



Dairy Task Force 2.0 Approves 49 Additional Recommendations

Release Date: March 18, 2019

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MADISON – In an effort to alleviate the financial and emotional stress experienced by our state’s dairy farmers, the 31 members of the Dairy Task Force 2.0 approved 49 recommendations at their Friday, March 15th meeting in Sheboygan. All approved recommendations are available at dairytaskforce.wi.gov.

“Every member of this task force understands the importance of our state’s dairy community and the challenges our farmers are facing,” said DATCP Secretary-designee Brad Pfaff. “This group rolled up its sleeves, thought long and hard, and provided a number of important recommendations on what can be done to maintain and grow our state’s world-class dairy industry.”

The Dairy Task Force 2.0 considered how farmers could ensure they are as competitive as they can be in the marketplace. Members recommended all milk producers and buyers to have a current contract/member agreement with the organization marketing the farm’s milk. The group also recommended requiring official animal identification to help prevent or respond to animal disease threats.

Members emphasized the importance of the dairy industry connecting with consumers by sharing a consistent, accurate, and relatable message. The Dairy Task Force 2.0 recommended additional agricultural impact studies, support for agritourism, and need for additional educational programming for non-farm audiences. One recommendation also focused on the need for truth in food labeling for consumers in the marketplace.

The Dairy Task Force 2.0 stressed the need for increased connections across the industry. Recommendations detailed the need for better collaboration and sharing ideas across the UW System and private industry and the need for more public and private partnerships such as the Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant Program. The group also noted the need for increased investments in rural infrastructure, including transportation and broadband.

The Dairy Task Force 2.0 also approved recommendations for the need to address significant challenges facing the dairy industry, including workforce availability, farm transition, water quality, and milk pricing. The members recommended additional internship opportunities with the Wisconsin Technical College System and an increase access to capital. Farmers were encouraged to get involved on the local boards and commissions and to engage more with state and federal government officials.

A theme across several recommendations was the need to expand our markets, locally, regionally, and around the world. The group identified the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research as a partner to gain consumer preference and insights, offer technical assistance for product development, and support export growth. The Dairy Task Force 2.0 also noted the need to reduce logistical obstacles, such as load consolidation.

The Dairy Task Force 2.0 will schedule its next meeting in the coming weeks. A final report, including all 51 recommendations, is expected to be completed this summer. For more information, visit dairytaskforce.wi.gov.

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