



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 2968-S, STOP 0225
Washington, DC 20250-0225

December 30, 2015

Charles M. English, Jr.
Davis Wright Tremaine LLP
Suite 800
1919 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006-3401

Dear Mr. English:

On September 29, 2015, the Organic Trade Association (OTA) and its members submitted a formal request to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a hearing to amend the ten existing Federal milk marketing orders (FMMOs). The proposal would provide a credit to organic fluid milk handlers against their monthly FMMO pool obligations, dependent upon the price paid to dairy farmers for organic milk.

In order to better understand OTA's proposal and determine whether a hearing should be held, USDA asked OTA on October 29, 2015, to provide additional information and analyses to show how the proposal might address the disorderly marketing conditions you described. The response USDA received from OTA on November 30, 2015, was incomplete, and although OTA noted the reasons for its inability to comply fully with the request, USDA must make a thorough examination and is therefore continuing to review and gather information to properly consider the efficacy of the OTA proposal.

We welcome any additional information that OTA might submit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex A. Barnes". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Rex A. Barnes
Acting Administrator