

Protein Milk Pricing System Is Used in Some Areas by NFO

Editor's Note: The idea of a new system for pricing milk has been periodically proposed to the dairy industry. The following is portions of an article by the National Farmers Organization on a price system based on protein content. It was forwarded by Leland S. Stanford.

Cletus and Steve Timmerman, a father-and-son team from Dickeyville, Wis., are taking NFO's story of protein pricing of milk to farmers in America's Dairyland

They equipped a second-hand panel truck as a mobile lab, undoubtedly the nation's first milk protein tester-on-wheels. And they're selling a protein approach that's working in NFO contracts in the West.

It's been a sideline since last spring to their main job of serving members marketing milk through the Dickeyville reload managed by Cletus. This is in Grant County, ranked 10th on the list of the nation's milk-producing counties.

The unusual mobile laboratory is good advertising for NFO's fast-growing reload system in Wisconsin.

Farm Progress Days

Probably the most interesting trip with the small lab was to Farm Progress Days at West Salem near LaCrosse, where Steve set it up and explained protein pricing to visitors. He ran several dozen samples a day to show how the test works.

He said dairy farmer interest in protein testing was tremendous, among members and non-members alike. City people, too,

Manor Young Farmers Set Nutrition Courses

The Manor Young Farmers will hold four animal nutrition courses this month starting at 7:30 p.m., the meetings will be held November 9, 11, 16, and 18 in the Penn Manor vo ag room.

Mike Burton, Penn Manor vo ag teacher, will be in charge of three of the meetings.

Dr. Emmett I. Robertson, nutritionist John W. Eshelman & Sons feed company, will speak on "The Importance of Minerals" at the November 16 meeting.

stopped by the talk about the need for more emphasis on protein content of milk.

Steve, a licensed milk tester, says the simple test for protein takes about the same amount of time as testing for butterfat. He draws off a small amount of milk with a syringe, puts it in a small bottle, adds an orange reagent dye to bind the protein, and shakes it up.

Then the sample is run through a special filter into a thin glass container, a photo cell shoots a light through it, and a small gauge provides a light transmission reading. That reading is quickly converted with standardized chart to percent of protein content

"We're still selling milk the ancient way," Steve notes. "Farmers realize this and never argue that the protein way isn't the right way to do it."

Met Roy Brog

Cletus said Norbert Connors, a national director from Viroqua, Wis., first introduced he and his son to the protein pricing concept Connors introduced them to Roy Brog, the man who developed the protein pricing concept for NFO. The idea for the testing van followed.

Basing milk prices on both butterfat and protein content, a much-needed change in the dairy industry, is sure to come eventually in Wisconsin they believe. It is getting its biggest push now from contracts negotiated by NFO producers in Utah, Idaho and Wyoming.

They ship milk under contracts paying an additional nine cents for each one-tenth of a per cent above a 3.2 per cent protein base. What NFO says, in effect, is that there's more value in milk than butterfat and farmers ought to get paid for it.

Protein Contracts

NFO members have had the expert assistance of Brog and Dairy Monitoring of America in developing a protein pricing system. His testing procedure, available to NFO dairy bargainers, is written into NFO protein-based supply contracts.

Brog's system measures protein content in both solid and fluid dairy products. He has found that the protein-fat milk pricing method is capable of identifying over 99 per cent of the true value of milk compared with only 78.6 per cent for the present fat-hundredweight scheme

"A fat-protein pricing system" he says, "has the capability of aligning the value of fat and protein in the producer milk with the value of these two components in the consumer packaged dairy products."

Ed Graf, national director of the Dairy Department, points out that the industry breeds cattle to produce more butterfat and then, in the next breath, they tell you

butterfat is your problem.

"So it's high time," he says,

"that we started the move to protein pricing."

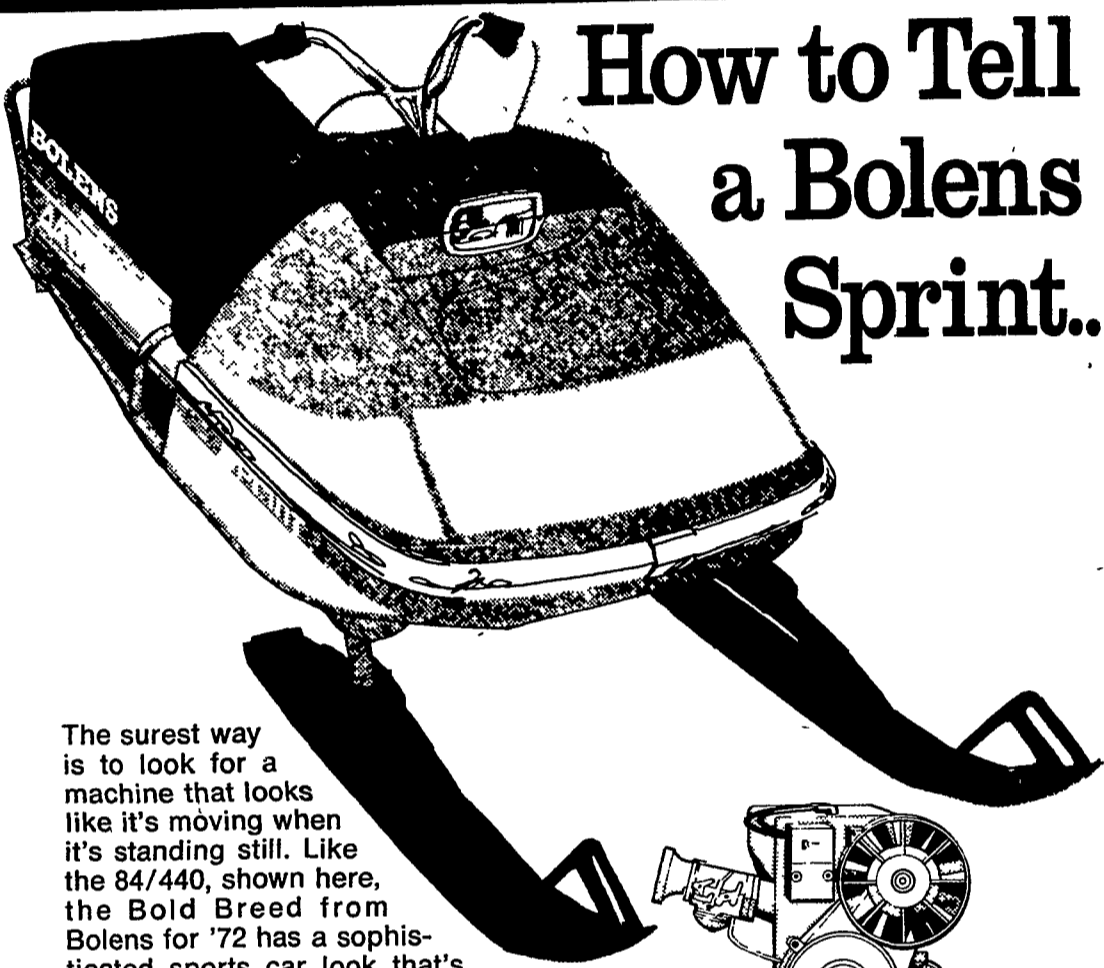
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