



# International Dairy Foods Association

## IDFA Issues Briefing

**Wednesday, October 7, 2020 | 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. ET**  
**Zoom Meeting**

*Presiding: Michael Dykes, D.V.M., President and CEO, International Dairy Foods Association*  
*Counsel: Danielle Quist, Senior Director, Regulatory Affairs and Counsel*

## Meeting Notes

### I. Welcome

Heather Soubra welcomed Executive Council and Segment Board members to the meeting. Soubra reviewed the housekeeping items and the agenda.

### II. Antitrust Reminder

Danielle Quist read the antitrust statement explaining IDFA's antitrust policy as it governs all IDFA activities and meetings.

### III. Chairman's Remarks

Dan Zagzebski, IDFA Executive Council Chair, opened the meeting with a welcome and thanked IDFA staff, members and their families for keeping everyone safe and doing what is best for dairy industry companies and their employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. He welcomed the NextGen Cohort<sup>2</sup> and encouraged participation in the program and opportunities to build leadership. He also recognized the importance of people and their power to strengthen the role of diversity in the dairy industry. He noted that since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the IDFA's member-driven agenda allowed IDFA to be more focused and effective. The increased communication and connectedness between IDFA and its membership has been noticeable and contributed to the effectiveness of IDFA's advocacy and ability of the dairy industry to weather the pandemic.

Zagzebski then reviewed the process of nominating and approving Executive Council members to the Nomination and Governance Committee and the purpose of the Committee. He named those members up for nomination, explaining why these choices represent leaders in the industry and cross-section of the industry and diversity.

#### **IV. State of the Industry: Reflections, Learnings and Vision for the Future**

Michael Dykes thanked members for their continued support of IDFA and the dairy industry. He summarized the current state of the economy, COVID-19 recovery and impact on the dairy industry. He reviewed IDFA advocacy that resulted in guidance from federal agencies and US government purchases of dairy products for needy families and helped maintain the stability of the dairy supply chain. He noted the policy results that can be achieved with a unified dairy industry and recognized the role of companies in assisting essential workers at the plant and in retail. He expressed optimism that despite global challenges, the dairy industry is recovering well.

Dykes then reminded members of IDFA's value to the industry through its focus on the three pillars of legislative advocacy, regulatory advocacy and communication. He reviewed IDFA's primary advocacy efforts and notable webinars aimed at furthering a successful and competitive dairy industry. He also walked members through some of the key takeaways from the first stage of the pandemic, including the role of technology, importance of trust, the impact of deglobalization, ensuing political risk and the surge of cultural change. Given the change in our economy and society, IDFA's focus on dairy's future and interaction with government is key to working with McKinsey & Co. and the Vision of the Future. Dykes reviewed how the Vision of the Future process is intended to focus IDFA advocacy, regulatory and communications priorities for the benefit of the entire dairy industry.

#### **V. Advocacy**

Dave Carlin provided an update on the status of IDFA's priorities for the next COVID-19 relief bill: authorization of a dairy recourse loan program and targeted tax relief for essential workers in the food and agriculture sector. He also reported on the advocacy team's efforts to secure additional funding for the Healthy Fluid Milk Incentives Project, ice cream research and the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) work to modernize standards of identity.

Becky Rasdall updated members on IDFA's advocacy on the enforcement of U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), with a focus on Canada's implementation of its tariff rate quota (TRQ) administration and price class revisions. Rasdall also reported on current questions and concerns around the U.S.-China trade relationship, highlighting the short- and long-term implications for U.S. dairy exports. She also briefly updated members on the status of U.S.-UK and U.S.-Kenya negotiations and explained IDFA's advocacy efforts in both negotiations. Lastly, Rasdall outlined the implications for trade post-election under both potential Administrations, citing a return to multilateral trade agreements under a potential Biden Administration, or a continuation of current negotiations, including initiating several "phase two" agreements under a potential second Trump Administration. IDFA is preparing for the appropriate advocacy and networking under both eventualities.

Colin Newman provided an update on the IDFA Political Action Committee (PAC) and related political efforts. He discussed the importance of having IDFA member executives engage in the IDFA PAC political affairs activities. He also encouraged Board members to participate in the upcoming virtual fly-in and new legislator meet and greets.

## VI. Regulatory

Joe Scimeca updated members on the regulatory team's efforts to reform certain FDA regulations. IDFA submitted written comments to a proposal to modernize the Standards of Identity (SOI) in July and participated in a follow up virtual meeting with FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) in September. IDFA advocated for the use of a horizontal, streamlined approach to modernizing the SOI rather than a slower, case-by-case approach being considered by FDA. IDFA also submitted written comments to the FDA on a proposal to amend regulations to permit the use of fluid Ultra Filtered and Micro Filtered milk in cheesemaking without requiring a labeling declaration other than "milk."

Scimeca next updated members on the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farmers to Families Food Box Program, including an update provided on the third-round commitments. Scimeca summarized USDA purchases under Section 32, which included an update on the regulatory team's effort to obtain a Commercial Item Description (CID) for Swiss Cheese, thus enabling it to be included in Section 32 purchases and to meet the dairy fulfillment requirement for the Food Box Program. In addition, he mentioned IDFA's continued actions to provide outreach on other USDA food nutrition programs, such as the Child Nutrition Program, SNAP, WIC, etc., ensuring that waivers due to COVID-19 remained in place during the school year. Finally, Scimeca reported that IDFA was successful in advocating for the continued sale of low-fat flavored milk in schools.

