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FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Elated with Permanent Rule Allowing Low-fat (1%) Flavored Milk in Schools

Madison, Wis. [December 6, 2018] – FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative is elated by Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue’s actions of returning low-fat (1%) flavored milk back into schools by making it a permanent part of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast program.

“This is great news, not only for dairy farmers and processors, but also for schoolkids across the U.S.,” says John Rettler, president of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative. “This is a step in the right direction in ensuring that school cafeterias are able to provide valuable nutrition in options that appeal to growing children’s taste buds. Their good habits now have the potential to make them lifelong milk-drinkers.”

Today’s announcement by the USDA makes permanent the changes Secretary Perdue implement over a year ago to streamline the process by which schools could serve low-fat flavored milk. Low-fat milk was eliminated back in 2012, and milk consumption decreased drastically.

“Ideally, these same school cafeterias should offer 2% or whole flavored milk as well, providing schoolchildren with a great variety of healthy beverage options. In fact, more and more studies show the health benefits of consuming milkfat. FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative will continue to advocate for these higher milkfat options until they are included on school menus,” says Rettler.

As a bipartisan effort, this final rule provides greater options to be available with the best interests in mind for growing schoolchildren across the U.S.

“When it comes to the health and nutrition of our children, it is a non-partisan issue,” says Jeff Lyon, general manager. “We greatly appreciate Secretary Perdue taking on this initiative, as well as numerous members of Congress. Their efforts to make this rule final will reduce the amount of paperwork and administrative hurdles schools have to jump through simply to offer their students more milk options. Thank you for putting dairy farmers and schoolchildren first.”

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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 cooperatives.

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