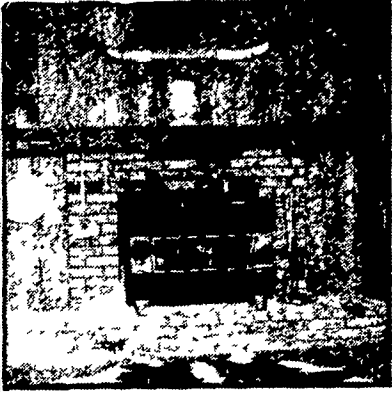


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## The Milk Check

**TOM JURCHAK  
County Agent**

### UP AND UP

With the highest production for October in 14 years, you got nearly two percent increase in your blend price over September for milk shipped to Order 2 handlers. So, who says more milk means lower prices, if prices go up when production goes up?

In any case, that two percent jump in the blend price was 26 cents, going from \$13.31 in September to \$13.57 for October milk.

Once again, it's a problem of understanding what the numbers mean. The Minnesota-Wisconsin price took a 35 cent jump in October because of the increase in the support price and purchases of butter, powder and cheese by the Commodity

Credit Corporation. That's what gave you 18 cents of that 26 cent increase — over half of it from last month's price support program. You got 18 cents because 51 percent of the pool was Class II milk.

Six cents of the increase came from a Class I price increase of 13 cents over September. That traces back to a 13 cent increase in the M-W in August, again due to CCC purchases and the price support program.

So, adding the 18 cent increase from Class I price to the six cent increase from the Class II price, you have 24 cents of the 26 cent increase coming from the price support program.

The rest of the increase can be accounted for by one

cent less than you got in your Louisville Plan payment over September and three cents more from an improvement of one percent in your Class I utilization which went from 47.8 to 48.7 in October.

That three cents out of 26 was the only indication of change in the market over last month in the Order 2 pool.

It's true higher production got you more money. But not because the law of supply and demand was repealed only because it isn't considered in the price support program which has been calling the shots in the milk market for over a year.

### FIFTY-FIFTY

I believe milk marketing is about 50 percent economics and 50 percent politics. That's an average.

With a new administration in Washington next year, and all the milk marketing decisions that have been delayed until after the election, and a new farm bill to be written by Congress, the proportions may change to 25 percent economics and 75 percent politics.

You probably don't have anything to worry about, though, because many people believe that the dairy industry is better at politics than it is with economics. You certainly can't com-

plain about the job done in the past by dairy cooperatives and general farm organizations.

In fact the dairy industry — especially among farm commodity organizations — is often held up as an example to other farm groups on how to get things done in the market as well as in Washington.

However, your political muscle may be put to the test next year, not only with the writing of a new price support program while you're producing record volumes of milk but at the same time fighting off all those organizations like the Community Nutrition Institute, the National Association for Milk Marketing Reform, and others who would like to take the federal milk marketing orders apart.

Former Pennsylvania Governor David Lawrence once said that there were more headaches in a quart of milk than in a fifth of whiskey. Whatever else you thought of Governor Lawrence, you have to admit he was a good politician.

If milk marketing problems tested his political talents, let's hope 1981 doesn't bring more headaches to the dairy industry than it can handle.

## Direct marketing conference held in Maryland

SILVER SPRINGS, Md — A national conference on direct marketing of agricultural products concluded Friday at the Sheraton Inn, Silver Spring, Md.

Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Jim Williams said the conference participants reviewed and evaluated direct marketing activities, including those done under the 1976 Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act.

"The development and expansion of commercial enterprise in which farmers can more profitably sell their commodities directly to consumers is benefitting American agriculture and consumers alike," Williams said.

"USDA is working with states, cities, universities and industries across the country to help develop roadside stands, 'pick-your-own' operations, open-air markets, tailgate markets and farmers' markets — including those in inner cities," he said.

The conference included workshops where each type of direct marketing outlet and the various state and city projects supporting them was reviewed, Williams said.

"From those and other conference sessions," he said. "We can assess the problems and potentials of direct marketing and develop future program plans."



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And blows out finely chopped bedding onto the cows' stalls right where you want it. Powered by your choice of electric or gasoline motor, the chopper turns on a dime. You can move along a row of free stalls or tie stalls fast enough to be 70 cows in 20 minutes. Blow bedding into calf pens or dry cow box stalls.

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