

The Development of School Milk Programme in China

at

The Fourth International School Milk Conference

South Africa,

Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me, on behalf of the People's Republic of China, to present you the achievements, experiences and plans in the near future of China School Milk Programme as well as exchange understandings with you on how school milk programme may improve the health of juvenile and facilitate the development of dairy and even the whole agriculture sector each individual nation.

The Achievements of China School Milk Programme

China School Milk Programme started in 2000. The participation of government, schools and licensed supplier and the support of the society, this programme achieves remarkable progress.

a) The school milk grows steadily and effectively improves the health of students

At the end of 2005, school milk programme expanded to more than ten thousands of schools in sixty cities of twenty-eight provinces, supplying 2,430,000 students which are 26% more than the figure as of 1,930,000 in 2004. School milk programme plays a promoting role to advocate milk drinking, to improve the health of students and to

develop the dairy business. Statistics prove that students who drink two cartons milk per day grow distinctly taller than comparison group as in six months the milk drinkers are respectively 0.72 cm (seven-year group) and 0.46 cm (nine-year group) taller than their comparison groups.

b) establishing an effective operating model

During the implementation of school milk programme, we have gradually formed a tri-level (national, provincial and city levels) administrative mechanism, issued rules on administration, the usage of marker and the certification of licensed supplier, approved licensed supplier and worked out the operation policy as of leading by the government, operating through market, and a broadly participating by enterprises, schools and other players. The production follows an integrated plan and stick to the guidance as of safety, nutrition, convenience and cheapness. Productions use unified serial numbers. All packages print the marker of “school milk”.

c) milk source upgrade programme

Safety is a key concern of school milk programme. Good raw milk is an important factor to ensure the quality and safety of school milk. Hence, we started the implementation of a milk source upgrade programme, which involves learning from international advanced experiences, working out a milk source management system and manufacturing standards according to Chinese situations, and upgrading the skills of culturists, the management of milk sources and the quality of raw milk to ensure safe products. Now we have approved some demonstrative bases of milk source upgrade programme, have trained culturists with modern breeding skills and have

summed up a production standards. All these form a solid foundation for the general improving of Chinese school milk source bases.

d) enhancing the reputation of school milk

It is necessary to form a good image of school milk among students. School milk is produced by licensed supplier. It is a high quality product which is safer than normal milk. We make advertisement and organise press conferences, health courses, quizzes, radio programmes, class meetings and parents meetings to popularise school milk and to enhance the good reputation of school milk. Further more, in 2005, we published a journal *Milk and Health* and set up a website www.schoolmilk.gov.cn to advocate school milk programme.

e) forming a consumer group of students and facilitating the dairy business

Dairy is a promising industry in China. With the support of government, education institutes, dairies and communities, China school milk programme popularised health knowledge established milk-drinking habit so that formed a consist consumer group. This dietary habit persists into adult life and may even influent next generations. Hence, this programme is a booster to the expansion of dairy market. This programme connected culturists, dairies and consumers effectively. Because of this programme, we witnessed increases of cows, milk production, producing scale and the income of culturists and the development of dairy in China.

Experiences

We have five experiences over six-year implementation of school milk programme.

a) integrate school milk programme into dairy development

China school milk programme presents the care and concern of Chinese leaders upon the health and nutrition of young people. Students are the backbone of the future of China. Their physical and intellectual progresses determine the future of China and Chinese people. China school milk programme put the improvement of the nutrition and corporeity of young people as its core task. Meanwhile, the implementation of school milk programme also boosts the dairy, agriculture and relevant businesses and becomes a breakthrough of agricultural reform and an engine of rural economy.

b) integrate governmental guidance into enterprise operation

Because of the particularity and importance of school milk programme and Chinese context, governmental guidance upon programme implementation is necessary. Chinese government attaches great importance to this programme also because it targets at students, a special consumer group, hence the quality requirement is high. It is necessary for government to guide and build a stable market and promote the development of the programme. At the same time, licensed supplier is one of the key partners of the programme. The government works out unified policies, regulations, licence requirements, standards, markers, certifications and manufacturing plans and administrates the whole business to ensure this programme developing along a standardised and healthy path.

