



2021 RESOLUTIONS – approved 11/2019

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56 **SECTION A: MAKE MINNESOTA A GREAT STATE FOR LIVESTOCK**

57 **A1: Move to Outcome-Based Regulation**

58 **WHEREAS**, well managed dairy operations provide significant natural resource benefits to Minnesota due to the
59 acreage committed to multi-year crops in alfalfa and hay production which reduces soil erosion; and

60 **WHEREAS**, the application of manure as a soil amendment and natural crop fertilizer limits the amount of
61 nutrients imported from other areas, which is better for water quality and soil health; and

62 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota dairy farmers are committed to protecting our natural resources for the benefit of all
63 citizens as well as the dairy farmer’s well-being; and

64 **WHEREAS**, the viability of Minnesota’s dairy industry depends on reasonable and rational environmental
65 regulatory processes for permitting, environmental review and compliance that do not reduce existing environmental
66 protection standards; and

67 **WHEREAS**, the existing processes for permitting, environmental review and compliance in Minnesota present
68 significant challenges for livestock farmers, supporting industry, state and local officials, and citizens; and

69 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota Milk supports the development of a permitting, environmental review and compliance
70 framework which would provide greater certainty with respect to permit and compliance requirements and timelines; and

71 **WHEREAS**, activist attorneys and/or special interest groups are misleading and influencing townships to adopt
72 arbitrary and onerous zoning ordinances that conflict with federal, state and county permits, ordinances and other
73 regulations which ultimately threatens Minnesota animal agriculture;

74 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

75 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the establishment of a permitting and environmental review process that
76 provides farmers, supporting industry, and state and local officials with clarity, consistency and timeliness.

77 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk opposes regulation on extreme soil loss, preferring instead preventative
78 measures to increase multi-year vegetation like pasture and hay ground.

79 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports existing environmental compliance standards – MinnFARM
80 standards for non-CAFOs and zero discharge standards for CAFOs.

81 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports ordinances and regulations based on sound science and current
82 technology and an environmental review process which ensures that Minnesota dairy farmers are not put at a
83 disadvantage compared to farmers in other states.

84 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges State, County and Township officials to join the Association in
85 developing proposals to improve the current process.

86 **A2: Health Insurance and Affordability**

87 **WHEREAS**, the cost of health insurance premiums is rising dramatically each year; and

88 **WHEREAS**, hundreds of Minnesota farm families cannot afford health insurance coverage and are not eligible for
89 MnSURE; and

90 **WHEREAS**, health care reform measures may also provide a framework for developing affordable health care
91 coverage for Minnesota farm families.

92 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

93 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges both State and Federal officials to implement policies to provide broader and
94 more equitable access to affordable health insurance coverage.

95 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that law be changed to allow for farms to create group health plans with the benefit
96 of lower costs realized by those group plans at other employers.

97 **A3: Tax Policy – State and Federal**

98 **WHEREAS**, the dairy industry is a major employer and economic engine for the United States and Greater
99 Minnesota; and

100 **WHEREAS**, dairy farmers need to remain competitive in a national market; and

101 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota dairy farmers are incurring significant costs relative to their counterparts in neighboring
102 states as they pay state sales tax on equipment and building materials to expand or improve operations.

103 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

104 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports tax policies that do not discriminate against the unique nature of dairy farms.

105 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports full state conformity with federal tax benefits like Section 179 depreciation
106 and Section 199A deduction.

107 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports sales tax exemption for materials purchased for new construction
108 or renovation of barns, storage facilities and milking parlors in order to improve Minnesota milk producers' competitive
109 position in the national dairy marketplace.

110 **A4: Corporate Ownership of Farmland**

111 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota Milk believes that local, private ownership of farmland is necessary for building and
112 maintaining healthy communities; and

113 **WHEREAS**, absentee ownership by corporations does not contribute to maintaining healthy communities; and

114 **WHEREAS**, certain business structures such as limited liability companies, farm producer corporations or other
115 networking structures for producers to work together attract outside capital and spread risk to afford the opportunity for
116 locally owned, farmer managed, dairies to succeed.

117 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

118 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the current corporate farm law provisions.

119 **A5: Preservation of Productive Agricultural Land**

120 **WHEREAS**, feeding a growing world population will become an ever more challenging task for the agricultural
121 sector; and

122 **WHEREAS**, valuable, productive agricultural land is being diverted to development and non-productive
123 conservation uses at a steady rate; and

124 **WHEREAS**, preservation of productive agricultural land will be essential to producing enough food to feed people
125 around the world.

126 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

127 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports policies that would protect the diversion of productive agricultural land to
128 industrial, commercial or residential uses or to non-productive conservation uses.

130 **SECTION B: SUPPORT FOR THE NEXT GENERATION DAIRY FARMERS AND AGRICULTURE**

131 **B1: Support for the Next Generation Dairy Farmers**

132 **WHEREAS**, the average age of Minnesota dairy farmers continues to increase, with 22% of the state’s dairy farmers
133 under the age of 45 years old; and,

134 **WHEREAS**, new farmers rejuvenate and reinvest in Minnesota’s dairy infrastructure; and,

135 **WHEREAS**, new farmers face limited access to the capital needed to generate sustainable revenue for the
136 incoming generation.

137 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

138 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk support programs, partnerships and collaborations that increase the success of new
139 famers entering dairy farming as a career.

140 **B2: Dairy Research, Teaching and Consumer Education Center**

141 **WHEREAS**, University of Minnesota research has been a building block for production agriculture in the State; and

142 **WHEREAS**, the Minnesota State system, especially the dairy program at Ridgewater College, does an outstanding
143 job of preparing students for a career in dairy production despite inadequate teaching facilities; and

144 **WHEREAS**, a new livestock research focus will foster cooperation between the University of Minnesota and the
145 dairy industry to enhance research capabilities and improve productivity and profitability for Minnesota dairies; and

146 **WHEREAS**, a new University of Minnesota Dairy Research Center will prepare the next generation of dairy
147 operators for business success using environmentally sound practices, improved animal care and enhanced product
148 quality and use; and

149 **WHEREAS**, the Center will provide a means to inform consumers of the health benefits of current and newly
150 developed dairy products; and

151 **WHEREAS**, upgrades to the current facilities at the West Central Research and Outreach Center will enhance dairy
152 learning.

153 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

154 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports development of a sustainable, long-term business model, with permanent
155 operating funding in place and reliance on grants for research and facilities upgrades.

156 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports funding for the University of Minnesota Dairy Research Center in
157 conjunction with other livestock through an allocation of state general obligation bond proceeds.

158 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports legislative approval of general fund appropriations to support
159 operation of enhanced Livestock Research, Training and Consumer Education Centers within the state of Minnesota, with
160 an emphasis on consumer education if based in the metro area.

161 **B3: Estate Tax Exemption and Tax Rate**

162 **WHEREAS**, estate tax law has significant impact on succession planning for dairy operations; and

163 **WHEREAS**, the current federal estate tax exemption and tax rate provide a reasonable framework for the tax
164 treatment of a descendant's assets.

165 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

166 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the continuation of the current federal estate tax exemption and tax rate.

167 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the Minnesota Beginning Farmer Tax Credit to be used amongst immediate
168 family members as well as non-relatives.

169 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports indexing the level of exemption for inflation and continuation of
170 stepped-up bases and provisions for spousal portability in order to provide long-term certainty for estate planning work.

171 **B4: Veterinary Education and Veterinarian Loan Forgiveness**

172 **WHEREAS**, the long-term sustainability of Minnesota's dairy industry depends upon having a sufficient number of
173 veterinarians trained in the care of animals in production agriculture; and

174 **WHEREAS**, partnerships with existing dairy operations which provide opportunities for veterinary students to receive
175 hands-on experience are a practical way to provide training opportunities for veterinarians; and

176 **WHEREAS**, the cost of pursuing a degree in veterinary medicine is placing pressure on veterinary students to
177 pursue alternatives to working in animal agriculture.

178 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

179 **RESOLVED**, the College of Veterinary Medicine should work closely with large scale dairy operations to maintain
180 facilities and programs which allow practical, hands-on experience for veterinary students to work with animals in
181 production agriculture.

182 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that funds be appropriated to provide loan forgiveness for graduates of the School of
183 Veterinary Medicine who practice in Minnesota in the area of food animal agriculture for a period of at least five years
184 following their graduation from the School of Veterinary Medicine.

185 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports federal funding for the University of Minnesota's College of
186 Veterinary Medicine National Center for Dairy Veterinary Education as a National Center of Excellence in Dairy Veterinary
187 Medical Education as authorized by the Federal Farm Bill.

188 **B5: Support for University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Programs**

189 **WHEREAS**, the University of Minnesota Land Grant College provides Minnesota Citizens an opportunity for
190 continuing education through the University of Minnesota Extension; and

191 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota Milk has partnered with Extension in the development and hosting of this convention and
192 other educational events; and

193 **WHEREAS**, the Adult Farm Business Management program within the Minnesota State system provides crucial
194 business management support to dairy producers and the Ridgewater College program provides youth with education for
195 dairy production careers.

196 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

197 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges the Extension to increase animal production agriculture staffing in the University
198 of Minnesota.

199 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges counties to support the satellite offices of the Extension.

200 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges continued support for the Ridgewater College and urges the
201 Minnesota State system to improve and strengthen the Adult Farm Business Management program.

202 **B6: Farm Youth Leadership Programs including 4-H and FFA**

203 **WHEREAS**, the 4-H Program and FFA have successfully served generations of rural youth with practical education
204 and leadership training; and

205 **WHEREAS**, maintaining strong youth programs in Minnesota which focus on agricultural activities is vitally
206 important to preparing the next generation of agricultural leaders.

207 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

208 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports continued state and county funding to maintain 4-H and state and school
209 district funding to maintain FFA Programs throughout Minnesota.

