



# Milk Producers Council

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## *STATEMENT FROM MILK PRODUCERS COUNCIL*

### **USDA Schedules Hearing on a California Federal Milk Marketing Order**

**CALIFORNIA** – Today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that a hearing has been scheduled to consider proposals to establish a Federal Milk Marketing Order (FMMO) in California. The hearing – which experts have indicated is expected to last a number of weeks or even months – will begin on September 22, 2015 at 9:00 am at the Clovis Veterans Memorial District Building (808 4th Street in Clovis, California).

In response to today's announcement, MPC General Manager Rob Vandenheuvel issued the following statement:

*“Milk Producers Council’s Board of Directors is excited to see this important process move forward. While California’s dairy industry thrived for many years under its State-run Marketing Order, that system has failed to facilitate a competitive farm-gate milk price in recent years, resulting in our State’s manufacturers receiving a massive ‘California Discount’ on the milk they buy, to the tune of nearly \$2 billion over the past five-plus years. We greatly appreciate the leadership of the State’s three major dairy cooperatives in submitting their proposal for a California Federal Milk Marketing Order, and join with our fellow producer-run trade associations in strongly supporting that proposal. We look forward to the opportunity to present our case to USDA in the upcoming hearing.”*

In their announcement, USDA identified the four proposals that will be considered in the upcoming hearing. The proposals were submitted by *(the first two are complete proposals; the last two are focused only on specific pieces of a CA-FMMO)*:

- **The three major California cooperatives** (California Dairies, Inc., Dairy Farmers of America and Land O’Lakes) *(with unified support from the boards of California Dairy Campaign, MPC and Western United Dairymen)*
- **The Dairy Institute of California** (on behalf of the California milk processors they represent)
- **The California Producer Handler Association** (on behalf of Foster Dairy Farms, Hollandia Dairy, Producers Dairy Foods and Rockview Dairies)
- **Ponderosa Dairy** (a large dairy farm in Amargosa Valley, Nevada)

MPC has begun and will be continuing a series of articles in our newsletter looking into the details of the various proposals. If you’ve missed the first two in that series, you can find them on our website at: <http://www.milkproducerscouncil.org/cafmno.htm>.

You can also find more information on the proposals or the USDA process by visiting their website at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/moa/dairy/ca>.