

PMMB To Meet, Decide

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board is scheduled to meet June 18 and is expected to decide the fate of its over-order fluid milk premium.

There is no indication as to how it will decide.

For a couple of years, Pennsylvania dairy farmers have received a \$1.05 over-federal order premium on fluid milk to help protect the state's dairy industry which has suffered because of repeated droughts and low milk prices.

Even though supply and demand for milk is reportedly at a close balance, the price has dropped here in response to production of milk in other parts of the United States which exceeds the demand there.

The Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board is an agency which protects the dairy industry from corruption and dairy farmers from unethical practices. It also has the ability to set minimum retail prices, and a minimum over-order premium to farmers that can guarantee a reasonable profit through-

out the fluid milk sales industry, while retaining a low cost to the consumer.

On June 30 the entire premium of \$1.05 and the additional 25 cents (which was tacked on late last year because of the drought) is set to terminate, unless the board decides to extend the premium.

Testimony on the over-order premium was taken during a public hearing last week.

Because of objections raised by an attorney who has, over the years, unsuccessfully challenged the legality of the board, written testimony was not allowed into record if the author of the written testimony was not physically present.

While most dairy organization representatives testified that some over-order premium was needed, representatives of Atlantic Dairy Cooperative testified that no over-order premium was needed.

ADC markets milk in other states and has to pay its members the over-order price and still compete with milk supplies which don't carry the premium.


However, Ohio is now considering legislation which would enable its agriculture secretary to implement minimum prices, using Pennsylvania's program as a leader.

The Pennsylvania State Grange representatives testified that the

25-cent drought premium is no longer needed, while the Pennsylvania Farmers Association testified that the premium is still needed until Pennsylvania dairy farmers can harvest enough forage

crops off of their own land to feed their cattle.

A number of milk producers have been purchasing a large portion of their cattle feed for months because of crop failures last year.



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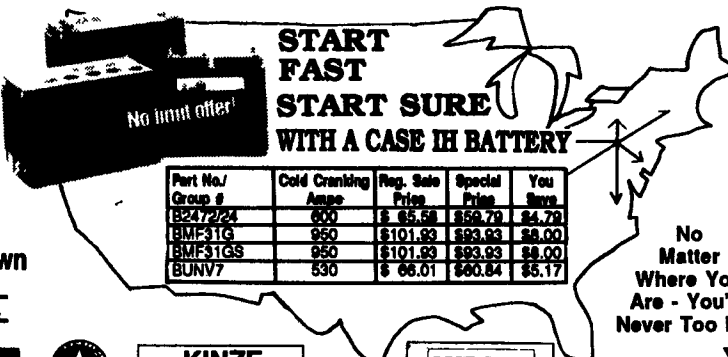



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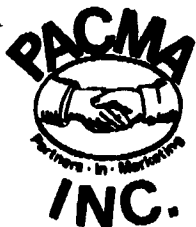
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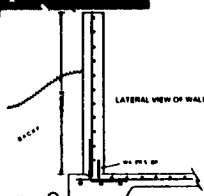
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