

Sustainable Family Dairies Planning Project

supported by the County of Humboldt Headwaters Fund

Some background:

- North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board adopted Dairy Program permits in Jan 2012
- New regulatory programs can cause demise of local businesses, and be barriers to recruitment of younger generations into family businesses
 - the number of local dairies has been declining over the years
- HCRCD's Sustainable Family Dairies Planning Project designed to help dairy producers navigate new regulatory permitting program from Regional Water Board



Humboldt County Resource Conservation District is committed to assisting the dairy industry with activities that help sustain operations and local agricultural working landscapes

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Goals of project included:

- assisting producers with completion of Regional Water Board dairy permit application process
- helping establish a producer-led association
- helping develop and implement a group surface water quality monitoring program
- assisting with completion of up to 7 conservation plans for dairies
- developing a reference booklet on local pasture grasses




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A brief summary of accomplishments:

- Developed and expanded partnerships with University of California/UC Cooperative Extension, California Dairy Quality Assurance Program (CDQAP), Western United Dairymen, Humboldt County Farm Bureau and USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Co-hosted 7 workshops that offered assistance with enrollment and reporting documentation

 
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

APPENDIX 3
Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements
Monitoring and Reporting
Order No. RT-2012-0903

Annual Report Report Date: _____ Month / day / year
For Dairies Covered by Order No. RT-2012-0903
Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements
For Existing Cow Dairies

Due November 30 each year reporting for preceding 12 month period (November 1 through October 31)

Facility Information

Facility _____	Address: _____	No. _____	Street _____	City _____	Zip _____
Operator _____	Address: _____				
Phone: (____) _____	E-mail: _____				
Property owner: _____	Address: _____				
Phone: (____) _____	E-mail: _____				

Current # of mature dairy cows (milking + dry): _____
Current # of other dairy cattle: _____

1. In the previous year, have changes been made to the facility Water Quality Plan? Yes No If yes, please attach explanation.
2. In the previous year, has a Nutrient Management Plan been prepared or revised for your facility? Yes No If yes, please attach explanation.
3. Has the dairy had a measure or prevent water discharge to surface or groundwater in the past year? Yes No
4. If so, where and how was the problem resolved?
5. Please answer the following questions pertaining to facility conditions and actions taken within the previous year to comply with conditions of the Waiver.

John W. Cramer, Chair | Michelle M. Jones, Executive Director
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board | www.northcoastwaterboards.com



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More accomplishments:

- Assisted producers with required groundwater sampling over a period of **4** seasons, including providing **12** group collection days for collecting and transporting water samples to a local laboratory
- Assisted in completion of **14** dairy conservation plans, which are necessary if a producer wishes to apply for federal cost-share funding assistance for dairy infrastructure projects



USDA – NRCS CALIFORNIA

Comprehensive
Nutrient Management Plan
for
North Coast Pasture-Based Dairies

Prepared For:

Brown Dairy
123 Cow Lane
Fortuna, CA 95540

This Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) documents the planning and maintenance decisions for the pasture-based dairy operation at Brown Dairy. The CNMP includes background information and provides guidance, references, and web-based sites where up-to-date information can be obtained about seasonal management activities, potential areas for improvement, and record-keeping.

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More accomplishments:

