



News Release

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

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NMPF Applauds USDA Support for More Milk Options in School Meals

ARLINGTON, Va. – The National Milk Producers Federation commended Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue for returning low-fat (1%) flavored milk as part of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs. The final rule implementing regulatory changes needed to add low-fat flavored milk to more school menus and other nutrition programs serving children was [announced today](#) by the USDA and will be published later this month in the [Federal Register](#).

"NMPF thanks Secretary Perdue for completing this step that will encourage milk consumption in schools," said Jim Mulhern, president and CEO of the NMPF. "USDA's own studies have shown that students drank less milk after low-fat chocolate milk was removed from schools. Returning low-fat flavored milk to school menus will help reverse this harmful trend. Milk has been an integral part of school meals since their beginning, and greater milk consumption equals better nutrition for America's kids. The new rule is good news for schools, students and American dairy farmers."

The final rule makes permanent the changes Secretary Purdue implemented last year to streamline the process by which schools can serve low-fat flavored milk. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Agriculture eliminated low-fat flavored milk as an option in school meal and a la carte programs, after which milk consumption in schools dropped. Students consumed 288 million fewer half-pints of milk from 2012-2015, even as public-school enrollments grew.

The USDA action will allow schools to offer low-fat flavored milk without requiring them to demonstrate either a reduction in student milk consumption or an increase in school milk waste, bureaucratic hoops that had limited their ability to offer low-fat flavored milk in the 2017/18 school year.

NMPF appreciates the bipartisan efforts of numerous members of Congress who advocated for this change, most notably Reps. Glenn 'GT' Thompson (R-PA) and Joe Courtney (D-CT).

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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.