

August 18, 2026

Dennis Rodenbaugh  
President and CEO  
Dairy Farmers of America  
1405 N. 98<sup>th</sup> St.  
Kansas City, KS 66111

Dear Mr. Rodenbaugh,

We were deeply concerned to learn of Dairy Farmers of America's (DFA) decision to idle its St. Albans, Vermont milk processing plant and close the adjoining St. Albans Creamery & Supply store. This decision will have a devastating impact on your workers, their families, Vermont dairy farmers, and the entire St. Albans community. To make matters worse, the timing of this decision following a recent union contract renegotiation raises concerns that idling the plant appears to be an attempt to illegally union-bust and set an example of the approximately 80 Vermonters represented by Teamsters Local 597.

For generations, DFA's St. Albans plant has been an integral part of St. Albans and Franklin County. Since 1919, this facility has processed milk from dairy farms across Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York. It has been an important part of Vermont's dairy economy and a critical source of good-paying jobs that workers are proud of.

These workers recently stood together to exercise their legal right to strike as they fought to negotiate a fair union contract. After a monthslong bargaining process and a nearly two-week long strike last year, the St. Albans workers ratified a contract with DFA in October 2025. At the time, DFA touted this contract as "support[ing] our employees and their families with competitive wages and benefits, while also ensuring the long-term success of our farmer-owners, their Cooperative and the consumers across Vermont we serve."

Now, less than a year later, these workers are being told that the facility where they work will be idled and their jobs will disappear. While workers, farmers and community members are left searching for answers and security, DFA instead is refusing to meaningfully engage and provide transparent rationale for its decision to idle the plant. Without a sufficient explanation, it would be reasonable to conclude that the decision to idle the plant is illegal retaliation for last year's strike. That is unacceptable.

At a time when working people are already struggling to afford housing, food, healthcare, and other basic necessities, losing a good-paying job can be devastating. And at a time when Vermont's family dairy farms are already facing enormous economic pressures, losing an important piece of the processing infrastructure that connects those farms to markets creates another serious challenge. We are very concerned that Vermont dairy farmers were not consulted before this decision and will face even steeper costs as a result of this idling.

DFA has a responsibility to the workers, farmers, and community members who have built and supported this facility for generations. That responsibility means making sure the constitutional rights of your workers to unionize and collectively bargain are fully respected. It means recognizing the impact this decision will have on Vermont's dairy farmers. And it means being transparent with your workers, farmers and the people of St. Albans about why this decision was made and what DFA intends to do to mitigate its consequences.

Mr. Rodenbaugh: Do the right thing. Reverse your decision to idle the St. Albans plant and creamery. Ensure dairy farmers do not face yet another cost increase on their balance sheets. Protect Franklin County's agricultural economy. Respect your workers' constitutional right to collectively bargain. Meet your workers at the bargaining table to provide transparency for this closure and reach a fair agreement with Teamsters Local 597.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



BERNARD SANDERS  
UNITED STATES SENATOR



PETER WELCH  
UNITED STATES SENATOR