

# REPORT OF THE VERMONT MILK COMMISSION

AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND MARKETS - JANUARY 2018



# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **MILK COMMISSION MEMBERS**
- **LEGISLATIVE CHARGE**
- **MEETINGS AND REPRESENTATION OF THE INDUSTRY**
- **OVERVIEW OF THE VERMONT DAIRY INDUSTRY**
- **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MILK COMMISSION**



# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **MILK COMMISSION MEMBERS**
- **TWO DAIRY FARMERS WITH KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRODUCTION AND MARKETING OF DAIRY PRODUCTS.**
  - **PAUL DOTON, WOODSTOCK – 2-YEAR TERM**
  - **HAROLD HOWRIGAN, FAIRFIELD – 3-YEAR TERM**
- **ONE MILK HANDLER WITH KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE IN THE MARKETING OF DAIRY PRODUCTS.**
  - **JERRY BOOTH, H.P. HOOD, BARRE, – 3-YEAR TERM**
- **TWO MEMBERS REPRESENTING MILK CONSUMERS AND HAVING NO PECUNIARY INTEREST IN THE SALE OF MILK OR MILK PRODUCTS.**
  - **JANE CLIFFORD, STRAKSBORO – 3 -YEAR TERM**
  - **LINDA BERLIN, S. BURLINGTON – 1-YEAR TERM**
- **ONE DAIRY FARMER, WHO DOES NOT SERVE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF ANY ORGANIZATION WHICH HANDLES OR PROCESSES DAIRY PRODUCTS, NOR IS AN OFFICER OF ANY ORGANIZED FARM ORGANIZATION IN THE STATE.**
  - **REG CHAPUT, NORTH TROY – 3-YEAR TERM**
- **ONE MEMBER FROM THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE CHOSEN BY THE SPEAKER.**
  - **REPRESENTATIVE RICHARD LAWRENCE, LYNDONVILLE REPRESENTING CALEDONIA - 4**
- **ONE MEMBER FROM THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE CHOSEN BY THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE SENATE.**
  - **SENATOR ROBERT STARR, NORTH TROY REPRESENTING ESSEX-ORLEANS DISTRICT**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- 2017 LEGISLATIVE SESSION – ACT 77
- ***SEC. 3. VERMONT MILK COMMISSION; EQUITABLE DAIRY PRICING***
  - ***ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2017, THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND MARKETS SHALL CONVENE THE VERMONT MILK COMMISSION UNDER 6 V.S.A. CHAPTER 161 TO REVIEW AND EVALUATE PROPOSALS THAT ENHANCE AND STABILIZE THE DAIRY INDUSTRY IN VERMONT AND NEW ENGLAND AND THAT MAY BE APPROPRIATE FOR INCLUSION IN THE FEDERAL FARM BILL 2018. THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND MARKETS SHALL SUBMIT TO THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION OF VERMONT PROPOSALS THAT THE MILK COMMISSION RECOMMENDS FOR INCLUSION IN THE FEDERAL FARM BILL 2018.***



# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **THE PROCESS**
- **SEVEN MEETINGS**
- **54 PEOPLE TESTIFYING**
- **REPRESENTING 47 ORGANIZATIONS AND 4 INDIVIDUALS**
- **ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDED**

