

The why and how of milk controls

FLEMINGTON, N.J. — When XYZ Cola goes up in price at the supermarket, it's generally accepted. Inflation! Costs of ingredients continue to climb. Costs of bottles, cartons, handling, distributing, merchandising are all on the upswing.

We may grumble a bit, but we pick up a bottle or two and move on to the next item on our shopping list. You can almost count on it being higher in cost than the last time you were in the store. That goes for non-food items as well as food.

Now milk, that's different! We know when the price goes up. We brace ourselves for the stop at the dairy counter. After all we read last week that milk was going up a 1/2 cent a quart. Sure enough, a gallon of whole milk is up a couple cents from our last shopping trip.

Everyone is kept informed as milk prices increase. And, since milk is such a uniformly accepted and utilized food commodity, just about everyone is affected by changes in its price.

Aerial seeding . topic of farm crops program

FLEMINGTON, N.J. — The aerial seeding of cover crops in standing soybeans and corn will be the lead topic on the program, "Field Crops II - Grain," scheduled by the Extension Service for Tuesday, February 19, 8 p.m., in Hunterdon's Extension Center, Flemington, N.J.

Three area farmers will discuss their experiences with rye, annual ryegrass, and hairy vetch as cover crops seeded in September in corn and soybean fields, reports C. G. Wettstein, Hunterdon Agricultural Agent.

The practice is growing in popularity with area farmers in attempting to reduce soil run-off. The seed germinates and begins to grow before the existing crop of beans or corn is harvested.

Once the crop is removed, the cover crop develops rapidly.

Rick Loveless, Dairy and Crop Enterprise Salesman for Agway, will discuss application procedures. Agway was one of several organizations coordinating the aerial seeding program this past fall.

Other subjects and speakers on the February 19

Dairy industry people say that milk is nature's most perfect food. They seem to have the facts to prove it. It's the choice of mothers raising toddlers and teen-agers, and senior citizens concerned about their well-being, to say nothing of the rest of us who enjoy and benefit from drinking milk.

Dairy farmers, those at the "udder" end of the dairy business, don't really like all the publicity that milk price hikes get. They kind of feel it's unfair. Their product is being zeroed in on as one of the causes of increased food prices.

After all, they feel the effects of inflation, too. Fuel prices have close to doubled, labor is up significantly, utilities up sharply, costs of feed and supplies all up. It just costs more to produce a gallon of milk. That upward trend goes on and on, it seems.

Why the publicity on milk pricing? Joseph Loh, Chief of Licensing and Enforcement for New Jersey's Department of Agriculture's Division of Dairy Industry reminds us that the division

serves not only the dairy industry, but the consumer. The news releases prepared by DDI are aimed at informing local stores of the minimum retail price for whole white milk and also the consumer, making the consumer aware of price changes.

He also says that the milk price minimum has been lowered at times, not just raised.

The Division of Dairy Industry sets the minimum retail price for whole white milk in the state on quarts and gallons. On November 1 the price rose 1/2 cent a quart. The lowest prices at which milk can be sold at present is 46 1/2 cents per quart, 88 cents per 1/2 gallon, and \$1.70 per gallon.

Woodson Moffett, director of DDI, reports that at this particular time, the price change reflects the prices paid to dairy farmers. And, the price to dairy farmers is a result of strong demand for manufactured dairy products and a tight milk supply situation.

Seasonally, we're in a high fluid milk demand time now. As spring rolls around, we often experience more milk than needed.

The present system reflects supply and demand changes which have been routinely announced since this system became effective in 1972.

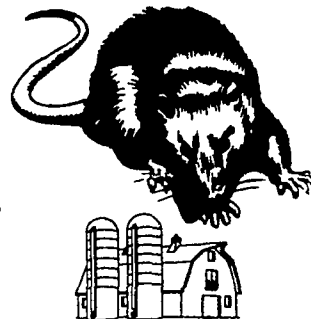
There is a move, a hope, that the system will be modified to also take into account changes in cost of fuel, labor and utilities. That's still in the planning stage.

Director Moffett explains the "why" of minimum prices on milk. It's to prevent destructive competition and below-cost selling in the marketplace, he says. And, it's resulted in lower prices in New Jersey compared to those in neighboring markets and other markets in the country.

A few examples - in Boston, gallon price is \$1.74. In the midwest, Des Moines, \$1.89; Minneapolis, \$1.85; Columbus, \$1.73. In the south, Raleigh \$2.11; eastern Virginia, \$1.93.

Compare the value in a jug of milk to most any other beverage. It's still a good buy!

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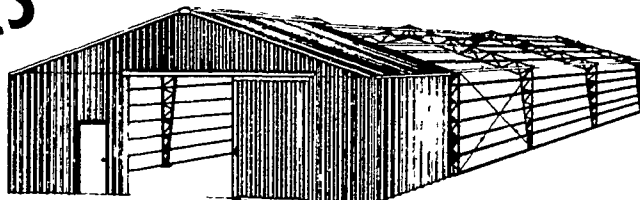
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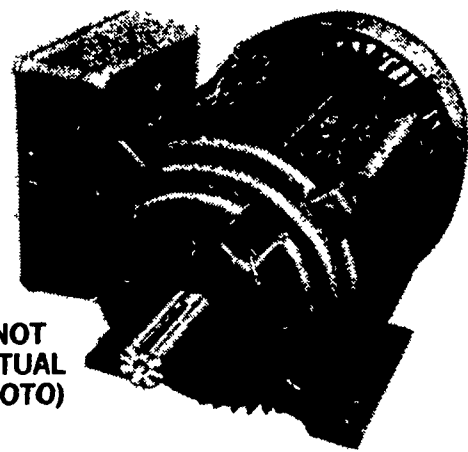
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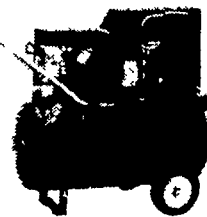


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