



DCNI Quarterly

November 2022





Dr Mike Johnston MBE

Chief Executive,
Dairy Council for
Northern Ireland

FOREWORD

Hello and welcome to the 2nd edition of the Dairy Council for Northern Ireland's e-zine. It's been a busy quarter for the sector and here at DCNI we have been active across all strands of our work, particularly so in the area of nutrition, where we have continued to advance understanding of the nutritional benefits and impacts of dairy.

In early October we welcomed Dr Sandra Luliano, University of Melbourne Australia, to Belfast to discuss how her ground-breaking work is leading to an uptake in dairy intake across the residential care sector in her home nation. We tell you about Dr Luliano's research in this edition and how we are working to build knowledge and trigger action based on its outcomes in elderly care here in Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile we made headlines in the agri-press in September as we highlighted the findings of Dr Sokratis Stergiadis, University of Reading, as he presented at our annual 'Health & Nutrition What's New?' seminar. *Alternatives cannot be considered nutritional replacements for dairy foods* is the fact that ran across the front page of the Farming Life and was the starting point of a presentation of Dr Stergiadis' work and that of others to a captivated audience of health professionals and academics.

Other highlights in this quarter were a very successful inward trade mission and coverage of our World School Milk Day activity, both of which you can learn more about below.



Dairy Can Play a Role in Reducing Fractures and Falls

At a roundtable hosted by the Dairy Council and attended by a group of key professionals involved with the care of older people in NI, Dr Sandra Iuliano of the University of Melbourne presented the findings of her study published in the British Medical Journal that has found a definitive link between increased dairy intake and the reduction of falls and fractures amongst care home residents.

Dr Iuliano's study found that giving older people in long-term residential care in Australia extra milk, cheese and yogurt, thereby increasing dairy foods from 2 servings to 3.5 servings per day for two years, resulted in a 46% reduction in hip fractures, a 33% reduction in fractures overall and an 11% reduction in falls.

According to the BMJ, the study was one of the few that examines whether ensuring care home residents get the required levels of calcium and protein – important nutrients they often lack – from food as opposed to supplements, is effective and safe.

For the duration of the study extra dairy foods were incorporated into existing menus in ways that suited the residents. It might have been introducing cheese and

biscuits as a dessert option, making a sauce with added milk powder or serving a milky pudding. There are any number of simple ways to incorporate dairy into the diet which fits in easily with the work of the caterer but potentially has a big impact for residents.

"This is really, really important news," said Dr Carole Lewis, nutritionist for the Dairy Council for Northern Ireland. "And we want to help ensure that those who are in charge of managing the diets of older people are aware of it, understand the implications of the science and, most importantly, take the opportunity to act on it.

"That's why we brought a group of health professionals together, from the Department of Health, the Public Health Agency and included dietitians, university researchers and care home providers, to hear directly from Dr Iuliano and have a chance to find out how the outcomes of her work are influencing policy in relation to care of the elderly. And the news that it has been proved beyond doubt that getting enough dairy in the diet by serving foods such as cheese, milk and yogurt, can have a very positive impact on bone health of the elderly, was very well received."

Dr Iuliano's landmark study found that increasing dairy intake reduces falls and fractures among older care home residents, reducing the number of fractures by 33% overall.

Having engaged with this group it is the Dairy Council's intention to build momentum by maintaining contact with the professionals, as well as informing other stakeholders who can influence policy in relation to elderly care. As Carole points out, "ultimately, there are implications for public healthcare if the approach was adopted as a preventative healthcare measure."





NUTRITION &

▶ What's New? Webinar

In September the Dairy sector was making front page headlines with the news that...

...Plant-based alternatives cannot be considered nutritional replacements for dairy foods.

The article detailing why this is the case was developed further to presentations at our latest 'Health & Nutrition What's New?' webinar.

Attended by almost 150 academics and health care professionals, the webinar heard the latest findings of research projects from leading experts including Dr Sokratis Stergiadis from the University of Reading. Dr Stergiadis presented a study comparing the nutrient composition of UK milk, dairy and plant-based alternatives and the nutritional implications for consumers.

Dr Stergiadis told the virtual audience, "This study found plant-based drinks contained less protein, vitamin B12 and iodine than milk. These differences were reflected in the nutrient intakes of different age groups. Our study concluded that plant-based alternatives cannot be considered nutritional replacements for dairy foods and therefore there are potential implications for those who use them as such not getting sufficient iodine, which is already falling short in some diets, particularly those of teenage girls and young women."

The adverse effect of iodine deficiency was also the subject of a presentation from Professor Jayne Woodside from Queen's University Belfast. Professor Woodside gave an update on iodine in the diet in the UK and Ireland. She reported that a study her team were part of found that in the UK the majority of plant-based alternatives to dairy such as plant-based drinks are not iodine-fortified, and as such using unfortified alternatives in place of milk, which is a good source of iodine, may put consumers at increased risk of iodine deficiency.

Professor Jayne Woodside and Dr Therese O'Sullivan also presented at September's webinar.

