

MIDDLEBURY COOPERATIVE NEWSLETTER

2023/Quarter 1

NATIONAL FARMERS

National Farmers Organization (NFO) is a national co-op that works in both the organic and conventional markets for livestock, grain, and dairy. In addition to their own members, NFO works with and markets for multiple organic and conventional co-ops in their Northeast Region, which covers from Maryland to Maine.

Like many co-ops, NFO had been part of DMS, but when it dissolved, they were not given the option to join DFA. As a result, NFO had to forge their own way. After several years of struggle, they were able to make a foothold in the markets & prove themselves to be a reliable supplier for milk.

NFO believes that the more that small co-ops can join together the stronger & more competitive we can be in the marketplace. It also allows for increased hauling efficiency when we can combine our milk on trucks.

MEMBER MEETING

On May 13th we held an open member meeting to discuss our new partnership with NFO. We discussed what this partnership means and what changes our members could expect to see.

There are 2 main changes for our co-op that will be happening. One, NFO will be marketing most of our milk starting with June milk. We have a current contract with Maryland-Virginia for the year that we will be honoring, we also have a contract through Dave Arms that we will be honoring as it does provide us premiums for that milk. The second change is that we will be looking at comingling milk with NFO members, where it makes sense, to make hauling as efficient as possible for both co-ops.

Middlebury will continue to write your milk checks. Our pay structure, quality premiums, volume bonuses, and hauling rates will not be changing.

Marketing Improvements Have Already Started

Of the 4 loads a day that NFO will be responsible for, they already have 3 loads set at premium rates. The 4th load will be on the spot market, but there are several good markets available. We are anticipating a significant decrease in the amount of underclass sales that we have.

"[A] lot has changed in the dairy industry. Because of that, a lot has changed in the way we do business. But, one thing has not changed. National Farmers has been, is, and always will be a strong and effective friend for America's family farmers."
Brad Rach, National Farmers Dairy Division Director

WHO TO CONTACT

You can continue to reach out to Jack and Lesley with any questions that you may have. You can also contact the NFO Regional Director, Don Harnish at 814-386-3880 & dharnish@nfo.org

As always, we will continue to keep you informed of any changes as they happen. We are very excited about this partnership and the opportunities that it opens up for us!