

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 15, 2018

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

We write today to express our concerns about the troubling economic challenges facing U.S. dairy farmers and the entire U.S. dairy industry. We have seen farm milk prices drop over 9 percent since 2014, which are expected to continue to decrease given the decline in milk consumption and Canada's unfair trade practices. Given the current expectations that the dairy market will continue to struggle with depressed prices, we seek your help as we search for ways to swiftly assist our nation's dairy farmers.

While Congress has been able to pass a handful of helpful provisions for the dairy industry, we believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) can continue to help as well. Recently, the USDA has been supportive by assisting advertising campaigns through the Dairy Research and Promotion Program (dairy checkoffs), administered by the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). Dairy checkoffs have developed partnerships with dozens of quick-serve restaurants to put more dairy-based items on the menu and thereby promote dairy consumption.

Another program monitored by AMS is the Milk Processor Education Program (MilkPEP). MilkPEP is dedicated to educating consumers and increasing the consumption of fluid milk. In 1995, MilkPEP was licensed to lead one of the most well-known advertising campaigns, "got milk?". The "got milk?" tagline was estimated to have a 95% household recognition and helped push the consumption of milk as many other beverage products were introduced to the market.

These two marketing tactics have proven to be extremely helpful for the dairy industry. While Congress works on passing the 2018 farm bill, we would be happy to continue working with the USDA and provide insight to the issues our constituents face every day.

We respectfully request that the USDA not only continue the above-mentioned programs but also look for other ways to boost our nation's dairy industry. In addition, we would be interested to know what current marketing initiatives the USDA has implemented and how Congress can be helpful in spreading the message. By working together, we hope to support all of our dairy farmers across the country.

Sincerely,



Chris Collins
Member of Congress



Claudia Tenney
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Jim Renacci
Member of Congress



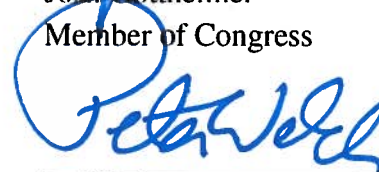
Sean Duffy
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
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Bob Gibbs
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Member of Congress



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David G. Valadao
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