

Inter-State's Holly plant "turns the corner"

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LANCASTER — In his address to approximately 500 delegates and alternates, Holly Milk Cooperative Plant Manager Rod McLeod summarized the past year as one of "challenge, change and achievement," at Inter-State Milk Producers' 65th annual meeting this week.

McLeod said the year started with change at the highest level: the outright purchase of the plant from Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers, and sole ownership by Inter-State Milk Producers' Cooperative.

At the beginning of the year "the goal was to reorganize, consolidate and bring the operation into a 'break even' situation within twelve months," he said.

To achieve this goal, the management team was strengthened and reorganized during the first half of the year, with the addition of manufacturing, technical, and engineering managers, McLeod said. The first six months were spent in identifying and analyzing problems and implementing corrective action, he said.

"By May, a glimmer of light could be seen at the end of the tunnel; attitudes changed, confidence was regained and progress was steady and rewarding with the 'break even' point being achieved in the June operation," McLeod said.

In the June-July period, 95 percent of butter and powder qualified for the AA grade, McLeod said. Also during the June-

July period more than 85 percent of the butter produced was successfully packaged into print for Land O' Lakes, establishing Holly's reputation as a high quality member of the Land O' Lakes Cooperative, he added.

"The improvement in quality has provided a solid base to produce more profitable product lines in the future," McLeod said.

Other improvements to the milk plant included the installation of two 60,000 gallon raw milk storage silos, an automatic microprocessor controlled truck tank CIP system and a freezer with a capacity in excess of 800,000 pounds of butter. A new truck drivers' lounge was also constructed.

"At the beginning of the year our wastewater treatment plant was undoubtedly one of the most critical issues that we faced," McLeod said. The size of the operation, high biological oxygen demand of milk and sensitive ecological balance of the immediate environment were all unique, he continued.

McLeod said substantial investment in both manpower and capital went into the plant during the year and full regulatory compliance was achieved during the month of July.

"With the corner turned and an eye to the future, plans have been prepared and funds budgeted to ensure that the plant reflects our commitment to efficiency and quality," McLeod said.

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