



CHEESE REPORTER

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US Dairy Exports Dropped 25% In August; Dairy Imports Rose 7%

In August, Cheese Exports Declined 3%, Cheese Imports Increased 5%; NDM Exports Rose 4%

Washington—US dairy exports during August were valued at \$634.2 million, down 25 percent from August 2022, according to figures released Thursday by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).

Dairy exports during the first eight months of 2023 were valued at \$5.55 billion, down 13 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Leading markets for US dairy exports during the January-August 2023 period, on a value basis, with comparisons to the same period last year, were: Mexico, \$1.58 billion, up slightly; Canada, \$732.1 million, up 5 percent; China, \$421.2 million, down 20 percent; Japan, \$280.3 million, down 18 percent; Philippines, \$263.1 million, down 38 percent; Indonesia, \$239.1 million, down 24 percent; South Korea, \$215.3 million; and Australia, \$134.4 million, up 3 percent.

US dairy imports during August were valued at \$443.4 million,

up 7 percent from August 2022. That's the third-highest monthly dairy import value ever, trailing only October 2022's record \$466.3 million and March 2023's \$453.4 million.

During the first eight months of 2023, dairy imports were valued at \$3.28 billion, up 12 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Leading sources of US dairy imports during the January-August period, on a value basis, with comparisons to the same period in 2022, were: New Zealand, \$474.6 million, up 2 percent; Ireland, \$444.3 million, up 4 percent; Italy, \$335.3 million, down 4 percent; Canada, \$250.7 million, up 28 percent; France, \$225.6 million, up 11 percent; Mexico, \$197.0 million, up 23 percent; Netherlands, \$165.6 million, up 5 percent; Denmark, \$147.0 million, up 33 percent; and Spain, \$125.2 million, up 39 percent.

US cheese exports during August totaled 81.9 million pounds, down 3 percent from

August 2022. The value of those exports, \$172.6 million, was down 15 percent.

Cheese exports during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 633.3 million pounds, down 6 percent from the first eight months of 2022. The value of those exports, \$1.45 billion, was down 3 percent.

Leading markets for US cheese exports during the January-August period, on a volume basis, with comparisons to the same period last year, were: Mexico, 207.4 million pounds, up 13 percent; South Korea, 64.9 million pounds, down 45 percent; Japan, 64.7 million pounds, down 9 percent; Australia, 47.0 million pounds, up 22 percent; Canada, 27.4 million pounds, up 34 percent; Guatemala, 25.0 million pounds, up 57 percent; Chile, 18.5 million pounds, up 4 percent; Dominican Republic, 17.0 million pounds, up 4 percent; China, 15.7 million pounds, up 133 percent; Panama, 15.6 million pounds, down 29 percent; and Saudi Arabia, 13.6 million pounds, down 27 percent.

• See **August Dairy Trade**, p. 20

Cheese Production Fell 0.2% In August; Cheddar Output Declined 1.2%

Washington—US cheese production during August totaled 1.15 billion pounds, down 0.2 percent from August 2022, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reported Wednesday.

Cheese production during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 9.39 billion pounds, up 0.2 percent, or 19.4 million pounds, from the first eight months of 2022.

Regional cheese production in August, with comparisons to August 2022, was: Central, 566.7 million pounds, up fractionally; West, 450.7 million pounds, down 1.4 percent; and Atlantic, 137.3 million pounds, up 2.6 percent.

August cheese production in the states broken out by NASS, with comparisons to August 2022, was: Wisconsin, 300.7 million pounds, up 3.0 percent; California, 207.8 million pounds, up 0.5 percent; Idaho, 80.4 million pounds, up 9.1 percent; New Mexico, 74.2 million pounds, down 8.0 percent; New York, 69.7 million pounds, up 1.1 percent; Minnesota, 66.9 million pounds, down 1.7 percent; South Dakota, 40.8 million pounds, down 5.2 percent; Pennsylvania, 39.5 million pounds, up 10.0 percent; Iowa, 32.1 million pounds, down 0.6 percent; Ohio, 21.1 million pounds, up 3.5 percent; Vermont, 11.6 million pounds, down

• See **Cheese Output Falls**, p. 6

Hearing Testimony Focuses On Base Class I Mover, Class I Differentials

Carmel, IN—Testimony on the base Class I skim milk price mover continued late last week and early this week at USDA's federal milk marketing order (FMMO) hearing here, then shifted later this week to Class I differentials.

Sally Keefe, owner and principal of skFigures, testified as a representative of the Milk Innovation Group (MIG), in support of MIG's Proposal 15.

MIG's base Class I skim milk price proposal retains the current "average of" formula while changing the adjuster from a static 74 cents per hundredweight to a rolling adjuster, Keefe explained.

MIG proposes updating the

• See **Class I Issues**, p. 10

USDA Awards \$23 Million To Four Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives

Washington—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Tuesday announced \$23 million in awards to support dairy businesses under the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives (DBI) grant program.

These funds are being awarded noncompetitively to the four current DBI Initiatives, at the University of Wisconsin, the University of Tennessee, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and California State University Fresno.

The DBI Initiatives support dairy businesses in the development, production, marketing, and distribution of dairy products. DBI Initiatives provide direct technical assistance and subawards to dairy businesses, including niche dairy products, such as specialty cheese, or dairy

products derived from the milk of a dairy animal, including cow, sheep, and goat milk.

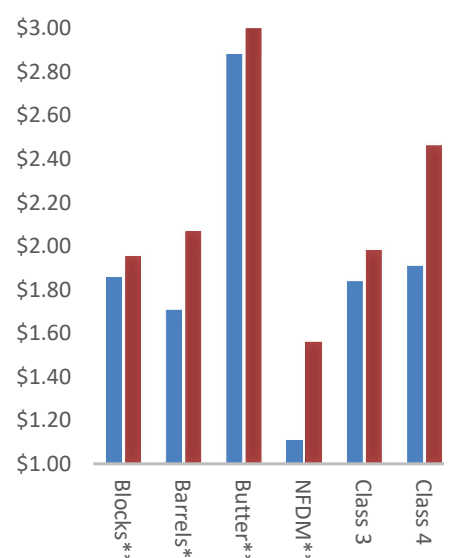
The entities that host this program, specifically focus on: diversifying dairy product markets to reduce risk and develop higher value uses for dairy products; promoting business development that diversifies farmer income through processing and marketing innovation; and encouraging the use of regional milk production.

DBI Initiatives provide direct technical assistance to dairy businesses directly or through industry experts or research institutions. Assistance may include business consulting, strategic planning, marketing, product innovation and development

• See **DBI Initiatives**, p. 13

Sept Avg Prices - 2023 vs 2022

Average CME Prices**
Class 3 and Class 4 Milk Price x 10





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FDA Nutrition Initiatives Are Way Too Biased Against Cheese

Looking over some of the comments submitted in response to the US Food and Drug Administration's draft guidance on Dietary Guidance Statements, we were reminded that there are several nutrition-related initiatives under way at FDA, and none of them seem very positive for cheese.

As noted in a front-page story in last week's edition, Dietary Guidance Statements are written or graphic material, based on key or principal recommendations from a consensus report, in food labeling that represent or suggest that a food or a food group may contribute to or help maintain a nutritious dietary pattern.

The draft guidance recommends that foods with Dietary Guidance Statements not exceed certain amounts of saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars, and that foods with Dietary Guidance Statements contain a meaningful amount of the food or category of foods that is the subject of the statement.

Appendix 1 of the draft guidance lists examples of Dietary Guidance Statements, and the one dairy-related example is as follows: "Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products instead of full-fat dairy options." That's pretty much eliminating Dietary Guidance Statements on the vast majority of cheeses produced in the US.

Further, as National Milk Producers Federation points out in its comments, this "implies that the most important message to consumers is to change the type of dairy foods they currently consume, rather than increasing consumption to recommended amounts." And the "large majority of Americans" consume fewer than the recommended number of dairy servings, NMPF noted.

Also, of the 11 statements in Appendix 1, the only one about dairy has a negative rather than

positive tone, and it doesn't encourage increasing consumption or highlight the beneficial role dairy plays in healthy dietary patterns, NMPF pointed out. By contrast, two of the other examples are to eat leafy green vegetables "as part of a nutritious dietary pattern," and that seafood, including shrimp, "is part of a nutritious dietary pattern."

As further evidence of FDA's anti-cheese bias, the International Dairy Foods Association doesn't support FDA's proposal to use disqualifying nutrients to limit (NLT) if the food meets the proposed food group equivalents (FGEs); IDFA believes this is "overly restrictive" and would inhibit the use of Dietary Guidance Statements on certain otherwise nutrient dense foods.

IDFA and others asked FDA to refrain from finalizing the draft guidance until the agency issues its final rule updating the criteria for the nutrient content claim "healthy." Further, as the Institute of Food Technologists points out, other food labeling initiatives underway at FDA include a healthy icon and front-of-package labels.

"The convergence of these labeling initiatives will result in multiple, major changes to food packaging that could cause confusion among consumers as to the meaning of each part of the label," the IFT noted in its comments to FDA on Dietary Guidance Statements. While some of these proposed label changes, such as front-of-package labels, are being tested with consumers, they are being conducted in isolation of the other proposed changes to the label that may influence consumer understanding and choice.

Therefore, IFT suggested that FDA consider inclusion of these multiple initiatives in consumer testing to better understand the interaction of these labels on

how might a consumer respond to a statement of "Eat cheese as part of a nutritious dietary pattern" if cheese also includes a front-of-pack label stating "high in saturated fat and sodium" or includes red lights for high saturated fat and sodium content?

consumer understanding and choice. For example, IFT asks, how might a consumer respond to a Dietary Guidance Statement of "Eat yogurt as part of a nutritious dietary pattern" if the yogurt also includes a front-of-pack label stating "high in added sugar" or includes the color red for added sugar content.

Looked at another way, how might a consumer respond to a statement of "Eat cheese as part of a nutritious dietary pattern" if cheese also includes a front-of-pack label stating "high in saturated fat and sodium" or includes red lights for high saturated fat and sodium content?

In fact, while FDA's Appendix 1 offers an example of eating leafy green vegetables as part of a nutritious dietary pattern, it seems like dairy products including cheese, yogurt and fluid milk should all be able to bear that Dietary Guidance Statement. If nothing else, these products could all bear a different example noted in Appendix 1: "Vary your protein routine."

Two other issues bear mentioning here. First, of the 1,200-plus comments FDA received on its draft guidance, only four mentioned the dairy and/or food matrix; those comments came from IDFA, NMPF, National Dairy Council and Dairy Council of California. FDA's draft guidance makes no mention of the food matrix, but it should.

Second, in addition to FDA's various labeling initiatives, the federal government is in the early stages of writing the 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and that new document will be released in a little over two years.

It seems foolish to finalize the draft guidance, or any of FDA's other food labeling initiatives, until the next edition of the Dietary Guidelines is released. Maybe the new guidelines will be more cheese-friendly.

Global Dairy Trade Price Index Climbs 4.4%; Majority Of Product Prices Rise

Auckland, New Zealand—The price index on this week's semi-monthly Global Dairy Trade (GDT) dairy commodity auction increased 4.4 percent from the previous auction, held two weeks ago.

That's the third straight increase in the Global Dairy Trade price index.

In this week's auction, which featured 164 participating bidders and 114 winning bidders, prices were higher for skim milk powder, whole milk powder, butter, anhydrous milkfat and buttermilk; and lower for Cheddar cheese and lactose.

