Milk starts with farmers who care about their cows and the land.

- 97% of dairy farms are owned and operated by families like yours!
- Water is recycled an average of 3 to 5 times on a dairy farm.
- One gallon of milk is produced with 90% less land and 65% less water that it was decades ago.
- Over 1/3 of a cow’s food is grown right on the farm.
- Most people live within 100 miles or less from a local dairy farm.

Farmers focus on cow comfort and health.

- Farmers can track the health of their cows with electronic bracelets, like a fitness tracker for humans.
- Dairy farmers provide clean, dry bedding for their cows and access to food and water 24 hours a day.
- Healthy, comfortable cows produce nutritious, high-quality milk.
- The average cow makes 6-8 gallons of milk each day.
- Cows eat grass, corn, hay and other feed to get a balanced diet.

Milk moves from the farm to the dairy plant in less than 48 hours.

- Most cows are milked two to three times a day by machine. Each milking only takes about 5-7 minutes.
- Milking equipment delivers milk directly from the cows to a refrigerated holding tank.
- Milk goes through strict quality controls to ensure freshness, purity, and great taste, and is never touched by human hands.
- A gallon of milk weighs 8.59 pounds.
- At the plant, milk is rapidly heated to kill germs and ensure it is safe to drink through a process called pasteurization.

CHECK OUT THESE FUN FACTS ABOUT DAIRY!

- To get the same amount of calcium in 1 quart of milk, you would have to eat 27 oranges, 3.5 pounds of peas, or 50 slices of whole wheat bread.
- Think cows have four stomachs? It’s actually just one, with four separate compartments to help with digestion!
- George Washington enjoyed ice cream so much that he spent $200 on it in 1774 – that’s more than $5,000 today!
- Did you eat something spicy? Milk helps cool your mouth better than water because of the protein casein – it cleanses your taste buds.

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