee.

Representative Mike Conaway (R-TX) talked with Greg Meador, president, Plains Dairy, LLC; Brian Perry, Perry’s Ice Cream Company, Inc.; Tom Arata, Ecolab Inc.; and Jeremy Travis, vice president, quality assurance, Hilmar Ingredients.

Ruth Saunders, IDFA vice president of policy and legislative affairs, walked the halls of Congress with Bob Dotchin of The Advocacy Group (left) and Andrei Mikhailovsky of California Dairies, Inc.

(Clockwise) Representative Mike Conaway (R-TX) talked with Greg Meador, president, Plains Dairy, LLC; Brian Perry, Perry’s Ice Cream Company, Inc.; Tom Arata, Ecolab Inc.; and Jeremy Travis, vice president, quality assurance, Hilmar Ingredients.
MAKING THE ISSUES REAL AT HOME

IDFA encouraged members to speak directly to legislators in their home districts, too, and provided talking points on key issues affecting dairy, such as calls for GMO labeling, immigration reform and Trade Promotion Authority, which would limit Congress to an up-or-down vote on trade agreements. Senator Joni Ernst (R–IA) (below left) toured the Wells Enterprises ice cream manufacturing facility in Le Mars, Iowa, during the congressional spring recess this April and discussed these issues with Wells employees.

Representative Pete Sessions (R–TX) (far right) extended a warm welcome to IDFA member representatives and IDFA staff during a special visit to Capitol Hill.

Senator Tom Harkin (D–IA) (center) greeted Lesley Bartholomew and Brad Swart from Wells Enterprises, Inc., at the Capitol Hill Ice Cream Party.
CREATING GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATION

Outdated standards of identity remain barriers to innovation and growth. IDFA is collaborating with others in the industry to convince FDA to allow more “better-for-you” product innovations to fit within the dairy standards of identity. For example, in February, IDFA asked the agency to act on the 2009 proposed rule to update the existing standards of identity for yogurt so they would align with current labeling standards, reflect consumer demands and market trends, and accommodate new yogurt techniques and ingredients.

Changes such as this could provide a significant market breakthrough for all dairy products.

GUIDING EFFORTS ON CHILD NUTRITION REAUTHORIZATION

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which is set to expire at the end of September, authorizes all federal child nutrition programs. IDFA is committed to protecting these programs and their nutritional goals, which include daily servings of dairy products, by working directly with key members of Congress and their staffs on the reauthorization bill. The bill will cover the School Breakfast and National School Lunch programs, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), among others.
PRESERVING DAIRY’S DOMINANCE IN DIETARY GUIDELINES

Following persuasive presentations and comments from IDFA and other industry groups, dairy retained its strong position in the report released in February by the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. The committee clearly supported consumption of low-fat and fat-free milk and dairy products, saying dairy foods are excellent sources of key nutrients that are under-consumed by Americans. While the report doesn’t affect the existing Dietary Guidelines for Americans, it will have a significant impact on the 2015 version, which will be released by USDA and the Department of Health and Human Services by the end of this year.

IDFA’s consultant on nutrition and labeling, Michelle Matto, RD, encouraged USDA and HHS officials to maintain the Dietary Guidelines’ current emphasis on consuming three daily servings of dairy. In oral and written comments, IDFA assured department officials that dairy companies have made significant investments to improve the nutrient profile of their products by lowering fat, sugars and sodium while maintaining the taste and function that consumers expect.

IDFA submitted extensive comments to USDA and HHS, saying the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans should encourage flexible eating patterns based on nutrient-dense foods, including dairy foods. IDFA called for the Dietary Guidelines to encourage Americans to eat or drink one more serving of dairy each day and to allow some nutrient-dense foods that have some saturated fat, added sugar or sodium, as long as individuals meet their recommended calorie levels based on nutrient-dense foods, including dairy foods.

