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International Dairy Foods Association
Milk Industry Foundation
National Cheese Institute
International Ice Cream Association

FAX

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July 7, 2005

TO: The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture

FAX: 202-720-2166

FROM: Connie Tipton
President and CEO
International Dairy Foods Association

RE: Farm Bill Forums



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July 7, 2005

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Johanns,

On behalf of the members of the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), I would like to commend your outreach to the public as you prepare for reauthorization of the next Farm Bill. Our members wish you the very best as you embark on this important fact-finding mission.

President Bush's recent challenge to the European Union to join the United States in eliminating agricultural subsidies lends even greater urgency to your work. As you know, the Farm Bill is a vitally important piece of legislation for the future of American agriculture at home and abroad. The entire dairy industry, from producers to processors, can benefit greatly from policy reforms that encourage greater competition and support innovation and growth.

All of us want the U.S. to be the hub for the world's dairy industry and we can achieve this goal by expanding export opportunities for dairy foods. Our nation has the greatest capacity to meet the growing world demand for dairy products, but our ability to meet this demand is stifled by our regulatory structure.

We accept your challenge "to maximize U.S. competitiveness and our country's ability to effectively compete in global markets." We are working closely with dairy farmers and other stakeholders to come up with a win-win solution for the entire dairy industry. I personally have met with dozens of farm groups and individual farmers across the country and our goals are so much more closely aligned than many in Washington would have you believe.

I am confident that we will be able to help you devise solutions to remove the regulatory barriers to growth and innovation, thereby allowing the U.S. dairy industry to achieve its full potential as a global leader. At the end of the day, a less regulated dairy industry will increase demand for U.S. manufactured dairy products and the milk used to make them. Farmers, processors and consumers all stand to gain from a stronger dairy industry capable of responding to the challenges of the 21st Century.

Again I wish you success in this significant undertaking. We look forward to submitting more detailed suggestions for the Farm Bill in the months ahead. If I can be of any service in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at (202) 220-3552. Thank you for your time and consideration of this correspondence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Connie Tipton'.

Connie Tipton
President and CEO