



REPORT: SCHOOL MILK DAY 13 OCTOBER 2009

OBJECTIVE

Promotion of the image of milk producers with the public/consumer in general and government, in particular, and creating awareness within government of the advantages attached to the inclusion of milk in a school feeding programme.

BACKGROUND

The idea of having an annual School Milk day was initiated by the MPO Free State. Since 2004 MPO National in cooperation with MPO regional management organised a School Milk Day at schools throughout the country. The MPO appealed to milk producers to donate milk to be distributed to school children at schools located in close proximity to them. Learners at the schools involved each received a serving of milk donated by a milk producer/s in the vicinity and processed and packaged by the producer/s' milk buyer/s. In 2008 several of the milk producers who were involved in donating and distributing milk during National School Milk Day in the past indicated that they would appreciate more support from the MPO. The farmers indicated that the MPO could support their efforts by supplying educational material like pamphlets, brochures, posters, colouring in sheets and Power Point presentations.

The MPO developed a colouring in and activity book for children from Grade 0 to 3 and posters encouraging the use of dairy products which were printed in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture. Thirty thousand books were

printed in five different languages as follows: 10 000 English books, 5 000 Afrikaans books, 5 000 Zulu books, 5 000 Xhosa books and 5 000 Sesotho books. 30 000 Colouring-in sheets, 5 000 posters encouraging the use of dairy products as well as 5 000 posters notifying children about School Milk Day were also printed.

The MPO decided to organise National School Milk Day in 2009 to coincide with the National Department of Health's National Nutrition Week and obtained the cooperation of Milk SA's Consumer Education Project. The team from Milk SA compiled Power Point presentations which give an overview of the benefits that the drinking of milk and the use of dairy products have for children. The presentations were compiled for the three groups: Grade 0 to 3, Grade 4 to 7 and Grade 8 to 12. Nutritionists were also made available to make these presentations if required.

The MPO requested its regional coordinators to arrange for milk (flavoured milk, maas and drinking yoghurt) to be distributed by milk producers to learners at at least one school in each province and to do everything possible to ensure that the relevant government officials in each province (Agriculture, Education, Health) are involved and to obtain as much media coverage as possible for the event. The following activities were arranged by the MPO in different regions:

MPO NORTH

NORTH WEST PROVINCE

Under the leadership of Mr Johan Strydom, chairman of MPO North West School milk day was stretched over four days from Monday, 12 to Thursday 15 October 2009. Colouring competitions were held at schools and 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes were handed over to learners. The prizes consisted of colouring pencils, crayons, whistles, sweets etc. which were donated by various stores in the region. The

benefits of milk were explained to learners at the various schools and each learner received a 250 ml dairy product – milk, flavoured milk and yogurt. Donations were received from Clover, Melpro, Soetvlei Dairies, Smith's Dairies, Laitco Dairies, Wesmelk and Dagbreek Melkery. Nearly 10 000 learners from 16 schools in the North West Province were involved in the MPO's school milk day activities.

MPUMALANGA

Colouring books were supplied to Amersfoort Primary School and Amajuba CVO School Volksrust where milk was donated and distributed by milk producers to 200 learners.

GAUTENG

Milk was donated by Nkunzi Milkyway Dairies and distributed to 850 learners at Bergsig Primary School and Wonderboom South Primary School. Learners were informed about the benefits of milk by MPO personnel. Representatives from the National Department of Agriculture attended the event.

MPO KZN

Milk was distributed at Isibongo Primary School near Howick. The MPO regional coordinator gave a presentation on the benefits of milk with the help of a Zulu translator. A colouring competition was also held and prizes were awarded to the winners. Each of the 900 learners at the school received 250 ml milk, a chocolate bar and a colouring book.

MPO FREE STATE AND NORTHERN CAPE

The MPO arranged events at two schools in Jacobsdal on 13 October and one school in Bloemfontein on 14 October. Learners at the three schools each received 250 ml milk and a colouring book.

MPO WESTERN CAPE

Approximately 7 500 learners from various schools received a dairy product – milk or yogurt – and a colouring book during School Milk Day in the Western Cape. Learners were split into groups and addressed by nutritionists from Milk SA and personnel and members of the MPO.

The MPO Western Cape also hosted 2 500 learners from ten schools in the Overberg district at the Agri Mega Week and informed them about the importance of milk and why dairy products should form an essential part of childrens' diets. A further four schools were visited in Cape Town where 2 500 learners received 250 ml milk. The MPO was also the host of a School Milk Stall during the From the Earth Expo at the Cape Town International Convention Centre where children had the opportunity to milk an artificial cow. Every child who "milked" the cow received a 250ml bottle of milk.

The dairy products distributed to the children at these events were donated by Caledon Melkery, Fair Cape and Clover.