



November 2010 Newsletter Dairy LCA Project

Dear all,

Please find below the November newsletter. The majority of this edition is directly linked to activities at the IDF World Dairy Summit in held in Auckland at the beginning of November. There are a few other 'meaty' bits in there also!

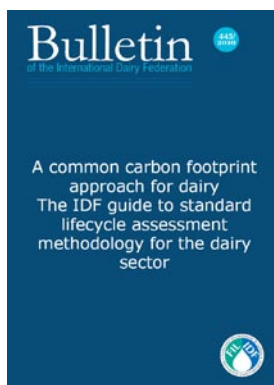
As the next issue will not be distributed until early January, I would like to wish you and your families a really happy and safe Christmas and New Year period!

Best regards,

Brian

Dairy LCA – Lift Off!

The efforts of over 25 individuals who invested their time over the last two years culminated in the launch of the ***IDF guide to standard lifecycle assessment methodology for the dairy sector***, just in time for the World Dairy Summit in Auckland. This publication has been received extremely positively from those within and outside the sector.



Supporting the document is a dedicated website that provides further background to the LCA approach and features input from individuals along the supply chain, via video and written interviews as to the need for this common approach and how they see it enhancing the already great progress the dairy sector has made to date.

It is anticipated that this will be a dynamic website that will see worked examples and other's experiences from using the IDF methodology, captured and made available for the benefit of the global supply chain.

I recommend that you take the time to go and both download the freely available document as well as having a look at the website.

Importantly we need to get this methodology used! Please tell us when you are applying it so that we can gauge the levels of implementation.

<http://www.idf-lca-guide.org/Public/en/LCA+Guide/Introduction>

Towards Sustainable Dairy Products

On October 12 a meeting of key industry influencers was held in Brussels to scenario plan/challenge our dairy sustainability activities. The key objective, in view of the Global Agenda for Action Commitments, was to see if new areas were emerging that should be considered or if any were being missed altogether. The one day workshop explored many issues and provided insights from those who were present regarding the areas of priority to move forward. An '*outputs paper*' has been developed for use by the dairy sector in their individual and collaborative efforts. I have attached a copy of this for your active use.



IDF Standing Committee on Environment meeting outcomes:

The Committee met on November 7 in Auckland and had a packed agenda which is indicative of the importance of environment and sustainability issues in the IDF delivery programme. *The below work programmes, were approved by the Standing Committee on Environment, though will require further approval by the IDF's Science and Programme Coordination Committee and National Committees before they start.*

LCA Monitoring Group initiated

With the IDF Common Methodology now complete and launched the Committee agreed to form a small working group to monitor developments in the LCA methodology. This group will have the responsibility of identifying when developments are at a sufficiently robust level to require amendments to the IDF methodology. A proposal will then be put to the Standing Committee on Environment to consider and agree an appropriate route forward.

Biodiversity

It was agreed by the Committee to look at what the current knowledge is in this area and develop a 'framework' for future activities. Biodiversity is an extremely challenging component to our sustainability work and hence we need to ensure that we build on current knowledge to ensure we develop appropriate measures and tools that are of value to the dairy farming sector.

Product Category Rules

The development of Product Category Rules (PCR) for milk and dairy products was discussed as this concept could potentially be an opportunity for the IDF, in its leadership role, to establish. The Standing Committee on Environment agreed that effort should be concentrated on the continued development of the LCA methodology and this in turn would effectively provide these 'rules'. Any organisation who may wish to provide an Environmental Product Declaration would establish this declaration by implementing the IDF LCA methodology. Monitoring of PCR developments will be the responsibility of the LCA Monitoring Group.

Nutrition and sustainability

This important new work programme, mentioned in previous newsletters, was approved (though still needs to be agreed by National Committees) at the conference by the IDF Science and Programme Coordination Committee and meetings between sustainability and nutrition experts were held in Auckland. I have attached a copy of the work item proposal, proposed by the Standing Committee on Nutrition and Health (that was approved) that details the nature of the work that will take place. This is an exciting piece of work that will see the IDF and GDP collaborating to achieve the agreed objectives. If you have expertise that you feel you could contribute to this work, please contact Sandra Tuijelaars at the IDF by e-mail - stuijelaars@fil-idf.org

Water Footprinting

Work on water footprinting was agreed by the Committee, though it was acknowledged that there is already considerable work being undertaken in this area. The challenge for the Action Team undertaking this work will be identifying the most appropriate approach for the dairy sector. Monitoring of the current ISO draft water footprinting activities was also agreed. This is extremely important to ensure alignment.

The workshop on water footprinting on the Thursday of the conference stressed the importance of establishing a methodology that is useable at a local level and is meaningful to the practitioners on the ground. Communications related to the water footprint was another



area that was emphasized (what are we going to do with the outcome?) by those attending the workshop. There are many numbers being quoted in relation to dairy production and we as the dairy sector need to establish a more robust and common approach to address this issue, recognizing that water is very different to GHG's due to the geographical and climatic differences that influence availability and management.

