

In general, we have dealers able to specialize and cater to their individual customer needs.

Once the minimum wholesale price for milk is established, the minimum retail price can be created. By setting minimum prices that account for all costs incurred by the retailers plus a small profit, the Board helps to insure that retailers will continue to sell milk to consumers in an environment free of destructive competition. Like their supplying dealers, stores are highly competitive based on service and their ability to sell a high quality, wholesome product to their customers.

When compared to surrounding markets, the consumer price for milk in Pennsylvania compares quite favorably. Month after month, the reports from the Inter-

national Association of Milk Control Agencies show that the prices charged in Pennsylvania are at or below those charged in surrounding states.

In Pennsylvania there is no undue price pressure because of destructive competition. This allows everyone in the supply chain, from the dairy farmers through the processing dairies and the retailers, to pursue the highest quality standards possible. Processors that purchase farm milk consistently provide premiums for high quality milk to their producers. The cost of these voluntary premiums is built into the resale pricing system. Processors in Pennsylvania in turn have the highest quality standards to be found anywhere in the world. Retailers pass on that

quality product to the consumers.

The legislature, through the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board, has established the most comprehensive and beneficial pricing system to be found anywhere on any commodity. By regulating pricing from top to bottom in a fair and equitable fashion, Pennsylvania enjoys one of the most robust dairy industries in the world. As we look to an uncertain future, the importance of the Board becomes increasingly clear.

We are seeing drastic changes in federal policies, upheavals and bankruptcies in surrounding markets, and continued pressure in international markets from highly subsidized milk products. Were it not for the foresight of our legislative leadership, our dairy industry and the thousands of people that depend on it for their livelihood

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dairy processor or manufacturer is meeting its obligations and is fiscally secure.

Besides setting the minimum farm price for milk, the Board also establishes the minimum wholesale price. This is done by verifying dealers' actual costs for processing, packaging and delivering packaged milk, and setting minimum wholesale prices based on those costs. By setting minimums

that account for all necessary costs incurred by the milk dealers plus a nominal profit, the Board helps to insure that processors can pay their farmers for the milk they purchase. Also, dealers operate in an environment free of destructive competition. In states without the benefit of price control, milk may be sold at a loss that can eventually cause bankruptcies and market disruptions that hurt everyone. In Pennsylvania, however, competition is based on service and quali-

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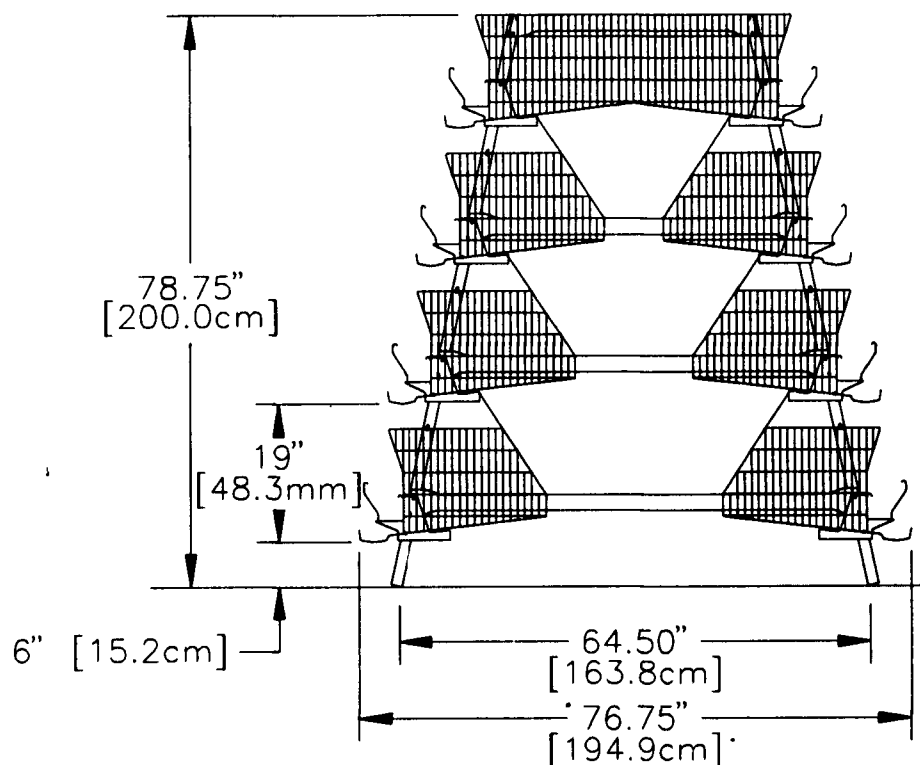
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