



# How To Host an **Unforgettable** Dairy Farm Sustainability Tour

YOUR GUIDE TO SHARING YOUR STORY OF STEWARDSHIP AND SOCIAL IMPACT



BIODIVERSITY IN ACTION



SUSTAINABILITY TOUR CHECKLIST



CASE STUDIES

To learn more about the U.S. dairy industry's sustainability accomplishments and vision for the future, visit:  
[www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability](http://www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability)

# Why Dairy Farm Sustainability Stories Matter More Than Ever

There has never been a more important time to engage with our communities and our broader circle of influence about the work of the American dairy farmer.

Farmers enjoy a high level of trust according to a recent [Gallup poll](#), yet a majority of U.S. residents are several generations removed from the farm. Misperceptions abound, and yet people have never been more curious about what we do, especially when it comes to sustainability. Definitions often vary widely between farmers and consumers, and even among farmers themselves.

It's for that reason we've developed this guide. Why in the world would you host a tour? For one thing because it is an incredible doorway to reaching people you might never otherwise meet. For another, it provides you with a chance to illustrate how your farm is indicative of the modern dairy industry—and the benefits it provides to people, animals and our planet. Farmers were doing sustainable practices long before the word “sustainable” became popular. It's good not only for dairy communities but also for dairy businesses.

I have the honor of being the fourth generation at Dorrich Dairy in Glenwood, Minn. But it's possible our visitors don't have parents or even grandparents who farmed.

Yet, farming—more specifically, our methods of farming—matters to them. They want to know how their food is produced and whether those production practices are good for cows, the planet and workers. These “how” factors of farming and our generations-long commitments, as well as our industry's 2050 Environmental Stewardship Goals, must become automatic aspects of our farm tour discussions.

On our operation, we don't just talk about nutritious cow feed. We discuss its sustainability journey and describe the many useful byproducts of feed that would otherwise end up in a landfill. We share how our milking equipment is sanitized several times a day and how the water we use is recycled and works for us in various other ways. And we discuss how our manure becomes natural fertilizer and serves as bedding for our cows.

The good news is farmers have plenty of support to help conduct effective tours, including language that best

connects with consumers of all ages, especially young ones. Tours can even help fellow farmers, dairy industry professionals and legislators gain a deeper appreciation of the sustainability leadership of our dairy farms. America's Conservation Ag Movement (ACAM) and its partner, the checkoff-founded Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, have created this tour guide to help enhance your farm tour experience.

Although I recognize you all know the great sustainability practices we do on our dairies every day, let's remember our visitors likely don't.

Make your environmental stewardship a routine part of your story with people who will remember your “givens” the next time they're in the grocery store.

**Suzanne Vold**  
*Dorrich Dairy, Glenwood, Minn*

## Farm Tour Benefits for Dairies

By showing your farm and practices, you are building your visitors' trust in you and your dairy overall. Additionally, tours provide an opportunity to:

- Share your story
- Explain how a dairy farm works
- Answer questions in a relaxed and comfortable environment
- Illustrate dairy industry leadership
- Build relationships
- Open doors to new business opportunities, such as value-added products, agritourism and more

## Three Pillars Of U.S. Dairy Farm Sustainability

### 1 Social Impact

Caring for the land, air and water is a responsibility dairy farmers share with their neighbors and other community members. Dairy farmers are local small-business owners, parents, school supporters and active members of community organizations.

### 2 Environmental Impact

Dairy farmers work with experts to find new ways to reduce the energy they use, conserve water and develop renewable energy sources.

### 3 Economic Impact

The dairy farm economy accounts for \$37 billion in production value, \$112 billion in total impact on U.S. economic output.

