



News Release

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"Connecting Cows, Cooperatives, Capitol Hill, and Consumers"

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NMPF Supports Mandatory Dairy Pricing Reporting Measure Approved By House, Senate Agriculture Committees

Weekly Electronic Reporting Important Means of Improving Price Transparency

ARLINGTON, VA – The mandatory dairy price reporting bills approved in the past week by the House and Senate agriculture committees represent an important improvement in the transparency of the dairy industry, the National Milk Producers Federation said today.

Last week, the House Agriculture Committee approved the Mandatory Price Reporting Act of 2010, H.R. 5852, while the Senate Agriculture Committee today approved an identical piece of legislation, S. 3656. The bills reauthorize mandatory price reporting programs run by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for five years. Most importantly for the dairy sector, the bills include language authorizing mandatory weekly electronic reporting for dairy products.

NMPF President and CEO, Jerry Kozak, welcomed the passage of the bills because "NMPF has been working since 2000 to improve the open, transparent discovery of dairy prices, but we've been frustrated by the stumbling blocks that have prevented the implementation of mandatory reporting. These bills make it clear, in no uncertain terms, that the USDA will have to do what it takes to establish dairy price reporting."

NMPF helped include mandatory price reporting language in the 2008 Farm Bill. But that measure was contingent on available funding at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the USDA has never had adequate funding to implement price reporting. These new bills will ensure that the USDA collects and reports pricing data that is currently surveyed.

The bills contain the follow specifications:

- Amending section 273 of the Agriculture Marketing Act of 1946 to require the Secretary to establish an electronic reporting system for dairy.
- Directing the Secretary to publish the information reported through the electronic reporting system by 3:00 PM ET, each Wednesday.
- Requiring the Secretary to implement the electronic reporting system for dairy not later than one year following enactment of this Act.

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House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) said that "Mandatory price reporting programs ensures that producers have access to transparent, accurate and timely market information that helps them make the best decisions for their business. There is broad support from producer, packer and processor groups to reauthorize these programs."

Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-AR), whose committee approved the price reporting bill Wednesday, said that "As Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I'm pleased to report today that we have successfully passed this legislation out of Committee in an effort to better maintain transparency and certainty in our livestock markets. This effort will ensure that family farmers and ranchers can remain confident that they are receiving fair market value for their livestock they have worked tirelessly to bring to the market. We also include additional measures to improve dairy reporting that will help farmers."

The full House of Representatives, and the U.S. Senate, must still approve the respective Mandatory Price Reporting bills before they can become law.

The National Milk Producers Federation, based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the well being of dairy producers and the cooperatives they own. The members of NMPF's 31 cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of more than 40,000 dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies.