



# News Release

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



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **FARM Program Statement: Zonneveld Dairies, Inc.**

*From Emily Yeiser Stepp, Director, FARM Animal Care Program:*

ARLINGTON, VA – “The National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) Program has established a rigorous framework of best practices to ensure the proper treatment of dairy animals at all stages of their lives. The program – created by veterinarians, animal health experts and farmers – takes seriously all allegations of inadequate care of dairy cattle.

“The family-owned and -operated California farm is a member of Land O’Lakes, Inc., a farmer-owned cooperative that requires participation in and full compliance with the FARM Program of all of its farmer-members. Zonneveld Dairies, Inc., underwent its required FARM assessment in June 2017 and was found to be compliance with the program’s criteria, including appropriately caring for calves and sick animals.

“Upon receipt of the video materials created recently by the animal rights group Direct Action Everywhere, the FARM Program used three animal care experts to review the video and offer a thorough analysis of the images. The third-party dairy veterinarian animal health experts concluded definitively that the calf in question was under proper veterinary care and receiving all necessary treatment. The panel did recommend that additional cushion or bedding could be used in the pens during adverse weather conditions. All experts agreed that the theft of a calf currently receiving proper care by both the farmer and dairy veterinary staff was unjustified and, in fact, put the calf (born prematurely just days before it was illegally and carelessly removed from the Zonneveld’s farm) at a higher risk for illness and potential death.

“To further assess Zonneveld’s commitment to animal care, a third-party audit will be conducted on all of their facilities to further ensure compliance with FARM Program standards.

“We hope that the activists who stole this animal recognize that it is a living creature requiring expert attention and care, not a political statement, and return the calf to its rightful owners so that it can

receive the further treatment and care it needs.”

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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 cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. For more on NMPF’s activities, visit our website at [www.nmpf.org](http://www.nmpf.org).