

The Milk Check

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Pennsy Production
There has been a tendency of late for producers and politicians to shift blame for dairy industry supply/demand problems to the midwestern states. I guess it makes people feel better to point a finger at someone else when there's a problem but in this case, as usually happens, it only delays the decision making needed for a solution and tends to divide those whose support is needed to provide the greatest good for the greatest number.

No matter what the decision is, not everyone benefits (or suffers) uniformly. In the case of Pennsylvania role in increasing national milk production to 10 percent beyond the commercial and governmental demand, I believe we've contributed our share. Increases here have been nothing short of phenomenal when you consider that in 1960 we were producing 12 percent less milk than we were consuming in all dairy products and now we market

26 percent more than we eat or drink.

Living close to some high population densities inside and outside of the state have provided incentives to increase production — and there's nothing wrong with that — but let's see how we stack up nationally before we get defensive about "who's problem is it?"

The First Five

For a long time Pennsylvania has been in the top five states in milk production along with Wisconsin, California, New York and Minnesota, in that order. Last year these states produced over half the milk in the nation with Wisconsin contributing 17 percent; California, 11; New York and Minnesota, 8; and Pennsylvania, 7 percent.

They were in the same order back in 1979 — the last year that national supply and demand were in balance — but since then Wisconsin and California have each lost one percent of their share

of the national production and New York, Minnesota and Pennsylvania have gained about a half percent but in total they were making over half the milk in the country that year also.

State Increases

Looking at the annual increases in each of the top five states as a percent of the previous year's production, Pennsylvania has been in second place three of the five years since 1977. We had first place in 1977 and tied with Minnesota for the top spot last year. Total increases in the top five states since 1979 were 13 percent in California and eleven percent in Pennsylvania followed by Minnesota with 10 percent and much further down the line New York with four and Wisconsin with 3.5 percent.

The increases in pounds of milk for the same period for the top five states was 4.6 billion pounds with California contributing 36 percent to the increase followed by Pennsylvania and Minnesota with 19 percent; Wisconsin with 16 and New York with nine percent.

Putting it all together it appears that Pennsylvania was second only to California so you can say we've done our share of increasing with the best in the country.

Sun Belt Milk

Whenever someone talks about percentage increases in milk production the real record holders are in the "sun belt" states that have had recent population increases with shifts away from the "frost belt" states.

The most dramatic increases have been just within the last year and the top five states are New

Mexico, Idaho, Arizona, Utah and Colorado, in that order, with increases from eleven to eight percent in 1981.

However, the total milk production of all these states is only six billion pounds or less than five percent of the national production and only about two thirds of what we produced in Pennsylvania alone. So, percent production increases in these states are not very important in the national supply/demand situation and, for the most part, represent milk deficient areas because of increasing population.

A Spade a Spade

There will be a flood of rhetoric

on dairy industry problems from now to election time and you may hear a great deal of what someone thinks you want to hear — and you may enjoy listening — but try to keep your feet on the ground and don't be afraid to ask questions especially of speakers with easy answers.

Individual states may take different approaches but milk is produced in nearly every one of the 3,000 counties in the country and is more of a national commodity than any other farm product. We're also going to need friends wherever we can find them before we're through with this one, so let's not alienate anyone before we get started.

Pa. milk production up

HARRISBURG — Milk production in Pennsylvania during June 1982 totaled 793 million pounds, up three percent from a year earlier according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

The number of milk cows in the Commonwealth averaged 721,000 head, up 6,000 head from a year ago with milk production per cow in June averaging 1,100 pounds, up 20 pounds.

Milk production in the state during the April-June quarter totaled 2.4 billion pounds, three percent above the same period in 1981 and six percent above the first quarter of this year. Milk production per cow for the quarter averaged 3,317 pounds, 57 pounds more than in the second quarter last year.

Grain and other concentrates fed to milk cows in the Commonwealth on July 1 averaged 14.7 pounds per head, down 0.1 pound from last year at this time. The value of grains and other concentrates fed to milk cows averaged \$8.10 per hundredweight, down \$1.10 from a year earlier.

Milk production in the nation during the April-June quarter totaled 35.5 billion pounds, one percent above the same period last year and eight percent above the first quarter this year. Milk production per cow for the quarter averaged 3,233 pounds, seven pounds more than in the second quarter last year. Total milk cows in the United States averaged 11.0 million head during the quarter, about one percent more than the 1981 April-June average.



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