

# Dairyalea Cooperative Supports Implementation Of Option 1-A In Pricing Class I Milk

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — At the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Federal Order Reform Listening Session held recently in Syracuse, N.Y., Dairyalea Cooperative Director of Planning and Regulatory Policy Edward Gallagher voiced the cooperative's strong support for Option 1-A in pricing Class I milk, explaining that it takes into account the costs associated with transporting fluid milk, regional supply and demand, cost of production and marketing, and the need to attract milk to regions that occasionally face production deficits.

"The size of the Northeast's market, the challenges of maintaining orderly and efficient marketings for the world's largest Class I market, and the presence

The USDA proposed rule for Federal Order Reform presented two alternatives in determining Class I prices when the Federal Orders are merged and consolidated.

Option 1-A, based on solid economic analysis performed by the USDA Price Structure Committee, incorporates the unique dynamics of the Northeast's milk market and does not economically discriminate against one or more milk producing regions to benefit another.

The alternative, Option 1-B, of a robust handler segment create a need to maintain Class I differentials at no lower than their current level and to implement marketwide service payments. Dairyalea strongly supports Option 1-A Class I differentials," he said.

would lower farm revenue in the Northeast by \$117 million annually, and create economic hardships for rural counties dependent on a strong dairy industry. According to Gallagher, Option 1-B would reduce the Northeast's Class I differential by about \$1.07 per hundredweight. This would lower blend prices by about \$0.55 per hundredweight throughout the Northeast. Secretary Glickman has publicly stated that he prefers Option 1-B.

"The implementation of Option 1-B would significantly lower Class I and blend prices in the Northeast and harm producers and the economies of many rural counties that depend on a strong and vibrant dairy industry," Gallagher said.

Reports indicate that Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman will be closely monitoring the volume of public response he receives on this matter. For that reason, Dairyalea strongly encourages all Northeast dairy farmers to write to their

Congressional representatives and Secretary Glickman to urge the implementation of Option 1-A under Federal Reform. Responses must be received by Secretary Glickman before April 30.

In writing the letters, farmers should make note that:

- Option 1-A maintains Class I and blend price levels in the Northeast, as well as other areas of the country;
- Option 1-A takes into account the need to deliver adequate supplies of fresh milk to consumers at reasonable prices;
- the alternative, Option 1-B, would reduce farmers' milk

checks by \$0.55 per hundredweight; additionally, Option 1-B would lower farm revenue in the Northeast by \$117 million annually, and create economic hardships for rural counties dependent on a strong dairy industry.

Dairyalea Cooperative Inc. is a Syracuse-based, agricultural service organization, cooperatively owned by dairy farmers throughout the Northeast. It markets more than 4.5 billion pounds of milk annually and participates, and is invested, in a milk marketing network stretching from Maine to Maryland to Ohio.

## Lancaster Farmland

(Continued from Page A31)

our Lancaster County farmers have a land ethic and sense of place that will keep them on the land as long as they are able to farm," Stouffer said. "It is this deeply ingrained and long-term

commitment to agriculture that is key to the future of Lancaster County. No act that any farmer can take more embodies that commitment than the decision of more and more of those dedicated farmers to preserve their lands forever."

Lancaster Farmland Trust is a private, non-profit organization that works to preserve Lancaster County's productive farmland, thriving agricultural economy, and rich farm-related heritage. The Trust is one of two organizations that preserve farmland in Lancaster County, but it is the only organization that Amish and some other "Plain Sect" farmers will work with. This point is especially important given that Plain Sect farmers now purchase the majority of all farms that are sold — and kept in farming — in Lancaster County. The government-run Lancaster County Agricultural Preserve Board is the other organization that preserves Lancaster County farms.

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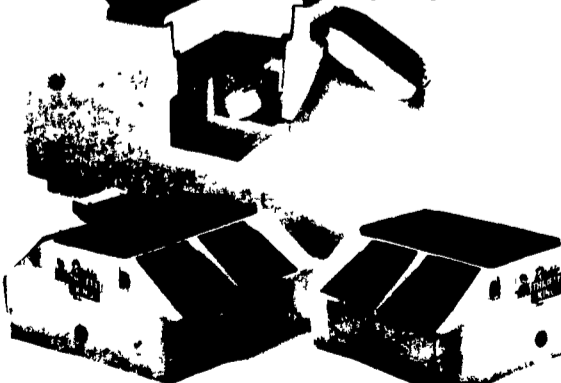
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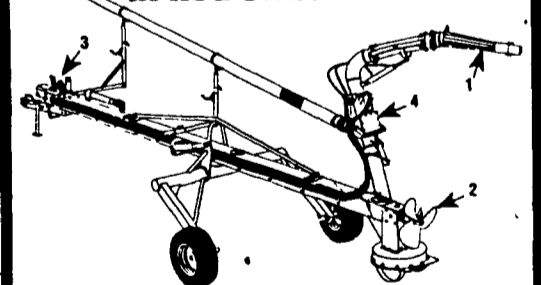
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