



The Dairy Product Environmental Footprint (PEF)

What is the Dairy PEF?

The Dairy PEF - also known as Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules or PEFCR - is a methodology for assessing the **environmental footprint** of different dairy products, considering a broad array of environmental criteria and covering the full life cycle of the product, from feeding the animal to washing your yoghurt spoon. The project has been driven by the European Dairy Association (EDA) and it attests the European dairy sector's continuous effort to improve its long-term environmental sustainability.



Why the Dairy PEF?



A harmonised approach in the dairy sector: it provides a harmonised approach for measuring the environmental footprint of products. The EU Commission and the sector chose the approach to increase the credibility of environmental measurements, given the proliferation of many non-reliable claims.



Identification of environmental hotspots: it is a life cycle assessment (LCA) based method that allows the identification of the most significant environmental impacts linked to the production of certain dairy products, across a broad set of impact categories. It provides consistent, reliable, reproducible and verifiable results.



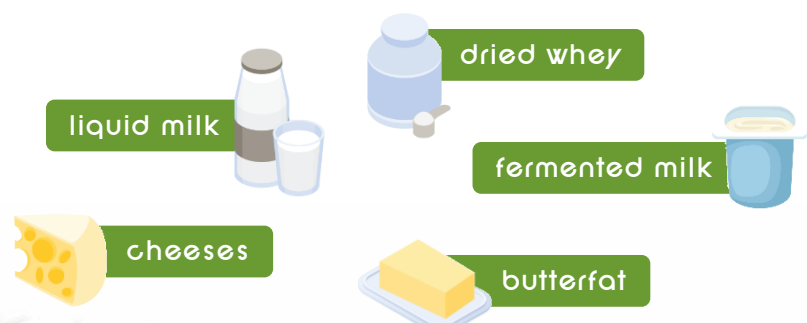
Minimising environmental impacts along the whole value chain: the project represents a cooperative effort of all stakeholders along the whole chain. It builds on the sector's several years' experience in environmental improvement. It is a simple and workable tool for all actors involved and all external bodies interested.



Environmental performance improvement over time: the Dairy PEF contributes to the improvement of the performance of the overall sector. The methodology can be used as an internal tool for companies for monitoring the environmental improvements over time and managing impacts associated with the products concerned.

For which products?

The scope of the Dairy PEF contains **five sub-categories** of dairy products:



Who has driven the PEF pilot?

 european dairy association			3 industry associations			
						6 dairy processors
	1 retailer		1 LCA consultant			
				4 public and research bodies		
	 FLEXIBLE PACKAGING EUROPE	 The European Container Glass Federation	3 packaging associations			

Steps of the project

Pilot phase: The framework of the pilot was laid out by the European Commission DG Environment initiative of a “Single Market for Green Products”. During this phase, the five subcategories of dairy products and the set of impact categories were defined, as well as the LCA based methodology.



The success of the Dairy PEF has been recognised by external evaluators and by the vote of the European Commission and the Member States in April 2018, that defined the Dairy PEF as the **reference methodology in the dairy sector**.

Transition phase: After the recognition of the EU Commission and the EU Member States, the PEF entered the transition phase, which will run until the end of 2021. The objective of this phase is to monitor the implementation of the methodology and assess its future policy applications, for instance the integration in existing EU policies such as the Green Public Procurement (GPP) and the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive, or in new policy instruments that will define new environmental and green claims.

Potential applications

The Dairy PEF as it stands now is a good methodology for **improvement calculation over time** and internal assessment, as well as business-level relationships. It could thus be used for **voluntary off-pack** information to stakeholders. Further work is necessary to allow for meaningful and quantitative comparability between products. The high-quality work of the Dairy PEF is relevant for framing sustainability strategies in the sector. Companies involved in eco-design and “green” products can benefit from the assessment of the Dairy PEF methodology, increasing their visibility and environmental credibility. Therefore, EDA supports actions by the European Commission to integrate the Dairy PEF methodology in existing or new policy instruments, in order to reward sustainable practices in the dairy sector.



See our EDA position papers on **PEF** and **EU Product Policy**.