

Worcester Schools in Massachusetts Launch Pilot Program Offering Lactose-Free Dairy Milk to All Students

Dairy farmers and Worcester Public Schools work to ensure inclusive nutrition for students with lactose sensitivity.

WORCESTER, MA, UNITED STATES, November 20, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) with their farmer-owned brand, Garelick Farms, and Worcester Public Schools (WPS), in collaboration with National Dairy Council and New England Dairy, have launched a pilot program offering chocolate lactose-free dairy milk as an option to all students. This initiative aims to promote inclusivity and improve student nutrition by ensuring that students with lactose intolerance can enjoy the benefits of dairy milk.

Students who experience lactose sensitivity have limited milk options in school and typically need permission for a lactose-free dairy choice. Additionally, most youth do not consume adequate amounts of key nutrients like calcium, vitamin D, and potassium found in milk. This program ensures students with lactose sensitivity are not excluded from enjoying milk and have access to milk's 13 essential nutrients.

Key Benefits of the Program:

- No Parent or Doctor's Note Required: Students can access lactose-free milk without the need for additional documentation – because it is real dairy milk, just without the lactose, making it easier for everyone to participate.
- Gentle on Tummies: Lactose-free milk allows students with lactose sensitivity to enjoy milk without experiencing discomfort or digestive issues.
- Natural Taste: The lactose-free milk maintains the natural, creamy taste of the milk they typically drink, ensuring that students don't miss out on the familiar flavor they love.
- Inclusive Choice: By offering lactose-free milk, the program ensures that students, regardless of lactose sensitivity, are offered the same nutrient rich meals at school.

Impact on Nutrition Equity:

This pilot program addresses nutrition inequity by providing an inclusive option that meets the diverse needs students. By removing barriers to milk consumption, Worcester Public Schools is

taking a significant step towards ensuring that every student has access to essential nutrients that supports their health and well-being.

Quotes:

“We are excited to be supporting this pilot program to provide a more inclusive and nutritious option for our students,” said Samantha D’Angelo, Assistant Director of Nutrition, Compliance & Wellness for WPS, “By offering the chocolate lactose-free milk, we are ensuring that every student can enjoy the benefits of milk without any discomfort.”

“We are thrilled to partner with National Dairy Council and New England Dairy to bring this pilot project to Worcester Public Schools,” says Rachel Kylo, a spokesperson for Garelick Farms. “Lactose intolerance can impact students. With this pilot, we are helping to meet diverse needs of children and adolescents as they grow.”

For more information about the pilot program, please contact the School Nutrition Department at wpsnutrition@worcesterschools.net.

About Worcester Public Schools:

Worcester Public Schools is committed to providing high-quality education and nutrition to all students. This pilot program is part of our ongoing efforts to promote inclusivity and improve student health.

About National Dairy Council

National Dairy Council® (NDC) is the non-profit organization dedicated to bringing to life the dairy community’s shared vision of a healthy, happy, sustainable world – with science as the foundation. NDC provides science-based nutrition information to, and in collaboration with, a variety of stakeholders committed to fostering a healthier nation, including health and wellness professionals, educators, school nutrition directors, academia, industry, consumers and media. For more information visit USDairy.com/NationalDairyCouncil.

About New England Dairy

New England Dairy’s mission is to champion the region’s farm families and the nutritious foods they produce. The non-profit organization does this by sharing the New England dairy story, connecting people to dairy farms, supporting youth wellness in schools, and delivering the latest nutrition and sustainability science to health professionals, scientists, media, nutrition professionals, and educators. Learn more at NewEnglandDairy.com.

About Dairy Farmers of America

Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) is a farmer-owned leading global dairy cooperative focusing on sustainability, innovation, community and the future of family dairies. While supporting and serving more than 10,000 farmer-owners, DFA manufactures nearly every form, function and flavor of high-quality nutritional dairy products, including fluid milk, cheese, butter, ice cream, dairy ingredients and more. These products connect our Cooperative’s family farms to family

tables with national and regional brands, such as Alta Dena® Dairy, Meadow Gold® Dairy, Friendly's®, Borden® Cheese, Plugrà® Premium Butter and Kemps®, to name a few. On a global scale, we work with some of the world's leading food companies to develop ingredients that deliver the greatest source of nutrition to consumers around the world, while staying committed to social responsibility and ethical farming. For more information, please visit dfamilk.com.

About Garelick Farms®

Garelick Farms has been providing families in the Northeast with delicious, fresh dairy since 1931. With manufacturing facilities in Franklin, Mass., New Britain, Conn., and Rensselaer, N.Y., Garelick Farms produces fluid milk and cream. Garelick Farms is a farmer-owned brand of Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), a national dairy cooperative owned by more than 10,000 family dairy farmers. 100% of profits go to dairy farmers and their families. For more information, visit garelickfarms.com.

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