

## Chobani adds products

Capital Press

Chobani is expanding its footprint in the refrigerated aisle with a lactose-free, protein-packed ultrafiltered milk and half & half.

The company turned its sights to upgrading the refrigerated aisle in 2019 with the launch of non-dairy oatmilk, which was its first foray outside yogurt. The company has also launched coffee creamers, ready-to-drink coffee and probiotic drinks.

The company said its new lactose-free ultra-filtered milk has more protein than the market leader. It also has half the sugar and 2.5 times more protein than traditional milk, offering more functional benefits to dairy milk consumers.

“With our lactose-free, reduced sugar and protein-packed Chobani ultra-filtered milk, we’re making dairy accessible to more people and giving consumers a great option to trade up

to a more advanced, functional and delicious product,” said Peter McGuinness, Chobani president and COO.

Available in whole, reduced fat 2%, fat free and chocolate, the ultrafiltered milk is on shelves this month.

The ultrafiltered milk segment, up 17.5% in total Nielsen reported sales, is driving growth in the \$1.7 billion easy-to-digest milk segment, which consists of both ultrafiltered and lactose-free dairy milk.

Chobani’s new half & half product is also on shelves this month, available in plain and lactose-free options. Currently, dairy-based half & half is a \$1 billion segment.

“We’ve seen incredible consumer love for our coffee creamers, and they asked us to bring the same craft and quality to dairy-based half & half while offering a lactose-free option as well,” McGuinness said.

## Cattle numbers tighter than expected

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS  
Capital Press

The number of beef and dairy cattle and calves in the U.S. on Jan. 1 declined about 1.9 million head year over year to 91.9 million.

“As expected, cattle numbers are down pretty much in every category,” said Derrell Peel, extension livestock marketing specialist with Oklahoma State University.

“We expected tighter numbers, and they were every bit of that and more,” he said.

Some categories are down even more than expected. The beef cow herd is down 2.3%, and beef replacement heifers are down 3.3%, he said.

That leaves limited prospects for herd rebuilding, he said.

“I think producers would like to keep heifers, they just can’t,” he said.

Drought impacted heifer



Carol Ryan Dumas/Capital Press File

**Steers run on Bureau of Land Management land in southern Twin Falls County, Idaho. The total number of cattle is down this year, according to USDA.**

retention last year, and “we don’t know what this year is going to hold for us,” he said.

Impacts were expected in drought-stricken states, and the biggest decrease in beef cows — in percentage decline and absolute numbers — was in South Dakota, he said.

Cow numbers there declined 11% and 189,000 head. Montana’s beef cow numbers were down signifi-

cantly, as expected, about 6% and 90,000 head, he said.

Texas also had a pretty big decline — down 3% and 160,000 head — but not all of it was due to drought, he said.

Colorado’s beef cows were down another 3% after having liquidated a lot last year, and Nebraska’s cow herd declined 3%. Declines were also seen in the Southwest.

Beef cow slaughter was up 9% year over year in 2021 largely because of the drought, he said.

“That clearly indicates liquidation,” he said.

That level of cow slaughter represents 11.5% of the beef cow herd, he said.

“I would expect that to be under 11% if we weren’t liquidating,” he said.

Drought is going to play a critical role, and cows will have to be liquidated at an even bigger number than last year, he said.

The Jan. 1 cattle on feed inventory was up just 0.2%, the 2021 calf crop was down 1.2% and the estimated feeder cattle supply is down 2.6%.

“We’ve reached a point now where there’s just not enough feeders in the pipeline” to keep feedlots full, he said.

Feedlot numbers should go down noticeably in the next two to four months, he said.

## Minnesota producer takes reins at NCBA

Capital Press

Don Schiefelbein, a central Minnesota seedstock breeder and cattle feeder, became the new NCBA president during the 2022 Cattle Industry Convention, held last week in Houston.

Schiefelbein and his family operate Schiefelbein Farms, a diversified farming operation in Kimball, Minn.

“I’m very fortunate to have been involved in the cattle industry through several different avenues and have seen the

positive results when people come together,” Schiefelbein said in a press release.

“As NCBA’s incoming president, I will continue bringing people together for the benefit of the industry,” he said.

Before returning to the family farm, Schiefelbein served as the executive director of the American Gelbvieh Association and previously worked for the North American Limousin Association after graduating from Texas A&M University.

He has a long history of industry service, most recently in the role as chairman of NCBA’s beef industry long-range planning committee. He has also held several positions on committees and the board of directors of the American Angus Association. He is a past president of the Minnesota Cattlemen’s Association.

As he looks to his year as NCBA president, Schiefelbein is serious about helping lead NCBA’s fight for policies and a business climate that supports cattle producing families.

“To me, I just sit in awe of how many people have the opportunity to do something they love to do and would love to do every day with their family by their side. There’s just not many places in this world that gives you that opportunity,” he said.

Schiefelbein plans to focus on several priorities, including ensuring NCBA members’ voices are heard as the organization continues to grow, uniting its membership and making sure NCBA is at the forefront of issues that impact the cattle industry to protect producer interests.

He also plans to continue the organization’s focus on producer profitability and build upon the work in the sustainability space to create opportunities for members and their ability to pass on their operations to the next generation.

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