

Promotional Toolkit: Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment

Overview

The Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment is a voluntary, proactive effort by America's dairy companies to support families and students in their efforts to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle. Nearly 30 million children and adolescents participate in federal school meal programs including breakfast and lunch. Dairy products including milk, cheese, and yogurt play a central role in school meals by providing 13 essential nutrients students need for healthy growth and development.

- **Milk** is the top source of calcium, potassium, phosphorus, and vitamin D in kids ages 2-18.
- **Cheese** provides a high-quality source of protein, calcium, phosphorous, and vitamin A.
- **Yogurt** is a nutrient-dense source of protein, calcium, riboflavin, vitamin B12, and phosphorous that may reduce the risk of type-2 diabetes.

As parents, policymakers, and nutrition professionals support making wholesome dairy options available for our nation's schoolchildren, the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), on behalf of America's school milk, cheese, and yogurt processors, is leading **the Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment**, a voluntary effort to eliminate the use of certified artificial colors Red 3, Red 40, Green 3, Blue 1, Blue 2, Yellow 5, and Yellow 6 in all milk, cheese, and yogurt products sold to K-12 schools for use in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program by the start of the 2026-2027 school year. The vast majority of dairy products sold to schools today do not contain any certified artificial colors, as most dairy processors chose not to use or have removed or replaced these ingredients. The goal of this new Commitment is to eliminate the use of certified artificial colors in any milk, yogurt, and cheese products sold to schools by July 2026 and in the years ahead.

Information about the Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment can be found at www.healthydairyinschools.org.

Below is information about the Commitment and promotional material to help you promote the Commitment.

Thank you for your support!

Jump to:

- [Talking Points: The Commitment and Dairy's Nutritional Benefits](#)
- [Sample Social Media Posts and Email Blurbs](#)
- [Promotional Graphics for Download](#)
- [The Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment](#)

Additional Materials:

- [2-Page Handout for the Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment](#)
- [Commitment Announcement Video](#)

Talking Points: The Commitment and Dairy's Nutritional Benefits

Key Talking Points

- We want to make you aware of a voluntary, proactive effort led by IDFA to safeguard our industry's ability to provide milk, cheese, and yogurt products to K-12 schools while reinforcing dairy's position as a nutritious and essential part of school meals.
- **We are pleased to share with you that after discussions with all dairy companies that supply milk, cheese, and/or yogurt to K-12 schools, IDFA has created the IDFA Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment.**
- Similar to our successful, widely adopted Healthy School Milk Commitment, this new effort on behalf of America's dairy processors is a voluntary and significant step to eliminate the use of the certified artificial colors Red 3, Red 40, Green 3, Blue 1, Blue 2, Yellow 5 and Yellow 6 in all milk, cheese, and yogurt products sold to K-12 schools for use in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program by the start of the 2026-2027 school year (July 2026).
- This Commitment only applies to products sold for use in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program; it does not apply to foods that fall outside of the school meals guidelines, such as foods sold as à la carte items, foods sold at school stores and cafes, and foods sold at school functions (such as entertainment or athletics).
- Today, the vast majority of dairy products sold to schools do not contain any certified artificial colors, as most dairy processors have chosen not to use or to remove or replace these ingredients. Moving forward, all companies supporting **the Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment** have pledged to discontinue products containing certified artificial colors or to reformulate products with natural ingredients, joining the majority of companies that will continue making products for schools without certified artificial colors.
- By taking this step now, our industry ensures that all dairy products provided through school meal programs remain trusted, nutritious options – protecting dairy's reputation and reinforcing its critical role in child nutrition programs.
- While the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has deemed certified artificial colors safe for use in foods when used in accordance with FDA regulations, the federal government is considering how to phase out the use of these ingredients in the U.S. food supply. At the same time, several states have passed laws banning the use of all certified colors in foods sold to schools, and additional states are expected to follow.
- The main goal of this voluntary effort is to ensure the public, especially parents, policymakers, and lawmakers, continues to view dairy as a healthy, nutritious, and wholesome food options for America's students, while a secondary goal is to ensure there is no disruption to the marketing or availability of nutritious dairy foods sold to schools even as states impose new standards on certified artificial colors.