*This Dairy Farm Sustainability Tour guide is the product of multistakeholder collaboration throughout the dairy industry. We would like to thank the following organizations for the insights that culminated in this partnership project with America's Conservation Ag Movement:*

**Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy**  
**American Dairy Association Northeast**  
**California Milk Advisory Board**  
**Florida Dairy Farmers**

*Special thanks to the three dairy farmers interviewed for this guide: Joey Airoso, Mike McMahon and Sutton Rucks.*

To learn more about the sustainability accomplishments and continuous improvement of U.S. dairy, visit [www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability](http://www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability)



## Dairy Farm Sustainability Tour Checklist

Review this producer-recommended list for everything you need to plan and host a successful event

*Time and energy are fundamental investments for a good farm tour. Yet with a little planning with your farm team, it might be less work—and more beneficial—than you think. Plan your next event with ideas contributed by dairy farmers Joey Airoso, Mike McMahon and Sutton Rucks.*

### 1. Explore Partners

Consider and reach out to dairy industry associations, local nonprofits and other organizations such as Soil and Water Conservation Districts. These groups and their leadership are likely happy to help you plan and promote your event at which sustainability topics will be featured. Reach out to other groups that can help such as your local checkoff organization.

### 2. Select Topics

Explore setting up stations throughout your farm to tell the sustainability story of your operation. Think about sustainability broadly including environmental stewardship, animal care and well-being, economic impact, social and community benefits, and more. Consider how to weave in different locations and common activities on your farm. Examples might include calves, young stock, stalls, feeding areas, manure handling and hoof trimming facilities, water systems, milking parlors and milk processing buildings.

Balance the temptation to overwhelm guests with information by setting a reasonable number of stations and key talking points at each that emphasize what it's like to work on a dairy farm. Outline the key messages to cover at each station. Make sure you're hitting important topics and not overlapping from station to station. Share real life anecdotes to illustrate what these things mean in practice—and don't be afraid to use humor. Take photos of your farm and examine them. Are there areas you wouldn't want shared on social media? Focus on those locations for cleanup as you prepare.

### 3. Identify Extra Help and Speakers

Invite your local experts e.g. Cooperative Extension office, local promotion board to participate in and help promote the event to farmers and community members in their network, depending on the focus of the tour. Dairy farmers interviewed for this guide indicated Extension is quick to help and can often serve in a speaking capacity, addressing trends, research or providing greater insight into dairy farms and sustainability topics.

Find ways to incorporate different family generations, if applicable to your dairy's situation. Guests might enjoy hearing about your farm from a 9-year-old's perspective as much as they do from an adult.

Showcasing different generations is another way to demonstrate what sustainability means to your farm - keeping the operation sustainable for future farmers. Identify farm team members who are willing and able to participate on the tours and lead conversations with guests. Vet speakers with research to ensure you are not inadvertently inviting an activist to speak at your event.

### 4. Prepare Food and Drink

Consider the benefits of providing food onsite. For example, New York dairy farmer Mike McMahon and his wife, Edie, host an annual law enforcement appreciation chicken barbecue at their operation. Guests can stay for the meal or drive through for a carryout bag for their families if they are on duty. Florida dairy farmer Sutton Rucks provides ice cream Thursdays through Saturdays during open hours and offers picnic tables and playground equipment for guests.



## 5. Provide Bathrooms

Ensure guests know the location of your restroom facilities. California dairy farmer Joey Airoso has a bathroom available at an introduction area guests enter first upon arrival. New York dairy farmer Mike McMahon always rents a portable bathroom and wash station. The surrounding facility makes guests feel at home and includes a water station, historical photos of the farm (as well as images of his dad's professional drag racing days) and a little museum with artifacts unique to the operation, such as a couple of mammoth tusks found during farm construction.

## 6. Determine Setup and Logistics

Find a place for guests to park. Label it clearly using signs out by the road, and include arrows pointing visitors in the right direction. Park farm pickups in the correct location for starters so guests can model the pattern and keep parking orderly.

Rent or purchase a tent you can pop up. This serves as a focal point for your farm tour, not to mention shade from the sun and cover in the event of rain.

Place a registration desk beneath the tent. Offer name tags for all guests and ask all farm team members to also wear a name tag for easier communication and relationship building.

## 7. Market and Promote

Word of mouth and civic engagement are often two of the best ways to organize farm tours. Some operations are exploring formal scheduling and marketing of regular tours, while others focus on hosting specific types of groups such as K-12 youth, college students, farmers and legislators. Some dairy farmers even host impromptu visits, when feasible, for people who show up for photos or otherwise express curiosity about the operation. Use social media to promote your tour. You can even pay to target posts to prospective attendees you'd like to reach.

Set boundaries appropriate for your operation, family and team with an eye toward creating a welcoming and insightful experience.





