

More Than Just Milk

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Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom 4th grade essay contest winner

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Every day dairy helps fuel my body, my parents' bank account, and my community. My family relies on dairy more than anything else in the world. Wisconsin is known as Wisconsin's Dairyland. That's why for every meal, I drink milk!

Wisconsin's dairy industry has fueled the lives of my family for generations and still does today! Every night when my family sits down for supper there is an ice cold milk on the table. Drinking milk is very important, it makes your teeth and bones strong. Milk is an excellent source of calcium and twelve essential nutrients. The average dairy cow in Wisconsin produces seven gallons of milk a day. Other dairy products like chocolate milk, cottage cheese, yogurt and cheese are always in our fridge for an easy, healthy snack to fuel my body.

Dairy farmers do business with so many people, even some in my family. My brother milks cows on a local dairy farm. My mom works as a dairy nutritionist, and my dad is an Ag Business instructor. My grandparents have been dairy farmers for nearly 50 years. Every community in Wisconsin benefits from dairy cows. One in nine jobs in Wisconsin relies on dairy farmers. If you think of all the people a dairy farmer can see in a day from the milk truck driver, seed dealer, feed delivery person, cow breeder, nutritionist, veterinarian, to milk equipment company. All those businesses rely on dairy farmers for their jobs and livelihoods. For every dollar generated by dairy farming, it turns three to seven times in the economy. When a farmer is making money, everyone is making money.

Wisconsin's 1.27 million cows help generate over 154,000 jobs and create over a billion dollars in state and local taxes. When a farmer pays all of their employees the employees get money to put into their wallets to buy clothing, food and local products. Spending by others helps fuel the economy. Wisconsin's dairy industry contributes \$45.6 billion to the economy each year. That's a lot of milk!

I can't imagine our world without milk and the very important dairy farmers. My life and others have been sculpted by the hard working dairy farmers who help take care of the cows and produce milk. That's why with every meal, I'm going to drink milk!
