



**U.S. Dairy
Export Council.**

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NEWS RELEASE

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Hardesty new USDEC chairman

Colorado dairyman Les Hardesty was elected chairman of the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) in a special election to fill the seat made vacant by Tom Camerlo's unexpected passing last autumn. He is the third elected chairman in the organization's history, following Elwood Kirkpatrick (1995-2004) and Tom Camerlo (2004-2009). Paul Rovey has served as interim chairman since Camerlo's passing.

Hardesty milks 700 cows on the Painted Prairie Dairy in Greeley, Colo., and also owns the smaller showcase Cozy Cow Dairy educational facility. Hardesty is chairman of the Mountain Area Region of Dairy Farmers of America and of the National Dairy Council, and serves on the board of National Milk Producers Federation and United Dairy Industry Association. He has been an active member of the USDEC board for the last seven years.

"USDEC is a great organization managed by quality people with incredible support from the membership," said Hardesty. "As incoming chair, I have an opportunity to continue the tradition of helping influence how U.S. dairy reaches our worldwide customers and consumers."

He will preside over the 94-member organization, which is made up of U.S. dairy producers, proprietary processors and cooperatives, ingredient suppliers, export traders and industry affiliates. The group is focused on market development, resolving market access barriers and advancing the industry's trade policy goals, supported by the dairy check-off, U.S. Department of Agriculture funding and membership dues.

Hardesty takes over at a critical juncture in the evolution of the United States as a global supplier.



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“We have tremendous opportunities to satisfy growing global demand for dairy in the years ahead. I see each and every person in the world as a potential customer for U.S. dairy products,” he said. “We also have a chance to grow the membership and spread the word about USDEC programs intended to help U.S. suppliers serve that population.

“Meanwhile, we have great challenges, too,” Hardesty continued. “We have to find ways to encourage greater diversity of our product offerings and better customer service to make U.S. dairy more attractive to the world. And we have to find ways to address the volatility of our domestic prices, overcome trade barriers and improve the perception of U.S. dairy products in the minds of overseas customers.”

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The U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) is a non-profit, independent membership organization that represents the global trade interests of U.S. dairy producers, proprietary processors and cooperatives, ingredient suppliers and export traders. Its mission is to enhance U.S. global competitiveness and assist the U.S. industry to increase its global dairy ingredient sales and exports of U.S. dairy products. USDEC accomplishes this through programs in market development that build global demand for U.S. dairy products, resolve market access barriers and advance industry trade policy goals. USDEC is supported by staff across the United States and overseas in Mexico, South America, Asia, Middle East and Europe.

USDEC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, political beliefs and sexual orientation.