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**REAL CALIFORNIA MILK DEBUTS GREAT MOZZARELLA SHOWDOWN
FOODSERVICE RECIPE CONTEST TO HIGHLIGHT CULINARY INNOVATION
TAPPING INTO CALIFORNIA'S LEADING FOODSERVICE CHEESE**

Tracy, Calif. – January 9, 2024 – The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB) today announced the launch of the 2024 Great Mozzarella Showdown, an inaugural foodservice recipe contest challenging professional chefs and culinary students to develop creative, non-pizza dishes using California's number one cheese product: Mozzarella.

The CMAB is hosting this online recipe contest to build on the ongoing popularity of Mozzarella at foodservice and how it can be used in endless menu innovation. The goal is to showcase ideas using two styles of this versatile cheese in a variety of dishes for different dayparts, including appetizers and handheld items.

The Great Mozzarella Showdown is open to professional chefs and culinary students in the U.S. and offers participants the opportunity to submit creative recipes in two categories: California Mozzarella and California Fresh Mozzarella.

Influential foodservice judges will select eight winning recipes from the online submissions based on criteria including innovation, use of cheese as a primary ingredient, and flavor expectations. Professional chefs will conduct a cook off of the eight winning recipes and grand prize champions will be named for each category. Each chef finalist will receive \$2,000, with the two winning dishes receiving an additional \$2,000 for a total of \$4,000 to each category champion. In total, the CMAB will award \$20,000 in prize money.

“This recipe contest is part of our continued efforts to partner with chefs and next generation culinary professionals to showcase the versatility and performance of California Mozzarella as a key foodservice ingredient,” said Mike Gallagher, Business and Market Development Consultant for the CMAB. “While we’ve done a lot to focus on the use of California Mozzarella in the pizza and entrée space, as the reigning cheese in our foodservice portfolio, the Great Mozzarella Showdown will serve to inspire awareness of the endless opportunities for use in appetizers, handhelds, flatbreads, salads and more.”

The entry period for submitting recipes is January 8-February 16, 2024. The eight winning recipes/chefs will be announced on February 29, 2024, with the two grand champions named in mid-April. For more information, including entry details, visit greatmozzarellashowdown.realcaliforniamilk.com/.

California is a reliable, consistent source of sustainable dairy products used by chefs and culinary professionals throughout the world. As the nation’s largest dairy state, California boasts an impressive lineup of award-winning cheesemakers and dairy processors that are helping to drive dining innovation.

California is the leading producer of fluid milk, butter, and ice cream as well as Mozzarella and Monterey Jack. California milk and dairy foods can be identified by the Real California Milk seal, which means they are made with sustainably sourced milk from the state’s dairy farm families.

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About Real California Milk/the 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 sustainable dairy farming practices. 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.

The Foodservice Division of the CMAB supports foodservice operators and distributors that use Real California dairy products. The CMAB offers marketing and promotional support for foodservice operators that purchase dairy products with the Real California Milk seal, which means they are made with 100 percent milk from California’s more than 1,100 family dairy farms, using some of the most sustainable dairy practices in the nation.

For more information on sourcing cheese from California, contact the foodservice team at 209.883.6455 (MILK), businessdevelopment@cmab.net or RealCaliforniaMilk.com/Foodservice, [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).