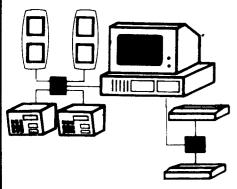
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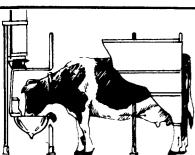


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Leprino/Eastern Announce Expansion, **Cash Premiums**

WAVERLY, N.Y. - Leprino Foods and Eastern Milk Producers jointly announced an expansion program at their mozzarella cheese plant here, and a new cash premium program that will boost farmers' income.

A \$6 million expansion and renovation program is underway at the plant, said Cy Carne, a Leprino vice president.

"This program entails new equipment, replacement equip-ment and improved facilities, including additional storage space," Carne said.

He noted that the expansion would enable Leprino to continue to meet the growing needs of its cheese customers, and also secure present employment.

"Combined with our other cheese plant in Horseheads the local Leprino workforce totals 330 people," Carne said, with an annual payroll in excess of \$6 million.

Eastern President Earl Forwood, a dairy farmer from Hop Bottom, Pa., said the new premium program would put an additional "three quarters of a million dollars" in the pockets of farmers shipping milk to the cheese plants.

He said the premium program was three-pronged, and included a 10-cents per hundredweight competitive premium, up to another 20 cents per hun-dredweight for quality, and up to an additional 70 cents per hun-dredweight for milk with high protein content.

Eastern General Manager Michael Donovan noted that every farmer who ships milk to the cheese plants through Eastern will get the 10-cent competitive premium, and that "the majority of farmers will also qualify" for the quality premiums.

"In practical terms," Donovan said, "an average farmer with a herd of 40 to 50 cows producing 600,000 pounds of milk a year, could receive.\$1,200 to \$1,800 in additional income."

That extra income could jump to over \$5,000 for an average farmer with a high protein herd who also qualifies for the protein premium, he said.

Donovan added, "We are also offering special fall premiums aimed at boosting milk production in the autumn when milk supplies have traditionally been short. Farmers will receive a premium of \$1 per hundredweight for milk that exceeds spring production, and they also will receive a 40-cent premium for fall milk that exceeds last fall's production levels."

Donovan said the new cash premium program, combined with the fall premiums, would provide

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'a much-needed economic boost to the farmers of the region."

Carne noted that Leprino's \$6 million payroll was only part of the economic picture for the New York-Pennsylvania Twin Tier region. He said the picture would not be complete without taking into account the \$80 million that Leprino paid for farmers' milk.

The cheese plants at Waverly and Horseheads are owned by the member-farmers of Eastern, and are operated by Leprino under a 20-year lease arrangement.

Eastern provided approximately 700 million pounds of milk to the plants last year. Mozzarella cheese production totaled about 70 million pounds, with the majority of that coming from the Waverly facility, which is the largest mozzarella plant in the U.S.