

Name of State Agency
Agency Address
Agency Phone and FAX numbers
URL for Agency Website

Date

Greetings,

Over the last 18 months, the **State Department of Agriculture** (**Agency abbreviation**) has continued its efforts to support **State** dairy farms during emergencies by completing face to face farm readiness surveys with the owners of approximately 600 commercial farms in the state. Through these interactions, **Agency** has been able to obtain important information that may be used in the future to help maintain fluid milk movement and continuity of business for **State** dairy farms during a Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak. In addition to this focused benefit, the 911 address, emergency email and cell phone contact information that has been collected for surveyed farms will better enable **Agency** to issue emergency notifications and provide needed assistance to **Agency** farmers during all hazards emergencies (floods, winter storms, power outages).

You are receiving this letter and the enclosures because we have not been able to connect with you to gather the information needed to provide assistance to your farm during all hazards emergencies and to prioritize your ability to ship fluid milk during a FMD outbreak that would otherwise stop all such movements.

We are requesting that you complete the enclosed survey and return it to **Agency in the self-addressed envelope no later than **Date**.**

There are two main targets for improvement through this survey:

- 1) Communication. As experience with hurricanes and other major weather events have repeatedly demonstrated, **Agency** requires complete and reliable farm contact information. We also seek to learn enough about each operation to anticipate the kind and scale of support that could be required.
- 2) Biosecurity. Experience with outbreaks of FMD in the United Kingdom, Japan, South Korea and Uruguay has indicated that farm survival depends on readiness to establish effective barriers to infection on very short notice. **Agency** will be better able to help farms continue operations (e.g., provide emergency permits for milk movement) with assurance that protective measures can and will be in place.

These preparations in **State** and New England are helping to set the national standard for continuity of business planning for the dairy industry. We acknowledge that **State** dairy farmers have received a number of requests to complete surveys in the recent past, and we expect that there may be some "survey fatigue" out there. However, we urge you to take a few minutes to answer the survey questions so that we may help you protect your substantial business investment and livelihood in the event of a highly contagious disease outbreak or other emergency.

Following are some tips for completing the survey:

1. It should be completed by the owner or other decision maker on behalf of the farm rather than by a farm employee.

2. In the Contact Information section of the survey, the “Address (where the cows are milked)” block under “Farm” should be the **physical address of where the cows are milked** rather than a mailing address or P.O. Box for the owner or farm point of contact.
3. In the Contact Information section of the survey, the Address block for “Primary Farm Contact in an Emergency” should be the **mailing address for the owner or other primary point of contact**.
4. The last part of the survey is the “Readiness” section, and choices for answers in this section are “yes”, “not now but possible” and “no, impossible”. Please pick the one best answer that applies to your business. For instance, if the survey asks whether you have a functional wash station, and you do not but could create/acquire one within 48 hours of when you are notified that it is needed, then answer “not now but possible”. If creating/acquiring a wash station is not likely to be possible now or in the immediate aftermath of being notified of an emergency, then answer with “no, impossible”. If you have one now, then answer “yes”.
5. Please record an answer for every question. If you do not know an answer, state that. If your answer to a question is 0 or none, then write that in rather than leaving it blank. If a question is non-applicable to your business, then please write N/A or the equivalent.
6. There are no wrong answers to this survey. Completing the survey accurately will help us help you during an emergency that impacts your livelihood.

Agency recognizes the contribution that your business makes to the state of **State**, and we are doing our best to prepare to protect your investment during emergency events that may threaten it. Although completion of this survey is not mandatory, we encourage you to take 20 minutes to provide the requested information so that we may efficiently offer assistance to you when needed.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and if you have any questions or concerns about the information, please feel free to contact the **Agency** office at **phone number**.

Sincerely,

Name
State Secretary of Agriculture

Name
State State Veterinarian