



International Dairy Foods Association
Milk Industry Foundation
National Cheese Institute
International Ice Cream Association



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NMPF and IDFA Oppose Senate Farm Bill Amendment Legalizing National Sales of Raw Milk

WASHINGTON, DC – The two organizations representing America’s dairy farmers and dairy foods companies jointly announced their opposition today to a proposal in the Senate that would allow the interstate sales of raw milk.

Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) has introduced an amendment to the 2012 Farm Bill, No. 2180, that would allow the direct sale of raw milk and raw milk products across state lines, “greatly enhancing the chances that people will become sick because of increased consumption of unpasteurized milk,” [the two groups said in a letter](#) sent to members of the Senate.

“Pasteurization is one of the greatest public health tools. To compromise or reduce its use through this legislation is not just bad politics – it’s a huge, inhumane step backwards, and one that will cause sickness and death,” said Jerry Kozak, President and CEO of NMPF.

Federal law currently prohibits the interstate sale of raw milk, but allows states individual discretion to regulate raw milk sales within their borders. Several states in recent years have liberalized sale or distribution of raw milk, even as the product has been repeatedly linked to serious illnesses from coast to coast.

“The link between raw milk and foodborne illness has been well-documented in the scientific literature, with evidence spanning nearly 100 years, said Connie Tipton, President and CEO of IDFA. “Raw milk is a key vehicle in the transmission of human pathogens, which is why its consumption has been opposed by every major health organization in the United States, including the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics.”

Kozak said that lawmakers have to keep in mind that “nearly two-thirds of all outbreaks associated with raw milk or raw milk products involve children. It is the responsibility of our nation’s leaders to make decisions to protect the health of the American public, most especially, those who are minors and are unable to make fully informed decisions that could have profound consequences for the rest of their lives,” he said.

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Tipton said that “While consumer choice is an important value, it should not pre-empt public health and well-being. Legalizing the sale of raw milk and raw milk products to consumers, either through direct sale or through cow-share programs, represents an unnecessary risk to consumer safety. Therefore, we ask that you oppose Amendment No. 2180.”

The Senate is expected to begin debating this and other amendments to the Farm Bill this week.

The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), 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.

The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), Washington, DC, represents the nation's dairy manufacturing and marketing industries and their suppliers, with a membership of 550 companies representing a \$110-billion a year industry. IDFA is composed of three constituent organizations: the Milk Industry Foundation (MIF), the National Cheese Institute (NCI) and the International Ice Cream Association (IICA). IDFA's 220 dairy processing members run more than 600 plant operations, and range from large multi-national organizations to single-plant companies. Together they represent more than 85% of the milk, cultured products, cheese and frozen desserts produced and marketed in the United States. IDFA can be found online at www.idfa.org.