

Milk Consumption Up In PA

UNIVERSITY PARK — Lower prices, higher incomes and successful advertising have brought good news to Pennsylvania dairy farmers.

Per capita consumption of fluid milk is up 2.1 percent over last year, and that means dairy farmers are getting a higher return for the milk they market.

"Farmers receive payment for raw milk according to its use," says Jack Kirkland, assistant professor of agricultural economics at Penn State. "Raw milk used in fluid products such as milk for drinking receives a higher price than milk used for other products such as cheese and butter."

Figures comparing this year's milk consumption to last year's by type of milk and by region of the state were released earlier this week in the "Dairy Marketing Information" newsletter, prepared by Kirkland and Blair Smith also an economist in Penn State's College of Agriculture.

"Our figures show a definite trend toward the consumption 2 percent milk," says Kirkland. "Consumption of 2 percent across the state is up in all areas — an average of 19.6 percent more than last year."

People may be switching from whole to low-fat milk for health reasons and from very low-fat milk — such as skim and 1 percent — to 2 percent because it tastes better. Kirkland thinks some are switching from whole milk because they don't understand that even standard whole milk has only 3.25 to 4 percent butterfat — not much compared to many other types of food.

"The national and state milk marketing programs that stress the health benefits of milk have also brought many adult consumers back to milk," says Kirkland. He sees that trend continuing statewide but notes some variations among the regions.

On the average, people in Philadelphia and the southeastern part of the state consume the least amount milk — 21.64 gallons a year per person — compared to the state average of 24.31 gallons.

"One explanation for the low regional consumption in the Philadelphia area may be that some people have problems with lactose — tolerance, which makes it hard to digest regular milk products," says Kirkland. The southeastern part of the state is the most urbanized area with a wide mix of populations and some are more prone to lactose problems than others.

At the other end of the state in Pittsburgh, people love their milk. Residents of the western area of the state drink an average of 25.49 gallons of milk a year, 52.7 percent of it as standard whole milk and a whopping 28.3 percent as 2 percent.

"Both the western and the west central areas show a significant rise in consumption of 2 percent milk," says Kirkland. "Why? I'd say most of that increase comes from national and state advertising campaigns on top of an already established trend toward drinking 2 percent for reasons of health and taste."



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Schedule of Events

Saturday, September 19
6:00 p.m. - Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Pageant, Marriott Inn

Monday, September 21
8:00 a.m. - INVITATIONAL YOUTH JUDGING CONTEST (4-H, FFA, and Intercollegiate)
8:00 a.m. - PENNSYLVANIA JUNIOR DAIRY SHOW
7:00 p.m. - All-American Banquet, Sheraton Harrisburg East
7:00 p.m. - Invitational Brown Swiss Sale

Tuesday, September 22
9:00 a.m. - NATIONAL GUERNSEY SHOW
9:00 a.m. - PAA MILKING SHORTHORN SHOW
10:00 a.m. - JUNIOR DAIRYMAN CONTEST
10:00 a.m. - PENNSYLVANIA 4-H & FFA DAIRY JUDGING FORUM

Wednesday - September 23
9:00 a.m. - EASTERN NATIONAL BROWN SWISS SHOW
1:30 p.m. - Pennsylvania State Jersey Sale

Thursday, September 24
9:00 a.m. - PAA JERSEY SHOW
12:00 noon - EASTERN NATIONAL HOLSTEIN SHOW (dry cow, calf, heifer and bull classes in that order)
1:30 p.m. - Pennsylvania Elite Ayrshire Sale
7:00 p.m. - ALL-AMERICAN HOLSTEIN SALE

Friday, September 25
9:00 a.m. - PAA AYRSHIRE SHOW
9:00 a.m. - EASTERN NATIONAL HOLSTEIN SHOW (milking classes and groups)

Entries Close: August 21 and September 3, 1987

For Information, Premium List, and Entry Blanks Contact:
Charles A. Iffe, Manager
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