Her work is also looking at iodine in relation to pregnancy: "Iodine is important to support normal growth and cognitive function, and is an essential nutrient in pregnancy," said Professor Woodside.

"Our work has found low iodine levels in pregnant women in Northern Ireland. Iodine deficiency in pregnancy can have lasting implications for a child's cognitive development and we are currently investigating the effect of increased milk intake on iodine status on both mother and child, providing a group of pregnant women with an extra pint milk per day for 12 weeks and recording the outcomes."

The focus of a third presentation from Dr Therese O'Sullivan from Edith Cowan University, Australia was of particular interest as she reported her research has changed her professional stance in relation to advice on full fat dairy. Dr O'Sullivan's *Milky Way study*, involved giving 4- to 6-year-old children either regular or reduced fat dairy products for three months and

looking at what happened to their weight, body fat levels, blood lipids and other health measures. There was no difference between the children in any of the measures of weight, nor of fat or heart health.

"Our study suggests that public health guidelines to introduce lower fat milks and other dairy after the age of two may not be necessary, and healthy children can have either," said Dr O'Sullivan. "I am someone who, when working as a clinical dietitian, recommended consumption of reduced fat dairy products rather than regular fat versions to countless people to improve their health. But the evidence from my own research, along with that of others, now suggests that whole fat dairy doesn't need to be avoided."

Dairy Council for Northern Ireland nutritionist, Dr Carole Lewis remarked: "Our aim in hosting the 'Health & Nutrition What's New?' webinar is that, as we continue to discover more about the important role dairy has to play in the diet, we ensure that Northern Ireland health care professionals and academics are aware of the science and can incorporate it into their work accordingly. As we understand more about how the nutrients work together in the dairy matrix we are able to bust myths and present the latest science to help inform public health policy."

World School Milk Day

The last Wednesday of September is always a special date on the Dairy Council calendar, as it marks World School Milk Day and with it, an opportunity to champion the importance of school milk.

More than 55% of primary and special education schools across Northern Ireland receive school milk currently – equating to more than 1,000,000 litres a year!

Pictured are Abbie and Liam from Acorn Integrated Primary School in Carrickfergus who raise a glass to 'cheers' the return of break time milk. A carton of milk will provide more than half of a five-year-old child's calcium, phosphorus and vitamin B2 requirements.

And similar to September's 'Health & Nutrition What's New?' webinar and the findings of Dr Sokratis Stergiadis, our World School Milk Day celebrations featured on the front page of Farming Life.

Commenting on 2022's landmark day, Dr Mike Johnston, Chief Executive of the Dairy Council, said: "The school milk programme is important as it encourages children to consume dairy products as part of a healthy, balanced diet. As we celebrate World School Milk Day 2022, I am delighted so many children across Northern Ireland are enjoying both the great taste and the nutritional benefits of milk during the school day."

Liam and Abbie

From Acorn Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus



Export programme Up And Running Again

In the last edition we reported on how we are on the road once again with the recommencement of our 80% EU funded programmes to support NI dairy export.

In late July we led an outward trade mission to Saudi Arabia during which meetings were held with 60 buyers, and in August we concluded this Middle East programme with an inward visit by a party of 10 buyers. The buyers from across the region had the opportunity to walk the Northern Ireland supply chain for themselves, gaining

understanding and knowledge of the stringent EU standards under which dairy in Northern Ireland operates.

While this programme is being evaluated, we continue work in the export area with a South East Asia programme which kicked off in September with the first of two inward missions, for Japanese buyers, and planned outward missions to China and Japan lined up in coming months.



