

Did You Know?



Sometimes called “nature’s most nearly perfect food,” milk is a mainstay on the grocery list of millions of consumers, who’ll be happy to hear the upbeat forecast for milk production.

The USDA expects record-high levels of U.S. milk production this year—202.1 billion pounds. That’s up from 200.3 billion pounds in

2012 and 196.2 in 2011. The good news continues for 2014 with estimates at 204.5 billion pounds. Now that’s a lot of milk!

According to data from ARS’s Nutrient Data Laboratory in Beltsville, MD, milk provides protein, vitamins, and a host of other essential nutrients. Milk and other dairy foods like yogurt and cheese are considered the best sources of calcium. In fact, about 72 percent of the calcium in the U.S. food supply comes from dairy foods.

Did you know that the average American drinks almost 25 gallons—or 400 glasses—of milk a year, and that 25 gallons of milk can make 9 gallons of ice cream, 25 pounds of cheese, or 11 pounds of butter?



The USDA has been collecting milk production records since 1895. This database is maintained and used by scientists at the ARS Animal Improvement Programs Laboratory in Beltsville, MD, to learn ways to produce milk more efficiently. For example, researchers study the genetics of dairy animals to help determine such traits as the amount of milk each cow produces and the amount of fat and protein in milk.

Did you know that U.S. cows give an average of 6.5 gallons of milk per day per cow? That’s more than 100 glasses of milk—enough for 33 children to have 3 glasses each day.

So drink up! Milk is loaded with important vitamins and nutrients that our bodies need.

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