



Georgian Milk Mark Federation

Member Survey

March 2026

SUMMARY

This survey assesses changes experienced by dairies since joining the [Georgian Milk Mark Federation \(GMMF\)](#), based on data collected in March 2026, 18 months after the previous survey [Georgian Milk Mark Federation Member Survey](#) (2024). The findings indicate that GMMF has significantly strengthened its role compared to the initial survey, becoming a more effective representative of the dairy sector. Dairies increasingly recognize the importance of unity in protecting their interests, boosting their negotiating power, and enhancing their advocacy efforts.

Membership has improved collaboration, collective voice, and confidence among dairies, with most respondents reporting better opportunities to **address sector challenges (68%)**, stronger **sense of unity (54%)**, better opportunity to **gather practical experience** from the group member dairies (**39%**), increased access to **knowledge and information (32%)** and engagement in **services (29%)** and **trainings (25%)**. Only a one respondent reported no change, suggesting that the federation delivers tangible benefits for the majority of members.

GMMF's advocacy role is highly valued, with all respondents confirming that it effectively represents their interests. The WhatsApp group¹ is seen as a key tool for communication and information sharing, though some improvements are suggested, particularly related to language accessibility and engagement.

Overall, the findings show that GMMF has enhanced member cooperation, sector representation and practical service delivery.

¹ This group created in 2023 is composed of all GMMF members (51) and is used for communication and information sharing among members.

INTRODUCTION

The Georgian Milk Mark Federation was established in 2019 as a coalition of twenty-four [Georgian Milk Mark dairies](#). The Georgian Milk Mark is an audited quality assurance mark. Member dairies must comply with the mark's criteria which include compliant production with 100% natural raw milk sourced from cows which have access to grazing for at least six months of the year, the majority of whose winter feed is grass based. This necessarily protects and adds value to the production of community-based dairies sourcing milk from small scale livestock producers who rely on minimal inputs livestock systems which maintain a balance with the environment.

The GMMF currently unites fifty-one dairy factories. These members are unified and dedicated to working together as a team to improve their conditions. Regular communication among members and active information exchange through the WhatsApp group has strengthened mutual trust and enhanced their capacity to engage effectively with public institutions and market actors. They are now confident enough to make their voice heard with relevant bodies and to articulate their concerns with government and media.

This impact assessment is a follow-up to the [Georgian Milk Mark Federation Member Survey \(2024\)](#) and examines the effects of GMMF on dairies since they became members.

This study explores how dairies assess the GMMF's institutional capacity, the benefits of membership and the services they receive. It also evaluates the effectiveness of their WhatsApp group used for communication and information sharing and capturing the qualitative perspectives of dairies on the federation and the group.

METHODOLOGY

The assessment included a semi-structured survey conducted among WhatsApp user members. The survey was conducted using an online survey tool and was conducted anonymously, allowing respondents to participate without entering their names, contact information, or other identifying details. Of the fifty-one WhatsApp user members, twenty-eight (55%) completed the online questionnaire, enabling the identification of key trends during analysis. 22 (79 %) out of 28 dairies who filled the survey use the Georgian Milk Mark.

KEY FINDINGS:

Representation of the Dairy Sector

100 % of respondents² responded that the GMMF **represents the milk sector better** than in previous years. It contributes to joint problem solving and collective efforts to address common challenges faced by dairy producers.

Advocacy and Support

All of the respondents believed that the Georgian Milk Mark Federation effectively **represents their interests**.

Use of GMMF Services

54% of respondents received financial support from donor organizations through the federation. Over 50% received financial support through linkages to donors provided by the GMMF and 50% had attended a training course on environmental auditing and health and safety provided by the GMMF itself or through its facilitation.

