Priority 16: Identify novel technologies/practices to improve viability of **SMALL DAIRY MILK PRODUCTION**

**86 out of 584 respondents (15%) ranked this topic as highest priority. Of those, 47 provided justification as follows:**

* 19 respondents (or 40%) commented that identifying novel technologies and practices to improve the viability of small dairy milk production is a necessary step in ensuring the economic viability of the small dairy industry and for keeping small-scale dairies in business.

*“Small dairy farms used to be the backbone of New York State agriculture. Small farmers need help making dairy farming profitable once again.”*

* 9 respondents (or 19%) commented that is it important to identify and develop technologies, methodologies, and equipment specific to small-scale dairy production in order to ensure the cost-effectiveness of small dairies and their ability to compete with large-scale producers.

*“Different sized operations require different types of technology. It is important to make sure that the technology exists for the different sizes of farms so that each farm can be as efficient as possible.”*

* 9 respondents (or 19%) commented that developing and promoting technologies and practices specific to small dairies could help farmers address and overcome processing and distribution regulations that result in high costs and/or low profitability.

*“Most small farmers cannot afford the high capital requirements to process milk for legal sale. More affordable avenues are needed.”*

* 8 respondents (or 17%) commented that identifying novel technologies and practices to support small dairy milk production would increase the prevalence of and consumer access to local dairy products, which in turn would benefit local economies and improve individual, community, and environmental health.

*“The world will be a better place when the get-big-or-get-out trend is bucked and every town has a dairy where fresh milk is bottled and processed for the good of local communities and farmers.”*

* 4 respondents (or 8%) commented that identifying novel technologies and practices to support small dairy milk production would encourage the production of niche products such as goat and raw milk, for which there is a growing demand.

*“Niche marketing is a way to keep small family dairies in business.”*