



305 Roselawn Ave E | Suite 200 | St. Paul, MN 55117
Phone: (651) 639-1223 | www.mfu.org

February 23, 2026

Co-Chair Rick Hansen
Co-Chair Paul Anderson
House Agriculture Finance and Policy Committee
75 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard., Room G3
St. Paul, MN 55155

RE: MFU support for Dairy Assistance, Investment, Relief Initiative (DAIRI) fix for new dairies (HF3508; SF3832)

Dear Co-Chair Hansen, Co-Chair Anderson, and members of the committee:

On behalf of Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU), I write to share strong support for ensuring that all dairy farmers can benefit from the Dairy Assistance, Investment, Relief Initiative (DAIRI) program. This effort reflects a simple, commonsense fix that will allow dairies whose production history started after 2022 to benefit from this program.

MFU is a grassroots membership organization that has represented Minnesota's family farmers, ranchers, and rural communities since 1918. When first created, the nation-leading DAIRI program helped ensure that Minnesota dairy farmers benefit from the highest level of federal risk protection. In the years following its first enactment, Minnesota boasted the highest enrollment in the nation.

With support from our members and others, DAIRI was renewed in 2023. Unfortunately, the federal program DAIRI leverages was not renewed until last year. Today, dairy farmers are again in need of support, and this fix is needed to ensure that the newest farmers can participate.

Finally, we appreciate that this program is targeted toward family-sized dairies. That will ensure that the money goes further to keeping more farms in business. Furthermore, we value that this will help farmers get the most from federal programs.

We thank Representatives Nelson and Smith for their work on this proposal and hope it earns your support. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact our Government Relations Director, Stu Lourey, at stu@mfu.org or (320) 232-3047. Thank you for considering the needs and perspectives of Minnesota's farm families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Wertish". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "G" and "W".

Gary Wertish
President, Minnesota Farmers Union