

Task Force to Revitalize the Vermont Dairy Industry

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Questions for Vermont Horizon Organic (Danone) Farmers Testifying September 13, 2021

1. Introductory information about your farm

- How many cows do you milk, and dry stock?
- How many acres do you farm; meadow and pasture; how much woodland?
- How long have you been organic? Have you always been with Horizon Organic?
- Other info about the farm?

2. Farm income and sustainability

- When did Danone inform you that they were terminating its contract with you?
- Did Danone follow the requirements for termination in the contract?
- What do you plan to do once the Horizon Organic contract is terminated next year?
- What was your cost of production over the past 5 years?
- What has been the price for milk you received from Horizon Organic over past five years? What was the previous highest price you received from Horizon Organic?
- Have you always operated under a contract?
- Do you have income from forest land; maple; other farm products?
- Do you have off-farm income; do other household members have off-farm jobs?
- Is the price paid for your milk the biggest challenge you face for farm sustainability?
- What other challenges are you facing as a farm -labor availability, equipment servicing, other?

3. Farm Management and Innovation

- How do you integrate risk management programs into your farm? What programs do you use (FSA, Crop Insurance, VHCB, UVM Extension, private contractor)?
- Has risk management helped? How? Does it outweigh the cost or vice versa?
- Do you participate in the Dairy Margin Coverage Program? At what level? Has it helped?
- What would you like to do to improve your farm operation if you could?
- What innovations in barn and field have you employed in past ten years?
- Have you installed efficiency measures, such as a variable speed pump?
- Have you installed a solar array or solar hot water?
- What can the state do to help you take more innovative steps, if you wish?

4. State Water Quality Improvement Programs

- Which State Water Quality Improvement Programs do you participate in; what suggestions do you have for their improvement?

5. New Task Force State Action

- What 3 issues should the Task Force address, and what new legislative action to address these issues should the Task Force propose?