211 **SECTION C: PROVIDING INCENTIVES FOR GROWTH**

212 **C1: Strengthening Minnesota’s Processing Sector**

213 **WHEREAS**, growth and prosperity of the dairy industry is important to the state of Minnesota economically,
214 socially and environmentally; and

215 **WHEREAS**, processing and innovation is critical to a prosperous dairy industry in Minnesota; and

216 **WHEREAS**, dairy farmers and processing partners work together to further success of the dairy industry; and

217 **WHEREAS**, continued growth and advancement of Minnesota’s processing sector provides for strategic growth
218 for making Minnesota a more profitable state for dairy; and

219 **WHEREAS**, insufficient processing innovation and capacity inhibits growth in Minnesota.

220 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

221 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports direct incentives to encourage further innovation and increased milk
222 processing capacity to add value to Minnesota produced milk.

223 **C2: Livestock Investment Grant Program and Access to Capital**

224 **WHEREAS**, private sector investment in dairy farm modernization in Minnesota has not kept pace with
225 investments made by dairy operations in other parts of the nation; and

226 **WHEREAS**, the capitalization of the Livestock Investment Grant Program will encourage investment by family
227 farmers in Minnesota’s dairy industry; and

228 **WHEREAS**, robotics and other technology on dairy farms allows producers to lower their cost of production,
229 making their operation more sustainable.

230 **WHEREAS**, the number of dairy farms in Minnesota continues to decline; and

231 **WHEREAS**, modernization and expansion of the industry is necessary for Minnesota dairy farmers to compete
232 economically with dairy farmers in other states; and

233 **WHEREAS**, many Minnesota dairy farmers lack access to sufficient capital to make the kinds of investments
234 needed to modernize or expand their dairy operations.

235 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

236 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports state funding of the Livestock Investment Grant Program in the amount of
237 at least 40% of total AGRI funding (per year) in order to facilitate modernization of our dairy industry.

238 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports incentives for robotics and other technology within the Livestock
239 Investment Grant Program.

240 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports Livestock Investment Grants awarded in amounts not less than
241 10% of total proposed project costs, not to exceed the current cap of \$50,000, or more for beginning dairy farmers.

242 **C3: Dairy Development and Profitability Enhancement (DDPEP)**

243 **WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Dairy Initiative (MDI) has been the primary focus of the Dairy Development and
244 Profitability Enhancement programs (DDPEP); and

245 **WHEREAS**, MDI has focused on the delivery of technical and financial services to Minnesota dairy farms; and

246 **WHEREAS**, the public investment in MDI helps to retain existing farms and support their ability to modernize and
247 expand; and

248 **WHEREAS**, DDPEP has consistently provided at least a 5 to 1 return on the state's investment thereby adding
249 significant value to the state's \$3 billion dairy industry while serving the farmers of the state; and

250 **WHEREAS**, greater flexibility with respect to the administration of state Dairy Development and Profitability
251 Enhancement Program would authorize the use of state funds for dairy training and research programs.

252 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

253 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports a return to full funding of \$1 million for the Dairy Development and
254 Profitability Enhancement program.

255 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk also supports maintaining funding for the on-farm component of the
256 program (dairy profitability teams) to continue to serve the individual needs of program participants by addressing
257 management issues which prevent participants from achieving their individual business goals.

258 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the program be modified to provide greater flexibility to allow funds to be used to
259 continue MDI activities and/or fund dairy training and research activities.

270 **C4: Federal Farm Program**

271 **WHEREAS**, the enactment of the 2018 Farm Bill supports programs which impact Minnesota dairy farmers,
272 including Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC), LGM-Livestock, Environmental Quality Incentives program (EQIP), and other
273 conservation programs; and

274 **WHEREAS**, the 2018 Farm Bill contains nutrition assistance programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
275 Program (SNAP), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and School Breakfast Program (SBP); and

276 **WHEREAS**, dairy products should continue to be a primary food source in all USDA food assistance programs; and

277 **WHEREAS**, alfalfa and other grass-based forages have a positive impact on the environment.

278 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

279 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges USDA to educate producers about the programs in the 2018 Farm Bill,
280 specifically, DMC and EQIP.

281 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk will work with United States Department of Agriculture's Farm Service
282 Agency and Natural Resource Conservation Services to ensure proper implementation of federal programs on dairy farms.

283 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, the DMC should allow for additional production history for a participating dairy when a
284 family member joins or when an inter-generational transfers occurs.

285 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, the DMC should update base for those who have grown.

286 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports making the Dairy Margin Coverage lower cost for producers to aid
287 enrollment, especially for the equivalent of an every-other day tanker load of milk – about 12 million pounds.

288 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the original feed-cost adjuster into DMC.

289 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the inclusion and federal funding of nutrition assistance programs
290 contained in the 2018 Farm Bill.

291 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports a program which works and acts like crop insurance for milk
292 revenue.

293 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that national dairy policy should encourage domestic and export market growth and
294 consumption of dairy products.

295 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that future farm policy should eliminate the penalty which farmers experience in moving
296 cropland to alfalfa or other grass-based forages.

297 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk work to identify resources to offset any negative repercussions for
298 transitioning to a higher grass based production.

299 **C5: Risk Management Tools for Milk Producers**

300 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota dairy farmers require access to improved tools to help them manage the risks inherent in
301 modern agriculture, including adverse weather and severe market fluctuations; and

302 **WHEREAS**, dairy farmers who do not have access to adequate risk management tools will struggle to obtain
303 financing for their dairy operations.

