



CHEESE REPORTER

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Senate Bill Would Boost Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives

Bipartisan Dairy Business Innovation Act Of 2023 Would Raise Funding To \$36 Million Per Year

Washington—US Sens. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) on Wednesday introduced legislation that will reauthorize and strengthen the Dairy Business Innovation (DBI) Initiatives program.

Specifically, the Dairy Business Innovation Act of 2023 will increase funding for the DBI Initiatives, authorizing \$36 million per year, up from \$20 million, to help more US dairy farmers and processors modernize, reach new markets, and create economic growth.

After the DBI Initiatives program was created in the 2018 farm bill, four dairy business innovation centers were established to serve dairy producers and processors across the US. Since the program was established in 2019, DBI Initiatives have supported over \$150 million in awards through the four regional centers, which include the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC), the Wisconsin-

based Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA), the Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative (SDBII), and the Pacific Coast Coalition Dairy Business Innovation Initiative (PCCDBII).

Each regional initiative is tasked with providing technical assistance and grants to farmers and processors, including:

Supporting new and expanding dairy businesses: Centers provide assistance with business plan development, accounting, market evaluation, and strategic planning.

Promoting innovation in dairy products: Dairy businesses receive assistance with product innovation, marketing and branding, packaging, distribution, supply chain innovation, food safety training and consultation, and dairy product production training.

Assisting with dairy plant modernization and process improvement: Dairy businesses receive assistance with processing facil-

ity improvement, including assistance with plant upgrades, food safety modernization, energy and water efficiency, byproduct reprocessing and use maximization, and waste treatment.

In addition to Baldwin and Blackburn, the Dairy Business Innovation Act of 2023 is being co-sponsored by US Sen. Peter Welch (D-VT).

The legislation is also supported by the International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA), Midwest Dairy Coalition, Farm-First Dairy Cooperative, and Organic Valley.

"I've heard directly from dozens of Wisconsin dairies that have expanded their businesses thanks to the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives, and I'm proud to lead the charge to ensure this program has the resources it needs to help more businesses innovate and grow for the future," Baldwin said. "Our dairy farmers and producers face unique challenges, and ex-

• See **Dairy Innovation**, p. 13

Dairy CPI Fell 0.5% In June; Retail Cheddar, Whole Milk Prices Declined

Washington—The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for dairy and related products was 268.3 in June (1982-84=100), down 0.5 percent from May but 2.7 percent higher than in June 2022, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported Wednesday.

That's the lowest level for the dairy CPI since August 2022, when it was 267.5. The dairy CPI has now been below 270 for two straight months, after being above that level for six consecutive months.

The overall CPI for all items was 305.1 in June, up 0.3 percent from May and 3.0 percent higher than in June 2022. June's CPI for food was 322.6, up 0.1 percent from May and up 5.7 percent from June 2022.

In June, the CPI for food at home was 302.3, down 0.1 percent from May but 4.7 percent higher than in June 2022; and the CPI for food away from home was 354.2, up 0.4 percent from May and up 7.7 percent from June 2022.

The CPI for cheese and related products was 266.5 in June, down 1.4 percent from May but up 1.1 percent from June 2022. That's the first time the cheese CPI has been below 270 since July 2022, when it was 268.7, and it's the lowest level for the cheese CPI since June 2022, when it was 263.5.

• See **Retail Prices Fall**, p. 14

USDA Lowers Most 2023, 2024 Price Forecasts; Butter Is An Exception

Washington—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA), in its monthly supply-demand estimates released Wednesday, reduced most of its dairy product price forecasts for both 2023 and 2024, with the exception of butter.

The agency's milk production forecast for 2023 is unchanged from last month, at 228.4 billion pounds, which is up 1.9 billion pounds from 2022's record output. The milk production forecast for 2024 is reduced by 200 million pounds from last month, to 230.6 billion pounds, based on lower dairy cow inventories and slower growth in milk per cow.

• See **Price Forecasts**, p. 6

NMPF Wants USDA To Reject Several Federal Order Hearing Proposals

Arlington, VA—The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) wants the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to reject several proposals that were submitted to the agency last month for consideration in a possible federal milk marketing order (FMMO) hearing.

NMPF made the request in a June 30 letter to Bruce Summers, administrator, and Dana Coale, deputy administrator, of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).

On June 1, the US Department of Agriculture requested additional proposals from interested parties for a possible federal order hearing and "carefully limited additional proposals to 'the current pricing provisions applicable to all FMMOs,'" NMPF noted.

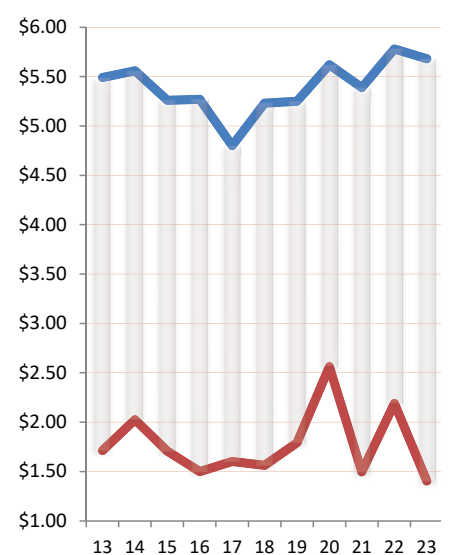
This "broad, yet well defined" scope of USDA's request provides an opportunity for the dairy industry to discuss and debate the uniform pricing provisions of the FMMOs.

At the same time, the defined scope of USDA's request ensures the hearing "will be focused on the uniform pricing provisions of all 11 orders and avoid diversions into myriad other order terms that interact with prices but involve plant definitions, accounting regulations, or order provisions tailored to regional marketing conditions," NMPF stated.

Also, it is "critical" any hearing be limited to proposals that the US secretary of agriculture has authority to adopt pursuant

• See **NMPF Wants**, p. 8

Average Cheddar Price
Retail vs. CME 40-pound Block;
June 2013–2023; Price per lb





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EDITORIAL COMMENT



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evidence continues to mount that saturated fat in general and the fat found in milk in particular isn't nearly as bad as experts have long thought.

Dietary Advice Should Emphasize Full-Fat Dairy Products

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, along with numerous other US and global dietary recommendations, have emphasized lowfat and fat-free dairy products for decades now. But evidence is mounting rapidly that full-fat dairy products actually pack more nutritional punch than the lower-fat varieties, and it seems logical to expect future dietary advice to stop focusing on reduced-fat dairy products.

Going back to 1980, the first edition of the Dietary Guidelines recommended that consumers avoid too much fat, saturated fat and cholesterol, and specifically advised that they limit intake of butter and cream.

And that advice continues to this day. Specifically for dairy, the 2020-2025 edition of the Dietary Guidelines states that most individuals would benefit by increasing intake of dairy in fat-free or low-fat forms, whether from milk yogurt, and cheese, or from fortified soy beverages or soy yogurt.

The most recent edition of the Dietary Guidelines also states that intake of saturated fat should be limited to less than 10 percent of calories per day by replacing them with unsaturated fats, particularly polyunsaturated fats. Strategies to lower saturated fat intake include, among other things, choosing lower-fat forms of foods and beverages (e.g., fat-free or low-fat milk instead of 2 percent or whole milk), and selecting lower-fat cheese instead of full-fat cheese.

The impacts of these recommendations go beyond just simple booklets (as in the pre-internet days) or websites (dietaryguidelines.gov). These recommendations govern what's emphasized on food labels and what can be served in child nutrition programs, among other things.

After all these years of recommending lower-fat dairy prod-

ucts over full-fat dairy products, what are the odds that the federal government will back off on its advice to limit saturated fat intake in the 2025-2030 edition of the Dietary Guidelines? Probably better than ever.

That's because the evidence continues to mount that saturated fat in general and the fat found in milk in particular isn't nearly as bad as experts have long thought.

For example, as we reported last week, new research found that diets emphasizing fruit, vegetables, dairy (mainly whole-fat), nuts, legumes and fish were linked with a lower risk of cardiovascular disease and premature death in all world regions.

Specifically, the study found that, given the low intake of fats and especially saturated fat (i.e., whole-fat dairy) among people with the lowest diet score, "current targeted dietary guidance limiting the consumption of saturated fat and dairy in many populations of the world may not be warranted."

Animal foods such as dairy products and meats are a major source of saturated fats, which have been presumed to adversely affect blood lipids and increase CVD and mortality, noted the study, which was published in the *European Heart Journal*, a journal of the European Society of Cardiology. But recent data suggest that the effects on lipids and blood pressure are "much more modest" than previously thought.

Further, recent reviews of observational studies and the findings in this PURE (Prospective Urban Rural Epidemiology) study showed that dairy foods, especially whole-fat dairy, may be protective against risk of hypertension and metabolic syndrome. These foods "also contain potentially beneficial compounds including quality protein, milk fat globule phos-

pholipids (mainly in whole-fat dairy), unsaturated and branched-chain fats, and numerous vitamins and minerals," the study stated.

In an accompanying editorial, Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian of the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, said the study's findings "provide further support that dairy foods, including whole-fat dairy, can be part of a healthy diet." Prior literature suggests benefits of dairy consumption on lean body mass and protective associations for diabetes, hypertension, and metabolic syndrome, often most notable for yogurt and cheese, and with no consistent differences in these associations for reduced-fat versus whole-fat dairy products.

Biomarker studies of dairy fat intake, which avoid many of the pitfalls of self-reported diet, are supportive of these findings, Mozaffarian continued. "The new results in PURE, in combination with prior reports, call for a re-evaluation of unrelenting guidelines to avoid whole-fat dairy products."

In its recent letter to the US Food and Drug Administration on Bored Cow's "Animal-Free Dairy Milk" (covered on our front page two weeks ago and in this space last week), National Milk Producers Federation pointed out that the milkfat portion of milk contains approximately 400 different fatty acids.

And as a review published in the journal *Nutrients* three years ago noted, dairy fat contains a unique variety of bioactive fatty acids; of the repertoire of fatty acids in dairy fat, about 14 percent of them are unique dairy-derived fatty acids and several function as bioactive molecules, exerting beneficial properties that support health and well-being.

Dietary advice should stop villainizing dairy fat.

EU, New Zealand Sign Free Trade Deal That Increases Dairy Market Access

Agreement Will Protect Numerous EU GIs; Prior Users Can Still Use Parmesan, Gruyere

Brussels, Belgium—The European Union (EU) and New Zealand last Sunday signed their free trade agreement (FTA), which will provide new dairy and other market access for both signatories.

The agreement was signed in Brussels by Damien O'Connor, New Zealand's minister for trade and export growth as well as the country's agriculture minister; EU executive vice president and trade commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis; and was witnessed by New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

According to the European Commission, EU farmers and food businesses will see new business opportunities in New Zealand, as the trade agreement removes all tariffs at entry into force on EU agri-food exports. That includes dairy products, including cheeses.

The EU is "very carefully" opening its market for New Zealand

land exports of agri-food products, the Commission said. For sensitive products, access to the EU market will be limited through tariff-rate quotas (TRQs), gradually implemented.

Under the agreement, the EU will allow a tariff-rate quota of 25,000 tons of cheese to be imported duty-free.

This volume will be gradually phased in over seven years from the entry into force of the agreement.

At the same time, the EU will reduce the tariff from 170.6 euros per ton to zero for two tariff quotas for cheese of combined volume of 6,031 tons allocated under the EU's WTO schedule to New Zealand.

For butter, New Zealand currently has access to the tariff quota of 47,177 tons allocated under the EU's WTO schedule with the in-quota tariff of 38 percent of the MFN duty.

For the volume of 21,000 tons, the tariff under this quota will gradually be reduced to 5 percent of the MFN duty. The EU will also allow imports within the limit of the new TRQ of 15,000 tons with the same gradually reduced duty.

A tariff-rate quota of 15,000 tons of milk powders will be

opened with 20 percent MFN duty. This volume will be gradually phased in over seven years from the entry into force of the agreement.

New Zealand access to the EU dairy market will also be granted through TRQs for high protein whey (3,500 tons phased in over seven years with zero duty).

The trade agreement will provide "significant new opportunities" for New Zealand's exporters of products such as cheese and butter, O'Connor said.

"Based on current trade figures New Zealand will have the opportunity through combined FTA and WTO quotas to provide up to 60 percent of the EU's butter imports, up from 14 percent today," O'Connor said. "New Zealand cheeses could also make up 15 percent of the EU's imported cheeses, up from 0.5 percent today, which is no mean feat for a small nation like ours."

Under the agreement, New Zealand will protect close to 2,000 EU geographical indications (GIs) in New Zealand, including numerous GIs for cheese, and amend its existing GI laws.

The agreement provides that GI protection will not prevent prior users of the terms "Parmesan" or "Gruyere" from continuing that use, provided that they were using those terms in good faith for a period of at least five years before the date of entry into

force of the FTA, and clearly indicate the actual geographical origin of the good concerned.

The FTA also notes that a list of those prior users is to be shared with the EU before the FTA is signed.

To be included on the list of prior users, relevant prior users needed to complete a statutory declaration confirming use of the term "Parmesan" or "Gruyere" in good faith for the requisite period.

Because prior users needed to have used the relevant terms for a period of at least five years before the date of entry into force of the FTA, the start date for that period will not be known until the date of entry into force is known, the New Zealand government noted. That date will be jointly decided by the EU and New Zealand after both parties have completed their respective legal processes to bring the FTA into force.

At this stage, the FTA is anticipated to enter into force in the second quarter of 2024, subject to relevant approvals.

"New Zealand is a key partner for us in the Indo-Pacific region, and this free trade agreement will bring us even closer together," von der Leyen said.

"This modern free trade agreement brings major opportunities for our companies, our farmers and our consumers, on both sides," von der Leyen added.



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Sustainability- What Does it Mean Part 2: Producer Perspective

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I help to feed the world. I genuinely care about my animals, my employees and the soil. The message aligns with my previous article and reflects what I find and hear during my travels across the dairy industry.

The concept of prioritizing the well-being of these elements is not new. Moreover, most actions taken by dairy producers are voluntary, driven by passion and care, as they are rooted in the business of producing milk and delivering high-quality value-added products to processors worldwide.

Over Time:

There are numerous stories about small family dairy farms going out of business, and it's undeniable that the demographics of milk production have changed. Farms have grown larger, and some have chosen to exit the business.

My argument stands on the fact that both ends of the spectrum now excel at producing a world-class product in a more efficient and sustainable manner than ever before. Additionally, there is greater attention given to the three aspects I mentioned earlier.

Like any successful industry, the dairy sector aims to achieve more with less, accepting similar or even lower profit margins compared to 30-40 years ago. You might wonder why someone would willingly do that. The answer is simple:

the industry places great importance on responsible practices and strives to leave a positive impact.

For example, as of 2021, the U.S. milk yield per animal unit surpassed the next leading producer, Denmark, by approximately 10 percent. It also exceeds France by about 40 percent and Vietnam by around 66 percent.

In 2008, the industry conducted a life cycle assessment, which was the first of its kind in food agriculture on a national stage. This shows that the industry has been aware of its impact and has worked toward its current state.

From 2007 to 2017, producing a gallon of milk required 30 percent less water, 21 percent less land and resulted in a 19 percent smaller carbon footprint.

Based on a Cornell University study from 1944 to 2007, modern dairies required 79 percent fewer animals, 77 percent less feed, 65 percent less water and only 10 percent of the land compared to the original study to produce the same gallon of milk. So yes, dairy farmers are constantly improving their practices, demonstrating their commitment to conserving resources and striving for better outcomes tomorrow.