Panelists for the Dairy Forum session on “New U.S. Dietary Guidelines: Implications for Dairy” were (L to R) Cary Frye, IDFA vice president; Greg Miller, Ph.D., chief science officer, National Dairy Council; Joanne Slavin, Ph.D., professor, department of food science and nutrition, University of Minnesota, and 2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee member; and Robert Post, Ph.D., senior director, nutrition and regulatory affairs, Chobani.
URGING FDA TO REVISIT NUTRITION LABEL PROPOSAL

IDFA defended the position of dairy in comments to FDA regarding the proposed rule to revise the Nutrition Facts label. Because the proposal would increase the daily value of calcium, potassium and vitamin D, many products would lose their ability to make nutrient content claims, such as “excellent source of calcium and vitamin D.” IDFA asked FDA to reconsider this impact and the potential consumer confusion that would result.

IDFA also opposed the proposal to require a declaration of added sugars, saying there is no scientific method for distinguishing between added sugars and naturally occurring sugars. For ice cream, IDFA urged FDA to keep the reference amount customarily consumed (RACC) at one-half cup rather than the proposed cup, and not to split the ice cream category into one for bulk ice cream and one for novelties.

ENCOURAGING LIFETIME CONSUMPTION OF MILK

When the Institute of Medicine sought comments on WIC, IDFA pointed out that changes made to the program last year may be inadvertently reducing fluid milk consumption among program participants. Reduced-fat milk is the preferred choice in minority households, according to consumption patterns, but USDA now only allows low-fat or nonfat milk.

IDFA stressed that the federal feeding programs, including WIC, should be doing everything possible to encourage a lifetime of milk consumption and urged the IOM committee to maintain the 2005 recommendations, which allow reduced-fat milk.

Other federal feeding programs were under review this year as well. USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service published a proposed rule with new requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, which serves about 3.6 million people each day. In comments, IDFA called for additional allowances that would encourage consumption of milk, yogurt and cheese.
IDFA’s first Regulatory RoundUP opened last summer with an impressive lineup of senior government speakers representing several federal agencies. More than 75 participants packed session rooms to hear the latest news on labeling, food safety, food defense, energy savings and school nutrition programs.

The keynote speaker was Mike Taylor, deputy commissioner for Foods and Veterinary Medicine for FDA, who oversees the agency’s work on the Food Safety Modernization Act. Taylor opened his address by complimenting IDFA on the many helpful comments the association has filed and the dairy industry on its successful efforts to ensure food safety.
CONTINUING DIALOGUE ON FOOD SAFETY REGULATIONS

FDA released last September its recommended revisions to four proposed rules for implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act, and the revisions reflected significant changes requested by IDFA and others in the food industry. Perhaps the most important change for IDFA members is the agency’s flexibility on environmental and finished-product testing for pathogens. The proposed update for preventive controls for human food would allow each facility to determine the best way to conduct product testing and environmental monitoring to verify that the facility’s preventive controls are effective.

“We’re very pleased that FDA listened to industry comments, including those from IDFA, that showed finished-product testing for pathogens is not a control measure and would do nothing to ensure food safety.”

John Allan, IDFA vice president of regulatory affairs and international standards (center), and Cary Frye, IDFA vice president, discussed dairy issues with Mike Taylor, FDA, at Regulatory RoundUP.

DETAILING THE DANGERS OF RAW MILK

IDFA and NMPF have long fought state-by-state battles on expanding raw milk sales, and this year was no exception. In joint letters to officials in Illinois, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, South Dakota and West Virginia, IDFA and NMPF detailed the dangers of consuming raw milk. After receiving one of the letters, West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin vetoed a bill that would have expanded raw milk sales in his state, saying, “signing this bill into law would pose a serious risk to public health.”
GUARDING LABELING RIGHTS

A small but vocal group of consumers continued to call for state-mandated labeling of GMO foods or foods containing ingredients made from GMOs with varied success. IDFA believes that a state-by-state patchwork of mandatory labeling laws would harm interstate commerce, drive up the price of food and increase consumer confusion. Instead, IDFA supports the development of federal guidelines that would bolster consumer confidence by affirming FDA’s overall authority for setting the nation’s food safety and labeling regulations.

Vermont currently is the only state with a law that mandates GMO labeling, starting July 1, 2016. IDFA has joined forces with the Grocery Manufacturers of America, the National Association of Manufacturers and the Snack Food Association to file a complaint in federal court to challenge the law. The suit is still pending.

“To enable the free flow of interstate commerce and to more easily provide consumers with the information they are looking for, it is essential that we have a federal system of labeling laws rather than a state-by-state approach.”

