

## The Milk Check

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County Agent



### Up and Down Again

Dairy farmers shipping milk to Order 2 handlers increased their milk production over the same month of the previous year for the 23rd consecutive time to an 18 year April high of 930 million pounds.

That's 32 million pounds or 3.6 per cent more than last April, and 8 million pounds more than last month.

Eight million pounds may not sound like much but there were 30 days in April and 31 in March. So figured on an average daily production, you jumped 4.4 per cent in one month.

That's about the same increase, figured on average daily production, that you have had each month since November.

In addition to your increased production last month, you had a drop in Class I sales partly because of Easter holiday school vacations. That made a difference of 21 million pounds of fluid milk and an average daily loss of 2.3 per cent that you didn't need.

This produced a Class I utilization of 40.6 per cent that was 2.7 per cent less than March. With the exception of last Spring's Teamster Union strike in New York, it was the lowest in 20 years.

So, while production was going up, your blend prices was going down as it has been the last six months.

The difference in your Class prices for April over March (two cents on Class I and five cents on Class II) weren't nearly enough to make up for the lower Class I utilization and a ten cent increase in your Louisville Plan take out.

Getting down to the nitty gritty, your April blend price was \$11.96 at the 201-210 mile zone for 3.5 milk and that was 12 cents less than March Nit Picking

In an effort to find some good news for you to balance a 29 cent drop in the uniform price since December, I did a little nit picking with your Louisville Plan payments to see how the market was really treating you.

There's no question that your increasing milk production has kept your blend prices down, but only the man with his hand on the teat (and one on the feed scoop) can do anything about that.

If you consider your Louisville Plan take outs of 20 cents in March and 30 cents in April, your blend price has stayed within three cents of your December price these last five months. However, you can't say the same for your Class prices.

During the same period your Class I price increased 12 cents and your Class II price 22 cents. These increases you gave away with higher milk production and lower Class I utilization and settled for nearly the same blend price each month since December.

Looking ahead for the next month, you know you're going to get nine cents more in June thanks to increases in the Minnesota-Wisconsin price production by the dairy price support program. Your Class II price should also show some improvement from the price support program.

Then you'll have to balance those increases against another 10 cent higher take out for the

HARRISBURG — A few years ago a wood fire was little more than a luxury.

But today, the spiralling prices of oil, gas and electricity, many homes have come to use firewood as an alternative heating source or supplement.

Firewood comes in a wide variety of cuts, types of wood and heating efficiencies, which means the firewood user should shop around and get the most for his money.

State Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell says the Bureau of Standard Weights and Measures is making a determined effort to educate both firewood dealers and consumers to the legalities of firewood sales. Too often, according to Hallowell, consumers buy firewood under illegal conditions which he says "may cost the consumer extra money needlessly."

Bureau Director Fred Thomas said the many dealers in the state are advertising and selling firewood by the face cord, home cord, or truckload, all illegal transactions.

"In some reported instances," Thomas said, "dealer are selling truckloads of firewood using one size truck to demonstrate and delivering a smaller truck full of wood."

Louisville Plan to 40 cents a hundred in June and more four per cent increases in milk production.

Put them all together and I'm saying they spell a bare bones market price of \$12.25 for your milk in Order 2 this Spring. But remember, you can't spend it all now because some of it you won't see until next Fall.

How's that for nit picking?

## Buying firewood according to the rules

Hallowell said the firewood consumer should ask for the firewood by the cord or fraction of a cord, and get a receipt from the dealer for the amount sold.

sure compliance with the law to protect firewood consumers.

Hallowell said the complaints about sales or quantities of wood in any lots

other than cords or fraction of a cord should be reported to the Bureau of Standard Weights and Measures at the Department's seven regional offices.

Section 23.107 Title 70 of the Pennsylvania Code requires that "wood for fuel shall be sold by the cord of 128 cubic feet or fraction thereof, and shall be accompanied by a statement of invoice certifying the amount sold and presented to the buyer or his designee at the time of delivery or billing."

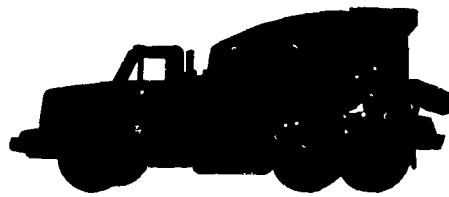
Inspectors from the Bureau are checking dealers throughout the state to in-

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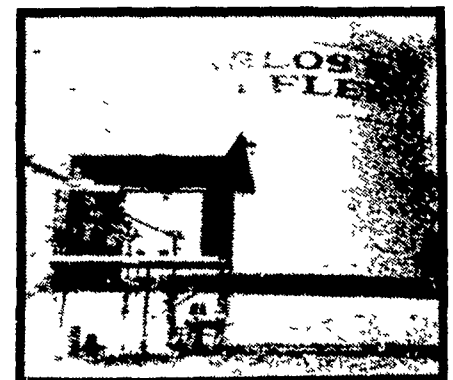
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