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**DAIRY CHECKOFF ORGANIZATIONS CONSOLIDATE TO BECOME AMERICAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION NORTH EAST — UNITING NEARLY 14,000 DAIRY FARMERS IN A SIX STATE REGION**

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (March 1, 2016) – In February, the dairy farmer leadership of American Dairy Association and Dairy Council, Inc., Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association and Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program voted unanimously to create American Dairy Association North East, effective March 1, 2016.

This week, the American Dairy Association North East corporate board, selected by and representing members of the three organizations, met for the first time to approve bylaws, elect additional officers, and review current programs.

“This consolidation unites two of the top five milk producing states in the United States — New York and Pennsylvania — under a single checkoff umbrella,” said American Dairy Association North East (ADANE) CEO Rick Naczi. “Our priority is to review each organization’s programs and develop a plan that uses the best and most effective business practices of each group. This creates a unified and consistent delivery of programs and provides a greater return on investment for our dairy farm families.”

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ADANE/PAGE TWO

Dairy farmer leadership of the new organization believes that this a positive move for all dairy farmers. “This change will encourage an effective use of dairy farmer promotion dollars and build an expanded go-to-market strategy in today's competitive marketplace,” said Richard Byma, Sussex County, N.J. dairy farmer and American Dairy Association North East Chairman.

“By working together, dairy farmers will have greater collective strength, allowing our staff to better position dairy in schools and among competing foods and beverages,” said Vernon Horst, Franklin County, Pa. dairy farmer and first Vice Chairman of ADANE.

Harold Shaulis, Second Vice Chairman and Somerset County, Pa. dairy farmer added, “More than ever, dairy farmers must be united as we work to re-connect our consumers with where their food comes from and re-establish consumer confidence in dairy.”

American Dairy Association North East will be responsible for promoting dairy and its nutritional benefits to 50-million consumers within a six-state region including New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia and four counties in northern Virginia. This consolidation will solidify the collective marketing strategy and power of more than 13,500 dairy farm families in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

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