In March, IDFA welcomed the The Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act, introduced by a bipartisan group of lawmakers led by Representatives Mike Pompeo (R-KS) and G.K. Butterfield (D-NC). IDFA called for Congress to quickly pass the bill, which would create a national, science-based labeling standard for foods containing GMOs.
After more than three years in the making, FDA released in March the results of the milk sampling survey conducted by its Center for Veterinary Medicine in 2012. The report underscored the safety of the nation’s milk supply and demonstrated that the regulations to keep drug residues out of milk are effective in protecting public health.

To prepare for the survey and release of the report, the industry embarked on a collaborative effort — by all stakeholders at all levels of organizations — that was unprecedented. Dairy leaders worked together with federal and state officials to ensure that consumer confidence in the milk supply would remain strong, without undermining the findings of the survey. Dairy communicators convened regularly and tirelessly to hold briefings, conduct media training and craft just the right messages — all to assure consumers that the milk supply is safe. The headlines following the report’s release say it all.

Dairy industry representatives met with state and federal regulators in May at the biennial National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments (NCIMS) Conference and gained successful outcomes on two top issues. IDFA advocated for reasonable regulations in the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) that will allow it to align with pending requirements of the Food Safety Modernization Act. The attendees also agreed to allow industry sufficient time to develop sampling criteria and rapid test methods to expand the requirements for testing raw milk for additional drug residues.
Clay Hough, IDFA senior group vice president, and Beth Hughes, IDFA director of international affairs, met with Alexis Taylor last year when she was named deputy under secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services at USDA. They discussed IDFA’s priorities in the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership with Taylor, who oversees FAS’s international activities, including trade policy and export assistance programs.

Ambassador Darci Vetter, chief agricultural negotiator in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, met with members and joined a panel discussion on the state of international trade at Dairy Forum. Vetter understands the needs of the dairy industry; during her Senate confirmation hearing, she mentioned areas where USTR and Congress need to work together, including market access for U.S. dairy in Japan and Canada, and geographical indications (GIs).

Clay Hough and John Allan, IDFA vice president, traveled to Geneva last summer to attend the 37th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the United Nations’ group that sets food standards. IDFA continued to oppose efforts to develop a Codex standard for processed cheese and is closely following a new proposal to develop a standard for dairy permeate.
BREAKING BARRIERS TO TRADE

The top priorities for IDFA in the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership negotiations are reductions in tariffs and non-tariff barriers, stronger sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and protection for U.S. exporters to continue marketing common cheese names. All three issues are currently obstacles to increasing U.S. dairy exports to the 28 countries of the European Union.

Especially problematic is the EU’s aggressive approach to move past protected GIs and specialty names, such as “Parmigiano Reggiano,” to claw back exclusive use of common names, such as parmesan. The Coalition for Common Food Names, of which IDFA is a founding member, has taken action in 20 countries in the past three years to protect common food names from protectionist efforts by the EU, and those efforts continued this year with positive results.

EXPANDING DAIRY EXPORTS TO THE PACIFIC RIM

IDFA continues to support the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), an agreement among 12 countries that would open new trade opportunities for Americans in the Asia Pacific region.

Working jointly with NMPF and the U.S. Dairy Export Council, IDFA consistently told top U.S. government trade negotiators that access to foreign markets for U.S. dairy products must be a priority in TPP negotiations.

IDFA, NMPF and USDEC also briefed members of Congress on important TPP provisions and challenges, working to garner their support. In April, more than 75 House members urged the Obama Administration to negotiate a strong market-access outcome for the U.S. dairy industry in the TPP agreement. Led by the co-chairs of the Congressional Dairy Farmer Caucus, the House members sent a bipartisan letter to U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman (right) and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack (left), saying Canadian and Japanese dairy market barriers must be addressed in any final TPP agreement to allow more U.S. dairy exports.

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Representative Paul Ryan (R-WI) held up a chunk of cheese as he questioned U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman during a hearing on U.S. trade policy on Capitol Hill in Washington.

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)
IDFA welcomed the introduction in April of the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 to modernize and renew Trade Promotion Authority (TPA). This legislation would help open the door to new markets for U.S. goods and services, boost U.S. economic growth and support well-paying U.S. jobs. IDFA urged Congress to pass the bill as quickly as possible.