## 8. Align on Tough Questions

It's almost certain you'll get a range of questions during a dairy farm tour. Consider writing down key talking points yet also focus on simply being authentic and answering questions openly, honestly and by relating on-farm activities to experiences that will be familiar to your guests. For example, when addressing antibiotic use, you might explain you care for cows that need medical attention the same way parents care for their children. California dairy farmer Joey Airoso uses this approach to draw connections and make dairying relatable, especially for visitors without an ag background.

Write down questions you hope aren't asked, and prepare answers to those questions. Share these FAQs with your full team, even if you plan to be the main contact answering questions. Making sure everyone is speaking from the same playbook is important.

For more tips on identifying potential audiences for your on-farm tours, marketing to those groups of people and even partnering with local organizations to maximize your reach, see the sidebar on page 6 titled "How To Define Your Ideal Dairy Farm Tour Groups—And Successfully Recruit Them"

# Farmer Spotlight

 NAME	Mike McMahon
 FARM OPERATION	EZ Acres
 LOCATION	Homer, New York
 WHO VISITS MY FARM?	Chamber of Commerce, law enforcement officials, Rotary Club, school groups (elementary to college age) and more

## Tour Tips

Be organized. Have your team wear shirts, hats and other gear with your farm's name and logo so people can easily recognize who works on the farm and ask questions. Guide visitors through your farm rather than letting them wander around. Make sure you're available to help them understand what they're seeing. Even small details such as LED lights or cover crops illustrate ways you are sustainable. Create and print cheat sheets for each station with talking points and fun facts, such as how many cows you milk per hour, how much a calf weighs at birth and so on.

“Whenever I speak to farmers, I say, ‘I don’t know of any farm that doesn’t have an impact on a stream, river, water somewhere.’”



## Kickstart Your Tour Plan In One Easy Step

Sharing your dairy story with others can feel uncomfortable at first, though it gets easier with practice. Consider starting by writing down a simple, strong introduction that communicates why you do what you do on your farm. Focusing on the why first, helps you convey the values that built your family business—values your visitors will likely share and appreciate.

To access more information and resources you can use to plan talking points at tour stops on your farm, visit:

[www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability](http://www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability)

# How To Define Your Ideal Dairy Farm Tour Groups—And Successfully Recruit Them

If you've never hosted an on-farm tour, putting together a plan on paper can be daunting. Where should you even begin? Who do you want to host? How do you reach them? And with such a big task, who on your team or in your community might be able to lend a hand? Here are some tips to keep in mind that can expedite your planning process and set up a fantastic event, whether it's your first or fiftieth.

## Decision Point #1: Who Might you Host?

To answer this question, consider your objectives for the tour. Many dairy farmers start with a simple focus on education and outreach in their local communities and on illustrating for curious non-dairy consumers what goes on in the life of a farm. This is often the easiest place to start because your target audience—the general public—is eager to learn from you and experience an industry they've rarely seen up close. Another straightforward path might be hosting other dairy farmers. This enables you to learn from their experiences and share what's working in sustainability on your own operation, and it's a similarly friendly audience. Other examples of target audiences for an on-farm dairy tour might include:

- Academic leaders (e.g. land-grant university Extension specialists, researchers, instructors)
- Camps (e.g. athletic camps, vacation Bible school groups, YMCA)
- Conservation and sustainability professionals (e.g. ag retail/other trusted advisers, NRCS, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, conservation nonprofit leaders)
- Food leaders (e.g. local food companies, grocers, processors, restaurants)
- Medical professionals (e.g. pediatricians, dietitians, doctors, nurses, nutritionists)
- Policymakers and other elected officials (e.g. local, state, federal)
- School groups (e.g. pre-K, elementary, middle, high school, college)
- Youth ag organizations (e.g. 4-H, FFA)

## Decision Point #2: Determine How to Reach Each Group

Rather than trying to reach all of these groups at once, identify the best timeframe for your next tour and decide which group you'll give priority emphasis. Then, decide on an outreach strategy. Your most effective route is often to ask your dairy team and your network of local community partners to help you plan, organize and spread the word—in addition to any direct marketing. For the examples above, some ideas for connecting with these target audiences might include:

### Academic leaders

- Direct emails or phone calls to specific individuals you'd like to participate
- Attend one of their events and recruit tour attendees and/or co-organizers via word of mouth

