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FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Applauds USDA Secretary Perdue on Changes to School Milk Options

Announcement Returns 1% Flavored Milk to School Lunch Programs

Madison, Wis. [May 1, 2017] – FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative applauds one of Sonny Perdue’s first actions as USDA Secretary, as he announced changes to the National School Lunch program by allowing school districts to once again offer 1% low-fat flavored milk.

“This is a major victory for both school children and dairy farmers,” says David Cooper, General Manager of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative. “FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative has made this a priority to restore more palatable dairy options in schools, knowing that these young, growing minds are also developing healthy habits for the future. We are very proud of Secretary Perdue’s first actions in his new role serving agriculture.”

Since changes were made to the National School Lunch program two years ago under the Obama Administration, approximately 1.1 million fewer school students drank milk with their lunch, according to the National Milk Producers Federation.

“Developing healthy habits begins at a young age, and for many students, that nutrition comes from the lunch they receive at school,” says Cooper. “By restoring more milk options in schools, we are restoring children’s interest back in a nutritional powerhouse that is dairy. Our efforts advocating for this valuable policy – for both growing children and dairy farmers – has paid off.”

The announcement came as Secretary Perdue visited with Catoctin Elementary School in Leesburg, Va., and was joined by Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Pat Roberts (R-KS).

“We would also like to recognize Senator Roberts, along with Reps. GT Thompson (R-PA) and Joe Courtney (D-CT) for their strong support of enhancing the milk options available in schools,” says Cooper. “FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative looks forward to working with Secretary Perdue and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) on continuing to develop meaningful policy for dairy farmers.”

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, laboratory testing opportunities and industry promotion.

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