



News & Views

The latest dairy news

October Class III Price Down \$1.37

The October Class III price is \$18.70, down \$1.37 from September, but up \$6.38 from a year ago. The October Class IV price is \$21.31, down 30 cents from September, but up \$9.80 from a year ago.

EPA Announces Formation of New Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced the formation of its new Farm, Ranch and Rural Communities Federal Advisory Committee. The committee will advise the EPA Administrator on environmental rules and regulations impacting farms, ranches and rural communities. Agricultural groups have long advocated the creation of such an Advisory group in an effort to improve communications with EPA policy makers and regulators. It will consist of 25 members and will include agricultural producers, academics and researchers, suppliers and processors, and environmental and conservation groups. The Federal Register notice request for nominations can be found online at: <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20071800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2007/E7-22380.htm>

Michigan Dairy Producers Approve Continuation Referendum

Michigan's dairy producers approved the referendum to continue the Michigan Dairy Market Program (for Grade "A" Milk) by an overwhelming majority. The approval of this referendum insures that 10 of the 15 cents dairy farmers invest in check-off efforts for promotion and education activities will stay in Michigan.

The program will continue for an additional five years beginning January 1, 2008. The current state program assessment is \$.10 per hundredweight of Michigan Grade "A" Milk.

A total of 635 valid ballots were cast in the referendum. Of those, 569 producers voted Yes (90 percent), representing 2,122,073,803 pounds (80 percent of the production volume represented) and 66 producers voted No (10 percent), representing 515,655,882 pounds (20 percent of the production volume represented).

To attain renewal of the program, more than 50 percent of the voting producers (representing more than 50 percent of the pounds sold by those voting) must approve continuation.

Established in January 1983, the Michigan Dairy Market Program was developed to promote the sale of milk and milk products produced within the State of Michigan and to increase consumer knowledge and acceptance of milk and milk products in general.

Upcoming Events

December

- 5 MMPA Advisory Committee Meeting – *Novi*
MMPA Local Meetings begin

January

- 29 MMPA Resolutions and Nominating Committee Meetings
– *Novi*

Countdown begins for 2008 Great Lakes Regional Dairy Conference

The Great Lakes Regional Dairy Conference is gearing up for another educational and fun-filled event, February 7-9 at the Bavarian Inn Lodge and Conference Center in Frankenmuth, Mich.

"We've worked hard to make sure we include quality information for all of the region's dairy producers, farm managers and dairy industry professionals," explains Brian Troyer, GLRDC executive director and dairy nutrition specialist for Caledonia Farmers Elevator. "Our goal is to provide an engaging venue for all sectors of the dairy industry to come together in one place at one time to learn and share information. We want to provide producers with a forum to gather the latest resources to help increase their profitability while doing more with less."

The conference kicks off with a key-

note by farm radio personality Orion Samuelson and then continues with two education-filled days featuring experts in dairy nutrition, reproduction and labor management. An All-Breeds Bulletin targeted to breed association members will take place on Saturday, February 9 – right on the heels of the main conference.

"As we enter our sixth year, we continue to attract more and better speakers," Troyer says. "The conference is segmented – the first day focuses on reproduction and financial health and the second day focuses on labor management and nutrition. And there's always some fun thrown in."

The planning committee hopes to build on the momentum from the

2007 conference, which attracted more than 425 dairy producers, farm managers, breeders and industry representatives from throughout the Midwest and Canada over three days.

"The strength of this conference lies in the fact that producers drive the content," Troyer explains. "This isn't one company going out and putting on a conference that suits its needs. It's about producers getting together and telling organizers what topics and issues are important to them – what they need to know to make their farms more efficient and profitable."

The 2008 speaker list includes Dr. Paul Fricke, associate professor of dairy science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; Dr. Normand St. Pierre, professor of dairy science at The Ohio State University; Sarah Fogelman, agricultural economist and labor relations expert with Kansas State University

Extension; Dr. Mike Hutjens, Extension dairy specialist at the University of Illinois; Dr. Mike Allen, animal science professor at Michigan State University; and Trent Loos, an agriculture evangelist and radio personality.

Some of the best learning opportunities, according to Troyer, will come when participants get to interact with two different producer panels to learn what works on their farms. This year's producer panel topics will be focused on reproduction programs and managing farm labor.

"Producer panels are always a big hit," Troyer says. "When you can sit with people who experience the same challenges as you do and



Great Lakes
Regional Dairy Conference
serving the dairy industry since 2003

learn from their successes and failures – it really puts you ahead of the game."

New this year will be an alternative program session offered on Thursday evening after dinner specially designed for farm managers and workers who are unable to attend during the day and, back by popular demand, will be a hot topics session on Friday morning.

Sara Long, Troyer's conference colleague and member of the Michigan Holstein Association and Michigan Brown Swiss Association boards, says organizers are encouraging producers to bring their families and enjoy all that Frankenmuth has to offer.

"This is truly a family destination and it offers folks an opportunity to mix business with pleasure," Long says.

Frankenmuth, located in the Thumb, has long billed itself as Michigan's Little Bavaria. In addition to the town's numerous specialty and gift shops, it is home to Bronner's Christmas Village, Zehnders Splash Down Water Park, two popular regional micro-breweries and a relaxing day spa. Several museums and one of the region's largest outlet malls are just minutes away.

For registration and pricing for the Great Lakes Regional Dairy Conference, visit www.glrdc.msu.edu, or call the registration hot line at (517) 353-3175, ext. 229.

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- Brian Troyer, GLRDC executive director