

## Data Sheet: Dairy Cow (Milk)

Milk is a nutritious liquid food produced by the mammary glands of mammals. It is the main source of nutrition for young mammals, including humans, before they are able to digest other types of food. It is not uncommon for humans to consume the milk of other mammals.

When we typically think of dairy milk we think of milk from cows. However, mammals, including sheep, goats, yaks, water buffalo, horses, reindeer, and camels are used as a source of milk for humans around the world.

According to the Purebred Dairy Cattle Association (PDCA), there are seven major dairy cow breeds in the United States (US): Holstein, Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Ayrshire, Jersey, Red and White, and Milking Shorthorn.

When most people think of dairy cows, they imagine a Holstein. Holsteins have distinct white and black or red and white markings. They are the largest of US dairy breeds. A mature Holstein weighs around 700 kilograms (1,500 lb). They are known for their outstanding milk production. An average Holstein cow produces around 10,000 kilograms (23,000 lb) of milk each year.

Dairy milk is extracted from farm animals during or soon after pregnancy. In 2011, dairy farms produced 730 million tons of milk from 260 million dairy cows.

### Why is milk on the lunch tray?

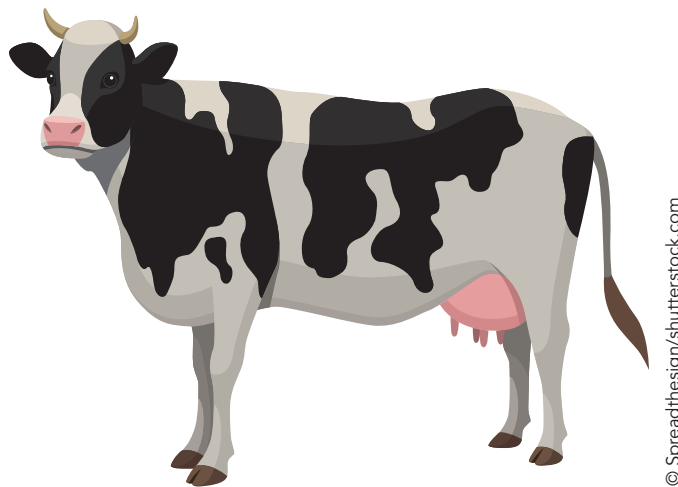
Milk	
Nutrition Facts	
Serving size	1 cup (250mL)
<b>Calories</b>	<b>130</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 5g	<b>8%</b>
Saturated Fat 3g	<b>15%</b>
Trans Fat 0.2g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 20mg	
<b>Sodium</b> 110mg	<b>5%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrates</b> 12g	<b>4%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	
Total Sugars 11g	
<b>Protein</b> 9g	<b>18%</b>
Vitamin A	15%
Vitamin C	0%
Vitamin D	45%
Calcium	30%
Iron	0%
*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a human's daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

In the US, schools must offer milk at every meal in order to receive money from the federal government. Seventy-one percent of milk served in US school cafeterias is flavored milk such as chocolate milk. Some districts have proposed a ban on flavored milk because of the added sugar in flavored milks.

US dietary guidelines recommend that people 9 years and older consume 3 glasses of fat-free or low-fat milk a day. Some health researchers claim more studies are needed because these recommendations have been influenced by the American dairy industry.

## Understanding and caring for cows

It is important for a farmer to know the needs of cattle in order to successfully keep herds healthy, strong, and producing the maximum amount of milk. Each dairy cow and her calf need about 2 acres of land to support them. On this land cattle will graze on alfalfa hay which is a type of grass. In addition to grazing, cattle are given supplemental feed including wheat, barley, oats, and corn as well as minerals in order to keep up a diet needed for energy and production of milk. In addition to land and diet, dairy cows require a fresh supply of water because they can drink anywhere from 30 to 50 gallons of water per day.



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