

National Milk Producers Federation



ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT 2015



Connecting Cows, Cooperatives, Capitol Hill, & Consumers



**2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22201**

703-243-6111

www.nmpf.org

info@nmpf.org

www.facebook.com/nationalmilk

www.twitter.com/nmpf

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1731 I St., NW, in Washington, D.C., was NMPF's headquarters from 1920-1960.

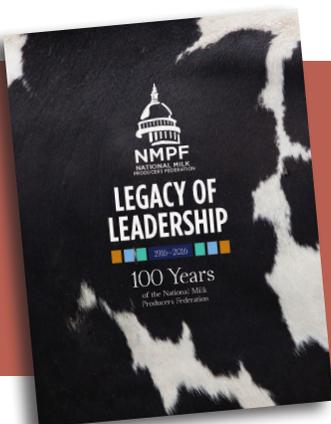
Established in 1916, the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) was one of the country's first agricultural trade associations, and is still recognized as one of the most influential American farm organizations. NMPF uses its unique resources to harness the ever-changing political and marketing environments to enhance and promote the economic well-being of dairy producers and their cooperatives through coordinated industry efforts.

NMPF cooperative members produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of more than 30,000 dairy farmers. Last year, NMPF member cooperatives marketed approximately 125 billion pounds of milk, representing 66% of the total milk marketed in the United States. In addition, many of NMPF's member cooperatives are leading processors of fluid milk, cheese, butter, milk powder and specialty dairy products.



The NMPF headquarters in the 1960s and 70s was located at 30 F St., NW, in Washington, D.C.

NMPF is the principal voice on national issues for cooperatives and their dairy farmer members. NMPF continues to advance the interests of dairy farmers and the cooperatives they own through grassroots efforts. This establishes NMPF as the voice of dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies.



At its 99th annual meeting in October 2015, National Milk unveiled a special edition booklet chronicling NMPF's century of work on behalf of America's dairy farmers. The booklet contains 68 pages of dairy history, from the fight against oleomargarine in the early 20th century to today's environmental issues. The booklet was recently awarded a gold medal in the Commemoration/Tribute category in the *Association Trends 2015 All Media Contest*.



Just as in our own lives, each year in an organization's life offers both challenges and rewards – and 2015 demonstrated that truism once again.

Last year was more challenging economically for dairy farmers as the stratospheric milk prices of 2014 came crashing back to earth. Milk income over feed costs dipped below \$8/cwt. for part of the year, but few producers purchased coverage at the top-end level in the new dairy Margin Protection Program. As a result, the program was not really tested for the types of catastrophic situations it was designed to address.

It was a busy year for our 12-year-old Cooperatives Working Together effort, which helped members export the equivalent of nearly 1.5 billion pounds of milk. In a year when domestic prices were disappointing, we were at least able to thwart the disastrous situations experienced by dairy producers elsewhere in the world.

While we continue efforts to enhance the MPP program, we are fortunate in the United States that we have the twin tools of MPP and CWT to help deter the type of conditions here that were common throughout the rest of the globe last year.

We focused our efforts on expanding long-term opportunities for dairy, in both domestic and world markets, as well as in government nutrition policy. In 2015, we blunted efforts to impose costly regulations in the areas of the environment and food safety. And we worked to provide beneficial tax relief to farmers as the year ended.

In fact, as you will see in these pages, we've quantified for our members the value of the effort NMPF expended on several of these key issues. Not every one of our accomplishments in a given year has a readily measurable price tag, but these victories provided obvious benefits to farmers, thanks to the role NMPF played in Washington in 2015.

Last, but not least, 2015 marked the start of NMPF's 100th year. We commemorated it in several ways, including designing a new logo and publishing a centennial booklet that reviews the long history of the organization and the dairy industry. I look forward to more challenges and rewards for this great industry, in 2016 and the many more years to come.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Mulhern". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jim Mulhern
President and CEO

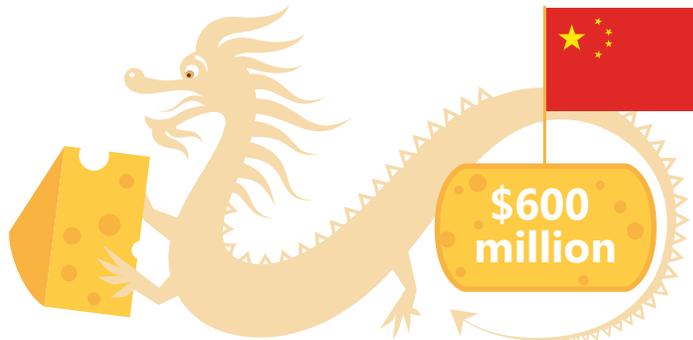


MAKING DOLLARS AND SENSE FOR DAIRY FARMERS

Several of NMPF's high-profile accomplishments in 2015 generated significant economic benefits to dairy farmers. Below are five illustrations that depict how our regulatory and legislative activities have paid dividends for the dairy sector.

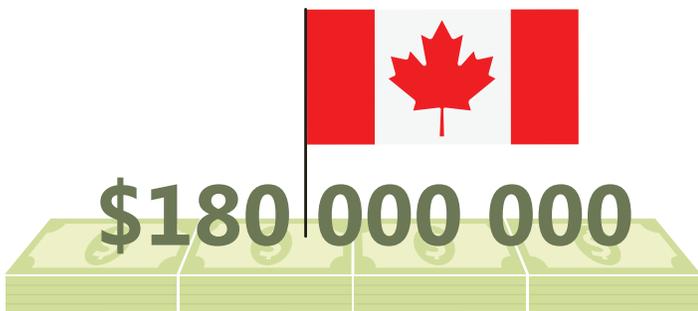
PROTECTING ACCESS TO CHINA

NMPF helped safeguard U.S. access to the Chinese dairy market, valued at an annual average of **\$600 million** a year in U.S. dairy exports. Outreach to Chinese officials on technical issues preserved access to a major export market.



PREVENTING COOL RETALIATION

The WTO ruling against the U.S.'s Country of Origin Labeling program was a threat to exports to two of dairy's largest markets. NMPF worked with Congress to prevent new tariffs. Canada's intended retaliation against U.S. dairy exports was **\$180 million**. Mexico would have retaliated on top of that, according to the U.S. Dairy Export Council.



HALTING UNNECESSARY FSMA REGULATIONS

FDA wanted its new food safety regulations to require pathogen testing for pasteurized fluid milk – a potential cost of **\$600 million**. FDA withdrew the testing proposal when NMPF pointed out that pasteurization made that requirement redundant.



INCREASING TRUCK WEIGHTS TO SAVE MONEY

A new highway bill gives states the option to allow milk haulers to increase truck weights. This enables milk trucks in some states to move more product without being forced to offload portions at state borders. In Wisconsin alone, as many as **64,000 fewer truck loads** would be needed to move milk from the farm to the plant. In Pennsylvania, the potential savings is **24,000 truck trips** from farm to plant.



SEC. 179 TAX RELIEF

NMPF worked with Congress to provide tax relief for farms through the permanent extension of the Section 179 expensing deduction. According to an analysis by Texas A&M University, the average dairy farm will see a benefit of **\$75,000** just in 2015 from raising the Sec. 179 limit to **\$500,000**.



