

Dairymen Inc. urges farmers to cooperate on raising milk prices

ATLANTA — Dairy farmers in the Southeast, struggling with a fragmented milk market and regional shortages spawned by economic conditions and the federal milk diversion program, must work together to bring up the price for their product. That was the message nearly 3,000 members of Dairymen Inc. milk marketing cooperative heard at their recent annual meeting in Atlanta, Ga.

"The economics of milk marketing say we should have a higher price for Class I (fluid) milk

in the area in which you operate," Dairymen Chief Executive Officer Ben F. Morgan Jr. told co-op members.

Ray Moss Tucker, a Finchville, Ky. dairy farmer who was elected president of the cooperative, said dairy farmers and others involved in agriculture should look forward to more and more market orientation in the future and rely less on government programs. He also called for team work among farmers to help the American public understand the plight of

farmers and put an end to the national "cheap-food policy."

"It takes all farmers working together to raise the price or hold the price," Morgan said. "I believe this very strongly, the future of the dairy business lies in the hands of all the farmers. They can make it or break it."

Morgan said this is why Dairymen helped organize and supports the efforts of the Sunbelt Dairy Federation, an organization of dairy cooperatives and independent farmers seeking to raise milk prices by \$1 on every 100 pounds (almost 12 gallons) of milk sold for the fluid market.

And, although 1984 was a difficult year for most segments of agriculture, Dairymen Inc. reported its fourth consecutive year with consolidated sales of more than \$1 billion. Net margins or profits amounted on \$8.3 million, more than \$2 million over 1983 profits.

The co-op's nearly 7,500 members received \$95.79 for every \$100

worth of raw milk they sold through their organizations during the year ending Aug. 31. In all, Dairymen marketed 5.94 billion pounds (for almost 700 million gallons) of milk in fiscal 1984.

Along with working to raise prices for milk produced by farmer-members, co-op officials said efforts are underway to streamline operations and improve efficiency in order to put more dollars into its members' checks.

"We know our challenge is to operate efficiently and to be cost effective in today's market," Morgan told members. To do this, the co-op has embarked on a program to consolidate co-op offices into regional centers and has phased out processing and bottling operations at several Flav-O-Rich plants. Flav-O-Rich is Dairymen's processing and bottling subsidiary.

"The Road Ahead" was the theme for the Dairymen annual meeting—held Dec. 14 and 15—which marked the sixteenth year for the milk marketing co-op.

Dairymen is headquartered in Louisville, Ky., and has operations in 17 eastern and southeastern states. Along with marketing milk produced by its members, Dairymen sells milk, ice cream and other refrigerated dairy products under the Flav-O-Rich label and unrefrigerated, long shelf-life Farm Best milk and Sip Ups flavored milk.

During its annual meeting, Dairymen honored "Outstanding Young Dairymen" couples selected at 11 of the co-op's member divisions. The cooperative's corporate board of directors also conducted elections for new officers. Elected along with Tucker were: First Vice President Franklin J. Teague, Elon College, N.C.; Second Vice President Edgar Garnett, Charlottesville, Va.; Third Vice President Charles McBee, Corryton, Tenn.; Secretary Carl B. Allison, Chambersburg, Pa.; and Treasurer Richard Riggs, Evansville, Ind.

Milkfat test variations topic of dairy management meeting

BLUE BALL — The Eastern Lancaster County Adult Farmer Program will present an educational meeting on dairy management on Tuesday evening, January 8th, at 7:30 p.m. in the Blue Ball Elementary School. The main topic of discussion will be "Causes of Milkfat Test Variations and Depression." What effect feeding, management, stage of lactation, age of animals, season of the year, and how samples are handled and tested has on milkfat test will be discussed in detail.

Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County Extension Service, Dairy Specialist, will be the speaker. Shirk will be showing a slide series on milkfat test variations; a question and answer session on other dairy management practices will also be included.

All interested persons are invited to attend the dairy management meeting. The Blue Ball School is located between

Routes 23 and 322 on Ewell Road just east of the village of Blue Ball. For additional information contact the Eastern Lancaster County Adult Farmer Program at 354-4525.



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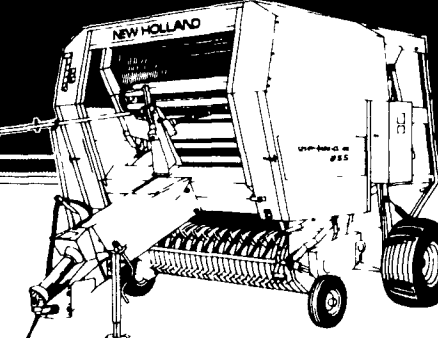
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