

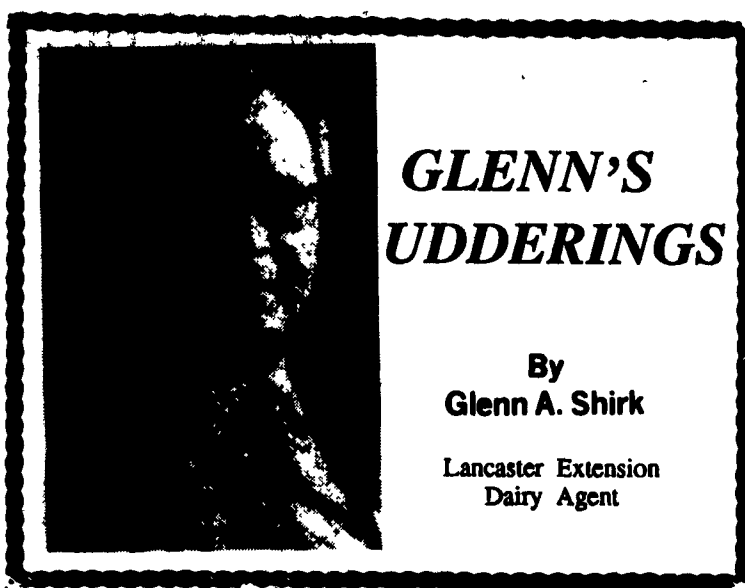
January Milk \$15.78

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Middle Atlantic Order Market Administrator Rex F. Lothrop today announced a Class I milk price of \$15.78 per hundredweight for January 1994. This price is up 29 cents from December and is 91 cents above last January's Class I price.

Mr. Lothrop announced a Class III milk price of \$12.83 per hundredweight for November 1993 and a Class III-A price of \$10.97 per hundredweight for the month.

The Class III price was up 29 cents from the previous month, while the Class III-A price increased nine cents. The January 1994 Class I price and the November 1993 Class III price are based on the November 1993 Minnesota-Wisconsin manufacturing milk price of \$12.75 per hundredweight at a 3.5 percent butterfat content.

The November 1993 butterfat price was 74.59 cents per pound, down 1.64 cents from October. The November skim milk price per hundredweight was \$10.59.



GLENN'S UDDERINGS

By
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Where Is Your Herd Heading?

DHIA rolling herd averages and cows' lactation records are nice to look at. They show what you and your cows have accomplished.

However, as a herd manager, you also need to be looking to the future to see where your herd is heading and you need to hunt for things you can change that will help you keep your herd moving in the right direction. Your DHIA records can help you do this.

Peak Milk and Persistency of Production

Peak milk per cow per day is one thing to focus on. It affects cows' lactation records and herd profits. Cows make about half of their profit per lactation during the first 100 days or so in milk. Therefore, how fast cows peak, how high they peak and how well they hold their peaks has a great impact on profit. Also of importance is how you can answer these questions: Can they stay healthy? Will

cows breed back and sustain high production levels without developing problems that will cause them to be culled prematurely and sold at depressed market prices? If you haven't been doing this very successfully, can changes be made that will enable you to do this?

Peak milk times 225-250 gives you a rough estimate of what first lactation heifers will produce in 305 days. For older cows, multiply peak milk by 200-225. First calf heifers generally peak 80-85% as high as third lactation and older cattle. A lot of this will depend on how well heifers were grown out and managed prior to

and after calving. Compared to older cows, heifers hold their peaks better. In other words, they have a flatter lactation curve and they should not drop much more than 5% in milk from the previous month's average daily production. Older cows have a steeper curve and can be expected to drop 8% or so per month. These persistencies appear on your Penna. DHIA Herd Summary Report II. On the Raleigh DHIA Herd Summary report, a test period persistency index of 100 indicates that cows are maintaining average lactation curves.

If cows peak slowly, if they do not peak as high as they should and if they do not hold their peaks as well as you would like, you may want to focus on some of the following areas of management: 1) heifer and dry cow programs, 2) the 2-3 week transition period for heifers and dry cows prior to calving, 3) early lactation feed program, 4) feed quality, 5) bunk space and other feeding practices, 6) herd health program, 7) cows' comfort, etc. Also observe cows' body condition.

Milk Components and Cow Health

Fat tests can indicate the status of a cow's metabolism and how well her rumen is functioning. It can also be a predictor of problems that cows may face in the near future. Fat tests and protein tests can also reflect the cow's emergency balance.

High fat tests soon after calving can indicate that cows are losing flesh too rapidly and are developing fatty livers. This could lead to ketosis, depressed appetites, loss of production, twisted stomachs, etc. If this is a problem, be sure to review your dry cow and heifer management program, the management of heifers and dry cows during the transition period prior to and shortly after calving, feed quality, ration formulation, feeding practices, cow comfort and anything else that may affect cows' appetites.

Low fat tests may indicate that cows have an acid rumen, which depresses appetites and milk production, and reduces efficiency of digestion; more of the feed ends up in the gutter rather than in the milk tank. Acidosis can also cause laminitis which can predispose cows to other foot problems. Fat tests may not add much to the market value of your milk, but it is still important to feed cows for normal rumen function. If you accomplish this, fat tests for Holsteins shouldn't drop much below 3.5; otherwise, there is a chance that cows' rumsen will not function properly and efficiently.

When cows are underconditioned and body scores drop into the low 2's, protein tests can start dropping and fat tests may be at or below protein tests. These cows are in a very severe negative energy balance. Chances are they won't display heats, and if bred, they probably will not conceive. Look for calving intervals to stretch out and for cows to possibly start calving at the wrong time of the year — in the heat of the summer, or slipping out of the base-building period and into the excess milk season which means their milk will be worth less.

If tests are low be sure to check rations for adequate forage dry matter intake and for forage fiber intake. Also important are length of chop, forage quality, fat levels in the ration, how and when grain is fed, proper use of buffers, etc.

Stay attuned to some of these warning signs and make necessary adjustments in your management program in timely fashion so the herd keeps moving in the direction you want it to move. Keep the steering wheel in your hands.

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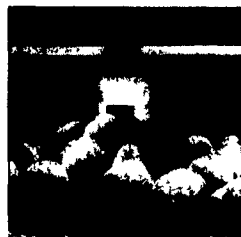
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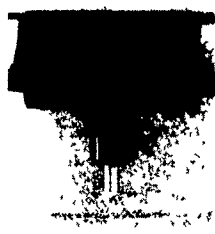
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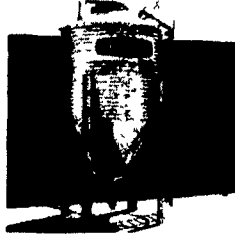
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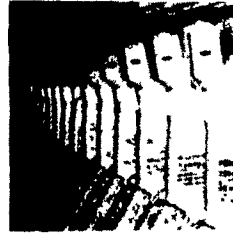
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