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FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Thanks Senate Ag Committee on Farm Bill Progress

Latest draft of Farm Bill includes several positive provisions

Madison, Wis. [June 13, 2018] – FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative thanks the Senate Agriculture Committee for their approval of a bipartisan Farm Bill that provides beneficial provisions for dairy farmers.

Key improvements were made in this latest markup of the Farm Bill, most specifically to the Margin Protection Program. The program now has greater flexibility, allowing dairy farmers to cover a maximum of \$9/cwt. while also having the ability to adjust the minimum percentage of milk volume that is insured.

Additional changes that are positive for dairy farmers include that farmers are not locked in at their coverage rate for the duration of the Farm Bill, and there are discounts in the premium structure for small- and medium-sized farms. This current draft also includes a provision to reimburse dairy farmers for the premiums they paid into the old Margin Protection Program, minus the indemnities they received under the old program and the program operating costs.

“The Senate Agriculture Committee was receptive to the many concerns FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative raised with respect to the 2018 Farm Bill’s Margin Protection Program,” says Jeff Lyon, General Manager. “We are very pleased that these beneficial provisions are in both this latest draft passed by the Senate Agriculture Committee, as well as the bill adopted by the House Agriculture Committee.”

“With the current Farm Bill set to expire on September 30, we are elated to see the progress continue for the drafting of the 2018 Farm Bill, along with these positive provisions for dairy farmers,” added Lyon.

FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative appreciates the leadership and support from Senators of member-represented states, including Ranking Member Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Joni Ernst (R-IA), John Thune (R-SD), Joe Donnelly (D-IN) and Tina Smith (D-MN).

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, disaster protection, laboratory testing opportunities and industry promotion.

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