



## April 2020 Enhance Webinar: COVID-19: What's Next for Dairy Policy? Presented by Mary Knigge and Paul Bleiberg

First Speaker, Mary Knigge, Dairy Farmers of America, [mknigge@dfamilk.com](mailto:mknigge@dfamilk.com)

### \*\*Current updates from DC:

#### March 6:

- First phase of COVID stimulus bill (CDC, FDA) \$7 billion for disaster loans.
- Family First Bill- required employers with 500 employees or less to provide sick leave.

#### March 10-11:

- National Milk board meeting. Pushing senate on immigration reform, gives dairy access to have visa program for workers. Major shutdown that day due to COVID-19, teleconferences were offered to farmers who had flown across the country to visit DC for this advocacy opportunity.
- \$2 trillion CARES Act- USDA funds with little to no guidance on how to use them.
- Paycheck Protection Program- forgivable loan for small businesses.
  - Agriculture is able to participate, but rocky roll out
  - \$349 billion across the country, already run out
  - Capitol Hill is working on more funding currently. We are concerned that not much \$\$ will go to rural America.

#### CALL TO ACTION FOR EVERYONE

- Weigh in with your elected officials.
  - Prioritize funding for the dairy industry; ask via phone call to state and federal officials, email, letter

Main Speaker, Paul Bleiberg, Governmental Relations for National Milk Producers Federation, [pbleiberg@nmpf.org](mailto:pbleiberg@nmpf.org)

#### Proposed NMPF-IDFA milk crisis plan for USDA

*"Estimate that supply exceeds demand by at least 10%- gap could widen as supply increases to seasonal peaks and as "shelter in place" conditions endure"*

#### Producer Initiatives:

- Producer Market Balancing Assistance- encourage producers to cut production by 10% from March 2020 baseline. Program run for 6 months (April- Sept). Payments during these months could be suspended if the average of Class III and IV prices for that month

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exceeds \$16 per cwt.

- Temporary Milk Disposal Reimbursement- provide coverage of milk at the USDA class IV (or lowest value class) price. Program runs for three months- April to June (peak production)

#### **Processor Initiatives:**

- Recourse Loan Program to Support Working Capital
- Forgivable Loan Program to Support Processor Operations

#### **Consumer Initiatives:**

- Dairy Product Purchases for Food Banks
- Eliminate restrictions that limit consumer choice including WIC and School Lunch program

#### **Other Initiatives:**

- Re-open DMC Program- to extend dairy producer financial safety net support
- Improve Existing Nutrition Programs to Address Food Insecurity
  - SNAP, Healthy Fluid Milk Incentive Program (HFMIIP)
- Maximize International Food Aid

#### **Questions asked:**

##### **DMC Program?**

- Believe that there will be pressure from congress to reopen. Could be Perdue or Congress's call.
- If this is a priority for you, please let your representatives know.

##### **Nutrition?**

- Pushing USDA to add flexibility to food choices- especially when food recommendations change often
- USDA call-to-action: <http://cqrcengage.com/nmpf/app/take-action?engagementId=507597>

\*Both speakers also emphasized for farmers to 'keep doing the amazing work you are doing!'"\*

**Written by Press Corps Member Savannah Basham**

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