



Northeast
Agribusiness
& Feed Alliance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: December 14, 2017
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**Northeast Agribusiness and Feed Alliance
Meets with Vermont Governor Scott
Group Advocates for VERMONT PRO-DAIRY**

The Northeast Agribusiness and Feed Alliance (NEAFA) and leaders in Vermont's dairy industry met with Governor Phil Scott in early December to discuss development of PRO-DAIRY educational programming to support economic development in Vermont's dairy sector. Vermont farmers are fortunate to have access to technical assistance through a variety of public and private resources. Despite the wide range of services available, there is still an unmet need for technical service providers, of the highest possible professional caliber, to assist farmers as they identify, implement, and evaluate changes to their farms.

The group suggested development of a Vermont PRO-DAIRY program, modeled after the Cornell PRO-DAIRY program. For 30 years PRO-DAIRY has linked farmers and agribusiness professionals to critical research and resources, giving them the information they need to build and manage robust businesses. PRO-DAIRY's contributions to educational programming and applied research have helped New York farmers implement practices for efficient milk production.

Harold Howrigan, a dairy farmer from Fairfield, Vermont and president of the St. Albans Cooperative Creamery commented that PRO-DAIRY can facilitate economic development by providing farmers with research and educational programs to enhance farm profitability while advancing dairy producers knowledge, skills and enthusiasm.

Eugene Audet, a dairy farmer in Bridport, Vermont and board member for Agrimark Cooperative Creamery said "UVM Extension has outstanding staff for agronomy and water management, we need the same quality of staffing for other parts of farm management."

Art Whitman, chair of the NEAFA Government Relations Committee explained to Governor Scott the need for Vermont based technical assistance in business assessment, facilities design, and animal management. These topics are closely tied to economic development and environmental stewardship for dairy farm businesses.

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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The Alliance organized a meeting for dairy farmers to explain the value of PRO-DAIRY programming to Vermont Governor Phil Scott. L-R VT Sec Ag Anson Tebbetts, Louise Calderwood Alliance staff, Eugene Audet Agrimark Board, Gov Scott, Art Whitman Alliance Government Relations Chair, Harold Howrigan President St. Albans Coop, Rick Zimmerman Alliance Executive Director.

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