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**AGRICULTURE SECRETARY VILSACK ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN
USDA, NFL, AND DAIRY FARMERS FOR NATIONAL NUTRITION AND FITNESS
CAMPAIGN**

WASHINGTON, September 17, 2009 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced today the U.S. Department of Agriculture will work with the National Football League (NFL) and the nation's dairy farmers to promote good nutrition and fitness in the nation's schools. The collaboration will help support President Obama's effort to promote good nutrition and physical fitness for America's children.

"Childhood obesity is a very serious issue that endangers the long-term health and welfare of our nation's youngsters," said Vilsack. "To reverse this dangerous trend and give our kids the opportunity to eat smarter, exercise more and lessen their risk of disease, both the public and private sectors will have to work together to marshal their combined expertise and resources."

Vilsack met with NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell and Thomas Gallagher, chief executive of Dairy Management, Inc., which runs the National Dairy Research and Promotion Program. The NFL and DMI are launching Fuel Up to Play 60, an innovative nutrition and fitness program based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, in some 60,000 schools this fall. The social marketing program empowers students to assume leadership in being more active and eating more healthy foods.

The campaign will inspire kids to "fuel up" with the nutrient-rich foods they often lack—fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low- or no-fat dairy products—and "get up and play" with 60 minutes of daily physical activity. Student teams will evaluate their school's "wellness" and choose the healthy eating and physical activity programs on which the school will focus.

At the meeting, Secretary Vilsack discussed a plan to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between USDA, the NFL and DMI to allow USDA programs and Fuel Up to Play 60 to collaborate and collectively tackle the critical issue of children's health.

"USDA is excited to bring this partnership the experience and resources of our successful school-based health education efforts like Team Nutrition schools and the HealthierUS School Challenge," Vilsack said.

"NFL is a proud partner of Fuel Up to Play 60. It is an important component of our overall NFL Play 60 campaign," says NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell. "Our goal is to raise awareness about the importance of staying fit and eating right, especially for America's young people. This partnership is a powerful alliance linking the USDA, National Dairy Council and the NFL to address childhood obesity and emphasize the role of daily physical activity in a healthy lifestyle."

"National Dairy Council is honored to work together with USDA and the NFL on Fuel Up to Play 60," said Thomas P. Gallagher, chief executive officer of Dairy Management Inc., the managing organization for National Dairy Council. "Child nutrition, particularly in schools, has been a cornerstone of National Dairy Council for nearly a century. This program centers on youth taking the lead in changing the school environment through increasing opportunities for eating healthier and getting more physical activity."

USDA manages 15 nutrition programs, which touch the lives of one in five Americans each year. And across the country, USDA designated 'Team Nutrition' schools have worked to forge the link between classroom nutrition activities and healthy meals served in the cafeteria. USDA's HealthierUS School Challenge recognizes 'Team Nutrition' schools that are creating healthier school environments through their promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. USDA is also the one of the lead agencies along with the Department of Health and Human Services, working to develop the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the nation's official dietary advice.

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