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## FarmFirst Applauds Reintroduction of the DAIRY PRIDE Act

*Madison, Wis.* [April 22, 2021] – FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative applauds the reintroduction of the DAIRY PRIDE Act today, thanks to the efforts of Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and James Risch (R-ID) and Representatives Peter Welch (D-VT) and Mike Simpson (R-ID). The DAIRY PRIDE Act would bring clarity to food labeling as it impacts imitation products of dairy foods including milk, yogurt and cheese while ultimately helping consumers make better, more-informed choices of the foods they eat.

“For years we have been engaged on the issue to require FDA to enforce milk standards of identity, which prohibit using dairy terms on non-dairy products. We commend Senator Baldwin for her persistent efforts to hold the FDA accountable through her direct communication with FDA and the reintroduction of the *Dairy Pride Act*,” said Jeff Lyon, FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative General Manager. “Consumers deserve transparency and want clear and accurate food labels on the food they buy. Further, our dairy farmers deserve recognition for producing such a wholesome, quality product.”

Dairy products are defined by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as being from dairy animals. While this is clearly outlined in FDA regulations, the FDA is not currently enforcing these labeling rules and the misuse of terms such as ‘milk’, ‘yogurt’, and ‘cheese’ has been rampant across non-dairy food products.

“Consumers deserve to be treated with respect and that begins with proper and accurate food labels. Milk is clearly defined by the FDA, and this definition should be enforced,” says John Rettler of Tin Valley Farms in Neosho, Wis. and President of FarmFirst. “It is time the FDA made it a priority to uphold its responsibility of enforcing existing labeling requirements, which will provide greater awareness and transparency for consumers in the foods they eat. The flagrant misuse of these dairy terms harms both dairy farmers and consumers.”

The reintroduced legislation requires the FDA to enforce its own existing standards of identity on imitation dairy products within 90 days and require the FDA to report to Congress two years after enactment to hold the agency accountable for this update in their enforcement obligations.

The bipartisan legislation is also cosponsored by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Mike Crapo (R-ID), Angus King (I-ME), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), and Tina Smith (D-MN).

*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. Learn more about FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative by visiting: [www.FarmFirstDairyCooperative.com](http://www.FarmFirstDairyCooperative.com).*

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