



January 27 2022

The Honorable Cindy McCain
U.S. Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome
via Boncompagni 2
Rome, Italy

Dear Ambassador McCain,

On behalf of America's dairy industry, we are writing to congratulate you on your appointment as Permanent Representative of the U.S. Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome. We look forward to working with you in this new position to advance the critical role U.S. dairy can play in sustainably nourishing a growing global population. To initiate that collaboration, we would like to request a meeting with you to discuss some of the ways in which the U.S. dairy industry is eager to play a more active role in collaborating with the U.S. government on this area.

Your appointment comes at a critical juncture for the development of policy recommendations and guidance that could impact U.S. production practices, global health and malnutrition efforts, and future export opportunities for U.S. dairy products and ingredients. With the conclusion of the UN Food Systems Summit, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) will become the center of activities, leading agencies across the UN system and directing work aimed at transforming global food systems to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

At the same time, certain countries and special interest groups are increasingly looking to use the multilateral system to impose their narrowly-focused agendas, punitive regulatory approaches and ideological priorities on the rest of the world, often to the detriment of science, consistent and fair trade rules, and innovative approaches that can help the world produce more nutritious foods more sustainably.

The U.S. dairy industry, which includes nearly 32 thousand dairy farmers and supports approximately three million¹ American jobs, is a global leader in responsible production, innovation and sustainable nutrition. We remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting evidence-based, practical recommendations that improve food systems while promoting better nutritional outcomes around the world and leveraging fair trade. Global guidance and policies play a large role in our ability to deliver on that commitment given the importance of exports to our industry: In 2020, the U.S. exported over \$6.5 billion in dairy products worldwide, equivalent to approximately 16% of total U.S. milk production. We produce high quality, nutritious products to help meet the world's nutrition needs while leading the agricultural sector in our commitment to sustainable production.

U.S. dairy producers, processors and manufacturers have long been leaders in advancing voluntary on-farm action to reduce environmental impacts, including an industry-wide goal to achieve net-zero

¹ Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) <https://downloads.usda.library.cornell.edu/usda-esmis/files/h989r321c/br86bx43m/7p88d932r/mkpr0221.pdf>

greenhouse gas emissions, optimize water use and improve water quality by 2050.² Our ambitious 2050 commitments come from a history of responsible stewardship and culture that rewards progress. According to a 2019 FAO report, North America (where the U.S. is the primary dairy producer) was the only region in the world to increase milk production since 2005 while also reducing absolute emissions, making its GHG intensity for dairy products the lowest in the world.³ Additionally, 99% of all U.S. milk production originates from farms participating in the first-of-its-kind internationally accredited voluntary National Dairy Farmers Assuring Responsible Management (FARM) Animal Care program, which sets high standards for animal care, housing, antibiotic stewardship, and workforce development.⁴

Given the importance of these issues and the strong sustainability commitments that the U.S. dairy and other agricultural sectors are making, we ask that you and your staff take an active role in ongoing, rapidly developing FAO food systems work while also following closely more conventional FAO engagement in forums like the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which can have a significant impact on U.S. dairy exports. Working with likeminded Permanent Representatives to insist that all policy recommendations, guidelines and standards originating in the Rome-based agencies are science-based, developed transparently, reflective of the will of member states and consistent with the mandate and expertise of the agencies involved will go a long way towards supporting U.S. dairy exports and ensuring a fair global playing field.

As noted earlier, we would greatly appreciate the opportunity to meet with virtually in the coming weeks to continue this important conversation and explore ways that we can work together to advance our shared goals. Kristen Hagan (kehagan@usdec.org) is available to coordinate scheduling with your staff to find a suitable date.

Congratulations again, and we look forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,



Krysta Harden
President and CEO
U.S. Dairy Export Council



James Mulhern
President and CEO
National Milk Producers Federation

² <https://www.usdairy.com/sustainability/environmental-sustainability>

³ <https://www.fao.org/3/CA2929EN/ca2929en.pdf>

⁴ https://nationaldairyfarm.com/news_post/farm-program-recognized-again-for-international-quality-certification/