



For Immediate Release:
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Representative Warren Petryk Calls on U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to Address Farming Crisis

ELEVA – In recent years, our farmers have faced greater economic hardships than ever before. The enactment of new tariffs on exported dairy products has in some cases dropped dairy income by another 25% on top of already low milk prices. Many farmers are on the brink of losing their farm operations, or selling out to avoid further debt.

As your State Representative for rural Western Wisconsin, lifelong resident, and strong advocate for our farming community, I am calling directly on the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue as well as all of our federally elected officials; both Congressmen and Senators, Governor Walker, the Wisconsin Secretary of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and State Legislators, urging them to also contact the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, and do everything in their power to ask that Secretary Perdue take the necessary steps needed to steady the market for farmers and consumers alike. Our farmers need our help now more than ever.

Here in Wisconsin, our farmers are not only the heart and soul of this great state, but they are an integral part of agricultural production across our nation.

Agriculture alone provides 413,500 jobs or 11.9% of the state's employment. Wisconsin is home to more dairy farms than any other state and ranks number one in cheese production. In 2017, Wisconsin exported \$3.5 billion of agriculture products to 147 countries.

As our farmers buy products, machinery, and supplies in their local area, they provide additional engines of growth to our state economy. Assets security loans to farmers are also at risk when they don't have sufficient funds, which also puts our rural banking economy at risk. In the heart of my Assembly District, the Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery receives a substantial amount of its income from the market conditions set forth on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. This year alone, the Creamery is projecting to lose 300 million dollars in purchasing ability within the state because of the trade challenges that we currently are experiencing on a world-wide scale.

I am hopeful that the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue, will heed our call and take swift action on this serious issue affecting our state and our country to continue our nation's longstanding dedication of providing farm-fresh, nutritious food for Americans in grocery stores nationwide.

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