



News Release

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

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NMPF Urges Congress to Pass New Farm Bill at Capitol Hill Rally *Time Running Out for Legislators to Improve Dairy Farmer Safety Net*



WASHINGTON, DC – Members of the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) joined hundreds of other farmers on Capitol Hill today at a rally urging Congress to pass a new, five-year farm bill before current farm programs expire in less than three weeks.

NMPF is a founding member of the [Farm Bill Now](#) coalition, which brought dozens of groups and hundreds of farmers together Wednesday at the steps of the U.S. Capitol. One of them was NMPF First Vice Chairman Ken Nobis (in the photo), a dairy farmer from St. John, Michigan, who told those assembled that politics shouldn't stand in the way of helping America's farmers.

"Dairy farmers have worked with Democrats and Republicans, in the Senate and the House, to create a farm bill that saves taxpayers money, and at the same time offers dairy producers a more effective safety net when times are tough," Nobis said. "It would be a tragic mistake, after this bill has already passed the Senate, and the House Agriculture Committee, to let it wither and die on the political vine, rather than make the necessary effort to get it passed in the coming weeks."

Nobis reminded lawmakers that the dairy reforms included in the new farm bill will reduce government expenditures compared to current policy, which should appeal to those members of the House concerned with the deficit.

"If the question in Washington is how to reform government programs and make them more effective, we have an answer: pass the 2012 Farm Bill. The dairy title, along with the rest of the program, is budget-friendly. By not acting on this measure, Congress actually increases federal spending next year," Nobis said.

There are fewer than ten days left on the legislative calendar of the House of Representatives before the Congress adjourns in October. If the bill can't be approved this fall, the path forward is murky at best. Other possible outcomes include a farm bill being passed by a lame duck session of Congress after the November elections, or a one-year extension of current farm programs.

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NMPF's Board of Directors earlier this year came out against the latter option, asserting that an extension of current policy through 2013 does dairy farmers no real good, and leaves the tough choices about budget priorities unresolved.

NMPF President and CEO Jerry Kozak said that if Congress can't generate the necessary effort to pass a new farm bill this year, the organization would not support an extension of current dairy programs, and instead would insist on getting the Dairy Security Act – the dairy reform bill already included in the Senate version of the Farm Bill – included in any extension package of other farm programs.

“We've come too far to acquiesce to another serving of the status quo. Dairy farmers need more than platitudes from Congress – we need action and leadership,” he said.

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Farm Bill Now is a coalition of more than 80 agricultural groups, each with strong and varied policy priorities, yet all committed to passing a farm bill this year. Learn more at www.FarmBillNow.com.

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 30 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.