



News Release

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

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NMPF Calls for Fast Farm Bill Implementation as Government Reopens

ARLINGTON, Va. – With the federal government poised to reopen for three weeks after a 35-day partial shutdown that delayed implementation of the 2018 Farm Bill, the National Milk Producers Federation today [sent a letter](#) to Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue urging quick implementation of the law's dairy provisions.

"Dairy farmers have just completed a fourth consecutive year of depressed milk prices and are facing an uncertain outlook for 2019," wrote Jim Mulhern, president and CEO of NMPF. "We believe that the significant dairy policy reforms we worked successfully with Congress to enact in the new farm bill will be critically important to helping farmers better manage difficult periods of low margins."

Implementation of the law, passed in December, has been slowed by the recent shutdown. Dairy programs should be fast-tracked because of the nature of farm bill reforms, NMPF said.

"Because the dairy provisions of the law simply modify the pre-existing margin program, it is clear from Congress' direction that USDA can move forward to enact the new provisions without conducting a formal rulemaking process," Mulhern wrote. "We encourage you to utilize this flexibility to help add momentum to the process, especially in light of the fact that the government shutdown has delayed the department's ability to proceed."

NMPF looks forward to working with USDA on a farmer-friendly sign-up process that gives producers time to understand their options, with quickly updated online tools to streamline the process. The new farm bill includes several critical provisions important to dairy. The new Dairy Margin Coverage program (DMC) offers much more affordable and higher coverage levels than previous initiatives, with all dairy producers able to insure margins up to \$9.50/cwt. on their Tier I (first 5 million pounds) production history. The DMC also offers lower-cost \$5.00 margin coverage, a higher level of affordable catastrophic protection for operations wishing to cover more than 5 million pounds of production.

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The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance dairy producers and the cooperatives they own. NMPF's member cooperatives produce the majority of U.S. milk, making NMPF the voice of dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. For more, visit www.nmpf.org.