



International Dairy Foods Association  
Milk Industry Foundation  
National Cheese Institute  
International Ice Cream Association



Director Thomas R. Frieden, MD, MPH  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Rd, Mailstop D14  
Atlanta, GA 30329

August 24, 2009

Dear Dr. Frieden,

The International Dairy Foods Association<sup>1</sup> (IDFA) and the National Milk Producers Federation<sup>2</sup> (NMPF), applaud your leadership in addressing children's health and nutrition. As the epidemic of obesity continues, the important work of the CDC becomes ever more paramount to succeeding at the task at hand – reducing the rate of obesity among all Americans, and especially our nation's youth.

Your July 24 MMWR report "*Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the US*" was an immense undertaking, and the strategies included provide clear tools and resources that will ultimately benefit many Americans.

The dairy industry has had a long-time commitment to improving child nutrition and fitness in an effort to reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity. Efforts have centered on the school environment, using innovative strategies to engage community stakeholders to help children increase access to and consumption of nutrient-rich foods and increase physical activity to 60 minutes each day. Of note, the Fuel Up to Play 60 program, a collaborative nutrition and physical activity effort with the National Football League and the National Dairy Council, is now in place in 40,000 schools; and Get Fit By Finals, a fitness and nutrition initiative by the Milk Processor Education Program and the NBA is helping teens achieve their own personal fitness goals. In addition, the dairy industry has come together to develop and test lower-calorie flavored milk formulas in order to reduce added sugars without compromising children's taste preferences. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to share our learnings from these efforts.

In addition, we would like to discuss strategy #10 within your July 24<sup>th</sup> report which recommends that communities should discourage consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, and specifically states that

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<sup>1</sup> The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), Washington, DC, represents the nation's dairy manufacturing and marketing industries and their suppliers, with a membership of 550 companies representing a \$110-billion a year industry. IDFA is composed of three constituent organizations: the Milk Industry Foundation (MIF), the National Cheese Institute (NCI) and the International Ice Cream Association (IICA). IDFA's 220 dairy processing members run more than 600 plant operations, and range from large multi-national organizations to single-plant companies. Together they represent more than 85% of the milk, cultured products, cheese and frozen desserts produced and marketed in the United States

<sup>2</sup> The National Milk Producers Federation, based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the well-being of U.S. dairy producers and the cooperatives they collectively own. The members of NMPF's 33 cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of nearly 50,000 dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies

licensed child care facilities be required to ban sugar-sweetened beverages, including “flavored sweetened milk.” We are concerned that the report does not consider the science that supports the positive role of milk, including flavored milk, in child health and nutrition or the science-based statements of multiple health and government authorities:

- Science shows children who consume flavored milk do not have higher total fat or calorie intakes than non-milk drinkers, milk drinkers in general consume more calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium and vitamin A than non-milk drinkers, and that flavored milk drinkers do not have higher BMI than those who do not consume milk.<sup>1</sup>
- Low-fat and fat-free dairy is recognized as a food group to encourage by the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and provides 3 of the 5 nutrients of concern for children (calcium, magnesium and potassium). The Dietary Guidelines also state that enhancing the palatability of nutrient-dense foods, such as milk, may improve nutrient intake.<sup>2</sup>
- The American Dietetic Association states that “by increasing the palatability of nutrient-dense foods/beverages, sweeteners can promote diet healthfulness.”<sup>3</sup>
- The Institute of Medicine also recognizes the nutritional value of flavored milk with modest amounts of sugar for school children.<sup>4</sup>
- The American Academy of Pediatrics, in a policy statement discouraging soft drinks in schools<sup>5</sup> and in its report on optimizing children’s and adolescents’ bone health and calcium intakes,<sup>6</sup> encourages consumption of nutritious beverages including low-fat or fat-free white or flavored milks.

IDFA and NMPF believe that a more positive approach should be undertaken to urge licensed day care centers to encourage consumption of low-fat and fat-free white or flavored milk in place of nutrient-poor, high calorie beverages. The current emphasis on banning flavored milk may have the unintended consequence of reducing children’s milk consumption and subsequent nutrient intake.

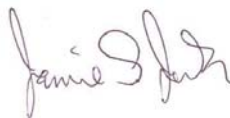
We kindly request a meeting at your earliest convenience to provide you with an update on the dairy industry’s commitment to improving child nutrition and physical fitness. We hope to also make time in this meeting to discuss the science on the role of milk, including flavored milk, in child health and nutrition along with an update on industry-wide efforts to reduce the amount of added sugar in flavored milks offered in schools.

We will be in touch to schedule this meeting.

Sincerely,



Cary Frye  
Vice President, Regulatory Affairs  
International Dairy Foods Association



Jamie Jonker, Ph.D.  
Vice President, Scientific & Regulatory Affairs  
National Milk Producers Federation

Cc:

Tanja Popovic, MD, PhD, Chief Science Officer

William H. Dietz, MD, PhD, Director of the Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity and Obesity

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REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Murphy MM, Douglass JS, Johnson RK, Spence LA. Drinking flavored or plain milk is positively associated with nutrient intake and is not associated with adverse effects on weight status in U.S. children and adolescents. *J Am Diet Assoc* 2008;108:631-639.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> American Dietetic Association. *J Am Diet Assoc*. 104: 255, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Institute of Medicine. *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier Youth*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on School Health. *Pediatrics*. 113: 152, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Greer FR, Krebs NF, and the Committee on Nutrition. *Pediatrics*. 117: 578, 2006.