

California Dairies, Inc. deploys Veeam to protect Microsoft 365 data and mitigate cyberattacks



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— Matthew Prieto,
Director of Infrastructure and Security,
California Dairies, Inc

The business challenges

CDI's family-owned member dairies are located throughout California's rural landscape from San Diego County in the south to Sacramento County in the north. All dairies are within 100 miles of a CDI manufacturing facility, enabling fresh, raw milk to be transformed into a variety of quality dairy products within 24 hours of arrival. CDI has sales of more than \$4 billion annually across all 50 states and in more than 50 countries.

Producing quality products doesn't happen by chance. Each family farm is committed to producing safe, fresh, and nutritious milk. More than 300 hardworking farm families are the backbone of CDI.

"They're also integral to everything we do as an organization, so protecting the data that helps us collect, market, and process milk while providing services to our members is critically important," said Matthew Prieto, Director of Infrastructure and Security at CDI.

Like many manufacturing companies, CDI was an early adopter of virtualization. After determining that Symantec Backup, which backed up physical servers to tape, wasn't suitable for virtual machines (VMs), CDI considered switching to Commvault but chose Veeam® Availability Suite™ instead.

"Veeam was the leading backup solution for virtualization, just like it is today," Prieto said. "We're very glad we chose Veeam because it has saved us from one IT headache after another. When stuff hits the fan, we know we can count on Veeam."

Industry

Manufacturing

Company



California Dairies, Inc. (CDI) is the largest farmer-owned milk processing cooperative in California, producing approximately 40% of the state's milk and 20% of the nation's butter. The #1 dairy processing cooperative in the #1 dairy state was founded in 1999 and is headquartered in Visalia.

The first time it hit the fan was when Microsoft Exchange email (on-premises) suddenly became unavailable.

"It was on a Friday at 4 p.m. and I was getting ready to leave on vacation, but our Exchange servers failed," Prieto said. "I began troubleshooting the cause to no avail, so I contacted Microsoft, but they couldn't determine the root cause quickly enough, and we needed to be up ASAP. I reached out to other experienced friends in the field, but they couldn't determine the cause either. My vacation was already postponed because it had been 36 hours, so with no resolution in sight and Monday morning fast approaching, I decided to put my faith in Veeam. I restored the entire Exchange environment from a backup – it was fast, incredibly easy and, worked as expected. The entire Exchange environment was fully restored, all data was accounted for and users were unaware of how catastrophic it could have been. Later when the opportunity arose to migrate our on-premises environment to the cloud, we didn't think twice about deploying Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 because we knew how simple and reliable recovery could be. We also knew backup was our responsibility, not Microsoft's."

Prieto said the second time it hit the fan was scarier. Custom-built software supporting milk payments to farmers had failed in the middle of the night.

"I can't stress enough how important our farm families are to our organization," Prieto said. "For five hours I tried to troubleshoot the software issue, but by early morning it was still unresolved. That's when I began referring to Veeam as our emergency parachute. I yanked on the ripcord and said, 'Let's go Veeam. You've never failed us before, so don't fail us now.' And it didn't. The entire system restore was quick and all systems were fully functional by sunrise."

The Veeam solution

Veeam helps CDI maintain milk production and pay dairy farmers by protecting data used to collect, market, and process milk. Veeam also ensures business continuity through verified disaster recovery (DR) strategies, fast-tracks data protection for multi-cloud ecosystems and offers additional ransomware resilience.

"Veeam is our guarantee that data will be available when we need it," Prieto said. "Veeam has our back – it's absolutely core to business continuity, so as we move more backups to the cloud, Veeam has us covered."

Veeam backs up 72 TBs of data across 240 VMs to ExaGrid, which replicates to a DR site. CDI's DR strategies include Veeam DataLabs™ to verify recovery of backups and replicas (SureBackup® and SureReplica) and Instant VM Recovery® to restore in minutes. In addition, Veeam creates immutable backups in Amazon S3 storage for additional ransomware protection.

Veeam also backs up and protects 14 TBs of data in Microsoft 365 (OneDrive, SharePoint, Teams, and Exchange) to an on-premises ExaGrid repository, which replicates to a DR site for additional protection. And, Veeam sends backup data to Microsoft Azure Blob Storage and Amazon S3, allowing for protection, security, and resiliency of data in long-term, low-cost object storage.

Challenge

CDI is comprised of more than 300 dairy farms producing nearly 17 billion pounds of milk annually that CDI processes to make butter, fluid milk products and milk powders. Producing fresh, high-quality dairy products every day is fundamental to CDI's success, but it can also be a challenge if there's an unforeseen IT incident.

Solution

- Veeam Availability Suite
- Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365

Results

- Protects critical data used to collect, market, and process milk
- Ensures business continuity through verified DR strategies and testing
- Fast-tracks multi-cloud data protection and offers added ransomware resilience

"It's so much easier to restore 365 data from a Veeam backup rather than risk our data not being available in Microsoft's cloud," Prieto said. "For example, if an employee deletes items before leaving the company, we might need access to those items later. Veeam makes it easy to find and restore them quickly."

Prieto said Veeam makes applying for cybersecurity insurance easy too.

"Our insurance company loves knowing we use Veeam for data protection," Prieto said. "When we first approached them and they asked us what we use for backup, we said Veeam. They said, 'Oh yes, you're in very good shape.'"

The results

- **Protects critical data used to collect, market, and process milk**
"Veeam is our emergency parachute," Prieto said. "For more than a decade, it's been Veeam recovery to the rescue."
- **Ensures business continuity through verified DR strategies and frequent testing**
"Knowing Veeam protects our data delivers a level of comfort that I can't describe," Prieto said.
- **Fast-tracks multi-cloud data protection and offers added ransomware resilience**
Veeam is cloud-agnostic, so it offers flexible, native-cloud backup capabilities. In addition, Veeam offers powerful solutions to defend against ransomware attacks and other threats.

About Veeam Software

Veeam® is the leader in backup, recovery and data management solutions that deliver Modern Data Protection. The company provides a single platform for Cloud, Virtual, Physical, SaaS and Kubernetes environments. Veeam customers are confident their apps and data are protected and always available with the most simple, flexible, reliable and powerful platform in the industry. Veeam protects over 400,000 customers worldwide, including 81% of the Fortune 500 and 69% of the Global 2,000. Veeam's global ecosystem includes 35,000+ technology partners, resellers and service providers, and alliance partners and has offices in more than 30 countries. To learn more, visit www.veeam.com or follow Veeam on LinkedIn [@veeam-software](https://www.linkedin.com/company/veeam) and Twitter [@veeam](https://twitter.com/veeam).



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