Global Conference on Sustainable Beef – Denver, Colorado November 1-3

'The Global Conference on Sustainable Beef in Denver, Colorado, was hosted by Cargill, Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health, JBS, McDonald's, Walmart and WWF. Through effective communication the conference achieved greater clarity and deepened alignment around the key issues that influence the sustainability of the beef production system. The conference leadership agreed to a series of next steps in the multi-stakeholder process on sustainable beef'. To see what these are and to engage with more of the conference proceedings including downloadable presentations, go to;

<http://www.sustainablelivestock.org/home>

It is obvious that the beef sector is at the same point the dairy sector was, some 3-4 years ago, though there is no doubting their commitment or enthusiasm. They recognise the great strides that the dairy sector has already made and were very willing to listen to our experiences, recognising that we are in this together...cattle!



The challenge for the main partners and SAI Platform as a convening partner to this process, is to manage expectations and refine the wide ranging discussions into a few really tangible deliverables (within sensible timescales), that when delivered, can provide a suitable platform for many other proactive activities.

We are waiting for a communication from the main steering group now regarding the priorities and associated activities they have identified as the route forward.

Predictive power of dairy cattle methane models insufficient to provide sound environmental advice - Thanks to Cindy Schweitzer at GDP for sharing this with us.

*Canadian and Dutch researchers have shown that current equations to predict methane production of cows are inaccurate. Sound mitigation options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions of dairy farms require a significant improvement of current methane equations, according to a study of the Dutch-Canadian team in the authoritative journal **Global Change Biology**.*

Follow this link for further details:

<http://www.wageningenuniversity.nl/UK/newsagenda/news/P059e.htm>



Agenda for Action and Green Paper

The Global Agenda for Action and Green Paper certainly received some attention in Auckland at the World Dairy Summit. I have counted at least four different sessions (GDP, SWIFT, Environment conference and Update Sessions) where it was profiled and discussed throughout the four days.

Fonterra did a fantastic job in assisting us, having a very prominent and visible presence in the sustainability area also. This provided those who heard about our efforts in any of the sessions the opportunity to have a look, first hand at our work, directly accessing the website at the stand.

Each day (prepared by the Green Paper Team) a different set of Green Paper examples were continually scrolling on the big screen. This facility was fantastic as many conference delegates came to the sustainability area during coffee and lunch breaks to eat their food and hence could observe the examples scrolling as they dined!

The update session, I personally felt, was not attended by as many as we had hoped, though we were competing with two very popular sessions within the IDF Conference, Dairy Farming and Dairy Policies and Economics. Having said that, the update session for those who attended, was extremely well presented by the Signatories and demonstrated clearly that this is a genuine commitment and not just a box ticking exercise.

The IDF have already considered how best to address the attendance issue for the next World Dairy Summit in September and have already identified a more suitable slot in the programme. This proposal is being considered by the Signatories and Operational Group who will have the responsibility of delivering the 2011 official reporting in Parma.

Product Carbon Footprinting – A study on methodologies and initiatives

In my September newsletter, I reported on the project where the European Commission (DG Environment) contracted Ernst and Young to review and compare many different methodologies under development for the carbon footprinting of products in a number of EU countries and in other non EU countries.

I reported that I had attended the pre publication workshop, where the authors shared with those present their findings and received feedback for consideration prior to completing the project.

The final report has now been published and can be sourced by following the link below:

http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/env/carbon_footprint/library

Food price inflation in China.....Food for thought?

Worried about the consequences of the worst inflation in a decade in China, the Chinese government is set to announce a series of measures that will reduce hoarding and speculation on agricultural products. The report from the South China Morning Post stated that cheaper daily goods are now a rarity as they are being rolled out in limited quantities by supermarkets as 'bait' to lure shoppers in off peak times such as early mornings!



Figures released this month from Beijing showed that in the first two weeks in November 18 kinds of staple vegetables saw average wholesale prices rise by 62% from the same period last year, 11.3% from the beginning of 2010.

Consumers used to go and buy these 'staples' without a second thought...But now product sales are telling a different story. What impact would this have on milk and dairy products?

How do we position dairy to ensure that the consumer can fully appreciate its value for money, be it nutritionally or environmentally?

Conference – 'Dairy and the 21st Century Diet: sustainability and nutrition'

Dairy UK is hosting a conference entitled "Dairy and the 21st Century Diet: sustainability and nutrition" on 27th January 2011 at 76 Portland Place, London.

Over recent years dairy products have been subject to criticism on health grounds and, increasingly, on environmental grounds, and this event will redress the balance by demonstrating dairy's important role in providing essential nutrients as part of a healthy diet. The conference will also show how this can be achieved in a sustainable fashion by highlighting the action the industry is taking to address the environmental challenges head on.

Speakers from around the world, including nutritionists, sustainability experts and academics, will present their views and stimulate the debate. You can find full details about this important event, including the full programme, at <http://www.dairyuk.org> . If you wish to register, or if you are interested in discussing sponsorship opportunities, please contact Ian Wakeling by e-mail at iwakeling@dairyuk.org or phone +44 (0) 20 7467 2621.