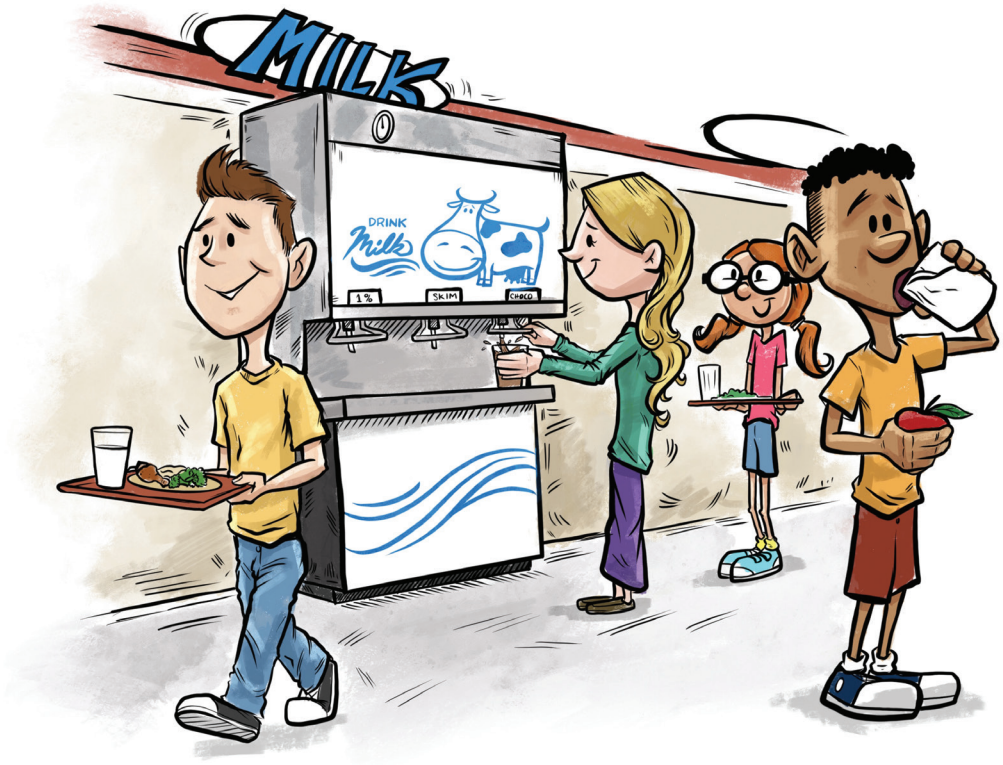
BULK MILK DISPENSERS
IN K-12 SCHOOLS

THE DAIRY ALLIANCE



SCHOOLS REPORT

MILK CONSUMPTION
UP TO **52%**
*Reported Milk Consumption Increase**

MEAL PARTICIPATION
4-11%
*Reported Average Daily Participation Increase**

WASTE
UP TO **91%**
*Reported Combined Packaging & Milk Waste Reduction**

**Source: Data collected from 4 dairy associations, 2014-2019*

Before deciding to make the switch to bulk milk dispensers, decision makers should consider the following factors in your evaluation:

- Upfront Capital Equipment Costs:
  - Reusable cups (9-12 oz.)
  - Milk dispensers
  - Tables for dispensers to sit on (stationary or mobile)
  - Dishwasher racks/dollies
  - Extra milk crates
- School's interest and willingness to make the change
- Administration and teaching staff support for waste reduction
- Additional time commitments of staff members: sanitizing coolers, washing cups, possibly pre-dispensing milk for students, and staff to handle the bags of milk and refill dispensers
- Training both staff and students
- Are there student groups that can get involved?
- Lunchroom location of dispensers: Is there ample room to be part of serving line? Are there accessible electrical outlets?
- Is bulk milk available from current distributor and if so, at what cost?
- At what time of year would the implementation of a bulk milk dispenser have the smoothest transition?
- Is a bulk milk program reasonable and sustainable to accommodate the number of students served within meal service time frames?
- How many milk dispensers would your school need?
  - Five gallon milk bag = 80 milk cartons
  - Determine current milk usage during breakfast and lunch periods

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When a decision has been made to use bulk milk dispensers, decision makers should consider the following factors to prepare for implementation:

Milk Dispenser Set-Up:

- Location for milk dispensers to be part of serving line
- Number of milk dispensers/spouts to include mandated two milk varieties
- Adequate electric outlets
- Place to store reusable cups
- Evaluate need for lids to prevent spillage and staff time to clean up spills

Milk Service Procedures/Staff Training:

- Number of servings permitted for each student
- Procedure for refills to meet health regulations
- Proper storage and rotation of milk bags regarding expiration dates
- Proper temperature control
- Proper cleaning and sanitizing of milk dispensers
- Procedure for washing reusable cups
- Adequate monitoring at point of service by cashier

Building Support From Teaching and Administrative Staff:

- Educate staff on switch to bulk milk dispensers prior to implementation
- Promote waste reduction and environmental impact
- Promote a better school lunch experience for students, and the ability for students to mix white and chocolate milk to reduce sugar

Student Training and Education:

- Educate students on the use of milk dispensers prior to implementation
- Allow students to use the milk dispensers and try milk prior to starting use in the lunch line
- Put signage on the milk dispensers to educate students on how to fill cup for appropriate portion to meet nutrition requirements as well as reduce spills
- Consider having students and staff place cups directly into dishwasher racks to save time for custodial and food service staff

Tracking Milk Consumption and Waste:

- Consider completing a pre and post waste study looking at milk consumption, milk waste, and environmental impact

ADVANTAGES

Increased milk consumption

Students reported cold milk tastes better/fresher – opportunity to switch to 1% chocolate milk

Milk stays cold at a constant temperature (milk cartons in an open cooler during lunch lose one day of shelf life for each hour cooler remains open)

Meal participation may increase and milk waste decreases

Less environmental impact with reusing cups and less waste from milk cartons

Potential reduced cost for milk (Milk in 3-5 gallon bags may cost less than milk in individual cartons)

Lower energy costs (Milk dispensers use less energy than milk coolers used to store cartoned milk)

Less work for custodians (No need to rinse, bag and haul empty milk cartons to dumpster)

DISADVANTAGES

Capital equipment costs (milk dispensers, tables, glasses)

Requires dish washer and adequate space in serving line

Overall staff time may increase slightly (Food service staff will need to refill dispensers, wash glasses, etc.)