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## Press Release



### For Immediate Release

November 29, 2016

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### Governor Hassan Urges Funding for Milk Producers Emergency Relief Fund

CONCORD – Continuing efforts to support New Hampshire farmers and other local businesses in the agriculture industry responding to crop losses caused by this year's extreme drought conditions, Governor Maggie Hassan today sent a letter urging the state Legislature's Dairy Producers Task Force to support an appropriation to the Milk Producers Emergency Relief Fund.

"Dairy farming is an integral part of New Hampshire's agricultural economy, representing more than one-third of the state's farm revenue," Governor Hassan wrote. "When one farm closes, other businesses such as farm supply companies are negatively impacted. It is in our state's best interest to help to ensure that our dairy farms remain operational."

As part of her efforts to support New Hampshire's agriculture industry, Governor Hassan requested a federal Secretarial Drought Disaster Designation, [which has since been granted to all 10 New Hampshire counties](#). In addition, [the Fiscal Year 2018/2019 agency budget proposals](#) included emergency relief for New Hampshire's farmers. [The Governor has also worked with state agencies and local communities on collaborative efforts to address this year's drought](#).

"We took an important step by allocating \$2 million per year for the Milk Producers Emergency Relief Fund in the agency phase of the efficiency budget, but these farms need help as soon as possible," Governor Hassan wrote. "In order to help this important industry survive in New Hampshire, I urge the task force to support an appropriation for the Milk Producers Emergency Relief Fund."

The full text of the Governor's letter is below:

November 29, 2016

The Honorable Dick Hinch, Chairman  
Dairy Producers Task Force  
House Majority Office  
State House, Room 313  
107 North Main Street  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Chairman Hinch and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to encourage the Dairy Producers Task Force to request an appropriation of funds to dairy farmers through the Milk Producers Emergency Relief Fund. This fund was created in 2007 to address raw milk pricing shortfalls but has not been funded since its inception. Dairy farmers in New Hampshire face challenging markets during their normal business operations. This year, these farmers were faced with an additional burden with our state's extreme drought conditions.

I have spoken with dairy farmers from across the state and seen the negative impact this year's drought has had on their crops. These conditions have resulted in more than 20 of our state's 120 dairy farms closing their dairy operations. Dairy farming is an integral part of New Hampshire's agricultural economy, representing more than one-third of the state's farm revenue. When one farm closes, other businesses such as farm supply companies are negatively impacted. It is in our state's best interest to help to ensure that our dairy farms remain operational.

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We took an important step by allocating \$2 million per year for the Milk Producers Emergency Relief Fund in the agency phase of the efficiency budget, but these farms need help as soon as possible. In order to help this important industry survive in New Hampshire, I urge the task force to support an appropriation for the Milk Producers Emergency Relief Fund.

Thank you for your consideration.

With every good wish,

Margaret Wood Hassan  
Governor

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