

Cornell Conference To Explore Pros and Cons of Milk Quotas

ITHACA, N.Y. — The pros and cons of establishing a nationwide mandatory milk quota system for the U.S. dairy industry to curb chronic milk surpluses and to improve prices for farmers will be debated in Syracuse on Nov. 13.

The debate will be part of the day-long Cornell Conference on Supply Management Programs for the Dairy Industry at the Sheraton Inn on Electronics Parkway beginning at 10 a.m.

David L. Call, dean of the New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, which is sponsoring the conference, will make welcoming remarks.

Speaking for establishment of a milk quota program will be Ronald Knutson, a professor of agricultural economics from

Texas A and M University. Opposing views will be given by Bernard F. Stanton, a professor of agricultural economics at Cornell.

Conference participants also will examine various aspects of quota systems, including the past, present and future directions of dairy policy, considerations in the design and implementation of a national compulsory supply management program, potential impacts of quota systems on economic efficiency and equity among dairy farmers.

Cornell University agricultural economist Harry M. Kaiser, who is organizing the conference, said that intense grassroots interest in alternative forms of supply management for the nation's dairy industry has been developing over

the last several years.

"Most notable among such programs is a national mandatory milk quota system," Kaiser said. "If such a system is adopted, it would create tremendous changes and would have significant ramifications on all segments of the dairy economy."

Public interest in mandatory supply management or production quota programs has been rising because of fears that the burgeoning surpluses of dairy products, high costs of removing surpluses under the federal price support program and declining prices for producers will persist, according to Kaiser.

"Some people are also concerned that our experiments with 'voluntary' forms of supply

management such as the recent federal whole-herd buyout and milk diversion programs are merely a band-aid approach to the problems facing the dairy industry," he said.

Supporters of a national mandatory quota system point to similar systems adopted in other countries such as Canada and members of the European Community as success stories that could be repeated in the United States, according to Kaiser.

"But the mechanics and implications of milk quota systems in effect in those countries are poorly understood," he said. "The structure of the dairy industry as well as social and political institutions are quite different in these countries."

For more information about the conference program and registration, contact Harry Kaiser, Department of Agricultural Economics, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850 or at (607) 255-1598.



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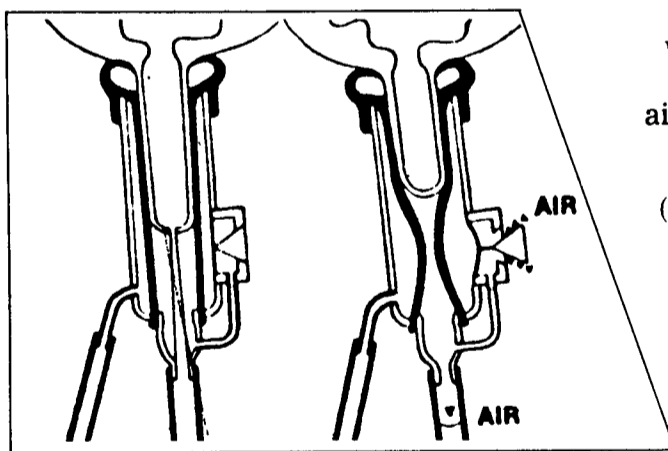
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