

Rep. Peter Welch today led a successful effort in the House Agriculture Committee to defeat an amendment to strike a key dairy reform provision from the pending Farm Bill. The provision, known as supply management, will help struggling Vermont dairy farmers cope with dramatic swings in milk prices. It was developed at the grassroots level by Vermont dairy farmers, working with farmer colleagues around the country.

The House Farm Bill is being considered all day today and into this evening by the House Agriculture Committee. Welch, a member of the Committee, led the effort this morning to defeat an amendment that would have stripped the supply management provision from the bill. The amendment was defeated by a vote of 29-17. Working with Vermont dairy farmers, Welch orchestrated an intense lobbying effort over the last week to convince Committee members to preserve the program.

Supply management would replace the existing MILC safety net program, which expires October 1, 2012. The new approach will allow each farmer to voluntarily buy insurance that pays out when the margin between the price the farmer is paid, and the cost of producing milk, drops too low. Each farmer can choose whether, and how much of a margin, to insure, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture will provide the insurance at a lower cost for the first four million pounds of milk -- about the annual production of 200 to 250 cows.

In his remarks preceding the vote, Welch appealed to Committee members for their support, citing the daily struggles facing Vermont dairy farmers, as well as dairy farmers in their districts.

Video of Welch's remarks can be seen [HERE](#) or by clicking the video below.

A final Committee vote on the Farm Bill is expected late tonight or early tomorrow morning. The bill will next be considered by the full House of Representatives. A similar supply management provision was included in the Senate passed Farm Bill and strongly supported by Senator

Welch leads successful effort to protect crucial dairy reform provision

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Patrick Leahy, a senior member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and Senator Bernie Sanders.