

Dairy Exports

Fact Sheet

To help increase U.S. dairy product consumption internationally, the dairy checkoff funds market development and expansion efforts through the U.S. Dairy Export Council® (USDEC).

- Dairy producers support export market development through the national dairy checkoff, which helped form USDEC in 1995. Producer funds are leveraged with additional funding from the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service and U.S. dairy cooperative and dairy manufacturer membership dues.
- Through USDEC, checkoff-funded marketing efforts help increase U.S. dairy product exports. This producer investment has paid off. Worldwide demand for dairy — and U.S. exports — has been surging over the last few years.
 - The world relies on U.S. dairy. Nearly 11 percent of U.S. production is now exported — more than double the export volume from just a decade ago.
 - About **97 percent of all export sales in 2007 were commercial and unsubsidized**, thereby providing profitable outlets for U.S. dairy products.
 - In 2007, U.S. exports of milk powder, whey, cheese, lactose, and other dairy products were **valued at \$3.06 billion, up 62 percent from the previous year.**
- How does this happen? Exports are a result of producer-funded market development and expansion programs, market access and technical services — plus trade policy programs, which are funded by non-checkoff sources. For example:
 - In Mexico, checkoff-funded marketing efforts built awareness for U.S. cheese through in-store promotions and consumer education. USDEC also matched up U.S. suppliers with Mexican restaurant chains to help incorporate U.S. cheese into menu items like pizza and hamburgers. Today, Mexico is the No. 1 export market for U.S. dairy producers.
 - With the support of USDEC, Japanese importers introduced 20 U.S. specialty cheeses in 2007. USDEC conducted one-on-one consultations with retailers and hotels, hosted seminars, participated in an annual consumer event celebrating “Cheese Day,” and sponsored cheese and wine tastings for culinary professionals. U.S. cheese shipments to Japan rose 30 percent to more than 22 million pounds in 2007.
- Maintaining and building dairy exports allows the U.S. dairy industry to grow. With annual production increases growing, and with continued efficiencies among dairy producers and co-ops, the industry needs new markets to keep up with increasing milk production.
 - Thanks, in part, to USDEC's marketing efforts funded by U.S. dairy producers, and the commitment of U.S. dairy suppliers, **more than 2 billion pounds of U.S. milk solids were sold internationally in 2007**, more than double the export volume of just five years ago.
 - Exports help clear the domestic market of excess milk solids. Nearly one-half of all new milk production is now sold internationally.