

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative: Sees positives for dairy in farm bill

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Co-op urges Congress and president to approve legislation

GREEN BAY, Wis. — One of the largest dairy cooperatives in the country, representing farmers throughout the Midwest, today applauded improvements for the dairy community in the new farm bill after details were released Monday night.

The bill must be approved by the full House and Senate, and the president must sign it, for it to become law. This legislation, which touches nearly every aspect of the country's food system, includes important priorities for dairy farmers. (Click [here](#) for text of the bill and comments from congressional leaders.)

Image

The following comments are from Brody Stapel, president of the board of directors for Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, who farms with his family on a dairy in eastern Wisconsin:

“We are breathing a sigh of relief that the bill has made it to this point — and that it includes important priorities for dairy farmers. Now, we call on Congress and President Trump to act quickly to make it law.

“A great deal of work and time will be lost if we let this bill falter now so close to the finish line. We cannot afford to start the process over.

“Dairy farmers are hurting and have been hanging on in hopes of something

positive, and this bill delivers improvements for our farmers.

“We appreciate the leadership of Representatives Mike Conaway and Collin Peterson and Senators Pat Roberts and Debbie Stabenow, along with everyone else who worked so hard to ensure that the dairy community’s needs were reflected in this legislation.”

Stapel noted these specific parts of the bill which Edge -- as the voice of milk -- pushed for aggressively in its advocacy work on Capitol Hill:

Trade promotion -- Programs to promote trade were fully funded. This critical investment will open opportunities to sell dairy products around the world.

“In the long run, trade equals stability and success for the dairy community.”

Risk management -- The bill creates Dairy Margin Coverage, which improves upon the former Margin Protection Program; allows simultaneous use of multiple risk management ; and expands potential coverage to all-size farms. These changes will give farmers options that work best for them.tools

“When it comes to farmers protecting our businesses, one size doesn’t fit all. We need to be able to choose what makes most sense for individual farm families.”

Nutrition Title -- The bill develops a framework to health eating for people in lower-income nutrition programs. Options could include fluid milk.incentivize

“If the goal is to promote healthy eating, it only makes sense to include milk in those programs. You won’t find a much more nutritious option.”