Results from this week's GDT commodity auction, with comparisons to the auction held two weeks ago, were as follows:

Cheddar cheese: The average winning price was \$3,853 per metric ton (\$1.75 per pound), down 4.8 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1 (November), \$3,963 per ton, down 4.2 percent; Contract 2 (December), \$3,812 per ton, down 5.9 percent; Contract 3 (January 2024), \$3,815 per ton, down 6.0 percent; Contract 4 (February), \$3,816 per ton, down 4.3 percent; Contract 5 (March), \$4,009 per ton, up 0.6 percent; and Contract 6 (April), \$3,951 per ton, down 5.4 percent.

Skim milk powder: The average winning price was \$2,558 per ton (\$1.16 per pound), up 6.6 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$2,527 per ton, up 6.8 percent; Contract 2, \$2,558 per ton, up 8.0 percent; Contract 3, \$2,558 per ton, up 6.0 percent; Contract 4, \$2,566 per ton, up 4.7 percent; and Contract 5, \$2,603 per ton, up 4.2 percent.

Whole milk powder: The average winning price was \$2,931 per ton (\$1.33 per pound), up 4.8 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$2,934 per ton, up 5.2 percent; Contract 2, \$2,908 per ton, up 5.0 percent; Contract 3, \$2,941 per ton, up 4.4 percent; Contract 4, \$2,983 per ton, up 4.6 percent; and Contract 5, \$3,030 per ton, up 3.5 percent.

Butter: The average winning price was \$4,806 per ton (\$2.18 per pound), up 1.3 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$4,960 per ton, up 4.5 percent; Contract 2, \$4,790 per ton, down 1.1 percent; Contract 3, \$4,795 per ton, up 1.7 percent; Contract 4, \$4,805 per ton, up 3.3 percent; Contract 5, \$4,825 per ton, up 3.4 percent; and Contract 6, \$4,820 per ton, up 2.0 percent.

Anhydrous milkfat: The average winning price was \$4,979 per ton (\$2.26 per pound), up 3.7 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$5,240 per

ton, up 11.1 percent; Contract 2, \$4,970 per ton, up 4.0 percent; Contract 3, \$4,934 per ton, up 3.8 percent; Contract 4, \$4,936 per ton, up 3.0 percent; Contract 5, \$5,040 per ton, up 4.1 percent; and Contract 6, \$5,088 per ton, up 3.5 percent.

Lactose: The average winning price was \$594 per ton (26.9 cents per pound), down 1.3 percent. That was for Contract 2.

Buttermilk powder: The average winning price was \$2,245 per ton (\$1.02 per pound), up 0.6 percent. Average winning prices were: Contract 1, \$2,345 per ton; Contract 2, \$2,215 per ton, up 0.9 percent; Contract 3, \$2,240 per ton, down 1.5 percent; Contract 4, \$2,270 per ton, up 0.9 percent; and Contract 5, \$2,330 per ton, up 4.0 percent.

While the recent positive Global Dairy Trade auction results are welcome, global dairy prices remain low, according to Westpac New Zealand.

Whole milk powder prices have yet to fully make up the lost ground over August when prices fell 18 percent; prices remain around 5 percent below the level as of the end of July.

Looking over a longer period, whole milk powder prices sit at 16 percent below their five-year average, Westpac pointed out.

With that in mind, it's difficult to judge yet whether prices have fully turned a corner, Westpac added.

"To make that call we will need to see further price lifts over the remainder of the year. Indeed, the recent price rises may have much to do with the fact that low prices have brought buyers back to the market rather than any fundamental change or improvement

in global dairy demand," Westpac said.

ASB Bank noted that the GDT auction contract curve does point to a little bit more momentum for prices in the near term, with the latter dated contracts commanding a little bit of a premium over their near-term counterparts.

In general, ASB remains cautious on the outlook for the season.

After a bit of a blip last auction, there is still comparatively little sign of a return in purchases by China, something ASB has regarded as a precursor to any sustained recovery in prices, given its influence over global dairy demand.

All up, Westpac is retaining its 2023/24 milk price forecast at \$6.75 per kilogram of milk solids, while ASB is retaining its \$6.60 per kilogram of milk solids milk price forecast for the 2023/24 season.

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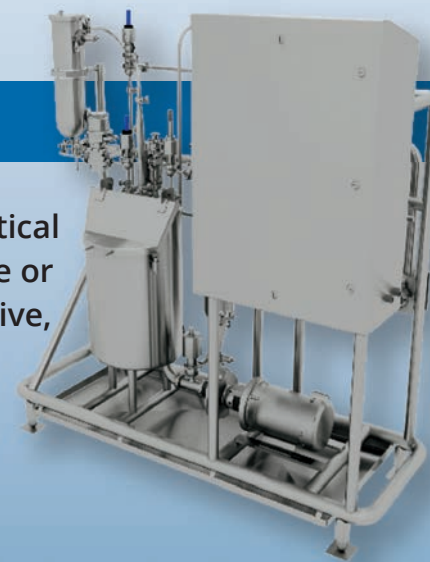


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Here's Where to Set Make Allowances

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Erin Taylor from USDA's Dairy Program ended the 70-minute cross examination with a gift.

"Mr. Umhoefer, from your position, with over 30 years of experience at your role in the dairy industry, where would you set the make allowance for cheese?" Taylor, the Director of Order Formulation and Enforcement, asked.

It was the sixth week of the 2023 National Federal Milk Marketing Order Pricing Formula Hearing and the time had finally arrived for Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association to present its proposal to the presiding Administrative Law Judge, USDA staff, lawyers and industry personnel gathered in a wedding event center in Carmel, Indiana.

More than 100 witnesses will likely testify before this hearing is complete (and when that will be is another story), each speaking aloud written testimony for the hearing stenographer and facing cross examination and redirect with no limits on time. The hearing plows on like a grain barge down the Mississippi, slow and unstoppable, the embodiment of the quiet power of democracy.

WCMA initiated this hearing, alongside International Dairy Foods Association, seeking a single change to milk pricing formulas: an update to the make allowances for Cheddar cheese,

butter, nonfat dry milk and dry whey – key to the pricing of all milk in the US and now woefully out of date. USDA was generous, accepting this proposal and 20 more from industry parties, and WCMA added the opportunity to speak against the complicating proposals to add the value of 640-pound Cheddar blocks or the value of Mozzarella to the price determination for protein.

Nearly every witness at the hearing has faced questions from lawyers and staff representing National Milk Producers Federation, International Dairy Foods Association, Select Milk Producers, Edge Cooperative, American Farm Bureau and others, but USDA staff always has the last word. Ms. Taylor's final question to WCMA was a gift – the chance to offer an open-ended opinion at how fresh milk should be priced.

"Well, it starts with having a goal," this WCMA staffer replied. (When hearing transcripts are released in a few months, it will be clear that this reporting is from recollection, not a recording.) So, to paraphrase and perhaps embellish on the rest of this answer:

There is no correct make allowance for Cheddar cheese or butter – any value USDA selects will be wrong, in the sense that every dairy plant faces different costs. So USDA's quest, after collecting

months of testimony, shouldn't be to seek the "right" make allowance values, their goal should be selecting values that attempt to achieve a goal.

The dairy industry spends a great deal of time, money and effort looking inward, quarreling to optimize a government pricing program that attempts to improve upon free market forces. In addition, labeling regulations, wastewater limits, cooperative law vs. proprietary business, static standards of identity and more issues sap energy from the true goal of a food industry: delighting consumers with delicious, nutritious and convenient choices.

The goal of make allowances should be to support a diverse spectrum of dairy manufacturers, large, medium and small, so that our industry can produce more than high-volume, low-cost commodity products. Specialty cheeses and butters, gourmet artisanal offerings, are the point of the marketing spear for dairy. These products elevate dairy to the timeless craft it has always been and excite consumers to buy foods made from real milk.

Dairy farmers and processors will thrive if USDA decides that make allowances should be just high enough to keep cutting-edge, smaller dairy manufacturers healthy. These craftsmen not only bring to consumers the amazing flavors and textures that make all of dairy something special, but they also partner with smaller dairy farms for their fresh milk. Healthy small processors offer a home to healthy smaller farms – including farms with progressive ideas in grazing, breeds and feeds.

The WCMA Board of Directors discussed how to approach this hearing – an association has so many voices. We concluded that the clearest path was to offer USDA the best available data on manufacturing costs. Real data from real dairy plants, large and small.

Dr. Mark Stephenson accepted and analyzed fresh cost data from manufacturers in a study executed in 2023. Dr. Bill Schiek looked at the gold standard, audited plant cost data the state of California gathered until 2016, and updated it with publicly available cost indices.

Several large manufacturers described soaring costs to produce dairy products and, bravely, Kim Heiman from Nasonville Dairy and Bob Wills from Cedar Grove Cheese laid open their ledgers on the witness stand, providing unfiltered data from not-so-large plants that make Cheddar.

With the goal of retaining a diverse, thriving dairy community, USDA can set new make allowances, and keep regulated milk pricing relevant into the future.™

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

50 YEARS AGO

Oct. 5, 1973: Juneau, WI—Ewald Jung, 72, owner-operator of the High Point Cheese Factory, died Oct. 1 after a short illness. Jung also served as a past secretary of the Southeastern Wisconsin Cheesemaker's Association, WCMA, and charter member of the Wisconsin Cheese Foundation.

Madison—If you took a second look at this week's Cheese Reporter, you might have noticed the change from letterpress to offset printing equipment. While the change has been discussed and looked forward to for years, it shouldn't be too drastic once the printing staff gets used to the new ways of putting things together.

25 YEARS AGO

Oct. 2, 1998: Minneapolis, MN—Four Midwest states are asking a full federal appeals court to rehear the Minnesota Milk Producers Association's challenge to the current Class I differential system in federal milk marketing orders.

Bismarck, ND—A change in North Dakota's milk delivery system is giving larger stores an advantage, some small grocers claim. Before Aug. 31, milk reached supermarkets through distributors contracted by large milk producers like Land O'Lakes and Cass Clay Creamery. Private haulers had been barred. Now that the North Dakota Milk Marketing Board sets minimum milk prices, private haulers are able to deliver milk to retailers.

10 YEARS AGO

Oct. 4, 2013: Washington—For the first time in 17 years, the federal government was partially shut down as the House and Senate, along with the White House, accused others of being at fault. At USDA, the contingency plan for close down procedures assumes some USDA activities are essential to protect life and property.

Madison—The WDE Championship Dairy Product Contest auction here this week raised a total of \$30,029. The Cheese & Butter Grand Champion, 43 pounds of Sartori Reserve Bellavitano Gold made by Sartori Co., Plymouth, earned \$3,360.

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FDA Further Modernizes Approach To Animal Biotech, Food For Animals

Silver Spring, MD—The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently announced that it is taking new steps to further modernize its approach to evaluating and supporting the development of innovative animal and veterinary products, to increase regulatory flexibility, predictability and efficiency.

The Animal and Veterinary Innovation Agenda released last month lists four objectives and details the supporting actions by FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) to foster product development and implement smart, risk-based approaches to regulating modern animal and veterinary products.

The new agenda applies to products like novel food ingredients that work solely in the animal's gut to increase nutritional efficiency and production; animal biotechnology products such as animal cell- and tissue-based products (ACTPs) and intentional genomic alterations (IGAs) in animals; cell-cultured animal food ingredients and more. It also aims to encourage the development of products for unmet human and animal needs, particularly to address the lack of targeted therapeutics designed and approved for use in animals.

"Novel technologies brought to the forefront in recent years have the potential to set a new course for the way veterinarians and food producers support human and animal health. The FDA is committed to helping developers bring products that enhance public health, animal health, and food production to market while providing consumers with confidence that they meet the FDA's high standards," said FDA Commissioner Robert M. Califf.

FDA is planning to reassess its animal and veterinary product review programs and processes and adjust them, where appropriate, to account for the diversity of products developed using innovative technologies. For example, the agency has been working with Congress on new legislative authority that will introduce new approval pathways for zootechnical animal food substances (novel food ingredients that function in the gut of the animal to affect qualities like feed efficiency, reduced waste output, or reduced pathogens in food products made from the animal).

Modernizing product review procedures will allow the agency to focus on specific questions raised by products developed using new and emerging technologies, bringing clarity and predictability to the review process,

FDA said. Optimizing regulatory processes for smart regulation will ensure that the US remains confident in FDA's longstanding safety evaluation standards and enjoys the benefits of cutting-edge innovation in veterinary medicine and food production.

Recognizing that the health of people, animals and their shared environment is intertwined, a concept known as One Health, this effort also focuses on connecting experts on converging science across the agency. That's why the agenda commits CVM to continue its work with the agency's Office of the Chief Scientist – a cross-cutting office that

supports the research, science and innovation that underpins FDA's regulatory mission – in order to leverage and expand scientific expertise across the agency workforce.

"This exciting time of technological advancement is an opportunity to continue modernizing our approaches in ways that both support and spur innovation," said CVM Director Tracey Forfa.

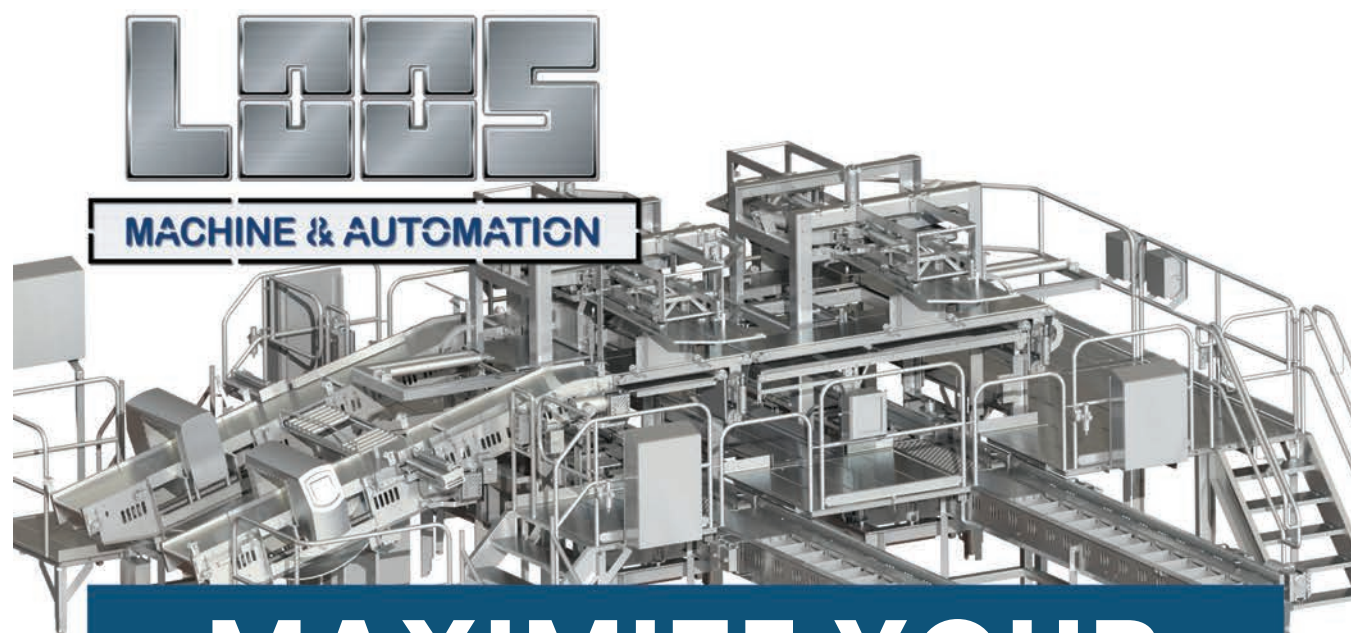
As part of this agenda, the agency is expanding the popular Veterinary Innovation Program (VIP) to include additional features for developers of ACTPs and IGAs in their interactions with FDA.

The expanded program, VIP Plus, is planned to premiere later this year. It includes new tools that will assist product develop-

ment and continually improve the efficiency of FDA's review process by tailoring data requirements to answer risk questions specific to the product.

The agenda also includes plans to continue investment in data modernization, to re-imagine CVM's vision for its science program, and scan for emerging technologies and scientific developments that may eventually lead to new kinds of animal and veterinary products.

Anticipating potential innovations will allow the agency to proactively seek information and adapt its review processes to evaluate the questions raised by new technologies and the products they generate, reducing delays in first-of-kind product reviews, FDA stated.

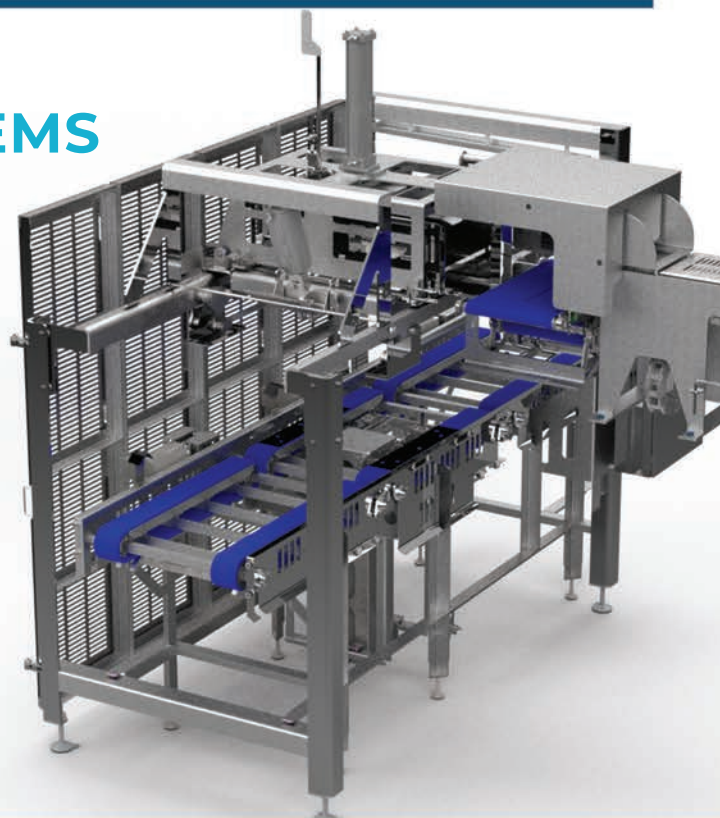


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Cheese Output Falls

(Continued from p. 1)

4.7 percent; Illinois, 5.3 million pounds, up 0.4 percent; and New Jersey, 5.2 million pounds, down 0.9 percent. Cheese production in all other states totaled 199.4 million pounds, down 6.3 percent from August 2022.

American-type cheese production totaled 458.8 million pounds, up 0.3 percent from August 2022. American-type cheese output during the January-August period totaled 3.84 billion pounds, up 1.9 percent from the same period last year.

Production of American-type cheese in the states broken out by NASS, with comparisons to August 2022, was: Wisconsin, 90.3 million pounds, up 3.1 percent; Minnesota, 56.5 million pounds, down 2.0 percent; California, 46.0 million pounds, up 2.3 percent; Iowa, 15.9 million pounds, down 3.8 percent; and New York, 12.2 million pounds, down 0.1 percent.

American-type cheese output in all other states totaled 237.9 million pounds, down 0.3 percent from August 2022.

Cheddar production totaled 314.4 million pounds, down 1.2 percent from August 2022. Cheddar output during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 2.7 billion pounds, up 1.7 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Production of other American-type cheeses during August totaled 144.4 million pounds, up 3.5 percent from August 2022.

Italian & Other Cheeses

August production of Italian-type cheese totaled 483.9 million pounds, down 0.6 percent from August 2022. Italian cheese output during the January-August period totaled 3.88 billion pounds, down 0.8 percent from a year earlier.

Production of Italian cheese with comparisons to August 2022, was: Wisconsin, 143.0 million pounds, up 4.0 percent; California, 135.2 million pounds, down 1.2 percent; New York, 30.0 million pounds, up 5.1 percent; Pennsylvania, 22.6 million pounds, up 2.3 percent; Minnesota, 10.1 million pounds, up 1.3 percent; and New Jersey, 2.7 million pounds, down 0.4 percent.

Mozzarella totaled 380.4 million pounds, down 0.9 percent from August 2022. Mozzarella output during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 3.06 billion pounds, down 0.3 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Production of other Italian cheese varieties, with comparisons to August 2022, was: Parmesan, 39.2 million pounds, up 2.5 percent; Provolone, 32.8 million pounds, up 1.6 percent; Ricotta, 20.9 million pounds, up 2.2 percent; Romano, 3.6 million pounds, down 23.8 percent; and other Italian types 7.0 million pounds, down 1.8 percent.

August production of other cheese varieties, with comparisons to August 2022, was:

Swiss cheese: 27.4 million pounds, down 1.6 percent.

Cream and Neufchatel: 91.0 million pounds, down 6.2 percent.

Brick and Muenster: 18.8 million pounds, up 21.1 percent.

Hispanic cheese: 35.5 million pounds, up 1.3 percent.

Blue and Gorgonzola: 7.9 million pounds, up 7.0 percent.

Feta: 13.2 million pounds, up 5.8 percent.

Gouda: 5.6 million pounds, up 32.2 percent.

All other types of cheese: 12.5 million pounds, down 5.7 percent.

Whey Products Output

August production of dry whey, human, totaled 79.8 million pounds, up 13.4 percent from

August 2022. Manufacturers' stocks of dry whey, human, at the end of August totaled 85.9 million pounds, up 31.5 percent from a year earlier and 2.4 percent higher than a month earlier.

Lactose production, human and animal, totaled 92.2 million pounds, down 1.0 percent from August 2022. Manufacturers' stocks of lactose, human and animal, at the end of August totaled 143.0 million pounds, down 10.4 percent from a year earlier and down 2.9 percent from a month earlier.

Production of whey protein concentrate, human, during August totaled 39.0 million pounds, up 14.5 percent from August 2022. Manufacturers' stocks of WPC, human, at the end of August totaled 80.6 million pounds, up 13.8 percent from a year earlier but down 3.3 percent from a month earlier.

August production of whey protein isolates totaled 9.4 million pounds, down 10.8 percent from August 2022. Manufacturers' stocks of WPI at the end of August totaled 21.3 million pounds, up 3.6 percent from a year earlier but down 2.8 percent from a month earlier.

Butter & Dry Milk Products

Butter production totaled 140.0 million pounds, down 2.1 percent from August 2022. Butter output during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 1.45 billion pounds, up 3.6 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Regional butter production, with comparisons to August 2022, was: West, 74.9 million pounds, down 10.4 percent; Central, 55.1 million pounds, up 14.9 percent; and Atlantic, 10.0 million pounds, down 12.5 percent.

Nonfat dry milk production totaled 113.4 million pounds, down 15.2 percent from August

2022. NDM output during the January-August period totaled 1.39 billion pounds, up 0.2 percent from the same period last year.

Manufacturers' shipments of nonfat dry milk totaled 131.7 million pounds, down 18.1 percent from August 2022. Manufacturers' stocks of NDM at the end of August totaled 266.6 million pounds, down 14.8 percent from a year earlier and 6.7 percent lower than a month earlier.

Production of other dry milk products, with comparisons to August 2022, was: skim milk powder, 57.2 million pounds, down 12.7 percent; dry whole milk, 8.0 million pounds, down 33.7 percent; milk protein concentrate, 13.7 million pounds, down 5.0 percent; and dry buttermilk, 5.7 million pounds, down 33.6 percent.