What's New (Or Maybe Not):

We hear about regenerative agriculture, conservation, animal care and nutrient management. These

terms seem like buzzwords in certain conversations, but the industry has embraced them for years.

Cow comfort, cover crops and efficiency in production are areas the dairy industry has been a leading force for quite some time. While certain practices may have been driven by available resources and geographic factors, dairy farmers want to do the best job they possibly can. They recognize that the land and their animals are their livelihoods.

Most farms are family-owned, and farmers aspire to bring the next generation into the business. Consequently, they prioritize the well-being of the land and animals for the sake of future generations.

Farmers are exceptional at adopting new practices. Take cover crops, for example. While they have been used since the 1800s and possibly even earlier, they have gained prominence as part of the regenerative ag narrative. However, progressive farmers, including those in the dairy industry, have been using cover crops for the past 10 to 20 years. With erosion protection, increased organic matter, weed suppression, a no-till planting system and additional feed crops, cover crops have been embraced and implemented on an increasing number of acres each year.

Digging In:

Nutrient handling and emissions continue to be in focus, but they are now viewed as areas of opportunity. Today, there are technologies available to capture methane emissions, concentrate nutrients, reuse and reapply clean water, recycle bedding, generate on-farm utilities, implement closed-loop irrigation and even robotically

• See Rohloff, p. 18

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

50 YEARS AGO

July 13, 1973: Van Wert, OH—About one-third of the Borden Foods plant here was recently destroyed by fire, mostly in the manufacturing area when Liederkrantz and Camembert cheese is made. Harold Steinke, president of Borden's Cheese Division, said other areas of the facility will soon resume production.

Washington—Ag Secretary Earl Butz said consumers face serious food shortages if price ceilings last much longer, and noted that with consumers calling for tough controls on food prices, further controls would increase the squeeze on production facilities.

25 YEARS AGO

July 10, 1998: Madison—Two Fond du Lac county cheese companies were among six local businesses to receive state funding for expansion projects. Park Cheese will receive \$1.2 million to expand its plant and add a Provolone line. Baker Cheese will use \$1.5 million for expansion and the creation of 29 new jobs.

New Holland, PA—Heralding versatility of one of the fastest-growing products in the cheese industry, Bongrain Cheese and the American Cheese Society have declared August National Goat Cheese Month. Farmstead goat cheese maker Judy Schad suggested offering a cheese plate appetizer to the restaurant-going public as an introduction to goat cheese.

10 YEARS AGO

July 12, 2013: New York—Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese of Point Reyes, CA, and Caves of Faribault, Faribault, MN, tied for Best Cheese or Dairy Product in the 2013 sofi Awards for Toma and Jeff's Select entries. Sweet Grass Dairy of Thomasville, GA, was among the Outstanding Retailers for 2013/

Long Island City, NY—Justin Trosclair of St. James Cheese Company in New Orleans, LA, won the title of top cheese monger at the fourth annual Cheesemonger Invitational here this week. More than 50 cheese professionals from across the US participated in the event.

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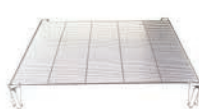
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Looking Back At ACS Over 40 Years, Pandemic Tops List Of Challenges

Denver, CO—This year marks the 40th anniversary of the American Cheese Society (ACS), which has faced challenges great and small, emerging stronger than ever.

Mike Koch, president and co-founder of FireFly Farms, Accident, MD, serves on the ACS board as president. Based on his years of service, Koch said surviving the COVID-19 pandemic was certainly the greatest challenge the Society has faced.

“The pandemic exposed the organization’s revenue concentration risk – along with other related operational weaknesses,” Koch said. “We were unable to hold our annual conference, our concentrated revenue source, for two years.”

“Fortunately, the organization had a foundation of assets, but those assets would have quickly been drained if the board did not make some courageous decisions to control and manage expenses, create operational efficiencies, and begin the process of revenue diversification,” he said.

“The accomplishment – to emerge from this period as a stronger organization, ready to face its future,” Koch continued.

Chris Eastwood, ACS Marketing & Communications Com-

mittee member and manager of vendor strategies and innovation, Gourmet Foods International, agrees that facing COVID and coming out the other side is the greatest challenge in 40 years – as well as its greatest accomplishment.

“Surviving the COVID epidemic has meant all surviving cheese makers are also scientists, mechanics, record keepers, accountants, cleaners, merchandisers and marketing experts,” Eastwood said. “The ACS has been there along the way with tools, seminars, and networking.”

American Cheese Is ‘Ascendant’

The industry has changed enormously over the last four decades, and I think our founder Dr. Frank Kosikowski would be mostly pleased, Koch said.

First – we’ve grown. Per capita cheese consumption in the US has doubled since our founding 40 years ago, jumping from 20.4 pounds in 1983 to 40.3 pounds in 2022, he said.

“Beyond our own borders, American cheese is ‘ascendant.’ The quality of American cheese and American cheesemaking is capturing global attention,” Koch continued.

“From Best in Show to super-gold, to category medalists, the ranks of American cheese makers on the podium of the World Cheese Awards and other global competitions are deep and wide,” he said.

Eastwood agreed that the world is taking more notice of talent from the Americas.

“In the past 40 years, the national and international community has completely shifted their view on American cheese and artisan cheesemaking,” Eastwood said.

The society has led from the front on gaining recognition and helping makers and the entire industry with education, leadership and advocacy, Eastwood continued.

“From early pioneers like Mary Keene and Allison Hooper, to the rise of mission-based cheese makers like Uplands Cheese and Jasper Hill Farms, to the current spread of makers in almost every state and region, these 40 years of American Cheese Society have marked a rebirth of a dynamic and growing industry,” Eastwood continued.

Consumer preferences have also evolved – channel preferences, product format and packaging demands, sustainability values, and health concerns are driving that evolution in the artisan cheese and dairy sector.

“And it’s likely some of the change would not be pleasing,” Koch said. “Regulatory changes and the associated compliance mandates are reshaping distribution channels and relationships and increasing cheese maker costs.”

“These regulatory changes, combined with industry consolidation, have increased barriers to entry – making it more difficult for new cheese makers to gain a foothold in the market,” he continued.

“Regulatory changes and the associated compliance mandates are reshaping distribution channels and relationships and increasing cheese maker costs.” “These regulatory changes, combined with industry consolidation, have increased barriers to entry

—Mike Koch, FireFly Farms

The core ACS member programs are healthy, but the society’s competition has likewise increased and evolved.

For example, the annual ACS Judging & Competition event

• See **Celebrating 40**, p. 7

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Price Forecasts

(Continued from p. 1)

For 2023, US dairy exports are reduced on both a fats and skim-solids basis. Fats basis exports are lowered primarily reflecting lower butter and cheese shipments. Skim-solids basis exports reflect lower exports of whey products as well as a number of other dairy products; however, these declines are partially offset by higher nonfat dry milk (NDM) exports.

For 2024, fat basis exports are reduced as weakness in butter sales is expected to carry into next year. Skim-solids basis export reductions are largely due to lower expected lactose exports.

Dairy imports on a fat basis for 2023 are unchanged with largely offsetting changes for a number of products, but skim-solids imports are lowered on lower milk protein concentrates. For 2024, imports on both a skim-solids basis and a fat basis are lowered slightly.

USDA lowered its price forecasts for cheese, nonfat dry milk and dry whey from last month's forecast — to \$1.6750, \$1.1700 and 35.0 cents per pound, respectively — based on continued ample supplies of cheese and competition in international nonfat dry milk and dry whey markets. The 2023 price forecast for butter is unchanged, at \$2.4350 per pound.

The 2023 Class III price forecast is reduced to \$16.05 per hundredweight on weaker cheese and dry whey prices, and the Class IV price forecast is lowered to \$18.20 per hundred due to lower expected NDM prices. The all milk price forecast is reduced to \$19.55.

For 2024, prices for cheese, nonfat dry milk, and dry whey are reduced from last month — to \$1.6900, \$1.1250 and 31.50 cents

per pound, respectively — but the butter price forecast is raised to \$2.3450 per pound. The Class III milk price forecast for 2024 is lowered to \$15.95 per hundred on the weaker cheese and dry whey price forecasts, but the Class IV price forecast is unchanged, at \$17.45, as the lower NDM price and higher butter price are offsetting. The 2024 all milk price forecast is reduced to \$19.10 per hundred.

This month's 2023/24 US corn outlook is for fractionally higher supplies and ending stocks. The season-average farm price received by producers is unchanged, at \$4.80 per bushel.

Milk Prices To Increase

Even the most efficient US milk producers are struggling in the current price environment, according to a new quarterly report from CoBank's Knowledge Exchange.

For historic perspective, USDA's estimated milk-price to feed-cost ratio is now at its lowest level since 2012, CoBank noted.

Milk and feed futures suggest profitability bottoming out in July and August but then improving considerably by October when Class III milk prices are anticipated to increase by about \$3.00 per hundredweight, the report explained. This should eventually bring some relief at the farm, where the national all-in mailbox milk price has dropped below the \$20.000 per hundredweight mark after averaging \$25.34 per hundred last year.

Although several factors are to blame for this year's milk price decline, the first place to look is American/Cheddar-style cheese prices, which have dropped by one-third since Jan. 1, 2023, the report continued. A few causes are at play, including:

- American-type cheese production was up 2.6 percent year-to-date through April (versus down 0.5 percent for other styles).

- Domestic consumption of all cheese was up only 1.2 percent through the first four months of 2023, which is half the decade average and one of the lowest rates on records kept since 1970.

- Cheese exports are flat year-on-year but really slowed as of late. The key problem is that sales to the number two US market, South Korea, were down 20 percent through the first four months of the year.

- Current cold storage cheese inventories are actually in line with historic inventory/use levels, which is more puzzling than enlightening: Is the market oversold, or are traders extremely bearish on export demand in the coming months?

Higher prices are taking a toll on dairy grocery volumes, the report pointed out. Per USDA, fluid milk sales volumes were down 2.7 percent year over year. And while not the largest of dairy segments, the dynamics of the frozen dairy dessert industry shows clearly the "demand destruction" caused by high prices: after price hikes of 10 percent in 2022 and 8 percent in 2023, ice cream unit sales have fallen by an estimated 5 percent year to date.

Meanwhile, China's aggregate dairy import demand continues to wane, with whole milk powder imports down 40 percent year to date. As we get further into the year, this looks less like a blip and more like the new normal, the report said.

Global milk supply has been modest by historic standards but stronger than previous expectations, the report added.

Redhead Creamery, Verndale Products Projects Aided By USDA

Manchester, NH—US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack announced recently that USDA is making investments worth \$320 million to strengthen food supply chains and create more opportunities for producers and entrepreneurs in 19 states.

A USDA-Rural Development investment of \$1.5 million will be used to expand the Redhead Creamery cheese production facility located near Brooten, MN. This expansion will house a new farm distillery and tasting room, as well as some additional cheese production and aging space.

The new distillery will use whey byproduct from the cheesemaking to produce distilled spirits. This project is expected to create six employment opportunities.

A USDA-Rural Development investment of \$5.0 million will be used to purchase and install equipment at both of Verndale Products Inc.'s dairy manufacturing plants in Michigan. Both facilities produce a roller dried whole milk powder from fresh milk to be sold in bulk to its customers, who are primarily manufacturers of premium chocolate.

Verndale's market is nationwide and also includes Canada and Mexico. This project will double the company's production capabilities; therefore, new equipment is needed to maintain the highest possibility quality control during production and customer growth, USDA noted.

A USDA-Rural Development investment of \$11,712,000 will be used to assist PlantBased Innovations LLC purchase a plant and equipment in Fredericksburg, IA.

The company manufactures plant-based yogurts and will expand its offerings with the USDA loan.

This project will be used to purchase real estate and equipment, working capital and refinancing existing debt.

USDA is making these investments through four programs designed to create economic opportunities for people and businesses in rural areas.

These programs are the Food Supply Chain Guaranteed Loan program, Meat and Poultry Intermediary Lending Program, Business and Industry Loan Guarantee Program and the Rural and Economic Development Loan and Grant Program.

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Celebrating 40

Continued from p 5

first held in 1989 was truly a “one-of-a-kind event,” Koch said.

“Now, there are multiple competitions with state, national, and international scopes competing for our members’ attention,” he said.

To that end, ACS is evaluating opportunities to increase member value through existing and new programming, Koch continued.

“We do this knowing that our members are more diverse than ever,” he said. “We must maintain our core focus on cheese makers, while being conscious of value provided to other growing member segments.”

“The industry itself has matured, with larger companies increasingly participating in the American artisan and specialty cheese community. American cheese makers have made remarkable progress in both cheese production and expanding our industry’s reach among consumers.”

—Britton Welsh, Beehive Cheese Company

“Generally, we saw a slight decline in total membership during the COVID years,” Koch said. “Last year, we started to see a reversal of that decline as membership numbers began to return.”

Membership in 2023 reflects the growth and changes across the specialty food world, Eastwood agreed.

“Retailers, brokers, distributors, and industry trade join makers in celebrating and supporting the understanding, appreciation, and promotion of artisan, farmstead, and specialty cheeses produced in the Americas,” Eastwood continued.

Looking ahead, Koch said he would like to see a more diverse and inclusive ACS.

“We must own the inequalities in our industry and act to address them,” he said. “Our industry must welcome, include, and cultivate different faces, voices, and leadership styles.”

“To do so, we must take on some difficult questions, as painful and uncomfortable as those questions make us,” Koch said. “To be blunt, our industry’s leadership must cease to be the exclusive domain of privileged white folks.”

The society should also actively supporting the fight for the consumer.

“Dairy – in fact all animal-based agriculture – is under attack,” he said. “We must act to educate our members on best practices necessary to mitigate our impact on climate change.”

We also need to increase our efforts to educate consumers and remain true to our mission to promote American cheese, he said.

“If we don’t tell our story, others with very different interests will tell it for us,” Koch continued.

This includes actively educating not just cheese makers, but cheese consumers as well.

Cheese Maker Member: Beehive

Beehive Cheese Company of Unithah, ID, is a longtime ACS member and has benefited greatly over the years, said Beehive president Britton Welsh.

“One of the major advantages has been the feedback we receive through the annual ACS Cheese

Competition, which helps us improve as cheese makers,” Welsh said. “Additionally, our relationships with distributors, retailers, and cheese mongers have been strengthened.”

Welsh has witnessed ACS change significantly during Beehive’s almost 20-year membership.

“We’ve witnessed prominent figures in the industry, like the founders of Cowgirl Creamery, move on,” he said. “The industry itself has matured, with larger companies increasingly participating in the American artisan and specialty cheese community.”

“American cheese makers have made remarkable progress in both cheese production and expanding our industry’s reach among consumers,” Welsh said.

Looking ahead to the next decade, ACS faces the challenge of staying relevant amidst the ongoing developments in the

industry, consumer preferences, and the economy, Welsh said.


“The ACS has emerged as a vital advocate for cheesemaking excellence in the United States.”


—Britton Welsh

“The past five years alone have brought about substantial changes, including the impact of COVID-19 and disruptions in supply chains, leading to price increases,” he said. “The ACS has emerged as a vital advocate for cheesemaking excellence in the United States.”

“If it continues to carry the torch, I believe ACS will effectively serve the artisan cheese industry for years to come,” Welsh continued.

