

SCHOOL MILK PILOT TEST: Estimating the Effects of National Implementation

The National Dairy Council® and the American School Food Service Association sponsored a pilot study to test improvements to school milk and determine whether milk consumption, participation in school meal programs and other important nutritional measures could be positively affected by school milk. The enhanced school milk program included upgraded packaging, more flavor variety, better merchandising, additional sales venues and more effective refrigeration. The **School Milk Pilot Test (SMPT)** was conducted in 146 schools (99 test schools and 47 control schools) and included over 100,000 students.

Promar International analyzed the SMPT results and estimated the effects of implementing these measures nationwide. If all schools used the SMPT guidelines to improve their school milk:

- Milk sales would rise 15% in elementary schools and 22% in secondary schools, a total increase of 63 million gallons of milk annually.
- Participation in the school meals programs would increase by 430,000 students.
- In addition to these new participants, about 2.1 million students who already participate in the meals programs would become milk drinkers.
- By adopting and maintaining healthy diets during their lifetimes, the 2.6 million students most directly affected by these changes would be expected to reduce their risk of six major health conditions. Depending on the condition, coronary heart disease, type II diabetes, colorectal cancer, osteoporosis, stroke and hypertension, risk of the disease could be reduced by 20-50%.
- In adopting healthy diets and lowering the risk of illnesses as they grow older, these students would lower the direct and indirect healthcare costs associated with the six health conditions by an estimated \$0.8 to \$1.1 billion (present value) per year.
- Increased participation in school meals programs would lead to higher federal reimbursements and commodity entitlements of about \$104 million per year.
- Changes in packaging, labeling and distribution of upgraded products could increase costs.

Promar's full report – which identifies all key assumptions and the sources for each – is available on request by contacting Camellia Patey at camelliap@rosedmi.com.