

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATIONAL FARMERS ORGANIZATION
Corning, Iowa
March 15, 1967

The National Board of Directors of the NFO has called a milk holding action. The holding action went into effect at 4 p.m. CST Wednesday, March 15, 1967.

NFO members in 25 states have been notified that the NFO is advising its members to hold for a 2 cent quart increase in price or \$1 per cwt. increase in price at the farm level in all areas.

In a statement released by the NFO national board of directors, the NFO said the situation in dairy farming is desperate because dairy farmers are only receiving 8 to 10 cents a quart for milk at the farm level in most areas. This is causing them to leave the farm in great numbers. In the dairy state of Wisconsin alone, 84 dairy farmers have been quitting each week. This really threatens the future milk supply of America.

The NFO said farm prices have been dropping and farmers are the forgotten people in the economy. "Our prices must be raised so they will be equal to wages received by workers and to the profit level of industry," commented NFO President Oren Lee Staley.

He said the calling of the milk holding action is only part of the NFO's efforts to lead the fight for higher prices on all farm commodities.

The NFO said farm prices have been on a general decline since 1952 with the exception of a few periods of increases and have lagged far behind the rest of the economy. "This situation must be changed and only farmers themselves can do it," the NFO President said.

"A holding action is a pricing action. It is simply farmers putting a price tag on their products in the same manner everyone else prices the products they have to sell. We are not trying to deprive the consuming public of food. We are only trying to get a fair price for dairy farmers, the NFO said.

404287

NATIONAL FARMERS ORGANIZATION
Corning, Iowa
March 15, 1967

Staley said "Our products will be for sale at a fair price and for contracts. The NFO has done everything possible to avoid calling a milk holding action. We have been trying to get buyers to pay a fair price for milk but we are convinced that we would still be talking 10 years from now and not get a single penny increase in price for the farmers unless we take direct action."

"Therefore", he said, "the NFO has an obligation as a farm organization leading the fight for better prices to give farmers the opportunity to do something about their problem. Really, farmers have no other choice other than to hold their products to get a fair price."

"We want to stress that this is a business action," Staley continued, "It must be carried out in an atmosphere of calmness. And it is our hope that those opposing our efforts will perform in the same manner. We are giving farmers an opportunity to do something for themselves. The action is voluntary. Therefore it is up to the farmers whether they want to do something for themselves or whether they want continued low prices. Farmers own their own products first and if they do not put a price tag on them, nobody else will do it for them."

The NFO said that milk holding action meetings will be held in every organized NFO county in the 25 state area extending from New York to Idaho and from the Canadian border to Florida, every night while the holding action is in effect except Good Friday and Sundays.

404288