

NEWS/BUSINESS



Dairy Research Institute plans to launch open innovation program to seek solutions

ROSEMONT, Ill. — The Dairy Research Institute (DRI), established under the leadership of America's dairy farmers, last week announced the launch of an open innovation program. The new program and associated submission site, DRIResearchSubmission.com, seek existing solutions and technologies from within and outside the dairy industry to help accelerate research and meet specific dairy industry needs.

"The Dairy Research Institute is committed to sound, scientific research to better understand the value of dairy products and accelerate dairy product and ingredient innovation," says Greg Miller, president of the Dairy Research Institute. "The open innovation program expands our view to ensure the dairy industry benefits from the best innovative ideas, whether from within or outside our industry."

The program aims to discover solutions to challenges that may already exist in other industries, reduce research time and dollars spent to solve industrywide issues and decrease time to activation.

"While the dairy industry has always been receptive to outside innovation, this effort formalizes the process to encourage the exchange of new ideas and partnerships with other industries," says Beth Rice, manager of scientific affairs, Dairy Research Institute. "Someone from a different field could have an existing solution to a dairy-specific challenge that we might not find without looking beyond our own industry."

The site is currently accepting sub-

missions on the following topics:

- Identification of a biomarker for dairy food intake;
- Novel methods to further improve quality of fresh or low-sodium cheeses; and
- Methods to prevent biofilm formation in dairy processing equipment

The Dairy Research Institute will conduct a technical review of all submissions and evaluate each for potential scalability, pilot testing and application to the dairy industry.

According to Rice, the short-term benefit of submitting a potential solution is the possibility for funding on research to determine how the technology applies to the dairy industry. The long-term benefit could be even greater, she adds.

"Applicants have the possibility to gain access to an entire industry that they may not have had a connection with before," she says. "This could open doors to build new partnerships within the dairy community for long-term success."

The Dairy Research Institute conducts research on behalf of partners, including the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, which also will be able to use this resource to address new dairy innovation challenges.

In addition, the Innovation Center this week held a "Future of Dairy Forum" in Rosemont which included eight breakout sessions on specific growth opportunities for the dairy industry.

For more information on the forum, visit www.usdairy.com/insights/pages/future-of-dairy-forum.aspx. CMN