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2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22201  
703-243-6111 • [www.nmpf.org](http://www.nmpf.org)

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*"Connecting Cows, Cooperatives, Capitol Hill, and Consumers"*

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Contact: Christopher Galen  
(703) 243-6111 ext. 356  
Email: [CGalen@nmpf.org](mailto:CGalen@nmpf.org)

### **FDA Analysis Demonstrates U.S. Milk Supply is Safe from Drug Residues**

ARLINGTON, VA – A [new report](#) released Thursday by the Food and Drug Administration underscores the safety of the nation's milk supply, and demonstrates that the regulations to keep drug residues out of milk are effective in protecting the public health, the National Milk Producers Federation said today in reaction to the FDA survey.

The milk survey was released by the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine, which sampled the 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 percent of the samples were free of residues, "underscoring the safety of the milk supply," according to the FDA.

"This report proves that America's dairy farmers are delivering on our commitment to providing safe and wholesome milk to consumers, while working closely with state and federal regulators to continually improve the safety of our products," said NMPF President and CEO Jim Mulhern. "Dairy farmers have a strong track record of compliance with state and federal milk safety regulations, and we support education and enforcement efforts to further strengthen that record."

The FDA's objective in the 2012 survey was to determine if those 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 by regulators over the years for being in violation of existing standards for antibiotic and other drug residues in animal carcasses at meat processing facilities.

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.

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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 to keep antibiotics out of the milk supply. This was not an analysis of processed, retail-bound dairy products that reached consumers. The FDA conducts approximately 40,000 separate antibiotic residue tests of retail-ready dairy products annually, and has detected zero positives in the past four years.

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. The 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.”

According to Mulhern, the findings “are a positive affirmation of our milk safety in the U.S., although we still need continued education among farmers, veterinarians, and pharmaceutical companies, and a need for continued outreach on how to prevent trace levels of residues in the future. This is a shared responsibility among all of us who are committed to continuing to provide people with a safe, healthy product.

“We want to continuously improve the demonstrably-effective processes already in place to keep antibiotics out of milk. These results are great, but we still are aiming for zero positives in the future.”

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The National Milk Producers Federation, based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the well-being 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](http://www.nmpf.org) for more information.