"U.S. dairy exports have risen from $1.4 billion in 2004 to $7.1 billion in 2014, and our nation now benefits from a dairy trade surplus of over $4 billion," said Connie Tipton, president and CEO of IDFA.

The benefits of this legislation to consumers, companies and employees would be far-reaching, since the United States is actively pursuing the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. IDFA has been working with the Trade Benefits America Coalition to educate and gain support for TPA. In early March, IDFA staff members visited 30 representatives in the House asking for their support.

"Since every $1 billion in exports creates 5,600 jobs, according to the Department of Commerce, increasing access to new markets through trade agreements will have a positive impact on American workers."
IDFA and the Sweetener Users Association continued their dialogue on the U.S. sugar program with Michael Scuse, under secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, who made his fourth consecutive appearance as keynote speaker at the International Sweetener Colloquium in February. Although Scuse encouraged sweetener users by saying USDA may consider additional imports of sugar to supply the U.S. market, IDFA opposes the current U.S. sugar program because it manipulates sugar supplies, creating unnecessary instability in sugar markets, higher costs for dairy companies and increased prices for consumers.

After calling for Congress to take steps to reform the program, IDFA welcomed the introduction this spring of the bipartisan Sugar Reform Act, which would change domestic supply restrictions and lower price support levels in the U.S. sugar program. Senators Jeanne Shaheen (D–NH), Mark Kirk (R–IL) and Pat Toomey (R–PA) introduced the bill in the Senate, while the companion legislation in the House had 25 co-sponsors, including Representatives Joe Pitts (R–PA), Danny Davis (D–IL), Bob Goodlatte (R–VA) and Jackie Speier (D–CA).
OPPOSING MANAGED TRADE FOR MEXICAN SUGAR

IDFA and the SUA argued against the managed trade agreements finalized in December by the U.S. government, the Mexican government and Mexican sugar producers. The agreements were crafted in response to a petition filed by U.S. sugar producers claiming that Mexican producers were dumping government-subsidized sugar in the United States.

IDFA continues to oppose the agreements because they will increase restrictions on sugar imports from Mexico in an already tight sugar market; they also are in sharp contrast to the spirit of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and effectively pile quotas on top of quotas.

COALESCING ON COOL REFORM AND PORT CLOSURES

When the World Trade Organization (WTO) found last November that the U.S. Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) regulations violated U.S. international trade obligations, IDFA and several members jumped into action. To avert retaliation from Canada and Mexico against U.S. dairy exports, IDFA has joined with business leaders from all sectors of the American economy in urging immediate Congressional intervention to bring the United States into compliance on COOL. The House Agriculture Committee approved a bill, co-sponsored by more than 50 House members, to repeal the COOL requirements for beef, pork and chicken. Chairman Mike Conaway (R-TX) expects the full House to vote in June.

A 10-month work stoppage at West Coast ports also raised concern among IDFA members. Joining with other groups, IDFA sent two letters to President Barack Obama, asking him to intervene in the labor dispute that had halted U.S. exports, including dairy products, to Asia. The dispute was finally resolved in February.
Trusted SOURCE
SAVORING A SWEET MONTH FOR ICE CREAM

On the 30th anniversary of Ronald Reagan’s proclamation of July as National Ice Cream Month, IDFA and members kept ice cream top of mind in the media and among consumers. IDFA worked with national and regional journalists, including the Associated Press, The New York Times, National Geographic for Kids, NBC and the TODAY Show, CBS Sunday Morning News and Huffington Post, on positive features about ice cream.

IDFA also hosted its second annual ice cream photo contest on Instagram, producing four winners. Cary Frye, IDFA vice president and resident ice cream expert, provided a timely blog to answer consumer questions about the slow-melting ice cream used to make novelty sandwiches.

HANDLING HEIGHTENED ISSUES

Responding to member needs for increased strategic support on issues management, IDFA engaged Ketchum, an international public relations agency, to supplement the association’s on-call counsel to member companies. Backed by in-depth experience with issues that are important to dairy, Ketchum has developed effective ways to communicate with the “food evangelists” who are shaping current conversations about food, nutrition and health. To date, three member companies have taken advantage of the confidential services with very positive results.

After surveying members to identify top issues of concern, IDFA and Ketchum teamed up to draft messages and materials to support member efforts. The first of these is the “Animal Care Communications Toolkit for Dairy Foods Companies,” which encourages members to share their animal care policies across their supply chain and provide transparency about their commitment to good animal care. Other materials are in the works.
CONNECTING WITH MEMBERS AND MORE

IDFA continues to provide its weekly News Update Headlines and the IDFA SmartBrief, which arrives in more than 11,000 industry inboxes three times a week. Regular updates to www.idfa.org, along with daily posts to the dairyIDFA Facebook page and Twitter @dairyIDFA, help to keep members and many other followers informed of the latest dairy news.

Several members of IDFA’s senior team provide industry insight and share their expertise through regular columns in Cheese Market News and Dairy Foods magazine. New this year, Dairy Foods expanded the reach of these columns with video interviews, beginning with Beth Hughes, IDFA director of international trade, who discussed U.S. dairy exports and geographical indications.

IDFA featured a session of the Food Dialogues®, a program developed by the USFRA to lead national discussions about how food is grown and raised. The dialogue centered on “Animal Care Amid Consumers’ Emerging Expectations” with a panel that included Mike Reidy, senior vice president of corporate affairs for Leprino Foods Company (third from right), and Chuck Ahlem, co-owner of Hilmar Jerseys, the 2015 Innovative Dairy Farmer of the Year (third from the left).

Featuring First Live Broadcast at Dairy Forum

For the first time in the 30-year history of Dairy Forum, IDFA offered live online broadcasts of key sessions through its partnership with Dairy Foods magazine and the U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Association (USFRA). The online streaming attracted nearly 700 people from 27 countries. A welcome surprise: The promotion for the broadcast option was so appealing that 28 additional people decided to attend the live event instead.

IDFA staff members who attended the NextGEN Symposium were (L to R) Robin Cornelison, trade show director; Dave Carlin, senior vice president; Heather Soubra, director, executive office and special projects; John Allan, vice president; Beth Hughes, director of international affairs; and Chelsee Woodey, director of legislative affairs.
Developing Dairy Leaders with Cornell

IDFA joined with Cornell University to offer leadership development opportunities for the next generation of leaders in the dairy foods business. The first joint program, the NextGEN Symposium held at Cornell last October, offered professional development, dairy education, leadership building, and visits to a processing plant and dairy farm. This is one of the many offerings designed for the NextGEN Dairy Network, created by IDFA to engage the next generation of dairy leaders.

"Teaming up with an organization such as IDFA will help to bridge the gap in workforce development for the next generation of leaders in our industry," said Kathryn J. Boor, dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University.

"MOVING DAIRY FORWARD" AT DAIRY SHOW

The International Dairy Show announced several exciting additions to the upcoming show in September, including a Co-Packer Pavilion, a Partner Pavilion and an unprecedented expo combination with GRAPH EXPO 15, which will run September 13–16 in the South Hall, while the International Dairy Show and its co-location partners — Process Expo and InterBev Process — will run September 15–18 in the North and East Halls. During the two-day overlap, attendees will have all-access admission to the exhibit halls for all events.

With the theme “Moving Dairy Forward,” the International Dairy Show continues to be the premier trade show for processing and packaging professionals in the global dairy food and beverage industry. All educational events will now be held on the show floor, allowing 20,000 attendees to have easy access to more than 325,000 square feet of exhibit space, on-floor demonstrations and daily networking events. The show floor will include 1,000 food, dairy and beverage suppliers featuring everything dairy companies need to run more efficiently, create new products and improve profitability.
Innovative Dairy Farmer of the Year Award

Hilmar Jerseys, a 6,000-cow dairy operation located in Hilmar, Calif., was named the 2015 Innovative Dairy Farmer of the Year. IDFA and Dairy Today magazine selected Hilmar Jerseys because of its dedicated focus on animal care.

(L to R) Mark Ahlem, Frank Dinis and Chuck Ahlem of Hilmar Jerseys received the award from Mike Reidy, NCI chairman.

NCI Laureate Award

The National Cheese Institute bestowed its highest honor, the NCI Laureate Award, on Fritz Leeman, owner of Brewster Dairy, Inc., in Brewster, Ohio. The NCI Laureate Award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the development and growth of the cheese industry. Brewster Dairy is the largest manufacturer of Swiss cheese in the United States.

