

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julie Sweney, FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative  
608-286-1909 or [jsweney@farmfirstcoop.com](mailto:jsweney@farmfirstcoop.com)

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



## FarmFirst Applauds Food Supply Protection Act to Support Farmers, Meet Food Bank Demands

*Statement by FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative General Manager Jeff Lyon*

*Madison, Wis.* [May 27, 2020] – “FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative applauds the introduction of the Food Supply Protection Act by Senator Stabenow (D-MI) and her efforts to bridge the gap between the food that America’s farmers produce to those desperately in need of it at their dinner table during this global pandemic.

FarmFirst believes this legislation will be an important piece for many food banks across the country that previously did not have the refrigeration necessary to make dairy products available to their patrons. The Food Supply Protection Act funds will provide additional cold storage and refrigeration, making it possible for many more families across the U.S. to have access to and enjoy dairy while getting the valuable nutrition they need.

This bill also enables businesses, including farms and food processors, to maintain the safety of their employees by providing access to personal protective equipment. Strengthening food partnerships is also a valuable aspect of this legislation, promoting innovative collaborations with chefs and restaurants to focus on the needs in local communities. Dairy farmers have continued to produce wholesome, quality milk, and are eagerly looking for creative measures to maintain demand for their products. These innovative solutions help make that possible.

As we have said before, supporting U.S. farmers ultimately supports the entire food chain and we applaud Senator Stabenow’s efforts to support and strengthen the U.S.’s food supply in light of COVID-19.”

The Food Supply Protection Act will:

- **Support food banks and non-profits to help increase their capacity and address growing demand.** The bill will provide infrastructure grants that can be used for additional cold storage and refrigeration, transportation, personal protective equipment, rental costs, and additional use of commercial and community infrastructure.

- **Strengthen food partnerships to prevent food waste and feed families.** Through grants and reimbursements, the bill will support new partnerships to make purchases of excess food and increase donations to food banks, schools, nonprofits. These partnerships will promote innovative collaborations with chefs and restaurants and focus on the needs and creative solutions in local communities. They will allow for a diverse variety of purchases and include many areas and products left out of the USDA's current food box program to ensure more people in need and agricultural producers of all sizes and types can access support.
- **Protect workers and retool small and medium-sized food processors.** Through grants, loans, and loan guarantees, the bill will support upgrading machinery, temporary cold storage, purchasing personal protective equipment and test kits, and cleaning. This funding will assist farmers and small and medium-sized food processors in protecting their workers and help them cater to new markets so they can continue operations and alleviate bottlenecks in the supply chain.

For more information about the Food Supply Protection Act, please visit:

<https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/newsroom/dem/press/release/ranking-member-stabenow-introduces-legislation-to-protect-americas-food-supply>

*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](http://www.FarmFirstDairyCooperative.com).*

###

View the Full Press Release online at: <https://bit.ly/FarmFirstCOVID19>

Access cooperative images and logos at: <https://bit.ly/FFDClogos>