



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

February 15, 2024

Ms. Gloria Montaño Greene  
Deputy Under Secretary, Farm Production and Conservation  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250

Mr. Zach Ducheneaux  
Administrator, Farm Service Agency  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250

RE: Delayed 2024 Dairy Margin Coverage Enrollment

Dear Deputy Under Secretary Montaño Greene and Administrator Ducheneaux,

As members of the Wisconsin State Legislature, we appreciate the U.S. Department of Agriculture for their dedicated review of the dairy pricing formula. Your ongoing commitment to fostering fairness and stability within the dairy industry is critical, and we implore you to expedite these efforts through any available means.

Wisconsin's dairy industry leads the country in Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program enrollees with over 4,000 farms enrolled. This figure equates to nearly 80% of Wisconsin's dairy farms, which is a testament to the critical role the DMC program plays in our agricultural landscape. As our state's dairy industry faces challenges, the timely initiation of DMC enrollment is paramount to ensuring the program effectively serves its intended purpose as a risk management tool.

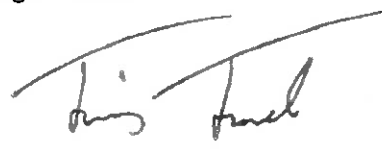
The DMC program serves as a safeguard for dairy producers during periods of low margin, stemming from depressed milk prices, elevated feed costs, or both. DMC program payments are triggered when margins are at their worst, and timely payments are at their highest importance. In June and July 2023, the DMC program's catastrophic coverage margin level of \$4 per hundredweight was breached for the first two times since the program's 2019 beginning. Without the lifeline of DMC payments, numerous farms would have struggled to remain operational. The current delay in payments poses a threat to farm cash flow, exacerbating the risk of additional herd losses due to financial strain.

We urge the Farm Service Agency to leverage its full authority to expedite the publication of necessary rules and implement essential technological software updates to facilitate the opening of DMC enrollment, without delay. Further postponements only heighten the vulnerability of dairy farmers, subjecting them to unnecessary risk and uncertainty in an already challenging environment.

Thank you for your continued support of Wisconsin agriculture.

Sincerely,

  
Senator Joan Ballweg  
14<sup>th</sup> Senate District

  
Representative Travis Tranel  
49<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



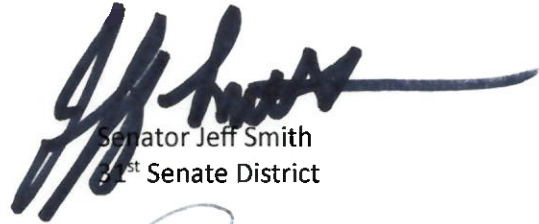
Senator Howard Marklein  
17<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Senator Brad Pfaff  
32<sup>nd</sup> Senate District



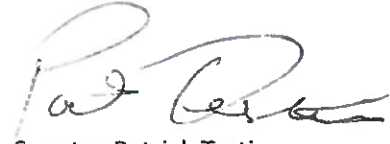
Senator Romaine Quinn  
25<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Senator Jeff Smith  
31<sup>st</sup> Senate District



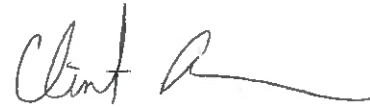
Senator Mark Spreitzer  
15<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Senator Patrick Testin  
24<sup>th</sup> Senate District



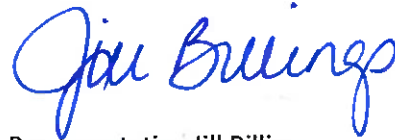
Senator Cory Tomczyk  
29<sup>th</sup> Senate District



Representative Clinton Anderson  
45<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



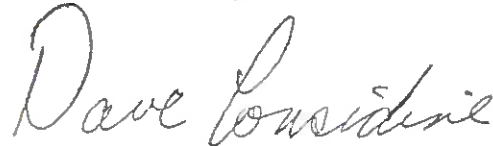
Representative David Armstrong  
75<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



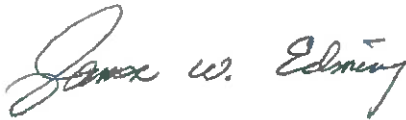
Representative Jill Billings  
95<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Representative Calvin Callahan  
35<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Representative Dave Considine  
81<sup>st</sup> Assembly District



Representative James Edming  
87<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Representative Rick Gundrum  
58<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Representative Nate Gustafson  
55<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



Representative Jenna Jacobson  
43<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District

Representative Tony Kurtz  
50<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Representative Todd Novak  
51<sup>st</sup> Assembly District

Representative Jerry O'Connor  
52<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District

Representative Loren Oldenburg  
96<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Representative William Penterman  
37<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Representative Donna Rozar  
69<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Representative Peter Schmidt  
6<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Representative Ellen Schutt  
31<sup>st</sup> Assembly District

Representative Katrina Shankland  
71<sup>st</sup> Assembly District

Representative Paul Tittel  
25<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Representative Nancy VanderMeer  
70<sup>th</sup> Assembly District