



Dairy Flash

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#13 / 2026

1 October

EDA Annual Convention 2026

| 14-16 October | Bratislava |



European Dairy: Local Roots and Global Competitiveness

Soon, our **Annual Convention 2026**, taking place **14-16 October** in **Bratislava, Slovakia**, is upon us. Three days of dialogue, collaboration, and exchange, bringing together experts and executives from the European *lactosphere* and beyond. Together with our partners, the **Slovak Dairy Association** (Slovenský mliekarenský zväz – SMZ) and **ASSIFONTE** (Association of the European Processed Cheese Industry), and under the auspices of **Richard Takáč, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic**, the Convention will be a unique platform for dialogue, collaboration, and exchange.

The first session of our Convention, a panel session, '**Local Roots and Global Competitiveness**', will explore how European dairy can build on its rich regional heritage while strengthening its position in an increasingly competitive global dairy marketplace, featuring insights from European dairy industry captains.

The session will also include: '**Ukraine Dairy: European Roots and Global Competitiveness**,' offering an important closer look at the Ukrainian dairy sector, '**What's on the mind of the CEO's of dairy companies?**' a study by **McKinsey & Company** and a contribution by **Tetra Pak**, Europe's biggest food and beverage packaging company.



Albert de Groot
EDA President



Richard Takáč
Minister of Agriculture and
Rural Development of the
Slovak Republic



Marián Šolty
SMZ President



Flavio Coturni
DG TRADE
EU Commission



Oisín Morrin
CEO, Tippagral France



Christoph Till
Managing Director
Meggle SK/CR/HU



Oleksandr Avramuk
CEO, Lactalis UA



Piercristiano Brazzale
CEO, Brazzale S.p.A

Dairy Delivering Nutrition Excellence Across the World



With international dairy leaders and researchers from the entire value chain, the afternoon session will explore how the dairy sector can continue to contribute to global nutrition and meet the evolving needs of consumers around the world. A strong opportunity to gain fresh insights into the trends, innovations, research and strategies shaping the future of dairy and global nutrition.

The session will also be preceded by 'Women in Dairy', introducing the new network for creating a stronger network for women across the dairy value chain.



Moderators:



Rose O'Donovan
Editor, AGRA FACTS



Kinga Adamaszwili
Deputy secretary general
EDA



Gilles Froment
IDF President



Pietro Paganini
President
Competere



Miquela L. Hanselman
U.S. dairy policy specialist
USDEC



Martin Polovka
Food Specialist
National Agricultural
and Food Center



Daniela Martini
Associate Professor
University of Milano



Isabelle Pitter
Chief Procurement &
Supply Chain Officer
Prolactal GmbH,
Woman in Dairy



Adela Putinelu
Senior Manager,
Government Affairs
EMEA, Sealed Air



Neil Dunn
Vice President, Food
Packaging Solutions
EMEA, Sealed Air



Alex Henriksen
Managing Director East
Europe, Tetra Pak



Ludovic Meilhac
Expert partner
McKinsey & Company

12th International Whey Conference in Chicago



IWC26 Dairy Ingredients Leadership Panel: Luis Cubel, CEO AFI, Maxime Devourdy, CEO Agropur Ingredients, Patti Smith, CEO & President, ADPI, Scott Graham, COO, Hilmar and EWPA President Benno van Mersbergen, RFC

With 650 registered attendees, the **12th International Whey Conference 2026**, co-organized by **ADPI** (the American Dairy Products Institute) and **EWPA** (the European Whey Processors Association), was fully booked – for sure a sign of the attractiveness of the dairy ingredient business from many perspectives.

"The future of whey will not be built by one dairy region, but through collaboration - between dairy regions, between industry and science, between established and emerging markets, between today's technologies and tomorrow's ideas. Our Whey industry sets a benchmark when it comes to showcasing the mutual benefits of transatlantic trade and investment partnership and collaboration", as EWPA secretary general **Alexander Anton** put it in his opening speech.

This year's edition offered an unrivalled blend of executive leadership, expertise in market analysis, nutritional science and processing technology. **Mary Ledman** (Daily Dairy Report) and **Mike McCully** (McCully Consulting) gave a deep insight into the global and U.S. markets for dairy ingredients – with a huge dynamic in U.S. production: *"We see an unprecedented investment in the U.S. milk processing – with an additional new capacity of 500.000 tons of cheese per year on the horizon – with a plus of around 50.000 tons of WPC 80 and 25.000 tons of WPI by 2028"*, concluded Mike McCully.

Mary Ledman underpinned the market outlook for whey with an analysis of the global demography. *"For the next ten years, one can expect an annual increase in global WPC 80 demand in the range of 34.000 tons per year"*.

The scientific programme of the conference was organised around latest research in nutrition (proteins, lipids and carbohydrates) and technology (processing, functionality, ingredients and co-product valorisation). Researchers from all around the world presented fascinating results of new studies on whey ingredients and human nutrition as well as new technologies and new market opportunities for whey going far beyond the currently well-known applications, including in military and space. Among numerous topics two big themes were prominently emerging as potential future trends: the rising use of GLP-1 anti-obesity medications as well as healthy aging.

Save the Dates:

EWPA at Food ingredients Europe 2026:

I Thursday I 19 November 2026 I Frankfurt I
"Why Whey, Why now", featuring EWPA
President Benno van Mersbergen



Benno van Mersbergen
EWPA President
CIO, Royal FrieslandCampina



Mark Voorbergen
Dairy Markets and
Strategy Consultant
Dairy Intel



Mette Toft
Senior Regulatory
Specialist
Arla Foods Ingredients

World School Milk Day 2026

The 30 September, **World School Milk Day**, was the opportunity to celebrate the millions of children across Europe who are enjoying the benefits of milk and dairy products from the **EU school scheme**. The EU school scheme supports viable food production and promotes healthy eating habits among children by encouraging the consumption of milk and certain milk products and of fruit and vegetables in schools. Last year, a total of **19,2 million** children participated every day - **23 %** of the entire population of children in the EU - **107 million litres** of drinking milk and **11 million litres of yoghurt** were distributed. From the classroom to the farm, it was a day to celebrate food education and EU agriculture.

We raise a glass of milk to this success!

EDA brings dairy sector together for an online TRACES workshop



On 28 September, EDA organised a workshop with **DG SANTE** of the EU Commission on the use of **TRACES**, the EU Commission's online platform for animal and plant health certification for dairy exports. With 123 registrations and 23 questions collected ahead of the session, the event demonstrated strong interest in practical support on export certification.

The workshop gave operators the opportunity to discuss the EU export workflow directly with DG SANTE, including system access, certificate corrections and replacements, and electronic seals. Participants' active engagement made the session a valuable exchange grounded in companies' day-to-day experience. By bringing dairy exporters and Commission experts together, EDA created a forum for practical guidance, shared learning and constructive dialogue.



EDA Factsheet on cardiovascular disease: Dairy & heart health

This week, on 29 September, on **International World Heart Health Day**, EDA published our new factsheet on cardiovascular disease (CVD) "**Dairy & heart health**". CVD remains the leading cause of death in the EU, and unhealthy diets are one of the major risk factors. Total dairy consumption is not associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease or higher LDL cholesterol levels. Fermented dairy products, particularly yoghurt and cheese, are consistently associated with favourable cardiometabolic outcomes. Dairy consumption may contribute to healthy blood pressure levels, and it is associated with a lower risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes, both important cardiovascular risk factors. The health effects of foods depend on the whole food matrix, rather than on individual nutrients considered in isolation.

These findings underline the importance of looking at whole foods and overall dietary patterns when considering heart health.

[Read it here:](#)