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POUR ONE MORE TO CELEBRATE DAIRY MONTH

June is Dairy Month, so pour one more to ensure that you get the benefits of milk. Behind every glass of milk you drink, cube of cheese you eat, and creamy fudgesicle you lick there is a family farm. Celebrate with me this month and salute our local dairy farmers who provide my very favorite food group. Frederick is the number one dairy producing county in Maryland supplying nearly 27 percent of the states milk supply.

Milk is packed with nutrition! As well as being an excellent source of protein, calcium and vitamin D, milk contains niacin, riboflavin, vitamin B12, potassium, phosphorus, selenium, zinc, and magnesium. Intake of milk products is crucial for bone health, as 72 percent of calcium in the food supply comes from dairy foods.

The majority of current fluid intake in the U.S. comes from reduced fat (2%) milk and whole milk. Fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) milk provide the exact same nutrients but with fewer calories, cholesterol, and saturated fat. Try switching to lower fat dairy products for baking and cooking and you will not even notice. For drinking make changes gradually to give your taste buds time to adjust.

The just released My Plate nutrition education symbol from the US Department of Agriculture, gives milk the importance it deserves and offers tips for making wise choices. You can learn more at <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/dairy.html>

To no surprise, almost half of the milk product intake is in the US and is in the form of cheese. Cheese added to anything makes it go from good to delicious! There are over 300 cheeses sold nationwide and many of the major producers have launched reduced fat varieties. I love cheese and have found those reduced by 25% fat to be acceptable. To help consumers compare cheeses I have developed the chart included to post on your fridge.

CHEESE COMPARISON CHART

<i>Based on 1 ounce portion</i>	CALORIES	GRAMS OF FAT	GRAMS OF SATURATED FAT	MG OF CALCIUM
ASIAGO	130	11	7	200
BLEU or BLUE	100	8	5	150
BRICK	105	8	5	191
CAMEMBERT	85	7	4	110
CHEDDAR	114	9	6	204
COTTAGE CHEESE (4% milkfat)	108	5	3	73
COTTAGE CHEESE (1% milkfat)	81	1	.7	69
COTTAGE CHEESE with added calcium (1% milkfat)*	80	1.5	.7	200
FETA	75	6	4	140
GOUDA	101	8	5	198
GRUEYERE	116	9	5	283
HAVARTI	110	9	6	200
MONTEREY JACK	106	9	5	211
MOZARELLA	85	6	4	143
MUENSTER	104	9	5	203
PARMESAN	111	7	5	336
PROVOLONE	100	8	5	214
ROQUEFORT	105	9	5	188
STRING CHEESE*	80	6	3.5	200
SWISS	108	8	5	224

Source: USDA Nutrient Data Bank and *product nutrition facts label

According to the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, intake of milk and milk products is associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and lower blood pressure in adults. I encourage you to try the recipes included and the wide selection of dairy products available and celebrate June Dairy Month and honor our nation's dairy farmers!

CUCUMBER YOGURT DIP

2 large cucumbers
2 cups plain yogurt, low-fat
1/2 cup sour cream, non-fat
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon fresh dill
1 garlic clove, chopped
1 cup cherry tomatoes
1 cup broccoli florets
1 cup baby carrots

Peel, seed, and grate one cucumber. Slice other cucumber and set aside.

Mix grated cucumber, yogurt, sour cream, lemon juice, dill, and garlic in a serving bowl. Chill for 1 hour.

Arrange tomatoes, cucumbers, broccoli, and carrots on a colorful platter. Serve with dip. Makes 6 servings.

MOCHA MUDSLIDE

1 cup skim milk
2/3 cup sliced ripe banana
1 tablespoon sugar
1 teaspoon instant coffee granules
1 cup vanilla low-fat frozen yogurt
Banana slices (optional)
1-2 cups ice

Place all ingredients in a blender; process until slushy. Garnish with sliced banana, if desired. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings. Note: For a chocolate flavored shake, use reduced-fat chocolate milk instead of the plain skim milk, and reduce the sugar to 1/2 tablespoon. One serving provides 240mg calcium.

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