

## **USDA Sets Hearing on Emergency Aid for Florida Milk Handlers and Producers**

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**Date:**

Thursday, December 7, 2017 - 3:00pm

**Contact Info:**

Michelle Person

[michellem.person@ams.usda.gov](mailto:michellem.person@ams.usda.gov)

202-260-8210

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 7, 2017 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will hold a public hearing beginning Dec. 12, 2017, through Dec. 14, 2017, to consider a proposal seeking to provide emergency reimbursement to Florida milk handlers and dairy producers for costs incurred as a result of market disruptions stemming from Hurricane Irma. The hearing will begin on Dec. 12 at 9 a.m. at the Embassy Suites, 513 S Florida Ave, Tampa, FL 33602.

In September 2017, Hurricane Irma caused widespread devastation throughout the entire state of Florida, resulting in dairy processing and manufacturing plant closures, store closures, and extensive road closures.

USDA is holding the hearing on an emergency basis to consider a proposal submitted by Southeast Milk, Inc., Dairy Farmers of America, Inc., Premier Milk, Inc., Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association, Inc., and Lone Star Milk Producers, L.C. At the hearing, USDA will take testimony and receive evidence regarding the proposal.

The proposal seeks to amend the Florida Federal Milk Marketing Order through a temporary supplemental charge on Class I milk to provide financial relief to milk handlers and dairy producers for financial losses incurred as a result of Hurricane Irma. Under the proposal, milk handlers and dairy producers could receive limited reimbursement for demonstrated financial losses.

The hearing notice and a supplemental hearing notice will appear in the Dec. 11, 2017, Federal Register. Those interested in participating in the hearing should notify a USDA official upon arrival at the hearing.

For a copy of the hearing notice and additional information, contact Erin Taylor, Acting Director, Order Formulation and Enforcement Division, USDA/AMS/Dairy Program, Stop 0231-Room 2973-S, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0231; (202) 720-7311; e-mail address: [erin.taylor@ams.usda.gov](mailto:erin.taylor@ams.usda.gov).

Persons requiring a sign language interpreter or other reasonable accommodations should contact Sherry Swanson, AMS Dairy Program, at (470) 767-5084, e-mail: [sswanson@fmmlatlanta.com](mailto:sswanson@fmmlatlanta.com), before the hearing begins.

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