

NMPF Requests USDA Help To Offset Milk Price Drop

ARLINGTON, Va. — The National Milk Producers Federation Monday urged Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy to counteract an anticipated 20-percent plunge in milk prices in the coming months.

The Federation's Executive Committee of 30 dairy producers and cooperative officials recently approved a resolution calling for immediate USDA intervention to stabilize milk prices.

In a letter to Espy, Jim Barr, NMPF's chief executive officer, requested USDA revitalize the lagging Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP) by adding new countries to the list of those eligible to receive subsidized dairy products.

Barr also urged USDA to make advance purchases of cheese, non-fat dry milk and other products for the school lunch and other government food assistance programs. The Federation also requested that donations of Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) dairy products continue under international aid and development programs.

In the letter, Barr said that "farm-level milk prices will plunge by several dollars per hundredweight, placing severe financial stress on dairy farmers throughout the country."

Barr said prices for milk used to

manufacture butter and non-fat dry milk are "already returning no more than the support price for milk."

Block cheese prices on the National Cheese Exchange fell to \$1.19 3/4 per pound — a slide of nearly 20 cents in three weeks. Barrel cheese prices were off almost 10 cents per pound last Friday.

"With cheese markets now within 7.75 cents of the \$1.12 per pound CCC block cheese purchase price and likely still falling, we see a great likelihood that milk prices overall will fall to support over the next several months," Barr said.

"This would represent a drop in milk prices of about \$2.60 per hundredweight compared to price levels during the first four months of the year."

Barr urged "strong action" by USDA to counteract the drop in milk prices and "the upcoming steep erosion in dairy farm income." He urged USDA to:

- Purchase dairy products in advance for the remainder of this year's and for next year's school lunch and other domestic food assistance programs,

- And to continue donations of CCC dairy product stocks under Section 416(b) and Public Law 480,

Industry, Government Cooperate

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- Only plastic pesticide containers, or plastic containers that held crop oils, surfactants, and fertilizers, will be accepted. Unacceptable are plastic containers that contained such things as antifreeze, motor oil, detergents, milk containers, etc.

- Plastic pesticide containers are to be examined at the drop-off site by PDA-approved inspectors. Those containers not cleaned properly are to be returned to the owner immediately. They can be taken home and properly cleaned for later drop-off the same day or during another scheduled pick-up.

- There is no charge or limit on quantity of plastic pesticide containers that can be dropped off. However, those in Adams and Franklin counties who wish to drop off more than 1,000 containers are asked to call the local extension office prior to the scheduled drop off. In Lancaster County, those wishing to drop off more than 500 containers are asked to call ahead to the state Department of Agriculture at (717) 787-4843.

For more specific instructions, in Adams County, call (717) 334-6271, or 624-4525; in Franklin County, call (717) 263-9226.

Although at least one pickup day has already occurred in all three counties, the program is scheduled

to continue through the year.

Officials ask that inquiries about the recycling program be directed to the extension offices or the state Department of Agriculture — not to the owners of the drop-off sites.

In Lancaster County, six locations have been selected as pickup points. There are three locations in each of the other two counties.

Lancaster County

The rest of the year's schedule for Lancaster County collection points is:

- Henry Hoover, 1731 W. Main St., Ephrata — June 17, July 15, August 16, and Nov. 2.

- G&G Feed and Supply, rear 123 E. Stiegel St., Manheim — June 20, July 18, August 17, and Nov. 4.

- Benjamin Landis, Landis Spraying Service, 587 Strasburg Road (Rt. 741), Strasburg — June 1, July 1, August 3, and Sept. 2.

- Gideon King, 5465 Elam Road, Kinzers — June 3, July 6, August 5, and Sept. 6.

- Martin Ag Service, 338 Grist Mill Road, New Holland — June 9, July 8, August 9, and Oct. 5.

- Little Britain Agri Service, 398 Little Britain Road, Quarryville — June 10, July 14, August 12, and Oct. 7.

Franklin County

The Franklin County collection site schedule for the year is:

- Cumberland Valley Co-op

Association, Plant 908, Mt. Rock Rd., Shippensburg — June 16, July 21, August 18, and Oct. 13.

- Mountain View Reclamation Landfill, 9760 Letzberg Rd., Greencastle — June 23, July 28, August 25, and Nov. 10.

- McGee & Smith Enterprises, Rt. 641, Spring Run — June 8, July 13, August 11, and Sept. 8.

Adams County

In Adams County, the collection site schedule is:

- Adams County Nursery, in Aspers — June 21, July 19, August 19, Oct. 11.

- Oylor's Orchard, 155 Hilltown Rd., Gettysburg — June 28, July 26, August 23, and Nov. 8.

- Mason-Dixon Farms, 1750 Mason-Dixon Rd., Gettysburg — June 14, July 12, August 10, and Sept. 7.

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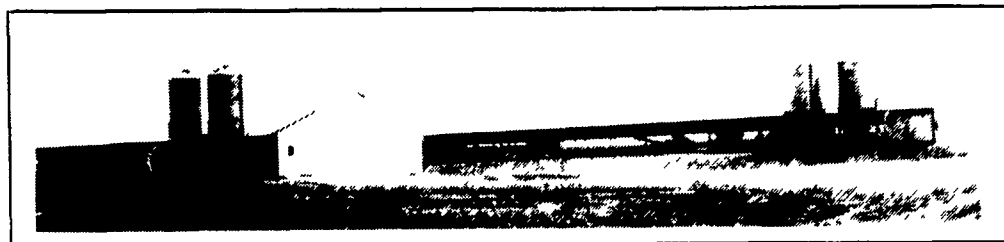
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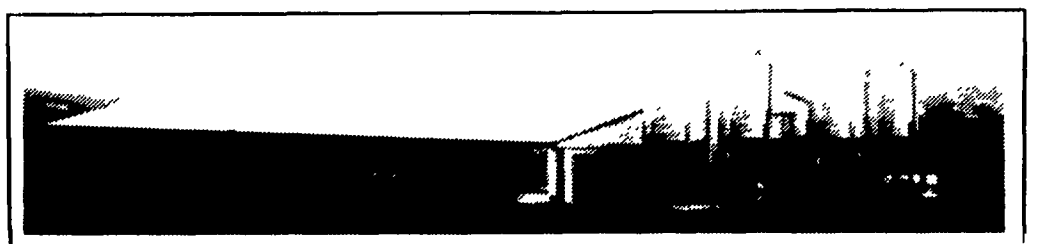
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