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California Milk Advisory Board

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **CALIFORNIA MILK ADVISORY BOARD ANNOUNCES TRANSITION IN LEADERSHIP**

*CEO John Talbot Shares 2025 Retirement Plan;*

*VP of Business Development Bob Carroll on Tap to Lead Organization in the Future*

Tracy, Calif. – March 10, 2025 – The California Milk Advisory Board (CMAB) today announced that CEO John Talbot will retire by the end of 2025 after more than a decade of leadership of the dairy marketing organization. Bob Carroll, CMAB’s current Vice President of Business Development, has been selected as his successor.

The decision, communicated during the March CMAB Board of Directors meeting, marks the end of a term highlighted by growth in dairy innovation and expansion in export markets as well as a focus on leveraging California dairy farmer leadership in sustainability as a point of differentiation.

Talbot joined the CMAB in 2014 and guided a multi-year evolution of the organization – implementing operational efficiencies and prioritizing a shift in mindset, driven by data, from a commodity orientation to a focus on building a culture of innovation. He articulated a new vision for the CMAB, to “Nourish the World with the Wholesome Goodness of Real California Milk” and put the people and processes in place to bring that vision to life, including hiring Bob Carroll to lead a team focused on retail, foodservice and international business development.

During his tenure, he envisioned and directed the creation of the California Dairy Innovation Center, supporting innovation at the product, processing and packaging level by tapping into California’s

existing college and university systems and the Real California Milk Excelerator innovation competition, now in its sixth year, which has supported more than 50 startups using dairy ingredients in value-added brands. Under his leadership, CMAB expanded international market focus, adding personnel and shifting financial resources to grow export distribution of Real California Milk products to more than 580 items across at least a dozen countries. During this time, fluid milk exports were up 64 percent, and cheese exports expanded by 51 percent. To streamline focus and budgets, Talbot consolidated offices, retired the Real California Cheese seal and oversaw a shift in communications focus from national to local and an increased concentration on digital and social media.

“John has a deeply strategic mindset, which has served our industry well. His focus on collaboration, team building and innovation has established a solid foundation for the CMAB’s future,” said CMAB Board Chairman, Noel Rosa.

“It has been an honor leading the CMAB and serving our dairy community. After 11 years of market evolution, industry challenges, and organizational adjustments, I’m extremely proud of the team we’ve built and what we’ve achieved together. I’m confident in the CMAB’s direction today and the plan in place for future success under Bob’s leadership,” said Talbot.

Carroll joined CMAB in 2015 with a wealth of domestic and international consumer brand experience including leadership of international strategy and development efforts for Blue Diamond Growers and brand management for Kraft Foods. A U.S. Army veteran, Carroll’s strong leadership skills and expertise in brand marketing, corporate strategic planning and international market development helped to build a Business Development team focused on growth for California dairy at retail, in foodservice and across export markets in Mexico, Latin America, and Asia.

“I accepted my position at CMAB ten years ago for two reasons: first, I knew I wanted to continue working on behalf of California farmers, and second because of the trust and respect I have for John Talbot,” said Carroll. “Over the last ten years, that respect and admiration has grown exponentially. John is a strategic leader and team-builder who is deeply dedicated to our mission and truly cares about people. Under his leadership, our organization has built a foundation of excellence and results that I’m excited to build upon. With our dairy farmers at the center of everything we do, processors who are increasingly willing to invest in innovation and the future, our passionate and professional team, and consumers who are increasingly returning to real dairy, I could not imagine a better place to serve in leadership.”

Talbot and Carroll will work closely together during the transition period with Carroll assuming the role of CEO at the CMAB’s May board meeting. Talbot will continue at a reduced capacity over the balance of the year working on a variety of strategic projects.

The CMAB was founded in 1969 by the state’s dairy farmers. An instrumentality of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the CMAB continues to be funded by the state's dairy farm families who lead the nation in sustainable dairy farming practices. With a vision to nourish the world with the wholesome goodness of Real California Milk, the CMAB's programs focus on increasing

demand for California's sustainable dairy products in the state, across the U.S. and around the world through advertising, public relations, research, and retail and foodservice promotional programs.

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