

# 'Green' technologies meet consumer demand

From the grocery store to the television, "going green" is the movement and the messages are everywhere.

A 2009 report showed that three out of four consumers consider the environment at least sometimes when making a purchase decision. The dairy industry recognizes these trends and is working to satisfy consumers' needs.

SUDIA is partnering with Dairy Management, Inc. (DMI) through the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, which provides a forum for the industry to work together to offer consumers the products they want, where they want them.

The Innovation Center recently unveiled an initiative to meet the growing consumer demand for environmentally friendly products by committing to a 25 percent reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2020.

In 2008, more than 250 stakeholders, including producers, processors, manufacturers, retailers, associations, researchers, scientists and government agencies came together to develop a GHG reduction road map.

Solutions provided for reduction included:

- Identifying and implementing energy-saving best practices across all parts of the industry
- Implementing pilot programs to test alternatives to thermal pasteurization for raw milk
- Implementing lower temperature methods for sanitation in processing



Georgia dairy farmer Billy Wright stands next to the Wright Farm's methane digester.

plants

- Identifying funding and removing barriers to adopting methane digesters
- "By investing in the methane digester we've not only made our dairy more

efficient, but we're selling our methane to the local energy company and gaining returns," said Billy Wright, Georgia dairy producer. "We feel good that we are recycling and selling green energy. Hopefully it will become easier to build these in the future, so more dairies can benefit from them."

As part of the initiative, the Innovation Center has provided 12 project plans offering a range of solutions for operating across industry segments. Some of the projects are short-term and take advantage of current practices; others are longer-term and require further research and development.

"Efforts to reduce the dairy industry's carbon footprint will not only help improve efficiency on the farm, but will also show consumers that we are meeting demand and continuing to be good stewards of the land," said Wright.

SUDIA is working to identify dairy farms in the region that have innovative practices, or that have new technologies.

If you have sustainable technologies on your farm, please contact JJ Collins at [jjcollins@sedairy.org](mailto:jjcollins@sedairy.org) or 423-234-2609, so we can tell your story to the public.

## Dairy farmers speak out to doctors, dietitians; a new direction in promotion programming

Communicating the latest dairy research to health professionals continues to be a priority in the Southeast.

SUDIA staff work with doctors, dietitians and thought leaders in the health industry to educate them on the nutritional benefits of dairy foods. They, in turn, advise their clients and patients to keep dairy in their diets. Sponsoring speakers to deliver dairy messages and exhibiting at meetings prove to be effective ways to communicate with health professionals.

"Another way to communicate our dairy messages is to have dairy farmers tell their story to the public," said Mary Martin Nordness, SUDIA's nutrition communications director. "Having farmers present to answer questions has been a huge success. The attendants seemed to enjoy speaking with the people who produce the dairy foods they enjoy."

Several producers have participated at recent health professional meetings. Alabama farmer Joe Ching, attended in Mobile, Ala.; Georgia farmer Kirk Butcher, attended at Callaway Gardens in Ga. and HH Barlow attended in Lexington, Ky.

"I was surprised at how many great questions I received," said Butcher. "I think I made a positive impact and addressed misinformation some of the people had."

If you're interested in attending a health professional meeting in the future, please contact Amanda Trice at [atrice@sedairy.org](mailto:atrice@sedairy.org) or 1-800-343-4693.



Georgia dairy farmer Kirk Butcher speaks at Georgia Dietetic Association meeting exhibit.