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California Milk Advisory Board

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Contact:

Thalia Sullivan, Communications Associate
California Milk Advisory Board
tsullivan@cmab.net / (209) 690-8242

Jennifer Giambroni, VP of Communications
California Milk Advisory Board
jgiambroni@cmab.net / (209) 690-8244

CALIFORNIA MILK ADVISORY BOARD NAMES DR. TY WAGONER DIRECTOR OF THE CALIFORNIA DAIRY INNOVATION CENTER

TRACY, Calif. – October 22, 2026 – The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB) today announced the promotion of Dr. Ty Wagoner to Director of the California Dairy Innovation Center (CDIC), effective January 1, 2027. Wagoner succeeds Veronique Lagrange, who will retire at the end of 2026 after more than six years guiding CDIC and serving California's dairy industry.

Wagoner brings more than 15 years of experience in dairy science, product development and innovation to the role. Since joining CDIC as Senior Manager in April 2024, he has directed numerous product research, innovation and education projects, strengthening the CDIC's support for California dairy processors, entrepreneurs, researchers and the broader industry.

As Director, Wagoner will steer CDIC's work to accelerate innovation and growth across California's dairy sector, in collaboration with industry and CDIC's Steering Committee. His priorities include expanding opportunities for product and process innovation, strengthening ties between industry and academia, supporting workforce development, and helping California dairy companies bring new products and technologies to market.

"Ty has demonstrated exceptional technical expertise, creativity and commitment to the California dairy industry," said Bob Carroll, CEO of CMAB. "His understanding of the opportunities facing dairy processors and his ability to work across industry, academia and other partners make him ideally positioned to take CDIC into its next chapter."

Wagoner began his career as a chef trained at the California School of Culinary Arts before earning his B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. in Food Science from North Carolina State University. His career includes dairy ingredients research at NC State; two years working with Fonterra's Research and Development Centre as part of the Transforming the Dairy Value Chain Primary Growth Partnership; and heading ingredient innovation in the precision fermentation industry. He has formulated new beverages, snacks, cheese products and novel ingredients, and has worked extensively across R&D and operations teams on strategic initiatives.

Since its inception, the CDIC's role supporting dairy processors, producers, researchers and industry partners has greatly expanded. The organization launched programs in product and process innovation, technical training, workforce development, research partnerships, commercialization and industry education. Today CDIC connects California dairy companies with academic and technical expertise, helps translate new ideas into practical opportunities, and develops training for both current and new members of the dairy workforce.

"I am extremely proud of what CDIC has accomplished and, most importantly, of the partnerships we have built across California's dairy community," said Lagrange. "Ty has been a crucial part of that work, and I am confident he will bring energy, expertise and a strong vision to the CDIC as its Director. I look forward to seeing CDIC continue to grow and make an even greater impact on California dairy innovation."

"CDIC has a tremendous opportunity ahead," said Wagoner. "I am honored to take on this role and build on the strong foundation Veronique established. Our focus will remain on delivering practical value to California dairy: helping companies innovate, developing the industry's workforce, connecting expertise with industry needs, and creating new opportunities to grow the value of California milk."

Created by the CMAB, the CDIC is a virtual organization that coordinates pre-competitive research and educational training in collaboration with industry, check-off programs, and research/academic institutions in support of a common set of innovation and productivity goals guided by a Steering Committee of leading industry organizations. Information about the CDIC and its programs is available at [CDIC.net](https://www.cdic.net).

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About the California Dairy Innovation Center

The California Dairy Innovation Center (CDIC) coordinates pre-competitive research and educational training in collaboration with industry, check-off programs, and research/academic institutions in support of a common set of innovation and productivity goals. The CDIC is guided by a Steering Committee that includes Dairy Farmers of America, California Dairies Inc., California Dairy Research Foundation, California Milk Advisory Board, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Dairy Management Inc., Fresno State University, Hilmar Cheese, Leprino Foods, and UC Davis. More info at: <https://www.cdic.net/>.

About Real California Milk/California Milk Advisory Board

The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB), an instrumentality of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, is funded by the state's dairy farm families who lead the nation in producing quality milk. With a vision to nourish the world with the wholesome goodness of Real California Milk, the CMAB's programs focus on increasing demand for California dairy products in the state, across the U.S. and around the world through advertising, public relations, research, and retail and foodservice promotional programs. For more information and to connect with the CMAB, visit RealCaliforniaMilk.com, [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [TikTok](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#) and [Pinterest](#).