



May 29, 2019

Administrator Martin Barbre  
Risk Management Agency  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Administrator Barbre,

On behalf of the Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative and over 800 Midwestern dairy farmer members, I am writing you today to ask the Risk Management Agency to consider moving the allowable cover crop harvest date in the prevented planting program up for this year to ensure that dairy farmers will have access to adequate feed for this year. The challenges this year's weather has posed to our ability to meet the forage needs of our cattle, combined with the stressed economic climate dairy farmers have been operating in warrants an exceptional consideration of moving the harvest date this year.

Many of our dairy farmers are facing some of the wettest conditions we have seen in years and do not know whether they will be able to plant the crops they need to feed their cattle this season. One available option for farmers who will not be able to plant until well after the late planting period is planting cover crops to fulfil their forage needs. However, due to the existing November 1 harvest date on prevented plant acres, Midwestern dairy and livestock farmers will lose out on the opportunity to fully utilize those cover crops for feed. After a winter where harsh weather damaged the alfalfa crop, these cover crops are even more important.

Allowing for additional flexibility this harvest season is one small way the RMA can help give dairy farmers the confidence that they will have adequate feed for the winter. It is our hope that the RMA will strongly consider the available legal options to move the allowable cover crop harvest date up to a more feasible timeframe so our farmers can take full advantage of the prevented planting program and utilize the cover crops they are able to plant for feed for their cattle. Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative and our dairy farmer members appreciate the Agency's attention to our concern and look forward to hearing from your office.

Sincerely,

Brody Stapel  
President  
Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative