

JUL 22 2005

Mr. Jerry Kozak  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
National Milk Producers Federation  
2101 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Mr. Kozak:

Thank you for the June 23, 2005, letter signed by the Board of Directors of the National Milk Producers Federation, that urged prompt implementation of the recommended decision regarding a limit on the dairy producer-handler exemption within the Arizona-Las Vegas and Pacific Northwest marketing areas. You indicated that dairy producers and their cooperatives support implementation of this decision.

The Department of Agriculture appreciates the importance of the issues discussed in your letter regarding the regulatory status of producer-handlers in Federal milk marketing orders. Although the comment period on the recommended decision closed on June 13, 2005, the Board's letter will be made part of the public record. We have received many comments that will be considered thoroughly before a final decision is issued.

Thank you for your interest in the Federal milk marketing order program.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Johanns  
Secretary

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