



# News Release

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, July 22, 2009

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## **NMPF Strategic Planning Task Force Meets To Review Proposals Intended To Offer Long-Term Solutions To Milk Price Problems**

ARLINGTON, VA – More than half a dozen U.S. dairy farm organizations met earlier this week in Chicago to review a handful of concepts designed to improve dairy farm prices and offer long-term solutions to the economic volatility afflicting farmers across the country.

The National Milk Producers Federation's new Strategic Planning Task force hosted a meeting Monday and Tuesday "to consider both how the current milk price crisis developed, and how best to reduce the chances that a similar situation could arise in the future," said Jerry Kozak, President and CEO of NMPF. "Coming out of the meeting, I believe we have a keener sense of what has brought us to this point, and we definitely have a stronger sense that the industry needs to make significant changes in the economic regulation of milk prices."

The Task Force spent much of Monday reviewing a plan to manage milk supply growth by assigning production bases to farmers, a program endorsed jointly by the Holstein Association USA, the Milk Producers Council, and Dairy Farmers Working Together. Representatives from each of those organizations discussed how such a program would work, and how it would have to be implemented legislatively in order to make it mandatory for all dairy farmers.

NMPF's Task Force is now in the process of conducting a more detailed analysis of the price stabilization plan discussed in Chicago, and will meet again in August to review that, and other ideas to reform the milk pricing system.

The Task Force also heard presentations from other farm policy organizations about their perspective on the dairy crisis, including the National Farmers Union, the National Farmers Organization, the American Farm Bureau Federation, and Western United Dairymen.

"Each organization has a somewhat different perspective on what potential future steps our industry can or should take, but there is a common understanding that this crisis presents an opportunity to make positive changes in our industry," Kozak said. "There is also a shared understanding that long-term changes have to be initiated by those farm organizations who best understand the nature of milk production and marketing."

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While the NMPF Strategic Planning Task Force is focused on future changes in milk pricing, Kozak said that NMPF is continuing to push for action steps to help improve prices in the short term. Last week, during a congressional hearing on the dairy crisis, an NMPF Board member called on U.S. Department of Agriculture to boost purchase prices under the dairy product price support program, and reiterated NMPF's request that the USDA fully utilize the Dairy Export Incentive Program to boost overseas exports.

NMPF'S Cooperatives Working Together program is also conducting its second herd retirement in the past three months, with a bid submission deadline of this Friday, July 24<sup>th</sup>.

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. Visit [www.nmpf.org](http://www.nmpf.org) for more information.