

Farmers

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mand," said Tewksbury, who started his own dairy farm in 1957. Tewksbury said the basic formula leaves too much room for big fluctuations in prices paid to the farmers. In Sept. 1996 milk was \$15.81 per 100 weight. In 10 months milk was \$11.67, \$4.14 less. "It allows too many ups and downs and there are more downs," he said.

Between Jan. and June 1996, the retail price of butter went up 75¢ per pound. "But the value of milk used for butter only went up 12¢ a pound," said Tewksbury. "Who's getting the extra profit? It's eaten up between the farm level and the stores."

He said many farmers do not want to abolish the basic formula altogether, but do want to change it significantly. "We want the average of what it costs to make milk (in the equation)," he said.

Tewksbury said many dairy farms big and small are going out of business because the current system of payment is not enough to make a profit.

The PA Milk Marketing Board (MMB) reports that there are 25 fewer dairy farms than there were 10 years ago in Luzerne County.

Sands, who was a dairy farmer since he was 18 years old, sold his milk cows after the last Luzerne

County Fair. The century farm that was started by his grandfather had gotten smaller and smaller, following in the reluctant footsteps of others.

"The family farm is a thing of the past," said Sands. "For a young man to start out today (in farming) it would be terrible. He'd have to have a rich grandfather."

For Sands, the farm stopped making a profit from milk and he knew he had to sell or sink. "The price of feed went up and the price of milk receded," he explained.

Tracey Jackson, MMB director of consumer affairs, said as grain prices go up, the farmers would like the federal government to raise the base level in the formula to a higher amount.

Jackson said farmers would be losing money if the judge's ruling went through.

According to MMB statistics, in October of 1977 a gallon of milk sold for \$1.66 in PA. Ten years ago a gallon sold for \$2.09, five years ago it sold for \$2.40 and it currently sells for about \$2.44.

Most dairy farmers who do not have their own store sell their milk to a co-op, which is a group made up of farmers. Each co-op has its own bylaws and guarantees the milk will be sold, said Jackson.

"If a farmer belongs to a co-op, the processor pays the co-op and the co-op pays each individual farmer," she said. "If the farmer is independent, the processor pays directly."

Will Conyngham, co-owner of Hillside Farms, Inc. Dairy Store, is in a different situation since he sells the milk on the farm. He said he can set any retail price as long as it does not dip below the state's required minimum.

"Most dairy farmers cannot

"The price of feed went up and the price of milk receded."

Ralph Sands Carverton

Left dairy business this year

produce milk at a price significantly lower than what they are getting. At best they are breaking even," said Conyngham. "There are an awful lot going out of business."

More than one milk

There are different classes of milk. Class One is drinking milk, which gets the highest price, Class Two and Three are cheese and manufacturing milk. Each month the federal government sets the price for milk. For October, Class One milk in Luzerne County ran \$15.44 per 100 pounds. Generally, dairy farmers are not paid this amount, they are paid a blend rate. A blend rate is somewhat lower than the class one rate because the co-op cannot determine how the milk will be used.



Three new board members and one incumbent take their oaths from Luzerne County Judge Hugh Mundy to serve the Dallas School District for the next four years. From left, Frank Natitus; Maureen Banks, incumbent; Tony Barbose and Karen Kyle.

Dallas

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upgrade our systems," said Griffiths.

Phase three of Link-to-Learn finances the Wide Area Network (WAN), which connects the schools together and to the state internet.

Griffiths said construction of the new Gerald J. Wycallis Elementary School should start about mid-April. The board is

setting up individual visitations with the Newton-Ransom Elementary School to get a better idea of their options when choosing interior materials.

Banks said she heard the Newton school maintained a comfortable and home-like environment for the young students.

Contract

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"They want to contract work out. You can see why they wouldn't want that," he said.

The last contract was drawn up three years ago.

Both Tipping and Mike Burnside, CTCO public relations director, said they did not know if the company had any contingency plans to fall back on in the case of a strike.

"The company is very profitable. The wages are substandard and so are the pensions."

Terry Tipping
Communication Workers of America

Red Cross lifeguard review Dec. 27

The Wyoming Valley Chapter, American Red Cross, will be conducting a Lifeguarding Review course, for those who took Lifeguarding in 1995. It will be held at the Wyoming Seminary Pool, Carpenter Athletic Center, Maple Street, Kingston, Dec. 27 and 30, Jan. 6 and 10.

Applicants must have a current CPR/FPR certification. If certification is needed there will be a CPR/FPR recertification class at the Red Cross Chapter House on Dec. 17.

For additional information and registration, call Health Services, 823-7161, ext. 37.

Teachers

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the Dallas district for 26 years and believes the quality of students, faculty and administration are what keep him coming back year after year.

Originally from Nanticoke, Warchal attended West Chester State College and worked for the health department after graduation. He then tried teaching and was hooked.

"I really enjoy the students and there is a great faculty up there," he said. "Most of us are the same age. We've kind of grown old together," he said with a laugh, referring to the faculty.

Warchal thinks students enjoy science because it is a hands-on class with experiments and field trips. He was nominated by Mike Faneck.



Paul Warchal, Life Science teacher at Dallas Middle School, has worked in the district for 26 years and recently received the Wyoming Seminary Middle School Teaching Excellence Award.

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