



## November 5 Update



## Dairy Together



**Dairy Together Update:** A dairy farmer involved in the *Dairy Together* effort, Sarah Lloyd of Wisconsin, was featured in a major network news story last week on the ongoing dairy crisis. Sarah

Lloyd who has been a leader in the *Dairy Together* effort calling for supply management was featured in an ABC news piece that can be viewed online here: ([ABC News Story](#)) The story states, "Some dairy farmers argue that the over-production of milk has created a surplus and led to plummeting prices. They say decreasing -- or managing -- the milk supply could help correct the cycle."

This past week, California Dairy Campaign member Xavier Avila participated in the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) Annual meeting in Arizona and called for the next farm bill to include an inventory management plan similar to the plan that almost passed during the last farm bill debate in 2014. Avila received a strong positive response from many dairy farmers from around the country when he raised the important issue of supply management. According to four separate estimates cited by NMPF, dairy farmer losses will exceed \$1 billion this year due to milk prices falling below production costs. CDC is calling for a farmer-led inventory management plan as a long-term solution to improve chronically low milk prices and sustain dairy operations.

California Dairy Campaign (CDC) is working with dairy farmers across the country in the *Dairy Together* campaign which is open to all dairy farmers, to call for a nationwide inventory management plan to establish equitable milk

prices to dairy producers. More information can be found online at [Dairy Together](#) (*Executive Director Lynne McBride*)

## Dairy Policy in the Farm Bill

Staff from the House and Senate farm bill conference committee continue to meet during the Congressional recess on the House and Senate passed versions of the farm bill. The House and Senate passed farm bills fail to provide an effective safety net for California dairy producers because the benefits of the margin protection program are directed at dairies with 230 cows or less, significantly smaller than the average 1300 cow dairy herd size in California.

The Margin Protection Program or Dairy Risk Coverage Program, as it is dubbed in the Senate bill, includes premium rates that are significantly lower for milk production of 5 million lbs. or less and on average are more than 10 times higher for milk production above the 5 million lbs. production level. The House and Senate bills contain revisions to the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy) passed in the last farm bill, a program that failed to provide an adequate safety net for dairy producers in California and around the country.

Neither the House nor the Senate farm bills incorporate inventory management which was extensively debated during the last farm bill, but failed to be considered during this year's farm bill debate. The farm bill passed the U.S. House by a partisan vote, but it is expected that if leadership changes as a result of the mid-term elections, there is greater potential for more substantial changes in the next farm bill. California Dairy Campaign is calling on Congress to include inventory management in future federal dairy policy.

**Action Alert:** Call on your member of Congress to urge them to support effective dairy inventory management policy at 202-225-3121. As part of the *Dairy Together* effort, dairy farmers from other parts of the country are calling on their federal lawmakers to support inventory management. For more information contact *Executive Director Lynne McBride* at 925-385-0217.

## Over 200 Farm, Food and Rural Groups Endorse Agribusiness Merger Moratorium Bills



*California Dairy Campaign and California Farmers Union Join a Broad and Diverse Coalition to Urge Members of Congress to Cosponsor Landmark Legislation*

**WASHINGTON** – This week, a broad-based coalition of 213 farm, food, rural, faith and consumer advocacy organizations delivered a letter to Congress endorsing food and agribusiness merger moratorium bills and urging members of the House and Senate to cosponsor the legislation. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Representative Mark Pocan (D-WI) introduced the Food and Agribusiness Merger Moratorium and Antitrust Review Act of

2018 companion bills this year (S.3404/H.R.6800).

“Corporate consolidation has long been one of the greatest challenges plaguing family farmers, ranchers and rural communities,” said National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson. “By allowing us to step back to evaluate and strengthen the United States’ antitrust framework, the merger moratorium is a meaningful first step in stemming the tide of concentration in the agriculture and food sectors. We applaud Senator Booker and Representative Pocan for introducing this legislation and urge other members of Congress to join the effort to pass this legislation.”

The legislation would impose an 18-month moratorium on the mega-mergers that have swept the agribusiness, food manufacturing and grocery industries. This wave of consolidation has contributed to falling farm prices, declining farm incomes, stagnant wages for food workers, raising food prices and economic stagnation in rural communities.

“There are now just a few colossal companies reaping profits from their control of every link of the food chain,” said Wenonah Hauter, Executive Director of Food & Water Watch. “Hyper-consolidation raises consumer prices while lowering the prices farmers receive. It eliminates choices for both farmers and eaters and undermines the resiliency and sustainability of the food system.”

