



# News & Views

The latest dairy news

## December Class III Price Up \$1.38

The Class III price for December is \$20.60, up \$1.38 from November and up \$7.13 from a year ago. The Class IV price is \$19.18, down \$1.22 from November but up \$6.88 from a year ago.

## ANR Week at MSU

Farmers, agriculturists, foresters and others interested in livestock, land and water are invited to Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Week, Feb. 29-March 8 at Michigan State University (MSU). The annual event, formerly known as Farmers' Week, is hosted by the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, MSU Extension and the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station.

This year's events include educational programs ranging from forest stewardship training to a small flock poultry program and educational sessions focused on forage and grazing technologies.

For a complete list of programs, conferences and educational opportunities, visit [www.canr.msu.edu/anrweek](http://www.canr.msu.edu/anrweek) or contact program coordinator Megghan Honke at (517) 353-3175, ext. 229, or e-mail [honkemeg@msu.edu](mailto:honkemeg@msu.edu). ANR Week program guides with dates, times, locations, costs and event descriptions are available from any county MSU Extension office or the MSU Bulletin Office, 117 Central Services, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1001; (517) 353-6740.

## California Milk Price Changes will have Negative National Ramifications

NMPF expressed its concern to California agriculture officials about changes in the state's cheese pricing system that will have negative ramifications nationally. California's Department of Food and Agriculture announced last year it would fix the whey value within the Class 4b price formula at 25 cents per hundredweight.

In a letter to Agriculture Secretary A. G. Kawamura, NMPF wrote: "a fixed whey value offers no accommodation with the rest of the country, and will ultimately disrupt milk marketing in all states, including California. Shifting differences among regional milk prices will result from the new formula, and lead to surges of milk in response: first into, then out of, California. This will destabilize milk marketing across the country, but within California most of all."

NMPF urges CDFA to reconsider its decision, abandon the fixed whey value, and adopt a Class 4b milk price formula that moves in parallel with the Federal order Class III milk price. NMPF contends that "the long-term viability of both the California and Federal pricing systems depends upon their effective coordination." Absent that, milk marketing conditions will be disorderly and more volatile, putting pressure on both dairy farmers and cheese makers.

## Upcoming Events

### February

MMPA District Meetings

- 7-9 Great Lakes Regional Dairy Conference – *Frankenmuth*
- 14-15 UDIM Dairy Product Promotion Seminar – *Lansing*
- 29 Balancing Animal Agriculture and Communities – *East Lansing*
- 29-March 8 Agriculture & Natural Resources Week at MSU – *East Lansing*

### March

MMPA Milker Training Schools (*see page 17 for complete listing*)

- 17 MMPA Resolutions and Committee Meeting – *Lansing*
- 18 MMPA State Annual Meeting – *Lansing*
- 19 Ag Day at the Capitol – *Lansing*

## Conference Hopes to Bridge Gap Between Animal Agriculture and Communities February 29 in East Lansing

Tension between livestock producers and neighbors has grown in parts of rural Michigan, leaving community leaders looking for solutions. How can neighbors and local officials work together to ensure that producers and their neighbors get a fair shake?

That's the question experts from across the country will address during Balancing Animal Agriculture and Communities, a one-day conference aimed at bridging the gap in understanding between animal agriculture producers, their neighbors and community leaders.

"This is not an easy topic to tackle," Wendy Powers, chair of the conference committee, said. "That's why we're bringing in researchers from across the country to talk about a variety of issues that affect decision makers."

Topics include air emissions' effects on human and environmental health, aquatic ecosystem integrity, real estate value and quality of life. In all cases, scientists will share their perspectives on the comparative effects of various systems. In addition, David Hollister, former Lansing mayor and president of the Prima Civitas Foundation, will moderate a session that explores the options and tradeoffs of various technologies and farm management systems.

Township, county and state government officials are encouraged to attend the conference as well as farmers and representatives from environmental, food and agriculture groups.

Powers said she and her 22-person planning committee, which consists of a rural sociologist, economists, animal researchers, sustainable agriculture specialists and water experts, hope to open up lines of communication between livestock farmers and their neighbors.

"This conference isn't designed to end the debate but rather to start the conversation," she said. "It's a great opportunity for people with differing viewpoints to learn from experts in various disciplines as well as from one another."

The day will wrap up with a "tell us what you think" session, allowing participants to give real-time feedback about issues covered throughout the day.

### Balancing Animal Agriculture and Communities

**When:** February 29, 2008

**Where:** Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center  
55 South Harrison Road  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing, MI 48824-1022

Registration fees for the conference are \$115. To register, visit [www.animalagteam.msu.edu](http://www.animalagteam.msu.edu) or call Faye Watson at (517) 353-3174.

For overnight accommodations and directions, call (800) 875-5090.

## Forage Technology Conference set for March 6 at MSU

Technology has affected many areas of agriculture, and forage production is one of those. Farmers and agribusiness representatives can learn about new varieties, strategies and management practices at the Forage Technology Conference, set for March 6 at the Michigan State University (MSU) Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center as part of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Week.

The program begins at 9:30 a.m. and includes a discussion about managing fertilizer use with increasing prices, fertilizing alfalfa and new developments in grass breeding for hay and haylage.

Following lunch, participants

can choose to attend sessions focused on pasture management or forage management.

The pasture management sessions will explore developments in grasses for pastures, warm-season grasses for pastures, pasture planning for forage availability and establishing pastures via slurry seeding with liquid manure.

The forage session presenters will look at the potential of Teff grass for Michigan, optimum seeding rates for alfalfa, wide-swath haylage and developments in alfalfa insect management.

Presenters include representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Natural Resources

Conservation Service and MSU Extension.

The registration fee is \$25 for Michigan Forage Council members and \$30 for non-members. It is due March 1 and includes lunch and all materials.

To register, contact Jodie Schonfelder at the MSU Department of Crop and Soil Sciences by calling (517) 355-0271, ext. 1114, or by e-mail at [schonfel@msu.edu](mailto:schonfel@msu.edu). To learn more about the program, contact Richard Leep, professor of crop and soil sciences, at (269) 671-2323, or e-mail [leep@msu.edu](mailto:leep@msu.edu). Information can also be found at <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/fis/workshops.htm>.