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ber to stay home and milk every morning at 5:00 a.m. when he's watching his brother make more money while working five days a week at the local auto plant," he says.

MMI Director of Marketing Rod Carlson says the government is still paying an important role in stabilizing the price of milk to the producers and the price of dairy

products to the consumers.

"But, still it's been a long time since the government has purchased any dairy products. The surplus is gone and we're now feeling the effects," explains Carlson.

The government buys surplus dairy products during times of overproduction to keep the market stable, then uses these purchases for government programs. USDA reports that the government has

bought no milk powder in the last year.

"And the lack of price assurances brought about by the lower support price levels means that an adequate safety net no longer exists for farmers. Many of them simply can't afford the risks," says Carlson.

Carlson predicts that the current rising cost in wholesale milk

prices is not over and prices may not peak for another month or two.

MMI is a 7,000-member dairy farmer owned cooperative encompassing an eight state midwestern area including Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Michigan, New York, Kentucky, Maryland and West Virginia. Last year MMI marketed more than 3.9 billion pounds or 3,930 million gallons of milk.

## Dairymen Say:

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to having cash flow problems," Dr. Keller states. "Very few could be described as doing well financially."

"Few farmers had formal retirement plans beyond Social Security and a farm failure could have a devastating impact on their retirement plans.

The survey revealed that more than half of those running dairy farms were between 49 and 74 years of age. Most had sons or grandsons to help them. The mean number of cows milked among the farmers surveyed was 58 and the mean number of acres farmed was 365.

"It became clear we were studying the survivors of a group of farmers that has been dwindling over much of the century," Dr. Keller says.

In Bradford, Lycoming and Tioga counties alone, more than 400 dairy farms went out of business between 1975 and 1988.

Pennsylvania, with more than 700,000 head of dairy cows statewide, ranks fifth nationally in milk production.

The survey of dairy farm families was sponsored by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, an agency of the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

"We wanted to learn about the histories of these families, their experiences in the present and their plans and expectations for the future," Dr. Keller says.

"The future of many small communities in Pennsylvania can be related directly to the future of family farms."

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## TESTIMONIALS



"The greatest advantage of being involved in the progeny test program is being years ahead in your genetic program when a bull like VICTORY or KING comes through with a high proof.

The progeny test program benefits provide the incentive to keep our records especially accurate and up-to-date on our registered Guernsey herd.

If dairymen want to see progress in the breed sampling young sires is essential."

**Gary Heinemann**

Goldenrose Guernsey Farm, Readlyn, IA.  
Daughter, Tracy, and father, Kenneth  
(1st place Best Three Females, Nat'l Show 1987)



"The incentive of the progeny test program is the chance to get genetically superior bulls at an attractive price. Genetically, the potential of the ABS young sires is much better than a herd bull used for clean up. And, normally, we never have more than two daughters from any one bull, so our risk is kept to a minimum. We also devote much attention to recordkeeping and benefit from the credits we receive for submitting reports on young sire offspring."

**Randy Ricca, Lawrence Ricca & Sons**  
Ricca Dairy, Salinas, CA  
RHA: 22,632M 873F, 420 Holsteins



"We've been on the ABS progeny test program since 1979. We currently receive 50 units of young sire semen for our herd of 75 Holsteins and use it primarily for breeding first-lactation cows. We have had quite a few good daughters from young bulls.

The credit benefits make it nice to be compensated for keeping good records. The program also helps to lower our semen investment. Who knows, we might be testing the next VALIANT!"

**Vernon Treinen, herdsman**

Trei-Four-Aces Farm, DeForest, WI  
Co-Host, 1986 Wisconsin Farm  
Progress Days



"We started on the young sire program as soon as it was available, not necessarily because of the credit benefits, but because we like the genetics of the young sires. We also believe it's our responsibility to the breed to help sample young bulls."

**Jim Head**  
Sycamore Jerseys  
Aurora, MO

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