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AG DAY MEANS HELPING PA DAIRY FARMERS

Following is a statement from PA State Grange President Wayne Campbell:

National Agriculture Day is a time to celebrate the bounty that is the result of Pennsylvania's farmers and families that toil not only for them but also to feed a hungry nation and a world. But government and individuals must work together to protect it. PA agriculture is not just about food. It is about FAMILY FARMS and a major number of them are in trouble.

The PA Department of Agriculture Center for Dairy Excellence is doing what it can, an example of which was an open forum with dairy farmers in Lebanon County yesterday, March 19. The General Assembly can play an important role too, by ensuring that the State Budget continues to support the work of the PA Department of Agriculture by reinstating the State Budget line item for the Center for Dairy Excellence which is helping our sorely stressed dairy farmers. It was eliminated in the Governor's original Budget proposal. The General Assembly should also work hand in hand with Governor Wolf and his Cabinet agencies to increase dairy processing capacity in the Commonwealth.

But public policy is simply not enough. A big reason dairy farmers are facing hardships now is that there simply is not enough consumption of dairy products. Somehow, the public has conceived the notion that whole milk is bad for kids. Recent studies have simply shown that this is not true. A recent study from the National Institutes of Health studied the impact of whole milk nutritionally on a group of Latino youth. Not only did it document nutritional value, it also demonstrated that whole milk helps curb obesity. Drinking more milk, eating more cheese and yogurt by themselves cannot by themselves restore dairy farmers to financial health. Government should do its part, for example for USDA to allow whole milk to be served to kids in our schools. But something we all can do is to simply drink more milk.

NOTES to Media:

~ **National Ag Day is the first day of spring. It is sponsored nationally by the Agriculture Council of America**, an organization uniquely composed of leaders in the agriculture, food and fiber communities dedicated to increasing the public awareness of agriculture's vital role in our society. The Agriculture Council of America and the National Ag Day program started in 1973.

<https://www.agday.org/AboutUs>

~ **The National Institutes of Health US National Library of Science study mentioned in the statement source material follows:**



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Full fat milk consumption protects against severe childhood obesity in Latinos☆☆☆

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Abstract Consumption of non- or low-fat dairy products is recommended as a strategy to lower the risk of childhood obesity. **However, recent evidence suggests that consumption of whole fat dairy products may, in fact, be protective against obesity.** Our objective was to determine the association between milk fat consumption and severe obesity among three-year-old Latino children, a population with a disproportionate burden of obesity and severe obesity. 24-hour-dietary recalls were conducted to determine child intake in San Francisco based cohort recruited in 2006-7. Mother-child dyads were weighed and measured. The 24-hour recall data was analyzed to determine participants' consumption of whole milk, 2% milk, and 1% milk. The milk consumption data was used to calculate grams of milk fat consumed. The cross-sectional association between milk fat intake and severe obesity (BMI \geq 99th percentile) was determined using multivariable logistic regression. Data were available for 145 children, of whom 17% were severely obese. Severely obese children had a lower mean intake of milk fat (5.3 g vs. 8.9 g) and fewer drank any milk (79% versus 95% for not severely obese children ($p < 0.01$)). Among the potential confounders assessed, maternal BMI and maternal marital status were associated with

severe obesity and were included in a multivariate model. In the multivariate model, higher milk fat consumption was associated with lower odds of severe obesity (OR 0.88 CI 0.80-0.97). Higher milk fat consumption is associated with lower odds of severe obesity among Latino preschoolers. These results call into question recommendations that promote consumption of lower fat milk.