



## Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative

2763 Manitowoc Rd Ste B, Green Bay, WI 54311

(920) 883-0020 | [www.voiceofmilk.com](http://www.voiceofmilk.com)

Mr. Bruce Summers  
Administrator  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

### ***Submitted via email***

I write today on behalf of Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative to reiterate our desire to see meaningful changes within the Federal Milk Marketing Orders. Our goal is to build more market certainty for our members. We believe Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack's request for unity around any federal milk pricing reform was a sensible and reasonable request.

For context, Edge is the third largest cooperative in the country in terms of milk volume, representing over 850 dairy farmer members across the Upper Midwest. As a verification cooperative, Edge directly represents the interest of farmers.

Although some progress and proposals have been made, dairy is still missing the mark on reaching the secretary's objective. Many stakeholders believe dairy drifted apart in recent weeks. Differing opinions are unsurprising, with each federal order's unique market and geographical differences requiring different approaches. This divide makes it nearly impossible to expect broad support for global policies and ideas if all orders' needs are left unmet.

Our farmers contend that any national milk pricing reform hearing must be comprehensive in its scope and provide each order with renewed relevance. While recent attempts to achieve more all-inclusive reform have been submitted, we believe enabling legislation should be pursued first to give each order more options. Edge's proposal is a two-pronged approach that provides regional flexibility while also establishing a standard set of contracting principles between farmers and processors.

Ultimately, it's about the process, timing and inclusion of ideas that drive farmers' value across all orders. Some ideas cannot be discussed in a hearing but require legislative changes; others have proposals that will eventually require legislation. We believe the secretary's unity request deserves more effort by all of us before a hearing is called.

As you know, a federal order hearing is costly, time-consuming and takes considerable staff resources. If the rules of the road may change amid the process, we believe it makes the most sense to delay any hearing, regardless of scope, until after the next farm bill is completed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Trotter", is written over a faint circular watermark.

Tim Trotter  
CEO, Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative

**EDGE DAIRY FARMER COOPERATIVE**

2763 MANITOWOC RD., STE B, GREEN BAY, WI 54001