

MCMP Members Aug. Base Milk

Dairy farmer members of the Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers, Inc. will receive \$8.10 for base milk and \$6.69 for milk in excess of base delivered in August, 24 cents per hundred above the announced Federal Order number 4 prices.

The record high Federal Order number 4 price for milk containing 3.5 percent butterfat, coupled with the 24 cent addition to the Order level, seeks to halt

the trend away from milk production.

The August price boost comes at a time when projections indicate the 1973 decline in national milk production to be the second largest in 25 years and at a time when fluid milk sales are solidly on the increase.

The base price applies to milk marketed under individual producer bases established during the period August through December, 1972. Present milk

production counts toward 1974 base determinations.

The 24 cent premium for MCMP members was negotiated by the Cooperative with local dairies in a move to insure adequate milk supplies in the market.

MCMP Business Manager R. L. Strock announced the price premium September 13 following the monthly announcement of the Federal Order price. "We negotiated the higher price to increase returns to our members and seek to halt the ever increasing number of dairymen selling their herds because they can no longer make ends meet.

"During the first eight months of 1973 approximately 70 farms or seven percent of our membership have discontinued milk production. While in many cases these herds were small there were larger ones as well as reflected in a 5 percent drop in total production at a time when fluid milk (Class I) sales are increasing.

"We will continue to see further increases in producer pay prices in response to further strengthening in dairy product prices. It is expected that the price for base milk will move above the \$9 figure for October milk deliveries and hold above the \$9 level at least through the end of the first quarter of 1974 if the current strong demand for fluid milk continues."

Alfalfa As Cheap Protein Source Seen Possible

The first pilot plant operation that produces a bland, white edible protein concentrate from fresh, green alfalfa juice is now in an advanced stage of development by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

This protein, developed by a research team headed by Dr. George O. Kohler and E. M. Bickoff, has many potential uses for feeding the world's poor. It can be used to step up the protein content of such foods as breads, pastas, soups, stews, gravies, ground meats, milk substitutes and other preprocessed foods.

Most of the world's protein exists in green leaves. However, a major portion of this protein is not consumed directly by humans because of its high fiber content and bitter taste.

The Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers, Inc. numbers approximately 950 farms throughout Maryland and into adjacent areas of Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. Founded in 1918 it has marketed milk for dairymen to dairies throughout the milkshed.

The alfalfa juice could come as a byproduct of the alfalfa dehydration industry. Additional juice sources could come from alfalfa squeezing operations before ensiling, before feeding as green chop feed to cattle and while crushing or crimping alfalfa prior to hay drying.

The PRO-XAN I process, previously developed at Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) Western Regional Research Center, Berkeley, Calif., separates the protein and pigment from freshly squeezed alfalfa juice. The end product is dry, fiber-free and high in protein and is used in the poultry feed industry. However, protein extracted by this process is not desirable as human food because of its strong, grassy flavor and deep green color.

Recently, this ARS team, which also includes Dr. Donald de Fremery, Richard H. Edwards, Raymond E. Miller and Benny E. Knuckles, modified the PRO-XAN I process to separate the white protein from the green protein by controlled heating and centrifugation steps. The white protein is then heat precipitated, washed and dried. This process, called PRO-XAN II, produces a white powder that contains approximately 90 percent protein.

Over 100 gallons alfalfa juice per hour are now being processed at the Center's pilot plant with about 80 percent of the soluble white protein in the juice being recovered. About three pounds of the protein powder are produced per hour.

Few Holds On Catsup

Tomatoes are showing the biggest increase in consumption of any processed vegetable in the United States. And the reason, experts say, is all that catsup being served up by fast food stands and pizza emporiums

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