304 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

305 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the development and implementation of strong risk management tools to
306 protect the financial viability of dairy operations.

307 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports efforts to educate farmers regarding the availability and efficacy
308 of utilizing federal risk management programs.

310 **SECTION D: CREATE THE PREMIER DAIRY INDUSTRY INFRASTRUCTURE**

311 **D1: Infrastructure Needs of Rural Communities and Milk Processors**

312 **WHEREAS**, a vibrant, diverse and growing dairy processing sector is vital to dairy sustainability; and

313 **WHEREAS**, local infrastructure needs such as roads, bridges, utilities, water supply and wastewater facilities affect
314 the ability of milk processors to remain competitive; and

315 **WHEREAS**, ongoing operations and any planned expansion by milk processors located in communities whose
316 infrastructure is inadequate to meet their operational needs will jeopardize jobs and economic impact in Greater
317 Minnesota and dairy farmer sustainability; and

318 **WHEREAS**, state financial assistance is needed to ensure that municipalities can make timely improvements to
319 public infrastructure.

320 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

321 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports funding and incentives to maintain or improve essential local infrastructure.

322 **D2: Safer Roads**

323 **WHEREAS**, employment opportunities in rural agricultural communities often attract a high population of
324 undocumented Minnesota residents; and

325 **WHEREAS**, undocumented Minnesota residents cannot currently receive a driver’s license from the State of
326 Minnesota; and

327 **WHEREAS**, completing proper driver training and successful passage of driver exams will allow undocumented
328 Minnesota residents to be safer drivers in our communities; and

329 **WHEREAS**, the privilege of a license to drive legally in the State of Minnesota would allow undocumented
330 Minnesota residents to have a safe and legal means of transportation for emergency and other purposes, making safer
331 communities.

332 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

333 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports legislation requiring the State of Minnesota to offer a provisional driver’s license to
334 undocumented Minnesota residents when those applicants demonstrate they have automotive and personal injury
335 liability insurance and meet minimum safety or driver training standards.

336 **D3: Competitive Overtime Pay Policy**

337 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota dairy farmers are operating in an increasingly competitive national market; and

338 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota’s neighboring states of Wisconsin, Iowa and South Dakota all recognize and implement the
339 federal farm exemption for overtime payment; and

340 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota farm operations currently pay a stepped-up minimum salary established in state law for
341 agricultural operations; and

342 **WHEREAS**, employers and workers have developed mutually beneficial work schedules using Minnesota’s
343 relatively higher hourly wage rates.

344 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

345 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports legislation which would place Minnesota on par with neighboring states by
346 ensuring that the federal agriculture exemption for overtime pay is the legal standard established in the state and by
347 rescinding the stepped up minimum salary for agricultural workers.

348 **D4: Remedy for Stray Current**

349 **WHEREAS**, a number of dairy herds continue to experience problems with milk production and animal health
350 associated with stray current on Minnesota dairy farms; and

351 **WHEREAS**, a comprehensive solution to this problem must be found through a commitment of Minnesota utilities
352 to address stray current where it exists on their high-voltage transmission or local distribution systems; and

353 **WHEREAS**, other dairy states are working to develop mechanisms to address stray current concerns.

354 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

355 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk work with state utility companies – including rural electric cooperatives – to identify
356 and address stray current conditions.

357 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk opposes legislation that would limit the rights of dairy producers pursuing
358 damages in a court of law for alleged electricity pollution and reduced milk production related to stray current.

359 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk proposes the use of expert testimonies of veterinarians and other dairy
360 industry professionals to support the case in representing the negative and harmful impact produced by stray current.

361 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges further research avenues targeted at identifying solid measurements
362 to accurately represent Minnesota’s diverse dairy industry, for the health and protection of the cattle.

363 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports Dairy Farmers of America policy to determine the quantity of stray
364 current on a producer’s facility by using the value of 125 ohms per cow instead of 500 ohms.

365 **D5: Renewable Energy – Federal and State Policies and Incentives**

366 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota dairies can become significant contributors to our energy supply and to energy self-
367 sufficiency through the continued development of bio-gas, electricity and heat from livestock manure, and other clean,
368 renewable energy technologies.

369 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

370 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the expansion of the state alternative energy production incentive for
371 methane digesters, solar, and small scale wind developments.

372 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports policies and programs that encourage the development and
373 utilization of all sources of ag-based renewable energy resources, including ethanol and biodiesel, that help free us from
374 dependence on fossil fuels.

375 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges the State to establish minimum standards for utility renewable energy
376 production and pricing for net-metering of power which more accurately reflects the cost of generation of power from
377 renewable sources such as on-farm digesters.

378 **D6: Wind and Solar Development Lease and Setback Requirements**

379 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota Milk supports the orderly and safe development of renewable energy; and

380 **WHEREAS**, some developers are presenting lease documents to landowners which are open-ended as to the wind
381 and solar project development timeframe and contain language which would provide interests in the leased property
382 which are more extensive than what is needed to construct a wind project; and

383 **WHEREAS**, some developers are not adhering to manufacturer recommended setbacks for wind turbines and solar
384 panels; and

385 **WHEREAS**, stray current can be a problem for dairy farms.

