

## March Class III Price Down 55 Cents

The March Class III price is \$9.11, down 55 cents from the prior month and down \$1.54 from a year ago. The March Class IV is \$9.79, down 2 cents from February and down \$1.63 from last March.

## NMPF Backs More USDA Resources For School Lunch Program

The nation's dairy producers and processors have asked Congress to bolster the role of milk in school feeding programs, arguing that children's health and nutritional needs can be best met through an enhanced role for milk in America's schools.



That message was delivered by Jerry Kozak, President and CEO of the

National Milk Producers Federation, whose testimony before the Senate Agriculture Committee on March 4 was given on behalf of NMPF and the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) regarding the reauthorization of school feeding programs. The Child Nutrition Act is under review by Congress, and that statute – which regulates federal programs that serve breakfast and lunch in schools – must be reauthorized this year.

Kozak told the Senate panel that child nutrition programs “represent a national commitment to offer our young people healthful choices and a fair start toward lifelong good nutrition. Milk is a

central part of this commitment and is an unparalleled source of affordable nutrients,” he said. “We must strengthen child nutrition programs across the board – and also enhance the role of milk in assuring that the programs succeed.”

The two groups said that “if more adequate budgetary resources permitted schools the flexibility to innovate, they might be able to attract more participants in the school meal programs.” They noted that participation in the lunch program “has been stagnant or declining,” due largely to competition from vending machines and other food sources.

NMPF and IDFA also reminded the Senate panel that if milk consumption is improved in schools, there are “profound and immediate nutritional benefits to our children” – as well as longer-term benefits. He said that if students have a positive experience of drinking milk in school, they are more likely to remain milk drinkers throughout life. Higher-quality milk products in

schools mean kids will be more likely to choose milk outside school. High-quality and attractive milk products in schools also will help build the image and sales potential of new, innovative milk products. And higher-quality, more-attractive milk can help build participation in school meal programs, increasing children's consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and other healthy foods.

NMPF and IDFA suggested four ways for the Senate Agriculture Committee to enhance the role of dairy products, especially in school meal programs, as part of Congress's reauthorization of federal nutrition programs: (1) Congress should seek to increase school milk consumption through higher reimbursement rates for better products; (2) Congress should provide expanded opportunities for commercially branded milk sales; (3) Congress should reject attacks on milk's role in child nutrition programs; and (4) Congress should permit schools to sell milk at anytime on the school campus.

## Upcoming Events

### May

- 1 MMPA Milk Hauler Meeting - *Lansing*
- 6 MMPA Milk Hauler Meeting - *Mt. Pleasant*
- 8 MMPA Milk Hauler Meeting - *Sandusky*
- 21 MMPA Milk Hauler Meeting - *Gaylord*
- 14-15 Michigan Dairy Industry Conference - *Grand Rapids*
- 22 MMPA Milk Hauler Meeting - *Harris*

### June

- 25-26 MMPA /4-H Milk Marketing Tour - *Novi*

## MSU to Establish Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources

The Michigan State University (MSU) College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) has announced the formation of a center to bolster existing businesses and develop new products in agriculture and natural resource-related industries.

The center was developed in concert with a number of Michigan agricultural, food and natural resource industry groups and governmental agencies in response to a stated need for technical, educational and research assistance. It is intended to provide a coordinated source of information for entrepreneurs and managers in cooperation with the Michigan Partnership for Product Agriculture.

“Despite the extremely challenging budget picture for CANR, we need to forge ahead with key priorities to keep Michigan agriculture and natural resource businesses successful,” CANR Dean Jeff Armstrong said. “This new center, created by reallocating existing scarce resources, will make a major difference in the success of Michigan’s agriculture and natural resource-based industries.”

According to its co-directors, MSU agricultural economics faculty members Chris Peterson and Arlen Leholm, the center will support the development of new products — for both existing businesses and new enterprises — through innovative product research, outreach and education.

“The center will help expand incomes and tax bases at a vitally important time to Michigan and its natural resource, food and agriculture industries,”

Armstrong said. “It will provide businesses with a single access point to programs and resources, both inside MSU and beyond the university, that can meet their needs and help them build high-value, high-profit ventures.”

“The emphasis on proactive market research within the center adds a new dimension that will increase the chances of success for value-added ventures in agriculture and natural resources,” said Ian Gray, director of the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station.

“The center will provide enhanced access to needed business, marketing and product development services at MSU for agriculture and natural resource-based industries,” said Maggie Bethel, director of MSU Extension.

The MSU Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources is a cooperative effort of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station and MSU Extension.

### May is National Electrical Safety Month

With warm weather come seasonal outdoor chores and activities with certain electrical hazards. To help prevent more electrical-related deaths and injuries, The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI—formerly the National Electrical Safety Foundation) supports the recognition and promotion of May as National Electrical Safety Month each year. ESFI warns consumers to be mindful of overhead and buried power lines and residential electrical equipment as they head outside to work and play.

To help protect people from accidental contact with overhead or buried power lines and residential electrical equipment, ESFI offers these tips:

- Overhead power lines are not necessarily insulated and should never be touched.
- Stay clear of overhead power lines — electricity can jump.
- Be aware of overhead power lines when using any ladder – not

just metal – and never rest a ladder against power lines.

- Children should never fly kites around overhead power lines or climb in trees through which power lines pass.
- Consumers should contact the utility company to trim trees that encroach upon power lines and never attempt to trim them themselves.
- Consumers need to contact the utility protection networks even when digging just a couple of inches in the dirt around households.

To safely coexist with electricity, we need to respect the system by which it is delivered,” says ESFI Executive Director Michael Clendenin. “Learn to look for and steer clear of overhead and buried power lines and leave residential power equipment alone.”

These and other electrical safety tips are available at the ESFI’s Web site at [www.electrical-safety.org](http://www.electrical-safety.org)