



NATIONAL DAIRY COUNCIL®

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DAIRY MANAGEMENT INC.™

August 31, 2004

Kathryn McMurry, M.S., R.D.
Dietary Guidelines Communication
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Room 738-G
200 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

FR Docket No. 04-12422, Department of Healthy and Human Services, Announcement of Solicitation of Research Pertinent to the Communication of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines

Dear Ms. McMurry:

The NATIONAL DAIRY COUNCIL® (NDC) submits the following information in response to the docket referenced above.

The NDC is an organization that initiates and administers nutrition research, develops nutrition programs, and provides information on nutrition to health professionals and others concerned about good nutrition. The NDC has been a leader in nutrition research and education since 1915. Through its affiliated Dairy Council units, the NDC is recognized throughout the nation as a leader in nutrition research and education.

We commend the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for employing a science-based approach to develop nutrition guidance that will meet the current and future health and nutrition needs of Americans. Before implementation of the new Dietary Guidelines, it will be important to conduct research to determine what messages really motivate, educate, and resonate with consumers.

The NDC appreciates the opportunity to share research on consumer communication that may be relevant to the development of the Dietary Guidelines. As you may know, the American Dairy Association and the NDC, with support from leading health professional organizations launched the 3-A-Day of Dairy for Stronger Bones nutrition education campaign in January 2003 to help combat America's calcium deficit and raise awareness of the overall health benefits of consuming 3-A-Day of Dairy. The campaign's easy, actionable message -- eat three servings of milk, cheese or yogurt every day for stronger bones -- helps bring nutrition guidelines to life and educates the public about the bone-building benefits and naturally unique combination of nutrients provided by milk, cheese and yogurt.

Since 2003, the NDC has encouraged consumers to look for lowfat, reduced-fat and fat-free varieties of milk, cheese, and yogurt to meet a variety of taste and nutrition needs. The 3-A-Day logo has been made available to dairy manufacturers and processors and it now appears on the package labels of calcium-rich milk, cheese and yogurt.

Below we have summarized four overarching findings from 3-A-Day of Dairy nutrition marketing research and communication data:

- Consumer segmentation and understanding of the target audience is critical, including how to reach them, and how to motivate them with positive messages.
- Simple, clear, actionable messages are important to drive behavior change. 3-A-Day of Dairy quantifies in simple terms how many servings of dairy to eat every day. Consumers understand it, and can use it to make positive food choices when they are planning, preparing, or shopping for foods.
- The credible benefit or “reason to believe” needs to be based on sound science. 3-A-Day of Dairy “for stronger bones” clearly tells consumers that enjoying 3 servings of dairy a day will promote stronger bones. This benefit is based on sound science. It has been confirmed by the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee recent conclusion that consuming three servings per day of milk and milk products can reduce the risk of low bone mass and contribute important amounts of many nutrients. Furthermore, this amount of milk product consumption is not associated with increased body weight. Therefore, the intake of three servings of milk products per day is recommended.
- An integrated campaign that uses several tools and is distributed through multiple channels (health professional and consumer marketing partners) is effective. When used alone, the individual logo, slogan and key messages are not as effective.

Over the years, NDC has conducted proprietary consumer research on various aspects of dairy nutrition and marketing. We are pleased to share with you some of our key learnings:

- Moms claim to watch these cable stations most frequently: TLC, USA, Lifetime and TNT.
- All moms (including African-American and Hispanic) claim to read these magazines most often: *Women's Day*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Family Circle*.
- About three out of five moms rely on package labeling for information on nutrition and healthy eating

- About one-half of Moms use the Internet, health professionals, and family and friends as nutrition information sources.
- Many moms who are aware of 3-A-Day of Dairy are even more aware of the USDA Food Guide Pyramid's three servings a day recommendation.
- Most moms consider it easy to include three dairy servings into their children's diet.
- Moms continue to believe dairy products provide more unique health benefits than calcium supplements or calcium fortified food and juices.
- About three out of four mothers are interested in employer-sponsored weight management programs.
- Limiting portion sizes and exercise programs are the most popular weight management strategies for moms.
- Health professionals are in strong agreement that patients in all age ranges and life stages require three or more servings of dairy products each day.

These key findings could be used to better understand consumer behavior and lifestyle and how to communicate to them about healthy choices.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our research. For more than 85 years, the National Dairy Council has worked to advance the state of scientific knowledge on the role and value of dairy foods in promoting and enhancing human nutrition and health. The NDC plans to continue to work with industry and government groups to carry science-based Dietary Guidelines messages to consumers through health professionals, media, schools, and in-store programs. Thank you for encouraging us to take an active role in the public process. Please contact us if we can be of further assistance or would like an oral presentation.

Sincerely,



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