The National Dairy Research Institute as country's premier Dairy Research institution has developed considerable expertise over the last five decades in different areas of Dairy Production, Processing, Management and Human Resource Development. Information generated at the Institute and the services offered have contributed to the growth of Dairy Industry as a whole and well-being of millions of milk producers and consumers of milk and milk products. Realizing the challenging need of global Dairy Trade, the Institute is continuously working to develop its R&D and HRD programmes to better serve the nation in terms of food security, employment generation, poverty alleviation and economic prosperity.

The National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal was originally started as Imperial Institute of Animal Husbandry and Dairying in 1923 at Bangalore. It was expanded and renamed as Imperial Dairy Institute in 1936 and was known as National Dairy Research Institute after independence in 1947. Subsequently, in 1955, NDRI Headquarter was shifted to Karnal. Facilities at Bangalore were retained to function as a Regional Station to serve the Southern States.

In 1964, Eastern Regional Station of the Institute was established at Kalyani in West Bengal. Both these Regional Stations continue to provide region specific R&D support for dairy development in these areas. In 1970, NDRI was brought under the wings of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research to provide greater operational autonomy to the Institute in research management functions. In 1989, status of Deemed University was conferred to the Institute for further strengthening the academic programmes for human resource development.

The National Dairy Research Institute as the premier Dairy Research Institution undertakes research, teaching and extension activities towards dairy development in the country. Being the National Institute, it conducts basic and applied research with the objective to enhance animal productivity and also to develop cost effective technologies for the benefit of the teeming millions.

Further, the Institute provides high quality manpower to meet the human resource requirements for the overall dairy development in the country. The Institute also undertakes extension programmes for transferring the know-how from the laboratory to the farmers’ fields.