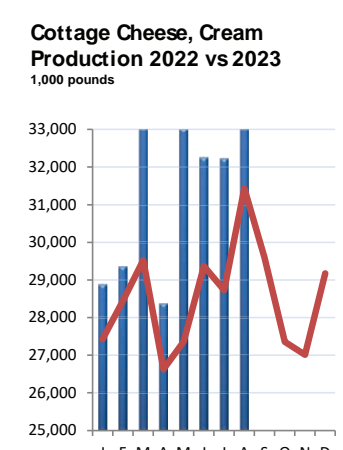
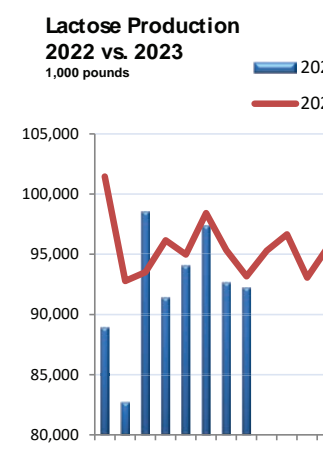
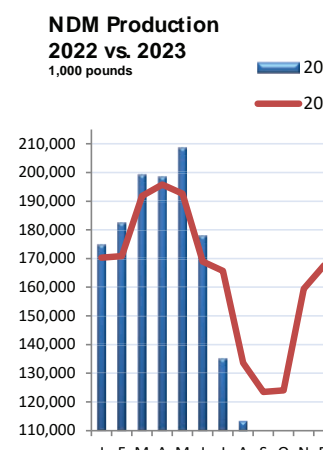
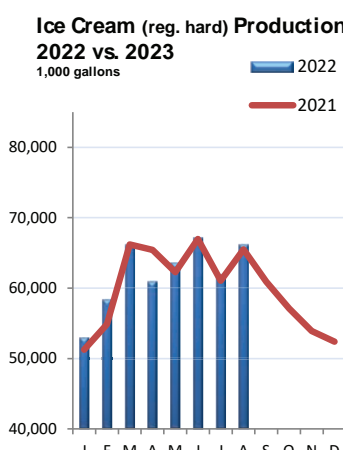
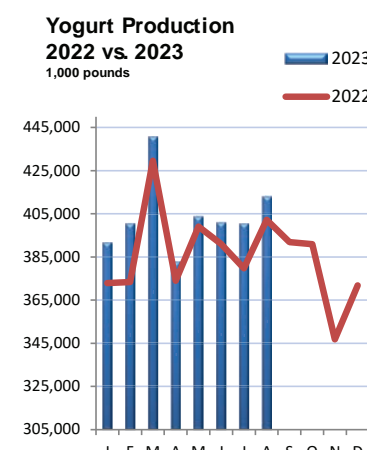
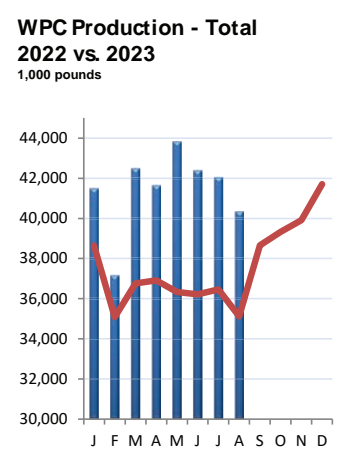
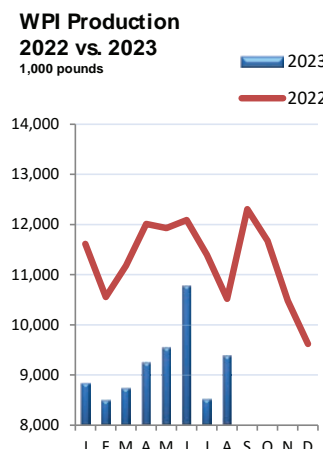
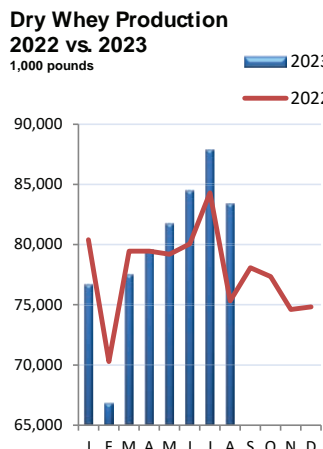
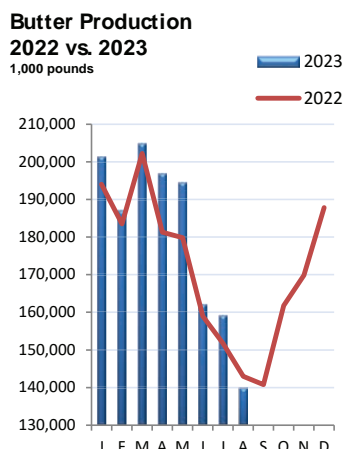
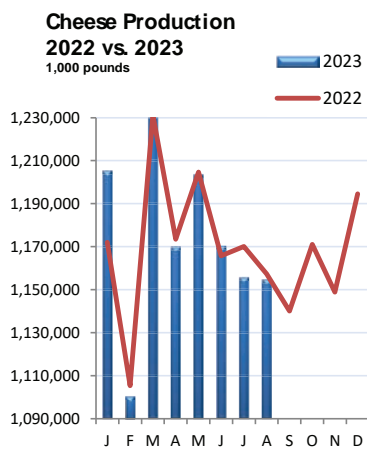
Yogurt & Other Dairy Products

August production of yogurt, plain and flavored, totaled 413.2 million pounds, up 2.7 percent from August 2022. Yogurt output during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 3.23 billion pounds, up 3.5 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Sour cream production totaled 124.1 million pounds, down 2.3 percent from August 2022. Sour cream output during the January-October period totaled 979.7 million pounds, up 0.4 percent from a year earlier.

Cream cottage cheese production totaled 33.3 million pounds, up 6.1 percent from August 2022. Lowfat cottage cheese output totaled 31.6 million pounds, up 15.0 percent from a year earlier.

Production of regular, hard ice cream during August totaled 66.2 million gallons, up 1.1 percent from August 2022. Lowfat ice cream production totaled 40.5 million gallons, down 5.2 percent from August 2022.



FDA Updates Infant Formula Compliance Program

Silver Spring, MD—The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has updated its infant formula compliance program for FDA investigators, laboratory analysts, and compliance officers.

The compliance program is designed to comprehensively outline FDA's approach for inspections, sample collection, sample analysis, and compliance activities to help ensure that infant formula products in the US food supply are safe and nutritious.

In September 2022, FDA released its internal evaluation of the infant formula response which recommended that the agency review and update its infant formula compliance program to ensure that it reflected the latest science on Cronobacter and offered consistency and clarity on FDA's inspection and compliance activities. In November 2022, as part of the Cronobacter prevention strategy, the agency committed to completing this review and update.

FDA has now published its updated compliance program, which builds on lessons learned over the last several years to elaborate on the agency's approaches for inspections, sampling, laboratory analysis, and imported infant formula products.

For example, updates include instructions for annual environmental sampling of Cronobacter and Salmonella at powdered infant formula facilities.

The compliance program provides instruction for FDA notification should a sample test positive for Cronobacter or Salmonella, or if a sample is found to have nutrients that are above or below required levels per the FDA's infant formula regulation.

The compliance program also includes instructions for how product or environmental positives identified during records reviews should be immediately escalated to the appropriate subject matter expert within FDA's Human Foods Program, FDA noted.

More generally, additional background on the risks associated with Salmonella and Cronobacter in infant formula products, and the conditions that could lead to environmental contamination within the manufacturing facilities, is included in the updated compliance program. In addition, it further elaborates on new infant formula related requirements that were included in the Food and Drug Omnibus Reform Act of 2022.

For more information, visit www.fda.gov.

FARM Program Launches Enhanced Biosecurity Initiative

Arlington, VA—The FARM Program announced the launch of FARM Biosecurity-Enhanced, a new aspect of the FARM Biosecurity Program that includes training and an online database.

FARM includes an online database to develop and securely store dairy producers' enhanced biosecurity plans (EBP) and an online training that helps users write those plans. FARM has also developed a FARM Biosecurity-Enhanced Biosecurity Prep Guide and Database User Guide to complement these tools.

Stronger, or enhanced, levels of biosecurity will be needed to protect cattle against the highly contagious foot-and-mouth disease

(FMD) found in two-thirds of the world, the FARM Program noted. One FMD case in the US could shut down movement across the country of livestock and their products for at least 72 hours.

FARM incorporates the on-farm elements of the Secure Milk Supply Plan for Continuity of Business. The Secure Milk Supply (SMS) Plan for Continuity of Business was designed to help the dairy industry prepare for an FMD outbreak by providing producers with the tools to develop an enhanced biosecurity plan.

The FARM Biosecurity-Enhanced database not only securely stores the EBP plans, but with permission will share the

plans with state animal health officials for approval to speed up issuing a movement permit in the event of an FMD outbreak.

FARM Biosecurity has two parts: Everyday Biosecurity for common disease threats and Enhanced Biosecurity for highly contagious foreign animal diseases. The FARM Biosecurity resources aim to protect dairy cattle, build resiliency, and future business continuity opportunities for the dairy industry.

National Milk Producers Federation and the National Dairy FARM Program thanked the USDA National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program for funding the FARM Biosecurity initiative through a cooperative agreement and Dr. Danelle Bickett-Weddle with Preventalytics.

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August Class IV Volume On Seven Federal Orders: 690.9 Million Pounds

Washington—The volume of milk pooled in Class IV in August on the seven federal milk marketing orders that pay dairy farmers a producer price differential (PPD) totaled 690.9 million pounds, down 138.9 million pounds from July and down 54.8 million pounds from August 2022, according to the uniform price announcements for those orders.

That's the lowest Class IV volume for those seven orders since the California order became the seventh order to pay farmers a PPD starting in November 2018. The previous low, 742.5 million pounds, was set in October 2022.

Class IV volume on the seven orders has now been under 1.0 billion pounds for three straight months.

Class III volume on the seven orders in August totaled 7.20 billion pounds, down 88.7 million pounds from July but up 94.0 million pounds from August 2022.

All seven orders reported positive PPDs in August; those PPDs ranged from 16 cents per hundredweight on the Upper Midwest order to \$2.24 per hundred on the Northeast order.

On the California order in August, Class III volume totaled 1.53 billion pounds, up 64 million pounds from July and up 247 million pounds from August 2022.

That's the largest monthly volume of milk ever pooled in Class III on the California order. The previous high, 1.49 billion pounds, was set in May of this year.

Class III utilization on the California order in August was 73.0 percent, up from 72.8 percent in July and up from 69.7 percent in

August 2022. Class III utilization on the order has now been above 72 percent for four consecutive months.

August Class IV volume on the California order totaled 45.2 million pounds, down 42 million pounds from July and down 1.9 million pounds from August 2022. Class IV utilization was 2.2 percent, down from 4.3 percent in July and down from 2.6 percent in August 2022.

A total of 1.2 billion pounds of milk was pooled on the California order in August, up 85 million pounds from July and up 258 million pounds from August 2022.

Class III volume on the Upper Midwest order in August totaled 2.6 billion pounds, up 2.7 million pounds from July but down 87 million pounds from August 2022.

Class III utilization on the Upper Midwest order was 92.9 percent, down from 93.0 percent in July but up from 92.7 in August 2022. That's the fourth straight month in which utilization on the order topped 92.0 percent.

Class IV volume on the Upper Midwest order totaled 9.5 million pounds, down 8.8 million pounds from July and down 6.3 million pounds from August 2022. Class IV utilization was 0.3 percent, down from 0.6 percent in July and down from 0.5 in August 2022.

