

ASDA Honors New Dairy Product Ideas

What are the next hot ideas in cold dairy products? The American Dairy Science Association (ASDA) went to a warm locale, Phoenix, to host its annual meeting and the inaugural Dairy Research Institute New Product Competition.

ASDA says it organized and funded the event with support from the Dairy Research Institute (DRI) and the industry's dairy check-off program. Officials say the competition helps inspire dairy innovation and challenges college students to develop dairy-based products that meet consumer needs. This year, sponsors challenged all participants to create a dairy beverage that included more than 51% of fresh milk, dry milk or other dairy ingredients.

"The estimated \$37 billion beverage industry presents significant opportunities for dairy-based drinks," said Bill Graves, DRI senior vice president. "Generating ideas based on consumer needs and trends identified by the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, students demonstrated innovative ways that dairy can help meet this demand. Their idea-sparking beverages were great-tasting and nutritious, delivering what consumers expect from dairy products. We congratulate all the students on the work they submitted and encourage industry to consider these opportunities."

Officials say the competition was open to undergraduate and graduate students who submitted entries as individuals or teams. Three winners were selected from 18 entries.

"Spurring product innovation, while at the same time identifying future leaders in the U.S. dairy industry is a win-win for dairy farmers," said Bill Siebenborn, a Missouri dairy farmer and chairman of United Dairy Industry Association (UDIA). UDIA represents 18 state and regional dairy promotion organizations across the country, helping fund the dairy check-off program, a primary funding source for the Dairy Research Institute.

The First-place Team, Receiving \$8,000:

Oat-infused vanilla milk (Clemson University, S.C.) — Created with health-conscious adults in mind, the winning product, dubbed "tOATal Milk," is an oat-infused vanilla milk enhanced with protein,

probiotics, conjugated linoleic acids (CLA) and fiber. The entry caters to the growing sports performance beverage market and leverages the benefits of protein shakes and grain/nut milks, while delivering the

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nutrition dairy provides. With 14g of protein and 4g of fiber per serving, this beverage has a light, sweet flavor profile. By combining the techniques used in the production of fluid milk and beer, the team was able to develop this product with only slight modifications to traditional dairy-processing equipment. Officials noted that whey protein and nonfat dry milk contributed an extra protein boost to the winning item.

The Second-place Team, Receiving \$5,000:

On-the-go mango drinkable Greek yogurt (Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia, Canada) — Greek yogurt sales have increased significantly in recent years. Building on that product's popularity, Mighty Mango is an on-the-go, drinkable yogurt that the students marketed for consumption post exercise. Targeted to health-conscious women, Mighty Mango contains nearly 10g of protein and fewer than 200 calories per serving. The students packaged the product in a biodegradable bottle to appeal to consumers' desire for environmentally-friendly products and speculated that future flavors beyond mango could include "Powerful Pineapple," "Brawny Berry," "Toned Tangelo" or "Fierce Fig."

The Third-place Team, Receiving \$3,000:

Caffeine-enhanced drinkable yogurt with antioxidants (University of Tennessee, Tenn.) — In the U.S., energy drinks make up 62.6% of the functional beverage market. With the average amount of caffeine found in one cup of coffee (100mg) in a drinkable yogurt consistency, Wired Berry taps into this growing market. Developed with teenagers and young adults in mind, the product is a healthy alternative that provides antioxidants, vitamin C, calcium and protein, in addition to caffeine. Made with low-fat yogurt, the product is flavored with blueberry and strawberry purées and contains 190 calories per serving.

Three additional teams were selected as finalists, including:

- Cornell University's Dairy Dream Mango-Orange Smoothie, a premium, lactose-free, ready-to-drink smoothie.

- Kansas State University's Yo-Fizz, a carbonated yogurt smoothie and a healthy alternative to soda.

- University of Delaware's PomMOOgranate, a fortified pomegranate-chai milk beverage for health-conscious consumers.

Judges included experts from the dairy industry, media, suppliers and DRI members. In addition to the final product, the six finalists also were evaluated on the merits of a cover letter and preliminary report, a final report and webinar presentation. 