

# U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Secures major investment for Wisconsin dairy farmers in bipartisan Senate budget agreement

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin announced that the bipartisan Senate budget agreement will include major investments to support the dairy industry, including more than \$1 billion for the Dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP). The final legislation includes significant improvements to dairy programs that will give Wisconsin dairy farmers much-needed, immediate relief as they face difficult dairy market conditions.

“Wisconsin’s dairy industry is a key driver of our state’s agricultural economy and a core part of our rural communities, but our farmers are facing a very difficult year. Washington has been far too slow to recognize the challenges facing our agriculture economy,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “I worked to make sure this bipartisan budget agreement includes the tools we need to act quickly in the face of this crisis. I am proud we have secured much-needed relief for our dairy farmers. We are doing right by them and Wisconsin’s rural economy.”

In the face of difficult dairy market conditions in Wisconsin and across the country, [Senator Baldwin sent a letter to Senate leadership in January](#) urging them to protect the economic security of the nation’s dairy farmers and update and expand the Dairy MPP in advance of the Farm Bill to provide better risk management tools for family farmers. Unfortunately, the program has not worked

as intended due to last minute cuts from House Republicans and implementation problems at USDA.

Since 2014, prices have dropped by over a third and dairy farmers have faced these difficult market conditions without a reliable safety net. This bipartisan plan would fix problems with the old MPP and provide a pathway to new, customizable insurance tools in the future.

Specifically, this proposal would:

- **Make a Significant Investment for Dairy**—Invest over \$1 billion into the dairy safety net for family dairy farmers.
- **Increase Affordability**—Eliminates or slashes premiums by up to 80 percent for small and medium dairy farms.
- **Target Those Most in Need**—Waives administrative fees for beginning, veteran, and underserved farmers.
- **Make Farmer-Friendly Improvements**—Makes the program more responsive to drops in prices and increases in feed costs, and triggers payments more quickly.
- **Allow Flexibility**—Provides farmers with an immediate chance to sign-up or change coverage levels for 2018 coverage.
- **Create New Opportunities for Insurance**—Removes arbitrary limits on developing new dairy insurance tools in the future, allowing for the creation of customizable dairy risk management tools.

An online version of this release is available [here](#).