New Dairy Safety Net Program Debuts in 2015

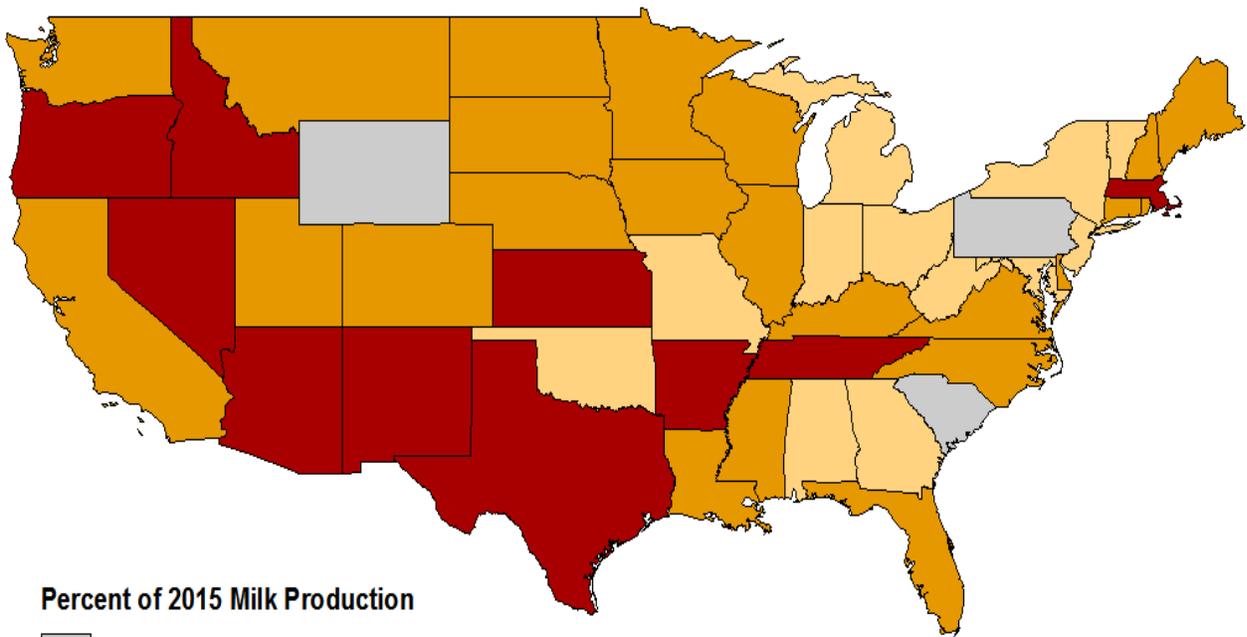
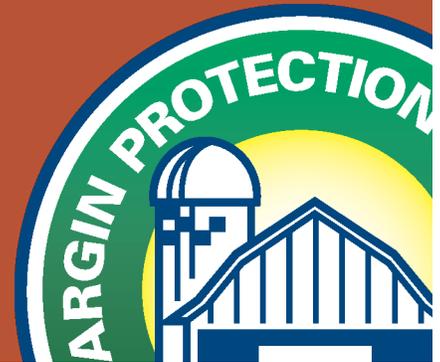
The first full year of Margin Protection Program participation saw 55% of licensed dairy operations and more than 80% of the U.S. milk supply enroll in the program. All told, more than 25,000 dairy operations, representing approximately 171 billion pounds of milk, participated in MPP in 2015. Of the enrolled operations, a majority of the farms elected to purchase MPP coverage above the basic \$4 level. Following the cyclical nature of dairy prices, national average dairy margins fell in 2015 from the record highs of 2014 to slightly below the \$8 threshold, triggering small safety net payments to several hundred holders of \$8 coverage.

NMPF recognizes the challenge of adopting an entirely new insurance-based approach to safety net programs, and has been actively working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to improve the program's performance. In 2015, NMPF successfully urged USDA to give farmers

the ability to make premium payments monthly or as an assessment from their milk check. USDA also extended the sign-up deadline for 2016 coverage from September 30 to November 20, 2015, at NMPF's request.

NMPF continues to work with USDA in 2016 on developing MPP rules that would provide \$4 coverage on all enrolled milk for all participating operations, and to accommodate the intergenerational transfer of dairy farm operations in the program.

NMPF will continue examining additional program improvements in 2016. •



Percent of 2015 Milk Production

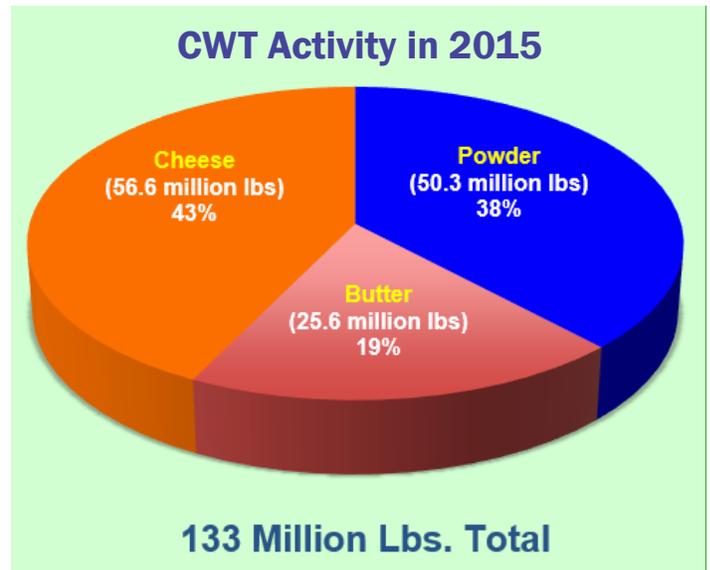
- Less than 50%
- 50% to 75%
- 76% to 90%
- Greater than 90%

Three states had 100% of their milk supply enrolled in the Margin Protection Program in 2015: Arkansas, New Mexico and Massachusetts. Wyoming had the least with just 18% of its farms' production history.

CWT Members Sell 133 Million Pounds of Product Overseas

In June, the NMPF Board of Directors voted to extend Cooperatives Working Together (CWT), the farmer-funded export assistance program, through 2018 at the funding level of 4¢/cwt. Throughout the year, CWT kept member cooperatives competitive in several key export markets, allowing them to contract to sell the equivalent of 1.473 billion pounds of milk overseas. Seventy-two percent of the product was delivered in 2015, and 28 percent will be delivered in 2016.

Member cooperatives submitted 1,191 requests for CWT export assistance in 2015. After economic analysis of those requests, 460 of CWT's assistance offers were accepted. The assistance helped members win 300 export sales contracts for 56.6 million pounds of Cheddar, Gouda and Monterey Jack cheese; 81 sales contracts for 25.6 million pounds of butter; and 79 sales contracts for 50.3 million pounds of whole milk powder. These products will go to 36 countries on five continents.



The majority of CWT's exports in 2015 came from both cheese and milk powder. Powder exports increased 20 points from 2014.

Seventy percent of cheese sales were to Asia, with Japan being the top destination. The Middle East accounted for 71% of butter sales, with Saudi Arabia receiving 82% of the product. Asia was again the leading regional destination for whole milk powder sales. Vietnam received 91% of the product sold there.



Asia was the top regional destination for CWT exports. Seventy percent of cheese sales were to Asia, while 71% of butter sales were to the Middle East.

CWT benefits U.S. dairy farmers by helping maintain U.S. exports of key dairy products when world prices fall below U.S. dairy product prices. By helping U.S. dairy cooperatives compete, CWT helps the U.S. become a more reliable supplier of dairy products to world markets.

Most importantly, CWT focuses the assistance it provides on higher-fat products, such as butter and cheese, that have the greatest impact on dairy farmers' milk prices. An analysis of CWT shipments in 2015 showed that the program kept farmers' milk prices 30¢/cwt. higher than if CWT had not existed.

The continuing investment by member cooperatives and many individual producers will allow CWT to provide the export assistance needed to maintain and grow the sales of U.S. dairy products in 2016. •

TRADE POLICY

Unified Industry, Congressional Support Key to Trade Agenda Success

Early in 2015, NMPF worked to secure congressional passage of the Trade Promotion Authority legislation. The law created a viable pathway for the congressional consideration of future free trade agreements, which could create useful opportunities for expanding dairy exports. It also includes guidance for U.S. negotiators on which trade issues merit focus during that process. Thanks to NMPF's earlier work with Congress, the TPA language captured important dairy priorities, such as new language on heightened sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) commitments that would minimize the risk of sudden trade barriers being introduced, as well as a focus on tackling the improper use of geographical indications (GIs) as a barrier to U.S. exports. NMPF secured "yes" votes for TPA from 80% of the top dairy farm districts.

Throughout the TPA process, NMPF simultaneously stressed to both U.S. negotiators and Congress how essential it was to avoid a deeply imbalanced

outcome for dairy trade in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement. Japan and Canada made clear they would block NMPF's press for greater access to their dairy markets. NMPF asserted that if U.S. export interests were being artificially capped, competitors' interests in the U.S. market would have to be similarly tempered.

Thanks to the unified work of U.S. dairy farmers in 2015 and even prior to then, NMPF worked hand in hand with leading processors and congressional allies to avoid the type of disproportionate one-way exchange that could have been the result. In addition, the TPP agreement contained the type of improved SPS commitments and due-process improvements on GIs that NMPF had worked so closely with U.S. negotiators to include.

As the United States shifts its negotiating focus in 2016 to advancing the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the United States and the European Union, NMPF will work to ensure that the U.S. dairy industry's priorities remain at the forefront. The agreement offers an opportunity to address the \$1 billion dairy trade deficit between the U.S. and EU, but only if non-tariff issues are sufficiently dealt with. •

NMPF Keeps Doors Open to U.S. Exports to Vital Markets

In addition to shaping U.S. trade agreements, NMPF also kept a keen eye on the threat of market access constraints arising from government actions. One of the larger threats was created by a finding that the U.S. Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) law for meat violated World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments. Dairy and other sectors faced retaliatory tariffs by Canada and Mexico against U.S. exports. NMPF's presence on Capitol Hill influenced lawmakers to resolve the threat to the U.S. dairy industry posed by the WTO ruling. The repeal by Congress of the COOL provisions preserved over \$180 million of targeted U.S. dairy exports to Canada alone.

Collaboration with the U.S. Dairy Export Council's market access and regulatory affairs staff helped



safeguard U.S. access to other important markets like China and Colombia. National Milk also pursued a longer-term strategy of working to re-establish access to major dairy markets such as India and Russia, which are currently closed to U.S. dairy exports.

In a specific market access focus area, NMPF continued its support of the Consortium for Common Food Names. The Consortium was founded by USDEC to foster the adoption of model geographical indication (GI) guidelines throughout the world. In recent years, the European Union has attempted to use GIs to ban the use of many generic cheese names outside of Europe, such as muenster, provolone and havarti. As the EU negotiates these product restrictions internationally, it puts at risk the use of additional cheese terms, including mozzarella, brie and gouda.

The EU's aggressive efforts to restrict competition from the United States and other suppliers via abuse of GIs were met with an equally strong response from CCFN and other allies dedicated to fighting this type of non-tariff trade barrier. The new model for GI regulations advanced in last year's TPP agreement was a particularly important step in this global battle.

Another critically important step that CCFN spearheaded in 2015 was a heightened political focus on this issue, as evidenced by congressional trade hearings early in the year, multiple letters by key members of Congress overseeng trade and intellectual property, and a strong coalition-building effort around the world. In addition, CCFN provided input to help

shape GI regulations in multiple countries, and lodged oppositions to specific GI applications threatening to impair the use of common food names. •

LEGISLATIVE

Truck Weight Amendment Signed into Law

Bringing uniformity to truck weight standards has long been a goal for NMPF. The patchwork of state laws and varying truck weights has presented challenges for farmers and cooperatives for decades. To address these challenges, NMPF worked with Reps. Reid Ribble (R-WI), Richard Hanna (R-NY) and Elizabeth Esty (D-CT) to include language in last year's reauthorization of the surface transportation (highway) bill.

Thanks to an intense lobbying effort by NMPF and its member cooperatives, Congress passed and President Obama signed into law H. R. 2353, which included language enabling states to increase truck weight limits on federal roads — originally 80,000 lbs. — for milk. With many states already increasing their truck weight limits for dairy trucks, dairy farmers and cooperatives in affected states are able to ship more milk in a safe and efficient fashion.

NMPF is now working to educate individual states about this important new option for milk trucks to ensure that as many states as possible implement the provision in a timely manner. •



GMO Labeling Fight Continues into 2016

One of the more high-profile issues that NMPF worked on in 2015 was establishing a national framework for the labeling of foods that may contain genetically modified ingredients (GMOs). NMPF has been a leader on this issue for many years, working with other agricultural and business groups through the Coalition for Safe and Affordable Foods (CSAF). As a member of the steering committee, NMPF serves not only as the voice for dairy farmers and their cooperatives, but as a representative for others in animal agriculture.

The coalition's efforts led directly to the introduction of the bipartisan H. R. 1599, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act, sponsored by Reps. Mike Pompeo (R-KS) and G. K. Butterfield (D-NC). Similar to legislation introduced in the previous Congress, H. R. 1599 would enact federal pre-emption of state GMO labeling and create a voluntary federal program. Thanks to efforts by NMPF and the coalition, the bill was overwhelmingly approved in the House of Representatives by a vote of 275-150. While no Senate bill was introduced, the issue remains atop the congressional to-do list for 2016, especially given the impending July 1, 2016, implementation of the first statewide labeling requirement in Vermont.

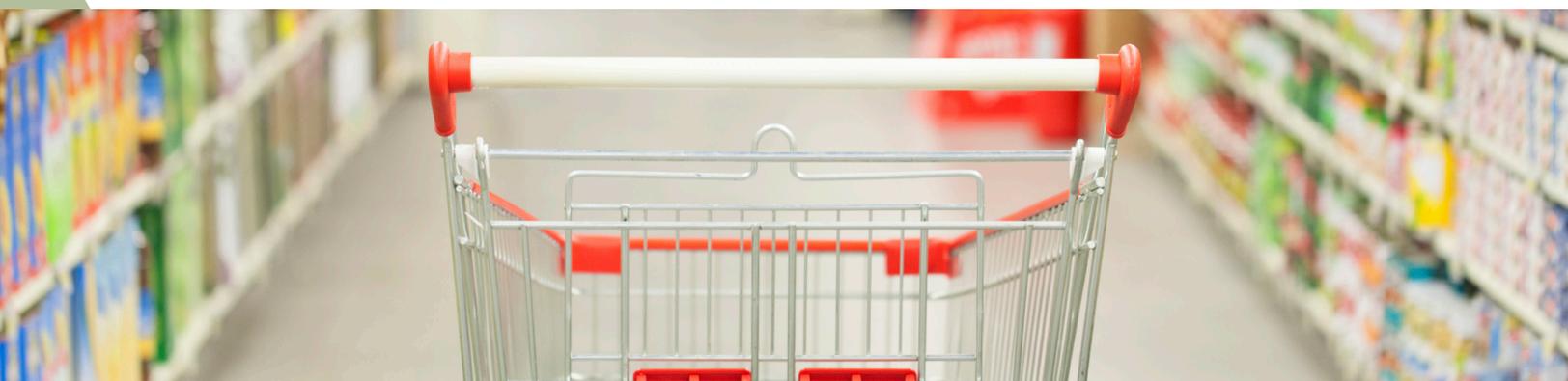
While most dairy products are exempt from the Vermont law, it is vital to ensure that federal pre-emption is adopted in Washington, D.C., to prevent the Vermont law and other state and local initiatives from going into effect. •

NMPF Helps Secure Permanent Tax Relief

In the fall, a major event occurred that enabled one of the most productive final quarters of any legislative session in recent memory. On September 25, 2015, Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) announced he would resign from Congress the following month. This action resulted not only in the election of Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI) as Speaker, but also in the passage of a budget agreement that established revised spending limits, an extension of the debt ceiling and, perhaps most importantly, a resetting of the debates regarding major legislation before Congress.

With Speaker Ryan in place, Congress worked furiously to pass both a package of tax cuts and federal spending limits in December. NMPF worked closely with industry advocates to achieve a number of important victories in this end-of-year legislation. Among these was a permanent extension of the Section 179 tax credits for businesses, a five-year extension of the 50% bonus depreciation tax credit, and a two-year extension of the investment tax credit for energy-producing digesters and other renewables. NMPF has long fought for certainty regarding tax credits, investments and estate planning, and the long-term extension of these benefits will enable farmers to make wiser investments regarding their businesses.

NMPF also fought for the inclusion of the biogas and manure resource recovery investment tax credit in the bill. Ultimately, the provision for non-energy-producing digesters (i.e. natural gas) and manure resource recovery systems was not included, but NMPF did succeed in generating interest in the legislation and technology, and it will be one of the organization's top priorities in 2016. •



NMPF Urges More Milk Consumption in Schools

With milk consumption continuing to decline in schools, NMPF collaborated with other dairy industry stakeholders on an effort to reverse the trend. This joint endeavor identified key changes that could be made to existing federal feeding programs to reduce the hurdles facing children and families trying to consume healthy and nutritious dairy products.

As Congress began to reauthorize child nutrition programs in 2015, NMPF goals were reflected in the bipartisan School Milk Nutrition Act (H. R. 2407), sponsored by Reps. Glenn Thompson (R-PA) and Joe Courtney (D-CT), both senior members of the House Education and Workforce Committee, which maintains jurisdiction over these programs. The bill includes requirements to restore 1% flavored milk to schools, enable milk to be sold in the same size containers as other beverages, encourage schools to offer lactose-free milk to children, and ensure that families utilizing the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program can purchase 2% milk for their children ages 2-5 without jumping through regulatory hoops. During testimony before the committee in June 2015, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack cited his personal support for returning 1% flavored milk to schools, noting the important and unique role that dairy plays in children's diets.

On the Senate side, where oversight of these programs lies with the Senate Agriculture Committee, NMPF encouraged the adoption of similar language by working with key allies, such as Chairman Pat Roberts (R-KS), Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT). The Senate began legislative action on child nutrition programs in January 2016, and NMPF is working to ensure the desired reforms move forward in both the Senate and House. •

“ I think if adding that option [low-fat flavored milk] would encourage more kids to drink more milk, **we should do that.**”

— *USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack at a hearing on the issue in June*



NMPF Leads Immigration Reform Effort for Dairy

With a lack of bipartisan support on Capitol Hill for moving immigration reform forward, little was accomplished by Congress on the issue in 2015. Despite the lack of legislative action, NMPF remained deeply engaged with congressional leaders and agriculture organizations through the Agriculture Workforce Coalition, which NMPF helped found. While no votes of consequence were held in either the House or Senate, NMPF worked closely with House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) to reframe the debate regarding agriculture's needs and ensure that, when new legislation is considered, the challenges of dairy farmers will be reflected. With the 2016 presidential election looming and a new Congress set to be sworn in next year, NMPF will continue its leadership on Capitol Hill to ensure that the concerns of dairy farmers and their cooperatives are well represented.

Furthermore, NMPF established a consultation process to ensure that congressional efforts will receive full feedback from all members of NMPF, as well as state dairy associations. Comments by producers from across the country were successfully delivered to the members of Congress who were directly engaged in developing immigration legislation in 2015.

In addition to congressional outreach, NMPF staff continued to engage the White House and the Department of Homeland Security to prevent unjustified raids, harassment and profiling of farm workers.

Over the summer, NMPF produced a new economic study on immigrant dairy farm workers. The study, developed by the Center of North American Studies (CNAS) at the University of Texas A&M, updated a 2009 CNAS study by estimating the current economic impacts of immigrant labor on U.S. dairy farms and related sectors of the economy (see sidebar). The study also estimated the economic effects of the loss of immigrant labor on the U.S. dairy sector and supporting industries. •

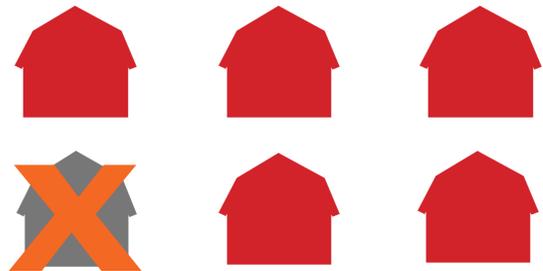
Immigration Study Results

NMPF, in collaboration with the University of Texas A&M, produced an updated version of a 2009 study that looked into the economic effects of immigrant labor on dairy farms. Here are the most interesting results from the 2015 release:

1/3 of all U.S. dairy farms employ foreign-born workers

Removing the immigrant labor force would...

- cost the U.S. economy more than **\$32 billion**
- result in the loss of **208,000 jobs** nationwide (77,000 would be on dairy farms)
- cause the loss of **one-in-six** dairy farms



- increase the price of a gallon of milk from



Economics Staff Supports Policy Work in Legislative, Other Areas

The economics staff at NMPF provided insightful analysis to the organization's legislative, regulatory and trade policy agendas in 2015, as well as to Cooperatives Working Together (CWT).

In the first full year of the dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP), both the NMPF economics and policy staff worked on program implementation elements of MPP and provided the basis for making improvements on the new safety net, such as offering more flexibility on how and when premium payments must be made.

NMPF submitted comments to USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) regarding its mandated review of the Federal Milk Marketing Order (FMMO) program. NMPF's comments clearly demonstrated that the FMMO program provides numerous benefits to the many entities it regulates, including milk producers and processors. NMPF asserted that no change to the program was needed for the purpose of reducing the regulatory burdens placed on small-business entities.

NMPF also submitted comments to AMS regarding purchases of Grade A bulk milk for domestic food distribution programs, and commended the department for creating new programs to increase availability of dairy products for food programs. NMPF also submitted comments to AMS regarding proposals to amend the Federal Order program to accommodate alternative pooling provisions for organic milk. In two separate comments, NMPF stated that the proposed rules for the National Organic Program would make the organic milk supply less flexible to meet consumer demand, and that proposed modifications to FMMOs would reduce the regulated milk price for farmers pooling on FMMOs by as much as \$50 million per year. NMPF's remarks also pointed out that differentiating milk by production attributes would erode the integrity of the FMMO program, and runs counter



to the goal of the 1937 Agricultural Marketing and Agreement Act to establish orderly marketing conditions for milk products.

NMPF staff, working with the American Butter Institute and its members, provided a compelling rationale for amending the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) rules for the cash butter market. The recommendation was to make optional the requirement that all butter traded on the CME cash market be USDA grade certified. The CME approved the NMPF-ABI alternative approach that traded butter need only carry a manufacturer's Certificate of Analysis. The change, which CME is implementing in early 2016, will significantly increase liquidity for butter cash trading and improve the CME spot market as a price discovery mechanism. In the current dairy market environment, butter plays a significantly larger role in dairy producers' milk checks, further enhancing the importance of this change.

NMPF, working with the National Ice Cream Mix Association (NICMA) and its mostly small-business members, also provided analysis and forecasts of ice cream mix ingredient costs, including dairy, sweetener and flavor ingredients. The fundamental market developments leading to tighter markets and higher prices for milkfat in the past few years have caused concern among NICMA members, and the analysis assisted their negotiations with buyers to permit them to pass on higher ingredient costs.

The economics staff continued to produce Dairy Data Highlights, NMPF's annual compilation of national and state milk and dairy production data. The team

also works with Dairy Management Inc. to produce the Dairy Market Report, which provides the latest key dairy economic data and trends in one concise, monthly document. •

ANIMAL CARE

National Dairy FARM Program Tells Farmers' Stories

The National Dairy FARM (Farmers Assuring Responsible Management) Animal Care Program was created in 2009 to demonstrate dairy producers' commitment to animal care and quality assurance.

In 2015, FARM Program participation grew to cover more than 94% of the domestic milk supply, ensuring the program's place as the animal care program for the entire dairy industry. There was also a record level of second-party evaluations performed on farms — conducted by more than 370 trained FARM evaluators — bringing the total number of evaluations conducted since the program's inception to 38,000.

The FARM Program focused on building awareness among costomers and consumers in 2015. Those close to the dairy industry know that producers have a great story to tell when it comes to animal care, and the program recognized the need to do a better job of sharing this with customers and consumers. Along with a new, consumer-friendly website and updated animal care messaging, the FARM Program launched Twitter (@FARMProgram), Facebook (National Dairy



“ Last year, FARM Program participation grew to cover **more than 94%** of the domestic milk supply.”

FARM Program) and Instagram (@FARMProgram) accounts. Additionally, the FARM Program also debuted the FARM Proud Blog, which shares the stories of co-ops, processors and producers who help ensure top-notch dairy animal care every day. The blog will also feature FARM Program updates and important announcements.

The FARM Program began contemplating how to best recognize the dairy industry members who are one step removed from the co-op or proprietary processor level, but endorse the FARM Program. Until recently, the program could not commend those within the dairy supply chain who require FARM Animal Care Program participation of their suppliers. To address this issue, a FARM Supporter Badge was created to recognize such companies' endorsements.

Along with the badge, FARM rolled out an animated video that describes — in 66 seconds — the FARM Animal Care Program. Both are available to members of the dairy supply chain for their use, and will direct curious consumers to find more information on the FARM Program website, www.nationaldairyfarm.com. •



Data Shows Adherence to FARM Standards

Data collected by more than 370 trained FARM evaluators in 2015 showed that the majority of producers are meeting or exceeding FARM Program benchmarks. Moreover, data in four key areas – locomotion, body condition, hygiene and hock/knee lesions – show continuous improvement over 2014 and 2015.

Locomotion observations examine potential lameness issues on dairy farms using a 1-3 scale (normal gait, moderate impairment, lameness requiring immediate action) with a FARM Program benchmark of 95% or more of lactating and dry cows scoring less than 3. In the past three years, more than 96% of all farms have exceeded this benchmark.

Body condition observations look at potential nutritional issues on a dairy farm using a 1-5 scale (skinny to fat) with a FARM Program benchmark of 99% or more of all animals scoring greater than 1. Over the past three years, more than 94% of all farms have exceeded this benchmark.

These results, confirmed by the annual third-party verification process, provide a quantifiable picture of animal care on dairy farms, and is part of FARM's ongoing analysis of the best management practices. Additional results from the analysis will be released in subsequent reports. •

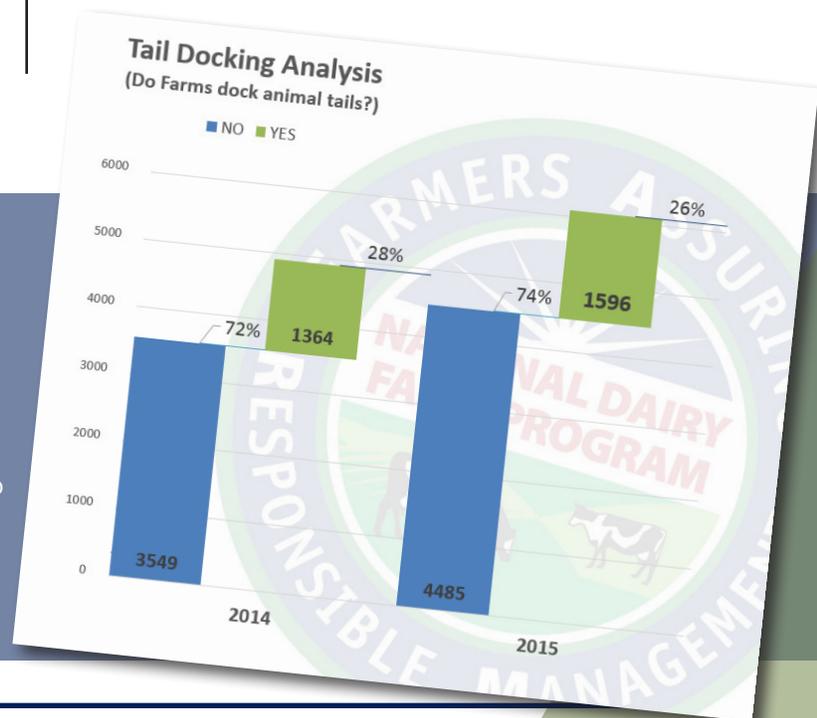
The FARM Program is able to sort and analyze data on any of its 52 animal care guidelines. The table is an analysis of tail docking prevalence nationwide over the last two years. Data shows less than 30% of farms routinely dock tails. *Source: The FARM Program*

NMPF Engages With Restaurants, Retailers, Brands

Since January 2015, NMPF staff have met with a number of branded food companies, restaurants and retailers to discuss animal care and the FARM Animal Care Program. These discussions are helpful in sharing farmers' perspective on animal care, but they also give the program insights into the pressures facing these companies and the questions being asked of them by their customers.

Many of these meetings include, at a minimum, a deep-dive review of program guidelines and supporting principles. Often these meetings include a visit to a dairy farm so company leadership can experience a modified FARM evaluation and speak with producers and co-op staff about the program.

It is critical that dairy industry leaders speak with a unified voice when it comes to animal care — humane handling should never be a product differentiator or competitive advantage. Such meetings help strengthen relationships with dairy customers and ensure they feel confident enough not to develop their own animal care programs or standards. •



FDA Reaffirms Safety of Nation's Milk Supply

In March 2015, the safety of the nation's milk supply was reaffirmed by the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) release of a report demonstrating that regulations to keep drug residues out of milk are effective in protecting the public health. NMPF ensured that the report offered the proper perspective on the safety of the milk supply.

The report's publication capped off a multi-year effort by FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine, which sampled raw milk from nearly 2,000 dairy farms in 2012 and conducted extensive laboratory testing on each milk sample for 31 different pharmaceutical compounds. It found that more than 99% of the samples were free of residues, "underscoring the safety of the milk supply," according to FDA.

NMPF was actively engaged throughout this process to ensure the sampling assignment would return accurate data and was consistent with FDA's project objectives, from study design and testing methodology to preparation of the final report. NMPF also spearheaded a coordinated communications plan on behalf of the dairy industry upon the public release of the report.

FDA's objective in the 2012 survey was to determine if dairy farms with previous drug residue violations in market-bound meat were also producing milk that contained residues. A small number of dairy farms have been cited over the years for violating standards for antibiotic and other drug residues in animal carcasses.

The FDA survey involved the confidential collection of milk samples from 953 dairy farms with a previous tissue residue violation, and another 959 randomly selected samples. The residue testing was conducted on raw milk from the farm, not on milk that had gone through the protocols in place further down the processing chain. This was not an analysis of processed, retail-bound dairy products that reached consumers.

The report found 15 confirmed positive samples out of 1,912 tested, or 0.7%. There was no statistically



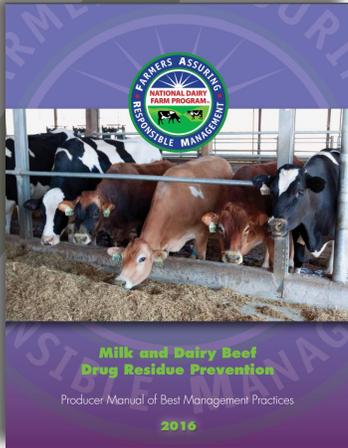
significant difference in the results when comparing the target farm group with the random samples. FDA said the results "are encouraging and indicate that the current system of regulatory oversight results in high rates of industry compliance. The FDA remains confident in the overall safety of the U.S. milk supply."

NMPF has continued to engage with FDA on interpreting the sampling assignment results and how they might affect future drug residue testing programs. •

NMPF Plays Leading Role on Antimicrobial Stewardship

For more than 25 years, the U.S. dairy industry has promoted the responsible use of antimicrobial drugs through the annual publication of a best practices manual. The latest edition (published October 2015) of the National Dairy FARM Program's Milk and Dairy Beef Drug Residue Prevention Manual, developed by NMPF, is the primary educational tool for dairy farm managers on the prudent use of antibiotics, including the avoidance of drug residues in milk and meat. Additionally, the 2016 edition of the Residue Prevention Manual provides advice on

REGULATORY AFFAIRS



The FARM Program updated its Drug Prevention Manual in 2015.

NMPF staff participated last June at the White House Forum on Antibiotic Stewardship. While there, NMPF shared dairy's long-term commitment to this sensitive issue, including industry educational efforts through the National Dairy FARM animal care and residue avoidance programs.

the implementation of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Guidances for Industry (GFI) 209 and 213, and the revised Veterinary Feed Directive Rule (VFD). These new policies restrict the types, uses and availability of certain antibiotics in animal agriculture.

To demonstrate the U.S. dairy industry's leadership on the use of antibiotics,

NMPF was a leader in 2015 in preparing dairy farmers for the Farm Foundation Forum series across the United States to examine antimicrobial stewardship. These 12 regional forums provided an opportunity for livestock producers, feed suppliers, veterinarians, government regulators and others to gain a comprehensive understanding of FDA's guidances regarding the use of medically important antimicrobial drugs in food-producing animals. Comments gathered at the 12 workshops have been compiled to assess the economic and physical challenges facing producers as they implement the GFIs and revised VFD.

On August 18, NMPF submitted comments on the FDA-proposed regulation for pharmaceutical companies to report livestock drug sales data. Currently, pharmaceutical companies are required by law to report aggregate drug sales and distribution data for livestock by type of drug. FDA proposed that companies should report estimates by species (cattle, swine, horse, etc.). NMPF opposed the FDA proposal

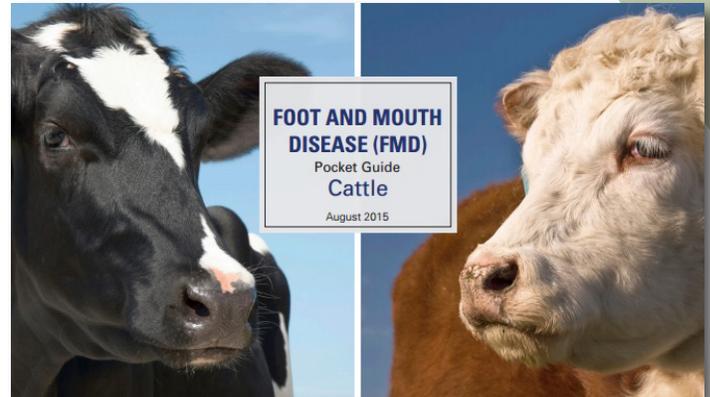


for several reasons, mainly around the accuracy of estimations and lack of usefulness of data in context of the larger federal government initiatives on antimicrobial resistance.

In a related development in November, NMPF submitted comments to the FDA on potential on-farm antimicrobial use and resistance data collection. NMPF commended the efforts of FDA, USDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to engage stakeholders on the best approaches for data collection about antimicrobial use and potential resistance in food-producing animals. NMPF said that certain data have the potential to be misinterpreted to portray responsible husbandry practices as harmful, especially if bacterial resistance did not decrease. Compounding this challenge is the reality that collecting meaningful data would be highly resource-intensive. Finally, NMPF expressed concerns that collecting on-farm antimicrobial use data without first outlining science-based goals and objectives may lead to less robust and less useful results.

Internationally in 2015, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) requested input on the organization's work on antimicrobial resistance, in part due to recent adoptions of new antibiotic usage policies by the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization. The Codex code defines the responsibilities of authorities and groups involved in the authorization, production, control, distribution and use of veterinary antimicrobials. The Codex Guidelines on Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance assesses the risk to human health associated with the presence in food and animal feed of drug-resistant micro-organisms, and provides advice on appropriate risk management activities. NMPF submitted comments to the U.S. Codex Office opposing new international standard development while the United States is currently implementing existing international codes. •

NMPF Focuses on Foot and Mouth Disease Prevention



The front cover of the Foot and Mouth Disease pocket guide. Source: Iowa State University

In 2015, NMPF focused on Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) preparedness through the continued development of the Secure Milk Supply program, advocacy for vaccination strategies and the protection of domestic dairy cattle from foreign threats.

During the 83rd general session of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), held last May in Paris, the FMD chapter was updated for clarity. OIE will also develop a chapter on FMD vaccination to address emergency use in an outbreak, including a vaccinate-to-live policy to regain FMD-free status in three months, which has been a priority for the U.S. dairy industry to remain a global supplier in the event of an FMD outbreak.

On November 17, NMPF commented on USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) proposed rule on the "Eligibility of Namibia to Export Meat Products to the United States." The proposed rule, if implemented, would allow the importation of beef and beef products from Namibia based on an equivalency audit of its food safety system. NMPF supported the USDA-FSIS equivalency process, but opposed opening the United States to imports of meat from Namibia because the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) had not conducted a review of the disease status of Namibia, and therefore had not published a formal risk assessment. This type of assessment is warranted because Namibia has had 29 recent outbreaks of FMD.

The NMPF Animal Health and Well-being Committee in 2014 identified the need for FMD educational resources for dairy farmers and veterinarians. Several of those resources were finalized in 2015, with contributions from NMPF, the American Association of Bovine Practitioners and the National Cattleman's Beef Association, as well as through a cooperative agreement from APHIS to Iowa State University. The FMD Pocket Guide, produced through this collaborative effort, is an easy-to-use resource illustrating the progression of FMD lesions in cattle. The photos in the guide (also available as a wall chart) follow the development of lesions over 18 days and can be used in vesicular disease surveillance programs. The guide is available to download from the Center for Food Security & Public Health at Iowa State University. •

NMPF Opposes “Added Sugars” Label on Foods

NMPF opposed FDA's proposal in 2015 to revise the Nutrition Facts Panel on food products to include an amount and Percent Daily Value for “added sugars” for consumers.

