

CCC suspends Am. cheese purchases

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will suspend purchases of process American cheese until further notice, and instead will redirect purchases toward bulk Cheddar cheese, Secretary of Agriculture

John R. Block announced last Wednesday.

Block said the bulk purchases will be in 40- and 60-pound blocks and in 500-pound fiber barrels.

CCC purchases cheese, nonfat dry milk and butter on a com-

petitive bid basis as part of USDA's dairy price support program.

Due to large purchases of cheese in recent months, CCC's uncommitted inventory is at record levels, Block said, and available space for additional cheese

storage is limited. Buying Cheddar cheese in bulk will help alleviate some storage problems and will make handling easier, he said.

CCC's uncommitted inventory of cheese as of June 12 was about 290 million pounds of process

American cheese and about 188 million pounds of bulk Cheddar cheese. At the current rate of distribution, the uncommitted inventory of process American cheese represents about three years' use, Block said.

He said CCC has purchased process American cheese in the past because it comes in smaller, 5-pound packages and is the cheese preferred by recipients of domestic donation programs such as the school lunch program.

"This action will result in a cheese inventory with a wider range of potential use — including export — and still accomplish the intent of the dairy price support program," Block said.

Holstein convention scenes



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