

Drought Could Cut Dairy Farm Income In Half

ARLINGTON, Va. — Effects of the drought could cut dairy farmers income in half over the next 12 months. Estimates released today by National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) show a potential drop in net cash income that could reach nearly 70 percent because of increased feed costs, lower prices for the animals which are culled and sold for meat, and an impending support price cut in January. Net cash income is the money farmers have available to pay debt principal, income taxes and family living expenses.

NMPF says that farmers in the Midwest, for example, are already feeding their cows hay that would normally be used next winter because their pastures have dried up.

Farmers who must buy hay face skyrocketing prices. One feed cooperative in Ohio reports that it must purchase alfalfa hay from Idaho at double the price of last year's local hay. While corn yields cannot yet be determined, a minimum crop loss of 15 to 20 percent is already likely in most of the Midwest.

Even before the drought began, NMPF estimated that dairy farmers faced a \$700 million loss if the U.S. Department of Agriculture implements another cut in the dairy price support level in January. A grass roots effort is underway to convince Agriculture Secretary Lyng not to implement further price reductions.

Says NMPF's Chief Executive James C. Barr, "At current milk and feed prices, a 15 percent increase in feed costs equates to an effective reduction to the farmer of 50 cents for each 100 pounds of milk marketed. This drought means farmers are already experiencing the same impact as a price cut."

NMPF member cooperatives meet in St. Louis today to assess drought damage in the different regions and to agree upon what actions must be taken to stabilize the incomes of the nation's dairy farmers.

NMPF is a 73-year-old farm commodity organization that represents dairy farmers and their milk marketing cooperatives. The Federation serves as a forum for the development of positions on national dairy policy and communicates the needs and concerns of its members to the Congress and the Administration.

CRYSTAL SPRING — An open house and dedication of the new national office building of the Red & White Holstein Association will be held here Saturday, July 23 at 11 a.m. John Carpenter, office manager, said that visitors from

across the U.S. and Canada are expected to attend. Included in the day's activities will be: tours of the building, a welcome from National President Jere Good, and a chicken barbecue at noon.

The National Red & White

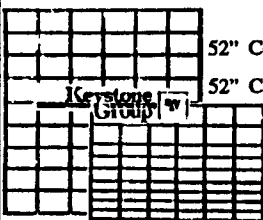
Holstein Association has 1300 members and is officially recognized by USDA. The new home office is located eight miles south-east of Breezewood on Route 915. More information may be obtained by calling 814-735-4221.

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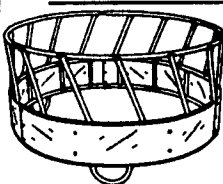
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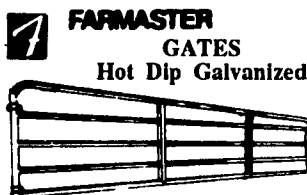


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