



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC
20250

JUL 24 2005

The Honorable Gordon H. Smith
United States Senate
121 SW Salmon Street, Suite 1250
Portland, Oregon 97204

Dear Senator Smith:

Thank you for your letter of May 25, 2005, to the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations. I have been asked to respond on behalf of the Assistant Secretary. In your letter, you requested that the Department of Agriculture (USDA) give consideration to comments sent in by your constituent, Mr. Orville Roth, of Roth IGA Supermarkets concerning the recommended decision on producer-handlers in the Arizona-Las Vegas and Pacific Northwest Federal milk marketing orders.

USDA appreciates the importance of the issues discussed in Mr. Roth's letter regarding the regulatory exemption of producer-handlers in Federal milk marketing orders. The comment period on the recommended decision closed on June 13. We have received many comments from other interested persons which will be considered thoroughly, along with Mr. Roth's comments, before a final decision is issued.

Thank you for your interest in the Federal milk marketing order program.

Sincerely,

/s/

Kenneth C. Clayton
Acting Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service