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NMPF Wants

(Continued from p. 1)

to the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act (AMAA), NMPF continued. "No one will benefit if the possible hearing is consumed with promotion or criticism of hypothetical order provisions that cannot become part of federal regulations."

While NMPF does not necessarily agree with many of the additional proposals submitted to USDA, many are properly within the scope of USDA's request, NMPF said.

The NMPF's comments in its June 30 letter are limited to the additional proposals that are beyond the scope of USDA's request or not within the authority of the AMAA; these additional proposals should not be included in the hearing notice, if one is issued.

Preliminarily, NMPF said it "strongly opposes" not holding a hearing at all, as requested by the CDC/CFU/NFU group, or postponing the hearing, as advocated by Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative. USDA should stay the course set in its Action Plan, which contemplated a hearing, if noticed, commencing Aug. 23, 2023.

NMPF identified five other requested proposals outside the defined scope of USDA's request. The following proposals do not amend the current pricing provisions applicable to all FMMOs, NMPF said:

- Lamers Dairy requested amendments to the definition of "exempt plants." This proposal seeks to change a definition and is not within the scope of USDA's request because it doesn't address uniform pricing provisions of the FMMOs, NMPF said.

- The Milk Innovation Group (MIG) proposed that one section of the federal order regulations be revised to increase the allowable shrinkage for ESL products. This proposal is not within the scope of USDA's request because it addresses the classification of milk, not the uniform pricing provisions of the FMMOs, NMPF stated.

- MIG also proposed the definitions of "Other Source Milk," "Fluid Milk Product" and "Fluid Cream Product" be revised to exempt organic certified milk from pooling.

This proposal is not in scope because it seeks to change definitions rather than amend the uniform pricing provisions of the FMMOs, NMPF said.

- Edge and the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) submitted additional proposals calling for greater milk check transparency.

The requirements for milk check information provided to independent producers are not identical across orders and are not part of the uniform pricing provisions of the orders, NMPF said.

Two other sets of proposals are outside the scope of USDA's request because they concern issues that, according to USDA's policy, are subjects for regional hearings, not national consideration, NMPF said.

First, MIG proposals 3 and 4 suggest creation of "assembly" and "balancing" credits. "Whether these purported market-wide service credits should be adopted is properly the subject of the marketing conditions in individual orders, or potentially regional subgroups of orders," NMPF continued.

Similarly, National All-Jersey proposals 2 and 3, which address component pricing of milk for all classes, should be resolved regionally, not nationally, NMPF said.

Fourteen proposals are not within the authority conferred upon USDA by the AMAA, according to the National Milk Producers Federation.

These fourteen proposals include:

- Edge proposal 4 and AFBF proposals 5, 6, 11, and 14 are premised on data being compiled by AMS pursuant to a supposed mandatory authority to collect, assemble, and publish manufactured dairy product sales volumes and costs of manufacturing. These proposals cannot be adopted because USDA does not have the authority to collect, assemble, and publish the data proposed, NMPF

said. If the agency is granted such authority in new legislation, then these proposals may become ripe. In the meantime, they should not be heard because extending the hearing with testimony on proposals that cannot be adopted "is futile," NMPF said.

Similarly, the proposals of Cedar Grove Cheese and Dairy Pricing Association, Edge proposal 1, and American Farm Bureau Federation proposal 7 cannot be adopted because they conflict with federal order regulations, which grant cooperatives the right to manage their internal financial affairs free from the prescription of any terms of FMMOs, NMPF continued.

The proposals of Cedar Grove Cheese and the Dairy Pricing Association seek to prescribe what cooperatives must pay their member producers monthly, and, similarly, the Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative proposal 1 and AFBF proposal 7 seek to "impermissibly infringe" on the prerogatives granted to qualified cooperatives.

- The Milk Innovation Group proposals 3, 4, and 6 conflict with the statutory mandates of the AMAA, cannot be adopted, and therefore should not be heard, NMPF said.

Minimum payment and pricing uniformity are the foundations of the FMMOs.

USDA's actions in this matter thus far "have structured a hearing of substantial, but not unlimited, breadth that will address critically important issues in the modernization of the FMMOs. Now that the parameters have been set, it is important to maintain the boundaries of a possible hearing to ensure that the process has the best possible opportunity to be successful," the National Milk Producers Federation stated.



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ADPI Restores Full Public Access To Its Ingredient Standards

Elmhurst, IL—The American Dairy Products Institute (ADPI) announced last Friday that it is restoring full public access to its ADPI Ingredient Standards, an extensive and growing library which encompasses many of the dairy industry’s commodity and value-added products.

ADPI’s current range of ingredient standards, developed by technical and marketing experts from its member organizations, not only define fundamental dairy ingredients such as milk and whey powders, but also a host of established or emerging ingredients that are on the competitive edge of functionality and nutrition, such as protein concentrates, isolates, and specific bioactive protein and lipid fractions.

The ADPI catalog consists of more than 30 standards representing an even greater number of individual dairy ingredients, everything from alpha-lactalbumin to whole milk powder. And the number of standards is growing; ADPI currently has two entirely new documents pending approval by its Standards Committee, with two more related standards immediately following those, and two more in the development queue.

ADPI’s member organizations and staff have given decades of commitment to define the products that make the dairy industry what it is today.

“Not only have we worked hard throughout our history to ensure that our standards evolve with the ever-expanding mix of products, but we are continuing to make sure that the language and content of our standards, both new and legacy, are aligned with industry best practices, food safety requirements and quality systems controls,” ADPI stated. “Every single one of our legacy standards has been reviewed to ensure that it remains on-brand, contemporary and fit for purpose.”

For more information on ADPI Ingredients Standards, visit www.adpi.org; or contact Andy Powers, ADPI vice president of technical services, at apowers@adpi.org.

The American Dairy Products Institute was established under its current name on April 17, 1986, through a merger of the American Dry Milk Institute (ADMI), founded in 1925, and the Whey Protein Institute (WPI), founded in 1971. In April 1987, ADPI expanded the scope of the organization by merging with the Evaporated Milk Association (EMA), which was founded in 1923.

First Milk UK Wins Top Cheese At ICDA With Mature Double Gloucester Entry

Pennyroyal Farm, Artisan Cheese Exchange Honored

Staffordshire, UK—First Milk UK earned bragging rights for Supreme Champion Cheese at the recent International Cheese & Dairy Awards (ICDA) here for its Haverfordwest Mature Double Gloucester entry.

Fonterra Brand New Zealand (FBNZ) took home the Reserve Champion Cheese title for its Kikoraangi Triple Cream Blue entry.

Butteton Lane Farm, Cheshire, won Supreme Champion Dairy Product-Non Cheese honors for its Big Brown Cow Apple Pie Ice Cream.

First Milk UK also earned Champion UK Cheese for Haverfordwest Mature Double Gloucester, with Cropwell Bishop coming in second place for its Stilton entry.

Kikoraangi Triple Cream Blue from FBNZ likewise earned the Champion Overseas Cheese title, with a Mature Gouda submitted by The Netherlands’ De Graafstroom Dairy winning Reserve Champion Overseas Cheese honors.

The contest – representing 125 years of tradition – typically draws over 5,000 entries from around the world, ICDA organizers stated.

Individual trophy winners for top entries in this year’s contest include:

Best USA Cheese: Pennyroyal Farm

Best Irish Cheddar: Ornuu Foods

Best English Cheese: Barbers Farmhouse Cheesemakers

Best Welsh Cheese: Abergavenny Fine Foods, Ltd.

Champion Fresh Cheese: Savencia UK

Best Italian Cheese: Latteria Soresina

Best Australian Cheese: Berry’s Creek Gourmet Cheese

Best Canadian Cheese Award: Old Quebec Vintage Cheddar

Best New Zealand Cheese: Fonterra Group Cooperative, Ltd.

Best Italian Cheese: Latteria Soresina

Best Health Drink in Show: Daylesford Organic Farm

Best Cheese for Export: Delamere Dairy

Supreme Cheese Retailer: Colston Bassett, Waitrose

Supreme Cheese with Additives: Walo von Muhlenen

Champion UK Sheep Milk Cheese: Butlers Farmhouse

Champion European Cheese: Treur Kaas

Champion Asia-Australasia Cheese: Berry’s Creek Gourmet

Best Goat’s Milk Cheese: Emmi UK

Champion French Cheese: Savencia UK

Champion Home International: Abergavenny Fine Foods

Champion US Cheese – Cow’s Milk: Artisan Cheese Exchange

Champion Convenience Cheese: De Graafstroom

Champion Organic Cheese: Lustenberger & Durst SA

Best Smoked Cheese: Belton Farm Limited

Best Wax Cheese: Godminster
Champion Butter: Alvis Bros
Best New Dairy Product: Joseph Heler, Ltd.

Best Sheep’s Milk Cheese: Agrolaguna

Best Soft, Semi Soft or Cream Cheese: FBNZ New Zealand

Best Vegetarian Cheese: De Graafstroom



Best Specialty Cheese: White Lake Cheese, Ltd.

Best Branded Packaging: Belton Farm Limited

Best Free From Cheese in Show: Norseland, Ltd.

Best Cooking Cheese: A.P. Polycarpou & Sons Farm, Ltd.

Best Processed Cheese: Greenvie Foods

Longest Stretch Cheese: Fonterra Cooperative Group

Champion Cream: Clotton Hall Dairy

Champion Yogurt: J&E Dickinson Longley Farm

Champion Quark: Isigny Sainte-Mere

Champion Milk: Wells Farm

Champion Cheese Board: Friar Farm.

For the full list of winners, visit www.internationalcheeseawards.co.uk.

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Canadian Government Invests In DFC To Support Sustainable Development

New Info On Dairy Compensation Payments For Trade Deal Impacts Also Announced

Winnipeg, Manitoba—The Canadian government this week announced over \$7.5 million to Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) to help support sustainable development in the dairy industry.

This funding is provided through the AgriScience Program-Clusters Component, under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

Through this Cluster, DFC will undertake research which aims to provide solutions to improve the environmental and economic sustainability, and resilience of the Canadian dairy industry.

To achieve these goals, DFC will develop and implement plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon, improve the health and welfare of cows and the quality of milk produced.

The Clusters consist of research activities that focus on Agri-Science Program priority areas: climate change and environment; economic growth and development; and industry resilience and societal changes.

The outcomes are intended to help the industry achieve its goal of reaching net-zero greenhouse gas emissions from dairy production by 2050. The goals of the funded activities also contribute to the Canadian government's cli-

mate change mitigation, economic growth and industry resilience priorities.

"This investment over the next five years to the fourth Dairy Research Cluster is essential to enable robust and evidenced-based research that ultimately supports Canadian dairy farmers," said Pierre Lampron, president of Dairy Farmers of Canada. "Today's announcement reinforces the work we are doing within the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership and supports another important step towards carbon neutrality."

The Canadian government also announced new information regarding the fifth compensation payment for dairy producers under the Dairy Direct Payment Program (DDPP). From 2019 to 2023, the first four payments were made available totalling \$1.75 billion in compensation to account for the impacts of the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

This fifth payment will begin compensation of up to \$1.2 billion over six years to account for the impacts of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA, which is known as the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, in the US).

In consultation with industry, the program's calculation date will be August 31. This means that producers of cow's milk must hold a valid dairy quota license registered with a provincial milk

marketing board or agency on August 31 to be eligible for a payment that year.

As the calculation date impacts when the registration period can open, setting the date earlier in the year (previous years used an October 31 date) will ensure producers have more time to sign up before the deadline and may receive their payment sooner. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada will be sending letters to all eligible producers in the fall with the program registration details, with payments to follow once a producer completes their registration.

"Today's announcement will help Dairy Farmers of Canada build on their momentum, by ensuring they have access to the tools and research they need to continue to improve the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the industry," said Marie-Claude Bibeau, Canada's agriculture minister.

"Setting the quota reference date for the Dairy Direct Payment Program will also ensure that producers have the necessary information further in advance to be able to plan and evaluate their farm situation," Bibeau continued to explain.

Meanwhile, Bibeau on Monday announced the creation of two new living labs in Quebec. These on-farm collaborative innovation projects bring together producers and scientists, among others, who co-develop and test innovative practices and technologies to accelerate the agri-environmental shift.

The lead partners for these two new Quebec living labs are L'Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA) and Les Producteurs de lait du Quebec (Les PLQ). The two projects represent an investment

of more than \$16 million over five years from the federal government, under the Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS) program.

With up to \$9.2 million in federal investments, the living lab led by UPA aims to co-develop, test and evaluate beneficial management practices with dairy, cattle, pork, sheep and field crops, which are the largest agricultural sectors in Quebec.

Les PLQ is benefiting from a federal investment of up to \$7 million for Laboratoire vivant-Lait carboneutre, which is part of a global strategy aimed at achieving carbon-neutral, on-farm milk production by 2050.

"Our organization is proud to contribute to the carbon-neutral milk living lab. Our farm-school will bring the student community into contact with the process, which will undoubtedly enrich agricultural training," said Jean-Pierre Charuest, chairman of the board of CIARC, a partner of Laboratoire vivant-Lait carboneutre.

"This is a major announcement by the Canadian government for Quebec dairy producers, as this living lab will make a major contribution to the development of knowledge and the improvement of practices in a perspective of sustainable development and carbon neutrality," said Daniel Gobeil, president, Producteurs de lait du Quebec.

"We are determined to be a leader in best practices, which is why we have adopted an ambitious sustainable development plan and are working to develop structuring projects," Gobeil continued. "This living lab will be able to rely on the participation of a number of dairy farms, and we would like to thank the producers who are committed to the project and its objectives, as well as all the partners who are contributing to it."

"Quebec farmers have long worked closely in collaboration with researchers to bring the best practices and the latest tools from out of the lab and into the field. These two new research projects ensure that farms themselves become laboratories where new practices are co-developed, tested and evaluated," Bibeau said. "This approach makes it possible to reach a greater number of producers, to accelerate the adoption of best practices and, as a result, make our agriculture increasingly sustainable."

"The participatory research and support activities of Living Lab-Quebec 2020-2023 have generated enthusiasm and support from over 200 producers, agricultural advisors, stakeholders and scientists," said Martin Caron, general president, Union des producteurs agricoles.

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USDA Seeks Cheddar For Oct.-Dec. Delivery; Awards Milk Contracts

Washington—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Tuesday invited offers to sell Cheddar for use in domestic food distribution programs.

USDA is specifically seeking to purchase 470,400 pounds of yellow shredded Cheddar cheese, 6/2-pound packages, for delivery between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, 2023. Products offered in response to this solicitation must be manufactured in a plant approved by USDA Dairy Programs.

Bids are due by 1:00 p.m. Central time on Tuesday, July 25. Offers must be submitted electronically via the Web-Based Supply Chain Management System (WBSCM).

Offerors are cautioned to bid only quantities they can reasonably expect to produce and deliver, USDA warned.

For more information, visit www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food.

Kerrygold Launches Flavored Butter Line

Evanston, IL—A new range of flavored butters under the Kerrygold brand has recently been introduced to US retailers, with national distribution expected by September.

Like all Kerrygold butters, the new line is made with milk from Irish grass-fed cows.



The three flavors include: Chive & Onion, with a blend of chive, onion, and parsley; Sundried Tomato & Basil, with dried tomatoes, basil, oregano, thyme, onions, and garlic; and Bell Pepper & Garden Herbs, blended with paprika, oregano, basil, onions, garlic and bell peppers.