386 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

387 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports a time limit on wind and solar project lease terms of seven years, by which
388 time a project must have commenced construction or the lease is void, requiring that a new lease be negotiated and
389 executed.

390 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that wind and solar project leases must be limited to real estate interests which are
391 necessary to develop a wind project.

392 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that state site permit standards for wind turbine and solar setbacks be reviewed and
393 modified to reflect at least current manufacturer setback distances.

394 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Minnesota maintain prime farmland.

395 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that wind developers conduct independent pre- and post-development testing for stray
396 current for dairy farms located with a wind and solar project footprint.

397 **D7: Immigration**

398 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota Milk understands the importance of reforming federal immigration policy for the dairy
399 industry; and

400 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota Milk has been working with Minnesota’s Congressional delegation on a reform package
401 that protects Minnesota’s dairy families, their employees and their animals; and

402 **WHEREAS**, the Agriculture Workforce Coalition has undertaken efforts to develop solutions for dairy operations
403 that employ immigrant workers; and

404 **WHEREAS**, the changing demographics across the U.S. clearly show a shortage of qualified workforce.

405 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

406 **RESOLVED**, that immigration reform should be handled at the Federal level and not by individual states.

407 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports a comprehensive immigration reform plan and establishment of a
408 guest worker program to address immediate worker needs.

409 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports implementation of the “AG Card” and Temporary Worker Visa
410 proposals developed by the Agriculture Workforce Coalition.

411 **D8: Employment Under False Pretenses**

412 **WHEREAS**, a central concern of Minnesota dairy farmers is the health and comfort of their livestock; and

413 **WHEREAS**, individual farmers and the dairy industry as a whole can suffer significant economic consequences
414 from findings or even allegations of animal abuse; and

415 **WHEREAS**, opponents of animal agriculture may seek to gain access to farm operations under false pretenses in
416 order to record real or staged instances of substandard animal care.

417 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT:**

418 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk remains vigilant in their commitment to proper animal care.

419 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the enactment of penalties for individuals who would gain access
420 to animal agriculture operations under false pretenses in order to stage and record the mistreatment of animals.

421 **D9: Manure Hoses in Right of Ways**

422 **WHEREAS**, manure hoses provide manure a fast, efficient, safe, and agronomic way to get nutrients to the field; and

423 **WHEREAS**, the state of Minnesota has the right to designate what is and is not allowed in public right-of-ways;
424 and

425 **WHEREAS**, local government powers should be respected, but the benefits to soil, road maintenance, and public
426 safety outweigh a local government trying to make business more difficult to dairy farm.

427 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

428 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports full rights for manure hoses in public right-of-ways with no permitting.

429 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the changes to right-of-way law in 2016 for flex pipes made life better for all
430 Minnesotans and Minnesota dairy farms.

431 **D10: Better Trucking Laws**

432 **WHEREAS**, milk trucks are carrying non-divisible loads that must safely get to a processing plant as soon as possible to
433 ensure a fresh product; and

434 **WHEREAS**, the FAST Act implemented by Congress allows for milk trucks to carry up to 91,000 pounds on federal
435 roads; and

436 **WHEREAS**, milk trucks require flexibility to limit the number of trips while still emptying bulk milk tanks on farms
437 in full due to the rules in the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance; and

438 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota law enforcement officials ticket milk trucks inconsistently over the road and at the milk
439 plant.

440 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

441 **RESOLVED**, that Minnesota conforms to neighboring state laws allowing minimal numbers of milk truck trips to
442 lower milk's carbon footprint.

443 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Minnesota begins regulating milk trucks by axle, combined with bridge safety
444 education, rather than by Gross Vehicle Weight.

445 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the federal government improve animal welfare by allowing more flexibility in long-
446 haul rules for livestock drivers.

447

448

SECTION E: MAINTAIN AND GROW DAIRY MARKETS

E1: Healthy Choices in Schools

WHEREAS, Minnesota Milk believes that the State of Minnesota should support a healthy school environment which improves access to foods which contribute to a healthy diet, such as high quality whole milk, and limits access to those which do not; and

WHEREAS, the availability of high quality milk through various venues in our schools is key to supporting healthy dietary choices; and

WHEREAS, flavored milk is the healthy option for students to choose as a snack or with their lunch, and

WHEREAS, dairy options, including flavored milk, provide students with important nutrients including calcium and Vitamins A and D.

WHEREAS, recently implemented federal school lunch guidelines establish lower limits on caloric intake for students from school lunch programs; and

WHEREAS, the new guidelines are generating complaints from active students and their parents about the adequacy of the modified guidelines in meeting the nutritional needs of at least some children.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:

RESOLVED, that the State of Minnesota encourage the presentation of healthy beverages including high quality whole milk and flavored milk, at competitive prices, in the school lunch line, alongside other healthy beverages sold in school vending machines or school stores throughout the state.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that every effort be made to present milk products in the most desirable packaging and at the most desirable temperature in school settings.