Connie Tipton, IDFA, congratulated Leeman at Dairy Forum.

Dairy Industry Safety Awards

IDFA awarded 72 dairy company operations with Dairy Industry Safety Recognition Awards and Achievement Certificates in 2014. The award program, which highlights the outstanding worker-safety records of U.S. dairy companies, includes categories for both processing facilities and trucking operations in the dairy industry. The 2015 award winners will be announced at the International Dairy Show.

Pictured here is Jeff Kanab of HP Hood LLC, which earned several safety awards in 2014.
Most Innovative Ice Cream Flavor Competition

German Chocolate Cake, by Perry’s Ice Cream Company, Inc., earned first place in the most innovative ice cream flavor category. Black Raspberry Krunch Sundae Cones, by Friendly’s Ice Cream, LLC, was named the most innovative novelty. Hawaiian Wedding Cake Ice Cream, by Parker Products, Inc., claimed first place for the most innovative prototype flavor. The contest was sponsored by Dairy Foods magazine.

Innovative Milk and Cultured Dairy Products Contest

Yoplait Berry Pomegranate Yogurt & Juice, a mix of yogurt and blends of fruit juices, won in the most innovative product category. It was entered by Kemps LLC/Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Dill Pickle Sour Cream Dip won the most innovative prototype product or flavor category. It was submitted by Trilogy Essential Ingredients, Inc. The contest was sponsored by Dairy Foods magazine.

IDFA Research Award in Dairy Foods Processing

Kayanush Aryana, Ph.D., received the 2014 IDFA Research Award in Dairy Foods Processing in recognition of his research accomplishments regarding functional dairy foods. Aryana, a professor in dairy foods technology at Louisiana State University’s School of Animal Sciences, earned the Milk Industry Foundation Teaching Award in 2013.
IDFA focuses on the growth and success of the dairy industry as a whole, while addressing the needs of each industry segment as well each individual company.

Members consist of nearly 200 dairy processing companies and their 165 subsidiaries, divisions and joint ventures. These companies range from large multi-national organizations to single-plant companies, and run nearly 600 plant operations in the United States, Canada and other countries around the world. Member companies represent 85 percent of the milk, cultured products, cheese, ice cream and frozen desserts produced and marketed in the United States. Members also process dairy ingredients, such as whey powders and other dairy powders, and finished products with dairy ingredients, such as infant formula, sports drinks and other nutritional products.

In addition, approximately 345 Gold Business Partner and Business Partner member companies provide processing equipment and supplies, packaging equipment and materials, ingredients and a wide variety of services to the dairy processing industry. Nearly 15 state and regional trade associations are also members of IDFA.

IDFA Mission Statement

As the premier organization for dairy foods processors, manufacturers and marketers, IDFA:

- Offers unparalleled strategic leadership, expertise and advocacy to promote the success of our members.
- Influences federal, state and international government policies with strong legislative, executive and regulatory advocacy focused on dairy policy and other key industry issues.
- Serves as a trusted source of relevant and timely information on dairy-related issues for members and the media, and collaborates with dairy industry partners to protect and enhance the image of dairy.
- Provides expert training, education programs and materials, and is a forum for dairy industry stakeholders to meet and exchange views on the key issues facing our industry.

IDFA represents the nation’s dairy processors, manufacturers and marketers, as well as their suppliers, with a membership of more than 550 companies, within a $125-billion a year industry. IDFA is composed of three constituent organizations:

- Milk Industry Foundation (MIF)
- National Cheese Institute (NCI)
- International Ice Cream Association (IICA)
(L to R, standing) Peggy Armstrong, vice president of communications; Dave Carlin, senior vice president of legislative affairs and economic policy; Ruth Saunders, vice president of policy and legislative affairs; Connie Tipton, president and CEO; Neil Moran, senior vice president of finance, administration and trade show; John Allan, vice president of regulatory affairs and international standards; and Cary Frye, vice president of regulatory and scientific affairs. (L to R, seated) Bob Yonkers, vice president and chief economist, and Clay Hough, senior group vice president and general counsel.
2014–2015 International Dairy Foods Association Officers
Chair: Patricia Stroup, Head of Procurement, Nestlé USA, Inc.
Vice Chair: Mike Wells, President and Chief Executive Officer, Wells Enterprises, Inc.
Secretary: Mike Reidy, Senior Vice President, Corporate Affairs, Leprino Foods Company
Treasurer: Jeff Kaneb, Executive Vice President, HP Hood LLC

