The Milk with Dignity Program brings together farmworkers, farmers, buyers and consumers to secure dignified working conditions in dairy supply chains. The Program enlists the resources of food industry leaders to provide a premium for milk to participating farmers who agree to work towards compliance with the labor standards in the Milk with Dignity (MD) Code of Conduct. The premium helps offset farms’ costs of compliance with the Code and rewards farms that comply.

In the MD Program, compliance on the farm is achieved through a unique partnership and problem-solving approach among farmers, farmworkers, and the Milk with Dignity Standards Council (MDSC). The MDSC is an independent non-profit whose sole function is to work with farmers and farmworkers to understand, participate in, and achieve compliance with labor standards in the Code.
Operationally, the MD Program is rooted in the MD Code of Conduct. The Code is created by the very workers whose rights it is intended to protect and is further improved on through an intensive feedback loop from participating farmworkers and farmers in the MD Working Group. The Code sets standards for working conditions relating to wages, health and safety, housing, schedule and rest, non-retaliation, non-discrimination, and other labor conditions.

Participating Farmers are paid a premium for agreeing to:

- Work with MDSC and workers to comply with the MD Code of Conduct’s labor standards;
- Support program education to ensure workers understand their rights and responsibilities;
- Allow workers to access MDSC support line and work with MDSC to resolve complaints;
- Collaborate with MDSC’s annual Code compliance audit, complaint investigations, and implementation of corrective action plans (CAPs) to make steady progress to come into compliance.

In addition, the Program creates a new mechanism to facilitate and improve communication and creative problem solving between workers and farmers that serves to improve the overall farm operations and proactively identify and mitigate risks such as injuries and accidents.

The MD Program is designed to encourage and support farmer compliance seeking to build participatory, fair, and dignified workplaces characterized by mutual respect, improved communication and collaborative problem solving.

For more information on the MDSC: info@milkwithdignity.org or 802-881-7054

For more information on the MD Program: info@migrantjustice.net or 802-540-8370