

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Urges Trump administration to invest in dairy innovation with trade aid

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – As Wisconsin farmers continue to face enormous challenges from retaliatory tariffs caused by the trade wars, U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin is urging the Trump administration to prioritize investments in dairy innovation and market development so farmers and dairy businesses can build brighter futures.

In a letter to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue, Senator Baldwin asks the administration to direct at least \$60 million in trade aid to USDA's Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives, which were created by Baldwin in the 2018 Farm Bill with the support of a wide range of dairy stakeholders and bipartisan lawmakers.

In her letter, Senator Baldwin writes, *“As you allocate trade aid in response to the enormous challenges our farmers are facing from retaliatory tariffs, I urge you to include funding for market development that targets innovation in dairy products.*

She continues, *“Wisconsin—America’s Dairyland—has lost over 1,600 dairy farms in the last two years, and forward-looking strategies to increase the value and utilization of milk cannot come fast enough. We know it’s going to take a range of steps to help dairy farmers get back on their feet—and we’ve made progress together in getting the Dairy Margin Coverage program signed into law and then made available to farmers, as well as refunding premiums that dairy farmers paid into the old dairy Margin Protection Program when it wasn’t working as promised.*

Baldwin concludes, *“Despite the challenges facing the dairy industry right now,*

including the loss of many of our family farms and the strong headwinds the industry faces from trade wars and low prices, I know that the men and women who lead dairy farms and dairy organizations are second to none in their expertise, tenacity, and commitment to improving their industry. Quite simply, there could not be a finer group of people to lead dairy through this difficult time. I urge you to prioritize investing in these rural leaders with trade aid funding of at least \$60 million to promote dairy market development.”

Wisconsin farmers have been hit hard by Trump trade wars with China, Mexico, Canada and the European Union. More than 1,600 dairy farms in Wisconsin have gone out of business since Trump took office.

Many dairy stakeholders have expressed strong support for the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives, including the National Milk Producers Federation, the International Dairy Foods Association, the Midwest Dairy Coalition, the Wisconsin Farm Bureau, the Wisconsin Farmers Union, the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association, the Dairy Business Association, and Edge Dairy Cooperative.

The full letter is available [here](#).

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