c) integrate safety into the expansion of the programme

Safety, nutrition, convenience and cheapness are the basic guidance of implementing China school milk programme. Relevant authorities all attach great importance to its safety. The establishing of source bases is to ensure the milk quality at the first

beginning. Licensed supplier monitor phases of production, distribution and the entry of school to ensure no unqualified products out the dairy nor enter the school. Schools provide training to students to distinguish the quality of milk. Within six years of the implementation China school milk programme, there was no severe safety accident because the dairies and school took strict measures to control quality.

d) integrate limited competition into market mechanism

The implementation of school milk programme should accord with rules of market economy. However, in order to prevent improper competition and to safeguard the interests of students, schools and licensed supplier, China school milk programme adopts a way of limited competition. Only licensed supplier and qualified products can access to schools. Licensed supplier bid for the contracts with individual schools. Students and parents are also participating in the process of selection. The milk is delivered directly from dairies to schools so as to reduce the sales cost. Meanwhile, dairies are required to stick to the policy of pursuing a narrow margin of profit.

e) integrate international experiences into Chinese context

We value the successful experiences of other nations of how to implement school milk programme. Since 1998, China has participated in many international school milk conferences and learned valuable experiences and practices from other nations. Integrating this knowledge into Chinese context, we formulated workable policies and plans. The tenet of Chinese school milk is to improve the health of young people and the whole Chinese people as well as to form a milk market and to promote the dairy and relevant industries with a purpose to increase the incomes of farmers through

agricultural reform. In 2005, we successfully hosted the Third International School Milk Conference in Kunming. Delegates gave encouraging remarks to the implementation of China school milk programme which proves that this programme now becomes an influential one in the world.

Ways of Promoting School Milk Programme

Our guidance of speeding up school milk programme is that putting safety at the core, leading by the popularisation, implementing mainly by the dairies and establishing a credible reputation of the programme.

a) working out development strategy and inviting supportive policies

We worked out long term strategy and detailed implementing plans of school milk. Meanwhile, governments of various levels in China offered supportive policies to this programme which include tax reduction towards licensed supplier and subsidies to students in rural and poor areas. We also enhanced the construction of milk source bases, the monitoring and testing of milk quality, the research of new products and new package and the popularisation of milk knowledge.

b) strengthen the monitoring and improving the quality of school milk

Safety and high quality of the milk are the key elements of the success of school milk programme. It is necessary to strengthen the quality control and adopt strict monitoring over every step such as producing, processing and delivering of school milk. It is also important to promote HACCP. All licensed supplier should be HACCP certified. School milk must be made from liquid raw milk and not from powder.

c) strengthen the popularisation and expand the programme

We broadly popularise school milk programme to encourage the habit of drinking milk among students. We selected and awarded a group of demonstrative models of cities, dairies and school in the whole nation for their role in the programme promotion. At the same time, we organised activities such as Chinese Middle School Student's Nutrition Day, World Children Day, World School Milk Day, World Milk Day to popularise China school milk programme.

d) emergency and crisis procedures

All administrative authorities, dairies and schools should have the awareness of emergency and crisis and work out procedures to alarm and cope with cases of emergency. Dairies should have emergency procedure covering every step of production including the milk source, processing, storage, transportation, delivering and drinking. Dairies also need a procedure to recall their products. Schools should provide trainings of food safety and medicine to students and also work out their emergency procedures. In the case of emergency, schools need to cooperate with hospitals and other public health institutes to cope with the case properly.

e) motivations of general participation

Schools and dairies played key roles in the successful implementation of school milk programme in just a few years. In addition, the actively promotion of nutritionist speeded this progress. In the future, we will continuously encourage them to work actively. Meanwhile, we are considering inviting social insurance into our programme so that more students may benefit from this ever developing programme. .

Ladies and Gentlemen,

School milk programme is a long-term and creative work which may suffer various difficulties. However, I believe that given the importance Chinese government attaching to it and the support and participation of enterprises, schools, parents of students and the healthy supply of milk, this programme will expand to broader areas and more juveniles will grow healthier. These new and stronger generations will build China a more prosperous nation.

Thank you all.