

◆ FARM FORUM ◆

(Continued from Page A10)

me mites. I know most people will claim mites can only be spread by bees but I don't buy it.

The part about "increased fines and penalties for violations" did

not go unnoticed (Heil Hitler!). That is bound to create a "good feeling" of cooperation. As Newt Gingrich recently remarked "The people who we have hired to serve us have decided they are our masters."

It is interesting to note that the state of Arizona has rescinded all bee regulations and no longer inspects, (American Beekeepers Journal Feb. 95, P. 87). The state's involvement in beekeeping, if any, should be restricted to the dispensing of the information generated by the informed individuals in our agricultural universities.

I think I understand this new emphasis on bee law and registration. It has little to do with bees or bee diseases. It has to do with

money. The bee law states that registration fees, fines and civil penalties shall be credited to the PA Dept. of Agriculture. \$10 from every 4-H and FFA kid with a bee project, every hobbyist, just about every farmer and every beekeeper in the state. What a boon that will be to a redundant, archaic, over-staffed bureaucracy.

I can see more registration programs in the future, perhaps next

year it will be roadside produce stands or everyone owning a horse or a goat. The opportunities are endless now that a registration program under the guise of disease control is under way.

Be aware of what your legislators are doing. They often have something other than our well being in mind.

Bob Van Ginhoven  
Lancaster

Editor:

What is the proper way to price milk to dairy farmers?

For nearly 35 years the Minnesota/Wisconsin (M and W) series has been the bench mark price used to determine the value of grade B milk in the upper midwest. This price then basically becomes the price for manufactured milk in all Federal Orders. It also is the basic formula price in federal milk orders that establishes all class prices, including class I.

While we have been critical of the M and W price as not being the proper way to price

milk, the formula did help return somewhere near a fair price to dairy farmers during the 1960s, '70s and early 1980s. However, the reasonable price was accomplished mainly because the support price on manufactured milk was set at a percentage between 75 and 85 percent of parity. In 1981 the U.S. Congress passed a resolution which was signed by President Reagan, that prevented the support price from being adjusted semi-annually, and further actions by Congress during the last 14 years have reduced the support price from a high of \$13.10 per cwt

to its present level of \$10.10 per cwt.

Some people will argue that the manufactured milk price has maintained a level somewhat above the support price, consequently the support price has no worthwhile meaning. In my opinion this argument is not valid, because the support price on milk products and the purchases of dairy products made by the U.S.D.A. does influence the manufactured price.

Class I Milk

No one has ever (to my knowledge) determined the value of any milk and this is especially true with milk used

for fluid purposes (class I).

Basically, the class I price is established by using the basic formula price in the federal orders, and placing transportation differentials on top of the basic formula price which then establishes the class I price.

The blend price is determined simply by using the value of each class price coupled with the utilization of each class of milk.

One important factor is left out! What does the dairy farmer deserve for 100 pounds of milk? Many experts use the argument, there is plenty of milk, therefore farmers are receiving an adequate price. WRONG.

It's time to get away from the fallacy that enough milk produced equates to an adequate price to dairy farmers. There are many reasons why dairy farmers continue to produce somewhere near enough milk. The main reason is the supplemental income derived by the dairyman or his spouse. The other main, unfair reason is GOING WITHOUT (health insurance, etc).

Dairy Farmers Prices Must Improve

As I reported in an earlier editorial, three recent milk hearings have failed to improve prices paid to dairy farmers. It's obvious that federal milk hearings have not and will not improve, to any degree, prices paid to dairymen.

In our opinion there are two ways to establish adequate prices that dairy farmers need.

1. All dairy farmers join together and establish the right price.

2. Amend the U.S. Agriculture Marketing Act, and pass legislation that allows dairy farmers to produce milk that fits the needs of the real market. (The same could also be done by the other commodity producers.)

So far plan #1 has not developed, and will happen only if dairy farmers make it happen.

A 1995 Farm Bill will be passed. It's up to all commodity producers to make changes in the Farm Bill that will reflect adequate prices.

Those of us that are working on a new dairy bill have come up with a plan that will #1 reduce (Turn to Page A35)



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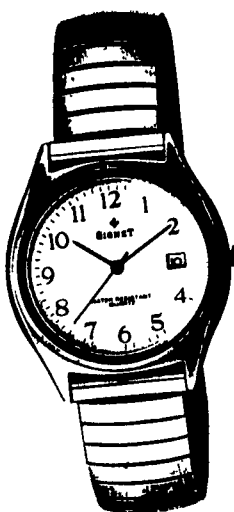
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