



# **Sustainability in the Dairy Industry**

April 1 2019 9:51 AM











Dairy farmers are committed to producing delicious, nutrient rich milk as well as taking care of the land and their animals. To meet the growing need of the US population, farmers are working hard to reduce their impact on the environment by using less land and resources to produce more food and milk. Each gallon of milk produced today requires 90 percent less land and 65 percent less water, with a 63 percent smaller carbon

footprint than it did almost 70 years ago. In fact, US farmers today are producing almost three times the amount of milk with about half the number of cows.

The increase in production of milk comes from genetic improvements, improved cow comfort, and advances in the diets and nutritional needs of dairy cows. The dairy industry is working hard to become even more sustainable. “Healthy, well-treated cows produce high quality, nutritious dairy products,” states Erin McGraw, a Registered Dietitian with the St. Louis District Dairy Council. Dairy farmers work to conserve resources such as water, land and energy. They also carefully manage waste. Many farmers spread natural manure into the soil which reduces the amount of commercial fertilizers needed. Cows also have four stomachs, which means they can recycle food that people can’t eat, such as citrus pulp and cottonseed.

As we celebrate Earth Day in April, we can think about ways as a consumer that we can also make an impact on the environment. One thing we can do is be more mindful of food waste. Choose smaller portions and buy only what you will eat. “Making healthy food choices that include dairy products such as milk, cheese, and yogurt, will help to keep you feeling fuller longer and give you a nutritious bang for your buck,” says McGraw.

For more information on sustainability and the health benefits of dairy, visit [www.stldairycouncil.org](http://www.stldairycouncil.org) or contact Erin McGraw with St. Louis District Dairy Council: call (314)835-9668, or e-mail ([emcgraw@stldairycouncil.org](mailto:emcgraw@stldairycouncil.org)). For more delicious and nutritious recipes, check us out on Facebook and Instagram at [STLDairyCouncil](#).

## **Recipes**

### **Vegetable Pizza**

Chopped vegetables and cheese make for a winning combo in this appetizer. This recipe is easy to customize using vegetables that are in season.

Yield: 16 servings

### **Ingredients**

2 (8 oz) packages of refrigerated crescent rolls

1 cup non-fat plain greek yogurt

1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened



1 teaspoon dried dill weed

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

1 (1 ounce) package ranch seasoning mix

¾ cup cherry tomatoes, halved

½ cup fresh broccoli, chopped

½ cup fresh cauliflower, chopped

¼ cup carrot, chopped

1 yellow bell pepper, chopped

1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

## **Instructions**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray cookie sheet or jellyroll pan with non-stick cooking spray.
2. Pat crescent roll dough into the pan. Pierce with fork.
3. Bake for 10 minutes, cool completely.
4. In a medium sized mixing bowl, combine greek yogurt, cream cheese, dill weed, garlic powder, and ranch seasoning mix. Spread this mixture on top of the cooled crust. Arrange vegetables on top of the yogurt/cream cheese mixture. Sprinkle grated cheddar cheese on top.
5. Cover and chill. Once chilled, cut into squares and serve.

Nutrition Facts: 196 Calories, 6 grams protein, 12 grams fat, 7% calcium

## **Vanilla Rice Pudding**

This delicious comfort food can be enjoyed either hot or cold. Rice pudding is a great way to add some dairy to your day.

Yield: 3 servings

## **Ingredients**

3 cups whole milk

¼ cup sugar

½ cup Arborio or sushi rice

1 tsp vanilla extract

Cinnamon

## **Instructions**

1. Warm the milk, sugar, rice, and vanilla extract in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring frequently, for 30 to 40 minutes, until it is thickened.
2. Ensure the rice is done. It should be firm, but not crunchy.
3. Remove the pudding from the heat. Serve warm, or refrigerate, well covered, and serve chilled. Sprinkle with a touch of ground cinnamon.

Nutrition Facts per serving: 330 calories, 10 g protein, 8 g fat, 30% DV Calcium

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