



National Milk Producers Federation

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June 19, 2020

Agri-Mark, Inc.
Associated Milk Producers Inc.
Bongards' Creameries
California Dairies, Inc.
Cayuga Marketing Cooperative Milk Producers Association
Dairy Farmers of America, Inc.
Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery
FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative
First District Association
Foremost Farms USA
Land O'Lakes, Inc.
Lone Star Milk Producers
Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association
Michigan Milk Producers Association
Mid-West Dairy Farmers' Company
Mount Joy Farmers Cooperative Association
Northwest Dairy Association
Oneida-Madison Milk Producers Cooperative Association
Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.
Premier Milk Inc.
Scioto Cooperative Milk Producers' Association
Select Milk Producers, Inc.
Southeast Milk, Inc.
Tillamook County Creamery Association
United Dairy Farmers of Arizona
Upstate Niagara Cooperative, Inc.

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow:

The National Milk Producers Federation appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony for your upcoming legislative hearing to review the Growing Climate Solutions Act (S. 3894), which will be held on Wednesday, June 24, 2020 at 10:00 AM.

As you know, the National Milk Producers Federation 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 more than 32,000 dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies.

NMPF closely collaborates with the U.S. Dairy Export Council, the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, and Newtrient LLC, a company established by a dozen NMPF member cooperatives. We are very pleased that you invited former Secretary Vilsack, now the President and CEO of the U.S. Dairy Export Council, to testify before you at a hearing last May regarding climate policy.

As you know, U.S. dairy farmers have been environmental stewards for decades, tending with great care to their land and water, and they value a proactive approach to sustainability. As agricultural practices and technologies have evolved and improved over time, so too have dairy producers adapted. We believe, however, that more can always be done and therefore are supportive of efforts to facilitate continuous improvement in this area.

As you and your committee members well know, sustained low milk prices have made it increasingly difficult for dairy farmers to succeed and we are grateful for the significant improvements included in your 2018 Farm Bill enacted into law. In

light of the COVID-19 pandemic which has only served to exacerbate these challenges, it is these improvements and more which are needed to make both milk production and advanced environmental protection a source of economic strength for all dairy farms.

To this point, we are excited to support the bipartisan Growing Climate Solutions Act (S. 3894) as introduced by Senator Mike Braun (R-IN), a member of this Committee, and Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), as well as Senators Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI). The measure encourages sustainable farming practices by making it easier for farmers to participate in carbon markets. Specifically, the Growing Climate Solutions Act creates a certification program at USDA to help solve technical entry barriers that make it difficult for dairy farmers and other producers to participate in carbon credit markets.

To continue and enhance our efforts to combat climate change, the dairy industry is launching the Net Zero Initiative to reduce the industry's climate impact to 'net zero' by as early as 2050 and minimize the water quality impacts of dairy farming. As part of the groundwork needed to launch this initiative, the dairy industry has worked to develop scientific and economic models to quantify the economic and environmental benefits associated with certain dairy farm technologies and practices, and various technologies have been catalogued and evaluated based on their effectiveness, resilience, and business prospects.

Within the initiative, the industry hopes to deploy several demonstration farms around the country to explore the impact of multiple technologies and management practices that have an ability to aid in reducing dairy's carbon footprint and water quality impact. This effort should help to identify which technologies and practices work well for different types of operations, which will help inform policy discussions regarding the best ways to expand their adoption in pursuit of reducing dairy's environmental impact. Carbon markets will play an important role in helping us to achieve our goal, making the Growing Climate Solutions Act a valuable addition to the legislative landscape in this regard.

In closing, we have appreciated the opportunity to work closely with you to develop a better safety net and array of risk management tools to help dairy producers better weather economic storms like the current one, and we are eager to work with you to advance this landmark legislation. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Jim Mulhern
President & CEO
NMPF

Mike McCloskey
Chairman
NMPF Environmental Issues Committee

