

# MILK CONSUMPTION INCREASES 5 PERCENT IN ALL-DAIRY SCHOOL VENDING TEST



Putting all-dairy vending machines in schools increases student dairy consumption, according to a pilot test by the Midwest Dairy Association, Swiss Valley Farms and Dairy Management Inc.™

Working together, the organizations placed state-of-the-art vending machines in 17 middle and high schools in Bettendorf, Davenport, Pleasant Valley, Eldridge and Iowa City, Iowa, along with Rock Island, Illinois. The black-and-white-spotted vending machines, which serve dairy products exclusively, were installed in schools at the beginning of the 2002-03 school year.

“Based on earlier vending tests, we thought the next natural step would be to offer other dairy products, such as cheese and yogurt, to give students more healthy snacking options throughout the school day,” said Kevin Stiles, vice president, marketing and industry coordination for Midwest Dairy Association. “The test is another effort, partially funded by dairy farmers through the dairy checkoff, to increase dairy sales.”

## Several key conclusions from the vending study:

- Total milk consumption increased 5.1% by volume per school over the previous year when dairy vending machines were not used.
- Junior high students chose yogurt (24%) and cheese (31%) more frequently than their high school counterparts who selected yogurt (10%)

and cheese (18%). High school students were more likely to choose milk (73%) vs. (45%) for their junior high counterparts.

- Although more dairy units were sold through high school vending than through junior high school vending, more product moved through junior high schools than high schools **on a per student basis.**
- Milk, with 60% of sales, captured the largest share of dairy products sold. Cheese followed with 24% of sales and yogurt with 16%.
- Availability of 16-ounce units (vs. eight ounces) increased the total amount of milk sold.
- Yogurt and cheese sales from vending were incremental; they added to total sales, rather than displacing sales that would have occurred from the lunch line.
- School foodservice staff can be successful in vending dairy as a healthy alternative to other vended products.

An earlier milk-only vending test completed in 2001 demonstrated that students would choose milk over other beverages such as juice and soda if readily available in attractive, easy-open containers and additional flavors. This test went a step further to see if cheese and yogurt could have marketing success if included alongside milk.

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(continued from *Milk Consumption Increases 5 Percent in All-Dairy School Vending Test*)

According to Stiles, the main goal was to better understand our challenges in developing a school vending program under “real world” conditions and assess student response to greater product availability via vending machines that serve milk, cheese and yogurt. “The test has helped us accomplish that,” said Stiles. “We’re confident that these test results will be useful as we encourage widespread adoption of dairy vending in other markets of the country.”

“We’re extremely pleased to be a participant in this ground-breaking study and help provide a healthy vending alternative in schools,” said Gene Quast, CEO, Swiss Valley Farms.

For more information, please contact your local Dairy Council. Phone 1-800-426-8271 for the Dairy Council nearest you.

## Dairy Vending is Healthy Vending

Kids between the ages of 11 and 18 typically triple the amount of soda they drink, while reducing their milk consumption. This pattern has contributed to a national calcium crisis, in which nearly 90 percent of teenage girls and 70 percent of teenage boys fall short of the recommended calcium intake.



“With so many kids replacing calcium-rich milk with sugary sodas and fruit-flavored drinks, it’s important that we encourage them to choose dairy for the calcium they need, especially now when their bones are in their most active growth phase,” said Char Heer, registered dietitian with the Midwest Dairy Association and mother of two teenagers.

Research shows that kids who consume high-calcium foods, such as milk, cheese and yogurt, have lower body fat and maintain their body fat percentages better. In addition, other studies show that calcium turns up the body’s fat-burning ability and helps build bone mass.

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