

USDA News

BRUCE SUMMERS APPOINTED AS AMS ADMINISTRATOR

On May 11, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the appointment of Bruce Summers as the Administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), part of the Marketing and Regulatory Programs mission area.

"During his many years at the department, Bruce Summers has earned a reputation for excellence and effectiveness," Secretary Sonny Perdue said. "As the Acting Administrator, Bruce has proved he has the knowledge and steady hand needed to continue leading AMS in their service to American farmers and families. I know that as AMS Administrator, Bruce will build on his great record of success."

AMS administers programs that create domestic and international marketing opportunities for U.S. producers of food, fiber, and specialty crops through voluntary grading, laboratory and quality verification programs. The agency also manages the USDA Market News Service. Federal Milk Marketing Orders are one of many programs administered by AMS.

Summers began at USDA in the Fruit and Vegetable program, working in a number of key leadership roles at AMS for more than 30 years, and most recently serving as acting administrator. He earned a degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Maryland. 🐾

Source: USDA. Press Release No. 0106.18. Available at www.usda.gov.

USDA ISSUES FINAL RULE ON REIMBURSEMENT TO FLORIDA MILK HANDLERS AND PRODUCERS AFFECTED BY HURRICANE IRMA

On May 10, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service announced in a final rule published in the *Federal Register* its adoption of amendments to the Florida Federal Milk Marketing Order (FMMO). The amendments implement a temporary assessment on Class I milk. Revenues collected through the assessment will be disbursed to handlers and producers who incurred extraordinary marketing costs and losses due to Hurricane Irma.

The proposed amendments to the Florida FMMO were approved by eligible producers and were based on the evidentiary record of a public hearing held in Tampa, Florida, December 12 through 14, 2017. In September 2017, Hurricane Irma caused widespread devastation throughout the entire state of Florida, resulting in dairy processing and manufacturing plant closures, store closures, and extensive road closures, cumulatively resulting in negative market impacts for all Florida dairy farmers in the market.

USDA held the hearing on an emergency basis to consider a proposal submitted by Southeast Milk, Inc., Dairy Farmers of America, Inc., Premier Milk, Inc., Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative Association, Inc., and Lone Star Milk Producers, L.C. At the hearing, USDA took testimony and received evidence regarding the proposal. 🐾

Source: USDA. Agricultural Marketing Service. Available at www.ams.usda.gov.