



May 8, 2023

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

Via Email: Bruce.Summers@usda.gov

Dear Administrator Summers:

On behalf of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative, I am writing in support of the comprehensive proposal for modernization of the Federal Milk Marketing Order system submitted to you on May 1, 2023 by the National Milk Producers Federation.

FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative is based in Madison, Wisconsin and has more than 2,600 dairy farmer members in seven Upper Midwestern states. We are a diverse cooperative that provides milk test verification services for our members that ship their milk to proprietary milk processors. Through our milk marketing division, Family Dairies USA, we sell nearly 600 million pounds of milk annually to 20 to 25 milk processors of products in all four Classes of milk on behalf of 138 dairy farmer members. We also own Fox Valley Quality Control Lab, a milk testing laboratory. We advocate for our members on policy issues based on positions adopted by our members. FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative represents nearly 7.7 billion pounds of milk production.

The NMPF plan is a comprehensive approach that addresses the systemwide changes that are needed to ensure a successful update of the nation's federal milk marketing order system, which is critical to ensuring a stable, orderly supply of milk across the United States.

NMPF and its plan is the result of nearly two years of meetings and discussions among the dairy industry's leading experts and represents a true consensus of the nation's dairy farmers and its processing dairy cooperatives. FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative is a member of NMPF, and I can personally attest to the in-depth discussions as I serve on NMPF's Federal Order Taskforce as well its Economic Policy Committee, and Board of Directors which developed and approved the plan that NMPF submitted to you.


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While the specific provisions of the NMPF plan will have different impacts on literally every dairy farm in the United States, this proposal will benefit all producers and represents the best path for the U.S. dairy industry moving forward.

It is imperative that USDA move forward with a national federal order hearing that includes all aspects of the NMPF proposal. Because of the extensive length of time that has passed since these provisions were last updated, and the complexity of the issues and interactions between the various provisions, each individual component is essential to the success of the whole.

I appreciate your prompt attention to the NMPF plan and thank you in advance for your approval to move forward with the NMPF proposal to a national hearing.

Sincerely,



Jeff Lyon
General Manager

cc: Dane Coale Dana.Coale@ams.usda.gov
Erin Taylor Erin.Taylor@ams.usda.gov