“The Butter Blends assortment is a delicious new addition to Kerrygold’s existing butter portfolio,” said Kerrygold brand manager Alexandra Vinci.

“With the rising popularity of homemade compound butters all over social media, we’re excited to bring consumers our Irish take and expertise on the growing culinary trend,” Vinci said.

Kerrygold Butter Blends are available at Kroger, Harris Teeter, Whole Foods and Publix. National distribution is slated for September.

For more information, visit www.kerrygoldusa.com.

Meanwhile, USDA recently awarded a contract to **Bongards Creameries** for the purchase of 158,400 pounds of kosher which process cheese slices. The total price of the purchase is \$672,408.00.

The kosher cheese is being purchased in support of child nutrition and related domestic food distribution programs. Deliveries are to be made during August.

USDA this week announced the awarding of contracts to a number of companies for a total of 683,100 containers fluid milk products being purchased in support of child nutrition and other related domestic food distribution programs. Deliveries are to be made during August.

The total cost of the fluid milk is \$1,579,354.73.

USDA’s purchase includes 57,600 gallons and 251,100 half-gallons of 1 percent milk; 158,400 gallons and 170,100 half-gallons of 2 percent milk; and 21,600 gallons and 24,300 half-gallons of skim milk.

A total of four trucks of fluid milk were not purchased due to no bids received.

Contracts were awarded as follows:

Anderson Erickson Dairy: 3,600 gallons of 2 percent milk, at a total price of \$12,042.00.

Cream-O-Land Dairy: 15,300 containers of milk, at a total price of \$37,869.75.

Dairy Farmers of America (DFA): 15,300 containers of milk, at a total price of \$36,708.30.

DFA Dairy Brands Fluid LLC: 72,000 containers of milk, at a total price of \$131,407.55.

Foster Dairy Farms: 15,300 containers of milk, at a total price of \$37,269.00.

GH Dairy (Chino, CA): 43,200 containers of milk, at a total price of \$94,968.90.

GH Dairy (El Paso, TX): 65,700 containers of milk, at a total price of \$199,476.00.

Hiland Dairy Foods Company: 118,800 containers of milk, at a total price of \$243,459.00.

McArthur Next: 15,300 containers of milk, at a total price of \$40,100.94.

New Dairy Opco: 33,300 containers of milk, at a total price of \$105,600.60.

Prairie Farms Dairy: 137,700 containers of milk, at a total price of \$298,269.00.

Royal Crest Dairy: 14,400 containers of milk, at a total price of \$53,784.00.

United Dairy Inc.: 84,600 containers of milk, at a total price of \$204,930.00.

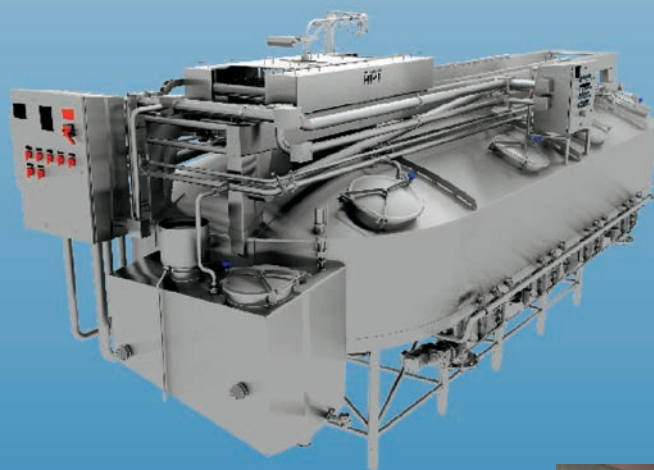
Upstate Niagara Cooperative: 48,600 containers of milk, at a total price of \$83,469.69.

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PERSONNEL

RAFFAEL PAYER has been tapped as the chief marketing officer for **Emmi Group**, effective Oct. 1. Payer joins Emmi from Ghirardelli Chocolate Company, serving as vice president of restaurant, retail and e-commerce. He previously worked as vice president of marketing at Ghirardelli parent company Lindt & Sprüngli. From 2016 to 2019, Payer was marketing director for Lindt & Sprüngli in Russia, and also held various positions in marketing and sales at Mars Switzerland. In his new role with Emmi, Payer will become a member of group management.

The **Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA)** announced this week promotions of four key members of its team. JUDY KELLER advances from events director to senior director, events; CAITLIN PEIRICK, previously events manager, is promoted to events director; SARA SCHMIDT advances from member engagement manager to membership director; and KIRSTEN STROHMENGER rises from contest manager to contest director.

JON PRUDEN of TASTE Family of Businesses has been elected chair of the **Specialty Food Association (SFA)** for 2023-24. Other officers include NONA LIM, vice president; PIERRE ABUSHACRA, Firehook Bakery, treasurer; and JILL GIACOMINI BASCH, Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese, secretary. Newly-approved board members with three-year terms through 2026 include: PIERRE

ABUSHACRA, Firehook Bakery; SCOTT JENSEN, Rhythm Superfoods, LLC; MICHAEL REICH, Hanson Faso Sales & Marketing; DWIGHT RICHMOND, Town & Country Markets; SARAH WALLACE, The Good Bean, Inc. SARAH MASONI of Oregon State University Food Innovation Center, was also appointed to a one-year term to fill a vacancy.

The **American Frozen Food Institute (AFFI)** has hired JENNIFER NORKA as its director of scientific and regulatory affairs. In her new role, she will support AFFI's engagement with federal agencies and the food industry to advance the association's regulatory and technical priorities.

OBITUARIES

Sidney Kittelson, 76, dairy inspector for the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP), passed away July 4 at his home in Maribel, WI. Kittelson began his lifelong career in the dairy industry as an accountant for F&A Dairy Products, Inc., Dresser, WI. He then joined Manitowoc county's Branch Cheese Company, Inc., where he spent four years as plant manager. From there, Kittelson made the move to Hinesburg, VT, to serve as plant manager for International Cheese, Inc. He returned to Wisconsin, joining the DATCP as dairy inspector for the state's northeastern territory, inspecting farms, milk tankers, and dairy plants. He earned his Registered Sanitation license at the age of 69, and continued at DATCP until the time of his death.

Cheese Industry Veteran Greg Kinate Receives WDPA Presidents Award



Honoring Kinate: From left to right: Brad Legreid, retiring WDPA executive director; Greg Kinate; Stacy Wand of Prairie Farms and current WDPA president; and Dennis Kasuboski, who introduced Kinate.

Egg Harbor, WI—Greg Kinate, whose cheese industry career spans more than four decades, received the 2023 WDPA Presidents Award here Monday night during the Wisconsin Dairy Products Association's (WDPA) annual Dairy Symposium.

The cheese business has been part of Kinate's entire life, from his grandfather running a cheese plant to his father being with Kraft for many years. He joined Wisconsin Dairies (now Foremost Farms) in Decorah, IA, as a supervisor in 1979.

During the 1980s, Kinate worked in production at Arpin Dairy, Arpin, WI, and as a cheese grading, production specialist and procurement manager at Kraft in Green Bay, WI.

He has also been involved in domestic and international cheese contest judging since the mid-1980s.

In 1990, Kinate joined Sargento Foods as the cheese procurement manager. Four years later, he began Kineva Foods, which worked with supplying small and medium size distributors with cheese and powder needs, and was also involved with cheese shredding and stick packaging operations. Kinate joined Winona Foods in 2016 as cheese procurement manager, a position he holds today.

Kinate joined the WDPA board of directors in 1994, and served on the board for many years, including serving as board president in 2007. He was also an original member of the WDPA World Dairy Expo Championship Dairy Product Contest steering committee, which was formed in 2003.

Recipients of the WDPA Presidents Award are chosen based on their contributions to the Wisconsin dairy industry and to the WDPA.

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USDA Makes Grant Funds Available To Boost Production, Marketing Of Sheep, Sheep Products

Washington—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Tuesday announced \$300,000 in available grant funding through the Sheep Production and Marketing Grant Program (SPMGP) to strengthen and enhance the production and marketing of sheep and sheep products in the US.

In 2019, USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service awarded a five-year grant for \$1.9 million to the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center (NSIIC).

Each year, the NSIIC budgets approximately \$300,000 to support projects that accomplish one or more of the following objectives:

- Strengthen and enhance the production and marketing of sheep and sheep products in the US through the improvement of infrastructure, business, resource development and the development of innovative approaches to solve long-term problems.

- Provide leadership training and education to industry stakeholders.

- Assist all segments of the industry in addressing sustainable production and marketing of sheep and sheep products.

- Promote marketing of sheep and sheep products through an organized method that can measure tangible results.

- Enhance the sheep industry by coordinating information exchange and seeking mutual understanding and marketing within the industry community.

"Projects funded by the Sheep Production and Marketing Grant Program have already made measurable impacts on our nation's sheep industry," said Jenny Lester Moffitt, USDA under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs.

"From increasing processing capacity in areas experiencing bottlenecks in production to expanding critical research on pathogens affecting sheep flocks, projects such as these will ultimately increase the availability and consumption of sheep products across the country," Lester Moffitt added.

Grant applications are currently being accepted through Sept. 15, 2023. Additional information is available on the AMS Sheep Production and Marketing Grant Program webpage, at www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/spmgrp. Applications must be submitted directly to the NSIIC, at www.nsiic.org.

Dairy Innovation

(Continued from p. 1)

panding this program will give more small- and medium-sized dairy businesses the tools and opportunity to reach new markets, implement efficiencies, and create world-class products."

"It is crucial that we provide the resources that dairies in Tennessee need to expand and create new products," Blackburn said. "With many small Tennessee dairies struggling to remain open, this bill will allow these businesses to diversify and expand their market competitiveness."

"We thank Senators Baldwin and Blackburn for their leadership to ensure the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives program can continue to grow and thrive," said Jim Mulhern, NMPF's president and CEO. "Dairy has a long history of ingenuity and pioneering cutting-edge advancement, and this program helps support researchers and industry leaders as they work to continue to drive innovation."

"IDFA applauds Senators Baldwin and Blackburn for introducing the Dairy Business Innovation Act of 2023," said Michael Dykes, IDFA's president and CEO. "The bill promotes innovation in the dairy processing sector and will help industry members work together to address common challenges and create new market opportunities for healthy and nutritious dairy products."

"Senator Baldwin has been an enthusiastic, steadfast supporter of the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives since she championed the program's creation in the 2018 farm bill. She's successfully pushed to keep the focus, and funding, on strengthening the entire dairy supply chain," said John Umhoefer, executive director of the WCMA, which administers the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance along with the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research (CDR).

"The Midwest Dairy Coalition greatly appreciates the leadership of Senators Baldwin and Mashburn in introducing the Dairy Business Innovation Act of 2023 to expand resources for four regional DBIA Initiatives," said Steve Etko, policy director for the Midwest Dairy Coalition. "These regional initiatives have been an excellent tool to encourage innovation and diversification in the dairy sector, and to do so in a way that benefits our nation's dairy farmers."

"FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative is appreciative of Senators Tammy Baldwin and Marsha Blackburn for their work in securing additional funding for the Dairy Business Innovation Act," said Jeff Lyon, general manager of FarmFirst Dairy Cooperative.

"It is imperative that we continue to support the advancement of dairy businesses through innovation, foster the development of new dairy products and enhance the efficiency of dairy plants through modernization," Lyon added. "The increased funding for grants is crucial to address the never-ending challenges to grow the dairy industry and provide vital support to dairy farmers."

"This legislation to resource the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives is unique in that it helps secure regionally specific dairy infrastructure needed for the future. We at Organic Valley know dairy processors who are doing more with support from this initiative and farmers who are better positioned to bring milk to market because of it," said Adam Warthesen, senior director of government and industry affairs at Organic Valley.

"As one of only four Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives in the country, Tennessee's grants to dairy businesses go a long way to help producers diversify products and markets, as well as increase the use of locally-produced milk," said Charlie Hatcher, commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. "The initiative puts

more money in dairy farmers' pockets to create more jobs and strengthen local economies.

"The Tennessee Department of Agriculture supports the reauthorization of the Dairy Business Innovation Act and the recommended increase in funding through SDBII that will allow for success for dairy processors and producers," Hatcher added.

"Since its passage, the Dairy Business Innovation Act has been a major catalyst in increasing revenue for rural dairy businesses and in overcoming impediments to their expansion. As the program manager for the Southeast region, the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) strongly supports the continuation and expansion of this valuable assistance to producers and the dairy industry," said Dr. Elizabeth Eckelkamp, SDBII program director and dairy extension specialist with UTIA.

"These grants, totaling more than \$38.7 million in five years with more than \$19.3 million focused on grants for dairy businesses, have had an historic impact on our industry in Tennessee and in the surrounding states, and we are grateful to Senators Blackburn and Baldwin for their support," Eckelkamp added.



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Retail Prices Fall

(Continued from p. 1)

The average retail price for Cheddar cheese was \$5.68 per pound, down 16 cents from May and down almost 10 cents from June 2022. That's the lowest average retail Cheddar price since May 2022, when it was \$5.65 per pound.

Average retail Cheddar prices in the four major US regions in June, with comparisons to a month earlier and a year earlier, were:

Northeast: \$6.09 per pound, up almost 10 cents from May but down two cents from June 2022.

Midwest: \$5.35 per pound, down more than 20 cents from May but up more than 10 cents from June 2022.

South: \$5.88 per pound, up more than two cents from May and up almost 28 cents from June 2022.

West: \$5.39 per pound, down almost 58 cents from May and down more than 78 cents from June 2022.

In June, the average retail price for a pound of American processed cheese was \$4.70, down almost seven cents from May but up almost 19 cents from June 2022.

Retail Milk Price Below \$4.00

In June, the CPI for whole milk was 250.6, down 0.6 percent from May and 4.0 percent lower than in June 2022. That's the lowest level for the whole milk CPI since March 2022, when it was 244.5.

June's CPI for "milk" was 175.4 (December 1997=100), down 0.7

percent from May and down 1.9 percent from June 2022. June's CPI for milk other than whole was 182.0, down 0.6 percent from May and 0.9 percent lower than in June 2022.

The average retail price for a gallon of whole milk was \$3.99, down almost six cents from May and down almost 17 cents from June 2022. That's the first time the average retail whole milk price has been below \$4.00 per gallon since March 2022.

Average retail whole milk prices in the regions reported by the BLS, with comparisons to a month earlier and a year earlier, were:

Northeast: \$4.32 per gallon, down more than one cent from May and down more than 29 cents from June 2022.

South: \$4.08 per gallon, down more than six cents from May but up almost 12 cents from June 2022.

West: \$3.99 per gallon, down more than seven cents from May and down almost 34 cents from June 2022.

Butter CPI Falls Below 300

June's CPI for butter was 298.1, down 1.6 percent from May and down 1.4 percent from June 2022.

That's the first time the butter CPI has been below 300 since May 2022, when it was 293.8. It reached a record high of 322.6 in January of this year.

June's CPI for ice cream and related products was 270.4, up 0.5 percent from May and 5.3 percent higher than in June 2022.

In June, the average retail price for a half-gallon of regular ice cream was \$5.81, up less than one cent from May and up almost 28 cents from June 2022.

In June, the CPI for other dairy and related products was 189.9 (December 1997=100), up 0.1 percent from May and 7.4 percent higher than in June 2022.

Montchevre Brand Gets A Makeover With New Products, Flavors, Packaging

Milwaukee, WI— Saputo USA has refreshed its Montchevre goat cheese brand with new products, added flavors and updated packaging set to hit retail shelves mid-fall.

Saputo's new Montchevre Duos feature two-in-one flavor combinations in a unique goat cheese log form.

Variations include Sweet Hot Peppers + Garlic & Herbs, a n d B l u e - b e r r y + Lemonade.



Montchevre Duos will be available for shipping in August and will hit grocery shelves mid-fall.

The company has also expanded its line of goat cheese toppers with a new flavor – Thai Sweet Chili. Also set to hit retail shelves in early fall, the newest flavor is a blend of sweet red peppers, lime, garlic and spices.

It will join Montchevre's other most recent flavors, Cranberry Port and Roasted Red Pepper.

In tandem with new products and flavors, the brand's updated packaging design features a horizontal orientation for fresh goat cheese logs, following the trend that's seeing more products in the goat cheese category merchandised horizontally at shelf, Saputo noted.


However, Montchevre will keep its iconic gingham plaid pattern, logo and bright color palette, while uniting the full product portfolio under a more harmonious design, the company said.

A recently-launched brand campaign will accompany the new additions. *Make Mischievous with Montchevre* features a series of comical ads highlighting innovative flavors and products inspired by very mischievous goats.

"Goat cheese demand continues to rise, as does consumer demand for complementary and complex flavor combinations," said Jenny Englert, marketing director for Saputo USA.

"With the Montchevre brand, we're purposely mischievous in our innovations and always looking for those unique flavor profiles and product combinations that break the norm and help us stay ahead of trends and consumer demand."

For more information, visit www.montchevre.com.



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Ploughgate Creamery, Maplebrook Farm Partner To Expand Butter Line

Owner Marisa Mauro Is Creator Of Jasper Hill's Willoughby Cheese

North Bennington, VT—Artisan cheese and butter maker Marisa Mauro has teamed up with Maplebrook Farm to boost production of her craft butter company, Ploughgate Creamery.

Mauro has been making small-batch, cultured butter at Bragg Farm here since 2014.

The company eventually outgrew its facility and in 2022, partnered with nearby Maplebrook Farm.

“After 15 years of running Ploughgate alone, the partnership allows our work to expand more than ever,” Mauro said.

“I’ve known one of Maplebrook’s founders, Mike Scheps, since I was a kid and frequented his father’s Italian grocery store in Manchester,” Mauro said.

“Partnering with a company I know and trust means that Ploughgate will continue to stay true to the foundation upon which it was built,” she said. “I’ll continue to be on the ground at Maplebrook every week making butter. This change will also allow more time dedicated to new product creation, research, and development at the Bragg Hill creamery.”

The Vermont native was introduced to artisan cheesemaking at age 15, when she worked as a farm hand at Woodcock Farm in Weston, VT.

Mauro went on to work for Shelburne Farms and Bonnieview Dairy in Vermont, as well as California’s Yerba Santa & Bodega Goat Dairy. At age 23, she returned to Vermont and founded Ploughgate Creamery. It was there that she created an award-winning, storied cheese – Willoughby.

For three years, Mauro made cheese and collected awards before a fire in 2011 shuttered Ploughgate.

This change will also allow more time dedicated to new product creation, research, and development at the Bragg Hill creamery.”

—Marisa Mauro

As a collaborator with nearby Jasper Hill Creamery, Mauro gave her blessing for Jasper Hill cheese makers to resurrect washed-rind Willoughby and make it their own.

Down but not out, Mauro rejoined the dairy industry in 2013 with a grant from the Vermont Land Trust to take over the Bragg Farm facility and rather than cheesemaking, this time she chose butter.

Bragg Hill Buttermaking History

Azro and Anna Bragg were the first in a long line of Braggs to own the property and used the facility for buttermaking. Saved letters from Bragg family mem-

bers tell of butter that was hand-churned from the milk of 40 cows and transported to Boston by way of wagon and train.

It’s fitting that 100 years later, Ploughgate butter travels the same route.

Mauro spent her first year at Bragg Farm focusing on construction projects, sourcing the proper equipment and fine-tuning recipe formulation.

Finding the right equipment to match the scale of her production capacity was a challenge; Mauro eventually purchased a butter churn made in Wisconsin, and a separator from Ukraine.

After renovations on the 100-year-old structure were complete, correct equipment installed and regulatory standards met, Ploughgate kicked off production in 2014.

Mauro’s endeavor was a success – so much so that a new production space was needed to fill demand growing by the day.

It’s worth noting that both companies were founded by women committed to make high-quality products by hand, rooted in the heritage of Vermont’s agricultural landscape.

Maplebrook’s Johann Englert joined the state’s artisan cheese sector in 2003 after trying to track down a cheese similar to the fresh Mozzarella balls she was introduced to while visiting rural Napali.

Englert found the cheese in a Boston-area retail store and before leaving, asked third generation cheese maker Mike Scheps if he could supply her with small quantities in the future.

From there, Scheps and Englert teamed up and began selling fresh Mozzarella that was first made in a kitchen to a small store, and

eventually to the 50,000 square-foot production facility Maplebrook Farm now uses, making 40,000 pounds of cheese every week that’s distributed across the US.



Ploughgate has been making cultured butter at Maplebrook since last year.

Cultured butter is tangier and richer than your everyday stick butter, with a taste reminiscent of cheese, the company noted.

Salt used to create Ploughgate butter is kneaded in by hand and manually formed into eight-ounce balls. Butter is also available at wholesale in 1-pound and 5-pound packages.

The latest flavor from Ploughgate is Seaweed, made with hand-harvested Dulse seaweed from Maine’s Vitamin Sea.

The ever-evolving product line includes original salted and unsalted cultured butter, Vermont Maple, Balsamic Fig, Espellete Pepper, Chocolate, and Habanero Salt flavors. Ghee is also available.

For more information, visit www.ploughgate.com and www.maplebrookvt.com.

Jasper Hill Farm Joins Vermont Flood Relief Effort

Greensboro, VT—Jasper Hill Farm here has launched a campaign to help farmers and other Vermont residents affected by catastrophic flooding this week.

Jasper Hill been donating cheese to local volunteer and relief efforts, and has created a “Snack to the Future” program where customers can purchase cheese online for shipment at a later date.

“By supporting our business, you’re helping us maximize our ability to distribute funds to our community as we work together to repair the damage from these floods,” the company continued.

Donations to the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) are also welcome. For details and link to the Northeast Organic Farming Association effort, visit www.jasperhill.com.



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FDA Updates Enforcement Discretion Policies In Two FSMA Guidances

Silver Spring, MD—The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Thursday re-issued two temporary guidances originally published during the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) for certain regulatory requirements that involve onsite visits abroad under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

Although the PHE ended in the US on May 11, 2023, FDA said it recognizes that certain international firms might still be impacted by COVID-19 travel restrictions and advisories.

Therefore, FDA has revised the two guidances to extend the

enforcement discretion policies issued during the PHE relative to supplier onsite audits for the FSMA Preventive Controls rules and the Foreign Supplier Verification Programs (FSVP) rule, and onsite monitoring activities and duration of already-issued certifications for the Accredited Third-Party Certification Program, when certain circumstances are met.

Regarding its Preventive Controls and FSVP rules, FDA said it does not intend to enforce the requirement for an onsite audit in the following circumstances:

•A receiving facility or FSVP importer has determined that an

onsite audit is the appropriate verification activity for an approved supplier, as reflected by its written food safety plan or FSVP;

•The supplier that is due for an onsite audit is in a region or country covered by a government travel restriction or travel advisory related to COVID-19;

•In light of a government travel restriction or travel advisory, it is temporarily impracticable for the receiving facility or FSVP importer to conduct or obtain the onsite audit of the supplier (e.g., a receiving facility or Foreign Supplier Verification Programs importer is unable to obtain the services of a qualified auditor in the impacted country or region or travel to the foreign supplier to conduct the onsite audit); and

•The receiving facility or FSVP importer temporarily selects an alternative verification activity or activities, such as sampling and testing food or reviewing relevant food safety records, and modifies its food safety plan or FSVP to incorporate the alternative activity(ies).

The alternative verification activity(ies) is designed, in consideration of the temporary unavailability of supplier onsite audits, to provide sufficient assurance that the hazard requiring a supply-chain-applied control (or, for Foreign Supplier Verification Programs, the hazard that is being controlled by the foreign supplier) has been significantly minimized or prevented during the period of onsite audit delay.

The Accredited Third-Party Certification Program regulation establishes a voluntary program for the recognition of accreditation bodies (ABs) that accredit third-party

certification bodies (CBs) to conduct food safety audits and issue food or facility certifications to eligible foreign entities.

The regulation requires that recognized accreditation bodies and accredited CBs perform certain onsite observations and examinations.

The US Food and Drug Administration is providing temporary flexibility so that ABs can maintain the accreditations of CBs and so that already-issued certifications need not lapse. The agency does not intend to enforce certain onsite observation and certificate term requirements in the following circumstances:

For recognized ABs monitoring their accredited CBs, FDA does not intend to enforce the requirements that, within one year after the initial date of accreditation and every two years thereafter, the recognized AB conduct onsite observations of a representative sample of regulatory audits performed by the accredited CB (or its audit agents) and that the recognized AB visit the certification bodies headquarters (or other location that manages audit agents conducting food safety audits under the regulation), when: a recognized AB determines that it is impracticable to conduct onsite observations of regulatory audits or visit an accredited CB's headquarters (or other location) due to government travel restrictions or advisories related to COVID-19; and the recognized accreditation bodies conducts the annual comprehensive assessment of the performance of a certification bodies it has accredited to determine whether the accredited certification bodies is in compliance with the regulation.

Recognized accreditation bodies should resume onsite observations and visits within a reasonable period of time after it becomes practicable to do so, FDA stated.

For already-issued certificates, FDA said it does not intend to enforce the requirement that the accredited CBs issue the certificates for a term only up to 12 months, when: the accredited CB determines that it is impracticable to conduct a regulatory audit due to government travel restrictions or advisories related to COVID-19; the regulatory audit would ordinarily be needed to support the issuance of a new certificate; the accredited CB has already issued a food or facility certificates to the eligible entity that is due to expire; the food or facility certificate has not been suspended or withdrawn by the accredited CB; and the accredited CB continues to adhere to the regulatory requirements regarding monitoring eligible entities to which they have issued certificates.

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Food Retailers, Suppliers Investing To Future-Proof Their Businesses: FMI

Arlington, VA—Food retailers and suppliers, facing formidable challenges with a changing workforce, inflation, supply chain hurdles, intense competition and shifting consumer buying habits, are investing in more creative and proactive approaches to future-proof their businesses, according to FMI—The Food Industry Association’s annual research analysis, *The Food Retailing Industry Speaks 2023*.

The 74th annual report finds the food industry is prioritizing innovation to increase efficiency and foster redundancies across product supply and assortments; investing in technology for worker recruiting, training and retention, and pay increases to ease labor issues; and prioritizing competitive pricing and strategies to provide value and maintain customer loyalty.

FMI’s report found that less than half of food retailers (44 percent) and suppliers (32 percent) believe supply chain disruptions will negatively impact their businesses in 2023, compared to 70 percent of food retailers and 82 percent of suppliers in 2022.

To maintain customer loyalty in this inflationary environment, retailers are fine-tuning competitive pricing for products and categories and increasing consumer communications about value.

The majority of retailers say they are showcasing private brands as strong value alternatives, and 85 percent of retailers are investing in new technologies to improve the customer experience, the report said.

In 2022, food retailers devoted an average of 1.3 percent of their total sales — more than \$13 billion — to technology investments, and food suppliers spent almost twice as much on technology as food retailers, the report noted.

Retailers also reported continuing to leverage perimeter departments to attract and retain shoppers.

Some 88 percent of food retailers differentiate themselves from the competition by selling local assortments throughout the store, with 73 percent increasing local items in SKU allocation, according to the report.

Retailers are placing a significant focus on fresh foods or perimeter departments to enhance store differentiation strategies, the report noted. Fresh prepared foods in particular are expected to gain space.

Among the key findings in the *Speaks* survey feedback:

•Most food retailers (74 percent, versus 82 percent a year ago) are planning to increase the

space they allocate to foodservice aspects such as fresh-prepared grab-and-go options.

•Some retailers are planning to increase labor allocation in areas such as foodservice (38 percent versus 44 percent a year ago) and specialty help by department (24 percent versus 25 percent a year ago), which entails hiring employees such as cheesemongers, in-store butchers, and trained or certified chefs.

•Fresh or perimeter departments now account for an average of about half of food retailers’ total online sales.

•Meat and produce continue to lead in sales per labor hour.

The food retail industry has many managerial roles unfilled, FMI reported. The percentage

of retail departments operating without a manager was 3.4 percent among reporting companies at the end of 2022.

In the different fresh departments, 4.5 percent of delis and 0.9 percent of dairy departments were without a manager.

Workforce training and development is an ongoing imperative and challenge across organizations in the face of high levels of turnover. The cost of this training can be significant for food retailers, at nearly \$500 per employee, and particularly for food suppliers, at \$1,400 per employee.

The expectation for most businesses surveyed is that these costs will increase further in 2023 as employee retention continues to be a challenge (forecast from 70 percent of retailers and 83 percent of suppliers).

Almost all food retailers (92 percent) and suppliers (100 per-

cent) have in-house training and development programs, and a majority also have purchased programs from third-party vendors.

“Food industry companies are maximizing efficiencies and, in some instances, creating strategic redundancies in the supply chain in their unending effort to ensure consumers have access to the products they love,” commented Leslie G. Sarasin, FMI president and CEO. “The positive news is the industry is signaling its expectation that supply chain disruptions will continue to lessen as we move through 2023.

“Across the food supply chain, we are taking the lessons learned over the past few years to change the way we invest in our employees, innovate to future-proof our businesses and, most importantly, adapt our operations to better engage with and serve shoppers,” Sarasin added.



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MADISON, WI

ENTRY DEADLINE: JULY 21
ENTRIES DUE DATE: AUG 14 - 18
JUDGING BEGINS: AUG 22

CONTEST AUCTION: OCT 3
WORLD DAIRY EXPO IN MADISON, WI



97 CONTEST CLASSES:

- CHEESE
- BUTTER
- ICE CREAM/SHERBET
- COTTAGE CHEESE
- FLUID MILK
- SOUR CREAM
- DAIRY DIPS
- WHEY PRODUCTS
- YOGURT
- CREATIVE & INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS

ONLINE ENTRY:

<https://www.wdpa.net/wde-championship-dairy-product-contest>

Hilmar Unveils New Brand Identity, Hilmar™, And New Company Logo

Hilmar, CA—Hilmar Cheese Company, Inc., one of the largest cheese manufacturers in the US and a global supplier of whey ingredients, on Thursday unveiled a new company logo and brand identity.

The company is unifying under the brand name Hilmar™. This evolution further supports its purpose of “improving lives together” by delivering on the full nutritional and economic value of dairy.

“The new identity aligns with the company’s expanding role in the markets it serves,” said David Ahlem, Hilmar’s president and chief executive officer. “When the company started in 1984, the founding dairy farm families were simply looking for a more equitable way to compensate dairy farmers and bring quality products to market. Now we are a leading global supplier with a passion and commitment to the future reflected in our new look.”

Hilmar’s new brand identity reflects its commitment to “improve the lives of everyone we touch, including consumers, customers, business partners, employees and the communities where we live and work,” Ahlem

said. “We believe we’ve just begun to tap the full life-changing power of dairy.”

