

## The top 50 dairy co-ops retain market share

by Sarah Thomas

**U**NITED States farms produced 217.5 billion pounds of milk in 2018. Together, the top 50 dairy cooperatives collected 175.7 billion pounds of that total, which embodies nearly 81 percent of the total milk flow. The top five co-ops alone supplied just under 47 percent of the nation's milk with a combined total of over 101 billion pounds.

Overall, milk production rose by 2 billion pounds among the top 50 cooperatives. How-



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ever, member farms dropped by 2,293, falling to 29,714. That's a 7.2 percent drop in comparison to the 32,007 member farms seen in 2017. As a point of reference, U.S. dairy farm numbers as a whole dropped 6.8 percent last year.

Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) anchored the list, growing 2.5 billion pounds. However, the cooperative lost 532 member farms last year, a 6.2 percent reduction. Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative added 413 million pounds of milk and 38 member farms.

In December 2018, the Zia Milk Producers disbanded and became members of the Southwest Council of Dairy Farmers of America, and St. Albans Cooperative Creamery merged with DFA this August. Additionally, Hastings Cooperative

Creamery Company merged with Plainview Milk Products Cooperative in December 2018, and Calhoun Cooperative Creamery merged with Foremost Farms USA in January 2019. Those transitions will be reflected in next year's list.

New to the list this year included No. 27 Legacy Cooperative, Turlock, Calif., and No. 49 Central Equity Milk Cooperative, Springfield, Mo.

*Hoard's Dairyman* gathers information for the top 50 co-op list each summer. Every cooperative is contacted and asked to provide information on the previous year's production. Because cooperatives have different ending dates for their fiscal year, milk volume and member farms may not necessarily represent the 2018 calendar year. This list has been published each year since 1986. 🐄

Rank	Dairy cooperative	Member milk volume (bil. lbs.)	Member farms	Rank	Dairy cooperative	Member milk volume (bil. lbs.)	Member farms
1.	✓ Dairy Farmers of America Inc. Kansas City, Kan.	52.700	8,019	26.	Magic Valley Quality Milk Producers Inc. Jerome, Idaho	0.933	30
2.	✓ California Dairies Inc. Visalia, Calif.	16.000	367	27.	Legacy Milk Cooperative Inc. Turlock, Calif.	0.900	16
3.	✓ Land O'Lakes Inc. St. Paul, Minn.	13.000	1,851	28.	High Desert Milk Inc. Burley, Idaho	0.840	6
4.	Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative Green Bay, Wis.	10.570	800	*29.	Lanco-Pennland Quality Milk Producers Hagerstown, Md.	0.741	543
5.	✓ FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Madison, Wis.	9.583	3,328	*29.	✓ Mount Joy Farmers Cooperative Association Mount Joy, Pa.	0.741	316
6.	✓ Northwest Dairy Association Seattle, Wash.	8.851	402	31.	✓ Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery Ellsworth, Wis.	0.662	330
7.	✓ Select Milk Producers Inc. Artesia, N.M.	7.755	99	32.	Cobblestone Milk Cooperative Inc. Chatham, Va.	0.568	18
8.	✓ Foremost Farms USA Baraboo, Wis.	6.200	1,180	33.	Rolling Hills Dairy Producers Co-op Monroe, Wis.	0.499	151
9.	✓ Associated Milk Producers Inc. New Ulm, Minn.	5.700	1,800	34.	Plainview Milk Products Cooperative Plainview, Minn.	0.489	128
10.	✓ Michigan Milk Producers Association Novi, Mich.	4.800	949	35.	Scenic Central Milk Producers Co-op Assn. Boscobel, Wis.	0.474	267
11.	✓ United Dairymen of Arizona Tempe, Ariz.	4.282	50	36.	White Eagle Cooperative Association South Bend, Ind.	0.455	36
12.	✓ Agri-Mark Inc. Andover, Mass.	3.213	926	37.	Woodstock Progressive Milk Producers Assn. Woodstock, Ill.	0.378	88
13.	✓ Maryland and Virginia Milk Prod. Co-op Assn. Reston, Va.	2.900	1,165	38.	Burnett Dairy Cooperative Grantsburg, Wis.	0.375	170
14.	✓ Prairie Farms Dairy Inc. Carlinville, Ill.	2.749	882	39.	Lowville Producers Dairy Cooperative Inc. Lowville, N.Y.	0.331	137
15.	✓ Southeast Milk Inc. Belleview, Fla.	2.500	148	40.	✓ Mid-West Dairymen's Company Rockford, Ill.	0.253	103
16.	✓ Upstate Niagara Cooperative Inc. Buffalo, N.Y.	2.261	327	41.	Hastings Cooperative Creamery Company Hastings, Minn.	0.222	78
17.	✓ First District Association Litchfield, Minn.	1.899	546	42.	Northwest Independent Milk Producers Assn. East Olympia, Wash.	0.201	18
*18.	✓ Lone Star Milk Producers Wichita Falls, Texas	1.600	117	43.	Sunrise Ag Cooperative Buckman, Minn.	0.197	108
*18.	Organic Valley/CROPP La Farge, Wis.	1.600	1,655	44.	Preble Milk Cooperative Preble, N.Y.	0.192	34
20.	National Farmers Organization Inc. Ames, Iowa	1.293	1,325	45.	✓ Premier Milk Inc. Ocala, Fla.	0.183	14
21.	✓ St. Albans Cooperative Creamery Inc. St. Albans, Vt.	1.256	346	46.	✓ Cooperative Milk Producers Association Blackstone, Va.	0.178	70
22.	✓ Bongards' Creameries Bongards, Minn.	1.200	237	47.	Westby Cooperative Creamery Westby, Wis.	0.174	182
23.	Cayuga Marketing Auburn, N.Y.	1.195	31	48.	Calhoun Cooperative Creamery Lansing, Iowa	0.168	49
24.	✓ Tillamook County Creamery Association Tillamook, Ore.	1.100	82	49.	Central Equity Milk Cooperative Inc. Springfield, Mo.	0.165	106
25.	✓ Zia Milk Producers Roswell, N.M.	1.000	16	50.	Lakes Area Cooperative Perham, Minn.	0.159	68
✓	Member of National Milk Producers Federation		*Tie	Total		175.685	29,714