

# Milk Price Stability Sought

**Editor's Note:** This is the final part of a series on milk pricing.

**VERNON ACHENBACH JR.**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
WEST FALLOWFIELD (Chester Co.) — At least in Pennsylvania, under the current set of circumstances, the prognosis for on-the-farm milk prices is not good, according to a variety of sources.

Although milk prices are continuing to make incremental recoveries, the trend in dairying in Pennsylvania has been a continued decrease in the number of farms, and an increase in the number of cows per farm and the milk production per cow.

In simple terms, it means that small dairies are failing and the

slack in production that results is being picked up by larger and more stable facilities.

Although there has been some finger pointing to the retail sector of price gouging, and some of it has been substantiated by state officials and university economists, there is no blanket support for the claim that dairymen are getting "cheated" out of money for their

milk, even though they may be selling it at the lowest price ever.

The problem seems to be one of dairymen doing too good of a job in providing for the needs of the market. And there also seems to be a lack of cooperation among independent producers, despite such cooperative bargaining agencies as Regional Cooperative Bargaining

Agency, an offshoot of Regional Cooperative Marketing Agency.

For a growing number of dairymen, the dairy production industry trend portends more of a departure from the small traditional, immediate-family farm.

With every ebb in the milk production-price cycle, more and more smaller farms are being left high and dry, while larger, better bankrolled, and more efficient operations continue to survive, at least until the next drop in production creates an increase in on-farm milk prices.

Without the reserve cash assets

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# Specialist Notes Culling Rates

**LARRY SPECHT**  
PSU Dairy Specialist  
STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — 1990-91 DHIA test year data shows that three quarters of all cows removed from herds last year left for reasons other than their productive ability.

This seriously limits a dairyman's option to cull for genetic merit and points out the small opportunity that exists to upgrade a herd's genetics from the female side.

There was an average of 330,000 cows on test for the 1990-91 year. The total number removed during the year was 101,758. This is a removal rate of 30.8 percent, which is consistent with rates in other Northeast states.

Twenty-four and a half percent of the cows were voluntarily

removed from the herd with 16.3 percent of those being culled for low production and 8.2 percent were removed for poor dairy qualities.

Of the rest of the cows removed from herds (75.5 percent), 23.6 percent were culled for reproductive problems, 10.8 percent for mastitis, 7.6 percent for type problems, 6.2 percent for injury, 2.1 percent for old age and 25.2 percent for reasons not specified.

Milk, fat and protein dollar values were calculated for the major removal categories. Results are -\$14 for low production; +\$20 for dairy; +\$4 for reproductive problems; +\$7 for mastitis; +\$13 for type problems; +\$13 for injury; -\$42 for old age; and +\$11 for nonspecified reasons.

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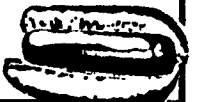
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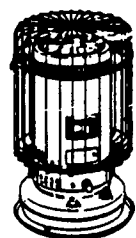
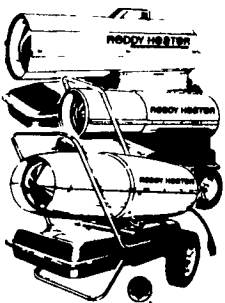
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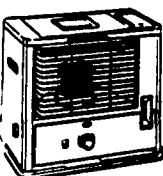
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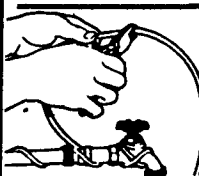
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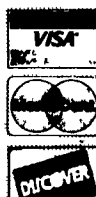
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