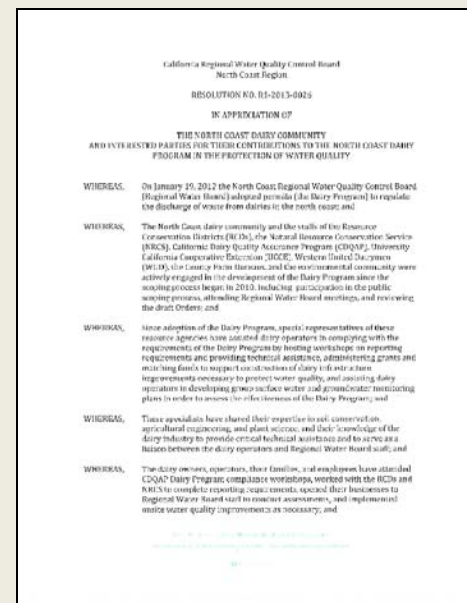
- Helped develop a representative group surface water sampling program to assist producers meet permit compliance; Quality Assurance Project Plan produced and was approved by Water Board for group program
- Helped establish the **Six Rivers Dairy Association** as a producer-led group to provide leadership and oversee group surface water sampling program
- Important highlight – Regional Water Board adopted Resolution in May 2013 “In Appreciation of the North Coast Dairy Community and Interested Parties for their Contributions to the North Coast Dairy Program in the Protections of Water Quality”

Humboldt County
Surface Water Group Monitoring Program
Quality Assurance Project Plan

Submitted to:
The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Prepared by:
Six Rivers Dairy Association

January 7, 2013

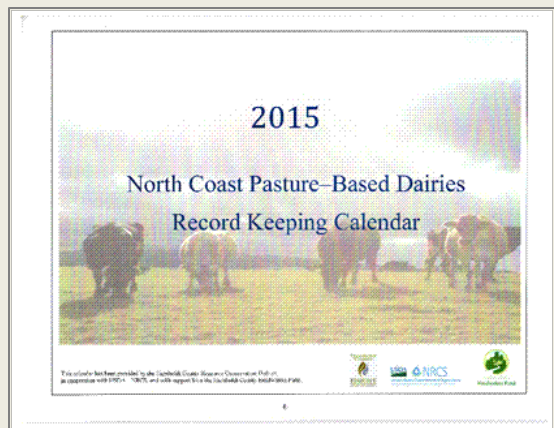


Sustainable Family Dairies Planning Project

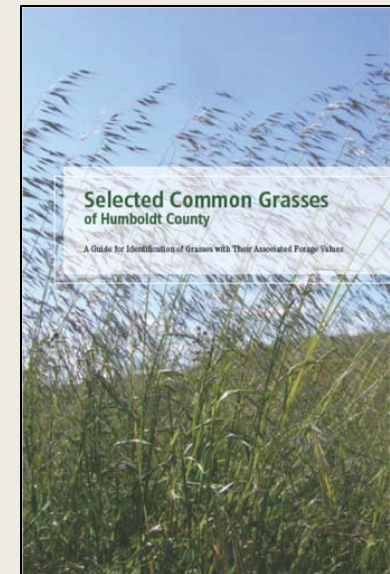
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More accomplishments:

- Developed and distributed copies of a record-keeping calendar for dairies



- Completing final stages on development of a grass identification booklet for producers



- Regulatory challenges still on horizon for dairies – Water Board proposing to adopt fees for Waiver enrolled dairies, approximately \$1000 annually for small dairies; HCRCDD recently helped collect data on \$\$ dairies have already spent towards meeting regulatory compliance



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How does this project translate to a local economic level?

Our pasture-based dairies contribute significantly the overall economic viability of our local economy – **\$61.8 million dollars** in 2013 (source: Humboldt County 2013 Crop and Livestock Report)

One estimate of influence – every dollar generated from dairies re-circulates 9 times through our community

As an example, they provide:

- Employment
- Purchasing power
- Tax base

Plus providing a food source for many families!



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Was this project successful from producers view? Some quotes...

- “this helped head off a lot of headaches and non-compliance issues”
- “if this resource hadn’t been there, I would have been in a much different position with the Water Board”
- “RCD made the process ‘bearable’”
- “helped knowing the RCD was working by our side on this issue”
- “CNMPs are important planning tools for dairies and help bring in federal dollars to our county”



Some losses to the dairy industry during this time:

2 operators retired, 1 converted to a beef cattle operation.

Although it is difficult to answer, it is likely there would have been additional dairies that would have ceased operations without the support of the HCRCD and the Headwaters Fund.

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Thank you.

Questions?