

## **Executive Director Report for February 2024**

### **OFA Meeting Updates (12/20):**

1. Legislative Work
  - a. Organic Dairy Assistance, Investment, and Reporting Yields Act of 2023 (O DAIRY Act of 2023)
  - b. “The organic Dairy Data Collection Act”
  - c. “Improved Data Collection for Organic Dairy”

### **OTA Meeting Updates (1/12, 1/26, 2/2, 2/9): Farm Bill Task Force & Farmers Advisory Council**

1. ODMAP
2. Letter to the Editor Campaign
  1. Focused around CIAO (Continuous Improvement and Accountability in Organic Standards Act) - [Continuous Improvement and Accountability in Organic Standards | OTA](#)
  2. Template attached for a letter
  3. Need help with a media outlet to send your letter to? Contact Laura Holm – [lholm@ota.com](mailto:lholm@ota.com) – (202)539-1375
3. Organic Market Development Grant
  1. [Organic Market Development Grant | Agricultural Marketing Service \(usda.gov\)](#)
4. NOSB
  1. 5 seats opening in January 2025 on NOSB. They want to get those filled by October 2024. Currently no dairy representatives on the Board.
  2. Spring 2024 meeting is April 29<sup>th</sup> – diving into the next round of sunset materials.
5. Organic Week Registration
  1. May 14 – 16
  2. Register before February 16<sup>th</sup> to get Early Bird pricing
6. Task Force being created to “Expand Organic Markets”

### **Government Announcements:**

1. Farm Bill: extension includes all orphan programs (cost share, organic data initiative, etc.)
2. DMC Program sign-ups are delayed for 2024

### **Letters, Sign- Ons and Write- Ups:**

1. California Cattle Council Grant 2024 applications are due February 16, 2024
  - a. Working on a grant proposal with Sonoma County Farm Bureau to put on a pilot program for “Cookies and Milk with the Cows (and their Farmers, too!)”

- b. \$15,000 maximum
2. Update on situation at the Point in California (Straus update)
3. Texas A & M Letter of Support (attached)

#### **Mercaris/ Argus update:**

1. Mercaris Milk Statement Survey for Q4 2023 available (attached)
2. Mercaris/Argus collecting statements for Q1 2024
  - a. Send statements to [AgData@ArgusMedia.com](mailto:AgData@ArgusMedia.com)
  - b. All organic dairy producers can submit statements. Only paying WODPA members can see the survey results.
3. Lunchtime Learning to cover End of Year Q4 commodity report and Q4 2023/Q1 2024 Milk Statement Survey – February 13<sup>th</sup> @ 12pm PST

#### **Financial Opportunities:**

1. Applications now open for \$22M Dairy Manure Management Incentive offered by Danone
  - a. <https://www.transformf2c.com/dairy-mm>
  - b. Farmers are encouraged to apply by 2/15 for early bird enrollment but the deadline is March 29, 2024.
2. Organic Dairy Exemption Request Form
  - a. [AMS-15 - Organic Exemption Request Form | Agricultural Marketing Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

#### **Reminders:**

1. Strengthening Organic Enforcement Rule goes into full effect March 19, 2024.
  - a. If anyone is in need of a certifier, please visit [Organic Integrity Database \(usda.gov\)](#)
2. Organic Livestock and Poultry Standards (OLPS) Rule has officially been announced.
  - a. Effective date: January 12, 2024
  - b. Compliance date: January 2, 2025
3. Save the Date: Spring 2024 NOSB Meeting – Milwaukee April 29 – May 1, 2024
  - a. Public comment webinar is scheduled for April 23 & 25
4. OTA's Organic Week
  - a. May 14 – 16, 2024
  - b. [Organic Week 2024 \(swoogo.com\)](#)