



April 28, 2006

Whitney A. Rick
Chief, Promotion and Research Branch
USDA/AMS/Dairy Programs
STOP 0233 – Room 2958-S
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-0233

Re: Comments in Response to Section 610 Review of National Dairy Promotion and Research Program, Federal Register Vol. 71, No. 3; February 28, 2006, Page 9978-9979 [Docket No. DA-06-04]

This letter is written in response to the notice of regulatory review and the request for comments on the national dairy checkoff. I write on behalf of Dairy Farmers of America, Inc. to express our support for the checkoff.

We believe that dairy farmers support a producer-funded checkoff. The dairy checkoff is vital to maintaining and increasing profitability for the farmer and increasing dairy consumption. Since the program began in 1983, total dairy per capita consumption has increased by more than 13 percent according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Under the dairy checkoff, farmers can receive a credit of up to 10 cents per hundredweight for payments made to state or regional dairy checkoff programs. This means that checkoff funds support promotion and research programs which directly benefit farmers at the local level. The ability to contribute to state and regional programs is vital to continued support for the checkoff from the dairy farmer.

Thank you for the chance to convey our thoughts on the checkoff.

Sincerely,

Richard P. Smith
President and Chief Executive Officer

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