- To ensure that our industry is recognized in a positive way, IDFA is leading this Commitment, and no company names or individual sponsors will be publicly named as part of this effort. IDFA is grateful that more than 50 dairy and food companies are supporting this effort, representing nearly all of the dairy foods sold to schools in the U.S. Once announced, any dairy company supporting the Commitment may choose to use Commitment branding or promote their support of the IDFA Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment.
- IDFA is pleased to have the support of Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins for this voluntary, industry-led Commitment. We are working with USDA leadership to coordinate an event in the coming weeks to amplify the Commitment, featuring Administration officials, key Members of Congress and other important stakeholders. We will keep you up to date as the details are finalized.
- IDFA is also sharing educational materials for our stakeholders to explain the Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment, including a toolkit, Commitment web page, and Question-and-Answer guide to address inquiries.
- If you have any questions, please reach out to IDFA's Matt Herrick at mherrick@idfa.org.

Sample Social Media Posts and Email Language

Facebook / LinkedIn / Email

America's dairy companies are committed to supporting families and students in their efforts to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle.

We call it the Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment. And it means we commit to eliminating certified artificial colors in all milk, cheese, and yogurt products sold to K-12 schools. That's right. We're delivering dairy's 13 essential nutrients to America's students in a more wholesome package.

Learn more about the Commitment: www.healthydairyinschools.org

Twitter

Same essential nutrients. No certified artificial colors. Healthy kids. We're proud to support the Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment. Learn more: www.healthydairyinschools.org

Downloadable Graphics for Social Media

The first option below is a generic post. The second option allows you to add your logo.

(click either to download its respective high-res version)





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- **Milk** is the top source of calcium, potassium, phosphorus, and vitamin D in kids ages 2-18.
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Our Commitment: Eliminate Certified Artificial Colors in School Foods

Beginning with the 2026-2027 school year (July 2026), all companies supporting the Commitment pledge to eliminate the use of certified artificial colors Red 3, Red 40, Green 3, Blue 1, Blue 2, Yellow 5, and Yellow 6 in all milk, cheese, and yogurt products sold to K-12 schools for use in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program. This effort does not apply to foods that fall outside of reimbursable federal school meals.

While the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has deemed certified artificial colors safe for use in foods when used in accordance with FDA regulations, the federal government is considering how to phase out the use of these ingredients in the U.S. food supply. At the same time, several states have passed laws banning the use of all certified colors in foods sold to schools, and additional states are expected to follow. The proactive **Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment** will ensure wholesome, nutrient-rich dairy options remain available to students everywhere regardless of changing state regulations, reflecting the dairy industry's longstanding dedication to child nutrition.

Moving forward, all companies supporting **the Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment** have pledged to discontinue products containing certified artificial colors or to reformulate products with natural ingredients, joining the majority of companies that will continue making products for schools without certified artificial colors.

The Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment further demonstrates our industry's longstanding promise to provide healthy, nutritious dairy options to school kids everywhere. This includes developing new and reformulated products without certified artificial colors, [reducing added sugar](#), and working with school meals professionals and nutrition professionals to educate school staff and students about the benefits of healthy milk, cheese, and yogurt options in the diets of children and adolescents.

The most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans is clear – children are not receiving enough essential nutrients for growth, development, healthy immune function, and overall wellness. In fact, U.S. federal dietary guidelines stress that between 68% and 94% of school-age boys and girls are currently failing to meet recommended levels of dairy intake. Healthy dairy options in school meals offer the most important opportunity of the day for children to get the critical nutrients they need. For years, parents and nutrition professionals have agreed that milk and dairy products must remain key building blocks in school meals. **The Healthy Dairy in Schools Commitment** affirms that promise and demonstrates U.S. dairy's dedication to our nation's youth.