<b>Northeast Dairy Foods Association</b>	<b>Dairy Cooperatives</b>	<b>VT Holstein Association</b>
<b>VT Ag Mediation Program</b>	<b>Dairy Farmers</b>	<b>Northeast Agribusiness &amp; Feed Alliance</b>
<b>Ben &amp; Jerry's</b>	<b>USDA FSA and NRCS</b>	<b>VT Feed Dealers Association</b>
<b>VT Congressional Delegation staff</b>	<b>Ag Lenders</b>	<b>American Farm Bureau</b>
<b>UVM Professor</b>	<b>NOFA-VT</b>	<b>VT Association of Conservation Districts</b>
<b>Former VT Secretary of Agriculture</b>	<b>VT Land Trust</b>	<b>UVM Extension</b>
<b>New England Dairy Promotion Board and Dairy Management Inc.</b>	<b>VT Farm Viability</b>	<b>VT Agencies of Health &amp; Human Services &amp; Education</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **OVERVIEW OF THE VERMONT DAIRY INDUSTRY**
- **MILK RECEIPTS IN 2012 USDA AG CENSUS**
  - **\$505 MILLION WITH TOTAL AG SALES OF \$776 MILLION OR 65%**
  - **ADD IN VALUE OF CATTLE AND CALVES THEN 73% OF TOTAL AG RECEIPTS**
- **ECONOMIC IMPACT ON THE STATE FROM 2015 STUDY**
  - **\$2.2 BILLION IMPACT ON THE STATE'S ECONOMY YEARLY**
  - **\$3 MILLION EACH DAY OF CIRCULATING CASH INTO VERMONT FROM THE SALE OF MILK FROM THE FARM AS WELL AS PROCESSED DAIRY PRODUCTS LIKE ICE CREAM AND CHEESE.**
  - **6,000 TO 7,000 JOBS IN VERMONT WITH \$360 MILLION IN WAGES**

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

By the numbers:

<b>Category</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b># of VT Cow Dairy Farms</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>796</b>
<b>Ave. # of cows/ farm</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Certified Organic Cow Dairy Farms</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>199</b>
<b>Milk Production- lbs. USDA</b>	<b>2.46 Billion</b>	<b>2.52 Billion</b>	<b>2.54 Billion</b>	<b>2.56 Billion</b>	<b>2.62 Billion</b>	<b>2.67 Billion</b>	<b>2.67 Billion</b>	<b>2.72 Billion</b>	<b>2.73 Billion</b>



## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **MILK PRICES**
  - **CONVENTIONAL – AVERAGE \$16.78 FOR 2017**
  - **ORGANIC - \$38.58 PER HUNDREDWEIGHT IN 2016 WITH A REPORTED \$5/CWT. DECLINE IN 2017**
- **COST OF PRODUCING MILK – PRICE NOT MEETING COST OF PRODUCTION FOR CONVENTIONAL MILK**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>USDA Total Operating Costs - VT</b>	<b>\$21.23</b>	<b>\$23.48</b>	<b>\$22.43</b>	<b>\$23.18</b>	<b>\$21.42</b>
<b>USDA Total Costs - VT</b>	<b>\$34.16</b>	<b>\$36.58</b>	<b>\$35.85</b>	<b>\$36.91</b>	<b>\$35.52</b>
<b>USDA Total Gross Value of Production</b>	<b>\$23.05</b>	<b>\$24.55</b>	<b>\$29.25</b>	<b>\$21.92</b>	<b>\$19.96</b>
<b>USDA Difference to Operating Costs</b>	<b>\$1.82</b>	<b>\$1.07</b>	<b>\$6.82</b>	<b>\$(1.26)</b>	<b>\$(1.46)</b>
<b>USDA Difference to Total Costs</b>	<b>\$(11.11)</b>	<b>\$(12.03)</b>	<b>\$(6.60)</b>	<b>\$(14.99)</b>	<b>\$(15.56)</b>



## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **DAIRY PROCESSING – CONTINUES TO GROW BUT MAJORITY VERY SMALL**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Off-Farm Dairy Processors</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>On-Farm Dairy Processors</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Total Dairy Processors</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>147</b>

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **OTHER FOR DAIRY INDUSTRY INFORMATION**
- **NATIONAL MILK VOLUME ABOVE DEMAND**
  - **14.5% OF MILK SOLIDS OUTPUT EXPORTED IN FIRST 11 MONTHS OF 2017**
  - **TRADE CONCERNS SURROUNDING NAFTA – DAIRY IN VT AS WELL AS NATIONALLY EXPORT TO MEXICO – CANADIAN PRICING AND SUPPLY MANAGEMENT CONCERNS**
- **PROCESSING CAPACITY IN VERMONT**
  - **GROWING BUT AT TIMES SUPPLY OUTSTRIPS CAPACITY**
  - **EXPANSION MAPLEBROOK IN BENNINGTON, BEN & JERRY'S IN ST. ALBANS, COMMONWEALTH IN BRATTLEBORO**
  - **OTHER EXISTING PLANT INVEST TO INCREASE VOLUME**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **ORGANIC MILK MARKET**
  - **199 CERTIFIED ORGANIC DAIRIES IN VERMONT – 25% OF FARMS – ESTIMATED TO BE BETWEEN 5 TO 7% OF MILK VOLUME**
  - **CURRENT BUYERS IN VERMONT NOT TAKING ON NEW DAIRY FARMS**
- **ORGANIC SUPPLY GREATER THAN DEMAND**
- **FIRST 6 MONTHS OF 2017 IN THE NORTHEAST ORDER**
  - **ORGANIC VOLUME GREW 5.2 PERCENT FROM THE SAME PERIOD IN 2016.**
  - **ORGANIC SALES DECLINED 1.1 PERCENT FOR FLUID MILK IN THE SAME TIME PERIOD**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **WATER QUALITY**

- **FARMERS IMPLEMENTING WATER QUALITY PRACTICES**
- **FUNDING AND COST OF PROJECTS A CONCERN**
- **FUNDING AT FEDERAL LEVEL IN NEXT FARM BILL CRITICAL**

- **ANAEROBIC MANURE TO METHANE DIGESTERS – 16 ACTIVE**

- **POSITIVE FOR FRAMERS – INCOME STREAM AND ALLOWS FOR ALTERNATIVE MANURE MANAGEMENT**
- **HIGH COST FOR IMPLEMENTATION**
- **FUTURE PHOSPHORUS REDUCTION POTENTIAL**





# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **IMMIGRANT LABOR ON VERMONT DAIRY FARMS**
- **TESTIMONY TO MILK COMMISSION**
  - **ESTIMATES THAT 173 DAIRY FARMS EMPLOY IMMIGRANT LABOR**
  - **600 TO 700 IMMIGRANT LABORERS IN VERMONT – REDUCTION IN LABOR FORCE OVER EARLIER ESTIMATES**
  - **CONTINUING INSTALLATION OF ROBOTIC MILKERS ON VERMONT DAIRY FARMS**
- **TRUTH IN LABELING**
  - **NUT AND SOY BASED BEVERAGES**
  - **EXISTING LEGISLATION AT FEDERAL LEVEL TO REQUIRE FDA TO IMPLEMENT EXISTING REGULATIONS ON LABELING**
  - **NUT AND SOY BASED BEVERAGES FALSE ADVERTISING AND IMPACTING SALES OF FLUID MILK**

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **TITLE 1 – COMMODITIES - MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM – THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.**
- **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS:**
  - **CHANGING FEED COSTS CALCULATIONS**
  - **CHANGING THE CALCULATION TO A ONE-MONTH VERSUS A TWO MONTH BASIS**
  - **WAIVING THE PREMIUM FOR BEGINNING AND SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGE FARMERS**
  - **ALLOW FLEXIBILITY TO MOVE IN AND OUT OF THE MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR FARMERS TO USE OTHER RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS.**
  - **REINVEST DAIRY FARMER PREMIUM PAYMENTS INTO THE MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR POTENTIAL INDEMNITY PAYMENTS TO FARMERS**
- **THE MILK COMMISSION REVIEWED SUPPLY MANAGEMENT CONCERNS CLOSELY AND DETERMINED NOT TO RECOMMEND ANY SPECIFIC SUPPLY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **FEDERAL ORDER REFORM – CLASS I FLUID MILK PRICING - THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.**
- **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING:**
  - **THE NATIONAL MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION (NMPF) AND THE INTERNATIONAL DAIRY FOODS ASSOCIATION (IDFA) HAVE A PROPOSAL TO ADJUST THE CALCULATION FOR THE CLASS I FLUID MILK PRICE WITHIN THE FEDERAL ORDER SYSTEM FOR ALL FEDERAL ORDERS.**
- **HIGHER SOLIDS STANDARDS IN FLUID MILK - THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.**
- **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING:**
  - **AN UPDATED STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF EXPANDING MILK SOLIDS STANDARDS NATIONALLY FOR 2017.**
  - **THE REQUIREMENT THAT ALL FLUID MILK SOLD NATIONALLY MEETS THE HIGHER MILK SOLIDS STANDARDS.**
  - **IF NOT SUCCESSFUL IN GETTING HIGHER MILK SOLIDS STANDARD NATIONALLY, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR FEDERAL ORDER NUMBER 1 IN THE NORTHEAST.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **TITLE 2 - CONSERVATION TITLE – LAND CONSERVATION AG CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM (ACEP) AND AG LAND EASEMENT PROGRAM (ALE) - *THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.***
- **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO THE ACEP PROGRAM:**
  - **RESTORE FUNDING NATIONALLY FOR THIS PROGRAM TO \$500 MILLION WHICH WOULD INCREASE THE ABILITY TO CONSERVE MORE FARMS IN VERMONT.**
  - **ALLOW FOR STATE OR REGION-SPECIFIC DEED TERMS TO IMPROVES FLEXIBILITY.**
  - **REMOVE THE ALE PLAN AS PART OF MINIMUM DEED TERMS WHICH ADDRESSES THE CONCERN OF FLEXIBILITY TO MEET ON-FARM CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT.**
  - **THE ABILITY FOR LOCAL ENTITIES TO BECOME CERTIFIED TO MANAGE THE CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROCESS SHOULD BE CONTINUED TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE EFFICIENCIES.**
- **USDA CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP) - *THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.***
  - **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS CONTINUED FUNDING OF THE CREP PROGRAM AND THE REQUESTS TO IMPROVE RENTAL RATES FOR THIS PROGRAM TO MORE SPECIFIC VERMONT RATES.**



## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (RCCP) - THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.**
  - **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE CONTINUATION OF THE REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM AND A WAIVER FOR THE MATCH REQUIREMENT FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS IN THE 2018 FEDERAL FARM BILL.**
- **USDA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM (EQIP) - THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.**
- **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO THE EQIP PROGRAM:**
  - **THE OPPORTUNITY TO WAIVE THE REQUIREMENT OF AN AGREEMENT BY THE FARMER TO IMPLEMENT THE WHOLE FARM PLAN OVER THE LIFE OF A FARM BILL SHOULD BE ADDED.**
  - **USDA EQIP PAYMENT CAP SHOULD BE INCREASED TO \$1,000,000 FOR THE LIFE OF THE FARM BILL.**
  - **EDGE OF FIELD MONITORING COSTS SHOULD NOT BE COUNTED AGAINST THE FUNDING CAP WITHIN THE EQIP PROGRAM.**
  - **ADD THE ABILITY TO HAVE PRE-APPROVAL OF SOME PROJECT COSTS – ABLE TO BEGIN PROJECT BEFORE CONTRACT IS COMPLETE. USDA SHOULD EXPLORE THE USE OF PERFORMANCE BONDING WITH CONTRACTORS TO ALLOW PAYMENT OF COSTS DURING THE WORK OF THE PROJECT.**
  - **ALLOW PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS WORKING ON COMMON GOALS WITH USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE TO SHARE SPECIFIC FARM DATA TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND TO FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES.**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **TITLE 3 – TRADE**
- **FOREIGN MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**
  - **THE VERMONT MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS CONTINUED FUNDING OF THE MARKET ACCESS PROGRAM AT \$400 MILLION PER YEAR.**
- **TITLE 4 NUTRITION - USDA FOOD PROGRAMS AND THE WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN'S (WIC)- *THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.***
  - **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE INCLUSION OF MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS AS PART OF ALL USDA FOOD PROGRAMS AND WOULD ENCOURAGE FLEXIBILITY AND ABILITY FOR CHOICE WITHIN THESE PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE A FULL RANGE OF FAT LEVELS IN MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS TO PARTICIPANTS. THE MILK COMMISSION ALSO SUPPORTS FULL FUNDING OF ALL USDA FOOD PROGRAMS IN THE 2018 FARM BILL.**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **TITLE 6 RURAL DEVELOPMENT**
- **TELECOMMUNICATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES**
  - **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS INCREASED FUNDING FOR THE TELECOMMUNICATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE LOANS AND LOAN GUARANTEES TO CONTINUE TO EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN BROADBAND COVERAGE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES.**
- **RURAL BUSINESS- COOPERATIVE SERVICE**
  - **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS CONTINUED FUNDING OF THE RURAL BUSINESS- COOPERATIVE SERVICES PROGRAMS WITHIN USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE NEEDED FUNDING SOURCES FOR THE DAIRY INDUSTRY AND COOPERATIVES IN VERMONT.**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **TITLE 7 – RESEARCH AND EXTENSION**
- **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH AND EXTENSION:**
  - **TITLE 7 RESEARCH AND EXTENSION WAS UNDERFUNDED IN THE LAST FARM BILL.**
  - **SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES AT ALL LAND GRANT COLLEGE FOR AGRICULTURAL TEACHING AND RESEARCH.**
  - **EXPAND RESEARCH FUNDING TO EXTENSION NATIONALLY TO ADDRESS CLIMATE AND WEATHER EXTREMES.**
- **DEVELOP FOCUSED RESEARCH, EXTENSION AND EDUCATION INITIATIVES FOR ON-FARM ROBOTICS, AG TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TO ADDRESS FARM LABOR SHORTAGES AS WELL AS DAIRY PRODUCT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. INCREASED FUNDING WOULD BENEFIT UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT EXTENSION TO BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THESE INITIATIVES.**



## **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION**

- **TITLE 9 – ENERGY**
- **RURAL ENERGY FOR AMERICA PROGRAM -RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS & ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENT LOANS & GRANTS**
  - **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE RURAL ENERGY FOR AMERICA PROGRAM AND SUPPORTS FUNDING FOR VERMONT DAIRY FARMERS TO INSTALL ANAEROBIC MANURE DIGESTERS ON THEIR FARMS. FUNDING SHOULD BE RETURNED TO \$50 MILLION PER YEAR LEVEL IN THE 2018 FARM BILL.**
- **TITLE 11 – CROP INSURANCE**
- **NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NAP)**
  - **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS ALLOWING FLEXIBILITY TO DETERMINE A REGIONAL RANGE FOR RELATIVE FEED VALUE (RFV) ON MIXED HAY AND HAYLAGE FOR THE NORTHEAST THAT WOULD BE MORE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEED USED ON DAIRY FARM FOR MILK PRODUCTION. USDA WOULD NEED TO DETERMINE WHAT DOCUMENTATION WAS ACCEPTABLE TO SET A REGIONAL RFV RANGE WITHIN THE NAP CROP DISASTER INSURANCE PROGRAM.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **TITLE 12 – MISCELLANEOUS – THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.**
- **ANIMAL HEALTH – BOVINE JOHNE'S DISEASE**
  - **THE MILK COMMISSION WOULD RECOMMEND THAT THE JOHNE'S DISEASE CONTROL PROGRAM BE REINSTATED IN THE 2018 FARM BILL AND BE FUNDED AT \$100 MILLION AND THAT USDA IMPLEMENT A GOAL OF ERADICATION OF JOHNE'S DISEASE BY 2030 IN THE UNITED STATES.**
- **ANIMAL HEALTH – NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY NETWORK**
  - **THE VERMONT MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE EXPANSION OF THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THE NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY NETWORK AND CONTINUED FUNDING AND AUTHORIZATION FOR COLLABORATIVE WORK.**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **NON-FARM BILL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **IMMIGRATION REFORM**

- **DUE TO VERMONT DAIRY FARMER'S RELIANCE ON IMMIGRANT LABOR, THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS A FEDERAL GUEST WORKER PROGRAM BE INCLUDED AND IMPLEMENTED IN ANY COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM.**