In comments sent to the agency in October, NMPF disagreed with FDA that its proposal will help consumers make better food choices and improve their diets, noting that FDA itself concluded there is no scientific basis for a recommended daily intake for added sugars.

As with comments submitted a year earlier on FDA's original proposal, NMPF again emphasized that FDA incorrectly and inappropriately extended the definition of “added sugars” to include the lactose in many concentrated and dried dairy ingredients, even though lactose is a naturally occurring sugar and is not used primarily as a sweetener.

“FDA's proposed definition of ‘added sugars’ falls woefully short in this regard and leaves our industry confused and ill-served,” NMPF said. It encouraged FDA to rewrite its “added sugars” definition “or risk significant consumer misunderstanding.”

FDA is currently reviewing the comments. A final rule is expected to be released some time in 2016. •

Nearly 50 Proposals Passed at 35th NCIMS Meeting

At last year's 35th meeting of the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments (NCIMS) in Portland, Ore., NMPF staff and members discussed 100 proposals to revise the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) and related documents, playing key roles in conference deliberations. Ultimately, voting delegates passed 44 proposals, with an additional five related to laboratory issues allowed to proceed through the 2400 Form process.

Of note, five proposals were passed to align the PMO with key provisions of FSMA, which would allow PMO facilities to continue to be regulated and inspected under the PMO going forward. NMPF staff were heavily involved in this multi-year effort, culminating in a collaboration with the Liaison Committee at NCIMS to ensure a continued safe milk supply as regulated under a single regulatory scheme — the PMO — as has successfully been done for decades. •

West Virginia Governor Vetoes Raw Milk Bill

NMPF continued to lead the dairy industry in opposing efforts to make raw milk and raw milk products more accessible to consumers, weighing in with written testimony in at least six states in 2015.

In one prominent victory, NMPF sent a letter in March to West Virginia Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin, urging him to reject Senate Bill No. 30, which would have legalized raw milk in the Mountain State. Tomblin said the bill, which would have allowed consumers to obtain raw milk through herd-shares or other arrangements under which they become part owners of a dairy cow, posed “a serious risk to public health.”

Ultimately, Tomblin sided with public health experts over raw milk advocates by signing his veto on April 2, saying that consuming raw milk “has inherent dangers.” •

WOTUS Remains Point of Contention

The final rule of the controversial Waters of the United States (WOTUS) went into effect on August 28, 2015, despite widespread concern across agriculture about its problems. NMPF does not believe the final rule sufficiently addresses the specific concerns raised in the organization's previous comments on the proposed rule. The WOTUS Final Rule included changes to definitions of tributaries, adjacent wetlands/waters, isolated waters and exclusions. In some cases it offered certainty about what is and is not regulated. However, there are still many case-by-case determinations and lingering complexity around the handling of agricultural ditches. Lawsuits challenging the rule have begun, with numerous lawsuits filed by states and affected industry stakeholder groups. It is likely these lawsuits will take months or years to resolve.

On August 27, an injunction on the compliance and enforcement of the WOTUS Final Rule was issued by the U.S. District Court for North Dakota and applied to only the 13 states that brought the lawsuit. After the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps indicated they would proceed with enforcement and compliance in the remaining 37 states, on August 31 NMPF requested that enforcement of the regulations be suspended nationwide due to the preliminary injunction granted to the original 13 states.

On October 9, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit ordered a nationwide stay of implementation of the final rule. The nationwide stay was granted by a 2-1 vote. The court took issue with both the content of the rule, as well as the lack of notice and comment for significant changes that were added in the final version. •

“ It is likely these lawsuits will take **months or years** to resolve.”



NMPF Helps Shape FSMA Regulations

Implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) by FDA is one of the most significant steps in decades to prevent foodborne illness. During the last five years, while FDA worked to develop and finalize the major rules and guidance documents required under FSMA — over 50 items in all — NMPF continued to protect the dairy industry from regulatory changes that would be unnecessarily burdensome and ineffective, focusing instead on realistic means to increase food safety. Throughout the process, NMPF staff were fully engaged, participating in virtually every public and private meeting, collaborating through dairy industry stakeholder efforts, and submitting extensive comments.

Last winter, NMPF filed its 31st set of comments on proposed FSMA regulations, including FDA's supplemental proposed rule "Current Good Manufacturing Practice and Hazard Analysis and Risk Based Preventive Controls for Human Food." Compared to the original proposal, the modified version was a strong sign that engagement during the rulemaking process pays off. A great deal of the supplemental proposal addressed issues that NMPF had raised in numerous meetings. For example, NMPF strongly advocated against mandatory finished product pathogen testing, something that would have been extremely costly and ineffective. Despite strong support from many groups, the final regulation does not include mandatory finished product pathogen testing — saving the dairy industry \$600 million annually just in the fluid milk category.

Other changes that reflected NMPF's advocacy efforts in 2015 included additional flexibility around supplier verification requirements and recognition that a facility subject to the Preventive Controls for Human Food Rule does not have to comply with the Preventive Controls Rule for Animal Feed, even if that facility diverts outdated or off-spec food to animal feeding operations.

Similarly, the impact of NMPF's efforts were seen when FDA proposed its supplement to the FSMA

produce rule. As originally drafted, the regulation applied to mixed-commodity farms with total food sales of more than \$25,000, which would have affected more than 2,000 dairy farms with incidental fresh produce sales. Fortunately, in direct response to NMPF's comments, the modified version only included produce sales from farms when applying the additional regulations.

One of the most challenging areas under FSMA is the intentional adulteration of food. Congress mandated that the regulation shall only apply to food for which there is a high risk of intentional contamination. Congress exempted all farms from the regulation except dairy farms, and FDA determined that on-farm milk, if intentionally contaminated, is a high-risk food that presents significant consequences to consumers.

NMPF has repeatedly argued that on-farm milk destined for pasteurization is not a high-risk food, and that dairy farms are not significantly vulnerable and thus should not be addressed through this rule. NMPF will continue to advocate for implementation of food defense regulations that are appropriate and practical. A final rule is expected from FDA by May 31, 2016.

In November, NMPF staff conducted their first member-focused FSMA webinar, which addressed the Preventive Controls for Human Food Rule, the most significant of the seven major FSMA rules. In the future, as NMPF efforts move from advocacy to industry compliance, similar webinars will focus on other FSMA rules and guidance documents to ensure the regulated community has reliable information with which to plan and make decisions.

NMPF staff were also trained as lead instructors to conduct the required FSMA training and certification that dairy processing personnel require. NMPF will offer courses in spring 2016, as well as by member request. •

Benefits of Milk Consumption Hot Topic Throughout 2015

The role of milk in a healthy diet gained considerable attention in 2015, most notably because the latest federal dietary guidelines were released in 2016. This was a culmination of a multi-year effort by NMPF to defend the strong positioning of dairy foods in the guidelines. Staff continued to make clear the need to make three servings of dairy per day a necessity in a healthy diet.

