

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Mike Thresher, I am Chair of the Board of Directors for NOFA-VT, and Director of Nutrition for Morrison's Custom Feeds.

I'm here asking for the inclusion of \$252,203 in supplemental funding for the emergency organic dairy relief program into the FY Budget Adjustment Act.

Last year the Legislature supported and provided \$6.9 million for the organic dairy relief, this covered millions of dollars in debt these organic dairies accumulated from the 2022 year, due to low milk process and record high grain prices. The organic dairies received their payments during the summer of 2023, with most of the funds used to pay debts. A few dairies have chosen to use some of these funds to invest in their infrastructure to help secure their future in organic dairying in Vermont.

We at Morrison's Custom Feeds saw many farms pay off or pay down grain bills, thank you.

It is my understanding that the program has a short fall of \$252,203 to complete payments to all organic dairies that applied. Please include this funding in the FY24 BAA so we can assist those farms that are still impacted.

Thank you.