



GEORGIA MILK PRODUCERS, INC.

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Office Phone: 706-310-0020

Bruce Summers
Administrator
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

July 24, 2023

Dear Administrator Summers:

On behalf of Georgia Milk Producers, Inc. (GMP), I am writing today to express our organization's support for comprehensive reform to the Federal Milk Marketing Order system as proposed by the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF). GMP is the trade association representing dairy farmers in Georgia, and our mission is to support, sustain, and grow the dairy industry in Georgia and the Southeastern United States. It is our belief that the modifications to the FMMO system set forth by NMPF will strengthen the dairy industry both in Georgia and nationally.

The U.S. dairy industry is diverse, and every region and marketing area has challenges and needs that are unique to its producers and handlers. NMPF has compiled a commendable set of policies that balance the needs of all dairy producers in order to ensure the orderly marketing of milk nationwide. There are three particular recommendations within NMPF's proposal that would have outsized impacts on Southeastern dairy farmers: returning to the "higher-of" Class I mover, updating the Class I differentials, and updating the component factors in the skim milk price formulas. All three of these policies will support the orderly marketing of milk in the Southeast by bolstering the Class I milk price. The Appalachian, Florida, and Southeastern orders have averaged 70 percent or higher Class I utilization since January 2019. Our market is heavily reliant on strong Class I prices, and restoring value to the Class I milk price will aid in balancing the increased costs our producers and handlers have incurred in servicing our local milk markets.

The policies put forward by NMPF have garnered vast support from producers and handlers across the U.S., and it is our belief that a sufficient consensus has been reached in regards to amend the federal order system. Our producers are grateful to USDA for considering all facets of NMPF's proposal for deliberation at the national hearing next month, and we are confident that the testimony given at the hearing will support those policies.

Sincerely,

Bryce Trotter
Executive Director
Georgia Milk Producers, Inc.