

# Farm Philosophy

By  
Newton Bair

## Spring Fever

Don't worry. This malady reaches epidemic proportions every year, about mid-April. While no one is immune, some of us come down harder than others when it hits.

### Symptoms?

Extreme lethargy (that's a nice word for laziness), loss of appetite (except for ham, chicken, potato stuffing, ice cream and apple pie), an urge to get in the pick-up and take in a few sales (never can tell what bargains slip through), and an uncontrollable urge to breathe the fumes from the diesel tractor with a plow hitched behind. These are the male symptoms, of course. Those of the female may vary slightly, but with the same general debilitating effect.

### The cure?

That's what this essay is all about. After all, you can't get this kind of advice from a doctor. Only great age and vast experience can gather the answers, and only a self-treated and highly inflated windbag is willing to pass along the know-how. For free, too. You're welcome.

The most painful surge of the fever usually hits at 5:30 a.m. The

jingle (or maybe the gentle buzz) of the clock sets off a reaction in the brain that shatters into fragments all the dreams that linger from the deep peace just before the darn thing rang. There's no cure for the alarm clock jitters, except to tune your ears to the song of the robin outside the window. And, of course, the smell of bacon frying in the kitchen. (Assuming

that Mom is not similarly afflicted).

You don't even have to admit that you are a victim of Spring Fever. If you do stoop that low, make it sound as devil-may-care as possible. You are not going to get any sympathy anyway.

Chances are that nearly everyone else in the household has it too, and even if the contagion hasn't spread through the family yet, a thoroughly-well member usually irritates and aggravates the sorely afflicted ones. Better just keep it to yourself, and hope that no one notices.

Some of the Fever symptoms can be downright pleasant, if you don't let your conscience get in the way. Take the urge to forget the cares of the day, or to linger over the toast and coffee, for instance.

What's two or three minutes to whoever is waiting for you to commence the day?

The udders get a little fuller, and the pigs a little hungrier, but the delay is soon forgotten because the master has lost a little bit of his fever. Only don't keep the banker waiting too long. If his blood pressure doesn't rise his interest rate will, and his eyes get dimmer with dollar signs as he is kept waiting.

Some will try to beat those earliest symptoms by feigning more serious maladies, like a sudden crick in the back, or a head that throbs to the beat of the milking machine. In cases like these, let mom and the kids do the clean-up chores. You should head for the pick-up, and tend to the more urgent business in town. Maybe you're fresh out of cigars or snuff, anyway.

In most people, spring fever does not become chronic. It is seasonal, and no more dangerous than a cold. It is never fatal, and when cured, the world and all about us is a better place. You can forget the

oldtime cures like sulfur and molasses, or dandelion greens. They worked, back when the winter diet consisted of fried potatoes, fried mush, and fried pork pudding. Something green and slippery was needed about this time of year.

So enjoy this year's bout with spring fever. Winter is behind us now, and the whole warm season lies ahead. Pet the dog, speak softly to the family, and put an extra dollar in the collection plate. After all, when spring comes, can the beauty and bounty of summer be far behind?

## Order 4 Milk Priced At \$14.06

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Middle Atlantic Order Market Administrator Joseph D. Shine announced a Class I milk price of \$14.06 per hundredweight for May 1987. This price is down 24 cents from April but is 1 cent above last May's Class I price.

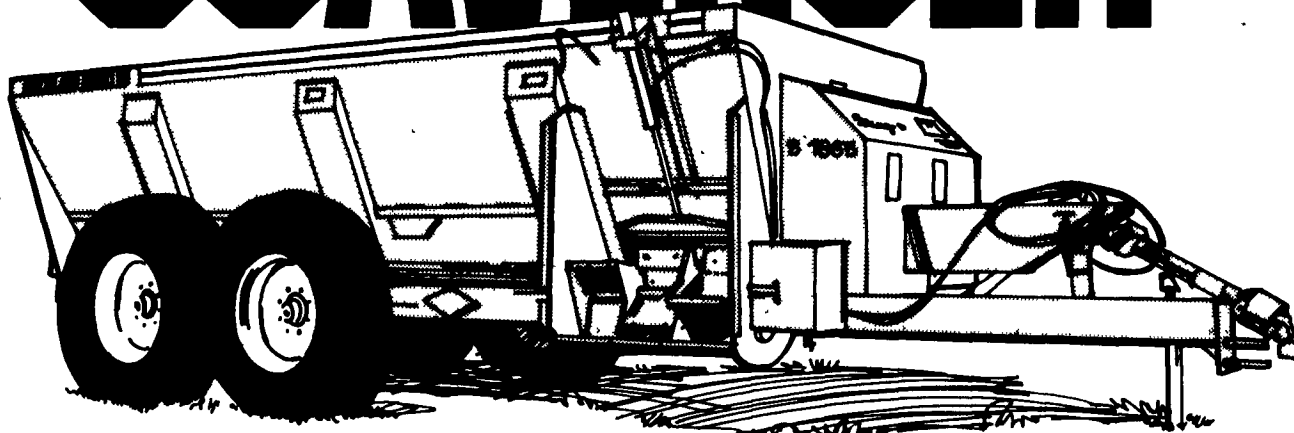
Shine announced a Class II milk price of \$11.00 per hundredweight for March 1987 and a butterfat differential of 15.8 cents for the month. The Class II price was down 31 cents from the previous month, while the butterfat dif-

ferential increased one-tenth of a cent.

The May 1987 Class I price and the March 1987 Class II price are based on the March 1987 Minnesota-Wisconsin manufacturing milk price of \$11.03 per hundredweight at a 3.5 percent butterfat content.

The USDA reported that the wholesale price of Grade A butter at Chicago for March was \$1.3781 per pound and the nonfat dry milk price was \$.7909 per pound, f.o.b. plants in the Chicago area.

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simply some of the bugs we worked out of the Scavenger years ago.

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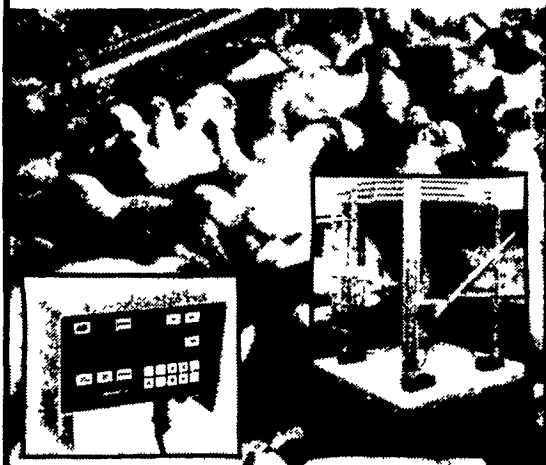
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