

# Dairy economy

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about the prospects of increased dairy imports and possible losses of rights and powers of farmer cooperatives. Developments along those lines are brewing in Washington, D.C. and dairymen are encouraged to get in touch with their representatives and senators, Honan advised.

According to Honan, who started working for Inter-State in 1947 as an economist, the price support level for milk is expected to change on April 1. The anticipated increase will not show significantly, however, since it "will already have worked its way into the system by then," Honan explained. Noting that the Class I milk price is already over \$13, he added that "it could get close to \$14 within the next 12 months."

"We are now in a time of very serious inflation," the general manager continued. Milk prices, he added, are keeping up with inflation better than prices for most any other farm commodity. He noted that 10 years ago dairymen were getting \$6 per hundredweight of milk.

On the subject of in-

ternational trade, Honan stated that they will have an impact on farm prices. The National Milk Producers Federation, he said, is "quite concerned" about possible boosts in cheese imports. The main concern, he explained, is that farm products not be used as a trade-off in trade negotiations.

Honan's anxiety over the future status of farmer cooperatives stems from federal studies that were concluded earlier this year. Recommendations to trim the activities of cooperatives were submitted both to President Carter and the Department of Justice. Honan, as well as numerous other agricultural leaders believe that the recommendations threaten to strike at the heart of farm products marketing. There is a possibility that cooperatives will be hemmed in by antitrust legislation, and Honan, among others, is encouraging farmers to make their objections known. "Become involved, write letters to congressmen and senators," he said.

While the internal and joint activities of dairy cooperatives may be restrained in the future as a result of federal directives, Inter-State is currently working closely with its neighbors. "Inter-State is now in better shape with its co-op neighbors than they have been for quite some time," Honan exclaimed. His cooperative is marketing milk through LeHi Cooperative Farmers under arrangements which Honan terms "very good." Although marketing agreements with Eastern Cooperative Milk Producers were terminated last year, Honan said that the relationship with them was good too.

Because of good marketing channels and the likelihood that Holly Milk will go on line in the near future, Inter-State believes that extra marketing costs may not be incurred during this year. Honan was not willing to give absolute



**Daniel Martin**  
*"We've been enjoying good milk prices, but our hauling rates increased faster last year than ever before."*

assurances on that, however.

Honan also touched briefly on the subject of hauling rates, but left Inter-State vice president Daniel Martin to give the details. Martin, a member and director of District 7, commented: "We've been enjoying good milk prices, but our hauling rates increased faster last

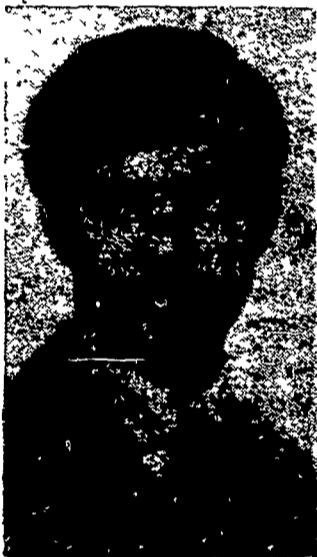
year than ever before. Despite the implementation of cost-saving measures such as diesel tractors, larger loads, and streamlined pick-up routes, costs continue to climb, Martin said.

A hauling committee has been formed to evaluate

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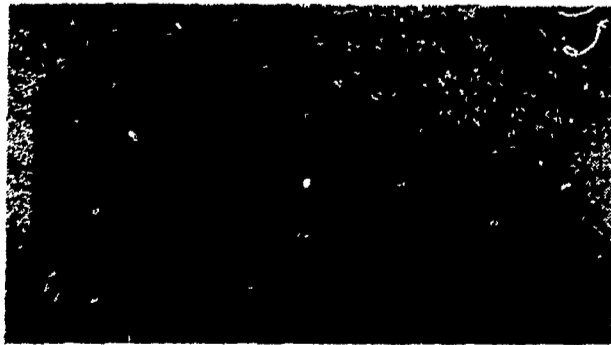


Glenn A. Shirk

*"Be careful not to be complacent. It's easy to fall asleep when things are going smoothly."*



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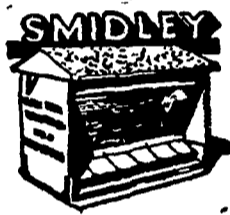
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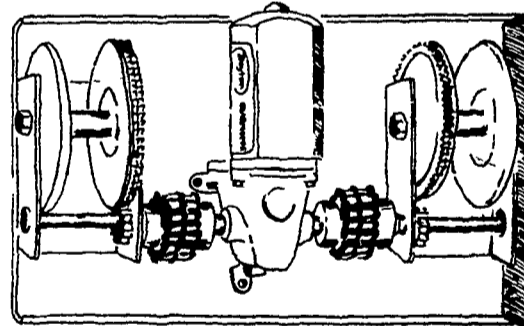


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