



February 5, 2024

Committee On Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
c/o Legislative Information Office
100 State House Station
Agusta, ME 04333

Re: Maine Dairy Stabilization Program

Dear Committee Members & Staff,

We are submitting this written testimony in support of Maine Dairy Farms. As the largest cheese producer in Maine, with the tagline MAINE COWS. MAINE MILK. MAINE CHEESE., Maine's dairy farms are critically important to our business.

Our cheesemaking operation moved in 2018 from New Gloucester to Bangor in part because of the facilities proximity to high quality milk supply. We are growing our cheese volume with customers both in and outside the state of Maine. As this growth continues we will add to the 30 employees already turning great Maine milk into great Maine cheese.

We all need to support dairy, it is more than just supporting our dairy farm families. Supporting dairy supports our communities, our agricultural heritage, our food security and all the jobs serving/supplying dairy farms and the jobs downstream from the farms that bring high quality Maine dairy products to consumers in Maine and out of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James M. Lesser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James M. Lesser

Director of Marketing & Sales