A total of 2.8 billion pounds of milk was pooled on the Upper Midwest order, up 5.3 million pounds from July but down 99 million pounds from August 2022.

On the Southwest order in August, Class III volume totaled 729.3 million pounds, up 7.0 million pounds from July but down

32.0 million pounds from August 2022. Class III utilization was 64.9 percent, down from 66.6 percent in July but up from 64.3 percent in August 2022.

Class IV volume on the Southwest order was 3.8 million pounds, down 8.0 million pounds from July and down 19.4 million pounds from August 2022. Class IV utilization was 0.3 percent, down from 1.1 percent in July and down from 2.0 percent in August 2022.

In August, a total of 1.12 billion pounds of milk was pooled on the Southwest order, up 39.4 million pounds from July but down 60.9 million pounds from August 2022.

Class III volume on the Central order in August totaled 623.3 million pounds, down 88.9 million pounds from July and down 89 million pounds from August 2022. Class III utilization was 51.4 percent, down from 56.6 percent in July and down from 54.3 percent in August 2022.

August Class IV volume on the Central order totaled 143.4 million pounds, unchanged from July but up 4.9 million pounds from August 2022. Class IV utilization was 11.8 percent, up from 11.4 percent in July and up from 10.6 percent in August 2022.

A total of 1.21 billion pounds of milk was pooled on the Central order in August, down 45 million pounds from July and down 98.5 million pounds from August 2022.

On the Mideast order, Class III volume totaled 695.1 million pounds, down 55.6 million pounds from July but up 27.5 million pounds from August 2022. Class III utilization was 49.9 percent, down from 53.8 percent in July and down from 51.3 percent in August 2022.

Class IV volume on the Mideast order in August totaled 42.2

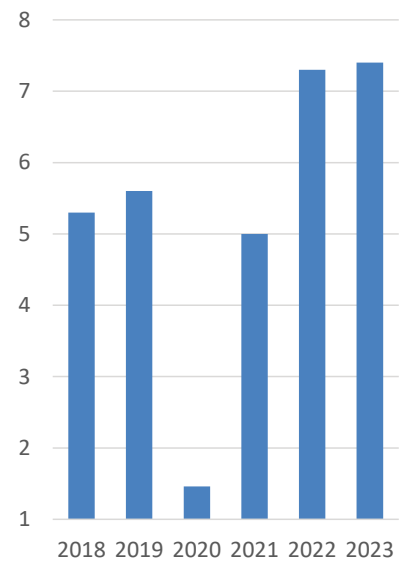
million pounds, down 12.8 million pounds from July but up 21.9 million pounds from August 2022. Class IV utilization was 3.0 percent, down from 3.9 percent in July but up from 1.5 percent in August 2022.

In August, a total of 1.39 billion pounds of milk was pooled on the Mideast order, down 37,144 pounds from July but up 93.4 million pounds from August 2022.

Volume of Milk

Pooled in Class III: August

billions of pounds; all 11 orders;
California order wasn't in effect in Aug 2018



Class III volume on the Northeast order was 687.1 million pounds, down 20.9 million pounds from July but up 6.7 million pounds from August 2022. Class III utilization was 29.7 percent, down from 30.5 percent in July and down from 30.1 percent in August 2022.

August Class IV volume on the Northeast order totaled 326.7 million pounds, down 51.6 million pounds from July and down 28.3 million pounds from August 2022. Class IV utilization was 14.1 percent, down from 16.3 percent in July and down from 15.7 percent in August 2022.

A total of 2.31 billion pounds of milk was pooled on the Northeast order, down 12.6 million pounds from July but up 46.5 million pounds from August 2022.

In August, Class III volume on the Pacific Northwest order totaled 330.4 million pounds, up 2.9 million pounds from July and up 21.8 million pounds from August 2022. Class III utilization was 53.0 percent, up from 52.8 percent in July and up from 49.9 percent in August 2022.

Class IV volume on the Pacific Northwest order in August totaled 120.2 million pounds, down 15.6 million pounds from July but down 25.7 million pounds from August 2022. Class IV utilization was 19.3 percent, down from 21.9 percent in July and down from 23.6 percent in August 2022.

A total of 623.3 million pounds of milk was pooled on the Pacific Northwest order, up 2.4 million pounds from July and up 4.4 million pounds from August 2022.



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Global Framework For Regenerative Agriculture Launched By SAI Platform

Geneva, Switzerland—SAI Platform last week announced the launch of the “Regenerating Together” global framework for regenerative agriculture.

SAI Platform is a non-profit network of over 170 agri-food industry members worldwide. Working together, SAI Platform members are advancing sustainable agricultural practices through pre-competitive collaboration.

SAI Platform’s purpose is to harness the collaborative power of its members to accelerate the widespread adoption of sustainable agriculture practices and the transformation to sustainable food systems.

The Regenerating Together framework is designed for practical use at farm-level to drive farmers’ transition to regenerative agriculture. It will allow crops, dairy and beef farmers anywhere in the world to work with supply chain partners to achieve measurable regenerative agriculture outcomes and enables the industry to translate the often-ambiguous concepts of regenerative agriculture into action at farm level, according to SAI Platform.

Also, the framework will be integrated into SAI Platform’s existing industry solutions, including the Sustainable Dairy Partnership (SDP), the Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA) and the European Roundtable for Beef Sustainability (ERBS).

Developed in consultation with farmers, academics and NGOs, the framework will assess, monitor and verify farm practices to aid the global transition towards regenerative agriculture. SAI Platform’s Regenerating Together program identifies four key areas of impact — water, soil, biodiversity and climate — and has devised four steps through which to enact the framework: risk screening assessment, outcome selection, the adoption of principles and practices and the monitoring and assessment of progress.

“Our farmer owners are experts for their farm in many aspects regarding soil, water and biodiversity and many are already practicing regenerative farming practices within their individual context,” commented Jo Lawrence, senior manager, agriculture sustainability global concepts, Arla Foods, and founding member of Regenerating Together.

“What they need from us and the wider industry to accelerate their efforts is an agreed-upon science-based framework for regenerative farming as a concept and a way to measure the direct impact and that is exactly what the Regenerating Together program

offers,” Lawrence continued. “As one of its founding members, we at Arla Foods are excited to drive forward the future of regenerative agriculture.”

“The Regeneration Together Framework is the result of strong collaboration between the food and beverage industry and farmer cooperatives,” said Antonia Wanner, group head of ESG strategy and deployment, Nestle, and founding member of SAI Platform and the Regenerating Together program. “It delivers clear industry alignment on the definition of regenerative agriculture and its principles, and how to measure its outcomes.

“In essence, it’s a pragmatic tool that can help farmers transition to regenerative agriculture

and will help the industry to scale-up its efforts,” Wanner added. “We’re pleased to contribute to this Framework alongside other partners and we look forward to continuing to work with SAI Platform and its members as we look to build more resilient agricultural systems over the long-term.”

“SAI Platform’s ‘Regenerating Together’ program has grown from the industry recognizing that we must evolve our approach to sustainable agriculture, to an agreement that we need to drive measurable outcomes to create a resilient food supply chain,” said Eric Soubeiran, vice president business operations sustainability, Unilever.

“As individual organizations, we have set targets to implement regenerative agricultural practices, but this new framework brings leaders together to work towards one common commit-

ment,” Eric Soubeiran continued. “We believe this framework sets a new standard for regenerative agriculture globally, whilst providing the flexibility that’s needed at farm level.”

“SAI Platform’s Regenerating Together framework is an exciting opportunity to drive outcomes and further build collaboration across the food and agriculture industry to make a more resilient, sustainable food system,” said Katherine Teague, group ESG director, ABF Sugar, SAI Platform member and founding member of the Regenerating Together program.

The Sustainable Dairy Partnership system was developed through a multi-stakeholder process that included dairy processors, industry associations, and dairy buyers. It was created with the goal of driving continuous improvement in dairy sustainability.

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Class I Issues

(Continued from p. 1)

adjuster monthly using a 24-month look-back period with a 12-month lag, i.e., the preceding 13-to-36-month period.

The most important point to consider in weighing MIG's Proposal 15 versus National Milk Producers Federation's (NMPF) Proposal 13 is that each would return roughly the same amount of money to farmers, Keefe testified. Both proposals provide base Class I skim milk prices at "very similar levels" and thus have similar effects on Class I milk prices and uniform producer prices in turn.

MIG's Proposal 15 has two benefits that are lacking from competing proposals, which are borne from its features of a year-long lag and rolling average adjuster over time, Keefe said. First, MIG's proposal allows for Class I processors to hedge. And second, the 24-month look-back stabilizes the price by moving gradually.

Jacob Schuelke, CFO and head of milk procurement for Crystal Creamery, a MIG member, also testified in support of Proposal 15.

"We support the MIG proposal because it is a win-win position that is revenue neutral to the 'higher of' formula and it also allows for the ability to manage price risk," Schuelke said.

Tim Doelman, CEO of fairlife, llc, another MIG member, also testified in support of MIG's Proposal 15. He also stated that the proposal is a "win-win," in that it allows processors to hedge and results in similar financial results for farmers as they would get under a return to the "higher of."

Chuck Turner, president of Turner Dairy Farms, a MIG member, testified in support of Proposal 15, saying the proposed base Class I skim milk formula "would protect dairy farmers from future unintended and unanticipated losses like those they experienced primarily due to COVID pandemic supply and demand disruptions, while maintaining the benefits of that formula for processing."

Michael Newell, sales director for HP Hood LLC, another MIG member, requested that USDA give its "utmost consideration" to Proposal 15 "in order to create a more stable, predictable price mover that continues to allow for Class I hedging." Hood also favors the International Dairy Foods Association's (IDFA) Proposal 14 if USDA finds that to be a better alternative.

IDFA's Proposal 14

Mike Brown, IDFA's chief economist, testified on why USDA should adopt IDFA Proposal 14, which would amend the current Class I mover, and should reject the Class I mover amendments proposed in Proposals 13, 16, 17, 18 and 19.

While IDFA prefers its own Class I mover proposal, MIG's Proposal 15 would also be acceptable should USDA prefer it, Brown said.

IDFA's Proposal 14, dubbed "the Floored Class I Mover," will increase the Class I milk price

over the current "average of plus 74 cents Class I mover and usually more than NMPF Proposal 13's proposed "higher of" Class I mover, while preserving the "critical goal" of enabling hedging, Brown said.

Brown explained how IDFA's Floored Class I Mover would work. First, 74 cents would be the minimum amount added each month to the simple average of the Class III and Class IV advanced price. This would be the case even in those months in which the Class I skim milk price (and thus payments to dairy farmers) would have been lower if based on the old "higher of" system.

Second, there would be a "look back and make whole" process, Brown continued. If over the two prior 12-month periods from August through July adding 74 cents to the simple average of the Class III and Class IV advanced price resulted in a lower Class I skim price than would have resulted had the Class I skim price been based upon the old "higher of" Class I mover, then the Class I mover would increase to be equal to the difference between the simple average of the advanced Class III and Class IV price over those two prior 12-month periods.

Edge, AFBF Proposals

Marin Bozic, representing Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, testified in support of Proposals 16, 17 and 18.

Proposal 16, submitted by Edge, seeks to change the base Class I skim milk price to the announced Class III skim milk price, plus an adjuster. Proposal 17, also submitted by Edge, seeks to use the "higher of" the Class III skim milk price or the Class IV skim milk price to calculate the base Class I skim milk price.

These proposals are "mutually exclusive," Bozic noted. Adopting Proposal 16 would preclude Proposal 17 from being implemented and vice versa.

Edge's "strong preference" is for Proposal 16, because the proposal is "best suited to balance the interests of dairy producers, dairy processors and consumers of dairy products," Bozic said.

