Wisconsin has a rich dairy history that began more than a century ago. Did you know:

- Mrs. Anne Picket began operating Wisconsin's first cheese factory in 1841 on the family farm near Lake Mills using milk from her neighbors' cows to produce butter and cheese. This continued until 1845, when the level of production and demand grew too large for her kitchen. By 1869, Wisconsin produced over 3 million pounds of cheese, and that number would more than quadruple within 10 years.
- The nation's first dairy school was created at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1890, where it remains the country's top Dairy Science Department.
- Several popular cheese varieties were invented in Wisconsin. Colby Cheese was created in Colby, Wis. in 1874. And Brick Cheese was invented in 1875 and named for its brick-like shape created when real bricks are used to press moisture from the cheese.
- Wisconsin has been a leader in dairying for more than a century and was officially named “America’s Dairyland” in 1930.
- National June Dairy Month began as National Milk Month in 1937 as a way to promote drinking milk. Wisconsin held its first June Dairy Month in 1939, expanding the celebration to include milk, cheese, butter and ice cream.

From the economy to the environment, to the food we eat and more, Wisconsin's dairy industry has a powerful impact on us all. Did you know:

- Wisconsin dairies help to fuel our state economy at the rate of more than $39,000 per minute. These dollars support schools, roads and businesses in our local communities.
- Wisconsin dairy cows produce much more than just great milk – each cow generates more than $21,000 each year in economic activity. This means the average 250-cow dairy farm contributes more than $5 million each year to our state’s economy.
- Dairy is the largest segment of Wisconsin Agriculture, employing 146,000 people across 300 different careers.

Wisconsin’s many dairy cows and plentiful dairy industry help produce a wide variety of award-winning products. Did you know:

- Wisconsin is currently home to more than 1.27 million dairy cows – that’s as many cows as there are Wisconsin school children!
- Wisconsin has more dairy cows per square mile than any other state.
- The average yearly milk production for a Wisconsin cow is 21,780 pounds (or 2,532 gallons). That's more than 40,500 8-ounce glasses of milk from just one cow – enough for you to drink 110 glasses of milk every day for a year!
- It takes 12 pounds of milk to make one gallon of ice cream, 10 pounds of milk to make one pound of cheese, and 21.8 pounds of milk to make one pound of butter.

- Wisconsin cheesemakers produced a record-breaking 2.8 billion pounds of cheese in 2013; 46.1 million pounds more than 2012. If Wisconsin were a country, it would rank 4th in the world in terms of total cheese production, behind the U.S., Germany and France, and just ahead of Italy.

- Finding a favorite ice cream flavor in Wisconsin requires lots of sampling – there are more than 300 different flavors produced within the state.