

Milk Production Drops For Third Consecutive Month

BY MARTHA J. GEHRINGER
WASHINGTON — Milk production nationwide dropped for the third consecutive month in September, according to a USDA report issued Thursday.

The report includes data from 21 states which produce 85.1 percent of the milk in the country, John Rourke, USDA agricultural marketing specialist noted.

In September 1986 total production, for the 21 states reporting, stood at 9.8 billion pounds of milk. This level dropped 3 percent from the September 1985 total of 10 million pounds of milk, Rourke said.

For the quarter from July to September 1986 the total U.S. milk production dropped 2 percent from the same period in 1985, Rourke noted.

Pennsylvania's total milk volume also dropped in September 1986 to the 822 million pounds. This total decreased 1 percent from the September 1985 volume of 827 million pounds. Pennsylvania continued with the nationwide trend, and recorded a three-month-low total volume of milk. In August 1986 production stood at 851 million pounds of milk compared to 867 million pounds of milk in July 1986.

New York state farmers decreased total milk production by 3 percent from September 1985 to September 1986. Wisconsin recorded a 4 percent decrease for the same period, Rourke said.

However, the USDA official

noted that Maryland and California reversed the nationwide trend and recorded increases in total production. Milk volume increased by 1 percent in Maryland and 2 percent in California.

At the end of September, 52 percent of the cows in the buyout program were taken out of production, either by export or slaughter, Rourke explained. The removal of this volume of cows in the first buyout period account for the drop in production, he explained.

The buyout program and the drought in the southeast portion of the nation accounted for a 4 percent drop in the number of cows on farms nationwide, the marketing specialist noted.

In September 1986 there were 8.9 million cows recorded in the 21 states reporting, down from 9.3 million cows in September 1985.

For the same period, Pennsylvania reported a decrease of

11,000 cows. The September 1986 total, 734,000, remained constant from August 1986. Maryland increased the number of cows from 124,000 in September 1985 to 125,000 in September 1986.

New York recorded a decrease of 17,000 cows during the September-to-September period.

USDA figures also show that California dropped from one million cows in September 1985 to 992,000 cows in September 1986. Wisconsin decreased the number of cows for the same period by 39,000.

These decreases are offset by a 11 percent increase in production per cow, Rourke said.

Nationwide production per cow for September 1986 was recorded at 1,090 pounds compared to 1,079 pounds in September 1985. In Pennsylvania per cow production increased from 1,110 to 1,120. New York and Maryland recorded 10 pound increases per cow for the same period.

The Minnesota-Wisconsin price was favorably influenced by the decrease in production and staged an increase of 43 cents for September 1985 to the \$11.55 mark in September 1986. The M-W price is up 22 cents from August 1986 and 49 cents from July 1986, Rourke said.

All milk wholesale sold for \$12.28 per hundredweight in September 1986, an increase of 25 cents from September 1985.

In Federal Order 2 the minimum price per hundredweight for Class 1 milk increased from \$13.35 to \$13.61 for the September-to-September period, according to figures released this week by the Thomas Wilson, Order 2 market administrator.

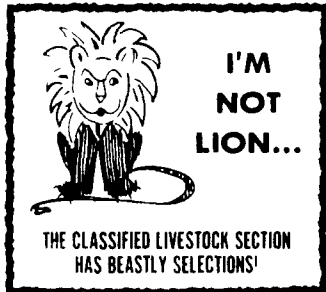
Producers in Federal Order 4 received a minimum of \$14.09 for Class 1 milk in September 1986, an increase of 21 cents from the September 1985 price of \$13.88, according to figures released by Joseph Shine, Order 2 market administrator.

The total number of producers in each Federal Order decreased. In Order 2, there were 15,569 total producers in September 1986 compared to 16,486 in September 1985.

Order 4 listed 6,484 producers in September 1986 compared to 6,702 producer in September 1985, a decrease of 218 producers.

Producers in Order 4, however, increased production by .6 percent for the period, according to the market administrators figures. In September 1986, the dairymen shipped 513 million pounds of milk compared to 510 million pounds in September 1985.

Yet, dairymen in Order 2 decreased production for the same period by 1.9 percent, or 17.7 million pounds. In September 1986, producers in Order 2 shipped 913 million pounds of milk compared to 930.8 million pounds of milk in September 1985, according to the market administrators figures for the month.



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