

Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance



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We endorse the dual request to eliminate the producer-handler exemption and at the same time increase the size limit for exempt handlers/small plants to 450,000 pounds per month.

Organic dairy farmers have many different production methods including seasonal grass based dairies and more traditional production methods that combine pasture, conserved forage and grain. They also

February 28, 2009

Ms. Dana Coale
USDA/AMS/Dairy Programs
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0225

Dear Ms. Coale,

The Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance (NODPA) would like to express our support for the petitions submitted by National Milk Producers Federation and the International Dairy Foods Association on January 30, 2009 calling for amending of all Federal milk marketing orders.

NODPA represents 820 organic dairy farmers in the East of the USA with a mission to enable organic dairy family farmers, situated across an extensive area, to have informed discussion about matters critical to the well being of the organic dairy industry as a whole, with particular emphasis on:

1. Establishing a fair and sustainable price for their product at the wholesale level.
2. Promoting ethical, ecological and economically sustainable farming practices.
3. Developing networks with producers and processors of other organic commodities to strengthen the infrastructure within the industry.
4. Establishing open dialogue with organic dairy processors and retailers in order to better influence producer pay price and to contribute to marketing efforts.

30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342
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market their milk in many different ways, selling to the major brands including Horizon Organic, Organic Valley, Stonyfield, as well as through smaller cooperatives including Upstate Farms Cooperative, Organic Choice and LOFCO, and independent manufacturers of organic dairy product and direct to the consumers.

We respectfully request that USDA / AMS initiate formal rulemaking as petitioned by NMPF and IDFA. We look forward to participating in a hearing. Please contact Ed Maltby, NODPA Executive Director, at 413-772-044 or ednodpa@comcast.net or 30 Keets Rd, Deerfield, MA 01342, for more information on our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry Perkins". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Henry" and last name "Perkins" clearly legible.

Henry Perkins
NODPA Board President