

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Editor's Note - Downloadable images available at:
<https://bit.ly/2pHaLue>



FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Appreciates Trade Aid for Farmers, Requests USMCA Passage

Madison, Wis. [July 25, 2019] – FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative approves of the improvements made to the latest trade mitigation package for farmers as details were shared today regarding sign-up and distribution of the funds.

“We greatly appreciate the work of USDA in maintaining a focus on our dairy farmers during this trying time of decreased exports,” says Jeff Lyon, general manager of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative. “The increased payment rate of 20 cents per hundredweight is an improvement from 12 cents, however, it still does not compare to the value lost by our dairy farmers due to the trade disputes.

“We urge Congress to pass the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement in addition to the Trump Administration finalizing a trade agreement with China. As some of U.S. dairy’s biggest export markets, restoring trade relationships with improved market access for free and fair trade deals is exactly what our U.S. farmers need right now,” says Lyon.

“While dairy farmers appreciate the support, we would much rather rely on the market for improved prices for our valuable product. Resolving these trade issues sooner than later is what is in the best interests for U.S. dairy farmers and we hope that the USDA realizes that these payments are not the long-term support we need,” John Rettler, dairy farmer and president of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative.

“The payment rates are a step in the right direction, and we hope that the production history used in these payments calculations are updated soon to more accurately reflect the true financial loss we are experiencing on our farms,” says Rettler.

FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative, established in 2013 and based in Madison, Wis., represents farmers in Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois and Indiana by providing legislative and regulatory advocacy, dairy marketing services, disaster protection, laboratory testing opportunities and industry promotion. FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative is a merger of three long-time prominent Wisconsin based cooperatives. Learn more about FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative by visiting: www.FarmFirstDairyCooperative.com.

###

View the Full Press Release online, [here](#). Access cooperative logos and event photos, [here](#).