



News Release

2107 Wilson Blvd., Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22201
703.243.6111 | www.nmpf.org

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, August 14, 2018

Christopher Galen
(703) 243-6111 ext. 356
CGalen@nmpf.org

NMPF Welcomes USDA's \$50 Million Milk Purchase for Needy Americans

ARLINGTON, VA – The National Milk Producers Federation welcomed the announcement today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that it will purchase \$50 million worth of fluid milk for distribution to domestic food assistance programs – the first time the agency has bought milk for use in this manner.

The USDA said Tuesday that it will authorize the expenditure of \$50 million in Section 32 funds to purchase a range of consumer-friendly milk varieties, including whole, 2 percent, 1 percent and skim. The agency will purchase the milk from approved vendors, and distribute the product – an estimated 12-15 million gallons, depending on the prices agreed to by USDA and its suppliers – to food assistance organizations such as Feeding America. The USDA will be offering informational webinars to dairy companies that wish to sell milk to the agency through this donation program.

"We are pleased that USDA is now including fluid milk in the assortment of foods it is buying and donating, as milk is in high demand at food banks because of its unparalleled nutritional benefits," said Jim Mulhern, president and CEO of NMPF. "This effort will help more Americans meet their U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommended daily consumption of milk. We appreciate this initial step and look forward to working with the department to continue building upon this effort."

The Agriculture Department noted that this purchase is a separate action from the unfair trade practice mitigation program – announced July 24 by the agency – that will provide financial assistance to agricultural producers through a combination of product purchases, direct payments and trade promotion programs. The USDA has yet to release any details about that effort, but the \$12 billion budget for that assistance, coming from Section 5 of USDA's spending authority, is distinct from the Section 32 funds being used for this new milk purchase program.

"NMPF has been sharing information with USDA about the best way to maximize the value of the farmer assistance program that will be implemented soon, and we are hopeful that the agency moves quickly to get resources in the hands of dairy farmers this fall," Mulhern said.

###

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.