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Troxler announces $2 million in funds for dairy assistance due to COVID-19 losses

Application period opens Sept. 28 and closes Oct. 12

RALEIGH – Grade A dairy fluid milk producers in North Carolina who suffered losses because of COVID-19 disruptions in the milk supply chain can soon apply for assistance through the COVID-19 Dairy Aid Program 2020. A total of $2 million will be available, with limits on the amount paid to producers.

“The application period opens Sept. 28 and closes Oct. 12, which is a fairly quick turnaround time,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “Grade A dairy fluid milk producers will want to gather their information together now, so they can submit their application easily when the period opens.”

COVID-19 created serious disruptions to the food supply chain, including the state’s dairy industry. Dairy producers and processors across the state and nation lost portions of their market due to COVID-19 mandated shutdowns of K-12 school systems, institutions of higher learning and food service industries. In some cases, milk had to be dumped on farms rather than being sold, which resulted in losses for those farms.

The N.C. General Assembly approved the funding for the assistance, which comes from federal COVID-19 funds earmarked for North Carolina. A dairy study could also be part of the program. The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will manage the program and distribute funds. Eligible producers will be sent a letter next week with further details about the application process.

“The people of North Carolina are grateful that we have a fresh and local supply of dairy products available to consumers and pray that our farmers continue their hard work in safety and good health,” said N.C. Representative Jeff McNeely, one of the advocates for the dairy legislation.

To qualify, fluid milk producers must be inspected by the NCDA&CS Food and Drug Protection Division and qualify for the Grade A dairy program.. Producers will be eligible based on the pounds of Class I fluid milk produced beginning in April.

For more information or for questions, email 2020DairyRelief@ncagr.gov

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