



# RECHARGE WITH MILK

Dairy producer committees can take advantage of new program to help promote milk and sports nutrition to youth in their communities

On the cover of this issue is one of the images used in Dairy Farmers of Ontario's (DFO) relaunched Recharge with Milk (RWM) program. The new campaign is bold, fun, targeted and speaks to the heart of what the program is all about—sports and nutrition. RWM is about more than promoting milk and chocolate milk as a recovery drink to athletes, although that is one important element. The program is also about DFO investing \$1.5 million over a three-year period into community-focused activations, promotions and youth engagement opportunities to fully integrate sports, healthy lifestyle education and food literacy activities in the community.

This isn't just a relaunch of old initiatives; the new program involves comprehensive partnerships between DFO, Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment (MLSE) and the Ottawa Senators to promote and advance community sport initiatives and develop new hockey, basketball and soccer events and opportunities for youth in communities across Ontario. DFO is also partnering with the Greater Toronto Hockey League, a non-profit organization that has more than 40,000 yearly participants ranging in age from four to 20. The community-based effort to get more kids into sport, combined with tips to lead a healthy and nutritious lifestyle, will generate hundreds of local family-focused events, as well as high-profile in-game promotions at Leafs, Raptors, Toronto FC, Argos and Senators games.

As DFO's general manager and chief executive officer Graham Lloyd put it, "Beyond partnership and promotion, all three organizations are committed to bringing real and meaningful sport and engagement opportunities to their fans and communities. The effort will bring local communities across Ontario together around a common vision: healthy, active lifestyles and opportunities for youth. This is something Ontario dairy farmers believe in and something the partnership with the Ottawa Senators and MLSE can help us build on."

The RWM program is exactly what youth need to help them develop good habits when they're still young and educate them on healthy eating routines and the importance of a balanced diet that includes milk and milk products. If you haven't already done so, I en-

courage you to visit [rechargewithmilk.ca](http://rechargewithmilk.ca) and explore what the program has to offer. Your young children and teens will appreciate the site's professional training tips on how to stay hydrated before, during and after games of any sport, and the benefits of why milk should be preferred over sports recovery drinks.

Enabling grassroots involvement is another important element of the program. Dairy producer committees (DPCs) are expected and encouraged to get involved in the community sport initiatives. DPCs will be able to award RWM sponsorship funds to boys', girls' or co-ed amateur hockey, soccer or basketball teams within the province. It is well known sponsorships are most effective when sponsors take an active interest in the sport and team experience they are supporting. DPC members and volunteers can help make the sponsorships as memorable to the young athletes as they are valuable to the RWM brand. Attending games and sharing team success stories is a great way to build hype around the program, Lloyd says. Stories and photos submitted through the program will be considered for social media promotion and could be included in DFO publications, including *Milk Producer* magazine.

DFO is committed to helping DPCs succeed with the new program and will provide brand, administrative, marketing and/or communications support to optimize and amplify community-level events, as needed. The RWM program provides a valuable opportunity for you—as producers and volunteers—to represent DFO's brand and values within your respective communities. These are the communities in which you live and work, and where the dairy sector is most crucial to the local economy.

What better way to engage youth and help the community at the same time than by promoting nature's most perfect food?



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**EDITORIAL TEAM:**

**Managing Editor:**

Sharon Laidlaw

Sharon.Laidlaw@milk.org

**Assistant Editor/Editorial Specialist:**

Jennifer Nevans

Jennifer.Nevans@milk.org

Co-ordinated by the Communications Division, Laural Adams, communications manager.

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Change of address notices should be sent to:

**MILK PRODUCER**

6780 Campobello Road, Mississauga, Ontario L5N 2L8

Phone: (905) 821-8970

Fax: (905) 821-3160

Email: [milkproducer@milk.org](mailto:milkproducer@milk.org)

**MAILING ADDRESS CHANGES FROM OTHER PROVINCES**

Contact your respective provincial marketing board directly.

**FOR ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES CONTACT:**

**Pat Logan**

Advertising Representative

Phone (519) 788-1559

Email: [pat.logan@milk.org](mailto:pat.logan@milk.org)

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