



## THE NUTRIENT RICH FOODS APPROACH WILL HELP CONSUMERS MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

### **State-of-the art research revealed at the IDF World Dairy Summit**

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Mexico, 13 November 2008- Experts in nutrition gathered at the IDF World Dairy Summit in Mexico this week to discuss the Nutrient Rich Foods system, a useful tool now in development and testing that will make it easy for consumers to select nutrient-rich foods. The tool will be able to score the nutrient-richness of an individual food or beverage, a meal, or the meals from a whole day, and ultimately improve healthy eating habits.

Internationally, food-rating systems that attempt to measure the nutritional quality and healthfulness of foods are exploding in retail and regulating environments. Nutrition labels and nutrition profiling systems are an opportunity to demonstrate dairy's health benefits to consumers – if the science behind them is sound.

"Some nutrient-profiling systems currently available may change food choices in the short term. But in the long term, focusing on choosing nutrient-rich foods -- rather than focusing on avoiding certain nutrients -- is the *smarter* choice to get more nutrition from calories and build a healthier diet," said Gregory D Miller, Executive Vice President, Research, Regulatory and Scientific Affairs, Dairy Management Inc./ National Dairy Council, Rosemont, Illinois.

Since 2004, the Nutrient Rich Foods (NRF) has been educating health professionals and targeted consumers about the Nutrient Rich Food approach, which emphasizes choosing nutrient-rich foods first from the five basic food groups. Nutrient-rich foods, also known as nutrient-dense foods, provide a significant amount of beneficial nutrients per calorie. This means that when choosing a food or beverage, or judging how healthy a day's diet is, it's important to consider how many beneficial nutrients it contains, such as vitamins, protein and fiber, as well as the amount of fat, sugar and sodium.

The next step for the NRF Coalition is an educational tool that utilizes the algorithm to help people identify and enjoy nutrient-rich foods within and among the basic food groups. The tool is expected to be complete in 2009. Also as part of its work, the NRF Coalition is conducting consumer research to develop messages on the health benefits of nutrient-rich foods that resonate best with consumers, so it can share these with health professionals as well as food industry.

"Reducing consumption of nutrients to limit, such as fat and sodium, may have unintended consequences for many nutrient-rich foods, including some dairy foods," said Christian Robert, IDF Director General. "Consequently, nutrition labels and nutrient-profiling systems need to fairly characterize the role of nutrient-rich foods in a well-rounded, healthy diet." "The dairy sector can help convey this message to those who give dietary guidance as well as to consumers," he continued. "The IDF World Dairy Summit is the perfect platform to convey this message. Dairy can improve the quality of life for people, and we should make sure everyone is aware of it."

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Note to editors:

- The International Dairy Federation is the pre-eminent source of scientific and technical expertise for all stakeholders in the dairy chain.
- IDF is represented in 55 countries and membership is growing: IDF accounts for approximately **85%** of the world's milk production at present. Visit our site at <http://www.fil-idf.org>
- The IDF World Dairy Summit 2008 takes place in Mexico, 11-14 November 2008. The event, based on the theme, "Facing the supply challenge: the industry in a new environment." is the first to be organized in Latin America. To find out more please visit <http://www.wds2008mexico.com>