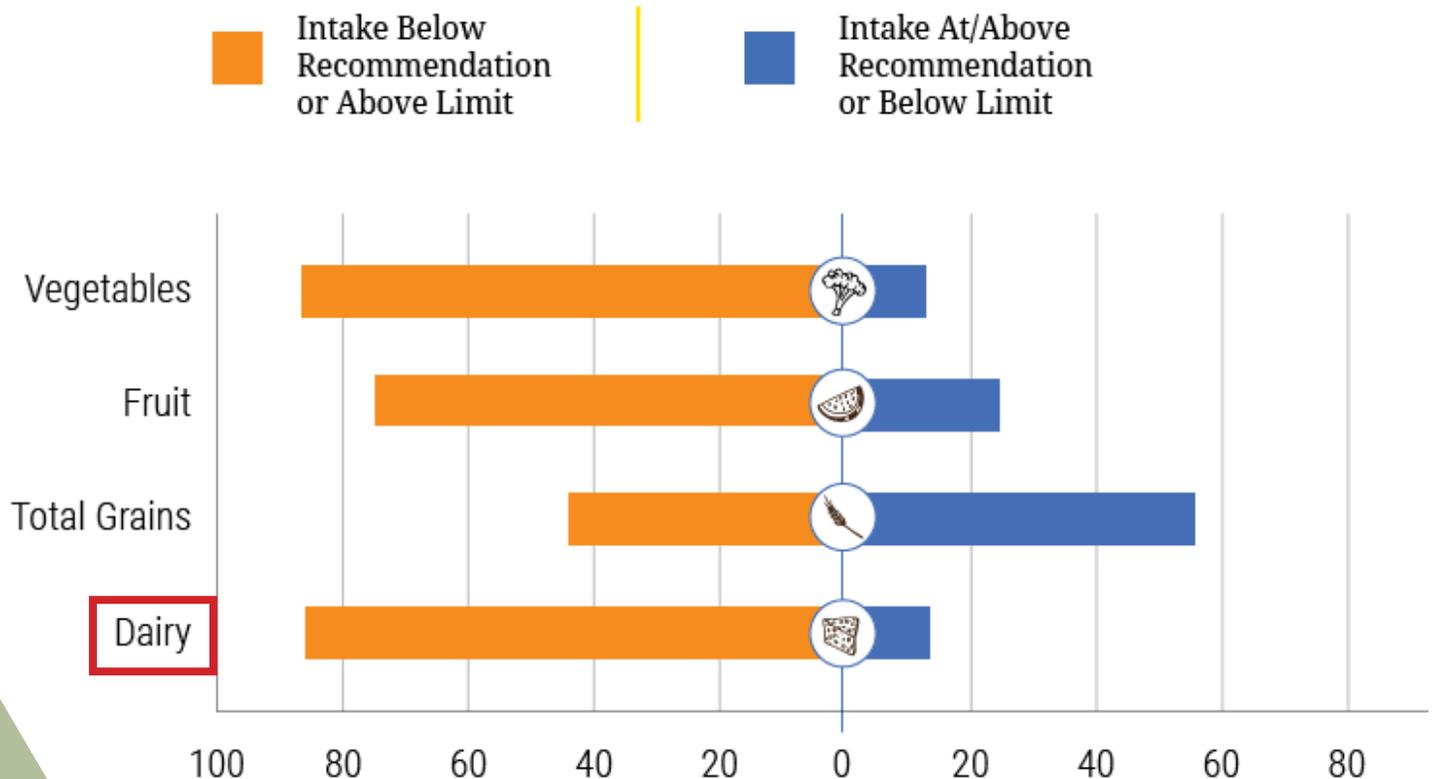
In March, Beth Briczinski, NMPF’s Vice President of Dairy Foods & Nutrition, shared the organization’s comments on the guidelines during a public meeting. She reinforced the value of milk’s nine essential nutrients, and noted that no other substitute can deliver the same nutritional value. She also asked that the guidelines suggest Americans consume more dairy

to fight the current trend of under consumption.

“Knowing that the nutrient package of dairy foods is virtually irreplaceable in the diet...and that dairy consumption averages less than two servings a day,” she said, “I would suggest that the dietary guidelines first continue to recommend three servings of dairy, and second to recommend Americans increase their current consumption of dairy foods.”

Last May, NMPF also provided extensive testimony to the advisory committee that compiled the guidelines, reminding them that key nutrients missing from Americans’ diets, such as calcium, Vitamin D and potassium, are found in abundance in dairy foods.

NMPF will work with USDA in 2016 to remind Americans about the need to consume more dairy foods. •



The table shows actual dietary intake compared to federal guideline recommendations. The left side of the graph shows the percentage of the population that consumes less than the recommended amount of that food group. The right side displays the percentage consuming at or above the recommended amount. Source: health.gov

Our Favorite REAL® Seal Posts



INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
- ¼ tsp. baking powder
- 2 tsp. granulated sugar
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ cup + 1 tbsp. REAL® milk
- 2 tsp. vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp. fruit preserves

DIRECTIONS

Whisk together all ingredients in a large microwave safe mug. Add 1 tbsp. of fruit preserves in the middle of the batter. Microwave mug cake for 60-70 seconds on high, depending on microwave.



REAL® Seal Awareness Expands Through Engaging Social Media Posts

The REAL® Seal’s social media footprint grew considerably in 2015, tallying thousands of followers on Facebook and Pinterest. The brand continued to host Pinterest contests, celebrate dairy food holidays and educate consumers on the nutritional qualities of real milk.

NMPF gained license to the REAL® Seal symbol in 2012 with the goal of refashioning it for the social media age, boosting dairy sales and using the REAL® Seal to go on the offensive against a growing list of imitation products.

On Facebook, the REAL® Seal fan count in 2015 continued to climb by nearly 2,000 every week to a yearly total of 242, 974 Likes. More than 120 eye-catching images and easy-to-follow recipes attracted plenty of likes and comments. By responding to questions posed within the content (“Who’s the butter to your bread?”), consumers initiated numerous online conversations about why they love real dairy.

In 2015, the REAL® Seal hosted three Pinterest contests to celebrate June Dairy Month, Thanksgiving and the holidays. Users submitted and voted for recipes they thought helped celebrate the occasion. The winner of the most votes received a \$100 gift card. Nearly 170 people entered all three contests with more than 2,075 recipes shared.

Also in 2015, 20 Dairy Divas – lifestyle bloggers who create recipes using REAL® dairy products – contributed content to the Pinterest contests, as well as the Facebook page, raking up views and likes along the way. •

FACEBOOK FANS

242,000+

PINTEREST FOLLOWERS

1,400+

TOTAL IMAGES

122

Young Cooperators Visit Washington, Orlando in 2015



(From left) Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) meets with Nelda and Brock Bailey of Swiss Valley Farms during the June YC Capitol Hill visit.

The national Young Cooperator Program has been a key part of NMPF's activities for more than six decades. The program builds strong leadership skills in younger dairy farmers as they plot the future course of the dairy industry. Many of today's national leaders, including some current NMPF board members, are former YCs. YCs from across the nation typically meet in Washington once a year, and then again at the annual meeting.

In June of 2015, more than 60 dairy farmers met in Arlington, Va., to plan for the upcoming annual meeting and to lobby their members of Congress on issues such as the School Milk Nutrition Act and the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act.

At NMPF's annual meeting in the fall in Orlando, Fla., 100 YCs conducted their own separate program, which included panels on planning for the future of their farms and utilizing social media effectively. In the evening, the YCs celebrated with a night of food and entertainment at Universal Studios.

An advisory council provides leadership for the Young Cooperators program annually. For 2015, members of the council included:

CHAIRCOUPLE

Brian & Carrie Preston
Michigan Milk Producers Association

VICE CHAIRCOUPLE

Tommy & Anna Watkins
Southeast Milk, Inc.

SECRETARY COUPLE

Donald & Bernadette Harwood
Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.

Bethany Hodge
Agri-Mark, Inc.

Devin Cain
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Jim & Shelly Grosenick
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Greg & Tammy Paplham
Foremost Farms USA

Evan Hillan
Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Joanna & Robb Shipp
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers

Doug & Lori Kamerman
Northwest Dairy Association

Jesse & Annette Morrow
Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.

Brock & Nelda Bailey
Swiss Valley Farms

Josh & April Neahring
Tillamook County Creamery Association

Traci Hamstra
United Dairymen of Arizona

2015 Scholarship Program Winners Announced

At its June meeting, the NMPF Scholarship Committee selected four graduate students to receive scholarships as part of the 2015 NMPF National Dairy Leadership Scholarship Program. These students are conducting research in areas that will benefit dairy cooperatives and producers.

Scholarships were awarded to:



Karmella Dolecheck, a PhD candidate in animal science at the University of Kentucky, is studying increasing dairy profitability through the application of a whole farm stochastic simulation model.



Paul LaPierre, an MS candidate in animal science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is conducting research titled "Effects of Hydroxy vs. Sulfate Forms of Trace Minerals in Milk Replacer or Starter on Dairy Calves through Weaning."



Jon Pretz, a PhD candidate in dairy science from South Dakota State University, is researching yeast products and antioxidants alone or in combination on ruminal volatile fatty acid absorption when fed to mid-lactation, high-producing dairy cows.



Barbara Wadsworth, a PhD candidate in animal science from the University of Kentucky, is studying the use of precision dairy farming technologies to detect lameness in dairy cattle.

ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Meeting Marks Start of NMPF's 100th Year



NMPF Chairman Randy Mooney speaks to attendees during the October annual meeting.

NMPF's 99th annual meeting marked a special celebration for the organization: the start of its centennial year. The meeting, jointly held with the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board and the United Dairy Industry Association in Orlando, Fla., welcomed more than 800 attendees for one of the largest dairy industry events in the country.

From October 26-29, industry stakeholders and farmers descended on the Orlando World Center Marriott for a series of meetings, panel sessions and speakers. Topics ranging from dairy's economic outlook and safety net programs to recent developments in trade policy and animal care. USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack made his second appearance at the event, stressing the importance of the agency's relationship with dairy producers.

The NMPF Town Hall event on October 27 featured presentations by NMPF staff on the Margin Protection Program, animal care and regulatory affairs. Question-and-answer periods following the presentations allowed attendees to learn more about NMPF's various projects.

Later, in a joint presentation, NMPF Board Chairman

Randy Mooney and President and CEO Jim Mulhern reflected on 10 decades of NMPF achievements on behalf of dairy farmers. To help ring in the organization's 100th year, the two leaders unveiled an updated NMPF logo and 68-page book chronicling its last century of work. The updated logo retains an image of the Capitol – used by NMPF for over 40 years – but with a refreshed look.

“No one in agriculture is more innovative than dairy farmers.”

— USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack

“A new century and new challenges call for a new, more modern design,” said Mulhern.

