

# Atlantic Dairy Co-op Members Get Strength In Unity

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**BIRD-IN-HAND** (Lancaster Co.) — Leaders of the Atlantic Dairy Cooperative locals of District No. 5 met last week to review the 1990 business year, present awards and elect officers for 1991.

Atlantic Dairy Cooperative is a relatively new organization in that it was formed several years ago with the merger of Lehigh and Interstate cooperatives.

District No. 5 locals consist of Millersville, West Lampeter, Paradise and Witmer locals. District No. 5 officers are Melvin Eby, president; Rodney Denlinger, vice president; and Nelson Habecker, secretary-treasurer.

In the West Lampeter local: Rodger Mills was elected president; J. Martin Harnish, vice president; John Howard, secretary-treasurer; and delegates are Robert Gochenaur III and Darrell Martin. Alternate delegates are J. Nelson Harnish and Andrew Mellinger.

In the Millersville local: Joe Hess, president; Richard Rohrer, vice president; David Garber, secretary-treasurer; and delegates are Glenn Burkholder and Elvin Hess. Alternates are David Charles and Glenn Rohrer. On the hauling committee is Glenn Binkley.

In the Witmer local: Mervin H. Bare, president; Raleigh Rhodes, vice president; Harvey Heller, secretary-treasurer; delegates are John Landis and Harvey Heller. Alternates are Mervin Bare and Raleigh Rhodes.

In the Paradise local: Melvin Eby, president; Daniel Stoltzfus, vice president; Robert Bowman, secretary-treasurer; delegates are Melvin Beiler and Rodney Denlinger. Alternates are Eugene Lapp and David Stoltzfus.

Key speaker was James Fraher, economist for ADC. Fraher said that the outlook for the dairy producer may be negative for the short term, but it's "Not all gloom and doom."

Fraher said he could see good things coming out of the current depressed milk price situation.

He said that with Atlantic being in business for as long as it has — including the years before the smaller cooperatives joined together to form Atlantic — it proves that being a member of a cooperative works and will continue to provide strength for the individual through the power of the group.

From an analytical viewpoint, however, Fraher said that with dairy producers becoming more and more subject to market influences it will up to the dairyman to learn how to adjust to fluctuating prices, which can be expected to be normal in coming years.

He said because of the dependency on the market, it will not take much of a change in the balance of supply and demand to make a big difference in price.

"Last spring, sales were 7 percent above sales the year before that," Fraher said. "Some of that was inventory building by cheese companies and others, but see long term strength a lot of people bought cheese and powder."

Then suddenly, with reserve stocks by private industry built up, sales of product started to not quite meet the expected rate.

And meanwhile, California milk production came on strong and was mostly used in powder, thus collapsing the price of milk, he said.

"We got a bigger change in price that change in supply and

demand," Fraher said. "But it's not as out of balance as it was in the mid-1980s."

For his predictions, Fraher said he can see milk prices slipping more; about 30- to 40-cents more before hitting rock bottom.

However, Fraher said that the dread of \$10 milk is not going to happen for several reasons, but basically because of premiums and over order prices, it will not go below \$13 for Class I and \$10 for Class II. The resulting blend price he predicted will not go below \$12.50.

Furthermore, because of normal seasonal supply-demand swings, he said he expects to see an increase of \$1 to \$1.50 per hundredweight by fall.

He said the average for the year in Federal Order 4 will be about \$12.50 and blend price in Federal Order 2 will be close to that.

Furthermore, while Fraher said it is too early to predict trends in the price, he expects that by June to see a decrease in production, because cow numbers are down.

And even though the production decrease should be relatively small, "I think we're going to see more response to price."



From the left, receiving 25-year awards for membership in Atlantic Dairy Cooperative are John M. Harnish and Joe Hess, of Singing Maple Farms. Presenting the awards and holding up a quality award to be given to Glenn E. Burkholder, is retiring field representative Andrew Marvin.

He said that with dairy products, being in an elastic supply and demand, big prices changes will occur with little change in supply

or demand. It will be mid-1992 before any real recovery, he said. The economic position of Atlan-

tic Dairy Co-op is a mirror of the economic position for the individual dairyman.

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