

# 'Heavy Metal' Might Mean Profit On Older Farms

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Farmers may harvest profits from scrap iron, steel and other valuable metals contained in old vehicles, equipment and products that have not been removed from the farm, according to two researchers in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

According to James Garthe, instructor in agricultural engineering, farmers can clean up their

acreage and reap a small profit by marketing their scrap metal to interested dealers. "The amount of money gained from selling scrap metal is nowhere near enough to retire on, but it will bring a decent price if the metals are separated and handled correctly," Garthe said.

Although farmers may not believe they have enough metal to make a cleanup worthwhile, Garthe said, "farm steel," a gener-

ic term for any scrap metal from farmsteads, can add up quickly. Salable metal items include abandoned vehicles, old tractors and equipment, engines, farm gates, appliances, fencing, wire and building materials.

"A typical farm easily can have several tons of scrap metal," said Jennifer Shufran, research associate in agricultural engineering. "Most farmers will not want to plan an intensive cleanup. The

best approach, from a labor standpoint, is to pick up scrap metals during winter down times, or as you clear a field or work other jobs on the farm."

Shufran said the more initial work the farmer does, the more profit is harvested from scrap metal. "If you gather everything into a pile and call the scrap dealer to pick it up, you'll make money," she said. "But you can get much better prices from dealers if you separate each type of scrap metal, and an even higher price if you haul each separated pile to the dealer."

Garthe lists different metals and a few products made from those metals in an approximate descending order of value.

- Copper: Wire (worth more with insulation removed) and plumbing pipes.

- Brass: Wire, plumbing fittings, radiator cores.

- Aluminum: Farm gates, roofing, siding, engine components.

- Stainless steel: Tanks, fittings, bolts.

- Bulk steel: Rods, pipes, structural components, shafts, gears, pulleys, chains.

- Sheet metal: Siding, drums.

- Cast iron: Bathtubs, transmissions, gearcases, wheel hubs.

- Zinc: Handles, fixtures and various castings.

Garthe emphasizes that large and small items should be dismantled if they are made from different metals. Cars, however, usually are taken without any dismantling.

Shufran suggests farmers estab-

lish a long-range plan for collecting scrap metal, encouraging employees and family members to collect and separate metals as they tackle other jobs.

"Most scrap metal is scattered over the farm and along field edges," she said. "Farmers should establish a central staging area to collect and separate the metal, then add to it over time until the farm has been cleaned up."

Garthe suggests looking in the Yellow Pages under "Scrap Metal" or "Scrap Yards" to find dealers that evaluate a farm's scrap metal.

"In the scrap business it pays to shop around for prices," Shufran said. "Some scrap dealers may pay double what another pays for the same metal. If you're hauling the metal yourself, it can really make a difference in price."

Garthe also points out that farmers should clean up their scrap metal if needed, removing plastics, glass, rubber, insulation and draining all fluids, such as oils or gasoline, from equipment. "Some materials may require a certified professional to remove it," Garthe said. "For example, a heating, ventilation and air-conditioning technician must remove CFC refrigerants from refrigerators, freezers and bulk milk tanks before they can be sold."

"Cleaning up scrap metal has incentives other than money," Shufran said. "It increases the value of the farm, makes the farm safer for workers, children and neighbors, and improves animal safety and health."

## Mid-Atlantic September Milk \$16.77

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Middle Atlantic Order Acting Market Administrator David Z. Walker recently announced a September 1998 weighted average milk price of \$16.77 per hundredweight.

The weighted average differential price was \$1.59 per hundredweight and the producer nonfat milk solids (NFMS) price was 42 cents per pound.

The weighted average price was up \$1.44 from August and was \$3.78 higher than a year earlier. The producer NFMS price was down 59 cents from last September.

The nonfat milk solids price, applicable to handler payments, was 42.59 cents per pound for the

month, down 59.13 cents from last year.

The gross value of September producer milk, adjusted to 3.4 percent butterfat was \$78.2 million, compared to \$61.6 million a year ago.

Mr. Walker said that producer receipts totaled 470.8 million pounds during September, a decrease of 7.2 million pounds from last September and the average daily delivery of 3,347 pounds per producer decreased 49 pounds or 1.4 percent from a year earlier.

A total of 4,689 producers supplied Order 4 handlers during the month, a decrease of three from a year ago.

Class I producer milk totaled

236.4 million pounds and was down 12.1 million pounds, or 4.9 percent from last September. Class I milk accounted for 50.22 percent of total producer milk receipts during the month, compared with 52 percent in September 1997.

The average NFMS test of producer milk was 8.62 percent, down from 8.69 percent the previous year. The average butterfat test of producer milk was 3.59 percent, up from 3.56 percent in September 1997.

Middle Atlantic Order pool handlers reported Class I in-area milk sales of 186.8 million pounds during September, a decrease of 2.1 percent from a year earlier, after adjustment to eliminate variation due to calendar composition.

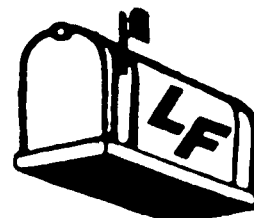
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13	6.37	12.74	17.16
14	6.86	13.72	18.48
15	7.35	14.70	19.80
16	7.84	15.68	21.12
17	8.33	16.66	22.44
18	8.82	17.64	23.76
19	9.31	18.62	25.08
20	9.80	19.60	26.40

DEADLINES:  
SECTION D - WEDNESDAY AT 4:00 P.M.  
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1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	34
36	37	38	39	40

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Lancaster Farming  
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The following categories  
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Thursday morning at 9 of each week's  
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1 - Farm Equipment  
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- 3-Silos and Unloaders
- 4-Building and Supplies
- 5-Grain Equipment
- 6-Dairy Equipment
- 7-Livestock Equipment
- 8-Cattle
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- 10-Sheep & Goats
- 11-Swine
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- 29-Found
- 30-Computers
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