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Contact: Julie Sweney, FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative
608-286-1909 or jsweney@farmfirstcoop.com



Disaster Benefits Program Pays FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Members on Milk Loss

Madison, Wis. [May 2, 2019] – Thirty-three FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative members in Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin will be receiving a disaster claim payment for milk loss as a result of the snowstorm that swept through the Upper Midwest February 23-24. With barn roofs collapsing under heavy snowfall, and cows being killed and milk having to be dumped due to impassable roads, the payments will total more than \$23,000, with additional payments anticipated for other claims where additional information is being gathered.

“Buildings have been damaged, but herds have also been impacted, removing valuable cows from the milking herd and taking away from farmer’s bottom lines during a challenging dairy economy,” says John Rettler, dairy farmer from Neosho, Wis. and president of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative. “Impassable roads required some farms to dump milk, because haulers were not able to travel to various farms during these storms. It was a very long and trying winter season.”

FarmFirst members are eligible for these payments through the cooperative’s disaster benefits program, assisting against the loss of milk income caused by the death of a cow by either lightning or electrocution, the loss of electric power or due to impassable roads due to snow or flooding.

“FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative continues to be a leading advocate for risk management tools and improved market-based dairy policies; however, the cooperative’s disaster benefits program fills a need for our members that goes beyond our priorities in the legislative and regulatory area,” Rettler noted. “Clearly, with the winter season we’ve just experienced, FarmFirst’s disaster program is a meaningful benefit to dairy farmers.”

Just a year ago, 19 FarmFirst members received nearly \$30,000 in payments as a result of the 2018 April snowstorm that started in South Dakota and moved through Wisconsin.

The Disaster Benefit Program is a unique benefit for FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative members. For more information on the disaster benefits program, please visit the webpage ‘Disaster Benefits for FarmFirst Members’ available under ‘Member Services’ on FarmFirst’s website (www.FarmFirstDairyCooperative.com).

FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative was established in 2013 and is based in Madison, Wis. The cooperative represents farms in Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana through policy bargaining, dairy marketing services, laboratory testing opportunities and industry promotion.

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