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October 7, 2020

John J. Mulligan
Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
1000 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Dear Mr. Mulligan:

The Dick Van Dam Dairy in Southern California is a supplier of Dairy Farmers of America, whose products include the DairyPure and TruMoo brands sold at Target stores nationwide. A recent [undercover investigation](#) at the Dick Van Dam Dairy revealed egregious abuse, documenting newborn calves in need of veterinary care left to die and decompose in pens alongside mother cows, and cows being routinely kicked, punched, and jabbed with splintered canes and metal pipes.

Target's [Food Animal Welfare and Antibiotics Policies](#) state that the company believes every animal deserves to be "[f]ree from discomfort ... pain, injury or disease ... [and] fear & distress." The policy further stipulates that Target's dairy vendors are expected to adhere to The National Dairy [Farmers Assuring Responsible Management \(FARM\)](#) Program. According to its animal care guidelines, FARM decertifies dairies that engage in egregious willful mistreatment of animals, including inflicting unnecessary and/or malicious, pain, suffering, or injury.

These abuses were observed and documented repeatedly during the course of the two-month investigation, making it clear that they represent not isolated incidents, but a routine practice of abuse and neglect caused by management of the Dick Van Dam Dairy.

Specific abuses documented during the investigation include:

- Cows being jabbed in the face, legs, and udders with splintered wooden canes and metal pipes by workers
- Cows being kicked and punched by workers
- Cows being poked in the eyes by workers
- Ailing newborn calves being left to die without any treatment provided, their bodies then left to decompose in pens alongside mother cows
- Workers twisting cows' tails so hard that the bones broke
- Workers slamming metal gates on cows
- Workers repeatedly hitting "downed" cows — those too sick, weak, or injured to stand — as the cows tried to crawl away in fear
- Workers improperly using machinery to lift downed cows by their hips, suspending them many feet above the ground, before lowering them and leaving them in the dirt to die
- Injuries and infections in cows' udders, which caused pus to seep from the udders and even turned milk pink with blood, necessitating that it be discarded by the dairy


These abuses are in direct violation of Target's corporate policy. **Accordingly, the Animal Legal Defense Fund, and its more than 300,000 members and supporters, urge Target to remove all Dairy Farmers of America products from its shelves**, DairyPure, TruMoo, and all other Dairy Farmers of America products from its shelves until Target conducts an independent investigation of the Dairy Farmers of America's entire supply chain through spot checks and surprise inspections to ensure suppliers comply with your corporate policy. The Animal Legal Defense Fund is happy to assist your inspectors during this process.

Merely ensuring Dairy Farmers of America permanently terminates its relationship with Dick Van Dam Dairy is insufficient. Dairy Farmers of America [states](#) it "act[s] ethically in all matters without exception" and is "passionate about...the animals [they] care for." The inclusion of Dick Van Dam Dairy in its supply chain calls into question its ability to meet these standards.

Your customers expect that products sold in Target adhere to the company's own stated animal welfare policies. Please respond by October 12, 2020 to ensure this matter is handled speedily.

I look forward to speaking with you.

Best,



Elizabeth Putsche

Communications Director
Animal Legal Defense Fund

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CC:

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