India Milks More, America Sells More

8.5 crore Indian households make 2.4× the milk of 23,609 American farms. The US wins on yield and exports; India wins on scale and livelihoods.

2.4X	8.5 CR	23,609	4.9X	20.7%
MORE MILK	HOUSEHOLDS	DAIRY FARMS	YIELD PER ANIMAL	VS INDIA 0.23%
INDIA'S LEAD	INDIA DAIRY	USA DAIRY	US ADVANTAGE	US EXPORTED
2,479 vs 1,051 lakh MT	Rural livelihoods, 2024-25	Avg herd: 397 cows, 2025	11,063 vs 2,250 kg/yr	Share of milk solids

TWO DAIRY MODELS, SIDE BY SIDE

Each row: the larger value fills its side · ratio shows who leads

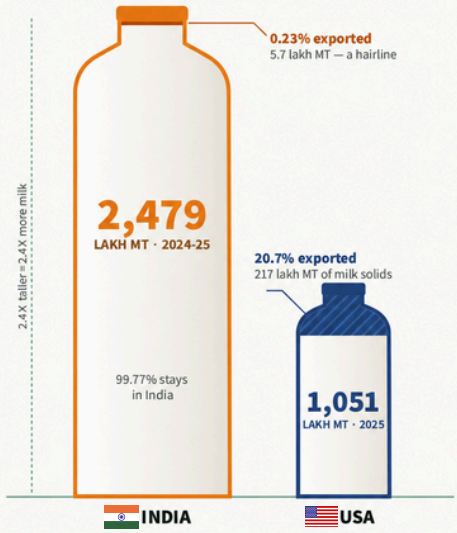
INDIA		USA
2,479	MILK PRODUCED lakh MT — India 2.4×	1,051
8.5 crore	PRODUCERS households / farms — India 3,600×	23,609
10.64 crore	MILKING ANIMALS in-milk bovines / milk cows — India 11.2×	95 lakh
2,250	YIELD PER ANIMAL kg per year — USA 4.9×	11,063
8	MILK PER PRODUCER kg per day* — USA 1,527×	12,196
0.23%	SHARE EXPORTED % of production — USA 90×	20.7%

Two models, One lesson :

India's dairy is a livelihood for millions; America's is an export industry.
Every 1% of India's milk sold abroad is worth about ₹12,200 Crore

TWO DAIRY GIANTS · HOW MUCH MILK LEAVES HOME?

Bottle height = milk produced (to scale) · Dark band = share exported



VALUE OF MILK (₹ LAKH CRORE)

India 12.21 | USA 4.61*

India's value lead (2.6×) beats its volume lead

VALUE PER KG OF MILK (₹)

49.3 INDIA · implied* | 43.9 USA · farm price

Indian milk is not "cheap milk"

IMPORTS (LAKH MT, MILK EQ.)

0.05 INDIA · 2024-25 | 33.6 USA · fat basis

US trades both ways; India is self-sufficient

LATEST YEAR GROWTH

+3.6% | +2.6%

India 2024-25 · USA 2025

Source: DAHD Annual Report 2025–26, GoI (BAHS 2025; import/export: FAOSTAT); USDA World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE-677), 10 Nov 2026; exchange rate US$1 = ₹93.91 (early Nov 2026). GFST Analysis.

A Livelihood Model Meets An Export Model

India out-produces the US by 2.4× and out-earns it by 2.6× — through 3,600 times as many producers. America does it with far fewer cows, five times the yield, and sells a fifth of its milk solids to the world.

The people gap is the real story: Dairy supports 8.5 crore Indian rural households; the US has just 23,609 licensed dairy farms. An average Indian household makes about 8 kg of milk a day (₹1.44 lakh a year); an average US farm makes 12,196 kg a day (about ₹19.5 crore a year).
Yield is America's edge: A US cow gave 11,063 kg of milk in 2025 against India's bovine average of 2,250 kg — 4.9× more. India needs 10.64 crore milking animals; the US needs 95 lakh, at 397 cows per farm.
Yet India leads on volume and value: 2,478.7 lakh MT against 1,051.0 lakh MT, worth ₹12.21 lakh crore against about ₹4.61 lakh crore. India's implied ₹49.3/kg is above the US farm price of ₹43.85.
Exports are the missing lever: The US exported 20.7% of its milk solids (217.3 lakh MT) in 2025; India exported 0.23% (5.7 lakh MT). Matching the US share would mean 513 lakh MT — and every 1% exported is worth about ₹12,200 crore.
How the numbers are estimated: India's milk is a sample-survey estimate — DAHD's Integrated Sample Survey (now eLISS) multiplies animals in milk by average yield across seasons. US cow, yield and farm counts come from USDA NASS surveys; WASDE balance sheets and 2026–27 projections are revised monthly. Per-producer and value figures are GFST calculations.

CONNECTS TO DATA STORIES #07 & #08

Story #07 traced how India overtook the US in 1998 to become the world's largest milk producer. Story #08 found that growth has slowed to 3.6%, so future value must come from yeild, prices, exports and value-addition — the gaps this strory measures against America.

Data Table

Indicator	India 2024–25	USA 2025	India ÷ USA
Milk production (lakh MT)	2,478.7	1,051.0	2.36×
Dairy households / licensed farms	8.5 crore	23,609	3,600×
Milking animals	10.64 crore	95 lakh	11.2×
Milk per animal (kg/year)	2,250	11,063	0.20×
Animals per producer	~1.3*	397	—
Milk per producer (kg/day)*	8.0	12,196	1/1,527
Value of milk (₹ lakh crore)	12.21	4.61*	2.65×
Value per producer (₹/year)*	1.44 lakh	19.5 crore	1/1,359
Value per kg (₹)	49.26*	43.85	1.12×
Exports (lakh MT, milk equiv.)	5.7	217.3 / 75.7	1/38
Exports as % of production	0.23%	20.7% / 7.2%	—
Imports (lakh MT, milk equiv.)	0.05	31.3 / 33.6	—
Growth over previous year	3.58%	2.57%	+1.0 pt

India: in-milk bovines (2024) and bovine yield (2024–25), DAHD; 8.5 crore = rural households with a dairy livelihood. USA: milk cows include dry cows; licensed herds and yield, NASS 2025. US trade: skim-solids / fat basis. India's year is April–March; US is calendar year. *GFST calculation: averages = totals ÷ producers; US value = production × all-milk price.

Source: DAHD Annual Report 2025–26, GoI (BAHS 2025; import/export: FAOSTAT); USDA World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE-677), 10 Nov 2026; exchange rate US$1 = ₹93.91 (early Nov 2026). GFST Analysis.