

BACKGROUND

BC Milk Producers Association (BCMPA) is a not for profit organization representing the voice of approximately 545 commercial dairy farmers in British Columbia. The organization is an advocate with governments, public media, environmentalists, and other special interest groups and industry associations. In 2009, BC dairy farms shipped over 660 million litres of milk, which brought in net receipts of approximately more than \$490 million.

The dairy producers in BC have always believed in producing safe and quality milk and the BC Milk Producers continue to implement safe milk production policies. In fact, in 1936 before the BCMPA was even an idea, the BC Federation of Agriculture served as a forum for dairy groups across the province so the producers could develop dairy policies to be followed province wide. During the 1960's the group was established as the BC Federation of Agriculture Dairy Committee, and later became known as the BC Federation of Dairymen's Association. Finally in 1987 the BCFDA was incorporated to represent all seven dairy regions in BC. Known as the BC Milk Producers Association since 1995, we still promote the safest and highest quality of milk to be produced by our dairy producers province wide.

BCMPA is an umbrella group for the seven regions that comprise British Columbia's dairy industry. These regions are the Fraser Valley, Bulkley Valley, Cariboo, Kootenays, Okanagan, Peace River and two regions on Vancouver Island. The regional associations appoint delegates to serve on the BCMPA board for 3 year terms. The board of directors is made up of fourteen delegates;; six from Mainland Milk Producers, two from Vancouver Island Milk Producers, two from Kamloops/Okanagan, and one from each of the other four regions.

BCMPA recognizes that both provincial and national cooperation is necessary to promote a healthy and sustainable dairy industry. In BC, support is provided for BC Dairy foundation, an organization that deals with fluid milk promotion and nutrition education. We work with BC Agriculture Council and Canadian Federation of Agriculture, organizations which advocate the collective interests of agricultural producers. In addition, BCMPA board members work with over 35 industry groups, committees and boards representing the dairy industry.

The BCMPA is a member of Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC). This group deals with national dairy issues including policy, lobbying and trade, and market development for industrial products, such as cheese. Six BCMPA delegates represent BC's interests at DFC's general council and attend both the Annual General Meeting and Policy Conference. Dairy is a vital part of the Canadian economy. In 2009 the industry added \$5.5 billion to the national economy, providing over 27 000 jobs and making it one of the largest employers in agriculture. Dairy products are ranked number three in agricultural commodities in BC.

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