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CATEGORY CLOSEUP

Best Practices for Improved Dairy Sales

The dairy department generates superior returns: It's been determined that it can total 19% of store profit, using 3% of store space. A new report shows that an updated dairy aisle can increase dollar sales by 1.6% and dairy unit sales by 2% to 3%. By optimizing space and creating a more shopper-oriented rather than operations-driven department, retailers can maximize new product potential, improve cross-merchandising opportunities and drive significant growth in sales and profits.

Based on the findings of the report, "The Future of the Dairy Department is Now," researchers created a list of eight best practices that should be part of any reinvention process:

- Establish a dairy department vs. just another aisle Make it clear to the shopper when entering and leaving the department.
- Make the department easier to shop Make it easier to move through this high-traffic department by eliminating elements that create congestion and bottlenecks.
- Utilize a broader array of methods to "personalize" the engagement of the shopper Use kiosks, offer meal solutions or provide

information about consumer benefits on danglers to slow the shopper down with useful and relevant information.

- Build stronger emotional connections leveraging health and wellness Help shoppers better understand the role that dairy can play in living a healthier lifestyle for them and their families.
- Leverage more meaningful merchandising Assist shoppers in locating the various categories more effectively, as categories often blur together in a long-running aisle format.
- Offer stronger freshness cues Freshness guarantees, proper lighting, keeping the department looking and smelling fresh, and inviting signage all create shopper trust and engagement.
- Foster interaction and engagement Change the dairy space from linear to three-dimensional.
- Inspire shoppers To maintain shopper interest, consistently update messaging and solutions. Provide messaging that educates shoppers about new items and new usage occasions.

SOURCE: Excerpted from "The Future of the Dairy Department is Now!", Dairy Management Inc., Kraft Foods, the Dannon Co.