



MINNESOTA MILK PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Minnesota Milk Producers Association is a dairy farmer driven organization providing state and local advocacy on issues and policies impacting the state's dairy community.

Summary of our 2026 Policy Priorities:

DAIRI program and the future of the farm bill

Minnesota Milk supports returning DAIRI to its original intention of \$8 million to help farmers pay federal crop insurance premiums, investing for a six-year future at a time of record low inflation-adjusted milk prices. Minnesota Milk also supports a provision for young farmers beginning farming after 2022 to enroll in the program, consistent with the USDA-FSA regulations.

Feedlot rules and regulations

Farms and other growing cities, projects and businesses should be able to show evidence of their water appropriations needs, working with DNR to obtain water permits once evidence is shown. DNR permits, along with the environmental review process, are too cumbersome for many in Minnesota to even begin. The optimization of feedlot regulations is necessary to encourage natural family farm growth.

County and local feedlot permit applications should be accepted concurrently with environmental review. We also oppose the reopening of the 7020 Feedlot Rules. Minnesota dairy plants have been operating sustainably with continuous improvement for decades. New regulations for nutrients and other micronutrients need to consider background, natural processes and harm to the businesses as they're implemented.

Infrastructure investments

We support infrastructure investments for electrical, wastewater, roads and bridges in conjunction with dairy farmers and processing plants. Minnesota needs to continue getting goods to market, and with a \$9.3 billion Minnesota dairy industry, supporting 25,000 jobs, prioritizing these areas would be a positive use of state resources.

Agricultural research and education

Minnesota Milk supports the University of Minnesota's reinvestment in the St. Paul Campus, keeping up on timely research that impacts the dairy industry, and extension programming that helps new and beginning farmers.

Better workplace management

Minnesota implemented new labor mandates, workplace restrictions and business taxes last session, significantly increasing the cost of doing business in Minnesota. Minnesota dairy farmers ask the legislature to consider that farmers depend on the weather and cow biology on when work gets done. Dairy farmers with fewer than 5 FTEs won't have H.R. departments or even dedicated personnel. We ask to exempt those with five and fewer FTEs from the ESST law.

The legislature should take time to look at the total number of weeks, benefit formula and definitions of seasonal workers. Overall, we believe dairy farmers should again be exempted or allowed to supply benefits in other ways.