

Milk Increase Sought

Dairy farmers in 13 north-central Pennsylvania counties asked Friday that the minimum prices paid them by milk dealers be increased 29 per cent, more than 5 cents a quart.

The request was made to the Milk Marketing Board in testimony by the Pennsylvania Farmers Association. The PFA said dairy farm expenses have climbed 12 per cent in the past year and are expected to increase another 10 per cent by next summer.

The figures were based on data from 266 dairy farms in the 18-county region.

Now at \$8.15

The state-mandated minimum price for the area is now set at \$8.15 for each 100 pounds of drinking milk sold by a farmer to a dealer. A hundredweight equals some 46 quarts, so the farmer's minimum price per quart is between 17 and 18 cents.

Most farmers are receiving more than the minimum for their milk, but few if any receive as much as 20 cents a quart.

The PFA said the minimum hundredweight price should be raised to \$10.53, or about 23 cents a quart.

If the increase were granted by the Milk Board, which expects to reach a decision in February, dealers probably would pass any boost in their actual costs on to the consumer.

13 Counties

The milk marketing area includes Bradford, Carbon, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga and Union counties.

On Thursday, the PFA asked for a 26 per cent increase, to \$10.56 per hundredweight, in minimum drinking milk prices to farmers in Berks, Bucks, Lehigh, Monroe and Northampton counties.



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Reader Calls for Fuel Crisis Answers

A. Wayne Readinger, master of the Pennsylvania State Grange, has called on government and industry leaders to end confusion over the energy crisis and "lay the facts on the line for the public."

Most Americans are trying to do their part in conserving fuel, Readinger said, but conflicting reports and rumors are causing many to grow skeptical.

"People want to know the

Advice on Ponds Now Available

Ponds, and how to build, maintain and use them, are the subject of a new publication of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

The 14-page illustrated booklet, "Building a Pond," was written by the Soil Conservation Service in response to growing public interest in the subject.

The publication gives advice on selecting a site, building an embankment or excavated pond, the requirements for satisfactory pond spillways, sealing leaky ponds, and maintaining completed ponds. The various uses of ponds for livestock, fire protection, fishing, recreation, irrigation, and wildlife habitat are also discussed. Photographs, maps and diagrams help to illustrate some of the concepts.

Single copies of "Building a Pond," FB 2256, are available from the Office of Communication, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Additional copies are available from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402, at 25 cents a copy.

facts," the Grange master declared. "They want to know exactly how serious the situation is, and precisely what must be done to meet the emergency. And they want clear cut priorities based on common sense and logic."

Priorities must be established, he said, on the determination of what we must have, what we would like to have, and what we can do without.

"Top priority," he declared, "must be given to providing the necessities of life and maintaining the health of Americans. Selfish motives of groups or individuals must not be allowed to interfere with the common good of all people."

"The decision must be based on a simple rule: Is it necessary, or is it nice?"

Food, he pointed out, is a basic necessity of life. Any restrictions that limit the production of food, Readinger warned, will intensify real and potential food shortages facing this nation today. This is particularly true of milk and meat, he said.

Milk production in the United States in the first ten months of this year, he pointed out, is one billion, 337 million quarts less than the amount produced in the first ten months of 1972.

"This means," he said, "that Americans will have to get along this year with about seven quarts less milk per person than they had in 1972."

The meat situation is just as serious, according to the Grange master. "As a matter of fact," he declared, "in no year since 1957 has the United States produced enough red meat - beef, pork, veal, and lamb and mutton - to satisfy domestic demand."

Today American farmers are being asked to plow and plant more acres to step up food production in 1974, Readinger said. If they are to answer this

call, they must be assured adequate supplies of fuel, fertilizer, chemicals, machinery, and other production supplies. "But the increased cost of fuel, fertilizer and other supplies - plus the increased cost of transportation and processing - undoubtedly will mean higher

food prices at retail stores. It is not pleasant to think about, but the alternative is even worse.

"If American food production is allowed to suffer as a result of indecision or poor judgment, the consequences will be felt for a long time after the present energy crisis is resolved."

The CONKLIN GARDEN SPOT ASSOCIATION

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Assistant Chairman
RD3, Manheim, Pa. 17545
717-665-4330

Herbert Hess
Secretary
RD3, Manheim, Pa. 17545
717-665-4351

Norman Nauman
Assistant Secretary
RD4, Manheim, Pa. 17545
717-665-5267

Joseph Miller
Treasurer
1352 Union Street
Lancaster, Pa. 17602
717-393-6055

Karl Van Dyk
Assistant Treasurer
3071 Druck Valley Road
York, Pa. 17402
717-755-8849

Paul Beiler
RD1, Paradise, Pa. 17562
717-442-4017

Adin Frey
Route 8
Chambersburg, Pa. 17201
717-264-7492

Levi High
Route 1, Ephrata, Pa. 17522
717-733-7213

Neil Hochstetler
RD2, East Earl, Pa. 17519
717-354-7193

Wilbur Lentz
RD1, Willow Street, Pa. 17584
717-464-3068

Aaron Riehl
RD3, Quarryville, Pa. 17566
717-786-3805

Nathan Shenk
RD4
Manheim, Pa. 17545
717-665-5444

Eli Stoltzfus
Maypost Road
Strasburg, Pa. 17579

James Wanner
511 South 9th St.
Akron, Pa. 17501
717-859-2164

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