### Camps

- Partner with camps and secure permission to place fliers in backpacks/packets of information for parents with farm tour details
- Peruse local community calendars for upcoming camps and proactively reach out to jointly plan an on-farm stop

### Conservation and Sustainability Professionals

- Use LinkedIn to identify local sustainability leaders and reach out via direct message or a connection request
- Visit your local NRCS/SWCD offices and meet team/discuss tour possibilities
- Search Google for local conservation organizations and offices and reach out via web form or email to set up a meet-and-greet conversation over coffee or via phone

### Food leaders

- Leverage your dairy association contacts (state and national) to identify interested partners on future tours

- Drop by local restaurants in person or ask a team member to do so on your behalf, leaving informational materials on tours and details on how to get in touch with you

### Medical professionals

- Build a spreadsheet of front-office contact information for local clinics and call up offices to invite attendance at future tours
- Host themed days (e.g. Thank A Dentist) at your operation and focus educational content on specific dairy benefits for that profession and the clients it serves

### Policymakers and other elected officials

- Contact your elected leaders' offices and request a call back – or submit an email requesting consideration for a future visit
- Organize an educational meal for elected officials and community members to mingle and hear updates, needs and priorities from one another, surrounded by your operation

### School Groups

- Start with a teacher you or your family knows. Use their connections to set up meetings with principal/superintendent
- Explore Facebook and other social media for homeschool groups or private schools that would be interested in visiting your operation

### Youth ag organizations

- Get in touch with local leadership of youth ag chapters to explore joint speaking opportunities and tour ideas
- Find a young farmers group via your local co-op or fair board to find school-age influencers with whom you could team up to plan a tour or event on-farm

# Farmer Spotlight

 <b>NAME</b>	Joey Airosso
 <b>FARM OPERATION</b>	Airosso Dairy Farms
 <b>LOCATION</b>	Pixley, California
 <b>WHO VISITS MY FARM?</b>	Farmers and ag professionals engaged in registered Holstein production, co-op leaders, food company leaders



“I’ve got a granddaughter who’s going to be nine in January. When she knows there’s a tour, she wants to be there, she wants to give the nine-year-old version of the tour. People really connect to the generational aspect when they see the kids out there.”

## Tour Tips

Seek out opportunities to spotlight multiple generations at work on your operation. Highlight the ways innovation and technology are taking your dairy into the future. Find ways to connect with your visitors by explaining dairy management and sustainability practices with examples they’ll find relatable.

### SAMPLE TALKING POINTS

#### Biodiversity

Dairy farmers are always looking at new ideas and technologies to improve soil and water quality by working with neighbors, business partners and other organizations. Installing waterways or planting cover crops are a couple examples of ways we are creating greater biodiversity and ecosystem health for our farm.

### SAMPLE TALKING POINTS

#### Greenhouse Gases

We are always working to improve the environmental footprint of our farm and dairy. Did you know the carbon footprint of a glass of milk is two-thirds less than it was 70 years ago? Producing a gallon of milk has 19% less greenhouse gas emissions than it did in 2007. That’s equivalent to the amount of carbon dioxide removed from the atmosphere by half a million acres of U.S. forest every year.

# How To Showcase Dairy Farm Sustainability On A Tour

Help eager visitors understand and value your stewardship mindset

*Engaging with other farmers, the public and your community has never been more important. Sustainability is a topic that's widely interesting to many people who matter to your dairy—and you have a great story to tell. Don't try to show them everything in one visit. Pick a couple of key sustainability elements to focus on. We asked dairy farmers across the U.S. to share how they approach it.*

## HOW TO TALK ABOUT

### Biodiversity

#### Farmer Insights

Florida dairy farmer Sutton Rucks and his team at Milking R Dairy installed a 100-acre reservoir in partnership with a state agency to help reduce the risk of residual phosphorus in surface water leaving the farm. Seven or eight years later, they began noticing more wildlife on the operation. Although it's likely many animals have been there all along, the new sustainability infrastructure made a noticeable difference. "Sometimes, you can't see the forest for the trees," Rucks explains. Today, the farm at various times hosts up to 200 Sandhill cranes in its fields, plus birds, deer, otters and alligators. People flock to the dairy to photograph wildlife and get up-close experiences. The farm's biodiversity investments have opened a door to conversations with non-farming visitors ordinarily worried about the impact of large dairies. "This is considered a controlled animal feeding operation (CAFO), and look, we are complementing the environment here, we are bringing wild animals," Rucks shares. "Yes, we gave up 100 acres of land, but we have our whole little ecosystem here."

