

Congressman Served on House-Senate Panel That Approved Allocation of Funding to Help Local, Family Farmers

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today released the following statement regarding the U.S. Department of Agriculture's announcement that it will soon begin to release \$290 million in direct aid to local dairy farmers across the country in order to help stabilize their operations during the economic downturn. As a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) helped secure a House-Senate agreement in September that resulted in the allocation of the emergency aid to dairy farmers, who play a critical role in New York's agriculture economy. In addition to the direct aid to farmers, the bill also included an additional \$60 million will be directed towards the purchasing of cheese products for food banks and other nutritional programs. Those funds will also help dairy farmers during the economic downturn.

"The downturn in the economy has put a severe strain on local, family dairy farmers who have seen the price of milk drop dramatically over the past year. This one-time emergency payment to dairy farmers will provide them with some relief as we continue working to strengthen our overall economy.

"While the U.S. Department of Agriculture has yet to announce specific state and county breakdowns, we know that this emergency aid means dairy farmers can expect to receive approximately \$6,400 for every 100 cows they have on their farms based on this past year's production numbers. That emergency aid is in addition to the annual federal assistance dairy farmers receive and will help keep their operations going. Dairy farmers are an integral part of New York's economy and it is very important that we help ensure their viability.

"As a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, I look forward to supporting additional pieces of legislation that will help our state's dairy farmers. At the same time, I will work to make the dairy system fairer for farmers. Anyone who goes to buy a gallon of milk knows that the price of milk hasn't dropped at the store. That's because dairy corporations have dropped the price they are willing to pay farmers, but haven't passed those savings on to the general public. Instead, these dairy corporations are taking in a greater profit for themselves at the expense of hardworking family farmers and the American people. That has to stop and I will work to help make the system function more effectively for everyone."

Hinchey Statement on Release of Emergency Aid to New York Dairy Farmers

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