

Press Release

connect to the world of dairy



The EU dairy industry supports the sustainability commitments and the important role of the dairy sector in striving towards the development goals.

Dairy provides healthy nutrition, societal and environmental benefits and engages to further enforce all these pillars in the support of the global sustainable development goals. The European dairy sector brings three major 'qualitative' pillars to sustainable development in Europe and beyond: nutrition, social and environmental benefits from dairying are highly important.

Especially in the context of the UN sustainable development goals, the merits of maintaining dairying in rural areas and prominent in the dietary recommendations become more evident in their active contribution to several goals. Certain positive, yet more indirect effects also benefit other goals that are only one step further from the agro-food sector.

We, as European dairy industry, are fully engaged in a continuous support and improvement of these goals; we are proud of → our contribution and have set ourselves ambitious targets to further tend towards.

Dairy is produced in many different areas across the European Union, with a variety of animals – cows, sheep, goats or buffaloes – and it shapes a huge variety of different products. Milk and dairy products bring most relevant nutrition to all ages of the population, and regular income to 300,000 employees in the dairy companies and the connected 700,000 farms producing raw milk¹. Dairy products are most often kept 'simple' and natural, in that their processing methods have been handed down for generations and have since seen little modification. However, the dairy industry can also prepare more elaborate specialties, such as a wide range of deserts and other special products for more defined needs, like for teenagers, elderly and highly active people.

¹ EDA Economic report [link](#), and factsheets once ready





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The European dairy industry has a long history in providing essential nutrition, care for animals, landscape and strives to further highlight its 'genetic fingerprint' of circularity with the three pillars – summarised in our → [Dairy sustainability synopsis](#).

Dairy is an important actor for climate and the environment. EDA is proud to highlight the relevance of dairy in the wide context of environmental actions (including climate), while looking at the broader picture with water and land uses, biodiversity and animal welfare².

The nutritional benefits of dairy are easily highlighted by many examples, especially the EU school food scheme support³ and the central place in all existing dietary recommendations⁴. All age groups should be eating dairy between 2 and 4 times a day, and each can choose which products suit them best⁵. Dairy provides the huge benefit of converting inedible plant material like grass into highly nutritious products for humans and thus, helps nourish the European and world population.

Its social role as core actor in rural areas, like with geographical challenges such as mountains or utmost areas (e.g. arctic or arid areas) is much recognised but not yet highlighted⁶ enough. Without dairying, many rural areas would not benefit from any source of economic actors – dairy animals and the milk processing industry guarantee jobs, social and basically all infrastructure in most of the European Union.

"Never has the dairy sector had a more crucial role to play in society, for nutrition and the environment, and never has it been willing to endorse it so avidly", underlines **EDA secretary general Alexander Anton**.

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION,

The European Dairy Association represents the interests of dairy processors in the European Union. The membership of EDA consists of the associations of dairy processors in EU Member States.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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² Our special dairy factsheet shows many projects and contributions: [link](#), and many factsheets on environmental projects and contributions: [link](#)
³ [Link](#) to factsheet
⁴ Importance of dairy factsheet [link](#)
⁵ Many more factsheets on nutritional benefits can be found on our websites: [link](#)
⁶ A special factsheet will soon be issued on this topic as well.