



# News Release

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NMPF Applauds Senate Appropriations Leaders on Dairy Safety Net Improvements**

ARLINGTON, VA – The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) today applauded the inclusion of improvements to both the dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP) and the cotton program in the Senate Appropriations Committee mark-up of its fiscal year 2018 agricultural appropriations bill.

"We very much appreciate the leadership of Sens. Thad Cochran (R-MS) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) to help address critical shortcomings in the dairy and cotton safety net programs through the agricultural appropriations bill," said NMPF President and CEO Jim Mulhern. "The enhancements to the dairy Margin Protection Program contained in the bill would strengthen the program and help pave the way for additional necessary improvements in the upcoming farm bill," Mulhern said.

The appropriations bill makes two important changes to the MPP that were included in NMPF's farm bill proposal: It would reduce premiums paid by dairy farmers for the first 5 million pounds of milk coverage in the program, as well as change the U.S. Department of Agriculture's calculation of the actual margin from a two-month average margin to monthly.

"By making the dairy safety net program more affordable," Mulhern said, "this legislation will ensure that more farmers have access to better protection against catastrophic losses, like those we experienced in 2009 and 2012. While there is more work to do to make the MPP the effective safety net that it was envisioned to be, these improvements are a great start."

Mulhern lauded the work by Cochran and Leahy – the chairman and ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, respectively – as well as Sens. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Pat Roberts (R-KS), the leaders of the Senate Agriculture Committee, for their critical work on this issue. He said NMPF was pleased to work with the four principals to achieve these important improvements for dairy and cotton. "This bi-partisan collaboration is a clear affirmation of how to get important work done," Mulhern said.

While these provisions do not resolve all the problems with the MPP, Mulhern said enacting these changes will be a major help. "NMPF will continue to work with Congress and the Administration through the farm bill process to address other problems so that the MPP can truly provide real safety

net support. While the MPP remains a work in progress, this development is a major step in the right direction.”

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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](http://www.nmpf.org).