

# Rep. Kind: Demands USDA secretary Perdue reopen insurance program for struggling dairy farmers

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**La Crosse, WI**— Today, **Rep. Ron Kind** sent a letter to Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Sonny Perdue demanding to know what he is doing to support dairy farmers amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, Rep. Kind is pressing Secretary Perdue to explain why he has still not reopened the dairy margin coverage (DMC) program.

During DMC enrollment for 2020 in December 2019, milk futures showed some of the highest milk prices in over five years. Cash strapped dairy farmers who were barely getting by in previous years were eager to take advantage of the higher prices to pay off debts, rebuild their savings, and make needed repairs or improvements to their farms. However, Wisconsin's dairy products are particularly reliant on a robust food service industry, and with most restaurants either closed or operating with limited service, dairy farmers are immediately being hit with some of the most severe financial repercussions of the COVID-19 crisis. With milk prices dropping rapidly, USDA needs to move now or many dairy farms in Wisconsin will not survive.

“Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Wisconsin was losing an average of two dairy farms a day. This year, farmers were looking forward to turning things around, only to be hit with a pandemic that shuttered many of the businesses they rely on most,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**. “I continue to be confused as to why Secretary Perdue has refused to reopen the DMC program. Reopening the DMC program would be a quick and effective way to ensure we do not lose farms permanently to this crisis. Now is not the time for the Department of Agriculture to be sitting on their hands.”

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Rep. Kind and members of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation sent a [letter](#) to Secretary Perdue, pressing him to take immediate action on behalf of Wisconsin dairy farmers and dairy processing businesses during this crisis. Rep. Kind and the delegation specifically asked the Secretary to reopen the DMC program. Eleven days later, Secretary Perdue has yet to reply to the delegation's concerns.

**Read the letter to Secretary Perdue [here](#).**