

June Class I Milk Price

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Milk Marketing Board (MMB) recently announced the prices to be paid to Pennsylvania dairy farmers for June Class I milk (beverage) as an average of \$13.69 in the western areas of the commonwealth; and an average of \$14.18 in the central and eastern areas of the commonwealth. These prices include the over-order premium of \$1.55 per one hundred pounds of milk.

Farmers, whose milk production is pooled under a federal order, will receive a market-wide blend price based upon the value of all classes of milk. However, the blend price received will vary as the component composition of a farmer's milk differs from the established benchmarks of 3.5 percent butterfat, 2.99 percent protein, and 5.69 percent other solids.

'Small Farms Boosters' On The Rise

ITHACA, N.Y. — The tremendous ingenuity, creativity and sheer persistence of small-scale farmers has become apparent, especially in the last couple of decades, and we're beginning to realize that there are lots of ways farmers can "Stay Small and Stay In." And there are lots of ways beginning farmers can "Go Small and Get In." Small farms are here to stay.

Fifty-three different extension projects have been funded in the last three years by The Cornell Cooperative (CCE) Extension

Grants Program for Innovative Small Farms Education, for a total of \$131,610.

Recently a group of Cornell Cooperative Extension "Small Farms Boosters" met at Hartwick College in Oneonta, N.Y., to share ideas about how to strengthen their educational programming for smaller farms. Sponsored by Cornell's Small Farms Task Group, the meeting featured a presentation and discussion with Dr. John Ikerd, professor emeritus of agricultural economics at the University of Missouri.

Ikerd has written extensively about small farms and sustainable agriculture, arguing that small farms, not large industrialized farms, are the future for agriculture in most rural communities. The paper he presented at the CCE retreat can be viewed at

www.smallfarms.cornell.edu. Click on "About Small Farms," and then click on "Contributions of Small Farms."

"Our purpose was to gather a small group of highly dedicated extension educators — people who are enthusiastic about small farms and have a lot of experience working with them," said Joanna Green, extension associate with Cornell's Small Farms Program. "The discussion was part of our ongoing effort to strengthen Cornell's support for small farms."

The Cornell Small Farms Task Group has developed a set of suggestions for extension program planning for small farms. To view the recommendations, go to www.smallfarms.cornell.edu. Click on "Working With Small Farms", then click on "Educational Programming."

Alternatives To Burning, Burying, Dumping Ag Plastics

ITHACA, N.Y. — Recycling Agricultural Plastics in New York State is a new 30-page report about recycling options for agricultural plastics. It addresses concerns about the environmental health effects and other liabilities of burning, burying, or dumping plastic wastes on farms by describing off-farm recycling and re-processing alternatives.

Plastics are being used increasingly in all sectors of agriculture. Plastic products are being substituted for the longer lasting materials previously used because they often cost less and improve production efficiency. For example, plastic silage bags can result in better feed quality.

However, as with many throw-

away products, disposal is a problem. Surveys indicate that more than half the agricultural plastics in New York state are disposed of by open burning, which releases high levels of polluting emissions. Most of the remainder is buried or dumped on-farm. Emissions from open burning are much greater than from controlled incineration and these emissions pose risks to human health.

Recycling Agricultural Plastics in New York State identifies major uses of plastics on New York farms; recycling technologies that are currently viable or that may be realistic in the near future; technical and infrastructural issues; and processes, agen-

cies, and individuals involved. It addresses concerns of the agricultural, environmental protection, public health, and economic development communities.

The report was written by Lois Levitan and Ana Barros of Cornell University's Environmental Risk Analysis Program. The full report, summary, references, and a photo gallery of agricultural plastic uses and recycling equipment is posted to the Website of the Cornell Environmental Risk Analysis Program: <http://www.cfe.cornell.edu/erap/C&ER>. Or call (607) 255-4765 to order a print copy.

For information on many other small farm topics, visit Cornell's Small Farms Website at www.smallfarms.cornell.edu.

Survey Will Help Penn State Target Needs Of Custom Operators

UNIVERSITY PARK (State College) — Custom agricultural operators are invited to take part in a new online survey designed to help Penn State Extension better serve their needs.

"This is the custom operators' opportunity to be heard," explained Sarah Roth, Extension associate in business management with the Dairy Alliance, a

program of Penn State's College of Agriculture.

A custom agricultural operator is defined as any individual or business hired to perform one or more activities necessary for the function of a farm.

"The survey is really an attempt to assess the needs of custom operators across the state, and see how we can better serve

them," said Roth. The short online survey can be found on Penn State's Farm Management website at <http://farmmanagement.aers.psu.edu>. The survey features eight questions that probe how custom operators are currently getting information about topics such as marketing, financial planning, or business organization; what types of information they need to improve their productivity; and how they would like to receive that information in the future.

Data collected from the survey will aid in creating new programming that addresses the specific needs of custom operators, one of the fastest growing segments of Pennsylvania's vast agriculture industry. According to Roth, this programming may take the form of a series of regional workshops that address topics of interest to operators.

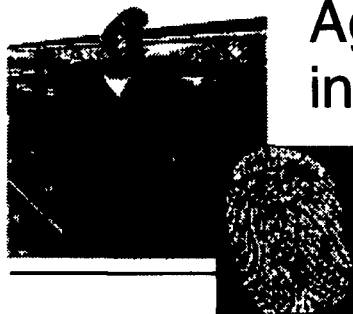
The survey follows on the heels of the creation of a custom operator database, also found on Penn State's Farm Management website.

"The database is a wonderful means to link operators with producers," explained Roth. "Operators from across Pennsylvania can use it as a marketing tool to raise awareness about the services they provide, and producers can use it to access a variety of resources from someone to harvest their silage to a place to house dry cows."

For more information about Penn State Farm Management services, contact Roth at (814) 863-8645, or via e-mail at: SarahRoth@psu.edu.

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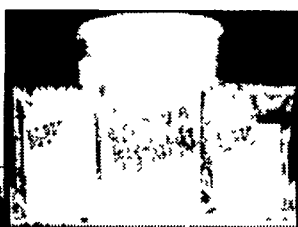
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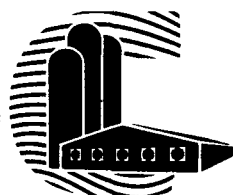
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