



**WDA WESTERN DAIRY
ASSOCIATION**

*Dairy farmers nourishing people and
planet with world-class care.*

October 3, 2011

Dear Dr. Urbina,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Board of Directors (10 dairy farmer and one dairy processor board members) for Western Dairy Association (WDA), the dairy checkoff association (a USDA Qualified program). WDA works on behalf of its dairy farmers in Colorado, Wyoming and Montana, representing 180 dairy farms and 3.25 billion pounds of locally produced milk in the three-state region.

I want to inform you of an important issue regarding the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) Food Day Initiative. This Food Day campaign is being organized by the CSPI and is supported by a list of individuals and groups from around the country. Its six principles mischaracterize and mislead the public on what dairy farmers - as food producers - represent. We are deeply concerned that the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) support such deceptive language about agribusiness, food production and animal agriculture. We find it unacceptable that a Colorado governmental agency has signed on as a sponsor and that the Coalition for Physical Activity and Nutrition (COPAN), housed under CDPHE, solicits support. CDPHE is an agency that has regulatory authority over numerous dairy and agricultural food production practices, and it joins other animal and food activist organizations - i.e. Farm Animals Rights Movement, the Human Society of the United States and the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine – to name a few.

Of concern to Western Dairy Association is the list of "6 Food Day Principles" Food Day organizers have prominently placed on its Web site. Packaged with the list is a form that asks visitors to contact Congress to express support for the principles, which are:

1. Reduce diet-related disease by promoting safe, healthy foods
2. Support sustainable farms and limit subsidies to big agribusiness
3. Expand access to food and alleviate hunger
4. Protect the environment and animals by reforming factory farms
5. Promote health by curbing junk-food marketing to kids
6. Support fair conditions for food and farm workers

While dairy farmers in this region do significantly support and fund work to expand access to food and alleviate hunger - promoting healthy food choices for our kids, value their on farm employees and are the original environmentalists through sustainable farms -- we do not agree with the misleading, mischaracterized language used as follows: "limit subsidies to big agribusiness; protect animals by reforming factory farms; and support fair conditions for food and farm workers." This type of language is deceptive about animal agriculture and food production.

Our dairy farmers and their families dedicate significant time, money and effort providing consumers with healthy and nutritious dairy products in a way that makes the earth and its people economically, environmentally and socially

Integrity Excellence Leadership Collaboration Innovation

12000 Washington St., Suite 175 • Thornton, CO 80241

T: 303.451.7711 • F: 303.451.0411

WesternDairyAssociation.org

better. The dairy industry as a whole is dedicated to providing safe foods that are produced responsibly. In fact, over the past 60 years dairy farmers have reduced its green house gas emissions by over 65% in the United States. Dairy farmers use less land, water, natural resources and fewer cows to supply today's communities with fresh, wholesome, nutritious milk and dairy foods. Today, the entire dairy supply chain comprised of farmers, processors, distributors and retailers continue working together to identify and adopt best and next practices so we can continue contributing to the well-being of people and the earth for generations to come.

As Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper proclaimed publicly, this summer, during our 75th anniversary, "Colorado dairy farm families have sponsored state and national programs to educate consumers about dairy foods and good nutrition. For decades, they have promoted child wellness and nutrition through school and community programs. Their farms have created jobs that nurture economic growth in our rural communities; and their innovative dairy farming practices ensures that they maintain an environmentally and socially sustainable way of life for this and future generations."

In his commendation letter this summer, Colorado Agriculture Commissioner John Salazar held up dairy farmers by stating, "Not only have your operations and management practices put Colorado on the map for excellence in world-class dairy production, your businesses have generated jobs and helped to fuel economic growth in our rural communities."

Food Day will take place on Oct. 24 and is being positioned as "Earth Day for Food." Organizers of the event are claiming that the initiative is supported by influential opinion leaders, nutrition influencers, health organizations, environmental groups, academic institutions, policy makers, legislators, state and local municipalities and agriculture and industry leaders.

Western Dairy Association believes there is an accurate way to talk about the critical importance of food production and its farmers and ranchers dedication, in this region and the United States.

I appreciate your time reading this letter and I ask for your timely response to this matter.

Respectfully,



Cynthia S. Haren
Chief Executive Officer



Brad Pickert
Chairman, Board of Directors

Cc:

- Honorable, Governor Hickenlooper
- R.D. Sewald, Director of Legislative Services, Governor Hickenlooper
- Honorable Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture, John Salazar
- Colorado Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture, Jim Miller
- Wyoming Director of Agriculture, Jason Fearneyhough,
- Montana Director of Agriculture, Ron de Yong,
- Dr. Tony Frank, President, Colorado State University
- Dr. Craig Beyrouy, Dean of Ag, Colorado State University
- Dr. Kevin Pond, Professor and Head, Department of Animal Sciences, Colorado State University
- Larry Jensen, President, Leprino Foods
- Rick Barz, Sr. Vice President, Research and Development, Leprino Foods
- Randy Nab, Director and the Colorado Milk Marketing Board members
- Shawn Pinon, Vice President, Meadow gold
- Charlie Walling, General Manager, Robinson Dairy
- Matt Conner, General Manager, Sinton Foods
- Rob Adamson, General Manager, Meadow Gold, Billings
- Fred Lombardi, Executive Director, Colorado Beef Council
- Terry Fankhauser, Executive Vice President, Colorado Cattlemen's Association
- Bill Hammerich, Chief Executive Officer, Colorado Livestock Association
- Troy Bredenkamp, Executive Director, Colorado Farm Bureau
- Leland Swenson, Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Farmers' Union