



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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### **Prairie Farms Dairy and Swiss Valley Farms Merger Approved**

CARLINVILLE, Ill., (February 7, 2017) – Prairie Farms Dairy and Swiss Valley Farms announced today that members of both cooperatives have approved the proposed merger with overwhelming support. Both companies are industry-leading farmer-owned cooperatives and rank among USDA's list of Top 100 Cooperatives. The merger agreement was originally announced late last year, and is expected to close on March 31, 2017.

"We had a great business relationship with Swiss Valley for many years, and are pleased to have reached this important milestone. Much has changed since our cooperative was founded in 1938, and the merger reflects our purpose, which is to generate sales and profit for our cooperative members," said Ed Mullins, Prairie Farms CEO. "Consumption of fluid milk, our core product, has been declining for years, while cheese consumption has increased nearly 150 percent since 1975. The complementary nature of Swiss Valley's product line will help counter this major shift. At the same time, Swiss Valley is looking to grow their export business, and with the merger, they will gain access to many Prairie Farms products, such as extended shelf life milk and cream," he added.

The combined company will operate under the name of Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc., and both organizations will retain their brand names, Prairie Farms Dairy and Swiss Valley Farms, respectively. The company will remain under the direction of Prairie Farms CEO Ed Mullins. Chris Hoeger, former CEO of Swiss Valley, will continue with the company as President of the newly formed Prairie Farms Cheese Division.

**Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc.** is one of the largest and most successful dairy cooperatives in the Midwest, with over 600 farm families, 5700 employees, 35 manufacturing plants, over 100 distribution facilities and annual sales of over \$3 billion. Prairie Farms is a nationally recognized leader in the dairy industry and is known for setting the standard for milk flavor innovations and producing award winning milk and dairy products. With headquarters in Carlerville, Ill., Prairie Farms distribution footprint covers over 30 percent of the United States; products are available in grocery chains, mass merchandiser stores, club stores, convenience stores, dollar stores, drug stores, schools, food service outlets and warehouse distribution centers. Prairie Farms charitable giving program, [Our Caps, Your Cause](#), supports a variety of non-profit organizations. [Prairiefarms.com](http://Prairiefarms.com)

**Swiss Valley Farms**, headquartered in Davenport, Iowa, is a division of Prairie Farms Dairy Inc., with five cheese production facilities that manufacture award-winning Swiss, Baby Swiss, Blue, Gorgonzola, Cream Cheese, Neufchatel, Gouda and Sweet Whey. Swiss Valley also produces pasteurized process cheeses, cold pack club blends, enzyme-modified cheeses and cheese analogs. Swiss Valley operates two subsidiary companies - Rochester Cheese and Caves of Faribault. In a joint venture with Emmi-Roth, Swiss Valley Farms also co-operates White Hill Cheese Co., LLC in Shullsburg, WI. Swiss Valley Farms has 400 dairy producer members in Iowa, Wisconsin, Northern Illinois and Southern Minnesota. [swissvalley.com](http://swissvalley.com)



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