

RCMA Announces 30 Cent Payout For December

BATAVIA, N.Y.—The 22,000 dairy farmer members of the Regional Cooperative Marketing Agency (RCMA) received a cash premium of \$0.30 per hundred pounds (cwt) of their milk shipped during December, 1988.

According to a survey conducted by the Legislative Commission on Dairy Industry Development in Albany, N.Y., 88 percent of the 2,300 New York farmers surveyed were members of RCMA. Senator John McHugh said, "The reason for dairy farmers' overwhelming support for RCMA is obvious from their questionnaire responses. Eighty percent stated that they were not receiving substantial premiums prior to July 1987 when RCMA announced its first over-order price (a price higher than what the government sets for Class I fluid milk). More than 80 percent believed that these premiums would not continue if RCMA ceased setting prices."

According to RCMA Executive Director and General Manager, Ed Anna, "These RCMA premiums have cost consumers \$0.06 per gallon of whole milk over the last sixteen months." Anna explained that this small cost to consumers has resulted in farm income of nearly \$45 MILLION for the same sixteen-month period.

"In other words," said Anna, "During December, that consumer-paid \$0.06 per gallon helped each one of RCMA's 22,000 farm families by giving them an average of \$300 for the milk they produced during December." (This amount is figured on an average milk production per month of 100,000 pounds.)

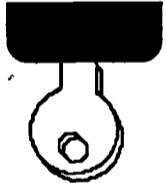
RCMA President, Bill Zuber agrees with Anna that RCMA is performing a very necessary service for dairy farm families in the Northeast, and this service is coming at a minimal cost to consumers. "We need to continue to educate both the dairy farmers and the general public on the importance of our organization's existence."

Zuber pointed out that from December 1987 to December 1988, nearly 1,500 farm families in the Northeast have been lost because of poor economic conditions in the dairy industry. "Since there are fewer and fewer local dairy farms, milk is being transported from farther and farther away to reach consumers; this extended travel time increases the price to the consumer and decrease the quality of the milk," said Zuber. "We all need to work together to keep our dairy farmers in business and our milk supply close to home," Zuber emphasized.

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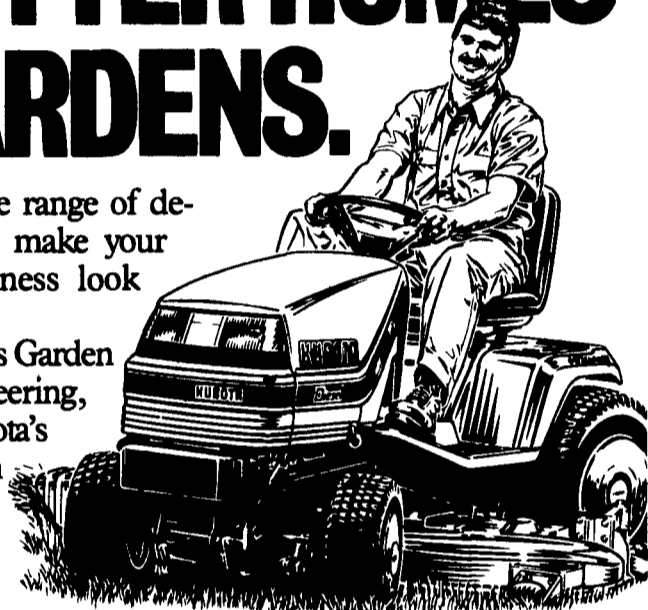
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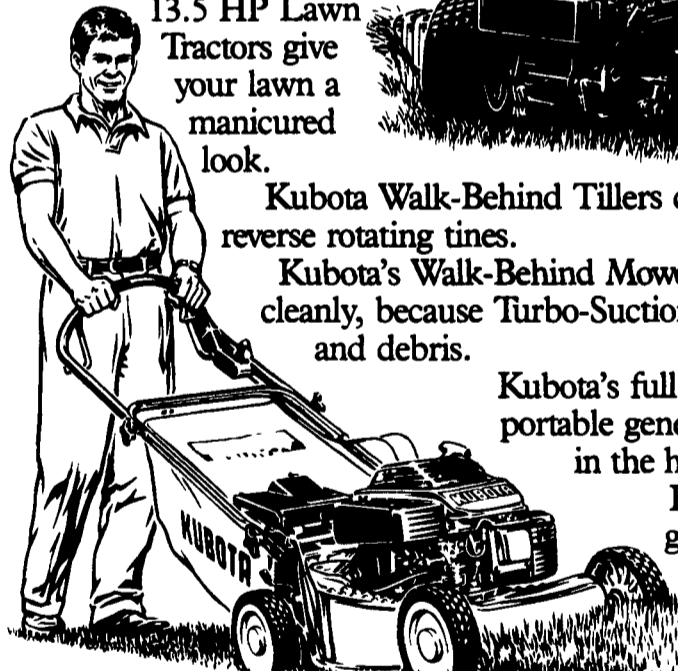
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