On-farm animal care was a hot-button issue at the meeting. On October 27, the NMPF board took up the topic of tail docking. Following substantial deliberation, members approved a resolution moving up by five years the date for farmers participating in the industry's National Dairy FARM animal care program to phase out routine tail docking. Farmers now have until Jan. 1, 2017, to phase out the practice.

A panel discussion featuring representatives from Walmart, Kroger, Starbucks and Chobani followed later in the meeting. The panelists commended dairy producers for their dedication to top-notch animal



(From left) NMPF Chairman Randy Mooney, NMPF's Vice President of Scientific & Regulatory Affairs Jamie Jonker, Swiss Valley Farms Board Chair Pam Bolin, Swiss Valley CEO Don Boelens and NMPF President & CEO Jim Mulhern pose with the 2015 winning cheese, a blue cheese from Swiss Valley's Caves of Faribault.

care, and noted that their companies are contacted constantly by consumers asking if their food is produced humanely.

On October 28, Secretary Vilsack made an impassioned speech on the value of dairy producers and their products. He thanked dairy farmers for their hard work before remarking on several topical issues such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership and child nutrition.

“No one in agriculture is more innovative than dairy farmers,” he said to a standing ovation.

A dairy bar allowed attendees to take a break and peruse dozens of stalls hosted by companies like Pizza Hut, Fuel Up to Play 60 and the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy. Free samples of pizza, cookies, cheese and milk were on hand throughout the day.

In other annual meeting news, six new members were elected to the NMPF board, five retiring board members were honored with certificates of appreciation, and four were given special recognition awards.

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack (right) receives a special gift from former Pittsburgh Steelers player Franco Harris (center) and United Dairy Industry Association Chairman Neil Hoff (far left).



ANNUAL MEETING

The new board members are: Craig Edler, Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.; Levi Ransom, Land O'Lakes, Inc.; Joe Diglio, Michigan Milk Producers Association; Gib Martin, Mt. Joy Farmers Cooperative; Jonathan Vander Dussen, Select Milk Producers; and Keith Blake, Swiss Valley Farms.

The retiring board members are: Wayne Palla and Bill Siebenborn, Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.; Jim Wegner, Northwest Dairy Association; Paul Mills, Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.; and Pat Schroeder, Swiss Valley Farms. Palla and Siebenborn were presented with honorary director awards, and Wegner and Richard Stammer, CEO of Agri-Mark Family Dairy Farms, were given special recognition awards for their work on behalf of dairy farmers and NMPF.



Former college football coach and ESPN analyst Lou Holtz speaks to attendees at the Wednesday luncheon.



Representatives from companies like Quaker Oats Company handed out samples of their products in the dairy bar.



Members of the 2015 Young Cooperator Council.

A blue cheese made by Swiss Valley Farms at its Caves of Faribault subsidiary received the top award in the NMPF cheese competition. The communications team at Michigan Milk Producers Association was named NMPF Communicator of the Year. The 2015 Young Cooperator Council elected its leadership for the coming year. Jason and Lisa Mesch from Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc., will serve as chaircouple, while the vice chairs will be Brad and Meghan Austin of Southeast Milk. Thomas and Jenna Matthews from Dairy Farmers of America will serve collectively as secretary. •



Meeting attendees also enjoyed free yogurt, cheese and milk as they explored the dairy bar stalls.

The member cooperatives of NMPF include:

Agri-Mark, Inc.
 Associated Milk Producers Inc.
 Bongards' Creameries
 Cooperative Milk Producers Association
 Cortland Bulk Milk Producers Cooperative
 Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
 Dairymen's Marketing Cooperative, Inc.
 Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery
 Farmers Cooperative Creamery
 FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative
 First District Association
 Foremost Farms USA
 Land O'Lakes, Inc.
 Lone Star Milk Producers
 Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers
 Michigan Milk Producers Association
 Mid-West Dairymen's Company
 Mount Joy Farmers Cooperative Association
 Northwest Dairy Association
 Oneida-Madison Milk Producers Co-op Association
 Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.
 Premier Milk Inc.
 Scioto Cooperative Milk Producers Association
 Select Milk Producers, Inc.
 Southeast Milk, Inc.
 St. Albans Cooperative Creamery, Inc.
 Swiss Valley Farms
 Tillamook County Creamery Association
 United Dairymen of Arizona
 Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.
 Zia Milk Producers, Inc.

NMPF's associate members continued to grow in 2015. More than 75 associate members include processor organizations, state associations, lending institutions, consultants, law firms, media and academia members, as well as two international cooperative companies.

NMPF OFFICERS

Randy Mooney, Chairman

Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Ken Nobis, First Vice Chairman

Michigan Milk Producers Association

Adrian Boer, Second Vice Chairman

Northwest Dairy Association

Mike McCloskey, Third Vice Chairman

Select Milk Producers, Inc.

Keith Murfield, Secretary

United Dairymen of Arizona

Doug Nuttelman, Assistant Secretary

Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Pete Kappelman, Treasurer

Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Neal Rea, Assistant Treasurer

Agri-Mark, Inc.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Neal Rea

Agri-Mark, Inc.

Steve Schlangen

Associated Milk Producers Inc.

Sheryl Meshke

Associated Milk Producers Inc.

James "Jimmy" Kerr

Cooperative Milk Producers Association

William Beeman

Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Brian Hardy

Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jerrel Heatwole
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Neil Hoff
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Jackie Klippenstein
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Chris Kraft
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

George Mertens
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Randy Mooney
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Doug Nuttelman
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Jeff Raney
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

George Rohrer
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Dan Senestraro
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Rick Smith
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Greg Wickham
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

John Wilson
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.

Scot Meyer
Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery

Michael Anderson
Farmers Cooperative Creamery

David Cooper
FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative

Clint Fall
First District Association

Michael Doyle
Foremost Farms USA

David Scheevel
Foremost Farms USA

Peter Janzen
Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Pete Kappelman
Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Cornell Kasbergen
Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Tom Wakefield
Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Jim Baird
Lone Star Milk Producers

Jay Bryant
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers

Ken Nobis
Michigan Milk Producers Association

Dennis Tonak
Mid-West Dairyman's Company

Adrian Boer
Northwest Dairy Association

Jim Werkhoven
Northwest Dairy Association

Mark Wesen
Northwest Dairy Association

Tony Graves
Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.

Tom Pittman
Premier Milk, Inc.

Brad Bouma
Select Milk Producers, Inc.

Mike McCloskey
Select Milk Producers, Inc.

Joe Wright
Southeast Milk Producers, Inc.

Ralph McNall
St. Albans Cooperative Creamery

Pat Schroeder
Swiss Valley Farms

Keith Murfield
United Dairymen of Arizona

Lawrence Webster
Upstate Niagara Cooperatives, Inc.

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President & Chief Executive Officer

Weston Abels
Front Desk Assistant

Tom Balmer
Executive Vice President

Ryan Bennett
Senior Director, Industry & Environmental Affairs

Madelyn Berner
Communications Coordinator

Paul Bleiberg
Senior Director, Government Relations

Beth Briczinski
Vice President, Dairy Foods & Nutrition

Jaime Castaneda
Senior Vice President, Strategic Initiatives & Trade Policy

Anne Chamblee
General Office Assistant

Clay Detlefsen
Senior Vice President, Regulatory & Environmental
Affairs

Chris Galen
Senior Vice President, Communications

Khadija Gibson-White
Program Manager, Cooperatives Working Together

John Hollay
Vice President, Government Relations

Carrie Hughes
Executive Assistant

Jamie Jonker
Vice President, Sustainability & Scientific Affairs

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Senior Director, Meetings & Office Services

Emily Meredith
Vice President, Animal Care

Anuja Miner
Vice President, Membership Services

Gail Mobley
Senior Director, Finance & Administration

Shawna Morris
Vice President, Trade Policy

John Newton
Senior Director, Economic Research

Peter Vitaliano
Vice President, Economic Policy & Market Research

Bobby Yi
Director, Information Technology

FUTURE MEETINGS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, March 7 – Tuesday, March 8, 2016
The Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City
Arlington, Virginia

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Tuesday, June 7 – Wednesday, June 8, 2016
The Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City
Arlington, Virginia

NDB, NMPF, UDIA JOINT ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, October 31 – Wednesday, November 2, 2016
Gaylord Opryland Nashville
Nashville, Tennessee

2017

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, March 6 – Tuesday, March 7, 2017
The Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City
Arlington, Virginia

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, June 12 – Wednesday, June 14, 2017
The Ritz-Carlton Washington, D.C.

NDB, NMPF, UDIA JOINT ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, October 30 – Wednesday, November 1, 2017
Disneyland Hotel
Anaheim, California

2018

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, March 5 – Tuesday, March 6, 2018
The Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City
Arlington, Virginia

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, June 4 – Wednesday, June 6, 2018
The Westin Arlington Gateway
Arlington, Virginia

NDB, NMPF, UDIA JOINT ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, October 29 – Wednesday, October 31, 2018
JW Marriott Desert Ridge
Phoenix, Arizona



The Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center in Nashville. Source: Gaylord Opryland





National Milk Producers Federation

2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22205

703-243-6111 | www.nmpf.org