- **ORGANIC STANDARDS**

- **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO ORGANIC STANDARDS:**

- **PROPOSAL FROM ORGANIC INDUSTRY FOR ALL CERTIFYING AGENTS TO BE LICENSED AND TRAINED BY USDA, WITH EXPECTATIONS TO CONSISTENTLY INSPECT DAIRY FARMS TO ORGANIC STANDARDS, WITH SPECIFIC ATTENTION TO THE ACCESS TO PASTURE REQUIREMENT AND TRANSITION OF LIVESTOCK TO ORGANIC PRODUCTION.**
- **ORGANIC PRODUCTION MARKET AND DATA INITIATIVE PROPOSAL SHOULD BE FUNDED AND EXPAND COLLECTION OF ORGANIC DATA AT A COST OF \$5 MILLION PER YEAR NATIONALLY.**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **NON-FARM BILL RECOMMENDATIONS**
- **FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT**
  - **THE VERMONT MILK COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION CONSIDER A GRANTING PROGRAM TO UPGRADE FEED MILLS TO MEET NEW REQUIREMENTS.**
- **NONMILK BEVERAGES – TRUTH IN LABELING – *THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OF THE MILK COMMISSION.***
  - **THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS TRUTH IN LABELING OF BEVERAGES TO REMOVE THE WORD MILK FROM NUT AND PLANT-BASED BEVERAGE CONTAINERS AND MARKETING MATERIALS.**



# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **NON-FARM BILL RECOMMENDATIONS**
- **USDA INSURANCE PROGRAM – MILK AS A COMMODITY**
- **FUNDING FOR ALL INSURANCE PROGRAM IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE WITHIN THE FARM BILL. AT THIS POINT, MILK IS IN A CATEGORY WITH LIVESTOCK AND A REQUEST IS BEING MADE TO MOVE MILK TO A COMMODITY STATUS WHICH WOULD INCREASE THE FEDERAL FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU REVENUE INSURANCE PROGRAM. IF THIS CHANGE CANNOT BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO NEGOTIATIONS ON THE FEDERAL FARM BILL, THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS INCLUSION OF MILK AS A COMMODITY IN THE 2018 FARM BILL.**
- **RURAL OPIATE ISSUE**
- **THE MILK COMMISSION RECOGNIZES THE ISSUE OF OPIATE ADDICTION IMPACTS EVERYONE IN THE STATE OF VERMONT INCLUDING THOSE INVOLVED IN AGRICULTURE. USDA SECRETARY PERDUE RECENTLY PROVIDED REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL PROSPERITY. WITHIN THIS REPORT, ONE OF THE RECOMMENDATION IS TO MODERNIZE HEALTHCARE ACCESS WHICH INCLUDES: IMPROVED ACCESS TO MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL CARE, PARTICULARLY ACCESS TO PREVENTION, TREATMENT, AND RECOVERY RESOURCES IS VITAL TO ADDRESS THE NATIONWIDE OPIOID CRISIS AND OTHER SUBSTANCE MISUSE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES. THE MILK COMMISSION SUPPORTS THIS RECOMMENDATION AND FUNDING FOR THIS VITAL INITIATIVE.**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **NON-FARM BILL RECOMMENDATIONS**
- **STAFFING LEVELS AND HIRING FREEZE FOR USDA IN STATE OFFICES**
  - **THERE WERE OVERALL CONCERNS WITH USDA FSA AND NRCS STAFFING LEVELS IN VERMONT. NATIONALLY USDA FSA AND NRCS HAS BEEN UNDER A HIRING FREEZE AND IF ATTRITION OCCURS, THERE IS A NATIONAL LEVEL PROCESS OF FILLING THE VACANCY. THE HIRING FREEZE IS ADVERSELY IMPACTING THE ABILITY OF THE VERMONT OFFICE TO ASSIST FARMERS IN IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION PRACTICES.**

# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VT MILK COMMISSION

- **FULL VERMONT MILK COMMISSION REPORT AVAILABLE AT:**
- **[HTTP://AGRICULTURE.VERMONT.GOV/MILK\\_COMMISSION](http://agriculture.vermont.gov/milk_commission)**
- **QUESTIONS?**

