

### *Congressman Served on House-Senate Panel That Decided on Allocation of Funding*

*Washington, DC* - As a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that he helped secure a House-Senate agreement that will deliver \$350 million in aid to dairy farmers across the country. The funds are included in the fiscal year 2010 Agriculture Appropriations bill, which the House and Senate will both vote on this week and subsequently send to the White House where the president will sign the funding into law.

Hinchey served on what is known as a conference committee where agriculture leaders in the House and Senate came together to work on resolving differences between the two chambers' versions of the agriculture funding bill. As a strong supporter of local dairy farmers in New York, Hinchey pushed for the aid and helped secure an agreement with members of the Senate that will now send \$350 million to dairy farmers.

"At a time when many dairy farmers in New York are struggling to keep their farms afloat because of extremely low prices for milk, this bill will provide them with a helping hand that will enable them to continue their businesses while also helping to ensure New Yorkers can enjoy fresh milk and dairy products that is locally produced," Hinchey said. "I will work very hard to ensure that the aid I helped negotiate and that we're about to pass in Congress will make its way back to New York dairy farmers who play such a vital role in our state's economy and provide a product that most state residents regularly use and need."

Under the agreement, \$290 million will be allocated in direct payments to dairy farmers while an additional \$60 million will be directed towards the purchasing of cheese products for food banks and other nutritional programs. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack will determine which farmers will receive the aid. As a member of the subcommittee that oversees agriculture spending, Hinchey said he will work very closely with Secretary Vilsack to ensure that New York dairy farmers, particularly family farmers, receive the support they need.

"While the price paid to dairy farmers for their milk has dropped dramatically, the price of milk at grocery stores has remained the same because dairy corporations that distribute the milk to stores for farmers are exploiting the system," Hinchey said. "Those corporations are taking in a greater profit for themselves at the expense of both dairy farmers who are being paid lower

## Hinchey Helps Secure \$350 Million in Aid for Dairy Farmers

Tuesday, 29 September 2009 19:00

---

amounts for their product and customers who purchase milk and other dairy products at their local stores."

In the midst of the economic recession, the price paid to New York dairy farmers for milk has plummeted by more than 40 percent since last September. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced a short-term increase in the Dairy Product Price Support Program (DPPSP) to help bolster dairy prices. While that step will help dairy farmers, additional aid is needed to help farmers stay in business as they weather the current dairy price crisis.

According to the USDA, dairy farmers in New York are receiving approximately \$7 less per hundredweight of milk than it costs them to produce that milk.