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FARM and BQA Extend Collaborative Commitment on Animal Care Issues

(Washington, D.C. – February 16, 2016) – In order to strengthen the ongoing partnership between the dairy and beef segments of the cattle industry on animal care issues, the National Milk Producers Federation and the beef checkoff-funded Beef Quality Assurance program today announced they will jointly be offering more training opportunities for farmers and ranchers in 2016.

NMPF has been working for the past year on identifying areas where its Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) program can further coordinate with the Dairy Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Program, managed by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association on behalf of the Beef Checkoff. Both programs focus on educating cattle producers about the best practices in animal care, to assure consumers that their meat and milk comes from animals that receive optimal care throughout the animals’ lives.

At the Cattle Industry Convention last month, the BQA Advisory Board approved an addition to its program whereby any dairy producer evaluated using the FARM program’s upcoming version 3.0, due out in January 2017, will also receive their BQA certification. BQA will also be working with the FARM program in the coming years to create training opportunities for dairy producers to preserve the beef quality of their cows. These training sessions will focus on stockmanship, residue prevention, and transportation. Many of these training opportunities will be available at the state level, implemented by the BQA state coordinators.

“This partnership will maximize the value of the beef checkoff’s investment in animal care, which is an issue of greater importance today because of consumers’ interest in the source of their beef, and the treatment of cows,” said Dan Kniffen, Ph.D., vice chair of the BQA Advisory Board.

Emily Meredith, NMPF’s Vice President of Animal Care, and director of the FARM program, said that “education is the key to preventing health and wellness problems for cattle further down the road. This collaboration with BQA will extend the reach of the FARM program’s educational materials, and harness the expertise that BQA state network of educators can provide to dairy farmers.”

In addition to regional training sessions and additional educational materials, the FARM program and BQA will jointly produce online stockmanship training resources that will be made available to dairy farmers in 2016.

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About NMPF

The National Milk Producers Federation, based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the wellbeing of dairy producers and the cooperatives they own. The members of NMPF's cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of more than 32,000 dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. Visit www.nmpf.org for more information.

About the Beef Checkoff Program

The Beef Checkoff Program was established as part of the 1985 Farm Bill. The checkoff assesses \$1 per head on the sale of live domestic and imported cattle, in addition to a comparable assessment on imported beef and beef products. States with qualifying state beef councils retain up to 50 cents on the dollar and forward the other 50 cents per head to the CBB, which administers the national checkoff program, subject to USDA approval.

About NCBA

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), based in Centennial, Colo., and a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program, has represented America's cattle producers since 1898. As the largest association of cattle producers, NCBA works to create new markets and increase demand for beef.