



News Release

2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 400, Arlington, VA 22201
703.243.6111 • www.nmpf.org

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

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Contact: Christopher Galen
Phone: (571) 217-3326
Email: CGalen@nmpf.org

National Milk Producers Statement on Senate Vote on Farm Bill Extension

From Jerry Kozak, President and CEO of NMPF

"The Senate's vote earlier today on a nine-month extension of current farm policy is a devastating blow to the nation's dairy farmers. After months of inaction, the plan that passed overnight as part of the fiscal cliff package amounts to shoving farmers over the dairy cliff without providing any safety net below.

"Meanwhile, the House is now considering a similar proposal that extends the farm bill nine months, but also without the new dairy safety net program that would provide better protection for the nation's milk producers.

"Dairy farmers across the country have united behind the Dairy Security Act provisions in the original farm bills that have already been approved by the full Senate and by the House Agriculture Committee. These stop-gap efforts don't even qualify as kicking the can down the road. It's little more than a New Year's Day, hair-of-the-dog stab at temporarily putting off decisions that should have been made in 2012 about how to move farm policy forward, not offer more of the same.

"The Senate had already passed a full, five-year farm bill that NMPF endorsed because it contains the Dairy Security Act that America's farmers need in 2013 and beyond. The House Agriculture Committee also passed a farm bill in 2012 that includes the Dairy Security Act. The bills in both chambers end the price support program that, starting today, will revert back to 1949 levels. But more importantly, they also eliminate direct payments and export subsidies, and establish a voluntary risk management tool for farmers that would save the government money.

"Despite the progress made in 2012 on the farm bill, we're starting 2013 on a bad note. We oppose any farm bill extension of any duration that does not contain the Dairy Security Act and resolve to work this year on achieving that as a long-term goal."

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 for more information.