

### USDA ANNOUNCES FINAL RULE REGARDING NATIONAL DAIRY PROMOTION AND RESEARCH BOARD REAPPORTIONMENT

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced a final rule on December 23, 2011, that amends the National Dairy Promotion and Research Order.

The final rule adopts the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board's proposal and therefore representation in Region 1 is increased from one member to two members; Region 2 representation is decreased from eight members to seven members; Region 3 is decreased from four members to two members; Region 8 and Region 10 are combined to create a new Region 10 with two members, and is comprised of Alabama, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia; Region 8 is now comprised of Idaho with two members; Region 12 and 13 are combined to create a new Region 12 and is comprised of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont, with three members.

The Dairy Order provides that the board shall review the geographic distribution of milk production throughout the United States and, if warranted, shall recommend to the Secretary a reapportionment of the regions and/or modification of the number of members from the regions in order to better reflect the geographic distribution of milk production volume in the United States.

The board was established under the Dairy Production Stabilization Act of 1983, as amended, to develop and administer a coordinated program of promotion, research, and nutrition education. The 38-member board is authorized to design programs to strengthen the dairy industry's position in domestic and foreign markets. The program is financed by a mandatory 15-cent per hundredweight assessment on all milk marketed commercially and a 7.5-cent per hundredweight assessment, or equivalent thereof, on milk and dairy products imported into the United States.

Copies of the final rule may be obtained from USDA, AMS, Dairy Programs, Room 2958-S, Washington, DC 202250-0233, USA from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. The final rule is also available on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and the AMS website at [www.ams.usda.gov/dairy](http://www.ams.usda.gov/dairy). ♦

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE EUROPEAN UNION HEALTH CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

On January 6, 2012, the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service issued a four-page document entitled "Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the European Union Health Certification Program."

The five areas addressed in the document include:

- Milk Quality Requirements
- Milk Supplier's Responsibilities
- Derogations
- Review of Records
- Fees

The official EU Health Certification Program document may be found at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5096347>.

If additional questions arise regarding this program, please contact Ken Vorgert, Chief, Dairy Grading Branch at 630-437-5037; email [Ken.Vorgert@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Ken.Vorgert@ams.usda.gov) or Diane Lewis, Director of Grading and Standards Division at 202-690-0530; [Diane.Lewis@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Diane.Lewis@ams.usda.gov).

The Dairy Grading Branch offers certification services to assist in the export of dairy and related products. The Dairy Grading Branch issues these certificates to eligible plants. Eligible plants include dairy plants listed in the Interstate Milk Shippers list (IMS list), the FDA maintained European Union Dairy Plant Reference list (EU list), and Dairy Plants Surveyed and Approved for USDA Grading Service (USDA Approved Plant list). ♦

### USDA INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENT PROJECTS

On January 20, 2012, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that USDA is seeking applications to provide assistance to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to complete a variety of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Funding is available from USDA's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill).

For more details, see USDA Release No. 0019.12 available at [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov). ♦