

June is Dairy Month
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You drive past dairy farms scattered about the Lake Oconee area almost daily. But have you ever stopped to think about all the hard work that goes into a dairy farm? Dairy farmers have to get up in all kinds of weather before dawn to go do the milking. They work all day long feeding, milking, cleaning up and doing maintenance; they don't come home until dark and have to work seven days a week, 365 days a year.

As with the rest of the economy, this year dairy farmers are really struggling. Feed prices are at an all-time high with corn and other feedstocks. Fertilizer prices are off slightly and if we continue in our dry pattern for the rest of the summer the dairies will not have adequate forages to carry them through the summer or winter. Many dairy farmers have had to borrow money to stay afloat financially. Even in these uncertain times our local dairy farmers deserve our admiration and respect.

Welcome to June Dairy Month, a perfect time for us to honor Greene, Morgan and Putnam County's hard working dairy farm families. Dairy farming makes a significant contribution to our local economy every year and in 2010 over \$35 million dollars was added directly and almost \$140 million indirectly as that money is spent in this area. The Lake Oconee area (Greene, Morgan, and Putnam Counties) has almost 60 dairy farms and more than 12,000 cows that work day and night to produce a healthy product every day of the year.

This year's June Dairy Month theme is "Pour one More," which encourages consumers to increase the amount of dairy foods in their diet. In today's challenging economy, it's important for Americans to make smart food choices when it comes to both price and nutrition. This year's theme encourages people to choose one more pocket-friendly and nutrition-rich food from the dairy aisle. Milk products are good, economical nutrition choices in today's economy.

To see many interesting features of the Southeastern United Dairy Industries Association that does promotion for southern dairy farmers log on to: <http://www.southeastdairy.org/jdm> One feature that may be of interest is the "Pour one More," activity book icon. This activity book contains many educational games and highlights dairy products' nutritional and economic value.

Consume milk and dairy products daily to stay healthy. When you are at your grocery store remember "Pour one More" and purchase locally produced dairy products for you and your family. Don't forget to thank and honor the Lake area men and women dairy farmers that work hard for you so you don't have to as we celebrate June Dairy Month.