FURTHER RESOLVED, Minnesota Milk will work with other dairy industry interests to reach out to school nutritionists and food service professionals to encourage the expanded availability of dairy products, including flavored milk, in a healthy meals program.

FURTHER RESOLVED, Minnesota Milk supports the adjustment to federal school lunch guidelines to allow for additional offerings of milk and other dairy products to meet the caloric/nutritional needs of active students.

E2: Raw Milk Sales – Public Health and Safety

WHEREAS, milk is an important part of a healthy diet for most Americans; and

WHEREAS, milk is made safe by virtue of certain long established processes including dairy inspections and pasteurization; and

WHEREAS, current state law limits the sale of unpasteurized (raw) milk to on-farm sales; and

WHEREAS, consumers will face increased health risks due to greater availability of raw milk.

480 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

481 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports strong dairy inspection programs and continuation of the current limitations
482 on the sale of raw milk.

483 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Minnesota dairy interests, including the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and
484 cooperative organizations strongly oppose the method of marketing raw milk.

485 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk will work with other dairy industry interests to strengthen and clarify state
486 law to limit the availability of raw milk to on-farm sales.

487 **E3: Opposition to Beverage Container Deposit Legislation**

488 **WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is developing a draft program design for a recycling refund
489 program for beverage containers in Minnesota; and

490 **WHEREAS**, the State of Minnesota currently rates second in per capita recycling among all states without having
491 a recycling refund/deposit program in place; and

492 **WHEREAS**, a recycling refund/deposit program would impose significant costs for both consumers and businesses
493 using beverage containers in Minnesota.

494 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

495 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk opposes the establishment of a recycling refund/deposit program for beverage
496 containers in Minnesota.

497 **E4: State Support for Dairy Research and Market Development**

498 **WHEREAS**, research and market development improves processor efficiencies and increases consumption of dairy
499 products; and

500 **WHEREAS**, state assistance for research and market development for Minnesota's dairy processing sector will
501 provide job growth and dairy producer sustainability.

502 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

503 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges support for research and market development from the state through the
504 University of Minnesota, the Agriculture Utilization Research Institute and other entities, including check-off
505 organizations, to grow a vibrant and diverse Minnesota dairy industry.

506 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk will work with these existing dairy research and market development
507 institutions to ensure coordination and cooperation with research undertaken by the emerging Dairy Research, Teaching
508 and Consumer Education Center.

509 **E5: Fair Milk Price**

510 **WHEREAS**, profitability continues to be a significant problem facing dairy farmers; and

511 **WHEREAS**, there is a significant spread between the retail price of milk and the farm gate price for milk.

512 **WHEREAS**, certain processors are capturing significant margins in the market by means of labeling practices which
513 imply that safe and approved animal treatment technologies are not perfectly safe.

514 **WHEREAS**, certain federal milk marketing order regulations may be distorting milk price discovery and
515 contributing to disorderly milk marketing.

516 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

517 **RESOLVED**, that state and federal policymakers and dairy operators' milk processing partners work to secure a
518 greater proportion of the milk price for milk producers.

519 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the state prohibits unfair or inaccurate labeling practices which increase cost to
520 consumers without providing price benefit to producers.

521 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports establishment of a national system to verify cold storage reports.

522 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the mandatory price reporting regulation be extended to cover 640-lb cheddar cheese
523 blocks, which prices are to be included in calculating the monthly USDA announced cheddar cheese price.

524 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that CFTC (Commodity Futures Trading Commission) should conduct investigation to
525 establish if any processors have engaged in disorderly marketing of barrel cheese on spot CME market with the purpose
526 of reducing USDA announced cheddar cheese price.

527 **E6: Truth in Labeling for Dairy Products**

528 **WHEREAS**, liquid extracted from grains, seeds, beans or leaves of various plants are being processed and marketed
529 as “milk”; and

530 **WHEREAS**, these imitation dairy products are not nutritionally the same as real milk; and

531 **WHEREAS**, the labeling and placement of these products in the marketplace serve to confuse consumers regarding
532 the relative benefits of these products; and

533 **WHEREAS**, it is a longstanding public policy to ensure that consumers receive accurate information regarding
534 products they are purchasing for consumption.

535 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

536 **RESOLVED**, that the term “milk” be reserved for foods that come from mammals.

537 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that non-dairy products be labeled with information to ensure that consumers understand
538 that imitation dairy products do not contain the same nutrient value as real milk.

539 **E7: Fluid Milk Solid Standards**

540 **WHEREAS**, the current fluid milk solid standards are not uniform nationally.

541 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

542 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports a more dynamic pricing system that would appropriately incentivize
543 increasing protein and fat inclusion in fluid milk.

544 **E8: Import Quality and Safety and Export Standards**

545 **WHEREAS**, imported dairy products may not be inspected as stringently as are U.S. dairy products; and

546 **WHEREAS**, an inadequate inspection system may constitute a bio-security risk; and

547 **WHEREAS**, the movement of dairy products in international commerce calls for efforts to ensure that U.S. milk
548 complies with certain minimal production standards; and

549 **WHEREAS**, international trade in dairy products should be governed by fair, reciprocal product standards.

