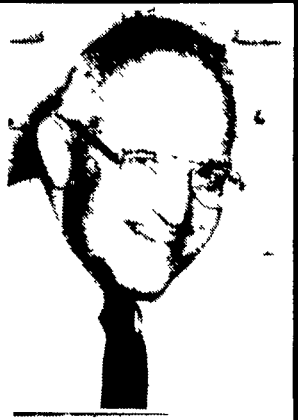


# The Milk Check

**TOM JURCHAK**  
County Agent



### Few Surprises

There were few surprises in the regulations implementing the Milk Diversion Program of the Dairy and Tobacco adjustment Act of 1983 when they were released recently.

We know now that the maximum variation in butterfat before penalties start is five tenths. In other words, if your average butterfat for the quarter was 3.5 per cent that you reported on your "Request for a Milk Base" your butterfat in the same quarter this year could go up to 4.0 per cent with no change in your diversion payment. Beyond that the payment will be reduced by \$2.00 a hundred for the extra butterfat over 4.0 per cent. This is to meet the requirement of the law that calls for payment of adjustments "if there is a marked deviation in the composition of milk marketed". Nothing is mentioned in the regulations about solids not fat.

Nothing is said in the regulations about selling "purebred" cattle for breeding purposes to producers without a contract. This may have to be a case by case decision to determine if the sale defeats the goals of the program so don't gamble on that until you get approval. The regulations only approve sales for slaughter; to another contractor or for export with no chance of their returning to this country. This includes all heifers born before April 1, 1983. Leased cows are also included and cannot be simply returned to the lessor to reduce production. When you complete your Milk Reduction Plan you'll have to list all the cows and heifers sold since November 8

but once the program starts you'll have to report all cattle sold or transferred within seven days of the sale and to whom. Verification of slaughter is still a question but the responsibility is on the producer and not the cattle dealer.

Payments will be made quarterly on application by the contractor but after the first quarter the payment will be determined by considering all the previous quarters. In other words, the payment isn't made on the basis of your performance in a single quarter but on your reductions from the start on January 1, 1984.

If you or your family have an interest in other dairy farms, this and the milk marketed from them, has to be reported in your contract. 1984 marketings from these farms must also be checked for any increases (if they are not under contract) before payment is made.

Adjustment of bases for abnormal production can be made by the County ASCS Committee using the average marketings of 1980; 1981 and 1982 for the "abnormal period" then calculating the base in the usual way using calendar 1982 or an average of 1981 and 1982 marketings. The deadline for contracts is still January 31 but the deadline for establishing bases is January 27 and that includes your evidence of marketings during the base period.

Finally, the most surprising thing to me was the modification of contracts. Once you sign the

contract there will be no opportunity for you to withdraw it if it is "modified" by the Secretary. However, nearly everything in the regulations refers to modification only if the total amount of reductions on the program is a threat to an adequate milk supply. That, of course, is a judgement call but when you consider that we now have a 12 per cent surplus it would take much more participation in the Milk Diversion Program than anyone expects right now. In addition, modification, if used must be applied uniformly over the whole country and not by geographic or marketing areas. Example - if the total reductions in the program amounted to 10 per cent of the present supply and the Secretary felt that was too much he could change all contracts by lowering the reduction by two per cent or whatever he thought would insure an adequate supply. He would also have to consider increases in production by dairy farmers who are not under contract.

Much of the time in the Conference Committee meeting was spent on protecting beef, pork and poultry prices from culled dairy cows but little or nothing is mentioned in the regulations about this but it will be considered. A summary of all the contracts in the country will be in Kansas City by February 2 so any modifications that are needed will certainly be made by the following week. If you participate, however, you will want to start making your reductions from January 1 because by February 15 you're half way through the first quarter.

You're allowed to do about anything you wish to reduce your marketings but you can't give away the milk to anyone or make butter or cheese (or any other dairy product) and sell that. Perhaps it would be all right if you stored the products until after March 31, 1985 but check with your ASCS director first.

### All the Pieces

So, all the pieces are now in place and County ASCS Directors will be attending training sessions

in Pennsylvania on January 10 and 11 and county meetings for all producers will be held soon after that. All the forms for establishing your base; making a reduction plan and a contract are all available in your ASCS office. All that remains is your decision on whether or not it is profitable for you to participate. Your Cooperative Extension office can help you with that but don't wait too long to request assistance from them or anyone else. Also check with your handler to determine the effect of your reduced marketings on your relationship with him.

### More Help

The television program made by Cornell University on "The New Dairy Bill - What Can Farmers Do?" will be shown over WVIA-TV, Channel 44, in Scranton at noon on Saturday, January 14, and all week during the Pennsylvania Farm Show at the Penn State exhibit by Jack Kirkland, Extension Dairy Specialist. Also, your county Extension agent has a mimeograph by Dick Adams of Penn State on "Reducing Farm Sales of Milk" that will be helpful in making your Milk Reduction Plan.

## Potato session Wednesday

DOVER, Del. — The potato session at the Delaware Vegetable Growers' Meeting Tuesday and Wednesday at the Sheraton Inn in Dover will begin at 12:15 Wednesday in the Sheraton's Mile High Lounge with a luncheon sponsored by FMC, Union Carbide and DuPont Chemical companies.

Grower Joe Jackewicz, Delaware representative to the National Potato Board, will discuss the board's pending referendum during the noon portion of the meeting. National Potato Board member Nate Churchill will also be on hand to answer questions and make a report. Reservations for the free luncheon are required and can be obtained by contacting University of Delaware county extension agent Bob Hochmuth at 736-1448.

No reservations are needed for the afternoon part of the program, which will be held in Parlor A on the inn's main floor. This will feature a talk by Dale Moyers, extension agent from Suffolk County, Long Island, on current efforts of growers there to control the Colorado potato beetle.

"Though Delaware producers have had trouble with the beetle, so far the problem hasn't been as severe here as on Long Island, where the pest quickly developed resistance to insecticides, thus limiting the number of effective control materials available."

Hochmuth says. "In Delaware, resistance has been slower to appear, so we still have good materials available in several different classes of chemicals. This allows us to rotate our insecticide sprays among classes, which is the most effective program for control. A good chemical rotation generally delays the development of resistance."

Following Moyers' talk, Hochmuth and Delaware extension entomologist Mark Graustein will lead a panel of growers and aerial applicators in a discussion of 1983 and 1984 insect control programs.

Bill Mapp of the Virginia Department of Agriculture also will report on the potato marketing outlook. The session will end with a presentation by Delaware extension vegetable specialist Ed Kee on his variety trials and russet potato fertility research.



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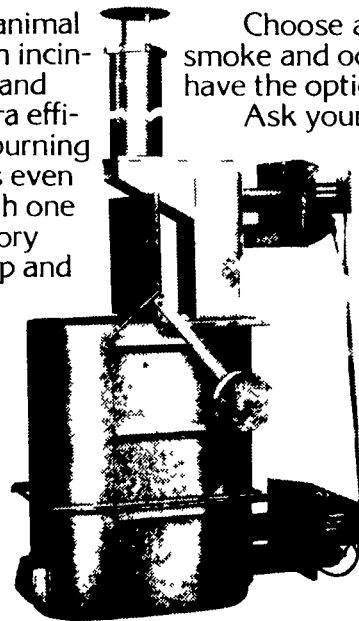
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