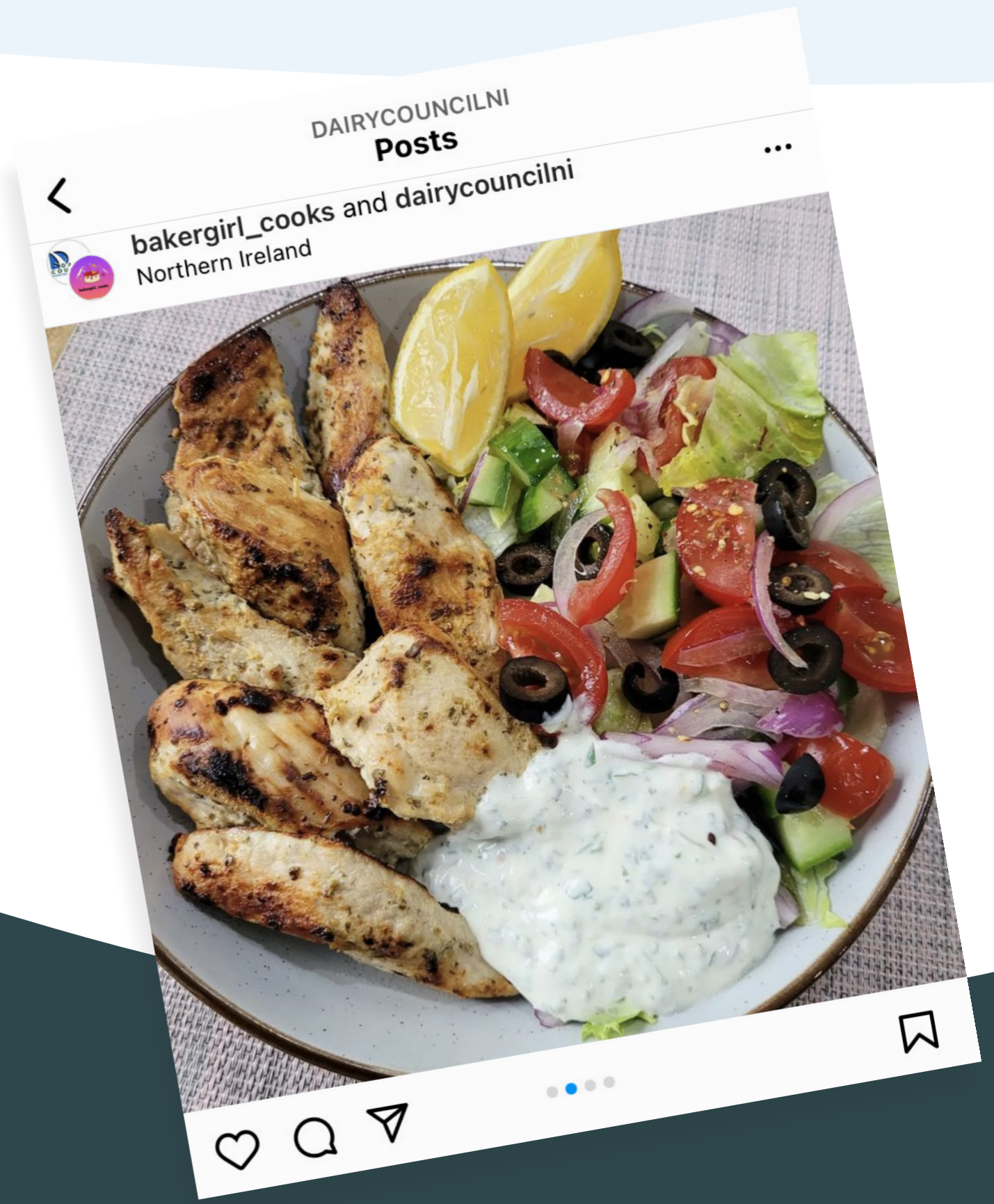
Social Media

A super summertime giveaway swept our Instagram page in August when we teamed up with [@bakergirl_cooks](#) and [@lnv_home](#) for a Summer Lunch Bowl competition.

Emma at [@bakergirl_cooks](#) whipped up delicious dairy-based lunch bowl inspiration just in time for schools starting back, including a tasty Greek-style chicken and cheesy pasta, with one of our lucky followers taking home a beautiful set of bowls from [@lnv_home](#) following more than 150 entries to our competition.

Follow along [@dairycouncilni](#) for fun, creative content and mouth-watering recipes, from cheesecake to homemade soup, all aimed at raising the profile of quality local dairy products.

We're on [Twitter](#) too where we continue to build positive engagement particularly with health professionals.



REGISTER NOW

The Dairy Council for Northern Ireland invites you and your colleagues to attend its

EU Sustainable Dairy Symposium

8th Nov 2022
10:30am Registration
11am - 1pm
(lunch provided from 1pm)

Dunadry Hotel & Gardens
2 Islandreagh Dr
Dunadry, Antrim
BT41 2HA

ABOUT THE SYMPOSIUM

The Dairy Council for Northern Ireland is hosting the EU Sustainable Dairy Symposium as part of a multi-country promotion programme highlighting the positive role of the dairy sector for climate action and the environment.

This year's focus will be on the role of dairy farms in capturing and utilising data to inform on farm decisions and to feed into the broader sustainability credentials of local dairy products as we continue to compete on the world stage.

Delegates from across the sector will hear from Board Member of the Dutch Farmers Organization and Dairy Farmer Wilco Brouwer de Koning.

Wilco will provide the Dutch context in relation to biodiversity and give an overview of challenges faced by Dutch dairy farmers, as well as give delegates a snapshot of his own farm. DAERA Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey will give an overview of the Department's policy direction. The event will also include a panel discussion with the CEOs from Lakeland Dairies, Dale Farm and Glanbia Cheese and another panel discussion with Wilco and three NI farmers.

Please register before
4th November via
philip@oscni.com or
call 07734 373164

Looking Ahead


Looking ahead, we have two more nutrition-focused events taking place before the end of the year. We are delighted that sporting hero Marissa Callaghan, NI Women's International captain, will headline our annual Milk It Performance Nutrition seminar as it returns to an in-person event for the first time in two years on 10th November.

With a footballing theme to celebrate the recent success of the NI women's team, our 2022 event will as usual include practical sports nutrition insights from both athletes and sports nutritionists.

Later in the month the annual DCNI Nutrition Lecture delivered in partnership with the University of Ulster will also return as a face-to-face event. The speaker, Professor Susan Lanham-New, is Head of the Department of Nutritional Sciences at the University of Surrey and is a world expert on vitamin D. We look forward to bringing you more detail on these events and more in our next edition.



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