



# News & Views

The latest dairy news

## September Class III Price Up 91 Cents

The September Class III price is \$12.11, up 91 cents from August but down \$4.17 from a year ago. The Class IV price is \$11.15, up 77 cents from a month ago, but down \$4.30 from last year. All prices are the highest so far this year.

## Dairy Producers Help Grow Sales with New Yogurt Smoothie Product

Dairy producers, through their dairy checkoff investment, in partnership with General Mills, owner of the Yoplait brand, developed a new line of frozen fruit and yogurt smoothies, Yoplait Yogurt Chips. The chips use a breakthrough technology to develop a yogurt product that is blended with fruit and eight ounces of fluid milk.

The smoothies were developed to help meet consumer needs for nutritious and convenient dairy products that also taste good. The smoothies, which can be found in the frozen fruit section in grocery stores nationwide, are available in three flavors—Strawberry Banana, Strawberry Mango Pineapple and Triple Berry.

“Sales of yogurt and smoothie products have been a shining star for the dairy category in recent years,” said Paul Rovey, Arizona dairy producer and chair of Dairy Management Inc., which manages the national dairy checkoff. “Checkoff-funded dairy ingredient marketing efforts work with key food and beverage manufacturers to assist in the development of new products that drive volume by highlighting the nutrition, functionality, versatility and good taste of dairy ingredients.”

General Mills, in collaboration with national and local dairy promotion organizations, is rolling out the frozen fruit and yogurt smoothie products in grocery stores across the nation this fall. The launch also will include in-store sampling events to boost sales. Consumer research indicates that, once consumers tried the smoothies, they became regular customers. The smoothies will result in an estimated 120 million pounds of additional milk volume used each year.

For more information about dairy ingredient marketing efforts and other dairy checkoff partnerships, visit [www.dairycheckoff.com](http://www.dairycheckoff.com).

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## Upcoming Events

**November**

10-12 NMPF/UDIA/NDB Joint Annual Meeting – *Grapevine, Texas*  
23 MMPA Leaders' Conference – *East Lansing*

**December**

15 MMPA Advisory Committee – *Novi*

## MDA Regional Offices Permanently Closed

*Closure part of budget cuts, saves \$600,000 per year*

In a move to shave approximately \$600,000 from its budget, Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) Director Don Koivisto announced the permanent closure of the department's regional offices located in Detroit, Escanaba, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Saginaw, St. Joseph, and Traverse City and its district office in Marquette. MDA will still continue to have field staff working around the state using their homes as an office base. The main difference is customers no longer have a brick and mortar location to go to for service.

"MDA's regional offices are an important part of the department's ability to deliver its programs to our customers; however, budget realities are causing us to look at different ways of doing business," said Koivisto. "While we anticipate there will be some bumps in the road as we transition to this new business model, MDA will work hard to maintain the high level of customer service we have always provided."

Effective October 1, customers calling MDA's regional and district offices had been redirected to a toll-free number in Lansing: 800-292-3939. Additionally, staff are no longer available at those locations.

*MDA's regional offices provided a variety of services to consumers and industry representatives such as:*

- Serving as a base of operations for investigations, product sampling, plant pest and disease eradication,

emergency incident management and response, foodborne illness outbreak response, staff training, field equipment, and evidence storage, etc.

- Accepting consumer complaints about food products, conditions of food establishments, nursery plants, insect pests, etc.

- Administering 16,000 pesticide applicator exams annually.

- Handling licensing and regulatory questions, including accepting fee and fine payments.

*MDA's new regional contact information is as follows:*

**Phone:** 800-292-3939

**General mail:** Michigan Dept. of Agriculture, PO Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909 General email: [mda-info@michigan.gov](mailto:mda-info@michigan.gov)

**Food and nursery licensing fees:** Michigan Dept. of Agriculture, PO Box 30746, Lansing, MI 48909

**Other money:** Michigan Dept. of Agriculture, PO Box 30776, Lansing, MI 48909

**Online complaint form:** [www.michigan.gov/mdacomplaints](http://www.michigan.gov/mdacomplaints)

**For information on licensing or starting a business in Michigan, you may visit:** <http://www.michigan.gov/business>.

## Ashley Messing Receives 2009 Dairy Shrine Award

Ashley Messing, a May 2009 Michigan State University (MSU) animal science graduate, was one of nine college students from across the country honored by the National Dairy Shrine at ceremonies held during the 2009 World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis. Ashley is the daughter of MMPA members Greg and Shelly Messing of Bad Axe.

The National Dairy Shrine's Student Recognition Award recognizes students for excellence in leadership skills, involvement in activities, academic accomplishments and interest in the dairy industry. The awards were presented during the National Dairy Shrine's annual awards banquet held Oct. 1.

The Student Recognition Award honors graduating college seniors as they begin their careers

or pursue graduate level education and comes with a cash award. Messing was one of seven students who received a \$500 cash award. Jennifer Rassler, Kempton, Pa., received a \$1,500 scholarship as this year's first place winner and Aaron Horst, Chambersburg, Pa., received a \$1,000 scholarship.

Messing is currently employed by Semex USA as its Northeastern Michigan District Sales Representative. Prior to earning a bachelor of science degree in animal science, she graduated from the MSU Institute of Agricultural Technology with a two-year degree in dairy management. Messing was actively involved in the MSU Dairy Club and participated on both the Ag Tech and college dairy judging teams. She was also an active Michigan 4-H member, served on both the Michigan Junior Holstein

Association and Jersey Junior Cattle Club boards of directors, and fulfilled the role of the 2007 senior Michigan Dairy Ambassador.

To compete for the award, Messing had to complete an application, answer several essay questions and submit two letters of recommendation. She said she was both surprised and ecstatic when she opened the congratulations letter from the National Dairy Shrine.

"It's indeed an honor to be recognized by the National Dairy Shrine, and I feel fortunate to be considered among some of the most elite individuals from the U.S. dairy industry as one of the recipients of this award," she said. "Receiving this award helps me stand out among my peers and puts me out in front of the worldwide dairy audience."