

# Business Standard

## Amul to launch India's first branded lactose-free milk

**It has been stated that customers who are lactose intolerant or believe they are, will pay a big premium for the right product**

[Sohini Das](#) | Ahmedabad August 31, 2015 Last Updated at 14:12 IST

Allergic to dairy products? Now, start your day with a glass of [lactose-free](#) milk from Amul. India's largest dairy cooperative Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) is all set to launch India's first branded lactose-free milk in a month.

Basically, anyone with lactose intolerance has difficulty in digesting milk sugars (lactose) from dairy products, due to insufficient amounts of lactase enzyme in the gut.

One of the most common cases of food intolerance among consumers is lactose intolerance.

R S Sodhi, managing director of GCMMF, confirmed the development, but said that they are yet to work out the final pricing. "All our products are reasonably priced and this would not be an exception. This would be the first branded lactose-free milk in the country," he said.

According to a report titled 'The Position of the lactose-free market within the Food Industry by Food and Health Innovation Service', Europe is a worldwide leader in the lactose-free market. The report highlights that sales of lactose-free products are expected to 75 per cent between 2012 and 2015 reaching euro 529 million by the end of this period.

"It has been stated that customers who are lactose intolerant or believe they are, will pay a big premium for the right product (Prescott, 2012)," the report said citing UK's example that nearly 15 per cent of its population avoid dairy in their diet and 12 per cent avoid lactose.

While no such systematic data is available for the Indian market at the moment, Sodhi feels that once the option is available, a significant portion of consumers would opt for it. A lion's share of GCMMF's turnover comes from liquid milk sales, and premium products like lactose-free milk (in tetra-packs) are only expected to add to the topline.

What's more, with demand for milk and dairy products clocking a 5 per cent growth in the country as against a production growth of 3.3 per cent, [GCMMF](#) is working towards plugging the gap and be ready for future demand growth.

"We are investing between Rs 800-1,200 crore every year to add capacities. By 2020, we plan to take our processing capacity up to 36 million litres per day (mlpd) from a current 24 mlpd. Within the next one and a half years, the capacity will reach 28 mlpd," Sodhi said.

Capacities of plants by dairies under GCMMF are coming onstream at Rohtak and Faridabad (Haryana), Kolkata (West Bengal), Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh) and Gandhinagar (Gujarat).