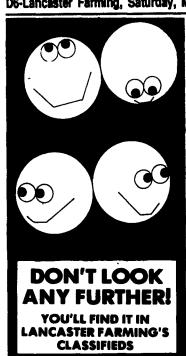
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USDA Official to Speak At

College

UNIVERSITY
PARK (Centre Co.) —
Dr. K. Jane Coulter, deputy administrator of the Cooperative State Research Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), will address graduates of Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences during the college's spring commencement.

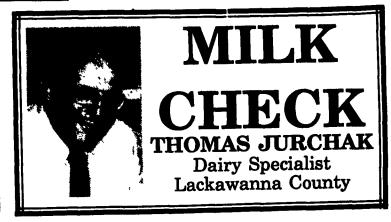
The ceremonies will take place May 15 at 9 a.m. in Eisenhower Auditorium.

Coulter is the key policy official responsible for managing USDA's role as the lead federal agency for higher education in the food and agricultural sciences.

She serves on numerous committees and boards, including the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's Committee on Education and Human Resources, the Federal Interagency Committee on Education, the Interdepartmental Minority Health Sciences Career Coordinating Committee, the U.S. Department of Education's Mathematics and Science Review Board, and NASA's Space Grants Program Review Board.

Coulter is widely credited for the launch of several new higher education competitive grants programs and has been instrumental in the development of the first national computerized online information system providing data on U.S. higher education in the food and agricultural sciences.

Coulter has won numerous awards, including the highest honor given by USDA, the Distinguished Service Award.



(Editor's Note: This was written based on data available as of April 15, 1993. Last week's article was run in error. We appologize for the inconvenience.)

SCRANTON (Lackawanna Co.) — In the last month cheese prices have gone into orbit reaching a height unheard of in such a short time and from all indications may set a new record in acceleration at blast off.

Taking nearly everyone by surprise, block and barrel prices advanced 19 cents a pound in the last month and 23 cents since Feb. 26 when they started this flight and are still headed for higher altitudes.

In last month's report there was caution from me about "too much, too soon" when prices went up 4 cents in two weeks. Since then it has been weekly increases of 3, 4 and 5 cents but the week before Easter really shook the market.

On Thursday barrel prices jumped 5 cents for the third consecutive week but block price zoomed 7 cents for a total of over 15 cents to match the barrel price. Even the Easter holiday didn't slow the pace with milk diverted from fluid to processing.

Cheese production was down in most states as well as the upper Mid West but it was the demand pull by dealers anxious to rebuild their inventories that did the trick. Only the demand was ahead of the supply and prices rose.

Sooner And Faster

It isn't unusual for cheese prices to rise in the spring — in fact it's expected — but this time it happened sooner and faster.

Just last year cheese prices went from a low of \$1.15 in early March to a high of \$1.39 in July for an increase of 23 cents. But that took 20 weeks before they started down again and bottomed out in January of this year.

Now we're looking at an increase of 23 cents again but starting in February and doing it in six weeks with more increases expected before summer.

The question is — how much higher can they go? Right now in mid April they are up to last year's high of \$1.38 in July and 11 cents higher than in April last year. This is what makes this year unusual.

We're almost up to record highs and it's only April. Even nonfat powder prices have strengthened because of a demand for powder to improve cheese yields as milk solids drop.

Of course the key to all this is the milk production expected this spring and summer.

It would appear that dealer inventories have been seriously depleted and most are not willing to gamble on getting more milk this summer so they're paying now to get the cheese supplies they need.

If there's another reason, I haven't heard.

Farm Price

The best news of course is what this does to farm prices. The Minnesota - Wisconsin Price Series for March has already gone up 28 cents to \$11.02 just on the strength of cheese price increases in early March.

When you add the 19-cent increase in cheese prices in April you should see another dollar or more added to the M-W by May 5 and more again on June 5.

So far, butter and powder prices have been steady and not hurt the M-W price but if we can get some exports started they may even add support to the M-W price. In any case, it's about as volatile as dairy market prices can get so hang on and see how high this ride can take you.

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