



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Louise Calderwood
Email: louiseh.calderwood@gmail.com
Phone: (802) 586-2239

Alliance Promotes PRO-DAIRY in Vermont

In late April, Northeast Agribusiness and Feed Alliance (NEAFA) President Andy Dugan and Executive Director Rick Zimmerman were joined by Government Relations Committee Chair Art Whitman and Government Relations Director Louise Calderwood for a series of meetings with Vermont Legislative leaders and agency heads. Secretary of Agriculture, Anson Tebbets, Secretary of Natural Resources, Julie Moore, Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Community Development, Ted Brady, and various legislative representatives joined in discussions about strengthening the health and vitality of Vermont's dairy industry. The primary topic of discussion was making PRO-DAIRY, an education and applied research program, available to all Vermont dairy farmers. "For the past 30 years, PRO-DAIRY has been a tremendous tool for New York dairy farmers," stated NEAFA President Andy Dugan. "It is time that Vermont dairy farmers have access to the same excellent resources to assure that they remain economically competitive with their counterparts throughout the world."

Vermont dairy farm leaders have met several times with the Alliance to develop a proposal to establish PRO-DAIRY educational programming for farm business management, dairy building design and renovation, and dairy animal production and welfare. Secretary Tebbets expressed interest in further developing the PRO-DAIRY concept and the dairy coalition will continue to work with the Secretary as budgets are developed for the next fiscal year. Rick Zimmerman stated, "The Alliance looks forward to ongoing conversations with Vermont government to build PRO-DAIRY technical assistance programming for Vermont dairy farmers."

The Alliance meeting with Secretary Moore provided an opportunity to revisit the role the feed industry has played in addressing water quality in Vermont. President Andy Dugan said "Over the last 30 years nutritionists have reduced the amount of phosphorus in dairy diets, demonstrating commitment to the protection of water quality." Secretary Moore and Alliance leadership agreed to continue building a relationship between state government and the feed industry in a collaborative effort to develop creative measures to reduce the phosphorus load in

Vermont waterways.

The Northeast Agribusiness and Feed Alliance is a 300 member network committed to supporting a thriving northeast agricultural community through advocacy, education and collaboration. Members of the Alliance include feed, seed, fertilizer companies, financial service providers, transportation companies, veterinarians, nutritional services providers, and professional advisors.

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Northeast Agribusiness & Feed Alliance
194 Washington Avenue, Suite 610
Albany, NY 12210

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