

Science-based Roadmap Can Help Dairy Industry Meet Sustainability Goals

NEWS RELEASE BY THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Northampton, MA | August 02, 2021 08:11 AM Eastern Daylight Time



The new Roadmap for a Sustainable Dairy System can help transform our nation's agricultural landscape for the benefit of farmers, communities, and the environment. ©

Paige Frautschy/TNC

August 2, 2021 /3BL Media/ - The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has developed a **Roadmap for a Sustainable Dairy System** to help businesses create solutions that are both environmentally friendly and economically favorable, while delivering dairy products that consumers can feel good about.

The Roadmap was developed using scientific data about milk production practices, and is designed to guide farmers, milk cooperatives, processors, and retailers as they identify opportunities and make supply chain improvements—all while tracking progress toward their water, climate and biodiversity goals.

A staple of the American diet, U.S. dairy accounts for 2 percent of total greenhouse emissions, 5.1 percent of water use, and 3.7 percent of U.S. farmland. This impact, however, presents a unique and vital conservation opportunity.

A Commitment for a Sustainable Future“Increasingly, the agriculture and food industries recognize the inherent connection between a secure food supply chain, clean water, and a stable climate,” said Alisha Staggs, dairy program manager for The Nature Conservancy’s North America Agriculture Program. “The U.S. dairy industry is leading by example with a commitment to environmental sustainability, working toward **a set of goals** that include cleaner water with maximized recycling and carbon neutrality by 2050.”

The dairy industry’s commitment to a sustainable future is already turning into action on the ground. For instance, a group of dairy farmers in Wisconsin are working to implement conservation agriculture practices that build soil health and improve water quality. Some of the practices they are using, such as cover crops and reduced tillage, will also help capture and hold carbon in the soil. With support from TNC, **Farmers for Sustainable Food** and the state’s **Producer-led Watershed Protection Grant Program**, these farmers are setting goals and tracking conservation outcomes annually.

“Producing a glass of milk today requires 30 percent less water, 21 percent less land, and a 19 percent smaller carbon footprint than it did in 2007, thanks to the positive actions taken by dairy farmers,” says Karen Scanlon, executive vice president of environmental stewardship at the **Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy**. “Tools like the TNC Roadmap can help dairy value chain partners identify and make economically viable improvements that make sense for their operations and contribute to the industry’s collective progress.”

Dairy farmers like Clint Hodorff, a member of the **Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers**, are already seeing the environmental and economic benefits of using cover crops and other soil health practices. When four inches of rain fell on Hodorff’s wheat field last fall, he was able to show fellow farmers at a field day event how his cover crops minimized runoff due to the improved structure and water-holding capacity of his soil.

The Roadmap can help further guide and accelerate efforts for farmers and businesses in the dairy supply chain reach their environmental and sustainability goals. We invite you to explore the Roadmap and how TNC can help you transform our nation's agricultural landscape for the benefit of our farmers, our communities, and the environment we all share. Learn more **here**.

###

The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We are tackling climate change, conserving lands, waters and oceans at an unprecedented scale, providing food and water sustainably and helping make cities more sustainable. Working in 79 countries and territories, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. To learn more, visit www.nature.org or follow [@nature_press](https://twitter.com/nature_press) on Twitter.

For more information, please contact:Christine Griffiths, Assoc. Director of Communications
cgriffiths@tnc.org Phone: (912) 222-3297

View additional multimedia and more ESG storytelling from The Nature Conservancy on 3blmedia.com

Tags

ENVIRONMENT

SUPPLY CHAIN & THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY