



September 7, 2018

Farmers Union to Host 350 Family Farmers for Fly-In

Advocates Will Hear from Secretary Perdue, Top USDA Officials, Members of Congress



WASHINGTON - Amidst an historic decline in net farm income and added disruptions in agricultural trade markets, National Farmers Union (NFU) will host 350 family farmers and ranchers in Washington, D.C., next week to meet face-to-face with top Trump administration officials and members of Congress as they decide on a number of legislative and regulatory priorities for farm country.

California Dairy Campaign President Joe Augusto, California Farmers Union Vice President George Davis, CDC Board Member Mark McAfee and Blaine McAfee will travel to DC to meet with federal lawmakers and call for a federal dairy policy that manages milk inventories, ensures a fair milk price to dairy producers and addresses dairy imports and exports. The California delegation is supporting the Sustainable Milk Inventory System Act (SMISA) which is based on these three key elements and we are urging dairy farmers in California and around the country to support this new approach to federal dairy policy. For more information about the SMISA go to the [California Dairy Campaign web site](#).

One key focus of the NFU Fly-In will be meetings on the Canadian dairy inventory management system with representatives from the Dairy Farmers of Ontario and officials from the Canadian Embassy. Given that milk prices in Canada today average \$27 per cwt, California Dairy Campaign is joining National Farmers Union and dairy farmers from around the country to look at the Canadian dairy system as a model for future U.S. dairy policy to ensure U.S. dairy farmers are paid a fair price for the milk they produce.

NFU Fly-In participants will travel from across the country to the nation's capital to push for passage of a farm bill that supports family agriculture, strong protections from international trade market disruptions, and reform of federal dairy policy. NFU will kick off the Fly-In on the morning of Wednesday, September 12, with a briefing at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), where participants will hear from U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue and other top officials at USDA and the office of the U.S. Trade Representative. Fly-In participants will meet in the afternoon with dairy farmers and officials from Canada on the Canadian dairy inventory management system. Following that, the Farmers Union members will make their way over to Capitol Hill for a Farm Bill Forum, where they will engage with members of Congress on legislative priorities.

On Thursday and Friday, Fly-In participants will visit all 535 congressional offices to meet with members of Congress and congressional staff to deliver their personal stories as to how federal level policies impact their families and communities.

CONFIRMED NFU Fly-In SPEAKERS:

Sonny Perdue, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture
Gregory Ibach, Under Secretary, Marketing and Regulatory Programs,
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Jamie Clover Adams, Chief of Staff, Farm Production and Conservation,
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Gregg Doud, Chief Agriculture Negotiator, U.S. Trade Representative
Anne Hazlett, Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development,
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Senator Heidi Heitkamp, North Dakota
U.S. Senator Joe Donnelly, Indiana
U.S. Senator Tina Smith, Minnesota
U.S. Senator John Hoeven, North Dakota
U.S. Senator Charles Grassley, Iowa
U.S. Representative Jim McGovern, Massachusetts
U.S. Senator Michael Bennet, Colorado
U.S. Representative Chellie Pingree, Maine

Canadian Dairy System to Be Focus during National Farmers Union Legislative Fly-in



California Dairy Campaign President Joe Augusto will join California Farmers Union Vice President George Davis, California Dairy Campaign Board Member Mark McAfee and Blaine McAfee on the National Farmers Union Fly-in set to take place in the nation's capital next week and the Canadian dairy system will be a major focus. During the NFU fly-in, participants will meet with dairy farmers from Canada to discuss details of the Canadian inventory management system. CDC has joined with dairy farmers from around the country to urge U.S. lawmakers to comprehensively reform federal dairy policy to ensure dairy farmers are paid a fair milk price. This year, the average price paid to dairy farmers in Canada is stable and well above average production costs. California dairy farmers and California Dairy Campaign is joining dairy farmers nationwide to incorporate the structure of the Canadian system in future federal dairy policy.

California Dairy Campaign (CDC) has put forward a plan that incorporates the three major components of the Canadian system including inventory management; fair milk prices and effective management of dairy imports and exports. The three point plan, the Sustainable Milk Inventory System Act (SMISA), would build a three-legged stool to foster a strong and sustainable dairy system in the United States. A summary of the SMISA can be found on the CDC web site at www.californiadairycampaign.com.

(Executive Director Lynne McBride)

*Contact us with your thoughts and feedback on the SMISA proposal by phone at 209-632-0885 or by email at cdc@californiadairycampaign.com
We continue to make improvements and look forward to your input.*



U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue this week launched the trade mitigation package aimed at assisting farmers suffering from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations. Producers of certain commodities can now sign up for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP), while USDA will also begin to purchase identified commodities under a food purchase and distribution program. In total, USDA will authorize up to \$12 billion in programs, consistent with World Trade Organization obligations.

Perdue [announced in July](#) that USDA would act to aid farmers in response to trade damage from unjustified retaliation. President Trump directed Secretary Perdue to craft a short-term relief strategy to protect agricultural producers while the Administration works on free, fair, and reciprocal trade deals to open more markets in the long run to help American farmers compete globally. These programs will assist agricultural producers to meet some of the costs of disrupted markets.

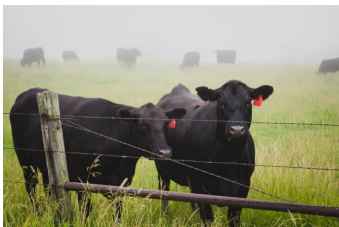
USDA [provided details in August](#) of the programs to be employed:

- USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) to provide payments to corn, cotton, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, and wheat producers. An announcement about further payments will be made in the coming months, if warranted.

Market Facilitation Program

The sign-up period for MFP is now open and runs through January 15, 2019, with information and instructions provided at www.farmers.gov/mfp. The MFP provides a 12 cent per cwt payment on 50 percent of the dairy producer's historical Margin Protection Program (MPP) milk production. For existing dairy operations, the production history is established using the highest annual milk production marketed during the full calendar years of 2011, 2012, and 2013. A second payment period, if warranted, will be determined by the USDA. For more further information or to locate and contact local FSA offices, interested producers can visit www.farmers.gov. (Source: USDA)

There is Still Time to Comment on U.S.A. Meat Labeling



Action Alert: Comment on "Product of U.S.A." by September 17, 2018

California Dairy Campaign and California Farmers Union submitted comments in support of a petition to require that only meat that is born, raised and processed is labeled "Product of U.S.A." The Organization for Competitive Markets and American Grassfed Association submitted a petition earlier this year to restrict the use of "Product of U.S.A." labels exclusively to products that are of domestic origin. Current standards allow meat products that pass through a U.S.D.A. inspected plant to use the label, regardless of where the animal was raised.

FSIS is accepting comments on the petition through September 17.

The petition submitted by AGA and OCM and the link for comment

submissions can be found at the following link: [Comment on USA Meat Labeling Today](#)

- **Key points to include in comments:**
- The current FSIS labeling policy for “Product of U.S.A.” grants foreign countries and foreign interests unfair marketing opportunity that harms America’s family farmers by allowing foreign entities to receive a premium from consumers who unwittingly believe they are buying meat and meat products with ingredients that originate domestically.
- Research has shown that as many as 93% of Americans want to know where their food comes from and 75% of Americans indicate the source of origin of their food is a major attribute when making their food choices. The current FSIS policy misleads Americans when they are making their purchases and denies America’s family farmers these food dollars. FSIS food labeling policy for “Product of U.S.A.” should be based on the source of the ingredients.
- The current FSIS labeling policy for “Product of U.S.A.” deceives America’s consumers who have clearly demonstrated they will pay a premium for meat and meat products sourced domestically by misbranding foreign meat and meat products as “Product of U.S.A.”
- In passing the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), Congress acknowledged the financial harm misbranding and mislabeling causes America’s livestock producers and clearly stated this as a key basis for the adoption of FMIA.
- Both the Federal Meat Inspection Act and FSIS regulations clearly establish that meat and meat product labels must not mislead the consumer nor must they be false. FMIA states that meat or meat food products shall be “misbranded” if its “labeling is false or misleading in any particular.” The current FSIS policy on labeling “Product of U.S.A.” must be clarified to correctly reflect the federal law ensuring U.S. consumers are not misled or deceived.
- Australia is a leading beef exporter into the U.S. and has just implemented a mandatory retail Country of Origin Labeling requirement. The current U.S. policy that allows Australian beef to pass through a USDA inspected facility and then to be labeled “Product of U.S.A.” clearly gives Australian ranchers and foreign interests a grossly unfair marketing advantage over American family farmers by allowing these foreign interests to receive a premium in both the U.S. and Australian market.

California Dairy Campaign - California Farmers Union
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