The letter outlines why the legislation is sorely needed as the food and agribusiness industries have been on a merger and acquisition spree. Major seed, fertilizer, food processing and grocery chains have merged to form some of the biggest food and agribusiness companies of all time.

“With the recent onslaught of agricultural mega-mergers and acquisitions, including those of multinational giants like ChemChina and Syngenta, Bayer and Monsanto, and Marfrig and National Beef, there has never been a more pressing time for Congress to take action,” said Joe Maxwell, Executive Director of the Organization for Competitive Markets. “OCM is encouraged by the groundswell of organizational support and proud to stand with more than 200 groups calling for a crackdown on monopolistic corporate practices that hurt farmers, workers, consumers and our communities.”

The Booker-Pocan bill would put a strategic pause on merger combinations of over \$176 million in sales or assets and establish a commission to study the impacts of consolidation in the food and agricultural sectors on farmers, rural communities and consumers. The commission would also recommend any necessary changes to federal antitrust statutes or other laws and regulations to restore a fair and competitive agricultural marketplace.

“The consolidation in the food and agribusiness sectors has disproportionately harmed smaller-scale and socially disadvantaged farmers that have had a harder time selling their farm products at fair prices to fewer, bigger corporate buyers,” said Lorette Picciano, Executive Director of the Rural Coalition. “The mega-merger trend also compounds a downward spiral in income, wages and working conditions for farmers, ranchers, farm and food chain workers, and small businesses, eroding rural economic vitality, creating less vibrant and less sustainable communities who are pitted against each other to survive. It is long

past time for a pause to provide them the time and statutory tools they need to build the futures they want.”

The letter, signed by groups from 47 states, urged other Members of Congress to cosponsor the legislation to stop the mergers that threaten independent family farmers, consumers and communities.

“The unchecked wave of food company mergers has enabled and encouraged large corporations to raise prices and manipulate research and development, to the detriment of farmers and consumers,” said Thomas Gremillion, Director of the Food Policy Institute at the Consumer Federation of America. “This legislation is sorely needed to prevent a tsunami of grossly anticompetitive, anti-consumer merger proposals.”

A copy of the letter is available [here](#).

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### Next Round of AMMP Funding



The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is expected to announce the next application period for the Alternative Manure Management Program (AMMP) in December. A number of CDC members have already received AMMP grants and CDC Field Representative Joe Melo is working with more dairy producers on their AMMP applications in preparation for the next sign-up period.

Dairy producers interested in more information about the AMMP can contact Joe Melo at 209-216-7615.

More details about the AMMP can be found online at [CDFA AMMP web site](#).

In addition applications will soon be accepted for the Healthy Soils Program - [Healthy Soils](#) and the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program - [SWEEP](#).



### Join Us for Our Upcoming Fall Membership Meetings and Socials in Modesto and Merced

Each year during our fall meetings we come together to look back on our work throughout the year and ahead to set our policy priorities for the new year.

We invite you to join us for one or both of our upcoming membership meetings and socials!

Friends and family are more than welcome for a delicious dinner.

***Membership Meeting and Social in Modesto  
Wednesday November 14th at 5:00 p.m.***

***Location:*** The Fruit Yard located at 7948 Yosemite Blvd. Modesto

***Membership Meeting and Social in Merced  
Thursday, November 29th At 5:00 p.m.***

***Location:*** The Branding Iron Restaurant located

at 640 W 16<sup>th</sup> Street in Merced  
Contact Bertha Medina at 209-632-0885 to RSVP.

## California Dairy Sustainability Summit



November 27–28, 2018  
Sacramento, CA

Register Today



Hosted by:



Look for the Seal  
SeeCaliforniaMilk.com

Leading dairy organizations have united to host the inaugural California Dairy Sustainability Summit on November 27-28, 2018 at the Sacramento Convention Center. The summit will showcase California's innovative and sustainable dairy farm practices, while highlighting cost-effective ways to meet ongoing challenges. A key focus will be developing partnerships and strategies to improve the economic sustainability of the state's family dairy farms. To learn more about how California dairy farmers are leading the way in planet-smart farming and to

register, visit [CADairySummit.com](http://CADairySummit.com).

For additional information contact the California Dairy Campaign office at 209-632-0885.

For More Information  
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