



NORTHEAST

DAIRY BUSINESS
INNOVATION CENTER

Program Overview

Laura Ginsburg - Section Chief
and Center Lead

Kathryn Donovan - Center Coordinator

What is the NE-DBIC?

- One of four USDA funded regional centers – Vermont, Wisconsin, Tennessee, and California
- At least 50% of funds go out as grants to dairy businesses
- Focus on development, production, marketing, and distribution of regional dairy products
- VAAFMD awarded competitively in 2019 and eligible for non-competitive funds through 2023

•\$12.7 million – awarded to date in three rounds





Who is the NE-DBIC for?

- Cow, goat, and sheep producers and processors
- New England, New York, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey
- Partners:
 - State Agency/Department of Agriculture and state extension offices
 - Dairy sector stakeholders: farmers, cooperatives, producer associations, watershed alliances, independent processors
 - Viability and business assistance organizations



Investment Strategy

Investing in farms and processors to promote the development, production, marketing, and distribution of dairy products supported by market research and technical assistance.

1. Connection to Consumers
2. Business Management
3. Support for Rural Communities
4. Leadership in Climate-Forward Strategies



Projects & Investments

2019 – 2021

Events and Activities

- Dairy Experience Forum
- Dairy visioning workshop series
- Dairy herd management technical assistance
- Grazing transition cohorts
- Production education for cheesemakers
- Missouri Learning Journey
- SIAL Canada tradeshow pavilion



Project Spotlight: Grazing Transition Cohorts

- **Goal:** provide cohort-structured education to dairy farmers to enhance, improve, and move towards grazing as a production strategy
- **Funded projects:**
 - University of Vermont – 2020
 - 5 conventional farms in Rutland/South Addison
 - White River Natural Resource Conservation District – 2021
 - 13 conventional and organic farms in the Connecticut River watershed, focused primarily around White River Junction
 - Pennsylvania Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) and Cornell – 2021
 - 20 farmers engaged in or recently graduated from the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship program in Pennsylvania and New York
- **Outcomes to date:**
 - The Cleveland Farm (UVM 2020 cohort) realized feed cost savings of \$34,000 during first year - Scott says, “I’m very pleased with how this went. I should have done this ten years ago.”





Competitive Grants

- Multi-Business Agritourism
- Dairy Marketing and Branding
- Goat & Sheep Dairy Supply Chain
- Dairy Food Safety and Certification
- Business Viability and Technical Assistance
- Packaging Innovation (2022)
- Farm and Processor Innovation (2022)

Project Spotlight: Marketing & Branding Grants

- **Goal:** provide professional services to value-added business to support brand development through labeling, e-commerce, social media, imagery, and strategy development
- **Funded projects:**
 - 13 grants totaling \$437,653
 - Four Vermont grantees:
 - Bridgman Hill Farm – brand refresh for Oak Knoll goat milk
 - J&R Family Farm dba Nothin' but Curd – business and marketing plan/materials development
 - lu•lu Artisan Ice Cream (Harmack LLC) – packaging redesign and marketing materials development
 - Ploughgate Creamery – enhanced website and digital marketing strategy

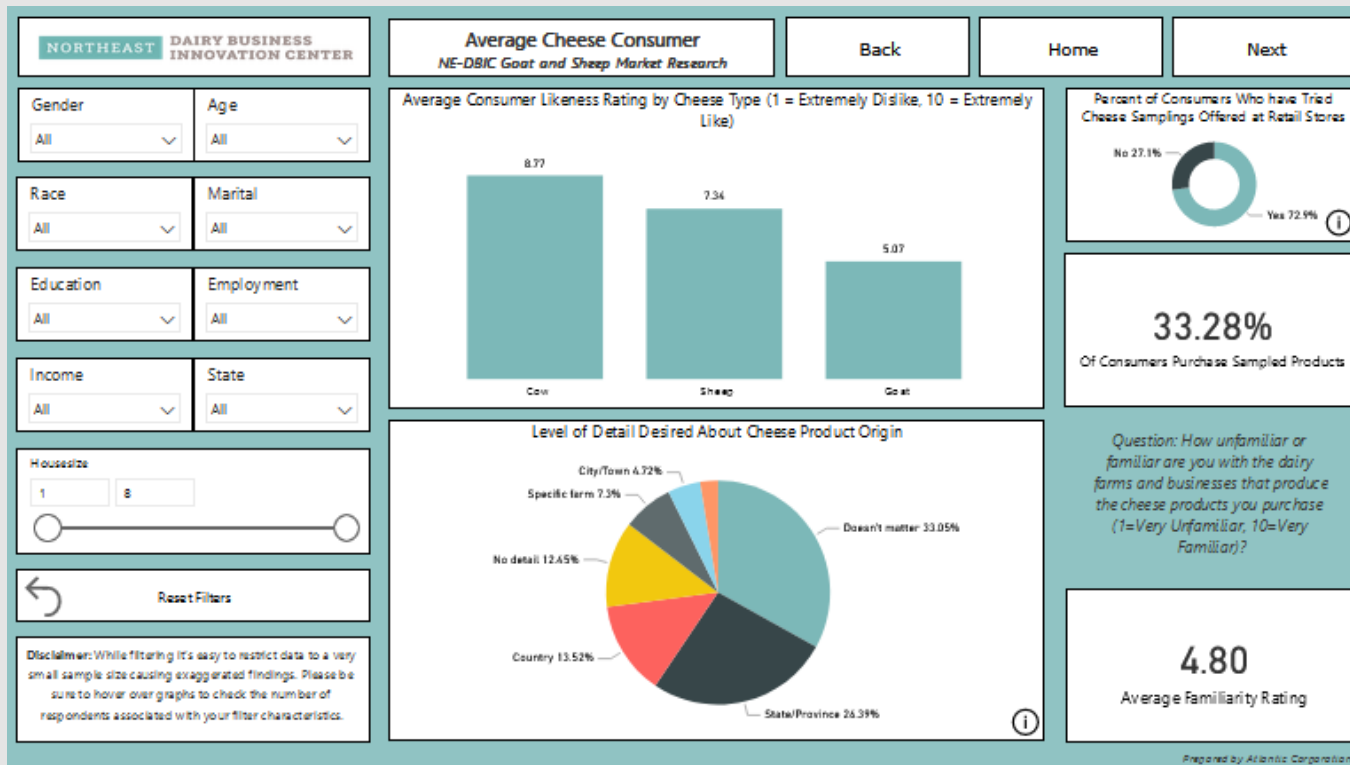


Research and Development

- New England distribution network study
- Goat dairy development needs
- Consumer perception study and marketing toolkit
- Sensory and microbial research of specialty cheese
- Goat and sheep consumer demand
- Specialty cheese quality milk supply/demand



Project Spotlight: Goat & Sheep Market Demand



- **Goal:** understand consumer demand, trends, and opportunities for goat and sheep milk, cheese, and yogurt in the Northeast market
- **Funded project:**
 - Atlantic Corporation completed a report, interactive dashboard, and recorded webinar
- **Outcomes to date:**
 - Goat and sheep supply chain grant applicants had access to current information for their projects
 - 74 webinar views and 30+ report downloads

Current Opportunities

- Contract – Grazing transition, forage enhancement, and innovative farm practices
- Grant – Multi-Business Agritourism
- Grant – Packaging Innovation

Vermont Awards

- 40 VT applications submitted – 85 total proposals
- 24 awards: 17 grants and 7 contracts
- \$2.25 million invested





Contact

Laura Ginsburg

Laura.Ginsburg@vermont.gov

agriculture.vermont.gov/dbic

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