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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 3, 2008

DBA Pleased with DNR's Air Emissions Extension

MADISON - On February 27, 2008, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) board members unanimously approved NR 445, thereby extending the enforcement date of rules that might have required livestock producers to invest significant amounts of revenue on untested practices or equipment which may not have met compliance under these new state and federal air emissions standards.

NR 445 will govern air emission standards and practices to help reduce excessive odors emitted by livestock operations. Originally scheduled to take effect in July of 2007, the DNR board voted to extend the implementation date of these new rules to July of 2010. The delay will allow the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state DNR the time they need to complete ongoing studies related to the rule.

"The passing of the NR 445 extension by the DNR board will allow for air emissions regulations to be based on scientific findings, which will help formulate best management practices and systems and efficiently reduce odors generated by farming operations in Wisconsin with the least effect on producers' bottom lines," said Laurie Fischer, executive director of the Dairy Business Association (DBA).

Several dairy producer-members of DBA and DNR staff testified at the board's January hearing, asking for an extension to the rule. They requested that more time be allowed to finish state and federal research studies. With Wisconsin's "Dairy and Livestock Odor and Air Emission Project" and the EPA's "National Air Emissions Monitoring Study," proven methods of collecting data will be available to estimate the emissions from individual livestock operations using standardized methods that can be compared with government regulatory thresholds. The data will help both the DNR and EPA construct an "agriculture strategy" to outline steps for reducing farm air pollution and determine what information is needed to define and support feasible regulations for air emissions in the nation.

"The Natural Resources Board is to be commended for understanding the need for delaying the rule. It will prove to be a win-win solution," added Fischer.

The Dairy Business Association is an industry organization comprised of dairy producers, corporate and allied industry supporters. DBA promotes the growth and success of all dairy farms in Wisconsin by fostering a positive business and political environment. For more information about DBA, please visit our website at www.widba.com.

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