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## FarmFirst Endorses Farmers First Act of 2023

Madison, Wis. [May 18, 2023] – FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative, along with other members of the Midwest Dairy Coalition, endorsed the Farmers First Act of 2023 that was introduced by Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Joni Ernst (R-IA) today. This bill builds off of the bipartisan 2018 legislation which provided seed funding through USDA to reestablish the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network.

“FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative greatly appreciates the work of Senators Baldwin and Ernst in addressing the mounting mental health crisis within the agricultural community,” said Jeff Lyon, General Manager of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative. “Farmers are particularly at risk for stress related mental health issues due to many unpredictable factors within their profession, and the issue is compounded by limited access to mental health care in rural areas. The Farmers First Act will help to expand the resources that farmers may need in times of crisis.”

The Farmers First Act of 2023 increases funding for the program to \$15 million per year through 2028. Funding for this critical program has supported the expansion of telephone helplines and hotlines; training programs to increase mental health literacy and stress management among agricultural producers and individuals engaged in other agricultural occupations; and support groups for farmworkers.

*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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