



**MILK  
CHECK**  
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**M-W Peaks**

SCRANTON (Lackawanna Co.) — It went up higher and stayed up longer than anyone predicted but dairy products prices and the milk supply finally caught up with the Minnesota-Wisconsin Price Series.

It fell 38 cents in December to \$12.10 after eight months of increases.

It's still \$1.91 better than last year and did manage to keep your farm price on the increase to the end of the year.

Cheese prices dropped slowly losing only two cents on blocks and five cents on barrels this month but still 14 cents above the support price. Powder prices dropped more than cheese losing 14 cents in one month but again still well above supports.

Butter prices dropped below supports but that was only two cents from where they were last month.

The drops in product prices aren't as disturbing as the increases in milk supplies. It doesn't show up so much on the production charts but there's a lot of milk selling at under order prices in the East and the upper Midwest.

Usually some milk is moving out of the M-W area to tighter markets but now there's more milk moving in. If this keeps up we may see a real spring flush for the first time in several years.

If the drought cut feed supplies in the Northeast it certainly isn't showing up yet in the milk supply.

**More Disaster Relief**

The Disaster Assistance Program has been added to the Emergency Livestock Feed Program and may give added relief to dairymen suffering crop losses in 1990 or 1991.

This program is for nearly all crops, including grain and forage crops, where losses were over 40 percent without crop insurance and 35 percent with crop insurance. Losses for crop years 1990 or 1991 are covered and the farmer has the choice. Take one year or the other but not both.

However, losses on two different farms operated by the same producer could be eligible in either year but not two different crops on the same farm in different years.

Congress limited payments to \$995 million so the rate of payment won't be known until all the claims are in to see how far the money goes.

The sign up period begins February 3 and ends on March 13.

It is possible that a farmer could qualify for payments under both the Emergency Livestock Feed Program and the Disaster Assistance Program.

**Refund Applications**

While you're at the ASCS office you can also make application for your five cent refund as soon as you have your December milk check stub.

All you have to do is prove that you produced no more milk in 1991 than you did in 1990 and you get back the five cents a hundred you already paid in 1991 under the Budget Reconciliation Act.

You'll need each of your monthly statements from 1990 and 1991 and they will be matched to determine if you had more, the same or less milk shipped in 1991.

The monthly matching is important. If you quit shipping milk in 1991 only those months that can be matched with 1990 will be counted. If you shipped milk from more than one farm you will have to report on all of them. This will include all the farms in which you or your wife have an interest. You can transfer the 1990 base if you sell the business but only if it's the entire operation and goes to a member of your family.

You can make application anytime now up to March 16 and probably get a check as soon as you qualify. There are no payment limits and you don't need a conservation plan for this refund.

However, you should know that how much is refunded for 1991 will be reflected in the assessment for 1992.

Starting with January milk you will be paying 11.25 cents a hundred but this can change in May.

When all of the applications for 1991 are made and the refunds paid, the total will be announced by April 30. That's when the decision will be made on how much more the assessment will be for the last seven months of 1992.

You may not have paid much attention to the five cent assessment in 1991 but the stakes are going up and it may get your attention in 1992 or 1993 and it isn't over until 1996.

**High Blend Price**

With the help of a near record high Class I price of \$14.92 in December and in spite of a record low of 40 percent Class I utilization you still made the highest blend price of the year in December in Order 2.

It was just two cents higher than November at \$13.34 but it was \$2.11 higher than last December and that sounds a lot better.

You were still getting the benefit of the higher M-W price in October in your Class I milk so it went up 48 cents over November to \$14.92, the second highest Class I price for December.

The Class II price at \$13.41 was also 48 cents above November but the Class III price at \$12.16 took the full blow of the 38 cent drop in the M-W this month.

Total receipts took a jump of a million pounds per day over November so it's no wonder there were some bargain prices in the market last month.

Lower butter prices dropped the differential down to 10 cents which you haven't seen in 30 years. At least the \$13.34 for December milk saved my prediction that farm prices would increase to the end of the year but I

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**Lancaster  
DHIA Elects  
Officers**

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — The Lancaster Red Rose DHIA board of directors held its annual re-organization meeting on January 27. The following officers were elected: P. Robert Wenger, president; Joseph Graybeal, vice president; and Gerald Risser, secretary. The board also endorsed Joseph Graybeal as a candidate for state director from the Southeast region to replace J. Robert Kindig, who announced his decision not to seek re-election.

The re-organization committee reported that it is attempting to work through a new committee set up by the state board to come up with a new federated agreement for counties who do not wish to centralize.

Lancaster feels that it would be in the best interests of both local members and the whole state to attempt to keep Pa. DHIA unified. The major concern is still the transfer of records from Pa. DHIA to the DRPC at Raleigh to provide access to the most up-to-date technology currently available in dairy records processing at a reasonable cost. Due to difficulties in arriving at an agreement with Pa. DHIA, the February 1 goal for Raleigh processing is no longer a possibility. It is hoped that an agreement can be reached with the next two months.

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