

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative: Short-term relief welcome; long-term success hinges on trade

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GREEN BAY, Wis. — Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, one of the largest dairy co-ops in the country, issued a statement today after the announcement of the Trump administration's new trade aid program for farmers affected by retaliatory tariffs.

Edge has members throughout the Midwest and is one of the largest dairy cooperatives in the country in terms of milk produced by its members.

Statement from Brody Stapel, president of Edge and a dairy farmer in eastern Wisconsin:

There is no sugarcoating the fact that rising production costs, low milk prices and disrupted markets continue to inflict serious pain on our dairy farmers. So we welcome and appreciate this new financial assistance.

But we also recognize that the aid will provide only partial and short-term relief for farmers, many who have been barely breaking even or operating at a loss for many months now.

Our farmers are looking for the sort of long-term stability and success that can come when we have access to foreign markets for our dairy products. We much prefer trade over aid.

Any trade deals need to be free and fair, so we do understand and support President Trump's aggressive efforts to protect our interests during negotiations with international partners.

The administration's recent deal with Canada and Mexico to end steel and aluminum tariffs removed a major roadblock to finalizing the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which is critical to success for our dairy community.

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative's objectives for trade are straightforward: Expand access to global markets with no net loss to existing ones by nurturing more opportunities and not disrupting favorable ones we have worked so hard to develop.

Edge will continue to work with the administration and Congress on approval of USMCA and other trade agreements favorable to our dairy farmers. The U.S. needs to move with urgency.

TRADE AID DETAILS

The trade aid package announced today provides \$16 billion in the same three categories as the earlier aid program, according to [this press release](#) from the U.S. Department of Agriculture:

- \$14.5 billion — Market Facilitation Program payments using a single rate per county rather than per commodity in the previous aid. Dairy farmers will receive a per hundredweight payment on production history. Details on eligibility and payment rates will be released later.
- \$1.4 billion — Food Purchase and Distribution Program to buy surplus commodities, including fruits, vegetables, some processed foods, beef, poultry, lamb, pork and milk for distribution to food banks, schools and other outlets serving low-income individuals.
- \$100 million — Agriculture Trade Promotion Program to assist in developing new export markets.

Photo: [Click here](#) for a headshot of Brody Stapel

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About Edge:

Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative provides dairy farmers throughout the Midwest with a powerful voice — the voice of milk — in Congress, with customers and within their communities. Edge, based in Green Bay, Wis., is one of the top cooperatives in the country based on milk volume. For more information, visit voiceofmilk.com.