

Master Class Dairy 360°: Workshop for HoReCa Sector

The Indian Dairy Association (West Zone) organized its flagship master class, **Dairy 360°: Quality, Adulteration & Commercial Insights**, on April 18, 2026, at the IDA (WZ) Mumbai office, Dynasty Business Park, Andheri. The workshop was designed to provide HoReCa professionals with a holistic understanding of dairy products, combining technical expertise with commercial insights.

The workshop was inaugurated by IDA (WZ) Chairman, Dr. J.B. Prajapati, who set the tone for the event by emphasizing the importance of quality and authenticity in dairy procurement. He also highlighted the critical role of the HoReCa sector in safeguarding consumer health by using genuine dairy products in their recipes. He was warmly welcomed by Secretary Shri Madhav Patgaonkar, whose efforts in organizing the session were acknowledged by all present. The inauguration was further graced by the presence of Vice Chairmen Dr. J. V. Parekh and Shri K. Shyju, along with Treasurer Shri Anil Hatekar, reflecting the strong leadership and collective commitment of the association.



The session opened with Prof. Dr. R.D. Kokane, a distinguished consultant who has worked with numerous dairy brands to establish production units. Drawing on his vast experience, Dr. Kokane explained the fundamentals of milk quality and the importance of purchase standards and product standardization. He emphasized how these parameters directly influence the commercial success of dairy products, offering practical guidance for procurement professionals in the hospitality and catering sectors.

The second speaker, Shri Rajan Malik, an entrepreneur credited with introducing paneer to the B2B market, shared his journey of supplying paneer to leading chains such as McDonald's and Domino's. His talk focused on the varieties of paneer available in the market and the critical factors a purchase

head should consider when selecting them. He also highlighted the growing issue of analogue or fake paneer, elaborating on methods to identify adulterated products and stressing the importance of authenticity in procurement.

The workshop attracted an impressive audience, including representatives from Taj Group of Hotels, JW Marriott, Copper Chimney, Prashant Corner, Tarachand Bhagat Chand, Mohanlal Mithaiwala, Westin, FW Chefs, Radisson, Fairmont, Reliance, Mars Hotels & Restaurants, Box 8, Beyond Kitchen, Vibrant India, etc. Their participation underscored the relevance of the session and ensured that the insights shared by the speakers reached decision-makers directly responsible for procurement and quality assurance.

The highlight of the workshop was the session by Shri Nilabja Dey, a seasoned professional with a distinguished career in the HoReCa industry. Formerly Purchase Head at Sodexo, followed by leadership roles in dairy companies as Sales Head, he brought unmatched authority to the discussion. With his vast experience in sourcing dairy products and selling reputed dairy brands to the HoReCa sector, Shri Dey delivered a comprehensive presentation on ghee—one of the most premium and most adulteration-prone dairy products. He explained traditional and modern methods of ghee-making, their impact on quality, and the commercial implications. He compared varieties and price ranges available in the market, guiding participants on what to prioritize during purchase. Importantly, he stressed the need for Gas Chromatography (GC) certification as a scientific measure to authenticate purity.

By covering milk, paneer, and ghee comprehensively, the workshop provided participants with a 360-degree perspective on dairy products. It bridged the gap between scientific expertise and commercial procurement practices, empowering HoReCa professionals to make informed decisions that balance quality, authenticity, and profitability. This was followed by an intense and enriching discussion. Many of the participants' concepts and concerns were addressed by the experts and IDA leadership.



The key takeaways from the workshop are:

- Beyond Pricing - Focus on Authenticity

Policy leaders in the HoReCa sector must look beyond price tags. A vendor offering products below production cost raises red flags-authenticity and sustainability of supply should be the priority.

- Quality Standards & Certification

Purchase decisions hinge on quality requirements and certifications. There is a pressing need for third-party authentication to ensure certifications are genuine and trustworthy.

- Bridging Knowledge Gaps with Training

Purchase heads require formal training to align their understanding with scientific principles, technology, and practical applications. This will help them make informed, evidence-based procurement decisions.

- Chef-Centric Understanding of Dairy Products

Chefs need clarity on how genuine dairy products differ from analogues and how their functionality can be adapted to meet culinary requirements. This empowers chefs to innovate while maintaining authenticity.

The event reaffirmed IDA (West Zone)'s commitment to advancing knowledge and fostering collaboration within the dairy industry, positioning the association as a hub for professional development and industry leadership.



