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From: milkpail@milkpail.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2009 12:12 PM
To: AGSEC -USDA
Cc: steve@milkpail.com
Subject: Keep an umbrella over the small dairy processor !

Dear Secretary,

I grew up in the world of milk processing in the San Francisco Bay Area. My father started a business that began as a drive thru dairy, and grew into a small local regional processing and distribution company.

When dad first opened for business, the appeal to the public for our fresh milk was partly due to a 2 cent per half gallon discount that the State of California permitted onsite dairy plants to charge, an advantage that helped the small processor to compete in the 1960's and '70s against huge corporate dairy operations.

It has come to my attention that your department is considering changing the Milk Pooling system in such a way that the small dairy based processor will be required to participate in this system. It is my hope that your office will postpone making this determination until such time that your new staff has had time to carefully evaluate the long term implications of this change. I believe that the inherent inefficiencies of the small farm based processor are sufficient to decide in favor of maintaining the status quo so that additional competitive burdens and regulatory costs are not pouring over the small but important dairy based processors.

I hope you will delay any immediate action on this matter while maintaining an umbrella over their operations in the spirit of supporting the independent American dairy farmer.

With gratitude,

Steven Rasmussen

The Milk Pail Market

Mountain View, CA