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REAL CALIFORNIA MILK KICKS OFF 6TH ANNUAL SEARCH FOR PIZZA INNOVATION USING CALIFORNIA CHEESE & DAIRY

2024 contest includes new format, new categories, and over \$28k in cash prizes

Tracy, Calif. – March 18, 2024 – The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB) today announced the launch of the 2024 Real California Pizza Contest, the sixth annual search for the best pizza recipes using Real California cheese and dairy. The contest, which is open to professional chefs and culinary students throughout the U.S., will award prize money totaling \$28,500 for the most innovative uses of cow’s milk cheeses from California. The entry submission period runs from March 18, 2024, through May 17, 2024.

This year’s contest simplifies submissions into two new categories: Protein and Produce. Protein pizza recipes will highlight meat toppings in combination with Real California Mozzarella and other Real California cheeses. Produce pizza recipes will emphasize the delicious flavors of vegetables and fruits paired with Real California Mozzarella and other Real California cheeses.

“Each year we bring the best of the best in pizza together to showcase how California cheeses and dairy ingredients – paired with protein, produce or both – are essential tools for pizza flavor and innovation,” said Mike Gallagher, Business and Market Development Consultant for the CMAB.

“We look forward to reviewing the submissions that celebrate California’s leading foodservice cheese, Mozzarella, and our many cheese varieties.”

All entries will be evaluated with the top four recipes in each category selected as finalists. The eight finalists will receive an all-expense paid trip to compete head-to-head at a bake-off event on August 7, 2024, at the Culinary Institute of America at Copia in Napa, Calif.

During the bake-off event, following the main competition, the eight chefs will compete in a separate Three-Cheese pizza bake-off, where they will be randomly paired and charged with crafting a signature three-cheese pizza selected from the wide array of cheeses made with Real California Milk.

The winners of the Protein and Produce categories will each receive \$7,500, and the pair of winning chefs in the Three-Cheese pizza bake-off will split \$7,500. All other finalists will receive \$750 each.

Both competitions will be judged by an esteemed panel of award-winning pizza chefs, including 13-time world pizza champion Tony Gemignani, renowned Italian and pizza chef Glen Cybulski, and 2023 Real California Pizza Contest grand prize winner Bill Crawford of Righteous Slice in Idaho.

Professional chefs and culinary students can review the contest details, official rules, and submit entries at pizzacontest.realcaliforniamilk.com. This year’s entry form includes pizza name, photograph, and a brief description detailing the recipe concept and use of Real California dairy.

Chefs can choose from more than 250 varieties and styles of cheeses that feature the Real California Milk seal, which means they are made with sustainably sourced milk from California’s more than 1,100 family dairy farms.

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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](#).

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