



**NATIONAL DAIRY
PRODUCERS
ORGANIZATION INC.**

June 20, 2023

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We write to express our disappointment in the failure of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to publish annual reports to Congress on the National Dairy Promotion and Research Program and the National Fluid Milk Processor Promotion Program for the years 2020, 2021, and 2022. We respectfully request their immediate release.

The same legislation that authorizes the dairy checkoff program also requires USDA to report annually to Congress “describing activities conducted, accounting for the receipt and disbursement of all funds, and including an independent analysis of the effectiveness of the program.”¹

Our review of USDA public sources indicates USDA has failed to submit such reports since 2019, denying dairy farmers access to years of critical insight into the efficacy of the checkoff programs they are required to pay into.

Since USDA’s last annual report, the National Dairy Promotion and Research Program has collected nearly \$1 billion in mandatory checkoff fees from dairy farmers. During the same time period, more than 6,000 dairy operations went out of business, and remaining dairy farmers continued to face economic hardship and an unprecedented farm stress crisis.

With this in mind, we strongly believe the dairy checkoff program must undergo careful and routine analysis and inspection, as required by federal law. We request the

¹ 7 U.S.C.S § 4514

publication of the reports or an update on their status by July 7, 2023. On behalf of America's dairy farmers, we urge you to fulfill this statutory obligation and publish these outstanding reports.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Angela Huffman
President
Farm Action



Deborah Mills
Chairwoman
National Dairy Producers Organization