

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## Los Nietos Students Learn Benefits of Milk as Cows Visit for Demonstration

### Mobile Dairy Classroom Educates Children About Healthy Choices

**Whittier, CA** – Students of Rancho Santa Gertrudes Elementary School squealed in excitement at the sight of a wobbly calf on Sept. 1 when they received a visit from the Mobile Dairy Classroom, a program that teaches children about agriculture and healthy food choices.

The school hosted two dairy animals, and students watched in amazement as an instructor milked a cow and explained its anatomy before allowing the students to pet the calf. The program is led by the Dairy Council of California, which provides free educational demonstrations across the state throughout the school year.

“It’s such a fun learning opportunity for our students to get an up close and personal look at how dairy foods are produced,” Rancho Santa Gertrudes Principal Octavio Perez said. “Education is much more exciting when you can show rather than tell, and we were able to give our students a hands-on lesson they won’t soon forget.”

Instructor Louis Batista arrived on campus with a 30-foot dairy classroom trailer that included a stall, a stanchion and milking equipment. Unveiling Lucy the cow, Batista gave a milking demonstration while explaining the products made from milk – such as cheese and yogurt – and the benefits of calcium and protein on teeth and bone strength.

Students were fascinated as they learned how Lucy consumes alfalfa hay, regurgitates it from one of the four compartments in her stomach, then chews and re-digests it into another compartment. Bella the calf emerged last from the trailer, allowing students the opportunity to get hands-on with the subject of their day’s lesson.

“Young elementary school children are at the age where they’re growing fast and developing just as the calf is, so we want to make sure they’re getting a relatable message,” Batista said. “The most important aspect of our demonstrations is that they promote healthy eating and living. If they can begin to grasp the importance of their diet choices at this early stage it can put them on the path to a healthy life.”

The Mobile Dairy program features six mobile classrooms that operate every school day, reaching more

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than 400,000 students per year. The demonstrations are free to the schools and supplemental textbooks are also offered.

“It’s always a special feeling to see our students excited about learning and playing an active role in the lessons they are receiving,” Los Nietos Superintendent Jonathan Vasquez said. “Through this program, we were able to give them a valuable experience and engage them in a way that will stoke their enthusiasm for education.”

### **PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**090816\_LOSNIETOS\_MOBILEDAIRY1:** A Rancho Santa Gertrudes kindergartner pets a calf during a Mobile Dairy Classroom presentation on Sept. 1. The program provides free educational demonstrations that teach students about agriculture and healthy food choices.

**090816\_LOSNIETOS\_MOBILEDAIRY2:** Rancho Santa Gertrudes students mimic milking a cow during a lesson plan from a Mobile Dairy Classroom instructor.

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