



News Release

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



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National Dairy FARM Program Now Compliant with International Standards Organization

First U.S. Livestock Care Program to Earn ISO Compatibility

ARLINGTON, VA – The National Dairy FARM Program is now the first livestock animal care program in the world to be recognized internationally for its industry-leading animal welfare standards. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) affirmed this week that the program complies with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Animal Welfare Management/General Requirements and Guidance for Organizations in the Food Supply Chain.

USDA's affirmation that the FARM Program is ISO-compliant "validates the hard work of everyone who has contributed to the FARM Program in the past decade — from the veterinarians and academics who helped design the program, to the farmers and dairy cooperatives who implement it," said Emily Meredith, NMPF's chief of staff. "The U.S. dairy industry has worked hard to make the FARM Program a best-in-class animal care program, not just in the United States, but now around the world."

ISO's animal welfare technical specification was designed to evaluate if animal welfare programs meet international standards for animal care. ISO, an independent, international standards-setting body, has worked for several years with the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) to help farmers and animal welfare programs like FARM determine how to implement species-specific animal welfare standards. The OIE, the World Trade Organization-recognized body for setting animal health and welfare standards affecting international trade, adopted dairy cattle welfare standards in 2015. In the United States, the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) offers a voluntary marketing program that ensures independent welfare programs meet the specifications of the ISO standard.

"ISO compliance means that dairy customers both here and abroad can safely trust that their products meet the stringent, internationally recognized animal welfare standards set by the OIE," added Meredith. "What's more, our dairy farmers can rest assured they only need to comply with one program — FARM — and not a potential myriad of other guidelines. This recognition becomes even more critical as nearly 16 percent of U.S. milk production is exported to foreign customers."

After a lengthy assessment process, the FARM Program now has a prestigious, independent corroboration that its science-based approach to high-quality animal care sets the standard for the dairy value chain in the United States and around the world. Consumers can trust that the dairy foods they consume came from animals treated under internationally recognized, quality animal care standards.

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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.