The introduction of the new Hilmar™ brand identity also marks the integration of the company’s cheese and ingredients businesses. Ahlem said that in 2004 the company built and promoted a dedicated ingredient brand, known as Hilmar Ingredients.

“Today, however, we’re well known for both cheese and ingredients. So, we want to put all our strategic thinking and investment behind one master brand,” Ahlem said.

The new logo-mark features a milk droplet that’s being split into two products: cheese and whey ingredients. The design also reflects the concepts of nature, farmland and sustainability.

“We take our role as stewards of the land and environment seriously,” Ahlem explained.

“This new brand reflects our commitment to investing in technologies and processes that reduce our carbon footprint and make efficient use of all our resources,” he continued.

For more information, visit www.hilmar.com.



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Rohloff

Continued from p. 4

manage milking and certain feeding operations.

In one sentence, these advancements collectively contribute to a more sustainable operation compared to the past. The concept of nutrient concentration and anaerobic digesters isn’t new. The industry began adopting them in the 2000s. In the US, there was an opportunity to capture methane from dairy manure and convert it into fuel to power generators and produce electricity. In recent years, the next frontier has been renewable natural gas (RNG) for the transportation industry. Studies conducted by the US Department of Energy and the California Air Resources Board show that RNG vehicles emit up to 95 percent lower emissions than those fueled with gas or diesel. Replacing traditional vehicle fuels with RNG from dairy manure leads to a 400 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

As of May 2022, there were approximately 330 anaerobic digester systems on livestock operations. Due to public and private partnerships, incentives and emerging opportunities, many systems have been commissioned over the past year, with many more expected to come online. This aspect of sustainability and environmental stewardship provides an additional revenue source, addresses climate concerns, opens up further possibilities for nutrient concentration and even facilitates water recycling.

It’s also important to note that the opportunity for anaerobic digesters is not limited to large dairies. Although the economics

currently favor larger operations, there are commercially available technologies for herds as small as 100 cows. I liken the adoption of digesters to color televisions – increasing adoption, decreasing costs and continuous improvement over time.

What’s Next:

The next frontier remains uncertain. Given labor shortages, robotics may play a bigger role in dairy farming.

Will dairy farmers be compelled to adopt more sustainable practices? In my opinion, the changes will result from a combination of factors: a desire to be better stewards, supply chain mandates and economic opportunities.

Given the dairy industry’s leadership and its commitment to continuous improvement, I’m excited to witness how much more efficient it can become. I am particularly intrigued by the research on feed additives that can potentially reduce enteric methane emissions by up to 90 percent.

Additionally, the exploration of transforming methane into valuable products like sustainable aviation fuel and renewable hydrogen holds promise for future opportunities. Moreover, the enhanced capture and targeted application of nutrients have significant potential.

In closing, the dairy producers you work with today are doing the best job they’ve ever done. You should take pride in the fact that you work with some of the finest dairy producers who prioritize responsible practices while supplying milk for nourishing products that feed the world.

There is much more to this humble industry, and its story deserves to be shared. ^{TR}

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Antibiotics Secreted By Fungi Can Influence Cheese Rind Development

Washington—Fungi produce metabolites that humans have used to improve health, but the ecology of fungal metabolites in microbial communities is not well understood.

In a recent study published in *mBio*, an American Society for Microbiology journal, researchers used cheese rinds to demonstrate that fungal antibiotics can influence how microbiomes develop.

“Fungi are widespread in many microbial ecosystems, from soils to our own bodies, but we know much less about their diversity and roles in microbiomes compared to more widely studied bacteria,” said the study’s principal investigator, said Benjamin Wolfe, associate professor in the Tufts University Department of Biology, whose lab studies how fungi interact with other microbes in microbial communities, focusing on fungal bacterial interactions.

“To study the ecology of fungi and their interactions with bacteria, we use cheese rinds as a model microbial ecosystem to understand these basic biology questions,” Wolfe said.

Cheese rinds are microbial communities that form on the surfaces of naturally aged cheeses. The fuzzy and sometimes sticky layers on the surfaces of these cheeses are communities of microbes that develop as the cheese is aged. They slowly decompose the cheese curd as they grow on the surface and produce aromas and pigments that give each artisan cheese unique properties.

Several years ago, a cheese maker reached out to Wolfe with a mold problem: A mold was becoming abundant on the surfaces of the cheese maker’s cheeses and was disrupting normal rind development. It appeared as though the rinds were disappearing as the mold invaded their cheese cave. This mold invasion provided a perfect opportunity for Wolfe and his colleagues to study the ecology, genetics and chemistry of fungal-bacterial interactions.

Wolfe’s team began a collaboration with Nancy Keller’s lab at the University of Wisconsin to try to figure out how this mold was impacting the rind microbial community. They wanted to find out what the mold was doing to the rind microbes and what chemicals the mold may be producing that could disrupt the rind.

To conduct their study, the researchers first deleted a gene (*laeA*) in the *Penicillium* mold that is known to control the expression of chemicals that fungi can secrete into their environment. These compounds are called specialized or secondary metabolites.

“We know that many fungi can produce metabolites that are antibiotics because we have used these as drugs for humans, but we know surprisingly little about how fungal antibiotics work in nature,” Wolfe said. “Do fungi actually use these compounds to kill other microbes? How do these antibiotics produced by fungi affect the development of bacterial communities? We added our normal and our *laeA*-deleted *Penicillium* to a community of cheese rind bacteria to see whether deleting *laeA* caused changes in how the community of bacteria developed.”

They found that when they deleted *laeA*, most of the antibacterial activity of the *Penicillium*

mold was lost. This allowed the researchers to narrow specific regions of the fungal genome that might be responsible for producing the antibacterial compounds.

They were able to narrow it down to one class of compounds called pseurotins. These are metabolites produced by a range of fungi that have been shown to have interesting biological activities, including bacterial inhibition.

The study is said to be the first to show that pseurotins can control how bacterial communities living with that fungi grow and develop. The pseurotins produced by the *Penicillium* mold in cheese are strongly antibacterial and dramatically inhibited certain bacteria compared to others (the bacteria inhibited were *Staphylococcus*, *Brevibacterium*, *Brachybacterium*, and *Psychrobacter*).

This caused a dramatic shift in the composition of the cheese rind microbiome in the presence of the *Penicillium*-produced pseurotins.

This study shows that antibiotics secreted by fungi can control how microbiomes develop. Because many fungi produce similar metabolites in a range of other ecosystems, from the human microbiome to soil ecosystems, the researchers expect that these mechanisms of fungal-bacterial interactions are widespread.

“Our results suggest that some pesky mold species in artisan cheeses may disrupt normal cheese development by deploying antibiotics,” Wolfe said. “These findings allow us to work with cheese makers to identify which molds are the bad ones and how to manage them in their cheese caves.”

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COMING EVENTS

www.cheesereporter.com/events.htm

Art Of Cheese Festival Hits Madison Area This Fall; Tickets Now Available

Madison—Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW) will debut its new Art of Cheese Festival Sept. 29 - Oct. 1 across Madison and surrounding communities.

The three-day event includes pairing events, educational sessions, day-long tours of local creameries, cheese-centric dining, and “Cheese Fair Off the Square,” free and open to the public. The festival kicks off Friday with a selection of tours:

Green County: Roth Cheese, Chalet Cheese, lunch at Seven Acre Dairy Company in Paoli and lesson in creating the perfect cheese board by Marissa Mullen, founder of That Cheese Plate.

Cheese & Architecture: Uplands Cheese, lunch at Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Riverview Terrace Café with Wisconsin Foodie Luke Zahm, and private tour of Wright’s home, Taliesin.

Cheese & Bourbon: Sensory class at the Center for Dairy

Research, bourbon and cheese tasting, and lunch by James Beard Award-nominated chef Daniel Fox at J. Henry & Sons Bourbon.

Cheesemaking 101: A mini course in cheese science at CDR and lunch at Cadre Restaurant with a group of Wisconsin Master Cheesemakers.

Friday’s lineup wraps with a Cheese Ball at Garver Feed Mill from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Saturday features Cheese Fair Off the Square alongside the Dane County Farmers Market from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., free and open to the public. Ticketed events include:

Art of the Cheese Board: author Marissa Mullen explains the *Cheese By Numbers* method

Art of Crafting with Cheese: wood-burning designs into cheese boards

Art of Affinage: Liz Thorp, founder of The People’s Cheese, and Food Network’s Justin Warner lead a cheese aging class at the

Dairy Ingredient Seminar: Risks And Opportunities For Alt-Dairy Strategy

Santa Barbara, CA—The American Dairy Products Institute (ADPI) this week released the agenda for its Dairy Ingredient Seminar, which examines the latest consumer product formulation trends and market opportunities – including the addition of dairy alternatives to product lines.

The seminar takes place here Sept. 25-27 at the Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort.

Educational sessions include a discussion on global dairy trends, regional supply and demand drivers and opportunities, and a global and regional climate review by dairy consultant Mike McCully.

He will join Andy Powers, ADPI vice president of technical services, on the latest sustainability trends: interest and drivers for dairy ingredient end users; processor initiatives for GHG emissions; and the “why and what” of capital projects.

Kevin Quinn of Idaho Milk Products will cover the diversity of the US producer landscape, followed with a session on consumer formulation trends led by Elizabeth Perez Atristain of Dairy Products, Inc.

Perez will highlight major food trends like sports nutrition and “muscle blends,” child nutrition from pre-natal to grow-up, healthy aging, and medical foods.

ADPI vice president of technical development KJ Burrington will cover a timely talk on dairy’s role in the alternative dairy sector. Topics of discussion include precision fermentation; risks and opportunities in a diversified ingredients strategy; and new product launches in the dairy alternative space.

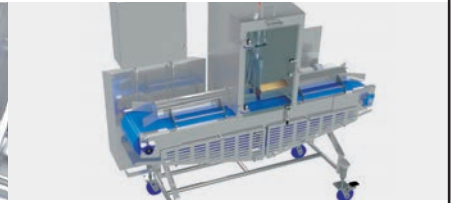
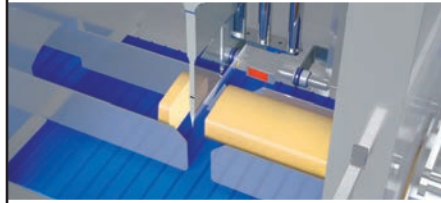
Billy Quinn, senior vice president, global sales at Global Dairy Trade, will cover digital disruption in dairy. Quinn will cover carbon credits and their trade, supply chain implications, and digital platforms.

The seminar will also include ADPI’s 100th anniversary celebration Tuesday night.

Early registration rates are available through July 28. Cost to attend is \$449 for ADPI member and \$599 for non-members.

After the deadline, cost is \$599 and \$749, respectively. For more information and to register online, visit www.adpi.org.

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Other ticketed Saturday sessions include author Laura Werlin on cooking with cheese; culinary and beverage expert Jeanette Hurt on pairing cocktails and cheese; and Erika Kubick of Cheese Sex Death on pairing chocolate and cheese.

A Cheese Crawl will take place in East Madison’s Willy St. Neighborhood, along with a special five-course dinner of Midwestern supper club fare at the award-winning Harvey House.

Sunday begins with cheese, coffee, pastries and yoga at The Edge-water hotel, and a four-course brunch will be held at Graze on the Capitol Square.

A complete schedule of events, including travel information, is available online.

A limited number tickets for individual sessions is now on sale at ArtofCheeseFestival.com.

Pennyroyal Farm Featured In Next CACG ‘Meet The Maker’ Web Series

Boonville, CA—Members of the California Artisan Cheese Guild (CACG) will have the opportunity to connect with head cheese maker Erika McKenzie-Chapter of award-winning Pennyroyal Farm as part of CACG’s “Meet the Maker” series.

The webinar will be held during the evening of July 27. Pennyroyal Farm is a goat and sheep farmstead dairy and creamery here at the entrance to Anderson Valley.

McKenzie-Chapter, who apprenticed at a goat dairy and creamery in France, will discuss how Pennyroyal makes its estate wines and handmade cheeses entirely from what grows on its regenerative farm.

Cost to participate is \$25 per person. Tasting add-ons are also available through Pennyroyal’s website at 10 percent off the retail price. Cheese should be ordered by July 24 to ensure delivery in time for the seminar.

For more information, ticket sales and list of future events, visit www.cacheeseguild.org.

PLANNING GUIDE

IAFP 2023: July 16-19, Toronto, Ontario. Visit www.foodprotection.org for more information.

IFT Expo: July 16-19, McCormick Place, Chicago. Visit www.iftevent.org for future updates.

ACS Conference: July 18-21, Des Moines, IA. Updates and online registration available at www.cheesesociety.org.

IMPA Conference: Aug. 10-11, Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, ID. Visit www.impa.us for more information closer to event date.

Pack Expo Las Vegas: Sept. 11-13, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV. Registration open at www.packexpolasvegas.com.

ADPI Dairy Ingredients Seminar: Sept. 25-27, Santa Barbara, CA. Registration now open at www.adpi.org/events.

NCCIA Annual Conference: Oct. 10-12, Best Western/Ramkota, Sioux Falls, SD. Visit www.northcentralcheese.org for more information as well as registration updates.

IDF World Dairy Summit: Oct. 16-19, Chicago, IL. Visit www.idfwds2023.com to register online and for more information.

Process Expo: Oct. 23-25, McCormick Place, Chicago. Online registration is available at www.fpsa.org/process-expo.

NDB, NMPF, UDIA Joint Annual Meeting: Oct. 23-26, Orlando, FL. Visit www.nmpf.org.

Dairy Forum 2024: Jan. 21-24, J.W. Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge, Phoenix, AZ. Details posted soon at www.idfa.org/dairy-forum.

World Championship Cheese Contest: March 5-7, Monona Terrace Convention Center, Madison. Visit www.worldchampioncheese.org for updates.

ADPI Global Ingredients Summit: March 11-13, 2024, Peppermill Resort, Reno, NV. www.adpi.org.



