



**For Immediate Release**  
Aug. 1, 2008

**Contact:** Jayne Sebright, 717-259-6496  
[c-jsebrigh@state.pa.us](mailto:c-jsebrigh@state.pa.us)

## **SECRETARIES, COMMISSIONER RENEW SUPPORT FOR NORTHEAST DAIRY LEADERSHIP TEAM**

*Industry Collaboration Hallmark of Organization's Accomplishments*

**HARRISBURG** – Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Dennis Wolff, New York Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker and Vermont Secretary of Agriculture Roger Allbee have renewed their support for the Northeast Dairy Leadership Team, an alliance initiated by a memorandum of understanding signed among the three state departments of agriculture in 2006.

The leadership team was created to establish a vision and promote profitability for the region's dairy industry. More than 50 leaders representing all facets of the dairy industry in the three leading northeastern dairy states – New York, Pennsylvania and Vermont – are part of the organization. The three states' agriculture departments and Centers for Dairy Excellence fund the Northeast Dairy Leadership Team's activities.

“Working as a region has been instrumental in helping to establish a new dairy policy, a stronger safety net, expanding forward contracting, and developing a new dairy revenue insurance program,” Secretary Wolff said about the issues that were integral parts of the federal farm bill debate.

The Northeast Dairy Leadership Team recommended nine issues for discussion in the farm bill. This collaborative effort had a positive affect on dairy policy, as eight of the nine areas were included in the farm bill.

“By coming together as a region, we have a greater opportunity to educate consumers on food safety, animal welfare and what we do as dairy producers everyday,” said Wolff.

“The relationship between our three states has been very positive, and has helped expand programs like the dairy profit team program first from Pennsylvania to New York and now into Vermont,”



said Vermont Secretary of Agriculture Roger Allbee. “We need to use the effort to embrace environmental stewardship and energy-related issues.”

“We see tremendous value in this effort, particularly through the exchange of ideas,” said Commissioner Hooker at the leadership team meeting in July. “With fewer people involved in the dairy industry, we all need to treat each other with a level of deference and respect, which is what I see at these team meetings.”

For more information about the Northeast Dairy Leadership Team, log onto [www.centerfordairyexcellence.org](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org) and click on “Industry,” then on “Regional Industry.” Scroll down to the NEDLT section or call your state representative. In New York, contact Mark Kenville at 315-453-3823. In Vermont, contact Diane Bothfeld at 802-828-3835. In Pennsylvania, contact John Frey at 717-346-0849.

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*The Center for Dairy Excellence is an initiative of the Department of Agriculture and was launched in January 2004 by Governor Edward G. Rendell. Bringing together people from more than 40 different dairy organizations in Pennsylvania, the Center’s mission is to enhance the profitability of the dairy industry by empowering people, creating partnerships, and increasing the availability and use of resources. Learn more about the Center at [www.centerfordairyexcellence.org](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org).*