

WFBF: Statement on COVID-19 impact on Wisconsin dairy farmers

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MADISON - The following statement can be attributed to Wisconsin Farm Bureau President Joe Bragger:

“It’s with a heavy heart I make this statement. The slight optimism that was floating around at the beginning of the year for our dairy farmers has been buried.

We have entered unprecedented times as a society. Our farmers, especially our dairy farmers, are being served a big dose of the sad reality we are living in with the COVID-19 pandemic. With depressed prices the last five years, our farmers were already stressed financially. The confirmed reports of milk dumping and processors asking farmers to cut back their production has only amplified the pressure.

As a dairy farmer myself, I am living and breathing this tough time along with our members throughout the state. During this time the best thing we can do is communicate with those around us. I encourage you to reach out to your vendors, processors, suppliers and other stakeholders to have conversations about what plans are in place for the near future and how business will be impacted. Don’t forget to check in with your fellow farmers too.

Dumping milk is not an easy thing to wrap your head around. However, if asked to dump milk I urge you to report it to Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection so they can track the magnitude of this situation. [Farmers should comply with the standards that DATCP and the Department of Natural Resources has laid out.](#) Whether you have been asked to dump product or cut back on production, please ensure that you keeping adequate records so there is an accurate accounting of your milk.

I assure you that Wisconsin Farm Bureau is working with stakeholders on all levels to communicate our members' needs. As an example, [we joined a group of other Wisconsin dairy groups in urging immediate action](#) by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to use the extensive purchasing power afforded it via the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to bring much-needed relief to the dairy industry. We will continue to work as hard as we can for our members during this unfortunate and unique time.”