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Tillamook County Creamery Association Wins National Community Impact Award
Long-term change comes from 109-year-old dairy co-op rethinking philanthropy

PORTLAND, Ore. – May 17, 2018 – The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, established under the leadership of dairy farmers, announced that the Tillamook County Creamery Association is the winner of the 2018 Community Impact Award. The award was presented during the seventh annual U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards ceremony on May 16, at the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Ill., outside of Chicago.

"Tillamook exemplifies devotion to their community," said Barbara O'Brien, president of the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy. "From working to find the root cause of food insecurity to improving housing access, they are addressing large-scale issues that impact the people and the planet."

Founded in 1909 as a farmer-owned cooperative on the coast of Oregon, the Tillamook County Creamery Association (Tillamook) prides itself on its commitment to bringing to market the most consistent, best tasting, highest-quality dairy products made as naturally as possible. Guided by the Dairy Done Right philosophy that everyone deserves real food that makes them feel good every day, Tillamook has earned top awards for their cheese, ice cream, yogurt, sour cream and butter made with unwavering values that never sacrifice quality for profit. For Tillamook, Dairy Done Right means more than making delicious product. It means they stand by their guiding principle: consider every stakeholder and always do what's right for the long term. Always.

"In Tillamook County, 13.5 percent of the population is food insecure due to inaccessibility to wholesome food and a housing crisis. Too many people have to make the heart-wrenching decision to pay the rent or feed their family," explained Sarah Beaubien, Tillamook's senior director of stewardship. "Knowing these circumstances, we wanted to be part of the solution in our community."

Tillamook engaged with leaders at the Oregon Food Bank to understand and address underlying causes of hunger and access to nutritious foods. Their collaboration led to Tillamook's purchase of a new distribution truck for the local food bank to improve their distribution capacity. They also funded a full-time position within the Oregon Food Bank to research the root causes of food insecurity issues in Tillamook County, with the goal of eventually addressing solutions at a state-wide level.

To address local housing inequalities – which are often a contributor to food insecurity - Tillamook also worked closely with CARE, a local agency that serves the at-risk population of Tillamook County. When CARE was at risk of losing its headquarters and therefore its ability to provide for community members, Tillamook pledged to help secure a permanent space for the organization.

Tillamook's approach to community enrichment is multi-pronged which, in addition to food security and housing opportunities, also extends to agricultural advocacy and healthful children. These commitments take shape in various, proactive ways.

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In 2017, Tillamook committed \$1.5 million to a new food innovation center at Oregon State University, providing an innovative space for research, testing and teaching related to Oregon's dairy industry. And, in an effort to educate young girls about STEM concepts, farms and food production, a cross-functional Tillamook team collaborated with the Girl Scouts of Oregon and SW Washington to create a first-ever dairy patch in the Northwest. To strengthen partnerships, Tillamook's farmer-owners and employees also regularly participate in the company's volunteer program, *Tillamook Cares*.

Tillamook contributes hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash and product donations each year to nonprofits working to address food security, agricultural advocacy and healthful youth. Still, the cooperative has ambitious plans for the future: to invest at least five percent of their profit back into the community by 2019.

"Tillamook takes a unique approach to problem solving that involves collaboration with key stakeholders, identification of root causes and implementation of socially innovative solutions – an approach that has resulted in tremendous success and serves as an example for the industry," said Pete Kent, executive director of the Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council.

Further illustrating Tillamook's collaborative approach to social impact, James Dillard, corporate and community relations manager at the Oregon Food Bank, said, "They push us to find solutions to have as much impact as possible. They are not giving away money just to improve their brand rating. They really are passionate about making a difference in Oregon."

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About Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council

The Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council (ODNC) works on behalf of all dairy farm families and dairy processors throughout the state of Oregon. Building trust and demand for Oregon dairy products and support for those who make them is accomplished through efforts and involvement in schools, health and wellness, communications and industry development. The ODNC's origins trace back to as early as 1918, when the Oregon Dairy Council was created to advance the benefits of dairy nutrition. The Oregon Dairy Products Commission was later created by the Oregon Legislature as a commodity commission in 1943.

About Tillamook County Creamery Association

Founded in 1909 as a farmer-owned cooperative, the Tillamook County Creamery Association (TCCA) prides itself on its commitment to bringing to market the most consistent, best tasting, highest quality dairy products made in the most natural way possible. Guided by the belief that everyone deserves real food that makes them feel good every day, Tillamook has earned top awards for their cheese, ice cream, sour cream, butter and yogurt products made with unwavering values that never sacrifice or compromise quality for profit. The TCCA is currently made up of nearly 90 farming families, primarily based in Tillamook County, Oregon. Tillamook operates production facilities in Tillamook and Boardman, Oregon and employs nearly 900 people throughout the state. The Tillamook Creamery Visitors Center is the largest tourist attraction on the coast of Oregon and one of the most popular in the state, attracting more than one million visitors each year. For more information on Tillamook, visit Tillamook.com.

About Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy

Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy® is a forum that brings together the dairy community to address the changing needs and expectations of consumers through a framework of shared best practices and accountability. Initiated in 2008 by dairy farmers through the dairy checkoff, we collaborate on efforts that are important both to us and our valued customers – issues like animal care, food safety, nutrition and health, the environment and economics. The Innovation Center is committed to continuous improvement from farm to table, striving to ensure a socially responsible and economically viable dairy community. Visit USDairy.com for more information about the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy.