

1 Sec. A. DAIRY ASSISTANCE DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC
2 HEALTH EMERGENCY

3 (a) This section establishes a program to provide financial assistance to
4 milk producers due to the loss of markets, such as schools and restaurants,
5 caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency. The program shall pay a
6 milk producer [Placeholder for formula or amount to be awarded to farms]. .
7 The assistance shall be paid [as a one-time award/monthly]. The maximum
8 assistance a milk producer may receive is \$?00,000.00 per month.

9 (b) The Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets shall request the Farm
10 Services Agency to provide available the production data for milk producers.
11 [May not need depending on formula for award]

12 (c) A milk producer seeking assistance under subsection (a) of this section
13 shall provide the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets with the
14 appropriate verifiable production evidence by the 12th day of each month for
15 milk produced by the producer in the previous month. Acceptable forms of
16 verifiable production evidence include milk marketing payment stubs, bulk
17 tank records, milk handler records, and daily milk marketing records. [May not
18 need depending on formula for award]

19 (d) The payment of the assistance under this section shall come as a
20 separate check direct to a milk producer from the State of Vermont.

21 (e) The following is not considered commercially marketed milk and is

1 ineligible for assistance under this section:

2 (1) dumped milk that causes bulk load contamination for which a
3 producer receives an insurance indemnity; or

4 (2) milk dumped on the farm by order of the Agency of Agriculture,
5 Food and Markets or the Department of Health. [May not need depending on
6 formula for award]

7 (f) As used in this section, “milk producer” or “producer” has the same
8 meaning as in 6 V.S.A. § 2672.

9 **Sec. B. ASSISTANCE THROUGH A LOAN BUY-DOWN PROGRAM**

10 The State of Vermont shall buy down the interest rate of farm loans at the
11 Vermont Agricultural Credit Corporation for the months May, June, and July
12 of 2020.

13 **Sec. C. APPROPRIATIONS**

14 (a) There is appropriated from the Coronaviruss Relief Fund in fiscal year
15 2020 the sum of \$? million to the Department of Finance and Management for
16 transfer to the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets to process payments
17 for dairy assistance established in this act.

18 (b) For the purpose of continuing to provide interest rate support for farm
19 loans, the sum of \$100,000.00 is appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief
20 Fund in fiscal year 2020 to the Vermont Agricultural Credit Corporation.