



SD DAIRY PRODUCERS NEWS

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Policy

SDDP Washington DC Fly In



The 2nd Washington DC Fly In was a collaborative effort between SDDP, along with neighboring state dairy trade associations from Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota. On March 5th through the 7th, Marv Post joined with dairy farmers Robert Horst and Lee Massen from Iowa; and Bill Thiele and Bob and Kelsey Larson from Nebraska. In addition to these 5 farmers, Executive Directors from each state trade association along with Bob Lefebvre and Trudy Westweert presented a unified front on critical issues facing the dairy industry.

A well planned agenda placed our group at 23 meetings over the 2 plus days and to be impactful, we developed an agenda of 4 key messages to drive home to each states representation. The messages were:

- Ensure that USDA timeline for Farm Bill implementation of dairy programs is met
- Ensure that USMCA passage happens and eliminate tariffs for top tier trading partners that are crippling dairy exports now.
- We need a labor solution that works for year around labor on dairy farms
- We need support of the Dairy Pride Act and, with Director Gottlieb's resignation from FDA, commitment to enforce labelling requirements for artificial dairy products is carried through.

At Right: The dairy farmer delegation addressed key issues to Minnesota Congressman and House Ag Chair Collin Peterson. Our coalition of dairy farmers and representatives made a powerful statement by demonstrating a unified message that solutions are needed and impacts are felt across the Midwest and throughout the dairy industry.





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Washington DC Fly In



At Left: Marv Post, along with dairy farmers from Iowa and Nebraska meet with Iowa Senator Grassley.



At Right: SD Congressman Dusty Johnson met the dairy coalition on the 1st night to provide a tour and to make time for hearing and understanding the issues we presented. Rep. Johnson has worked to position himself of the House Ag Committee and a sub-committee to be in a position of influence.

Senator Thune and Senator Rounds also made time specific to South Dakota meetings where the group was able to deliver a message on behalf of SDDP that solutions for trade and a secure labor force are absolutely critical. We can not give up on finding a labor solution despite the divided lines in Washington DC.

In addition to meetings with state representatives, our dairy advocates met with USDA and USDEC to hear the latest on issues and impacts of the current trade environment. According to USDEC 2018 will finish with growth in most major product categories, despite the tariffs having a -4% impact overall. Illustrating the importance of developing trade in other countries simultaneously to seeking a trade resolution with Mexico, Canada, and China.

Our contingency met with FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce and also members of the Senate Ag Committee on our final day. Once again our message was clear that timely, farmer friendly implementation of the Farm Bill dairy components is critical to allow farmers to keep farming, and that outreach to local county FSA offices is important to ensure that enrollment is simple, efficient and inclusive.

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