2014–2015 Milk Industry Foundation Officers
Chair: Jeff Kaneb, Executive Vice President, HP Hood LLC
Vice Chair: Gregg Tanner, Chief Executive Officer, Dean Foods Company
Secretary: David Nelsen, Vice President, Manufacturing, Safeway/Albertsons
Treasurer: Carmine Catalana, President, Cumberland Dairy Inc.

2014–2015 National Cheese Institute Officers
Chair: Mike Reidy, Senior Vice President, Corporate Affairs, Leprino Foods Company
Vice Chair: Ron Dunford, President Schreiber US, Schreiber Foods, Inc.
Secretary: Doug Simon, President, USA Cheese Business Unit, Agropur Inc.
Treasurer: Jeff Giffin, President and CEO, Masters Gallery Foods, Incorporated

2014–2015 International Ice Cream Association Officers
Chair: Mike Wells, President and Chief Executive Officer, Wells Enterprises, Inc.
Vice Chair: Rachel Kyllo, Senior Vice President, Sales and Marketing, Kemps LLC/Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
Secretary: Rich Draper, Chief Executive Officer, The Ice Cream Club, Inc.
Treasurer: Alan Thomsen, President, Schoep’s Ice Cream Co., Inc.
EXPERTISE AND TRAINING

Hands-on Microbiological Testing, Food Safety and Laboratory Best Practices
Hosted by IDFA and Chestnut Labs
July 14–16, 2015
The Jordan Valley Innovation Center
Springfield, Mo.

International Dairy Show
September 15–18, 2015
McCormick Place
Chicago, Ill.

Better Process Cheese School
Held in conjunction with International Dairy Show
September 15–16, 2015
McCormick Place
Chicago, Ill.

NextGEN Symposium
October 6–8, 2015
Cornell University
Ithaca, N.Y.

Hands-on Microbiological Testing, Food Safety and Laboratory Best Practices
Hosted by IDFA and Chestnut Labs
October 13–15, 2015
The Jordan Valley Innovation Center
Springfield, Mo.

Dairy Forum 2016
January 24–27, 2016
The Arizona Biltmore
Phoenix, Ariz.

International Sweetener Colloquium
February 21–24, 2016
Turnberry Isle Miami
Aventura, Fla.

Milk Procurement Workshop
March 2016

Ice Cream Technology Conference
April 12–13, 2016
Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort and Spa
Bonita Springs, Fla.

Dairy Accounting & Finance Workshop
May 2016

Milk & Cultured Dairy Products Conference
May 2016

Regulatory RoundUP
June 14–15, 2016
Washington, D.C.

Advocacy Days
June 15–16, 2016
Washington, D.C.
GET INVOLVED

IDFA encourages members to participate in association committees and groups to share expertise and recommendations on issues that will direct the path of the industry’s future. Get involved and help us to make a difference for dairy. Contact Cindy Cavallo, IDFA director of membership, at ccavallo@idfa.org for details.

The Cheese Guys

IDFA and NCI board members welcomed Dan Zagzebski, the COO of Great Lakes Cheese Co., Inc., and thanked Gary Vanic, outgoing CEO, for his years of leadership in NCI and IDFA. (L to R) Zagzebski, Louie Gentine of Sargento Foods Inc., Vanic, and David Ahlem of Hilmar Cheese Company, Inc.

(L to R) Emily Lyons, IDFA director of regulatory affairs and counsel, and Ashley Burch, IDFA director of political programs, teamed up to promote Regulatory RoundUP and Advocacy Days in a video for members.

(L to R) Brian Whittaker of Polypack, Inc., attended the International Dairy Show Advisory Committee meeting at Dairy Forum where he met with Cindy Cavallo, IDFA director of membership.

The Washington, D.C.-based representatives of member companies meet periodically with IDFA staff members to discuss legislative strategies and issues. The newest member of IDFA’s legislative team is Molly Pfaffenroth, legislative assistant (standing fourth from the left).