Proposal 18, submitted by the American Farm Bureau Federation, seeks to eliminate the advanced pricing of Class I milk and components, and Class II skim milk and components.

Roger Cryan, AFBF's chief economist, explained that, in AFBF Proposal 18, the Class II skim milk price would be equal to the Class IV skim milk price plus the Class II differential. The Class II nonfat solids price would be equal to the Class IV nonfat solids price plus one-hundredth of the Class II differential.

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• See **Class I Issues**, p. 11

Class I Issues

Continued from p. 10

The Class I skim milk price would be the higher of the Class III or Class IV skim milk price plus the Class I differential, Cryan noted. And the Class I butterfat price would be equal to the butterfat price plus one-hundredth of the Class I differential.

Advanced pricing and the “average of” Class I price formula are two of the largest contributors to class price misalignments in federal order markets, leading to negative producer price differentials (PPDs) and milk being depooled, when a manufacturer faces Class III or IV prices that are higher than the market’s uniform price, Cryan said.

Given the information and risk management resources available today, AFBF supports announcing prices for all four classes of milk at the end of the month to which they apply, Roger Cryan said.

Calvin Covington, testifying on behalf of Southeast Milk, Inc., with the support of NMPF, opposed the portions of Proposals 16, 17, and 18 which eliminate advanced pricing.

“The marginal benefit from eliminating advanced pricing does not exceed the marginal cost,” Covington said.

Increasing Class I Differentials

Peter Vitaliano, NMPF’s vice president, economic policy and market research, testified in support of Proposal 19, submitted by NMPF, which would increase the Class I differentials for all counties, parishes and cities of the 48 contiguous United States “to reflect the current costs of providing adequate supplies of fresh milk to fluid milk processing plants.”

Just as the make allowances are out of date, so, too, are the underlying cost assumptions embedded in the Class I differentials, Vitaliano said. Since the current Class I differentials were established, one of their key determinants, fuel costs and the basic per-mile costs of hauling, “have increased significantly.”

Other structural changes have increased both the costs and general availability of milk hauling, including increased road tolls, restrictive and variable road weight limits, labor shortages, and truck, trailer, tire, and replacement parts costs and shortages, as well as significant diesel fuel cost increases, Vitaliano continued.

“Driven by the increased cost of hauling milk per loaded mile, the cost per hundredweight per 100 miles has almost tripled since the current Class I differentials were established,” Vitaliano said. Compounding this greater expense, opportunities for reduc-

ing costs through backhauls have become more limited.

Taken together, milk transportation costs, producer production costs, and other factors have created a market environment in which the federal orders operate that is “antithetical” to the goals of the federal order system; that is, ensuring adequate supplies of milk for fluid processing, equitable treatment of producers and processors, and providing for the orderly marketing of milk, Vitaliano said.

NMPF’s proposal to address these multiple challenges and to help alleviate the economic stresses on milk marketers who have accepted the responsibility of supplying the marketplace with milk for Class I use is to update the adjusted Class I differentials

for every US county, parish and city, he explained.

The method NMPF followed to develop its proposed update to the Class I differentials follows the general process previously used during federal order reform, Vitaliano said. In brief, NMPF commissioned an update to the University of Wisconsin (previously Cornell University) national price surface model using 2021 model input data, including milk supplies, dairy product demand, cost of processing milk, and the cost of transporting milk and dairy products.

In all locations, the recommended regulated Class I differential surface increased versus the current regulated Class I differentials, Vitaliano noted. The tilt, or slope, of the price surface from

reserve supply points to Class I demand points has become steeper, and the geographic locations representing the reserve supply of milk have generally shifted toward western states.

Similar to the general nature of the existing Class I differential price surface, the updated price surface slopes from lower values in the Northwest and West, areas of reserve supply, with increasing values when moving toward the milk-deficit areas in the Southeast, he said.

Jeffrey Sims, secretary and chief market analysis officer of Lone Star Milk Producers, testified on behalf of NMPF in support of Proposal 19. He highlighted the “urgent need” for updating and improving the Class I differential surface.




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Funds Under Massachusetts Co-Packing Start-Up Grant Program Available

Montpelier, VT—The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC) has announced the availability of funds through the Massachusetts Co-Packing Start-Up Grant program.

This six-month grant program will provide funds for either dairy farmers located in Massachusetts forming a new partnership with a processor co-packer; or for a licensed dairy processor forming a new partnership with at least one Massachusetts dairy farmer to launch a farm-branded value-added product line.

Projects funded through this program will support dairy farmers or dairy processors who have sought assistance from a technical service provider to develop a co-packing business plan.

Having this plan in place is essential for funding to kickstart co-packing opportunities, the NE-DBIC noted. It should be ready for immediate implementation and outline the vision, goals, and

strategies for value-added production, along with details of the farmer-processor relationship.

As this grant program is focused on the development of value-added dairy products via co-packing, the applicant will be required to demonstrate a partnership with a farmer or with a processor.

Funded projects will be centered on continued technical assistance for value-added processing and production, professional marketing and branding services for the co-packed products, and/or equipment specific to value-added processing. All projects must include a viable plan that shows value-added production vision, goals, and include a description of any work that has taken place to implement processor start-up, including formalizing the farmer-processor relationship.

Dairy farmers in Massachusetts and licensed dairy processors are invited to apply for these grants. A total of \$130,000 in grant funds is available. Awards will range from \$15,000 to \$35,000 with a 25 percent match commitment.

The request for applications provides details on eligible project/applicants and application process. For details, email Ali Boochever, grants coordinator, at ali.boochever@vermont.gov.

Hundreds Gather To Celebrate 90 Years Of Rogue Creamery Cheese



Well-wishers and artisan cheese lovers gathered in Central Point, OR, last month to celebrate 90 years of award-winning cheese craftsmanship at Rogue Creamery.

Central Point, OR—Hundreds of visitors in the Pacific Northwest congregated here last month for Rogue Creamery's 90th anniversary celebration.

The three-day event kicked off Friday, Sept. 22 with the Artisan Corridor Block Party in downtown Central Point.

The creamery began in 1933 as a resource to support local dairy farmers during the Great Depression.

Storied cheese maker Tom Vella transformed the small cooperative into a thriving cheese factory. Following World War II, he traveled to France to learn the art and tradition of cave-aged Blue cheese.

In the 1950s, Vella was among the first to introduce a cave-aged Blue cheese made west of the Mississippi.

His son, Ig Vella, "The Godfather of Artisan Cheese," took

over the business in 1998 before selling it to local entrepreneur David Gremmels in 2002.

Under Gremmels' leadership, Rogue Creamery has become a revered artisan cheese company. Gremmels retired from Rogue Creamery this past July.

The party featured the return of Rogue Creamery's "Vault Sale," offering a limited selection of slightly imperfect cheeses at discounted prices.

About 250 guests participated in the celebration, said Rogue marketing manager and cheese emissary Marguerite Merritt.

"Rogue Creamery enjoyed a wonderful weekend celebrating the company's 90 years of cheesemaking in Southern Oregon," Merritt said. "We're so thankful for all the team members, neighbors, friends, and partners who have made Rogue Creamery what it is today."

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DBI Initiatives

(Continued from p. 1)

and distribution, etc.

Some 50 percent of the initiative's funds should be used for subawards. Subawards are to be focused on modernization, specialization, and grazing of dairy farms, value chain and commodity innovations, and product development, packaging, and marketing of dairy products.

In Wisconsin, the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA), is a partnership between the Wisconsin Center for Dairy Research (CDR) and the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA). The DBIA's fiscal 2023 award is \$7.05 million.

Together with regional collaborators across 11 Midwest states the DBIA provides access to expertise, resources and insights to support dairy business innovation.

The DBIA 2023 project will expand the scope of the previous programs to create a sustainable, reproducible model that promotes business innovation within the dairy industry. This 2023 project's "Outreach" theme continues to build upon the previous grant infrastructures and successful technical assistance programs enabling dairy farmers and processors to get their ideas off the ground, into the market, and grow their business.

This will be achieved via the following goals: provide assistance to dairy processors in their efforts to add value to their milk; increase the mentorship support for the region, focusing on entities in the development and growth of their efforts by expanding technical assistance across marketing, financial planning, and technical expertise; and continue to address

industry issues with a range of dedicated, time-limited projects whose objectives are aligned with the DBI Initiatives and whose results will be shared.

The DBIA will continue to work with collaborators as it develops its programs with the potential for scalable application across the US.

The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC), whose fiscal 2023 award is \$7.05 million, will focus on the delivery of high-value, high-impact programming to benefit the dairy sector across the region, including 11 states (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont).

Opportunities are focused on farm and processor viability, with modernization, innovation, and climate-forward strategies at the forefront. The NE-DBIC's regional approach with intentional collaboration is developing trust, multistate solutions, and benefits beyond the direct grantee.

Grant-funded activities are focused in three primary areas: farm investments, processing investments, and dairy supply chain research and development.

The funding in this project builds on previous opportunities that resonated across the dairy community, including on-farm milk storage and handling, food safety improvements, farm modernization, and processor innovation. New areas of focus include a regional economic study to understand the impact of dairy across New England, research and development of a novel farm production strategy, and investment in critical regional supply chain resources.

Expected outcomes include job creation and maintenance, increased sales through existing or new market channels, new partnerships that result in higher profits, expanded infrastructure, and increased utilization of regional milk.

The NE-DBIC also measures outcomes related to subrecipient education, satisfaction, and outlook.

The Southeast Dairy Business Innovation Initiative (SDBII), hosted by the University of Tennessee, whose fiscal 2023 award is \$7.05 million, will continue to provide support to the value-added and conventional dairy industry across 12 Southeast states (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia).

The SDBII has created a network which supports understanding: value-added dairy opportunities (animal husbandry and farm sustainability); dairy finances and decision-support tools; food safety and product innovation projects; marketing and training tools; and leadership and workforce development.

This project will focus on expanded and new initiatives around animal husbandry and farm sustainability, dairy finances

and decision-support tools, and leadership and workforce development.

This furthers the SDBII's overarching goal of creating a holistic support system, benchmarks, and resources across all aspects of the dairy industry.

The Pacific Coast Coalition at Fresno State, which was awarded \$1.84 million, supports dairy businesses across six states (Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington).

The fiscal 2023 project amplifies and extends the dairy business subawards, technical assistance, and coalition building initiated in Phases I, II, and III to stimulate regional dairy innovation by assisting dairy businesses in developing higher value uses for their milk, diversifying their markets and income, realizing increased returns, and training their workforce.

Following the previously established models of investing in human and targeted equipment capacity, the PCC-DBII furthers its capabilities in organizing and providing technical assistance in multiple modalities, languages, and locations as well as investing in the professional development pipeline of future dairy science employees/leaders.

For more, visit www.usda.gov/services/grants/dbi.



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20th Annual WDE Championship Dairy Product Contest Auction Raises \$35K

Madison—The 20th installment of the World Dairy Expo (WDE) Championship Dairy Product Contest Auction took place here Tuesday, raising a total of just under \$35,000.

The Cheese & Butter Grand Champion, 20 pounds of Cello Artisan Parmesan Wheel made by Lake Country Dairy/Schuman Cheese, Turtle Lake, WI, was purchased by Nelson-Jameson for \$130.00 per pound, or \$2,600.00 total.

The Grade A Champion, 10 pounds of 2% White Milk made by Hiland Dairy Foods, Norman, OK, was purchased by Kerry Ingredients for \$25.00 per pound, or \$250.00 total.

The Grand Champion Ice Cream, five pounds of Raspberry Cheesecake Frozen Yogurt made by Country View Dairy, Hawkeye, IA, was purchased by Ag Source for \$300.00 per pound, or \$1,500.00 total.

