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FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative Encouraged by Momentum on Federal Order Reform

Statement by FarmFirst General Manager Jeff Lyon

Madison, Wis. [December 1, 2021] – “FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative is encouraged by the legislation introduced by Senator Gillibrand today, which would require the USDA to hold a federal milk marketing order hearing. As a strong proponent to making much-needed changes to the federal order system, this is welcomed news.

With more than 2,700 dairy farmer members across the Upper Midwest, FarmFirst knows the importance of improving the federal orders and the value it would bring to both dairy farmers and processors.

In the spring of 2021, FarmFirst shared our proposal of returning to the “higher of” the class III or class IV pricing formula. When reviewing other proposals and options, we came back to using the “higher of” since it was fully vetted in a national hearing process nearly twenty years ago and has served the industry well. The formula has a good track record, is simple and straightforward.

In addition to addressing the class I pricing, FarmFirst is engaged in industry discussions regarding additional reforms that are long overdue to the federal order. FarmFirst has been involved in these conversations on both a regional and national perspective, having identified several aspects of the order to be improved upon. We look forward to working with our partners in Washington, D.C. on all the federal order issues that need to be addressed.

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.

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