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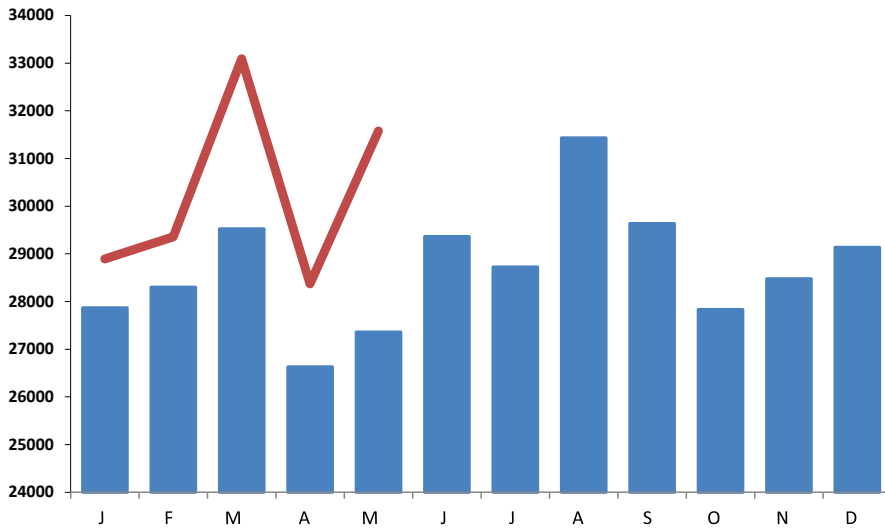


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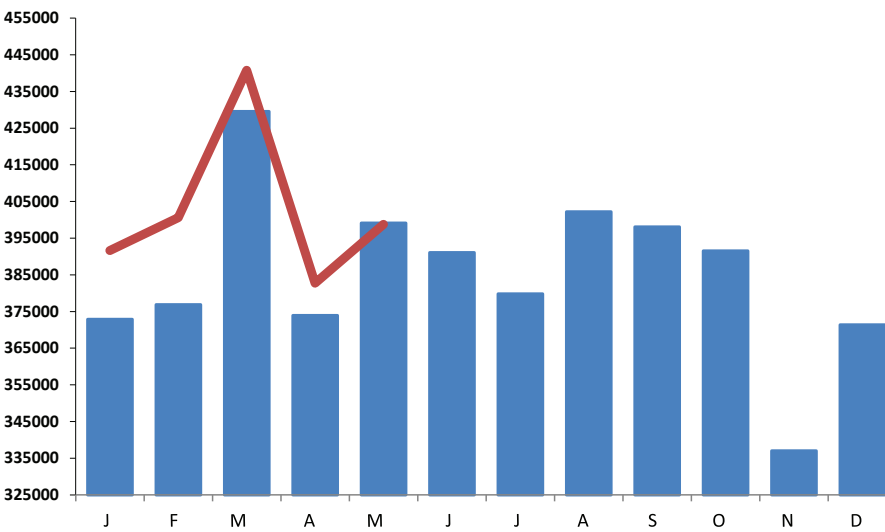
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2022 VS 2023 (1,000 LBS)



Yogurt (plain & flavored) US Production
2022 VS 2023 (1,000 LBS)



DAIRY FUTURES PRICES

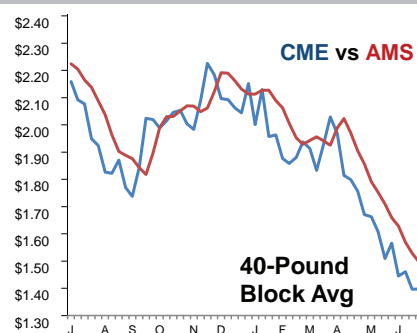
SETTLING PRICE							*Cash Settled	
Date	Month	Class III	Class IV	Dry Whey	NDM	Block Cheese	Cheese*	Butter*
7-7	July 23	13.90	18.05	27.750	114.650	1.457	1.4990	243.500
7-10	July 23	13.92	18.05	27.650	114.650	1.457	1.5000	244.750
7-11	July 23	13.98	18.05	27.475	115.000	1.462	1.5000	244.750
7-12	July 23	13.87	18.05	27.450	115.400	1.462	1.4910	244.750
7-6	July 23	13.84	18.17	27.325	115.400	1.462	1.4900	247.975
7-7	Aug 23	14.52	17.70	26.000	111.600	1.565	1.5700	243.400
7-10	Aug 23	14.89	17.70	26.500	111.700	1.576	1.6100	243.500
7-11	Aug 23	15.23	17.75	27.200	112.000	1.596	1.6350	243.875
7-12	Aug 23	14.82	17.84	27.000	112.650	1.615	1.5930	244.000
7-6	Aug 23	15.34	18.21	27.000	114.500	1.665	1.6490	248.500
7-7	Sept 23	15.62	17.43	26.275	108.400	1.690	1.6800	243.500
7-10	Sept 23	16.01	17.43	27.575	108.400	1.708	1.7170	243.500
7-11	Sept 23	16.28	17.59	28.000	108.750	1.727	1.7450	243.800
7-12	Sept 23	15.76	17.61	28.000	110.000	1.727	1.6880	243.500
7-6	Sept 23	16.27	18.10	29.175	114.000	1.760	1.7280	248.225
7-7	Oct 23	16.68	17.56	27.250	108.475	1.800	1.7780	244.000
7-10	Oct 23	16.85	17.56	28.375	109.250	1.800	1.7940	244.000
7-11	Oct 23	17.09	17.61	29.250	110.000	1.810	1.8140	244.000
7-12	Oct 23	16.75	17.68	29.000	111.250	1.810	1.7880	244.000
7-6	Oct 23	17.20	18.26	30.050	115.250	1.835	1.8150	249.000
7-7	Nov 23	17.31	17.70	28.500	111.300	1.870	1.8410	245.000
7-10	Nov 23	17.42	17.80	28.575	111.700	1.870	1.8510	245.050
7-11	Nov 23	17.46	17.84	29.500	112.000	1.880	1.8600	245.400
7-12	Nov 23	17.31	17.90	29.500	112.875	1.880	1.8390	245.200
7-6	Nov 23	17.71	18.39	31.500	116.850	1.890	1.8640	249.000
7-7	Dec 23	17.44	17.75	29.600	113.700	1.891	1.8570	240.050
7-10	Dec 23	17.60	17.83	30.500	114.250	1.891	1.8660	240.100
7-11	Dec 23	17.53	17.84	30.900	114.700	1.891	1.8650	240.475
7-12	Dec 23	17.53	17.93	30.900	115.500	1.891	1.8500	240.500
7-6	Dec 23	17.75	18.35	33.000	119.500	1.889	1.8790	242.500
7-7	Jan 24	17.44	17.80	32.250	115.750	1.893	1.8580	235.600
7-10	Jan 24	17.65	17.85	32.500	116.250	1.893	1.8670	236.000
7-11	Jan 24	17.70	17.81	32.500	116.750	1.893	1.8590	236.225
7-12	Jan 24	17.46	18.00	32.500	118.000	1.889	1.8510	236.250
7-6	Jan 24	17.73	18.30	33.750	122.000	1.889	1.8630	236.750
7-7	Feb 24	17.62	17.97	35.000	118.025	1.901	1.8660	234.000
7-10	Feb 24	17.70	17.97	35.000	118.050	1.901	1.8680	234.025
7-11	Feb 24	17.70	17.97	35.000	118.175	1.899	1.8680	234.025
7-12	Feb 24	17.56	18.00	35.000	119.975	1.899	1.8770	234.775
7-6	Feb 24	17.60	18.34	35.000	122.800	1.899	1.8700	234.775
7-7	Mar 24	17.61	18.15	38.250	121.000	1.908	1.8700	233.500
7-10	Mar 24	17.75	18.20	38.250	121.000	1.908	1.8800	233.500
7-11	Mar 24	17.75	18.19	38.250	121.000	1.908	1.8800	233.500
7-12	Mar 24	17.61	18.19	38.250	121.000	1.908	1.8510	233.500
7-6	Mar 24	17.84	18.44	38.250	125.000	1.908	1.8750	233.500
7-7	April 24	17.61	18.20	38.875	123.525	1.910	1.8750	232.000
7-10	April 24	17.75	18.20	38.875	123.525	1.910	1.8770	232.000
7-11	April 24	17.75	18.20	38.875	123.525	1.910	1.8770	232.000
7-12	April 24	17.75	18.23	38.875	123.525	1.910	1.8770	232.000
7-6	April 24	17.81	18.47	38.875	126.500	1.910	1.8800	232.000
7-7	May 24	17.74	18.35	38.875	125.500	1.913	1.8780	231.500
7-10	May 24	17.78	18.35	38.875	125.500	1.913	1.8830	231.500
7-11	May 24	17.78	18.35	38.875	125.500	1.913	1.8830	231.500
7-12	May 24	17.78	18.40	38.875	125.500	1.913	1.8810	233.000
7-6	May 24	17.78	18.50	38.875	127.750	1.913	1.8790	233.000
July 13		26,824	5,344	2,716	8,196	1,067	22,898	9,053

AVG MONTHLY ANIMAL FEED PRICES: USDA

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'19	.3655	.3376	.3105	.2852	.2718	.2725	.2657	.2598	.2550	.2509	.2446	.2924
'20	.2900	.2997	.2973	.2968	.3098	.2914	.2680	.2540	.2767	.2895	.3142	.3416
'21	.3784	.3913	.4752	.5469	.5613	.5255	.4719	.4168	.4024	.4643	.4853	.5100
'22	.5638	.6624	.6586	.5525	.5138	.4873	.4435	.3863	.3664	.3308	.3250	.3159
'23	.2967	.2895	.3375	.3438	.2784	.2257						

DAIRY PRODUCT SALES

July 12, 2023—AMS' National Dairy Products Sales Report. Prices included are provided each week by manufacturers. Prices collected are for the (wholesale) point of sale for natural, unaged Cheddar; boxes of butter meeting USDA standards; Extra Grade edible dry whey; and Extra Grade and USPH Grade A nonfortified NFDN.



Week Ending	July 8	July 1	June 24	June 17
40-Pound Block Cheddar Cheese Prices and Sales				
Weighted Price		Dollars/Pound		
US	1.4302	1.4714	1.4964	1.5291
Sales Volume		Pounds		
US	10,807,315	11,677,760	11,209,159	12,209,961
500-Pound Barrel Cheddar Cheese Prices, Sales & Moisture Content				
Weighted Price		Dollars/Pound		
US	1.5695	1.6461	1.6711	1.6580
Adjusted to 38% Moisture				
US	1.4950	1.5644	1.5871	1.5785
Sales Volume		Pounds		
US	14,172,180	12,871,488	13,231,344	14,552,933
Weighted Moisture Content		Percent		
US	34.91	34.76	34.72	34.88
AA Butter				
Weighted Price		Dollars/Pound		
US	2.4591	2.4257	2.4148	2.4347
Sales Volume		Pounds		
US	2,038,549	3,843,372	3,162,968	2,987,042
Extra Grade Dry Whey Prices				
Weighted Price		Dollars/Pound		
US	0.2765	0.2892	0.3109	0.3196
Sales Volume		Pounds		
US	5,791,961	6,989,234	6,872,528	7,859,924
Extra Grade or USPHS Grade A Nonfat Dry Milk				
Average Price		Dollars/Pound		
US	1.1798	1.1533	1.1760	1.1726
Sales Volume		Pounds		
US	13,414,751	16,732,566	14,231,246	17,670,868

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TYPE OF BUSINESS:	JOB FUNCTION:
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DAIRY PRODUCT MARKETS

AS REPORTED BY THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WHOLESALE CHEESE MARKETS

NORTHEAST - JULY 12: Milk volumes are steady to lower in the Northeast. There are reports of milk being discarded in the Northeast due to rain and flooding. Some cheese plant managers have reported that they successfully moved milk intended for Class III manufacturing from some of their processing plants to other locations not as severely affected by precipitation. Contacts have shared that cheese inventories remain strong, but that cold storage space is becoming scarce. Foodservice and retail demands are steady. Last week's National Retail Report outlined sliced cheese in 6-8-ounce packages as the most advertised conventional cheese product with an average advertised price of \$2.44.

Wholesale prices, delivered, dollars per/lb:

Cheddar 40-lb block:	\$1.8400 - \$2.1275	Process 5-lb sliced:	\$1.4550 - \$1.9350
Muenster:	\$1.8275 - \$2.1775	Swiss 10-14 lb cuts:	\$3.5400 - \$5.8625

MIDWEST AREA - JULY 12: Cheese makers report a continuance of hearty demand. Retail Cheddar/American style cheese makers say customers have ramped up ordering, but despite widely available milk supplies, they are pushing capacity limits to meet customer needs. Barrel producers report similar notes. They say any extra barrel loads are moving at readily. Contacts say there are some warehouse space concerns, but some of those concerns are based on cheeses that require more aging time than others. Milk remains available in the Upper Midwest, but the farther south the plant, the tighter the milk availability. Spots continue to be reported at double-digit prices below Class III in the Upper Midwest, but prices have been reported at Class in the Central/Southern states. Contacts expect seasonal milk supply limitations are expected to hamper upcoming production and potentially boost market prices, which are currently under a noticeably bearish pressure.

Wholesale prices delivered, dollars per/lb:

Blue 5# Loaf :	\$1.8825 - \$3.0925	Mozzarella 5-6#:	\$1.4125 - \$2.5000
Brick 5# Loaf:	\$1.6125 - \$2.1800	Muenster 5#:	\$1.6125 - \$2.1800
Cheddar 40# Block:	\$1.3350 - \$1.8775	Process 5# Loaf:	\$1.3325 - \$1.8000
Monterey Jack 10#:	\$1.5875 - \$1.9350	Swiss 6-9# Cuts:	\$3.0550 - \$3.1575

WEST - JULY 12: Demand for varietal cheeses from foodservice channels is steady. Retail demand is steady to moderate for varietal cheeses. Some industry sources note strong Cottage cheese and cream cheese sales thus far for the year. Manufacturers of frozen pizzas relay less demand for Q3 of 2023 compared to Q3 of 2022 so far, which is negatively impacting Mozzarella cheese sales. Loads are available to meet current barrel and block cheese demand and some stakeholders relay supplies tending towards higher warehouse capacities. Class III milk volumes are ample for strong to steady cheese manufacturing. Export demand is mixed. Interest from Asian and Mexican purchasers is noted as moderate. Some varietal cheese converters note more steady export demand.

Wholesale prices delivered, dollars per/lb:

Monterey Jack 10#:	\$1.7025 - \$1.9775
Cheddar 10# Cuts :	\$1.7150 - \$1.9150
Cheddar 40# Block:	\$1.4675 - \$1.9575
Process 5# Loaf:	\$1.4575 - \$1.6125
Swiss 6-9# Cuts:	\$2.3475 - \$3.7775

EEX Weekly European Cheese Indices (WECI): Price Per/lb (US Converted)

Variety	Date: 7/12	7/5	Variety	Date: 7/12	7/5
Cheddar Curd	\$1.98	\$1.94	Mild Cheddar	\$2.00	\$1.99
Young Gouda	\$1.73	\$1.73	Mozzarella	\$1.71	\$1.70

FOREIGN -TYPE CHEESE - JULY 12: Farm level milk outputs continue to decline seasonally throughout Europe. Some industry sources have indicated that milk production is up slightly from this time last year, though. Despite tightening milk supplies, cheese makers report active manufacturing schedules to keep up with strong demand. Demand for cheeses at retail markets is reportedly strong, albeit inconsistent due to some summer holidays. Foodservice demands are strong throughout Europe, namely in heavily visited tourist destinations. Cheese inventories are said to be shrinking as a result of continued strong demand outpacing the rate of production.

Selling prices, delivered, dollars per/lb:

	Imported	Domestic
Blue:	\$2.6400 - 5.2300	\$1.6975 - 3.1850
Gorgonzola:	\$3.6900 - 5.7400	\$2.2050 - 2.9225
Parmesan (Italy):	0	\$2.0875 - 4.1750
Romano (Cows Milk):	0	\$2.8875 - 5.0425
Sardo Romano (Argentine):	\$2.8500 - 4.7800	0
Reggianito (Argentine):	\$3.2900 - 4.7800	0
Jarlsberg (Brand):	\$2.9500 - 6.4500	0
Swiss Cuts Switzerland:	0	\$3.5750 - 3.9000
Swiss Cuts Finnish:	\$2.6700 - 2.9300	0

DRY PRODUCTS - JULY 13

LACTOSE CENTRAL/WEST: Dairy carbohydrate markets remain very lopsided in regards to supply versus light demand. Feed end users are getting hearty offers on lower-mesh and unground lactose, permeates, and deproteinized whey. This continues to keep interchangeable lactose needs limited. Brand preferred, higher mesh and infant-grade varieties are also under some pressure. Processors have begun to alternate into other blending and manufacturing options due to current market conditions. Limits in warehouse space continue to be a regular topic among lactose contacts.

WPC CENTRAL/WEST: Some processors say feed end users are the only active customer base right now, and those volumes are widely available. Food-grade end users are working primarily via contractual volumes. Brand preferred volumes changing hands kept the tops of the price range/

mostly price series intact, but spot interest in general remains light. As customer interest in WPC 80% and other high protein dairy powders has begun to firm, some contacts are hopeful that shifts in processing to those varieties will hamper the currently bearish movements of the WPC 34% market tone, but near-term market tones are clearly on the bearish end of the spectrum.

CASEIN: Despite contacts' expectations that Q3 contractual agreements would put further pressure on market pricing, current prices are holding firm in the low/mid-\$4 range from rennet casein and mid- to upper-\$4 for acid casein trading. European commodity markets have been bearish, but higher protein options are not noted as bearish as others. South American processing is seasonally quiet, but there are contact notes that suggest it could pick up later in the winter months.

NATIONAL - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY PRODUCTS

Conventional cheese was the second-most advertised commodity, despite conventional cheese ads decreasing 37 percent. The 6- to 8-ounce block cheese packages had an average price of \$2.41, down 29 cents. The 6- to 8-ounce shredded cheese packages had an average price of \$2.40, down 6 cents. The 6- to 8-ounce sliced cheese packages had a weighted average advertised price of \$2.39, down 5 cents.

Ice cream took over the most advertised commodity spot for both categories. Total ads for conventional ice cream in 48- to 64-ounce containers increased 9 percent, with an average price of \$3.68, up 9 cents.

Conventional half-gallon milk had an average price of \$1.47, down 54 cents. Organic half-gallon milk had an average price of \$4.78, up 35 cents - a premium of \$3.31.

RETAIL PRICES - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY - JULY 14

Commodity	US	NE	SE	MID	SC	SW	NW
Butter 8 oz	3.40	3.42	3.36	NA	NA	NA	NA
Butter 1#	4.27	4.34	4.99	3.83	4.29	3.98	4.98
Cheese 6-8 oz block	2.41	2.63	2.31	2.35	2.12	2.19	2.46
Cheese 6-8 oz shred	2.40	2.55	2.36	2.30	2.22	2.21	2.59
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced	2.39	2.91	2.20	2.33	2.36	1.97	2.59
Cheese 1# block	5.01	5.39	NA	NA	NA	NA	4.19
Cheese 1# shred	6.00	8.99	4.99	4.99	NA	3.88	4.42
Cheese 1# sliced	4.54	3.99	4.49	NA	NA	NA	5.47
Cheese 2# block	6.12	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	5.98
Cheese 2# shred	5.65	NA	8.29	NA	NA	5.99	5.05
Cottage Cheese 16 oz	2.65	3.11	2.38	2.39	1.92	2.63	NA
Cottage Cheese 24 oz	2.84	3.18	2.73	2.46	3.49	2.49	3.99
Cream Cheese 8 oz	2.72	2.94	2.50	3.29	NA	2.99	1.99
Ice Cream 14-16 oz	3.35	3.08	3.60	3.25	2.76	3.09	4.29
Ice Cream 48-64 oz	3.68	3.52	3.66	3.08	4.24	3.99	3.91
Milk 1/2 gallon	1.47	NA	NA	3.00	1.82	1.80	1.41
Milk gallon	3.30	3.44	1.29	1.29	3.99	3.18	2.27
Flavored Milk 1/2 gal	2.68	NA	2.50	NA	3.29	NA	NA
Flavored Milk gallon	2.99	NA	NA	NA	2.99	NA	NA
Sour Cream 16 oz	2.28	2.26	2.31	2.16	2.47	2.23	NA
Sour Cream 24 oz	2.92	NA	2.95	2.51	3.49	NA	3.66
Yogurt (Greek) 4-6 oz	1.09	1.07	1.15	1.03	1.00	1.04	1.07
Yogurt 4-6 oz	0.62	0.61	0.69	0.68	0.60	1.44	0.54
Yogurt (Greek) 32 oz	4.63	4.99	NA	3.00	NA	NA	NA
Yogurt 32 oz	2.05	2.27	2.04	1.79	1.83	2.16	2.59

ORGANIC DAIRY - RETAIL OVERVIEW

National Weighted Retail Avg Price:

Cream Cheese 8 oz:	\$3.29	Yogurt 4-6 oz:	\$1.56
Butter 8 oz:	NA	Yogurt 32 oz:	\$3.99
Cottage Cheese 8 oz:	\$3.29	Yogurt Greek 32 oz:	\$4.49
Cottage Cheese 16 oz:	\$5.29	Flavored Milk 1/2 gallon:	NA
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced:	\$5.99	Milk 1/2 gallon:	\$4.78
Cheese 6-8 oz shreds:	NA	Milk gallon:	\$7.53
Cheese 6-8 oz block:	\$3.91	Ice Cream 14-16 oz:	\$3.45
Cheese 2 lb block:	NA	Ice Cream 48-64 oz:	\$5.49

WHOLESALE BUTTER MARKETS - JULY 12

WEST: Cream is tighter in the southern areas of the region, with California joining the triple-degree temperature club. However, cream supplies are available and meeting manufacturers' needs. Some stakeholders relay cream demand from ice cream makers is under last year levels but expect warmer weather to yield increased Class II draws away from butter production, while others expect Class II draws to decline further. Production is steady to lighter, with some churn maintenance and expectations of churning breaks noted. Retail and foodservice demand is strong to steady, with some stakeholders indicating buying for Q4 needs is comparatively lighter than Q3 demand thus far. Although unsalted butter is tighter than salted butter in some areas of the western region, loads are available to accommodate current demand for both.

CENTRAL: Some butter makers say cream has begun its seasonal disappearing act in terms of affordable spots for churning. Some have suggested they expect limits on spot cream for the remain-

ing summer months, as warmer temperatures are hampering milk/cream output, in general, and southern US processing plants are vying for more Upper Midwestern cream tankers, as well. That said, there are some Upper Midwestern butter plant contacts who say cream availability is not as tight in their respective areas. They also point out that current cream access this late into the summer is unique to 2023. Brokers say bulk 80 and 82 percent butter availability has diminished in the Midwest and southern central states.

NORTHEAST: Cream supplies have tightened in the East. Market participants have relayed that strong ice cream production, heat, and now rain and flooding in the Northeast have hindered cream availability. Butter plant managers report that churning remains active for contracted loads of cream. Butter inventories are unchanged, and some contacts have relayed that available cold storage space is slim to none. Foodservice and retail demands are seasonally steady.

WEEKLY COLD STORAGE HOLDINGS

SELECTED STORAGE CENTERS IN 1,000 POUNDS - INCLUDING GOVERNMENT

DATE	BUTTER	CHEESE
07/10/23	1,515	82,823
07/01/23	76,287	81,088
Change	-74,772	1,735
Percent Change	-98	2

CME CASH PRICES - JULY 10 - JULY 14, 2023

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for daily prices

	500-LB CHEDDAR	40-LB CHEDDAR	AA BUTTER	GRADE A NFDN	DRY WHEY
MONDAY July 10	\$1.4000 (+2)	\$1.4450 (+5¼)	\$2.4925 (+1¼)	\$1.0775 (-1)	\$0.2275 (NC)
TUESDAY July 11	\$1.4200 (+2)	\$1.5000 (+5½)	\$2.4875 (-½)	\$1.0775 (NC)	\$0.2275 (NC)
WEDNESDAY July 12	\$1.3900 (-3)	\$1.4750 (-2½)	\$2.4975 (+1)	\$1.0825 (+½)	\$0.2250 (-¼)
THURSDAY July 13	\$1.4000 (+1)	\$1.5300 (+5½)	\$2.5300 (+3¼)	\$1.1150 (+3¼)	\$0.2425 (+1¼)
FRIDAY July 14	\$1.3925 (-¾)	\$1.4800 (-5)	\$2.5500 (+2)	\$1.1050 (-1)	\$0.2475 (+½)
Week's AVG \$ Change	\$1.4005 (+0.0499)	\$1.4860 (+0.1110)	\$2.5115 (+0.0990)	\$1.0915 (-0.0141)	\$0.2340 (-0.0004)
Last Week's AVG	\$1.3506	\$1.3750	\$2.4725	\$1.1056	\$0.2344
2022 AVG Same Week	\$2.1375	\$2.0765	\$2.9470	\$1.7400	\$0.4550

MARKET OPINION - CHEESE REPORTER

Cheese Comment: Two cars of blocks were sold Monday, the last at \$1.4450, which set the price. One car of blocks was sold Tuesday at \$1.5000, which set the price. On Wednesday, 2 cars of blocks were sold, the last at \$1.4750, which set the price. Five cars of blocks were sold Thursday, the last at \$1.5325; an uncovered offer at \$1.5300 then set the price. A total of 12 cars of blocks were sold Friday, the last at \$1.4800, which set the price. The barrel price increased Monday on a sale at \$1.4000, rose Tuesday on a sale at \$1.4200, declined Wednesday on a sale at \$1.3900, rose Thursday on a sale at \$1.4000, then fell Friday on a sale at \$1.3925.

Butter Comment: The price rose Monday on a sale at \$2.4925, declined Tuesday on a sale at \$2.4875, increased Wednesday on a sale at \$2.4975, climbed Thursday on a sale at \$2.5300, and rose Friday on a sale at \$2.5500.

Nonfat Dry Milk Comment: The price declined Monday on a sale at \$1.0775, rose Wednesday on an unfilled bid at \$1.0825, increased Thursday on an unfilled bid at \$1.1150, then dropped Friday on a sale at \$1.1050.

Dry Whey Comment: The price declined Wednesday on a sale at 22.50 cents, rose Thursday on an unfilled offer at 24.25 cents, and increased Friday on a sale.

WHEY MARKETS - JULY 10 - JULY 14, 2023

RELEASE DATE - JULY 13, 2023

Animal Feed Whey—Central: Milk Replacer:	.2000 (NC) – .2300 (NC)
Buttermilk Powder:	
Central & East:	.9200 (NC) – .9900 (-1) West: .8200 (-2) – .9700 (-2)
Mostly:	.8700 (-2) – .9300 (-2)
Casein: Rennet:	4.2500 (NC) – 4.7500 (NC) Acid: 4.5000 (NC) – 5.0000 (NC)
Dry Whey—Central (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.2200 (-2) – .2900 (-1) Mostly: .2350 (-1½) – .2700 (NC)
Dry Whey—West (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.2400 (-¾) – .3600 (-1) Mostly: .2700 (NC) – .3300 (NC)
Dry Whey—NE:	.2350 (-1) – .3350 (-½)
Lactose—Central and West:	
Edible:	.1300 (-½) – .3600 (NC) Mostly: .1400 (NC) – .2500 (-2)
Nonfat Dry Milk—Central & East:	
Low/Medium Heat:	1.0700 (-4) – 1.1500 (-2) Mostly: 1.1000 (-3) – 1.1300 (-2)
High Heat:	1.1475 (-2) – 1.2800 (NC)
Nonfat Dry Milk—Western:	
Low/Med Heat:	1.0550 (-2½) – 1.1750 (NC) Mostly: 1.0800 (-1) – 1.1500 (-1)
High Heat:	1.1900 (-2) – 1.3500 (-2)
Whey Protein Concentrate—34% Protein:	
Central & West:	.6500 (-5) – 1.1300 (NC) Mostly: .7000 (-2) – 1.0700 (NC)
Whole Milk:	1.8000 (NC) – 1.9000 (-5)

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for historical dairy, cheese, butter, & whey prices

HISTORICAL CME AVG BLOCK CHEESE PRICES

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'09	1.0883	1.2171	1.2455	1.2045	1.1394	1.1353	1.1516	1.3471	1.3294	1.4709	1.5788	1.6503
10	1.4536	1.4526	1.2976	1.4182	1.4420	1.3961	1.5549	1.6367	1.7374	1.7246	1.4619	1.3807
'11	1.5140	1.9064	1.8125	1.6036	1.6858	2.0995	2.1150	1.9725	1.7561	1.7231	1.8716	1.6170
'12	1.5546	1.4793	1.5193	1.5039	1.5234	1.6313	1.6855	1.8262	1.9245	2.0757	1.9073	1.6619
'13	1.6965	1.6420	1.6240	1.8225	1.8052	1.7140	1.7074	1.7492	1.7956	1.8236	1.8478	1.9431
'14	2.2227	2.1945	2.3554	2.2439	2.0155	2.0237	1.9870	2.1820	2.3499	2.1932	1.9513	1.5938
'15	1.5218	1.5382	\$1.5549	1.5890	1.6308	1.7052	1.6659	1.7111	1.6605	1.6674	1.6175	1.4616
'16	1.4757	1.4744	1.4877	1.4194	1.3174	1.5005	1.6613	1.7826	1.6224	1.6035	1.8775	1.7335
'17	1.6866	1.6199	1.4342	1.4970	1.6264	1.6022	1.6586	1.6852	1.6370	1.7305	1.6590	1.4900
'18	1.4928	1.5157	1.5614	1.6062	1.6397	1.5617	1.5364	1.6341	1.6438	1.5874	1.3951	1.3764
'19	1.4087	1.5589	1.5908	1.6619	1.6799	1.7906	1.8180	1.8791	2.0395	2.0703	1.9664	1.8764
'20	1.9142	1.8343	1.7550	1.1019	1.6704	2.5620	2.6466	1.7730	2.3277	2.7103	2.0521	1.6249
'21	1.7470	1.5821	1.7362	1.7945	1.6778	1.4978	1.6370	1.7217	1.7601	1.7798	1.7408	1.8930
'22	1.9065	1.9379	2.1699	2.3399	2.3293	2.1902	2.0143	1.8104	1.9548	2.0260	2.1186	2.0860
'23	2.0024	1.8895	1.9372	1.7574	1.5719	1.4039						

USDA To Invest \$300 Million To Boost Verification Of GHG Emissions

Washington—US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack on Wednesday announced that the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) will invest \$300 million to improve measurement, monitoring, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and carbon sequestration in climate-smart agriculture and forestry.

The Inflation Reduction Act tasked USDA with quantifying and tracking carbon sequestration and GHG emissions and gathering field-based data to evaluate the effectiveness of climate-smart mitigation practices in reducing these emissions.

To carry out these tasks, USDA has identified seven key focus areas that reflect the framework outlined by the federal strategy and are based on substantial input from stakeholders:

- Establish and advance a Soil Carbon Monitoring and Research Network with a perennial biomass component;
- Establish and advance a Greenhouse Gas Research Network;
- Expand data management, infrastructure and capacity;
- Improve models and tools for assessing greenhouse gas outcomes

at operational, state, regional, and national scales;

- Improve NRCS conservation practice standards and implementation data to reflect greenhouse gas mitigation opportunities;

- Improve temporal and spatial coverage of national conservation activity data; and

- Strengthen the Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Assessment Program of USDA.

This new investment by USDA in improving data and measurement of greenhouse gas emissions “is unmatched in its scope and potential to increase accuracy, reduce uncertainty and enhance overall confidence in these estimates,” Vilsack commented. “We’re data driven, and we seek continuous improvement in our climate-smart agriculture and forestry efforts.”

“One of the big remaining technological challenges for tackling the climate crisis is ensuring that natural solutions in agriculture and forestry are working well,” said John Podesta, senior advisor to the president for clean energy innovation and implementation. USDA’s announcement of \$300 million to measure and verify emissions from those sectors “is a big step in the right direction.”



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