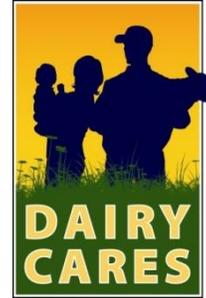


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## Dairy Cares Newsletter

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[DairyCares.com](http://DairyCares.com)

# Investment by dairy families leads way toward improved Valley water quality

In coming weeks, California dairy families will step forward with a new, pioneering initiative to further protect and improve water quality across the great Central Valley.

This multi-million-dollar effort will begin with the installation of a special network of monitoring wells in Merced and Stanislaus counties. This network is designed to provide some of the most precise measurements to date of the effectiveness of various dairy management techniques in protecting and preserving groundwater quality. This network will expand over the next one to two years, with wells installed on dozens of dairies in at least nine counties where dairies are especially active.

This monitoring effort is by far the most ambitious in the history of California's dairy industry, and in fact is the first such program of this scale in the United States. While the science behind groundwater monitoring is complex, the goal of the program is simple: To ensure that California dairies have the information they need to protect groundwater resources.

The new monitoring initiative, led by the non-profit Central Valley Dairy Representative Monitoring Program (CVDRMP), is the product of more than two years of intensive planning and organizing. The program is envisioned to collect data for at least the next several years, while preparing technical reports and recommendations on groundwater protection efforts.

To do their part in protecting California's valuable water supplies above and below ground, Central Valley dairy families already operate under the strictest water quality protection measures in the nation. Dairies must manage manure through a careful budgeting process that assures the proper amounts of this valuable plant nutrient are applied to crops. Efforts must also be made to store manure properly and safely until it is needed, and to prevent flooding during rainy seasons. These efforts include ongoing testing of wells and other types of testing to track trends in water quality.

The new monitoring initiative will provide something like a report card on the comprehensive efforts of dairies across the Central Valley to improve water quality. It is expected to provide valuable data to quantify

improvements in water quality that have resulted from improved management at dairies, as well as potentially identifying opportunities for further improvement.

Over the past decade, California dairy families have repeatedly established themselves as leaders in environmental stewardship, by reducing their carbon footprint, adopting measures to help improve valley air quality, and cooperating with efforts to protect water quality. As the CVDRMP's first wells are installed this August, consumers of California dairy products can rest assured that California dairy families will continue to provide nutritious, delicious and affordable dairy products to the tables of millions of American families, even as they continue to diligently pursue efforts to protect the environmental resources upon which all Californians depend.

*Dairy Cares is a statewide coalition supporting economic and environmental sustainability and responsible animal care. Our members include Bar 20 Dairy Farms, California Cattlemen's Association, California Dairies Inc., California Dairy Campaign, California Dairy Research Foundation, California Farm Bureau Federation, Dairy Farmers of America-Western Area Council, Dairy Institute of California, GHD, Inc., Hilmar Cheese Co., Joseph Gallo Farms, Land O'Lakes, Merck Animal Health, Milk Producers Council, Ruan Transport Corp., Western United Dairywomen, Yosemite Farm Credit and others. For information, visit [DairyCares.com](http://DairyCares.com) or call 916-441-3318.*