

## Shift in Dairy Product Use Created by Consumer Concern

"When people say that they are cutting down on milk and dairy products due to their weight concern, they really are shifting from one dairy product to another" according to Dr. Gerald G. Quackenbush, director of the Marketing and Economic Research Division of United Dairy Industry Association (UDIA).

Speaking to the Board of Directors of UDIA meeting in Chicago, Quackenbush summarized information from a study of how consumers viewed milk and dairy products.

Some 3,500 people across the nation were polled. They were asked to rate their position on various statements on a 6-point scale, ranging from one for "definitely disagree" to six for "definitely agree."

According to the results, 97 percent of the people polled agreed that milk is a healthful drink, including the 90 percent of those polled who said that they never drink milk. However, 28 percent of the respondents thought that milk had a flat and watery taste.

Seventy percent of the group felt that milk was fattening (25 percent slightly agreed, 21 percent moderately agreed, and 24 percent definitely agreed).

Milk and dairy products were compared with other foods.

Vegetables, fruits, steak and meat were considered less fattening than dairy products, milk and cheese; potatoes, pork chops, bread and soft drinks were considered more fattening. Butter, ice cream and cream, in ascending order, were viewed the most fattening of the 14 categories.

From the standpoint of a fattening image, all of the dairy and milk products were considered above average. The opinion that milk is fattening was shared by both those who said they were heavy milk drinkers and those who said that they never drink milk. Ninety percent of those polled felt that ice cream was fattening.

"Some of the products considered more fattening than milk actually are enjoying increased consumption," Quackenbush said, "including cheese, potatoes, and soft drinks. This verifies a study conducted a year ago which showed that actions may not be affected by all beliefs. Ice cream is a good example. It's a fun food, too good to leave alone. Since what people believe doesn't always correspond to what they do, we found out what actions they take."

Respondents were asked if they had cut down on dairy products because of their weight. About 40 percent said that they had cut

down; 60 percent had not. When asked how much milk they drank, however, there was no difference between those who said that they had cut down and those who hadn't. When queried concerning milk forms, it was found that regular milk usage had declined, while skim milk and low-fat milk use had increased. Cutting down really meant shifting from one product to another.

When asked how often they used other products, it was found that the more the respondents claimed they had cut down on dairy products, the more they really had switched to cottage cheese. Ice cream use was down slightly among weight watchers, but ice milk and yogurt usage was up slightly. Among those polled, total use of cheese, sour cream, light cream and half-and-half remained steady, while whipping cream use was down slightly. Butter usage also declined slightly, with margarine taking up the slack.

Summing up the study, Quackenbush said, "All of this may sound unusual, but on a non-fat-solids basis per-capita consumption of dairy products has been very steady for 20 years.

The shift among products shows in the decline of milk fat.

"A U. S. Department of Agriculture study a year ago reported that 33 percent of the people thought that milk was over 50 percent fat. Our study confirmed the USDA one; 24 percent of our respondents definitely agreed that milk was

fattening. Then we went a few steps beyond the USDA study to find out what people do. The resulting consumption data, coupled with opinion sampling, should be a useful tool in planning dairy industry advertising, education and research programs to sell more milk and dairy products."

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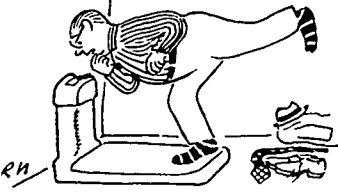
The Agricultural Sales and/or Service proficiency awards program of the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) will be sponsored by the Allis-Chalmers Corp. Agricultural Equipment Division beginning in 1973. The announcement was made jointly at the recent Wisconsin State FFA Conference held in Milwaukee.

The annual awards program is designed to complement the training provided in the vocational agriculture classroom by making practical application of the academic subjects.

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