#### KEY TAKEAWAY

Seeing is believing. Find ways to show, rather than tell, your guests about the sustainability benefits your dairy provides. Show visitors the by-products that would otherwise end up in a landfill, but are now being digested by your cows.

## HOW TO TALK ABOUT

### Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases

#### Farmer Insights

California dairies have experienced huge weather swings for the past 100 years, explains farmer Joey Airoso. Those cycles have been part of human history for generations—and it's important for farmers to step up and do their part. "You can't not be willing to adopt new technology that's going to make air cleaner and water cleaner," explains Airoso, a fourth-generation farmer whose family immigrated to the U.S. in 1912 from the Azores Islands. "That ties into the generational aspect of what we do." To meet the state's regulatory targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction, Airoso installed a methane digester. His farm became the first in California to begin putting renewable energy from the farm into the state's pipelines.

#### KEY TAKEAWAY

Use visitor curiosity about sustainability practices to highlight the role of innovation and technology in lowering environmental impact and providing benefits to farm operations, local markets and the public. Use the examples that your visitors already know, make the connection between technology that tracks cattle movement and a FitBit they may be wearing.

## What Is The U.S. Dairy Net Zero Initiative?

The Net Zero Initiative is an industry-wide effort that will help U.S. dairy farms of all sizes and geographies continue to implement technologies and economically-viable practices in feed production, cow care, energy efficiency and manure management. The industry's 2050 Environmental Stewardship goals support a vision that U.S. dairy is an environmental solution. The goals are:

- Achieve greenhouse gas neutrality.
- Optimize water use while maximizing recycling.
- Improve water quality by optimizing utilization of manure and nutrients.



To learn more about emerging biodiversity research happening on U.S. dairy farms, visit [www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability](http://www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability)



## HOW TO TALK ABOUT

### Animal Health and Wellbeing

#### Farmer Insights

Animal care is routinely among the top interest areas of guests to Florida dairy farmer Sutton Rucks' operation. In fact, activist videos featuring allegations of animal mistreatment on dairies prompted Rucks to begin hosting visitors to illustrate the importance of animal care. "We talk about the way we house cows because some people want to see these cows out on green pastures," Rucks relays. The operation has freestall barns including dry sand beds for the animals, access to water within 100 ft. of all animals at all times and constant shade. The cows wear pedometers so the farm team can monitor activity and ensure they are getting enough exercise. Rucks takes guests on a trailer to see the cows, which often walk up and lick the visitors. "Nine times out of 10, there are not many more questions about animal welfare and animal health," Rucks says. "What they see speaks louder than words." New York dairy farmer Mike McMahon adds he's routinely asked what happens to an animal when it dies. "That's fair," McMahon says. "These are living animals, and part of life is the end of life." He explains to visitors that some dairy cows become beef they enjoy at hamburger restaurants, while others are composted—providing a nutrient-rich soil amendment for farm gardens. "Here again, we're recycling," McMahon shares.

#### KEY TAKEAWAY

Be open, kind and courteous in hearing and responding to questions from guests. Rather than shying away from uncomfortable topics, look for ways to build a relationship with visitors by illustrating the thought and consideration that goes into animal well-being decisions on your operation.

