



News & Views

The latest dairy news

September Class III Price Down \$1.04

The September Class III price is \$16.28, down \$1.04 from August and down \$3.79 from a year ago. The September Class IV is \$15.45, down \$1.19 from August and down \$6.16 from last year.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service Rules on School Nutrition Program Milk Substitutions

The USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) finalized nutrient standards for non-dairy beverage alternatives to fluid milk in the School Nutrition Programs. The final rule came in response to the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, and follows the November 2006 FNS proposed rule.

The rule allows schools to accept a written substitution request from a parent or legal guardian, grants schools discretion to select the acceptable non-dairy beverages, and continues to make school food authorities responsible for substitution expenses that exceed the Federal reimbursement.

The new standards allow non-dairy alternatives in the School Nutrition Programs, but milk will still be offered in schools (by law) with all meals due to milk's unique nutrient package and importance to children's health. The rule allows substitution as an exception to the requirement, not a replacement.

Country of Origin Labeling Now in Effect

After years of political wrangling, the USDA finally moved ahead with Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) for meat at the end of September. Implementation of the new rule—which is still in interim form—means that any covered commodities, which include muscle cuts of beef and ground beef, packaged after September 30, 2008 must declare the country of origin on their labels. Processed food items (such as dairy products) are not covered by this rule, but dairy beef products are covered, resulting in some necessary actions by dairy producers.

As part of the rule, USDA declared that a review of records will be the means for the agency to verify origin claims made on labels. Retailers will be required to have the ability to trace the labeled product with records of origin to prove the label claim. Suppliers (either direct or indirect) of covered commodities must make the information available to the retailer to enable them to conduct the trace back. USDA also indicated that a producer affidavit is considered acceptable evidence on which the slaughter facility may rely to initiate the origin claim. To assist producers in complying with any requirements for affidavits, the livestock chain developed a universal set of affidavits that industry can use.

National Animal Identification System-compliant RFID tags, specifically those known as 840 tags, are acceptable as an alternative to paper affidavit recordkeeping. The RFID tags used in Michigan are NAIS compliant.

Upcoming Events

November

24 MMPA Leaders' Conference – *East Lansing*

December

2 MMPA Advisory Committee – *Novi*

REGISTERED HOLSTEIN BULLS

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USDA Issues October Prices with Revised Make Allowances

On September 23, after delaying the implementation of its interim final rule on Class III and IV make allowance adjustments by one month, USDA issued advanced Class II skim and Class I prices for October using formulas revised per the interim final rule published on July 31.

The delay was USDA's response to a lawsuit filed on behalf of seven dairy farmer cooperatives, two other farm operators, and a state dairy farmers association. Their petition for an injunction to stop USDA from using the new formulas in October was heard by U.S. District Judge Emmet Sullivan on September 16; Judge Sullivan denied the petition on September 19. An appeal was denied by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals on September 22, leaving USDA free to use the revised make allowances in the September 23 price announcement.

That announcement was for advanced prices for Class I skim milk and butterfat and Class II skim milk in October. The new formulas will also be applied to the Class III and IV prices and the Class II butterfat prices for October.

The revised formulas thus took effect October 1, 2008, for all classes, increasing make allowances for cheese, butter, nonfat dry milk, and dry whey, and revising the butterfat yield factor. (Because they applied to Class II butterfat and Class III and IV milk for September, the prices announced October 3 applied the old formulas.)

Healthy Hooves—No Lame Excuses

Hoof care and treating foot problems are a high priority for dairy producers. Hoof trimmer and Dairyland Hoof Care Institute instructor Karl Burgi will speak about hoof health and preventative care at a series of MSU Extension clinics in December.

Dec. 15 – Franklin Inn, Bad Axe

Dec. 16 – Forward's, West Branch

Dec. 17 – Smith Hall, Clinton Co. Fairgrounds, St. Johns

Dec. 18 – Polkton Township Hall, Coopersville

Clinics take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The \$10 per person registration fee includes lunch and meeting materials.

A supplemental program will cover on-farm cow comfort assessments and "Farm Animal Care GAAMPs: What You Need to Know."

For registration and program information, contact MSU Extension dairy educators Faith Cullens at (989) 224-5249 or Phil Durst at (989) 826-1160.

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

MMPA South Central BTU

September 2008

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Eugene Feldkamp

Gier Dairy

Leo Bur Farms LLC

Craig & Linda Jo Newland

Penney Farms

James Ogden & Ernest O'Connor

Denningsons Farms

Simon Wagler Jr. & Duane Wagler

MMPA Robert Lalone BTU

September 2008

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Timothy & Jennifer Oehrli

Jerry Mitchell

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Bruce Carey

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September 2008

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