The 96 first place winners received their trophies at the auction, and will have opportunities to market and promote their award-winning products.

A portion of the auction proceeds will be used to fund the Dr. Robert L. Bradley Scholarship, Wisconsin Dairy Products Association Scholarship and the MATC Culinary Foundation Scholarship.

"We're so grateful to this year's contest winners, bidders, and guests who attended; it was a wonderful evening of celebration and fellowship," said WDPA executive director Amy Winters.

WDPA will also use a portion of the proceeds to help sponsor the annual Collegiate Dairy Prod-

ucts Evaluation Contest. WDE Auction results are as follows:

AMPI

40 pounds of Cheddar made by AMPI, Jim Falls, WI, was purchased by Galloway Company for \$50.00 per pound, or \$2,000.00 total.

AMPI, Prairie Farms

dsm-firmenich purchased 46.5 pounds of Sharp Cheddar by AMPI, Jim Falls, WI; and Blue Veined Heat Treated Blue Cheese, Prairie Farms, Mindoro, WI. dsm-firmenich bought the cheese lot for \$82.50 per pound, or \$3,836.25 total.

Prairie Farms

Nelson-Jameson purchased 29.5 pounds of Swiss Cheese by Prairie Farms, Luana, IA; 4% Small Curd Cottage Cheese by Prairie Farms, Quincy, IL; Sea Salt Caramel Cream Cheese, Prairie Farms, Battle Creek, MI; and Johnson's Strawberry Ice Cream, Prairie Farms, Rockford, IL. Nelson-Jameson bought the lot for \$40.00 per pound, or \$1,180.00 total.

Joseph Gallo, Lactalis American

Nelson-Jameson also purchased 50 pounds of Monterey Jack made by Joseph Farms, Atwater, CA; and Whole Milk Ricotta by Lactalis American Group, Buffalo, NY. Nelson-Jameson bought the lot for \$30.00 per pound, or \$1,500.00 total.

Lactalis Group, Foremost Farms

34 pounds of Provolone SMK LPS by Foremost Farms, Clayton, WI; Reduced Fat Provolone by Foremost Farms, Appleton, WI; and Whole Milk Shred by Lactalis American Group, Nampa, ID,



Purchasing the Cheese & Butter Grand Champion cheese, made by Lake Country Dairy/Schuman Cheese, Turtle Lake, WI, in the WDE Championship Dairy Product Contest Auction, was Nelson-Jameson, Inc. In the above photo from left to right are: Reggie Way and Janine Mercer of Nelson-Jameson; Gary Gosda, Ryan Anderson, Justin Wilcox, Andy Koenig and Lisa Gosda, all with Lake Country Dairy; and Kevin Van Ornum of Nelson-Jameson.

was purchased by Masters Gallery for \$50.00 per pound, or \$1,700.00 total.

Pleasant Lane Farms, Global Foods, Old Home Foods

Dairy Connection purchased 24 pounds of 1976 Reserve Gouda by Pleasant Lane Farms, Latrobe, PA; Oven Smoked Gouda by Global Foods International, Schiller Park, IL; and Plain Whole Milk Yogurt by Hold Home Foods, Bloomington, MN. Dairy Connection purchased the lot of cheese in auction for \$42.00 per pound, or \$1,008.00 total.

Foremost Farms USA

42 pounds of Aged Cheddar made by Foremost Farms USA, Marshfield, WI, was purchased by Galloway Company for \$72.50 per pound, or \$3,045 total.

DFA, Lactalis, Crave Brothers

30 pounds of Whole Milk Mozz by Lactalis American Group,

Buffalo, NY; Marinated Fresh Mozz by Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, Waterloo, WI; and Unsalted Butter by DFA, Winnsboro, TX, was purchased by Cheese Market News for \$40 per pound, or \$1,200.00 total.

Southwest Cheese, Prairie Farms

Nelson-Jameson purchased 46 pounds of Monterey Jack with Red & Green Jalapeno Peppers by Southwest Cheese, Clovis, NM; and 2% Small Curd Cottage Cheese by Prairie Farms, Quincy, IL. Nelson-Jameson bought the lot for \$37.50 per pound, or \$1,725.00 total.

Lake County Dairy/Schuman Cheese, Pine River Pre-Pack, Hiland Dairy & Stewarts Shops

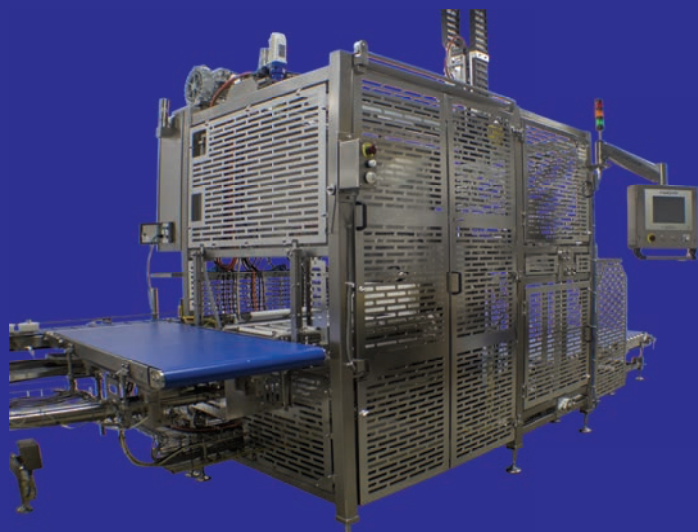
Vivolac Cultures Corporation purchased 44 pounds of Creamy Dill Fontal by Lake Country Dairy/Schuman Cheese; Mango Habanero Cold Pack Cheese Food by Pine River Pre-Pack, Newton, WI; Mango Drinkable Yogurt, Hiland Dairy, Chandler, OK; and Mango Dragon Fruit Sherbet, Stewarts Shops, Saratoga Spring, NY. Vivolac purchased the lot for \$32.50 per pound, or \$1,430.00 total.

WW Homestead Dairy, Lake Country Dairy/Schuman Cheese, Lactalis, Chocolate Shoppe

Vivolac Cultures Corporation also purchased 45 pounds of Garlic & Dill White Cheddar Curds by WW Homestead Dairy, Waukon, IA; Cello Mascarpone by Lake Country Dairy/Schuman Cheese; low moisture part skim (LMPS) String Cheese, Lactalis, Nampa, ID; and Vanilla Bean Ice Cream, Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream, Madison, WI. Vivolac Cultures purchased the lot for \$45.00 per pound, or \$2,025.00 total.

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Sartori, Hoards Dairyman Farm, Crave Brothers

40 pounds of Garlic & Herb BellaVitano by Sartori Company, Plymouth, WI; Port Salut Style Cheese, Hoards Dairyman Farm Creamery, Fort Atkinson, WI; and Chocolate Mascarpone by Crave Brothers Farmstead was purchased by Masters Gallery for \$40.00 per pound, or \$1,600.00.

Global Foods International, Central Valley Cheese

32 pounds of Oven Smoked Processed Gouda and Oven Smoked Gouda Cubes by Global Foods; and Feta made by Central Valley Cheese, Turlock, CA, was purchased by Novak's Cheese for \$14.00 per pound, or \$448.00 total.

Crave Brothers, Prairie Farms, Mexican Cheese Producers

17 pounds of Oaxaca by Crave Brothers Farmstead; Jalapeno Fiesta Dip by Prairie Farms, Fort Wayne, IN; and Cultured Sour Cream and Sour Cream Chipotle by Mexican Cheese Producers, Darlington, WI, was purchased by Darlington Dairy Supply for \$55.00 per pound, or \$935.00 total.

Saputo, Nordic Creamery, Lactalis

32 pounds of Montchevre Bucheron by Saputo Cheese, Wauwatosa, WI; Cinnamon Sugar Butter, Nordic Creamery, Westby, WI; and President Wee Brie Spreadable Cheese Wedges by Lactalis American Group, Merrill, WI, was purchased by AgSource for \$10.00 per pound, or \$320.00 total.

Kemps, Deerland Dairy, Continental Dairy, Upstate Niagara

20.5 pounds of Mixed Berry Fruit on the Bottom Cottage Cheese by Kemps, Farmington, MN; Whole Milk Strawberry Yogurt, Deerland Dairy, Freeport, IL; Grade AA Salted Butter, Continental Dairy, Littlefield, TX; and Bison Sour Cream, Upstate Niagara Co-op, Lancaster, NY, was purchased by Ever.Ag for \$62.50 per pound, or \$1,281.25 total.

Southwestern Grocers, Cabot Creamery, WW Homestead, DFA

28 pounds of Greek Blueberry Yogurt, Southeastern Grocers, Jacksonville, FL; Triple Cream Vanilla Bean Greek Yogurt, Cabot Creamery, Waitsfield, VT; Salted Whipped Butter, DFA, Winnsboro, TX; and White Cheddar Curds, WW Homestead Dairy, was purchased by Kelman Consulting for \$15.00 per pound, or \$420.00 total.

Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream, Old Home Foods

24 pounds of Blackberry Lemon Bar Ice Cream by Chocolate Shoppe; and Vanilla Whole Milk Yogurt by Hold Home Foods, was purchased by Darlington Dairy Supply for \$15.00 per pound, or \$360.00 total.

Southeastern Grocers, Hiland Dairy

20.5 pounds of Peach Drinkable Yogurt, Hiland Dairy, Chandler, OK; Lite Sour Cream, Hiland Dairy, Omaha, NE; and Plain Soft Cream Cheese Spread, Southeastern Grocers, Jacksonville, FL, was purchased by Hydrite for \$10.00 per pound, or \$200.50 total.

Prairie Farms, Old Home Foods, Belfonte Ice Cream

24.5 pounds of French Onion Dip, Prairie Farms, Fort Wayne, IN; Premium Vanilla Ice Cream, Belfonte Ice Cream, Kansas City, MO; French Vanilla Ice Cream, Prairie Farms, Rockford, IL; and Plain Greek Whole Milk Yogurt made by Old Home Foods was purchased by Jacoby & Company for \$65.00 per pound, or \$1,592.50 total.

Ruby Jewel, Stewarts Shops

11 pounds of Lemon Lavender Ice Cream Sandwiches by Ruby Jewel, Beaverton, OR; and Death By Chocolate Ice Cream, Stewarts Shops, was purchased by Cheese Market News for \$10.00 per pound, or \$110.00 total.

Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream, Belfonte Ice Cream

Darlington Dairy Supply also purchased 29 pounds of Chocolate Ice Cream by Chocolate Shoppe; and Cookies Ice Cream made by Belfonte Ice Cream, Kansas City, MO. Darlington Dairy Supply purchased the lot for \$12.50 per pound, or \$362.50 total.

Cedar Crest Ice Cream, Hudsonville Ice Cream

31 pounds of Big Muddy Ice Cream by Cedar Crest, Manitowoc, WI; and Triple Peanut Butter Cup Ice Cream, Hudsonville, Holland, MI, was purchased by



Purchasing Lot 18, which included products made by Crave Brothers Farmstead, Prairie Farms and Mexican Cheese Producers, was Darlington Dairy Supply. In the above photo from left to right are: Ruben Cabrera, Jose Aragon, and Joel Ortega of Mexican Cheese Producers; and Tory Thuli of Darlington Dairy Supply.

Novak's Cheese for \$30.00 per pound, or \$930.00 total.

Chocolate Shoppe, Gelatissimo

28 pounds of Mint Avalanche Ice cream by the Chocolate Shoppe, Madison; and Pistachio Gelato by Gelatissimo, Friendswood, TX; was purchased by Kelman Consulting for \$10.00 per pound, or \$280.00 total.

