



# News Release

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

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## **Senate Passes Farm Bill with Crucial Dairy Policy Reforms**

NMPF-Backed Dairy Security Act Emerges Intact After Dozens of Amendments Debated

ARLINGTON, VA – The dairy policy reforms that have been under development for three years were included in the 2012 Farm Bill approved by the Senate Thursday by a vote of 64-35. The National Milk Producers Federation hailed the bill's passage as a "huge and historic step toward making a once-in-a-generation improvement in the safety net for America's dairy farmers," according to Jerry Kozak, President and CEO of NMPF.

"Despite a variety of political, economic and institutional challenges, the leaders of the Senate, and in particular, the leaders of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Sens. Stabenow and Roberts, have delivered on their promise to produce better farm and food policy. We appreciate their hard work in the past months, and will work in turn to ensure the House produces a similar bill in the coming months," Kozak said.

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 the government and participating farmers. Those farmers choosing to enroll in the margin program will also be subject to a Market Stabilization Program that addresses the imbalance between supply and demand when farm-level margins are poor.

During the consideration of more than 70 amendments to the bill, there was no effort to significantly alter the dairy title, NMPF said. "Although it was necessary to work to defeat several unacceptable amendments, the fundamental package of dairy policy reforms supported by NMPF remained unchanged throughout the Senate debate," said Kozak. "We are very pleased at the progress made during this vital step in the Farm Bill process, but we also know that much work lies ahead," he added.

With Senate passage of a 2012 Farm Bill, the focus now shifts to the House of Representatives, where the House Agriculture Committee is expected to begin marking up its own version July 11th.

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