

From: Brenda Cochran (b) (6)

Sent: Thursday, September 5, 2024 12:34 AM

To: AMS - FMMO Hearing <[FMMOHearing@usda.gov](mailto:FMMOHearing@usda.gov)>

Cc: [aria\\_austin@fetterman.senate.gov](mailto:aria_austin@fetterman.senate.gov)

Subject: [External Email]URGENT: Pennsylvania Dairy Farmer Requests Emergency Extension of Official Comment Period on USDA FMMO Hearing Recommendations Beyond Current Deadline of September 13, 2024

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Sent from my iPhone

To: USDA Officials Overseeing the Comment Period for the “Proposed Amendments to Marketing Agreements and Orders” from Carmel, Indiana, Hearing

From: Pennsylvania Dairy Farmer Brenda Cochran

Re: Current Comment Period Deadline of September 13, 2024, Gives Dairy Farmers Insufficient Time to Secure Copies of the Lengthy USDA Recommendations or to Thoroughly Study the Proposals Themselves, to Understand the Negative Impact These Recommendations Will Have on Their Milk Prices, Their Dairy Farming Businesses, Their Rural Communities, the Marketing of Their Milk, the Future of the FMMO System, and Consumers

I am hereby formally requesting an Emergency Extension of the official Comment Period beyond the current published deadline of September 13, 2024.

I am one of the majority of US dairy farmers who have been given insufficient time to date to both secure a copy of the 219+ pages and read and comprehend what is actually being proposed or to study and verify the negative effect of the Recommendations on dairy farmers like me, our rural dairy farming communities, and on consumers.

It is highly unlikely that a majority of dairy farmers have even secured copies of the government Recommendations or had adequate time to study them exhaustively or understand them.

To my knowledge, no impact studies have been ordered by the government or undertaken by the Land-Grant Universities to allow farmers to better decide whether or not to support the abstruse and insanely complicated proposals that go far beyond the scope of knowledge dairy farmers are expected to routinely understand and that are geared to cause additional harm to the class of citizens identified as dairy farmers.

Dairy farmers also face the special circumstances of being involved in one of the busiest times of the cropping year with summer feed harvesting.

Additionally, my dairy farming community has been devastated by deadly flooding which has caused widespread destruction which further distracts dairy farmers in these regions and makes it difficult for these farmers to study the Recommendations themselves or any various third-party analyses that may be available to assist the affected farmers in making fully informed decisions about the specific Recommendations, or the block-voting process they now face, or the great anxious concern circulating about a “No” vote terminating the Federal Order.

Tremendous upheaval looms for the dairy farmers who have not had adequate opportunity to try to wade through the massive number of pages that comprise the federal Recommendations for the Proposed Rule.

In summary, as a matter of justice and respect for a fully democratic process in this weighty matter, which appears to be cataclysmic for dairy farmers, it is reasonable and necessary to extend the official Comment Period on the USDA FMMO Hearing Recommendations well beyond the current published date of September 13, 2024.

If there is any presumption that a Statute dictates the deadline date, then there must be an expedited emergency intervention by Congress to correct this flagrant violation of justice. Reasonable charity for the beleaguered and marginalized dairy farmers demands nothing less.

Dairy farmers are not offered a seat at any federal hearing table even lacking individual standing to themselves petition for a federal hearing. Only the processors and dairy cooperatives are considered “fit” to request USDA hearings yet dairy farmers are burdened to vote their “approval” of

the very Recommendations that stand to cause them significant serious harm rather than vote down the Proposals and “terminate” the Order.

Death by firing squad or by slow systemic poisoning is what is being “recommended.” Dairy farmers are getting railroaded no matter what they do.

It is a matter of record that most dairy farmers have already been suffering devastating material harm from the ongoing decades-long low federal milk prices being paid so far below the dairy farmers’ cost of production as it is.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Brenda Cochran

Westfield, PA

Dairy Farmer

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