

On-Farm Dairy Processing Field Days to Showcase Niche Market Opportunities for Producers

July 6, 2026 | Gail Carpenter

AMES, Iowa – The Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Dairy Team will host a series of on-farm dairy processing field days that highlight successful niche-market herds in Iowa. Regional dairy producers are invited to explore profitable niche markets and learn from producers investing in cheese,

Each field day will include a tour of the farm and a panel discussion featuring the host dairy producer; Dylan Liu, assistant professor of food science at Iowa State; members of the ISU Extension and Outreach Farm, Food and Enterprise Development and Dairy teams; and a representative from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. A boxed meal will also be provided at each field day.

Gail Carpenter, assistant professor and extension dairy specialist at Iowa State, said exploring new markets is a great way for dairies to maintain profitability.

“On-farm processors are important and growing contributors to Iowa’s dairy industry. Small dairies in particular see on-farm processing as a way to stay competitive in today’s markets,” she said. “These events will help dairy producers determine if this is a good option for them and begin building their support network and toolbox as they explore this opportunity.”

Schedule and registration

- Orange City: Favorite Creamery, Aug. 4, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- Donnellson: Hinterland Dairy, Aug. 6, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. (Parlor tour to follow.)
- Ogden: Sundae Morning Dairy, Aug. 24, 6 to 8 p.m.
- Maquoketa: Moore Local, Sept. 8, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (The program will begin at the ISU Extension and Outreach Jackson County office.)

Those interested in attending are asked to register online at least one week before the event. Field days are offered at no cost to attendees thanks to funding from the North Central Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education. Registration and additional information about the events is available on the Dairy Team website: <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/dairyteam/farm-processing>

For more information, contact Carpenter at ajcarpen@iastate.edu.

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