March 18, 2024

Mary Anderson

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

1410 North Hilton Street

Boise, Idaho 83706

Re: Gem State Air Quality Initiative

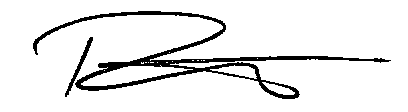
Dear Mary Anderson,

The Idaho Dairymen’s Association (IDA), which represents all of Idaho’s over 350 family-owned dairy farms, is in strong support of the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality’s (IDEQ) Gem State Air Quality Initiative (GSAQI) grant proposal. IDA is a member of the Innovation Center for US Dairy, which has set an industry goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. The GSAQI would help to facilitate the implementation of on-farm technologies and practices that will reduce carbon emissions and help Idaho dairymen be part of achieving this ambitious goal.

Furthermore, IDEQ has been a great partner for Idaho’s dairy industry through the administration of the state’s CAFO Improvement Fund grants, which provide cost share funding for manure related projects on Idaho CAFO operations. The efficient and thoughtful administration of the program by IDEQ has facilitated Idaho dairymen’s desire to apply for cost share funding. If the GSAQI is funded, IDA will work closely with IDEQ to encourage participation from Idaho’s dairymen. Together, we have a track history of success, procuring nearly 70 applicants for shovel ready projects with Idaho’s CAFO Improvement Fund over the past two years. The funded projects from those applications have implemented nearly $40 million in conservation projects, with $28 million coming from the CAFO owners.

We believe the GSAQI, and its focus on agriculture, will be one of the best investments the Environmental Protection Agency can make in reducing carbon emissions. We have proven successes in our public and private partnerships in Idaho and will work collaboratively and swiftly to implement new practices and technologies that will reduce carbon, often in the form of methane, which provides even more impactful reductions than just carbon alone.

Sincerely,



Rick Naerebout

Chief Executive Officer

Idaho Dairymen’s Association, Inc.