Michelle Matto updated members about the upcoming release of the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). As USDA and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) staff work to finalize the 2020-2025 DGAs before the end of the year, IDFA is continuing to take actions to ensure that positive messages about dairy's role from the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) report are included in the final DGA, while also encouraging the inclusion of messages on dairy at a variety of fat levels. These activities include submitting additional comments to USDA/HHS staff, asking members to submit similar comments through the Campaign Center, developing a dairy farmer video appeal to USDA Secretary Purdue and President Trump, asking supportive members of Congress to submit a letter to USDA/HHS and hosting a webinar with DGAC chair Dr. Barbara Schneeman. These efforts are being coordinated across IDFA teams and with other organizations to result in science-based messages about the role of dairy in a healthy diet.

John Allan provided overviews of IDFA's recent comments to FDA regarding the agency's proposed rule on laboratory accreditation and final set of guidance to industry on

compliance with the final rule “Mitigation Strategies to Prevent the Intentional Adulteration of Food.”

Danielle Quist updated members on IDFA efforts to assist dairy industry compliance with the National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Rule (BE rule). Quist reported on IDFA’s discussions with FDA regarding fermentation inputs as BE ingredients. She also summarized the importance of the recent Agricultural Marketing Service guidance on how to document the absence of detectable levels of modified genetic material. She also informed members of litigation challenging the BE rule. Next, Quist reported on webinars on the topics of food industry COVID-19 litigation and managing liability and food safety risks.

## **VII. Communications**

Matt Herrick reported on IDFA advocacy communications related to the DGAs and COVID-related legislation pending before Congress. Matt shared how IDFA and the dairy industry have made progress to influence the outcome of the DGA, and how IDFA is shifting to advocate in the final three months of the year to make progress on the remaining DGA priorities, namely: (1) recognize favorable/neutral outcomes of consuming dairy at all fat levels; (2) increase overall consumption of dairy; (3) recommend no less than 10% added sugars in total calories, consistent with previous DGAs; and (4) USDA needs updated consumer-focused messaging & materials on DGAs (especially for dairy).

Herrick summarized IDFA advocacy for a Dairy Recourse Loan to be included in next coronavirus relief package from Congress, as well as Essential Worker Tax Relief. He reported that IDFA entered into a partnership with the Morning Consult survey firm to help gauge voter and public perspective on a variety of policy and advocacy issues, including the public’s appetite for essential worker tax relief. IDFA learned that eight in ten registered voters support providing food supply chain workers temporary tax relief during the coronavirus pandemic. This information aided IDFA’s advocacy before key Senators to use the information in support of bills for temporary worker relief. IDFA’s priority media outreach to agricultural radio and trade publications aided efforts to get a key Senator to introduce a bill with a dairy recourse loan.

Andrew Jerome shared IDFA actions to update IDFA.org to account for a greater share of live and on-demand virtual content, including video and audio features. He also reported that the new live series, Dairy Innovator Dialogues LIVE, has attracted more than 900 registrants to date for inspiring conversations with IDFA member executives. Also, he updated members on the launch of the Dairy Download podcast, available at [www.idfa.org/thedairydownload](http://www.idfa.org/thedairydownload). The podcast is produced by IDFA and Blimling and Associates and covers dairy market news, consumer and industry trends, and discussions about policy impacting dairy. The first two episodes have generated more than 1,000 listens.

## **VIII. Membership & Programs**

Tom Wojno shared progress on IDFA's shifting to virtual programming and events. He reported that over the last several months, IDFA quadrupled the volume of its online content: webinars, trainings, virtual events – projecting more than 60 unique pieces of content by year's end. Wojno joined with Matt Herrick in updating members on new member recruitment, illustrating the progress of the "Making a Difference Campaign." Working from a list of more than 250 member prospects, Wojno and Herrick reported that IDFA has retained 13 members, including 5 of its 17 top prospects. Wojno shared the top prospects list, soliciting the help of IDFA's segment boards and executive council for targeted recruitment efforts.

## **IX. Dairy Forum 2021**

Heather Soubra gave an overview of speakers, sessions, and what to expect at a virtual Dairy Forum, scheduled for January 25 – 28, 2021.

## **X. IDFA People Strategy**

Heather Soubra shared the IDFA People Strategy, including a brief overview of each of the groups making up the overall strategy: Women in Dairy, NextGen Leadership Program, and HR Leaders in Dairy. Soubra also gave an update on the Power of People Conference, scheduled for October 19 - 21.

## **XI. Closing Remarks**

Michael Dykes closed with final remarks regarding the planning of Dairy Forum and that IDFA member company teams are welcome to join Dairy Forum with its virtual format. Dan Zagzebski urged members to sign up for Dairy Forum, which is expected to be a vibrant program.

## **XII. Adjourn**

Dan Zagzebski asked if members had any business to raise. Being none, the meeting was adjourned.