

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE AGRICULTURE , CONSERVATION AND FORESTRY COMMITTEE

IN SUPPORT OF LD 2188

Regarding Legislative review of Chapter 26: Producer Margins , a Major Substantive  
Rule of the Maine Milk Commission

Senator Ingwerson , Representative Pluecker , and honorable members of the standing committee on Agriculture , Conservation , and Forestry , my name is Steve Keene. My Family owns a dairy farm in the Western Maine River Valley town of Canton. I am here to speak in support of LD 2188.

The Maine Dairy Stabilization Program (Tier Program) is vital to the stability of dairy farms in Maine.

Conant Acres is a dairy farm with 4 generations involved in day to day operation , feeding 4 households and have 2 part-time employees. 250 acres of land owned and 100 acres leased is used to grow crops for our farm use and we sell hay and corn silage to other dairy farms and small farms ( beef, horses, sheep) that don't have enough land or equipment to do so on their own. We also built a farm market , on location , a few years ago to sell vegetables , fruits , meats , cheese , and baked goods. Land access for snowmobiling and ATV trails is another thing I'm happy we are able to provide.

The widespread economic impact that dairy farms have is enormous when we think of the businesses we deal with , and the trickle down effect it has on the states economy. Local and state taxes , Insurance dealer , tractor and equipment dealers , Milking equipment dealer , Shavings supplier , feed supplier , veterinarian , hardware store , local farm supply store ,and tire service provider; dairy farms need these to function each year . Each of these businesses also have employees that have families which continues the trickle down.

I am in support of LD 2188 and the Tier Program as I feel that dairy farms are important to our states' economy and Maine's landscape.

Thank you for your time.

Steve Keene

Conant Acres

Canton Maine