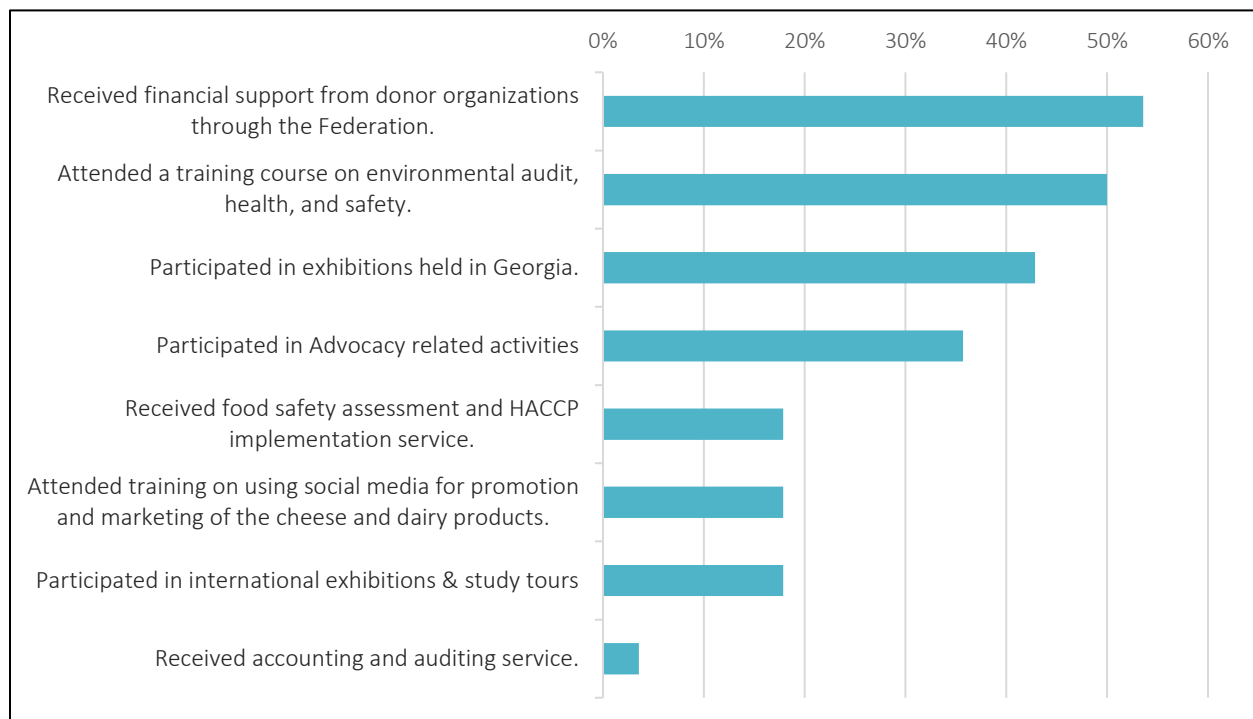


Figure 1: GMMF services used by the members of the Federation

² All percentages are calculated out of respondents who answered the question

Key Benefits of GMMF Membership

The findings suggest that GMMF membership has primarily strengthened collaboration and the collective voice amongst the dairies. The most commonly reported change (68%) is improved opportunity to discuss sector challenges and promote shared interests, followed by increased confidence driven by a sense of unity with other members (54%). Practical knowledge exchange is also notable, with 39% highlighting better access to peer experience. Improved access to reliable information (32%) and beneficial services (29%). Increased participation in trainings and events (25%) were also mentioned with only a small share (4%) reporting no change, indicating that the federation is delivering tangible value for the vast majority of its members.

