

Dairy development happens in every country

This year's IFCN Dairy Conference in Kiel, Germany, set a cornerstone in defining steps for dairy development worldwide. How big the scope of dairy development is became clear, when dairy researchers, institutions and companies from over 43 countries presented on-going initiatives and activities. Which kind of dairy development programmes are helping countries in the future, and who should take the lead was the core of the workshops and following vivid discussions among the dairy experts.

Around 1 billion people in the world live on dairy farms and are involved in upstream and downstream operations, as well as billions of consumers enrich their nutrition with milk products. Therefore dairy development in both developing but also developed countries is needed today as well as in the future. This year's IFCN Dairy Conference elucidated the past, present and the future of holistic and sustainable dairy development. During intense days of discussion and working groups it became clear that the broader vision of dairy development nowadays extends more and more towards the whole value chain, accounts for gender and locally optimal dairy farming systems.

Torsten Hemme, Managing Director of the IFCN, after encouraged discussion among the participants: 'Dairy development happens in every country at different levels and has potential to be done more strategic in the future.'

In presentations from multiple international organizations and networks, including Global Dairy Platform, Global Agenda for Sustainable Livestock and FAO Livestock information, it was pointed out that joint efforts have to be taken to bring dairy development forward. Also from the private sector multiple dairy processors are undertaking national and international projects towards social development in the nexus of feeding and feed production, livestock performance, animal health, environmental footprint.

Three main outcomes on dairy development from the IFCN Dairy Conference:

1. **Use a business approach:** Dairy development should create value following business and market oriented approaches for farmers, processors and the broader value chain.
2. **Leadership** needs to be under the responsibility of private organizations in developed countries and through public-private partnerships in developing countries.
3. **Fitting dairy development programmes** depend foremost on the current status of the country or region. Data, metrics and impact analysis are crucial to define the right strategy.

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