

Coca-Cola's Fairlife supplier ends ties with two farms over animal cruelty allegations

Published March 1, 2025



USA – A supplier of milk to Coca-Cola's Fairlife brand has severed ties with two dairy farms in Arizona following allegations of animal cruelty.

According to a report by Animal Recovery Mission (ARM), an investigation conducted last year uncovered severe mistreatment of cows at Rainbow Valley and Butterfield Dairy farms in Buckeye, Arizona.

The findings were disclosed on February 26 in a lawsuit filed in a California district court, which also accuses Fairlife of polluting nearby waterways.

The report detailed incidents of physical abuse, including cows being hit, dragged, whipped, shot, and force-fed.

ARM stated that the abuse was not limited to low-level employees but also involved top management.

The group's founder, Richard Couto, said, "This isn't an isolated issue – it's systemic, and Fairlife's response is just another attempt to cover up the truth."

Fairlife responded to the allegations by emphasizing its commitment to animal welfare, asserting that it maintains a “zero tolerance for animal abuse.”

The company confirmed that United Dairymen of Arizona, its supplier, had suspended milk deliveries from the implicated farms.

Fairlife also stated that it operates solely as a milk processor and does not own farms or cows, though it requires suppliers to adhere to strict animal welfare standards.

United Dairymen of Arizona expressed disappointment over the findings and affirmed that its members participate in a national animal welfare initiative.

The organization said in a statement, “We are shocked and saddened by the behavior depicted in the recently released videos. There is no place within our cooperative, or in our society, for mistreatment of animals.”

The cooperative also noted that it provides training to dairy employees to ensure proper animal care practices.

This is not the first time Fairlife has faced scrutiny over animal welfare issues.

In 2023, ARM alleged that the brand continued sourcing milk from two Indiana dairy farms previously exposed for animal cruelty.

In 2019, ARM’s investigation into these farms led to lawsuits against Coca-Cola and other parties, which were settled in 2022 for US\$21 million.

Despite these controversies, Fairlife has continued to grow, surpassing US\$1 billion in annual retail sales.

The brand, known for its ultra-filtered milk with higher protein and reduced sugar content, has been a key player in Coca-Cola’s dairy portfolio.

The company’s CEO, James Quincey, previously described Fairlife as a brand with “tremendous growth prospects.”

Coca-Cola is set to open a US\$650 million Fairlife facility in New York later this year, expected to be its flagship location in the Northeast.

Fairlife has also reported investments of nearly US\$30 million in its animal welfare program in collaboration with its suppliers.

The company states that its farms undergo regular third-party audits to ensure compliance with animal care standards.

However, ARM continues to challenge Fairlife's commitment to these standards, arguing that systemic issues persist despite the brand's claims of oversight improvements.

The company confirmed that United Dairymen of Arizona, its supplier, had suspended milk deliveries from the implicated farms.

Fairlife also stated that it operates solely as a milk processor and does not own farms or cows, though it requires suppliers to adhere to strict animal welfare standards.

United Dairymen of Arizona expressed disappointment over the findings and affirmed that its members participate in a national animal welfare initiative.

The organization said in a statement, "We are shocked and saddened by the behavior depicted in the recently released videos. There is no place within our cooperative, or in our society, for mistreatment of animals."

The cooperative also noted that it provides training to dairy employees to ensure proper animal care practices.

This is not the first time Fairlife has faced scrutiny over animal welfare issues. In 2023, ARM alleged that the brand continued sourcing milk from two Indiana dairy farms previously exposed for animal cruelty.

In 2019, ARM's investigation into these farms led to lawsuits against Coca-Cola and other parties, which were settled in 2022 for US\$21 million.

Despite these controversies, Fairlife has continued to grow, surpassing US\$1 billion in annual retail sales.