



# News Release

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

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## **NMPF Strategic Planning Task Force Gets Underway** Initial Meeting Focuses on Short-Term Solutions to Milk Price Woes

ARLINGTON, VA – In response to the current economic milk price crisis affecting dairy farmers across the country, the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF)'s newly-formed Strategic Planning Task Force met last week to focus on short-term solutions and to establish an aggressive schedule for addressing longer-term solutions to the problem.

The Task Force immediately voted to recommend to the CWT Committee and the NMPF Board of Directors to direct any available CWT funds to assist CWT members in utilizing the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP) to its fullest extent. DEIP has the potential to export the equivalent of more than 1.5 billion pounds of milk. The NMPF Board of Directors immediately approved the recommendation and directed CWT management to work with CWT members to facilitate this recommendation.

While CWT's Export Assistance program isn't meant to replace the use of the DEIP, "we've always seen it as a complement to the role of DEIP, and so we are willing to utilize specially-designated CWT funds to help expedite the use of the government's resources to help remove one percent of the nation's dairy production through DEIP," said Jerry Kozak, President and CEO of NMPF.

Kozak said that this measure, spurred on by the Task Force, will further aid efforts to correct the supply-demand imbalance at the heart of the financial hardship being faced by thousands of American dairy farm families. In a separate action, CWT is currently in the middle of removing more than 100,000 cows equivalent to two billion pounds of milk in the largest-ever herd retirement in its six-year history.

To address longer-term factors affecting price and volatility, the Task Force will next meet in Chicago with representatives from major dairy producer organizations across the nation that are proposing programs to resolve the crisis.

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The Task Force will engage in a detailed dialogue with these groups “to determine the economic and political feasibility of those plans, with the goal of achieving a common understanding of how best to tackle the problems of low milk prices and high input costs,” Kozak said.

Letters of invitation have already been sent to the producer organizations asking them to be prepared to discuss a number of proposals concerning both supply and demand.

“There was no single reason why dairy farmers have found themselves in this plight so the Task Force will focus on developing a portfolio of solutions to ensure that we can avoid such circumstances in the future,” said Kozak.

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 31 cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of more than 40,000 dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies.