



News Release

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, June 7, 2012

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Senate Farm Bill Passes Key Procedural Vote

Dairy Reform Proposal Part of Larger Measure to be Debated This Month

ARLINGTON, VA – The Senate version of the 2012 Farm Bill passed a crucial test today when 90 Senators voted in favor of bringing the bill to the floor for further consideration, according to the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF).

The 2012 Farm Bill, formally designated S. 3240, passed the cloture vote Thursday by an overwhelming margin of 90-8. The measure now proceeds to the full Senate floor for debate and amendments, a process that could take several weeks before a final vote is taken.

Thursday's action "greatly increases the chances that we can get our dairy reform proposal through the Senate, as well as the House, and passed into law this year," said Jerry Kozak, President and CEO of NMPF. "We commend Senators Stabenow and Roberts, the leaders of the Senate Agriculture Committee, for their dogged determination to get this bill to the Senate floor."

The Senate legislation includes a new, voluntary margin protection program, endorsed by NMPF, to better safeguard farmers against disastrously low margins, such as those generated by the low milk prices and high feed costs that cost dairy farmers \$20 billion in net worth between 2007 and 2009.

Kozak said the dairy title contains a better safety net for farmers in the form of the Dairy Production Margin Protection Program, which offers them a basic level of coverage against low margins, as well as a supplemental insurance plan offering higher levels of protection jointly funded by government and farmers. Those who opt to enroll in the margin program will also be subject to the Market Stabilization program that asks them to reduce milk output when margins are poor.

NMPF representatives [appeared Wednesday at a news conference](#) in the U.S. Capitol with Stabenow and Roberts, urging that the farm bill debate begin as soon as possible.

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.