



National Milk Producers Federation

National Milk Producers Federation • 2101 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201 • 703-243-6111; FAX 703-841-9328

September 19, 2008

Congressman XXXX
XXX
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman XXXXXX:

The National Milk Producers Federation applauds Congressman McHugh's introduction of the Dairy and Sheep H-2A Visa Enhancement Act of 2008 (H.R. 6885). We appreciate this tremendously important step that he and the other four original cosponsors (Congressmen Kuhl, Nunes, Reynolds and Walsh) have taken to address a gross oversight in America's agricultural guest worker program by enabling dairy workers to participate effectively in the H-2A visa program. We urge you to join them by cosponsoring H.R. 6885.

Immigrant labor plays a crucial role in contributing to the success of America's dairy industry. A large percentage of the hired workers on dairy farms are immigrants. This is true for so many dairy farmers across this country, both large and small.

Unfortunately, unlike most other immigrant-dependent agricultural sectors, the dairy industry is currently blocked by the Department of Labor (DOL) from using the H-2A program because of the program's requirement that the worker and job both be temporary or seasonal. Although we disagree with the DOL's assessment of the seasonality rule, it is not a workable program for our dairy industry at this time.

NMPF remains a very strong proponent for comprehensive agricultural immigration reform (such as that contained in AgJOBS). However, while dairy farmers continue to work to convince Congress of the urgent need for action on a broader agricultural immigration bill, they must have access to appropriate temporary agricultural guest-worker visas. It is only fair to allow dairy farmers to use the same crucial business tool (H-2A), which others in immigrant-dependent sectors of American agriculture already are permitted to use on timetables which suit those seasonal industries.

Once again, we urge you to become a cosponsor of the Dairy and Sheep H-2A Visa Enhancement Act of 2008 (HR 6885) to help rectify a portion of the current untenable labor situation by providing dairy farmers access to legal temporary workers.

Sincerely,

Jerry Kozak
President & CEO

Jerry Kozak, President/Chief Executive Officer

Charles Beckendorf, Chairman

Agri-Mark, Inc.
Arkansas Dairy Cooperative Association
Associated Milk Producers, Inc.
Continental Dairy Products, Inc.
Cooperative Milk Producers Assn.
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
Dairymen's Marketing Cooperative, Inc.
Dairstyle Cooperative Inc.
Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery
Farmers Cooperative Creamery
First District Association
Foremost Farms USA
Humboldt Creamery
Just Jersey Cooperative, Inc.
Land O'Lakes, Inc.
Lone Star Milk Producers, Inc.
Manitowoc Milk Producers Coop.
MD & VA Milk Producers Cooperative Association, Inc.
Michigan Milk Producers Assn.
Mid-West Dairymen's Company
Northwest Dairy Association
Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.
St. Albans Cooperative Creamery, Inc.
Scioto County Co-op Milk Producers' Assn.
Select Milk Producers, Inc.
Southeast Milk, Inc.
Swiss Valley Farms, Co.
Tillamook County Creamery Assn.
United Dairymen of Arizona
Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.
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