A Day in the Life of a Dairy Cow

Introduction
As consumers become further removed from agriculture, the gap in knowledge of and trust in the food system widens radically. To combat this decline, it is important that agriculturalists aim to educate consumers and close this gap.

Methods
The book follows an ordinary day of a dairy cow and gives insight into day-to-day work on the farm. Kids learn about dairy through the perspective of a cow, and adults can find bonus facts in speech bubbles throughout the book. Pictures of real cows illustrate these concepts.

Conclusion
- Focusing on early education is a good way to counteract misinformation about dairy and show consumers where their food comes from.
- A children's book provides a low-pressure way for families to learn about dairy together.
- Understanding common farm practices builds consumer trust in the industry and the food supply.

Objectives
Create a children's book that addresses consumers' key concerns about dairy by targeting two audiences:
1. Children who read the book
2. Parents or other adults who may read the book to/with the child

Research
- Why focus on misconceptions? Misinformation is frequently presented to consumers. They are willing to learn, so it's best to focus on counteracting that misinformation by sharing the dairy industry's story (1).
- Why a children's book? Children who understand food production better understand nutrition and the importance of ag (2). In addition, it is difficult to get someone to reform an opinion after they have made up their minds. Providing early knowledge helps form positive opinions first (3).
- Why both children and adults? Children are more likely to believe what their parents believe, so educating both audiences is important (3).

References
(1) Holt & Cartmell. (2013). Consumer perceptions of the U.S. agriculture industry before and after watching the film Food, Inc.
(2) Knobloch, Ball, & Allen, (2007). The benefits of teaching and learning about agriculture in elementary and junior high schools.

Thank you to the ISU Dairy Farm for providing photo locations.