



# News Release

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

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## **Congress Leaves Dairy Farmers Without Safety Net In Absence of New Farm Bill** *Key Farm Programs Among First To End*

ARLINGTON, VA – Dairy farmers have lost a safety net because the 2008 farm bill expired Sunday and Congress has yet to pass a new Farm Bill, according to the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), which said today that farmers need to continue to voice their dissatisfaction with the lack of action in Washington on farm policy.

Members of the House left Washington last month without completing work on the 2012 Farm Bill. Although Congress is expected to return to Capitol Hill after the November elections, the status of many farm and food programs is in limbo until then, along with the rest of the pending farm bill that contains a new and better safety net for dairy farmers.

"Dairy is among the first sectors in agriculture to feel the impact of Congress's inability to reach accord on most anything, including a new Farm Bill," said Jerry Kozak, President and CEO of NMPF. "Had the House leadership brought the bipartisan farm bill to the floor, I believe we could have passed a bill containing the Dairy Security Act. Instead, we are in uncharted waters, and one of our life rafts has disappeared."

Dairy farmers continue to suffer from high feed costs, and the other program intended to serve as a safety net – the dairy product price support program – was created years before feed costs started to escalate, Kozak said.

That's why NMPF has been urging Congress to pass the Dairy Security Act, which instead of focusing simply on milk prices, takes into account the margin between farm-level milk prices and feed costs.

"We strongly encourage our dairy farmer members to visit with their members of Congress during the pre-election recess to determine a path forward for the 2012 Farm Bill soon after the elections," Kozak said. "We need a full, five-year bill to be passed in the House, sent to a conference committee, and approved before the end of the year."

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](http://www.nmpf.org) for more information.