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But Some Dairymen Won't Notice . . .

Fatter Milk Checks Coming

Some dairy farmers in Pennsylvania will notice fatter milk checks by mid-April as a result of the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board decision to raise the Class 1 milk price by 92-cents a hundredweight. Many more dairy farmers, especially those in Lancaster and surrounding counties, won't notice the increase at all.

Locally, a number of dairymen were concerned that their milk checks hadn't grown with their mid-March payments. This concern was voiced after dairies increased their retail prices to consumers by three to four cents a quart on home deliveries and two to three cents for wholesale customers. This price increase was effective March 12, or one day before the 92-cents increase for farmers went into effect.

Dairymen who ship to local dairies, such

as Moore, Graybill and Cloister, will receive the 92-cent increase in the checks they receive before April 20. The reason for the lag is that the dealers must wait for March utilization figures from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture before they can compute each farmer's milk check. The agriculture department is expected to send utilization figures to dealers by April 13, and dealers are expected to send milk checks to producers beginning April 16 and in no case later than April 20. Under Pennsylvania law, all milk checks must be mailed by the 20th of each month.

Farmers who are shipping their milk to Federal Market Order 4 dealers will not be getting a 92-cent increase in their class 1 price, and they may not notice any difference in their checks. The reason for this is that the federal order price now stands

at about \$8.25 a hundredweight. The milk marketing board action increased the Pennsylvania minimum for milk sold outside the federal orders to \$8.19 in the ten-county Southcentral Area 4, which includes Lancaster, Lebanon and York counties. The previous Pennsylvania minimum had been \$7.27 per hundredweight.

Most local farmers do ship their milk to federal order dairies. At first glance, it might seem that they had been doing much better than those shipping to local dairies, but this is an incorrect assumption. Actually, dairymen here and throughout the Commonwealth have been getting about the same blend price for their milk whether they ship locally or to federal order markets. The reason is that local dairies

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Evan Gress, Reinholds, proudly displays two of the most colorful pheasants from his gamebird operation. The popular golden

pheasant is to the right, while the rarer Ghigis yellow golden is to the left.

Birdman of Reinholds

Evan Gress has a bird operation that could give nightmares to most poultrymen. His hens might do nothing but eat and drink for two to three years before they lay a single egg. And then they'll produce fewer than a dozen per year.

Fortunately, Gress doesn't have to live on the income from selling eggs. He's a gamebird breeder, and he specializes in exotic pheasants.

A retired carpenter Gress lives near Reinholds, and maintains a miniature bird zoo in his backyard. He has close to 100 birds, and some 30 different varieties. There are two kinds of golden pheasants, Reeves pheasants, quail, doves, wood

ducks, Mandarin ducks, silver pheasants and even some ringnecks.

"I started raising pheasants in 1927," Gress recalled, "and I raised them for many years for sale to the Pennsylvania Game Commission. They stocked them in hunting areas all over the state."

Gress now sells chiefly to gamebird fanciers who want to try their luck at raising and breeding the exotically plumed creatures. The most expensive breed Gress handles is the shimmeringly purple Impeyan pheasant, which came originally from the Himalya Mountains. Impeyans sell for \$125 a pair. Rarity, of course, is one of the

things that helps keep the Impeyan price pegged somewhat higher than the broiler futures. One of the reasons they're rare is that Impeyans are not prolific breeders. Like many pheasants, the female produces six to eight eggs a year, and they don't always hatch.

Other pheasants, like the silver and the ringnecks, are more prolific and much less expensive. Gress said he remembers selling a pair of female ringnecks to a grower who later told him that the two birds had produced 100 egg apiece during the month-long breeding season. A wild ringneck, Gress noted, might only produce 18 to 20 eggs a

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King is Tops at Octorara Meet

Six production contest prizes were awarded at the Octorara Area Young Farmers Association annual awards dinner recently, and Paul King won five of those contests. He walked away with the awards for grain corn, corn silage, haylage, high cow and high dairy herd.

During the meeting, the group elected officers for the 1973-74 year. The new president is Aldus King. Larry Hershey, Atglen R1 was elected vice-president; Jerry Hershey, Cochranville R1 was named treasurer; Glen Engle, Parkesburg was named secretary, and Elmer Mast, Parkesburg R1 is the new director of public relations. The group's advisor is Ivan Stauffer, vo-ag teacher at Octorara.

The next meeting for the group will be Monday, April 2, which will also be the last meeting for the year.

Production award ceremonies started with the presentation of a first place trophy to Paul King for his 197.03 bushel per acre yield on grain corn. Second place went to Larry Hershey, Atglen R1, 196.4

bu-acre; Third place-William Engle, Cochranville R1 - 191.81 bu-acre; Gideon K. Stoltzfus-Atglen R1 - 191.62 bu-acre; Elmer Mast Parkesburg RD - 183.35 bu-acre.

The corn silage contest was also won by Paul King with a yield of 9.18 TIA of T.D.N. Second place went to Ernest Lantz, R.D. 4 Coatesville, 6.84 T-A; third prize went to Elmer Mast, Parkesburg, 6.5 T-A. Fourth Carl Horst, R.D. 1 Atglen, 6.5 T-A. Fifth Nathan King R.D. 1 Lincoln University.

First place hay award went to David King, and second place to Elmer Mast, Parkesburg.

First place Haylage went to Paul King, Cochranville.

The high cow contest was won by Paul King with a 305 day production of 28,335 pounds of milk at 3.4 percent and 972 pounds of butterfat.

Second place went to Vernon
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Farm Calendar

Saturday, March 24
Pennsylvania Landrace Association State Show and Sale, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg; Show, 9 a.m.; Sale, 1 p.m.

Monday, March 26
7:30 p.m. — 4-H County Council meeting, Coca Cola Bottling Plant.

County Grange Visitation, Fulton Grange, host.

Tuesday, March 27
6:30 p.m. — Manor Young Farmer Annual Banquet, Willow Valley Motor Inn

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Paul King holds one of the five production awards he won at this year's awards dinner for the Octorara Young Farmers