## HOW TO TALK ABOUT

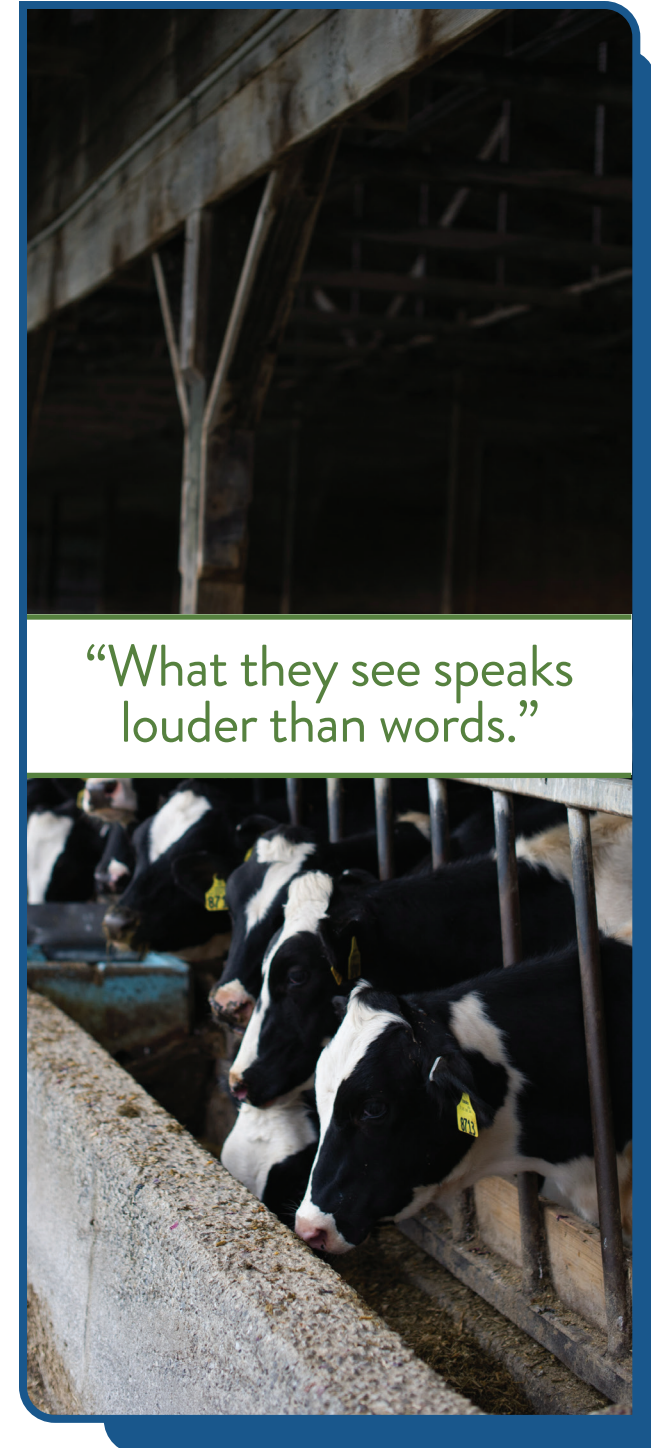
### Water Use and Water Quality Improvements

#### Farmer Insights

Since 1997, New York dairy farmer Mike McMahon has worked with Cornell University to sample five wells throughout the valley in which his operation lies, starting with the head of the aquifer and running to its end. Seventy percent of the farm sits in the heavily regulated Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and the remaining 30% flows to the Skaneateles Lake Watershed, which provides unfiltered drinking water to Syracuse, N.Y. For about \$75 per quarter, McMahon pays out of pocket to monitor for nitrates in well water and phosphorus in surface water. Their operation sits over a municipal well that supplies 28,000 people in their community, so proper water use and water quality is essential to keep people healthy and maintain a viable dairy. When he started the project, nitrate levels sat at 16 parts per million (ppm), below the cautionary threshold of 44 ppm. As of three years ago, data showed a straight-line decline in nitrates to just 9 ppm. "We are able to put that up there on the screen and say, 'We can attribute this to our agronomic practices and carefully balancing that nutrient application to the ground,'" McMahon says. Wildlife also benefits: Trout in two streams that intersect the property continue to flourish.

#### KEY TAKEAWAY

Use examples to illustrate how you are going beyond minimum sustainability requirements to put human, animal and environmental well-being first. Other professionals similarly take steps to treat their workplace and their customers well and will relate to your investment of time, care and money to keep your dairy and community thriving.



# Farmer Spotlight

 <b>NAME</b>	Sutton Rucks
 <b>FARM OPERATION</b>	Milking R Dairy
 <b>LOCATION</b>	Okeechobee, Florida
 <b>WHO VISITS MY FARM?</b>	Domestic and international tourists, policymakers and other elected officials, ice cream shop visitors

## Tour Tips

Answer people's questions and fears with up-close examples of life on a dairy farm that counter misconceptions, emphasizing the sustainability practices you have adopted. Showcase wildlife, waterways and other things around your operation that benefit from stewardship on your operation. Learn how dairy farmers in other parts of the U.S. keep tourists and consumers more broadly engaged—and try what they're doing, right-sized to your local community. Encourage visitors to review your farm and their tour experience on platforms such as Google, bringing greater awareness to your dairy and the welcoming environment you and your team have established.

