

Darigold invests \$67M to expand FIT milk production

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Northwest farmer co-op invests \$67 million in Boise facility to support ramp-up



Consumer demand for Darigold FIT milk is growing rapidly. Launched in the Pacific Northwest market last year, FIT has doubled in sales and distribution over the past six months. This great-tasting milk with no compromises has 75% more protein and 40% less sugar compared to traditional milk. To support this growth, Darigold, Inc. will invest \$67 million in its Boise, Idaho, facility this year.

FIT was developed in response to consumer trends that demand “better for you” products, which are also delicious and convenient. Using ultrafiltration, FIT is designed to give consumers the taste they want while being lactose-free and high in protein without introducing anything artificial. Darigold recently broadened the FIT product line to include whole milk, as well as offering 2% white and 2% chocolate milk.

According to Duane Naluai, Darigold’s senior vice president who was behind this new product: “FIT was inspired by our farmer owners’ desire to revitalize fluid milk. They, more than anyone, know Darigold must provide consumers with new and relevant types of milk that preserve the wholesome and nutritious foundation which makes milk great in the first place. The positive consumer response we have received gives us confidence that FIT is bringing consumers back to fluid dairy.”

The investment in Boise will not only expand FIT but will also serve as a platform for re-launching other classic Darigold beverages. “We will deliver a better package for both our consumers and channel partners,” Naluai said.

This investment includes a major capacity expansion, as well as modern aseptic packaging to produce FIT as a shelf-stable product that can be shipped and stored without refrigeration. This project will generate 15 new positions in Boise. It will also reduce the company’s environmental footprint as it relates to water use, plastic, corrugated material and overall energy use.

Many of the local farmers who supply the milk and sponsored the development of FIT are based in Washington state. Tony

Veiga, chairman of the [Dairy Farmers of Washington's](#) board of directors, said: "This is yet another example of innovation coming from the entrepreneurial spirit of our farmers, building on a tradition of constantly striving to provide more nutritious products in more sustainable ways. Darigold and the co-op's farmers certainly do dairy in a responsible way."

The first production run using the shelf-stable packaging is anticipated for fall of 2020, marking the first of its kind in the Northwest.

"It's an exciting time for dairy, as innovation is inspiring increased demand among consumers," said Karianne Fallow, CEO of [Dairy West](#), who represents and sponsors dairy across Idaho and Utah. "Darigold FIT is a great example of the kind of new thinking that is revitalizing dairy and we're proud of the investment Darigold has chosen to make."

With the FIT expansion, the local [farmer owners of Darigold](#) are investing in their own future. Not only are they stepping up to better serve consumers, they also continue to invest in local farming. Their commitment to caring for people, the land and animals is steadfast and permanent. They operate under a set of ever-improving standards that ensure excellence and continuous improvement in dairy stewardship and sustainable farm practices.