

## **Task Force to Revitalize the Vermont Dairy Industry**

Created by 2020 Acts & Resolves No. 129, Sec. 31

Questions for Vermont Organic Valley Farmers Testifying September 13, 2021

### 1. Introductory information about your farm

- How many cows do you milk, and dry stock?
- How many acres do you farm; meadow and pasture; how much woodland?
- How long have you been organic? Have you always been with Organic Valley?
- Other info about the farm?

### 2. Farm income and sustainability

- What is your cost of production over past 5 years?
- What has been the price for milk you received from Organic Valley over past five years? What was the previous highest price you received from Organic Valley?
- Have you always operated under a contract? Are you concerned about organic Valley leaving Vermont, like Horizon leaving?
- Do you have income from forest land; maple; other farm products?
- Do you have off-farm income; do other household members have off-farm jobs?
- Is the price paid for your milk the biggest challenge you face for farm sustainability?
- What other challenges are you facing as a farm -labor availability, equipment servicing, other?

### 3. Farm Management and Innovation

- How do you integrate risk management programs into your farm? What programs do you use (FSA, Crop Insurance, VHCB, UVM Extension, private contractor)?
- Has risk management helped? How? Does it outweigh the cost or vice versa?
- Do you participate in the Dairy Margin Coverage Program? At what level? Has it helped?
- What would you like to do to improve your farm operation if you could?
- What innovations in barn and field have you employed in past ten years?
- Have you installed efficiency measures, such as a variable speed pump?
- Have you installed a solar array or solar hot water?
- What can the state do to help you take more innovative steps, if you wish?

### 4. State Water Quality Improvement Programs

- Which State Water Quality Improvement Programs do you participate in; what suggestions do you have for their improvement?

### 5. New Task Force State Action

- What 3 issues should the Task Force address, and what new legislative action to address these issues should the Task Force propose?