“I tell people the wildlife is unbelievable: birds, deer, otters, alligators, of course. We're on a little utility vehicle riding around. The kids are having a great time, telling their mom, ‘This is better than the zoo.’”



### SAMPLE TALKING POINTS

## Animal Health and Wellbeing

Dairy farmers work closely with veterinarians, animal nutritionists and other professionals to keep their cows healthy and comfortable, including a balanced and nutritious diet. Dairy cows receive periodic checkups, vaccinations and prompt treatment of illness. Dairy farmers provide clean sand, mattresses, straw or even waterbeds for their cows and access to food and water 24 hours a day.

### SAMPLE TALKING POINTS

## Water Use and Water Quality

Dairy farmers use water responsibly and often recycle it to use on their crops or to clean their milking parlors and barns. They work with industry organizations, the government and local civic groups to address local water-use issues.

For more tour-worthy facts about the national Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) program advancing animal well-being for 99% of the U.S. milk supply, visit

[www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability](http://www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability)

# How To Get People To Your Tour—And Leave Them Wanting More

Marketing your event, hosting for success and building long-term relationships with visitors

*Attention to detail contributes to an outstanding farm tour. To recap, here are key steps you can take for a successful sustainability tour outcome, as shared by dairy farmers.*

## Before Your Farm Sustainability Tour

### Neaten up around your farm operation.

“When you yourself, or your employees and your family, drive around, if it looks good to you, that’s the perception somebody else is going to get. We’re really fanatical about being clean and neat and really good cow care.”

– *Joey Airoso, California dairy farmer*

### Consider landscaping touches.

“I came home and without asking my grandmother, who was in charge of the finances at the time, we spent about \$2,500 on plants and trees and everything else just to give the farm an eye appeal. I tell everyone, ‘I have one time to make a first impression, and I want to give a good one.’”

– *Sutton Rucks, Florida dairy farmer*

### Partner with local media.

“If we’re reaching out to the public to have a larger public event, we’ll typically use the local paper and have ads in the local paper. Sometimes we even use our local radio station and pay for a few spots on that. You’ll have some money tied up in this, but it’s so worthwhile.”

– *Mike McMahon, New York dairy farmer*

## During Your Farm Sustainability Tour

### Wear your passion on your sleeve.

“I always say, ‘This is an asset to every person who eats in this country—that passion that people have for making food, even when they know there’s not a dime to be made. It’s because of people growing up on farms and the love they have for what they do.’”

– *Joey Airoso, California dairy farmer*

### Explain your stewardship so it resonates with guests.

“I start out with what does sustainability mean to me? We have three bubbles: one being economics, one being the environment and one being community. We talk about operating in the nexus.”

– *Mike McMahon, New York dairy farmer*

## After Your Farm Sustainability Tour

### Invest in continued storytelling.

“All farms have to get more involved with the public. We know the big cities are going to keep getting bigger. The rural areas kind of tell our story because there are less people who are going to understand it. It’s going to become more and more important. I think the positive thing is that people have a high regard for farmers. We’ve got to maintain that.”

– *Joey Airoso, California dairy farmer*

For more sustainability storytelling inspiration, visit  
[USDairy.com/Sustainability/Award-Winners](https://USDairy.com/Sustainability/Award-Winners)

You’ll find stories, photos and other information about past U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards winners and finalists whose experiences can give you new ideas of topics to cover and stories to share on your next farm tour.



## Want To Build Lasting Trust? Be Yourself

This sustainability tour guide isn’t worth much on its own. What matters is how you apply it. As you consider the possibility of hosting a future tour, work with your family and team to brainstorm. Identify personal examples from life on your dairy farm that will resonate with visitors. Bring your passion, your enthusiasm and your tone. These details, small as they might seem, will bring your story to life in a way that’s authentic and relatable for guests.



To learn more about the U.S. dairy industry's sustainability accomplishments and vision for the future, visit:  
[www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability](http://www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability)