

# Milk Production Slows, Hot Weather May Help Prices

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MADISON, Wis. — As of July 16, June milk production data for 21 reporting states show that compared to a year ago milk cow numbers were down 1.1 percent and milk per cow was up just 1.7 percent for an increase in total milk production of .6 percent.

The increase in milk per cow is below the normal increase of over 2 percent.

However, very hot June weather for many parts of the U.S. adversely affected milk per cow.

In comparing milk production data to year ago levels, one needs to recognize that a year ago at this time milk production slowed down and began decreasing from the previous year's levels in July and remained below for the remainder of the year.

Compared to the previous year, milk per cow was increasing less than 1 percent from August on and milk cow numbers were declining from 1.6 percent to 2.3 percent from June on.

Total milk production for the first half of the year was up just .8 percent from a year ago.

Milk production continues to suffer in both Wisconsin and Minnesota. Compared to June last year, Wisconsin and Minnesota produced 4.3 percent and 3.5 percent less milk respectively. Both had, respectively, 4.5 percent and 3.8 percent fewer milk cows and milk per cow was up just .4 percent for both states.

Despite the availability of better quality forages, the hot and humid June weather took a toll on milk per cow.

Wisconsin has shown an increase in milk cow numbers for the past two months.

June milk cow numbers are up 9,000 head or .6 percent from April.

With a much improved feed supply, milk cow numbers may stabilize some in Wisconsin for the remainder of the year.

Cows are milking very well in California. June production per cow was 5.4 percent more than a year ago.

With milk cow numbers up 3.3 percent California produced 8.9

percent more milk in June than a year earlier.

(Editor's note: As of deadline, California has been experiencing a fairly severe drought. National media reports are that human drinking water supplies are tight.)

Milk production in the Northeast, however, has not increased.

Compared to June last year, milk production was the same for New York and down 1.0 percent and 4.6 percent respectively for Pennsylvania and Ohio, but up 3.9 percent for Michigan.

Milk per cow was rather poor for New York, up just 1.1 percent, and Pennsylvania and Ohio down, respectively, 1.5 percent and 3.5 percent.

Milk production expansion is big in Idaho. Compared to last June, Idaho had 7.8 percent more milk cows that produced 7.6 percent more milk, giving an increase

in total milk production of 15.9 percent.

Although Washington had just .8 percent more milk cows, the 3.7 percent more milk per cow resulted in 4.3 percent more total milk.

Texas had 3.4 percent more cows, but the hot weather reduced the increase in milk per cow to just 1.6 percent but still resulting in 4.9 percent more total milk.

Some other Midwest states reported milk production down from a year ago in June.

Production was down 1.3 percent in Illinois, 5.6 percent in Indiana and 1.8 percent in Iowa.

With milk production slowing for the U.S. as a whole, farm milk prices have bottomed out and will once again begin to increase.

The Minnesota-Wisconsin price (M-W), after peaking at \$12.99 per

hundredweight for April, fell \$1.74 per hundredweight to \$11.25 for June. The cause of this decline was a drop in cheese prices from mid-April to early May of 20.75 cents per pound for cheddar barrel cheese and 13.75 cents per pound for cheddar blocks.

But for six consecutive weeks, cheese prices have strengthened. As of July 15, on the National Cheese Exchange, cheddar barrels have increased 9.25 cents per pound and cheddar blocks 7.75 cents per pound.

Although cheese inventories overall are adequate, good sales and the slow down in milk production has caused cheese buyers to be more aggressive in buying.

Other factors for stronger cheese prices include good sales, lower butterfat and protein tests reducing cheese yields and the Class III-A pricing which has

channeled more milk into the production of nonfat dry milk and away from cheese making.

However, with the low value for butter, considerably more of this nonfat dry milk is being used by cheese makers to increase solids-not-fat in raw milk to capture more of the milkfat in cheese and increase the cheese yield.

The M-W will increase for July. With the increases in cheese prices that have occurred, the M-W would increase a minimum of 25 to 30 cents per hundredweight.

If cheese prices show further strength, and this is likely, we can expect the July M-W to increase even more than this.

However, remember that the \$11.25 per hundredweight M-W for June did not fully reflect all of the decline in cheese prices that had occurred earlier.

## Holstein Club Meets

a higher conception rate and fewer feet and leg problems in the herd. They surprised their audience with statements about the durability of the forage stand under their particular style of management. Experience with pasturing calves and heifers indicated a \$1,000 return from 1.5 acres of timothy.

With three years experience, the Marks family has plenty of enthusiasm for the system and announced that they are already working toward a seasonal milk production program with planned time off from milking.

Supporting the positive experience with grazing, Jeffrey Roche, 245 Forest Drive, New Oxford, told how his 85-cow Holstein herd is managed for three times per day milking and rotated daily among 1.5-acre pasture lots.

Opening speaker Dr. Donald Yorlets, veterinarian from New Oxford, reviewed the incidence of a new, acute form of Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) in the commonwealth and the hazard this poses for livestock producers. He described the symptoms of the disease, told how it is spread, and urged all dairy and beef producers to consult their veterinarians about vaccinations to prevent animals from becoming infected. Once infected, there is little that can be done to help the animal recover. Of special concern are those animals destined for showing, a booster vaccination at least 10

days and not more than 60 days prior to the show is advised.

County Agent Thomas E. Piper introduced the speakers and alerted the dairy farmers to these coming events: the 4-H Fair scheduled for Saturday, August 6 at South Mountain Fairgrounds, Arendts-

ville; Ag Progress Days, August 16-18 at the Penn State Ag Research Center, Rock Springs, and the South Mountain Fair now accepting entries for August 31-September 4 at the fairgrounds near Arendtsville.

## Shropshire Association Elects President

MOUNT JOY (Lancaster Co.) — The Pennsylvania-Maryland Shropshire Breeders Association recently elected Steven M. Spayd as their new president.

As chief executive officer of the association, Spayd will preside at all meetings as well as direct all committees. His term will end in June 1996. The Penn-Mar Shropshire Association is the fourth largest association of the breed in the nation.

Steve and his wife, Brenda have 20 head of sheep. Steve is employed full time by Georgia-Pacific Corp., Lancaster and is an active member of the Lancaster County Sheep and Wool Growers Association and the Pennsylvania Livestock Association. He was also actively involved in 4-H and FFA on the local and county level.

The Penn-Mar Shropshire Association will hold its next meeting on October 8 at the Keystone International Livestock Exposi-

tion in Harrisburg. New members are welcome. Anyone wishing to acquire more information about the association may contact Steve at (717) 653-6860.



Steven M. Spayd

GETTYSBURG (Adams Co.) — Rotational grazing represents one of the few new technologies or systems that does not require a large investment outlay per cow. This statement from the May/June 1994 edition of Penn State's Farm Economic newsletter was supported by visiting dairy farmers Melvin and Barbara Marks of Airville, York County, when they addressed a twilight meeting of the Adams County Holstein Club recently.

The event was held at the Lagging Stream Farm, a partnership operated by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Clowney and their sons Robert and John at 361 Barlow Road, Gettysburg. The Clowns maintain a herd of 130 registered Holsteins, providing corn and alfalfa for the herd on the 300 acres which they farm. President Marvin Brown presided at the meeting.

Maintaining a herd of 55 Holsteins on their 80-acre Bridgeton Farm, Melvin and Barbara Marks with the help of three young daughters let the cows do most of the harvesting. They described how they have sub-divided their alfalfa/orchardgrass sod into 1.5-acre paddock and how a clean-up group of dry cows and lower producers helps realize full potential from the forage crop.

They cited among the benefits,

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