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FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Commends USDA on Easing Cover Crop Harvest Rules

In 2019, Farmers Can Harvest Prevent Plant Cover Crops beginning Sept. 1

Madison, Wis. [June 20, 2019] – FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative commends Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and the USDA for easing the cover crop harvest rules, providing greater flexibility to farmers in light of the unprecedented flooding and excessive rain experienced this spring.

“This one-year adjustment will prove to be incredibly valuable to our farmers experiencing such a wet spring season,” says Brian Wozniak, dairy farmer from Stanley, Wis. and FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Vice-President. “As another management tool available to farmers, it is greatly appreciated. Many farmers will use this opportunity to replenish their feed inventory going into the winter season, and hopefully be prepared if we encounter another wet spring and slow start to next year’s planting season.”

It was also determined by the Risk Management Agency (RMA) that silage, haylage and baleage will be treated in the same manner as haying and grazing for this year. This means that producers can harvest cover crops off of prevent plant acres and still receive their full indemnity this year.

“Congressional leaders have been listening to our concerns, and we are thankful for their efforts in vocalizing this change for 2019,” says John Rettler, dairy farmer from Neosho, Wis. and FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative President. “It may provide the much-needed relief that farmers need during these challenging times.

FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative would also like to extend thanks to Rep. Angie Craig (D-MN) and Rep. Dusty Johnson (R-SD) for their original efforts on the Feed Emergency Enhancement During Disasters Act (FEEDD Act). This legislation also helps alleviate the feed challenges facing farmers across the U.S.

“Many, many farmers have been impacted with the extremely wet spring, and depending on how the weather plays out this growing season, that impact may be far from over,” says Rettler. “It very likely can take a toll on commodity prices several months from now, so this common-sense approach is a much appreciated.”

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.

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