

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I am Jamie Jonker, Chief Science Officer for the National Milk Producers Federation, representing dairy cooperatives and their 20,000 farmer owners.

The National Animal Vaccine and Veterinary Countermeasures Bank (NAVVCB) is our insurance policy against catastrophic animal disease outbreaks like foot-and-mouth disease, African swine fever, and highly pathogenic avian influenza. These diseases could cripple livestock industries, devastate rural economies, and threaten national food security, costing billions in trade losses and disrupting consumer access to safe, affordable food.

With additional funding, USDA can expand antigen and vaccine stockpiles to ensure rapid deployment during an outbreak. This means moving beyond minimum to robust coverage for the many foot-and-mouth disease serotypes and broadening to include other high-risk threats like African swine fever, Lumpy Skin Disease and H5N1. Increased resources would also strengthen surge capacity—so vaccines can be delivered quickly and at scale—and improve logistics for distribution to affected regions.

Enhanced funding should also extend to the National Veterinary Stockpile, which provides critical equipment, supplies, diagnostics, and countermeasures needed to implement vaccination and disease control strategies effectively. Together, NAVVCB and NVS form a comprehensive response system—vaccines alone are not enough without the infrastructure and tools to deploy them rapidly and safely.

Furthermore, increased investment would support research and development of next-generation vaccines and countermeasures, ensuring we stay ahead of evolving pathogens. It would also allow for better coordination with state and industry partners to maintain continuity of business during emergencies.

Simply put, investing in NAVVCB and the National Veterinary Stockpile now is far more cost-effective than responding to an uncontrolled outbreak later. Strengthening these programs protects producers, consumers, and the integrity of our food system—and safeguards national food security. Thank you.