NEWS | GLOBAL

rePlant to invest $20M to support Danone in organic farming

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By **Sonali Wankhade** | January 30, 2020



replant-to-invest-20m-to-support-danone-in-organic-farming

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rePlant Capital to dedicate up to 40% of its $50M impact investing fund to Danone North America farmer partners

Danone North America, a leading food & beverage company and the world's largest Certified B Corp, has announced its partnership with rePlant Capital, a financial services firm dedicated to reversing climate change. Over the next several years, rePlant will invest up to $20 million dollars to support Danone North America's farmer partners with expenses related to converting to regenerative or organic farming practices. These practices increase biodiversity, enhance ecosystems and enrich soil, as part of the company and its partners' broader commitments to addressing climate change.

As a Public Benefit Corporation and the largest Certified B Corp, Danone North America works tirelessly with partners across its value chain to support its farmers, lessen the impacts of its business on the environment and protect natural resources for the future. This partnership with rePlant is yet another example of the company's commitment and demonstrates how the company thinks differently about the role of business, valuing social progress and sustainability alongside business growth.

The company is consistently pursuing new models of working with farmers to incentivize the adoption of new, sustainable farm management practices — for example, by maintaining long-term contracts with dairies to help alleviate short-term market volatility, thus allowing them to consider new ways of farming — and in 2018 committed to investing $6 million in soil health research over five years. By gaining a better understanding of the variables and nuances across growing regions, this research will enable Danone North America to better guide its farmer partners with regards to farm management and use of regenerative agriculture practices on their farms.

The first of these loans has been provided to Kansas-based McCarty Family Farms, a partner of Danone North America for almost 10 years and co-owner of MVP dairy, LLC, winner of the International Dairy Foods Association 2020 Innovative Dairy Farmer of the Year award. McCarty family farm owners and fourth generation dairy farmers Mike, Clay, David and Ken McCarty will use the loan to install moisture probes on cropland surrounding their dairy, where water access issues are of concern, to reduce the amount of water used on crops that provide forage for the

dairy cows. In addition to reducing water usage on their own farm, McCarty Family Farms is working with their local feed partnerships as well as the local watershed authority to see how this program may be expanded to other farms in the region to improve water consumption and aquifer longevity within the Ogallala aquifer.

One of the first funds of its kind, rePlant brings together a range of impact investors and family foundations to tackle some of the greatest challenges created by climate change. At an invitation-only event held at MVP Dairy, LLC — a Danone North America partner co-owned by the McCarty and VanTilburg families — in Celina, Ohio earlier this month, the company's senior leaders gathered farmer partners and rePlant's investor network to discuss how these groups can further collaborate on funding opportunities that help farms during the period of transition to regenerative or organic practice adoption.

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