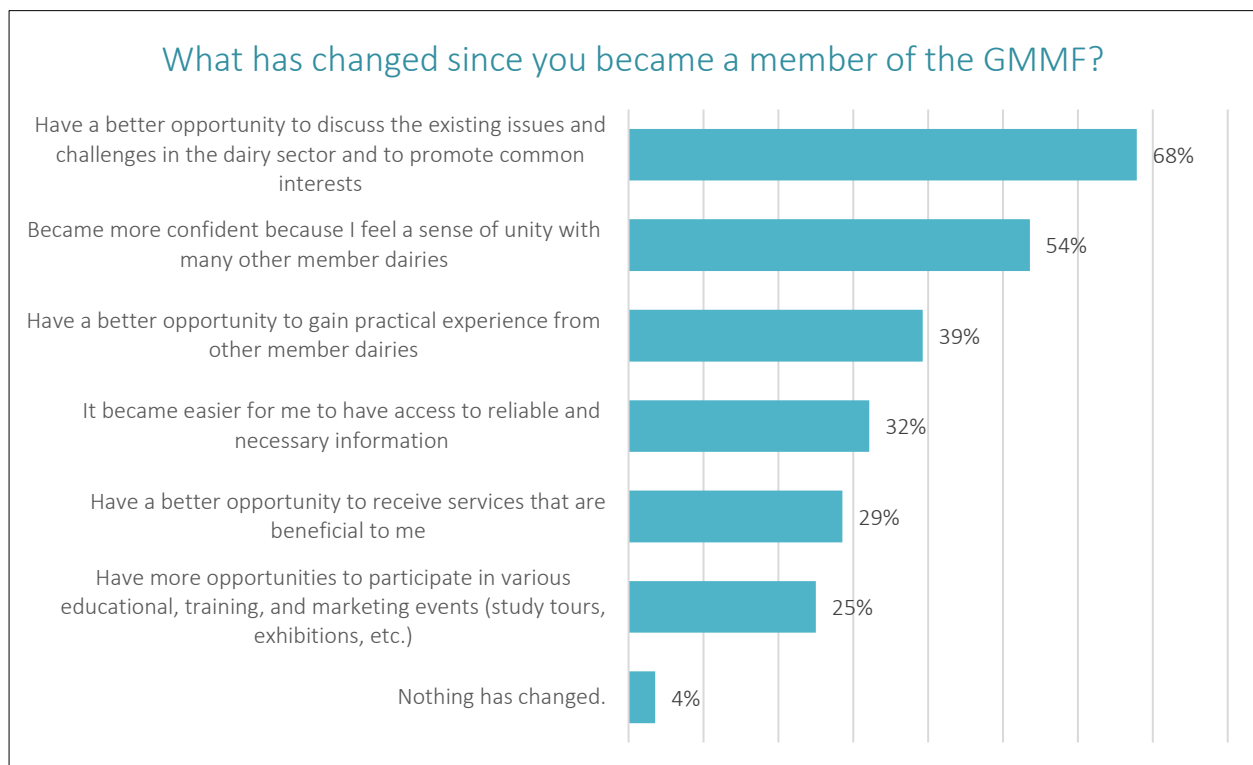


Figure 2: Impact of GMMF Membership

Benefit of the WhatsApp Group

60% of the surveyed federation members actively use the group from daily to several times a week intervals.

96% (27 out of 28 those who answered the question) responded that they like the WhatsApp group, as it is widely perceived as a **useful and active communication and information platform**. The most frequently mentioned benefit is access to timely and reliable information, with members highlighting that the group helps them stay updated on sector developments. Respondents also emphasized the value of **quick and direct communication**, which improves coordination and strengthens connections within the sector.

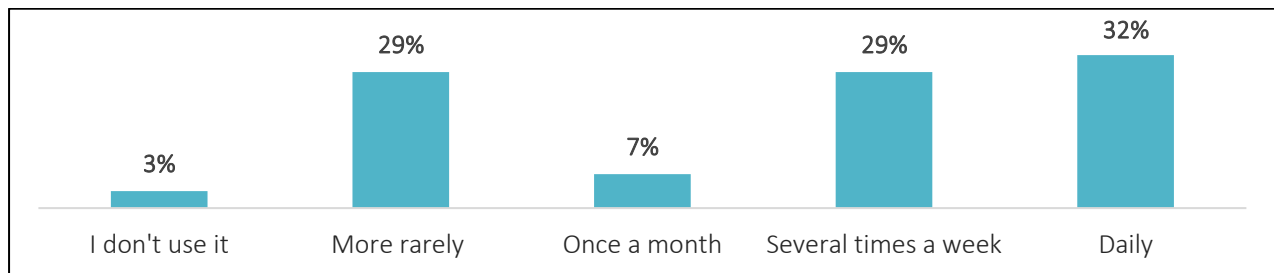


Figure 3: Frequency of Using the Federation WhatsApp Group

Suggested Improvements to the GMMF and Member Communication

Some of the respondents indicated that **no improvements are needed**, suggesting overall satisfaction with the work of the GMMF and communication among members, including through the Federation's WhatsApp group.

Among those who suggested improvements, the most prominent theme relates to **language barriers**. Several respondents noted difficulties in understanding information due to language constraints and recommended introducing **translation support** (e.g. Armenian language translation) to improve accessibility and inclusiveness across GMMF WhatsApp group activities and communications.

Another recurring theme is the need for **greater activity and engagement**, both within the WhatsApp group and from the Federation more broadly. Respondents expressed interest in more proactive involvement from GMMF in responding to members' needs and encouraging more regular interaction among members.

Respondents also emphasized strengthening GMMF's role in advocacy and engagement at the state level, with calls for more active efforts to address sector challenges through interaction with government institutions.

Additionally, some participants suggested improvements in:

- **Information focus**, with more attention on farmers and their specific needs
- **Sharing of best practices**
- **Promotion of initiatives such as promotion the Georgian Milk Mark**
- **Structured feedback and communication**, including updates from the Federation on progress, current status, and next steps on key issues

CONCLUSION

The findings confirm that GMMF is a relevant and effective platform for uniting dairies, addressing a gap that previously existed. It has strengthened their common voice and supports the development of the sector. Membership has delivered clear practical benefits, as members actively use the group to exchange opinions, receive recommendations and share experiences with one another. It also facilitates collaboration, improves access to information and increases engagement in services, while the federation's advocacy role is widely recognized by its members.

The 2024 GMMF Survey focused more on the development of services for the group and this survey shows that this development has been successful, it also highlighted the need for more linkages with the National Food Agency which has also been achieved. In general, the satisfaction of the group is as high as before and shows a definite development of the Federation.

The WhatsApp group further enhances communication and coordination across the GMMF network, with a particular focus on the Samtskhe-Javakheti region, where many Armenian communities are based. However, the survey highlighted that language barriers continue to limit the ability of some Armenian-speaking members, to fully participate in group discussions and benefit equally from the information shared. Addressing this through translation support and more inclusive communication practices should be considered a priority for strengthening participation and inclusion going forward.

The survey has revealed several suggestions for improvement from respondents which would significantly improve the GMMF offering to its members. Responding to their suggestions would further strengthen their buy in to the group and enhance its joint value.

Overall, the results indicate that the GMMF continues to create tangible value and strengthen its institutional role within the dairy sector, members have a strong desire to remain part of it wanting to benefit fully from the opportunities they perceive it offers.