

## **Executive Director Report for April 2023**

### **1. OFA's National Organic Dairy Call (3/20, 3/27, 4/3)**

- a. Scheduling meetings with House & Senate members and staffers
- b. Reviewed OV testimony from June 2022 to House Ag Committee and Ed Maltby's testimony of the Organic Dairy Market

### **2. OTA's Dairy Council Meeting (3/29)**

- a. Dr. Sciligo shared the dairy glyphosate study has advanced and testing will be completed in the next several weeks.
- b. The dairy industry is debating reform proposals for the Federal Milk Marketing Orders and changes to Class 1 could disproportionately impact organic producers.
- c. FDA's new guidance on plant-based labeling
  - i. I have not written comments yet but plan to have them done and submitted prior to the due date of 4/24.
- d. Blake Alexandre was elected as Vice Chair of the Dairy Council.

### **3. Farm Bill Task Force Committee (4/4)**

- a. Introductions
- b. Discussed existing House & Senate relationships.
- c. Discussed OTA's Farm Bill Priorities (listed on last month's ED report)

### **4. Rep. Kim Schrier's (chair of Farm Bill task force) visit to Haugen Family Farm (3/17)**

- a. Spent 2 hours talking with BJ about his dairy, WODPA and OFA asks for the Farm Bill
- b. Talked about climate smart initiatives and how it impacts farmers
- c. Asked us to write feedback, opinions and suggestions via email and send them back to her office.
- d. Community meeting was focused more on nutrition and school meals

### **5. Mercaris update**

- a. Example report is attached. This was also sent out in an email to the entire Board on 3/28/2023. This example report is an aggregate of 9 statements that were received.
- b. We have a follow up meeting to discuss the sample report on 4/13 @ 11am.
- c. Please submit every statement to [data@mercaris.com](mailto:data@mercaris.com)

- d. Mercaris is going to provide us with the report and then we can send it out to paid WODPA Farmer Members. Now, we have the control to send this out to the farmers who are paying in to WODPA rather than counting on Mercaris to distribute accordingly.
- e. First quarterly report should be out the first week of May!

**6. ODMAP update**

- a. We have been assured payments will start rolling out at the end of May from your local FSA office. No other information has been released.

**7. Financial Opportunities:**

- a. NRCS invests \$75 million to assist producers transitioning to organic production - <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/news/nrcs-announces-75-million-to-assist-producers-transitioning-to-organic-as-part-of-usdas>
- b. Value Added Producer Grant - [Value-Added Producer Grant: Taking Your Operation to the Next Level - AG Funding Assistance](#)

**8. Reminders:**

- a. Origin of Livestock Rule went into full effect April 5, 2023
- b. Strengthening Organic Enforcement Rule goes into full effect March 19, 2024