

PRESS INFORMATION



The role of the EU dairy industry in the worldwide sustainability challenge

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The European Dairy Association (EDA) takes and will take its responsibility in the worldwide sustainability challenge. An overview of where the EU dairy industry stands today in making dairy producing and processing more sustainable.

Dairy products have a positive impact

For the EDA, dairy production is a sustainable economical activity respecting animal, nature and man. Dairy products are not only natural, but are of high importance for a healthy diet, because of their natural richness (calcium, vitamins). They constitute the real base of the European balanced diet, which has since long proven its beneficial impact on human health.

Besides a positive health impact, dairy producing plays an essential role in many zones in Europe for rural preservation, maintaining the quality of landscapes and favouring the maintenance of populations living in mountainous areas. The EU dairy industry employs some 600.000 people.

Dairy producing and processing has an impact on the environment

The CE Delft Report, reflecting results of research commissioned by the EDA, indicates that cradle-to-farm gate emissions out of the dairy sector contribute 3% to the total global climate emissions. It also indicates that dairy livestock emissions of dairy cattle contributes 1.2% to the total global greenhouse gas emissions. The CH₄ emissions of dairy cattle in the EU have been reduced with 20-30%. The EU dairy industry is convinced that the environmental impact of dairy producing and processing will be further reduced in the coming years.

The EU dairy industry, a responsible stakeholder aiming at sustainable dairy efficiency

The EU dairy industry has already taken initiatives to reduce its environmental impact and increase its sustainability. Emissions have clearly gone down since 1990 and figures indicate that there is still room for improvement. Between 1990 and 2005 emissions from enteric fermentation in dairy cattle lowered by 30%.



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Although efforts have already clearly been made, the EU dairy industry is working hard in order to be even more sustainable and efficient.

Dr. Joop Kleibeuker enumerates a number of initiatives the EU dairy industry is currently looking at: *'We believe that further reducing enteric fermentation can be obtained by the optimised protein feeding of dairy cattle. Using different protein sources may also improve the global methane balance. The EU dairy industry assesses currently also the optimization of fertilisers use and manure management, power saving in farming and the optimization of the whole supply chain, including packaging, in order to save energy and carbon use.'*

The EU dairy industry is committed to take up the climate change and sustainability challenges and make dairy producing and processing so efficient as possible: *'As responsible stakeholder, the EU dairy industry wishes to mark the difference. We acknowledge that there is still a huge potential for improvement, that's why the dairy industry is investing heavily in R&D'*, according to Dr. Kleibeuker.

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION

The European Dairy Association represents the interests of dairy processors in the European Union. The membership of the EDA consists of the national trade associations for dairy processors in each EU Member State.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

DR. JOOP KLEIBEUKER
EUROPEAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION
+32 2 549 50 43
+32 475 70 77 74
jkleibeuker@euomilk.org

CHRIS DECROIX
PEAK COMMUNICATIONS
+32 2 454 55 55
+32 498 51 33 56
chris.decroix@peakcom.eu