



News & Views

The latest dairy news

MMPA Employee Retires

MMPA Mastitis Management coordinator and Farm HACCP Coordinator Gil Johnson will officially retire from the association on August 1, 2007.

Gil, a microbiologist, began his career with MMPA in 1977 where he was in charge of setting up and managing a herd culture program for the MMPA Lab. He performed load tests on tankers at several dairies and was later promoted to MMPA assistant Lab Supervisor and then Lab Supervisor. He was later named MMPA's Farm HACCP Coordinator and served a short stint as a Member Representative in the East area. Gil retires as one of the cooperative's Mastitis Management coordinators, a position he has held for the past 5 years.

Producers scoring 95 percent or more on Grade A Surveys and Federal Check Ratings

MMPA Remus

June 2007

Folkersma Farms*
Clark Dairy Farm*
Maple Woods Farm
Archie Potter
Donald Budzinski
Schaub Dairy Farms

*scored 100 percent

June Class III Price Up \$2.51

The June Class III price is \$20.11, up \$2.51 from May and up \$8.82 from a year ago. This is just the second time that the Class III price has topped \$20.00. In the first half of the year, the Class III averaged \$16.11, the highest ever, and nearly \$4.00, or 33 percent, higher than the 1996-06 average.

The Class IV price is at an all-time high of \$20.76, up \$2.28 from May and up \$10.54 from June 2006.

MMPA Exports Butter Through CWT

Michigan Milk Producers Association had two export assistance bids accepted through the Cooperatives Working Together (CWT) in June and July for the sale of butter.

The first bid was for 190 metric tons (418,000 pounds) of butter to Belgium. The second bid accepted was for the export of 190 MT (418,000 lbs) of butter to Denmark. CWT will pay an export bonus to the bidders, once completion of the butter and cheese shipments is verified.

These accepted bids increase CWT's total 2007 export obligations for cheese to 5,530 MT (12.1 million lbs); its YTD export obligations for butter to 9,630 MT (21.2 million lbs) and its YTD anhydrous milkfat exports to 2,180 MT (5 million lbs). Those totals represent a year to date milk equivalent of 680 million pounds of exports.

Upcoming Events

August

15-17 Outstanding Young Dairy Cooperator Conference – *Novi*

September

26 MMPA Advisory Committee Meeting – *Lansing*

Agriculture Director Irwin to Retire

State Agriculture Director Mitch Irwin announced on July 18, 2007 that he is retiring as State Agriculture Director to pursue private sector business ventures. Irwin made his official announcement in a letter to the Michigan Agriculture Commission which met in East Lansing. Irwin is expected to leave his post on or before August 17.

Agriculture Commission Chair James Byrum accepted Irwin's resignation and complimented his leadership on agriculture issues.

"Mitch Irwin has been a dynamic advocate for agriculture and has been especially effective in promoting the emerging bio-fuel and alternative energy sectors," Byrum said. "We are grateful for his service and wish him every success in the future."

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm commended Irwin for his years of dedicated service and creativity he brought to state government.

"Mitch has been an enthusiastic champion for protecting our food supply, promoting Michigan-grown products, and preserving critical farmland," said Granholm. "Mitch also helped launch our effort to create thriving bio-fuel and alternative energy industries in Michigan, a critical part of our plan to revitalize Michigan's economy."

Irwin said his decision brings to a close a career of public service in state government that began with his election to the Michigan Senate in the 1970s and is looking forward to pursuing private business opportunities.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed the challenges of leading the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) to help expand agriculture and diversify Michigan's economy," he said, "It is simply time for me to return to the private sector to pursue opportunities in business development, investment, and real estate ventures. MDA has an outstanding team of dedicated professionals, and I have been honored to work with them and with the commission."

By statute, the Agriculture Commission appoints the director. Chairman Byrum said the selection process will begin immediately and expects the commission to solicit, interview, and select the new director in the next few weeks.

MMPA Matters

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more about the dairy industry and recognize the value of dairy to the state and to their individual districts within the state. We look forward to the positive effect that their proactive approach will have on our industry and the citizens of our state. As MMPA members, we must work closely with all of our legislators to enhance the value that the dairy industry adds to the state of Michigan.

You don't have to make a trip to Washington D.C. to be effective. Time is a precious com-

modity for all of us today, and we all want to use it judiciously. Fortunately, our legislators make it easier to meet with them today than in years past. They all provide office hours in their districts to meet with constituents on a regular basis, so take a little time today to make an appointment with your legislators. Get to know each other so that phone call you need to make concerning a particular bill in Congress is a very effective phone call.



WTO Talks Again Produce No Agreement

A meeting of four highly-influential World Trade Organization members - the U.S., the EU, Brazil and India - suddenly broke down in mid June before negotiations were scheduled to end. The primary reason for the breakdown in negotiations was an inability to move forward on the issue of Non-Agricultural Market Access. The meeting among the four was to be an important precursor to achieving the necessary progress to allow the discussions with the full WTO membership to move forward this summer.

WTO countries plan to continue to negotiate, but specific talks are not expected to resume among this group of four. Negotiations will likely now revert to the broader WTO membership for continued dialogue. The Chairmen of the WTO negotiating committees are expected to release new papers aimed at forging compromise among the membership. A complicating factor in achieving a deal, however, is the lack of time that remains to achieve an agreement by very early 2008. The collapse of discussions among these four key players will significantly complicate the ability to reach a deal by then.

Also, President Bush's Trade Promotion Authority expired at the end of June, without which the prospect of passing a large trade bill through Congress becomes more daunting.