550 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

551 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports federal legislation to increase inspection of imports, enhance tracking, and
552 to ensure that imported products adhere to the same regulations as U.S. products.

553 **E9: Trade Policies**

554 **WHEREAS**, international trade policies have a significant impact on Minnesota dairy farmers.

555 **WHEREAS**, many well-known cheeses trace their origins to Europe, and decades of trade and emigration have
556 increased the familiarity and production of these cheeses beyond that of the historically European geographic region. To
557 the extent that many of these cheeses are known by common food names regardless of the geographic area it is produced.

558 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

559 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the development of trade policies and regional trade agreements that
560 safeguard U.S. dairy production and economics.

561 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, tariffs are extremely harmful to U.S. agriculture.

562 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we specifically oppose including dairy in the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment
563 Partnership (TTIP); such action would result in superseding existing bilateral agreements, such as the U.S./Australia FTA, and
564 open the U.S. market for increased imports of dairy products without gaining any increased market access for U.S. exports.

565 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the goal of U.S. trade policy and future trade agreements should be to expand access
566 to profitable markets for exports of U.S. dairy and other agricultural products.

567 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that U.S. trade policy should limit the efforts of the European Union to gain exclusive
568 geographical indication coverage of many common names of cheeses, many of which, the generic names have been used
569 and recognized throughout the world.

570 **E10: New and Existing Technologies and Products**

571 **WHEREAS**, new and existing technologies and products continue to be researched by Universities and private
572 institutions to improve the safe production of foods including milk; and

573 **WHEREAS**, the consumers are assured of the safety and quality of the food supply by the U.S. Food and Drug
574 Administration and other responsible governmental agencies; and

575 **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Environmental Protection Agency and Food and Drug
576 Administration (FDA) have all confirmed the safety of food and animal feed that contain genetically modified organisms
577 which are made through biotechnology; and

578 **WHEREAS**, dairy farmers are committed to the production of quality, safe milk, excellent care of their animals and
579 the sustainable use of our natural resources.

580 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

581 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the use of new and existing technologies and products by dairy farmers when
582 approved by the responsible governmental agencies.

583 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges processors and marketers of milk to refrain from misleading claims
584 about the safety and quality of milk.

585 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk does not support food labels which would mislead consumers about the
586 safety of biotechnology, erode the credibility of FDA and discourage consumer confidence of new, beneficial technologies;
587 and

588 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that any attempt to disseminate misleading consumer messages denies dairy farmers the
589 freedom to produce and market a quality product.

590

591 **SECTION F: IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH A PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP**

592 **F1: Water Stewardship**

593 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota’s dairy and other farmers are one of the primary stewards of the waters of our state; and

594 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota Milk supports having all waters of the state designated as to their use and a determination
595 made with respect to natural, background, and/or legacy levels of impairments which contribute to TMDLs; and

596 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota dairy farmers propose to actively participate in the TMDL process and the establishment of
597 an equitable fee structure to implement TMDL remedies; and

598 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota voters made clear through their adoption of the Clean Water Amendment in 2012 that they
599 share the goal of more resources being targeted to clean Minnesota waters.

600 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT:**

601 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Center, a formal coalition of
602 farm organizations whose focus is to bring farmers input to the Impaired Waters and TMDL discussion and to help non
603 farmers gain a better understanding of existing practices utilized to protect the waters of our state.

604 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports reasonable, science-based assessments of water quality which
605 take into account modern agricultural practices which limit agriculture’s contribution to groundwater and surface water
606 quality concerns.

607 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk opposes any increase in water fees assessed to feedlots by the Minnesota
608 Pollution Control Agency.

609 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports using Clean Water Amendment sales tax collections to experiment
610 with and improve clean water practices, and to incentivize land owners for water quality practices and compensate for
611 any regulatory taking such as mandatory buffers.

612 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk encourages State Leaders to target sensitive lands and not take fertile
613 cropland out of production, and urge that any programs be voluntary and not permanent.

614 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges that no additional regulation be imposed.

615 **F2: Board of Water Soil Resources Cost Share Program**

616 **WHEREAS**, all Minnesota dairy farmers over 1,000 animal units are already in compliance with state feedlot rules
617 and all producers under 300 animal units must have sought to come into compliance with the state’s feedlot rules; and

618 **WHEREAS**, the expense of coming into compliance should not be borne by dairy producers alone since improving
619 our natural resources is a benefit to all citizens and the cost of compliance adds uncompetitive production costs to the
620 smaller-scale dairy farmer; and

621 **WHEREAS**, the state established the cost share program to assist farmers in making investments in facilities and
622 practices to bring dairy operations into compliance with the feedlot rules, and

623 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota’s Feedlot Water Quality Grant cost share program is administered by the Board of Water
624 and Soil Resources (BWSR); and

625 **WHEREAS**, the Legislature appropriated \$260,000, per year for Fiscal Year 2016 and Fiscal Year 2017 for Feedlot
626 Water Quality Grants which provides competitive grant opportunities for feedlots under 300 animal units, in watersheds
627 where there are impaired waters; and

628 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

629 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges the state to maintain, at a minimum, current levels of funding to allow feedlot
630 operators to come into compliance with state feedlot rules.

