



# News & Views

The latest dairy news

## February Class III Price Drops to \$9.31

The February Class III price is \$9.31, down \$1.47 from January and down \$7.72 from a year earlier. This is the third-lowest Class III price in the past 30 years, topping only \$9.11 posted in March 2003 and November 2000's \$8.57.

The Class IV price is \$9.45, down 14 cents from January, and the lowest price since the Class IV was put in place to value butter/powder milk in January 2000.

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

MMPA Michigan Dairy West BTU

February 2009

Richard Horetski\*

Kirkpatrick Farms\*

Jeff & Tim Dansby\*

Howard & Delesa Clark

Marshall Bros LLC

RI-VAL-RE Farms

Robert & Elaine Esch

Donal Farm LLC

Apple Dairy Corp.

MSU Dairy Dept. of Animal Science

Larry, Kathi & Daniel Minnis

Fogle Farms

\* Scored 100 percent

## MMPA Returns Nearly 1.7 million of Cash Patronage Refunds to Members

Michigan Milk Producers Association recently paid nearly \$1.7 million in cash patronage refunds to its dairy farmer members. This cash allocation represents approximately 28 percent of the \$5.9 million allocated net earnings generated by the cooperative in fiscal year 2008. The cash patronage returned includes 100 percent of the farm supply earnings and 25 percent of the milk marketing earnings. All members who marketed milk through MMPA for fiscal year 2008 will be receiving a portion of the nearly \$1.7 million.

MMPA members received other cash payments in May 2008 of more than \$4.5 million through retirement of the cooperative's 1999 equities. In October 2008, MMPA members received \$1.3 million in cash payments in the form of a "13th" milk check. With the current payment of \$1.7 million, cash payments in the last ten months total over \$7.5 million.

"The continued success of our operations and diverse product mix allow us to make these extra cash payments to our members in the form of equity retirements and cash patronage," says John Dilland, MMPA General Manager.

Cash patronage funds and equity allocations are based on the amount of milk each individual member farm marketed and on the supplies purchased through the cooperative during the year in which the earnings were achieved. Under the current board policy, the non-cash balance of the equity allocation will be revolved back to the members in future years.

## Supply and Demand

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would remove close to three billion pounds of milk equivalent from our supply.

Will all of these ideas work? No guarantees can be made, of course, but I think we have a sound plan. We have no control over many worldwide issues, but we must attempt to help ourselves out of this mess even though it wasn't of our making. We are not asking the government for a bailout, but if we were, I wonder who the "cow czar" would be?

Ken

## Upcoming Events

### April

16 MMPA Dairy Communicator Conference – Lansing

23 MMPA Advisory Committee Meeting – Novi

## Turn Heifers Into Cash Cows at MSU Extension Program

Raising healthy, productive heifers is vital to the long-term profitability of any dairy farm. Michigan dairy producers can learn what it takes to get the most from a calf-rearing program during "Turning your Heifers into Cash Cows," a new educational session planned for four Michigan locations during April by the Michigan State University (MSU) Extension Dairy Team.

The program will take place April 6 at the Fowler Conservation Club in Fowler, April 7 at the Salem Township Hall in Burnips, April 8 at the Carl T. Johnson Hunting and Fishing Center in Cadillac and April 9 at the Somerset Township Hall in Somerset Center. It will run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in each location.

Presenters include MSU

Extension dairy educators, Extension specialists and industry professionals, who will discuss the importance of calf-rearing strategies and management practices that can be implemented to improve heifer calf performance.

The program will feature a look at how feeding programs can improve the health of young calves, including how properly timing colostrum feeding can prevent disease incidence.

Participants will learn how to set up standard operating procedures for calf-raising enterprises. They'll also learn about controlling calf diseases through proper vaccination and herd health programs, and on-farm milk pasteurizing and using whole milk versus milk replacer in

calf-feeding programs.

The \$15 registration fee is due April 1. It covers lunch and all materials.

For more information or to register, contact the host MSU Extension dairy educator listed below. To reach any MSU Extension county office, call toll-free 1-888-678-3464. For the April 6 session, call Faith Cullens in the Clinton County MSU Extension office; for the April 7 session, call Ira Krupp in the Branch County MSU Extension office; for the April 8 program, call Kathy Lee in the Missaukee County MSU Extension office; and for the April 9 meeting, call Dean Ross in the Livingston County MSU Extension office.

## Bovine TB Potential High Risk Area Designated in Iosco County

The Michigan departments of Agriculture (MDA) and Natural Resources (DNR) announced on March 19 that routine bovine Tuberculosis (TB) surveillance resulted in the identification of a bovine TB positive Iosco County hunter-harvested deer in the 2008 hunting season taken on the border of the bovine TB zone as bovine TB-positive.

As a result, MDA has designated the area within a 10-mile radius around the deer to be in a Potential High-Risk Area. The Iosco County deer was discovered inside the boundary of the northern Lower Michigan bovine TB zone, but a small portion of the 10-mile circle falls just outside of the zone. Cattle, bison, and cervid farms within the Potential High Risk Area are required to test for bovine TB within six months of the official designation.


"The designation will be dropped after disease surveillance testing finds no bovine TB in cattle or bison," said MDA State Veterinarian Dr. Steven Halstead. "Farms within the TB zone are tested every year, but there are approximately 13 farms within the section of the circle falling outside the TB zone that will need to be tested."

As part of the bovine TB eradication effort, the DNR conducts annual surveillance testing in hunter-harvested deer, and has tested more than 178,500 deer statewide. The DNR has examined approximately 4,841 deer from Iosco County since testing began in 1998.

In 2008, two potential high-risk areas were designated in Iosco County and subsequently dropped after whole-herd cattle testing found no bovine TB in


cattle or bison.

For more information on Michigan's bovine TB eradication project, visit: [www.michigan.gov/](http://www.michigan.gov/)



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