631 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the state determines the number and location of dairy operators who are yet to come
632 into compliance with the feedlot rules.

633 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk and State officials work together to facilitate compliance of dairy producers
634 on a realistic timeframe.

635 **F3: Agriculture Drainage Systems**

636 **WHEREAS**, landowners currently experience frustration from the need to interact with numerous state and
637 federal agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands and drainage activities; and

638 **WHEREAS**, landowners experience lack of certainty with regard to wetland definitions and delineations, and a
639 complicated mix of wetland protection laws and wetland restoration programs.

640 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

641 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the development of working agreements between the U.S. Department of
642 Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR),
643 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) that simplify the installation
644 and maintenance of agricultural drainage systems.

645 **F4: Climate Change and Clean Air Act**

646 **WHEREAS**, Minnesota Milk recognizes the climate is changing; and

647 **WHEREAS**, factors impacting climate change are worldwide in scope; and

648 **WHEREAS**, the dairy industry’s carbon footprint per pound of milk produced has been shrinking since 1944; and

649 **WHEREAS**, there is little or no conclusive scientific evidence indicating that particulate matter from farm
650 operations adversely affects public health.

651 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

652 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk urges policy aimed at impacting climate change be resolved on a national and
653 international level.

654 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk calls for the adoption of environmental regulations based on sound science
655 and by means of a transparent process, and that regulations be administered in a practical manner so as to prevent undue
656 hardship for dairy farmers.

657

SECTION G: SUPPORT FOR INDUSTRY EFFORTS

G1: Options for Animal Disposal

WHEREAS, the Food and Drug Administration has developed rules which prevent the rendering of animals over 30 months of age; and

WHEREAS, some County regulations do not allow composting or burial of animals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:

RESOLVED, Minnesota Milk supports having the Board of Animal Health be the leading state agency to set, implement or enforce policies relating to animal disposal practices.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that additional options for disposal of animals must be uniformly available to producers across the state including continuation of financial support through programs such as EQIP.

G2: Care of Animals

WHEREAS, Minnesota Milk supports a vibrant livestock sector and believes in maintaining consumer confidence in the Nation's food supply; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota dairy farmers provide quality care of their animals; and

WHEREAS, the foundation for the care of dairy animals is based on the values and integrity of the dairy farmers whose way of life is dependent upon the health and well-being of their animals; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Milk will participate in initiatives which seek to establish livestock care standards that are based on sound science, economic feasibility and which are broadly accepted in the marketplace.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:

RESOLVED, Minnesota Milk urges its members to provide quality housing, nutrition, husbandry and veterinary care to all animals.

FURTHER RESOLVED Minnesota Milk work with other entities to ensure animal care standards are being met and to educate the broader community, including elected officials, about current animal care practices.

FURTHER RESOLVED, Minnesota Milk opposes initiatives to impose arbitrary animal care standards through statute.

G3: Johne's Disease

WHEREAS, Johne's Disease is a threat and can be detected through testing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:

RESOLVED, Minnesota Milk requests that the state and federal governments provide cost-share funding for the cost of a voluntary testing program with the goal of establishing Minnesota as a Johne's-free state.

688 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the state of Minnesota continue the Johne’s testing program.

689 **G4: US Dairy Sustainability Efforts**

690 **WHEREAS**, the dairy industry is working to provide consumers with the nutritious and responsibly produced products
691 they want, while developing a more sustainable food system for the 21st century and beyond; and

692 **WHEREAS**, dairy farmers are committed to socially responsible, economically viable and environmentally sound
693 practices that promote the current and future health and wellbeing of our consumers, our communities, our employees,
694 our cows, our planet, and our business through leadership in innovation and research; and

695 **WHEREAS** the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy is a collaboration effort of experts from academia, government,
696 nongovernment organizations, as well as professionals from the U.S. dairy value chain whose focus is to measure, improve
697 and communicate dairy’s role in a sustainable food system.

698 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

699 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports the dairy industry’s sustainability commitment through the Innovation
700 Center for U.S. Dairy.

701 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk will provide input and assistance to its members as they work to optimize
702 their production practices and to communicate positive contributions their farm businesses make.

703 **G5: Strategic Alliances**

704 **WHEREAS**, the dairy farmer and their cooperatives must work together to get a fair price for their product; and

705 **WHEREAS**, the cost of transporting milk for processing in the Upper Midwest is considerably higher than in other
706 milk producing regions; and

707 **WHEREAS**, this cost is being paid by the producer -- either directly or indirectly; and

708 **WHEREAS**, enhanced outcomes can be gained through strategic alliances and coalitions.

709 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:**

710 **RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk supports Cooperatives Working Together (CWT) Program which bring cooperatives
711 and farmers together to achieve common goals.

712 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that dairy farmers and milk processing partners continue working to improve hauling
713 efficiencies by every means possible in order to reduce assembly costs.

714 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, Minnesota Milk seek strategic alliances when improved association priority outcomes can
715 be achieved.