Chocolate Shoppe, Hudsonville, Southeastern Grocers

Ever.Ag also purchased 26 pounds of S'More to Love Ice Cream, Chocolate Shoppe; Seaside Caramel Ice Cream, Hudsonville Ice Cream; and Lowfat Blueberry Yogurt, Southeastern Grocers. Ever.Ag purchased the lot in auction for \$20.00 per pound, or \$520.00 total.

"Our winning companies brought so much positive energy and gratitude, you could feel the energy in the room," Winters said.

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer

Protection Secretary, Randy Romanski, also attended the event and commended the industry on their excellence.

"Wisconsin is known internationally for its innovative dairy industry, and our state's high-quality dairy products are exported to customers around the globe," Romanski said.

"It's fitting that a global gathering of the dairy industry, and one that celebrates the best dairy cows in North America, would partner with WDPA to recognize milk processors who craft champion-quality dairy products for all to enjoy," shares Laura Herschleb, World Dairy Expo General Manager.

"I am pleased that the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin hosts the Wisconsin Dairy Products Association's prestigious award ceremony to recognize the achievements of the country's award-winning dairy processors," Romanski added.



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Marieke Penterman Talks Importance Of Consumer Education, Master Plans

Middleton, WI—Holland native Marieke Penterman came to Wisconsin with a strong dairy background and a conventional appreciation for good cheese.

Nearly two decades later, she and her family have established a lucrative farmstead dairy operation in Thorp, WI, and Penterman has become one of the state's most accomplished and award-winning artisan cheese makers.

Penterman recently sat down with members of the International Dairy Deli Bakery Association (IDDBA) to talk about her introduction and ascendancy in the US specialty cheese market.

Born in the Netherlands and searching for an affordable space to start a dairy operation, the Penterman family investigated several different countries before deciding to make the US their new home and more specifically, Wisconsin.

"I know there are other states that have happy cows, but we have extremely happy cows," Penterman said.

Located in Thorp, the family dairy began in 2002 with a herd of 350 cows – Holsteins, a few Brown Swiss, and some crossbreeds.

Not everyone has the opportunity to have a farmstead creamery, so we're very grateful, Penterman said. The fact that we already knew a lot about cows was one of our strengths.

"I feel good about making raw milk cheese here because we have our own cows and our own milk source," Penterman said.

Among the herd, most are Holstein cows, "which bring the volume, averaging 90 pounds of milk per day," she said.

With the dairy side firmly established, Penterman began thinking about ways to make the farmstead more lucrative.

"The first of many challenges was that I didn't know how to make cheese," Penterman said. "So I went back to Holland to see how to make Gouda."

After returning to the US, she enrolled in classes to earn her state of Wisconsin cheese maker's license and begin apprenticeships here and abroad.

Just four months after Penterman crafted her first batch of Gouda in November 2006, she captured a gold award at the US Championship Cheese Contest in 2007.

Dozens of awards followed, including her biggest win thus far – the United States Grand Champion Cheese in 2013 for her Marieke Gouda Mature entry.

Each piece of raw milk cheese soaks up its own salt in brine, Penterman said. After about 60 hours, it develops a nice, sturdy rind around the cheese, and then goes to the aging room where they are aged for at least 60 days on Dutch Pine planks.

"We do not vacuum-pack the cheeses," Penterman said. "A lot of people recognize Edam and Gouda from a red wax rind. Actually, I think that's a way to protect the cheese during travel all over the world," Penterman said.

The company is currently upgrading to an edible coating machine to further preserve cheese quality and shelf-life.

This doesn't mean Marieke Gouda isn't hand-crafted, Penterman said. I'm proud to offer my

people better, safer and more efficient ways to work.

Showing Consumers Artistry, Hard Work Behind Premium Prices

The expanded Thorp facility serves beyond a tourist destination; it's a way to demonstrate the talent and labor behind every piece of artisan cheese tagged with a premium price.

The farm welcomes an average of 150,000 visitors every year. Guests learn about the incredible level of involvement required in making artisan, farmstead cheese.

"Before I started making cheese, I had no idea how much work it was," Peterman said. "I would go to the store, pick up a piece of cheese and say, 'Wow – that's a lot of money.' Now I'll go to a store, pick up a piece of cheese and say, 'That's not enough money.'"

The operation also champions equality in an industry historically staffed by men.

Marieke Gouda is owned and operated by women, and currently has a team of 50 workers. Licensed cheese makers at the plant are women, and Penterman has appointed women to head every department across the entire operation.

Penterman attributes her laudable success in a modest amount of time to instinct and hard work. When it comes to making cheese, she's "not a scientist; more like a musician that plays by ear."

That said, Penterman's been accepted into the prestigious three-year Wisconsin Master Cheesemaker Program.

"I never thought I'd be happy going back to school, but here I am, hopefully graduating in the class of 2025," she said.

For more information, visit www.mariekegouda.com.

OBITUARIES

Forest Hicks, 97, Grand Champion Swiss cheese maker and member of the founding committee of the Ohio Swiss Festival, passed away Tuesday, Aug. 22, 2023. Born in North Carolina, Hicks relocated to Pearl, OH, after serving in the US Navy during WWII. He continued to pursue his passion for cheesemaking, moving to Ragersville, OH, in 1953, and helped lead the Swiss cheese industry for over 60 years. Hicks was also among the committee that founded the Ohio Swiss Festival in Sugarcreek, OH, beginning 1953. The festival, which is Ohio's longest-running celebration, marked its 70th anniversary last week.

PERSONNEL

Good Foods Group, LLC has recently hired SHANNON MAHER as the company's first chief marketing officer, and REGINA KUZMANICH as its first consumer insights director. Maher joins Good Foods from Bel Brands USA, where she most recently served as chief marketing officer. At Bel, Maher supported entry of the company's brands into the plant-based category through marketing campaigns and strategic partnerships. Kuzmanich joins Good Foods with more than a decade of experience in market research, consumer behavior and data analysis for food brands including The J.M. Smucker Company, Pepperidge Farm, WhiteWave Foods and Hormel.

BARRY DIDATO has joined **Rä Foods**, a functional food company that includes the Mixmi Frozen Yogurt business, as president. Didato's career spans over three decades, during which he held key executive and advisory positions in strategic planning, finance, operations, and business development in a range of companies and organizations. He recently served as vice president of strategy for EatWell Investment Group, a plant-based foods investment company focused on agribusiness, food tech, and CPG brands.

KEVIN BURKUM has been named CEO of the **US Farmers & Ranchers in Action (USFRA)**, effective Oct. 9. Burkum served as chief communications officer for Global Dairy Platform, and was part of the leadership team that developed the Pathways to Dairy Net Zero climate initiative.

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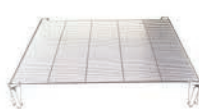
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Lactalis Canada Invests In New Distribution Center In Ontario

Toronto, Ontario—Lactalis Canada, a subsidiary of France-based Lactalis Group, recently announced that it is entering into a long-term lease for a new distribution center located in Oshawa, Ontario, principally for its cheese and tablespreads supply chain network.

Set to open in the fourth quarter of 2024, the agreement was facilitated by CBRE Limited and the distribution center will be developed, built, and leased by Broccolini with construction beginning immediately.

The 379,000-square-foot center will consolidate multiple shipping locations used to service the cheese and tablespreads category — including the internally operated Belleville, Ontario, distribution center — into a central, modern facility to enable the company’s long-term growth, increase capacity and efficiency while enhancing service to the company’s customers, Lactalis Canada noted.

“Lactalis Canada’s new facility in Oshawa will become the largest distribution center, from a capacity standpoint, for Lactalis Group globally,” said Mark Taylor, president and CEO, Lactalis Canada. “This bold step exemplifies Lactalis Canada’s growth ambitions in Canada as a dairy leader and more importantly, reinforces our continued commitment and investment in the country and communities in which we operate.”

“The Greater Toronto Area is the optimal hub for this part of our supply chain network across Canada,” said Eric Seguin, senior vice president, supply chain, Lactalis Canada. “The Oshawa distribution center is poised to meet the current needs and future demands of our business and customers, while its sustainable design will transform our network effectiveness and contribute to Lactalis Canada’s ESG agenda in reducing its carbon footprint.”

The facility will create approximately 80 jobs in Oshawa and the surrounding region and will join Lactalis Canada’s workforce of more than 4,200 employees across 30 operating sites, including 20 manufacturing facilities, across Canada.

Lactalis Canada’s brands include Black Diamond, Balderson, Cracker Barrel, P’tit Quebec, Cheestrings Ficello, aMOOza!, Astro, Khaas, siggi’s, IÖGO, IÖGO nanö, Olympic, Lactantia, Beatrice, Marie Morin Canada, Galbani and Président. For more information, visit www.lactalis.ca.

Hershey, EPA Commit \$2 Million To Support Land O’Lakes Farms In PA

Washington Boro, PA—The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and The Hershey Company recently announced the joint commitment of \$2 million to support local dairy farmers.

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, in collaboration with Land O’Lakes, will use funds to promote the adoption of practices that support environmental goals with dairy farmers in Land O’Lakes’ eastern region milkshed.

The Alliance, Hershey, and Land O’Lakes have been working together since 2021 on an initiative called “Sustainable Dairy PA.” The initiative takes a collaborative, industry-led, and public sector-supported approach to accelerate on-farm conservation efforts for eastern region farmers.

The \$2 million in funding is part of a commitment between the EPA and Hershey. These funds, \$1 million of which will be funded by the EPA and a matching \$1 million of which will be committed from Hershey, will be used to support the Alliance and Land O’Lakes in

implementing agricultural conservation practices on Land O’Lakes member dairy farms.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) will administer the portion of the funds provided from EPA to the Alliance.

“Dairy farmers are critical to our supply chain and our local communities,” said Leigh Horner, Hershey’s chief sustainability officer.

“American farmers continually rise to the challenge of feeding a growing global population in an increasingly sustainable and efficient manner,” said Tim Leviny, Land O’Lakes senior vice president of global dairy ingredients and international. “Collaborative initiatives like Sustainable Dairy PA provide the necessary incentives to drive voluntary practice changes that not only help contribute to the health of the planet, but also help better position farmers for success in a challenging operating environment.”

“EPA’s funding commitment to Hershey, Land O’Lakes, and the Alliance for the Chesapeake

Bay brings \$2 million of much-needed support to Pennsylvania dairy farmers to scale up conservation practices that are good for our farms, climate, local streams, and the Bay.” said EPA Regional Administrator Adam Ortiz.

Thanks to funding provided by EPA, NFWF, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Alliance has created a model that companies are now adopting in an effort to increase sustainability in their supply chain and bring cleaner water back to their communities.

“Hershey’s, EPA’s, and Land O’Lakes’ leadership to support our Pennsylvania dairy farmers and local ecosystems is revolutionary.” said Jenna Mitchell Beckett, Agriculture Program Director at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. “This effort is helping to create a paradigm shift in which an entire supply chain works together to support work on the ground rather than farmers being expected to carry the load alone. We believe this model is the future of how we will overcome the environmental hurdles we face.”

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Roger Schroeder Retires After 50 Years; Stories Highlight Commitment

Le Sueur, MN—Despite a few name changes, Roger Schroeder only knew it as a place he worked for 50 years - Le Sueur Cheese.

Schroeder retired from Agropur - Le Sueur, April 16, 2023 after 50 years “and four days.”

He started at Le Sueur Cheese during high school. A friend was working at the creamery and suggested he apply for a job.

“I went there and said, ‘I’d like to apply for a job,’” Schroeder described. “They kind of looked me up and down for a second and said, ‘You’re hired. When can you start?’ I don’t think I ever filled out a job application in my life.”

“I’d say it was a pretty good hire,” said Mark Davis of Davisco Foods and former owner of the Le Sueur Cheese plant. “You couldn’t find people that were committed to their job in those days. There were many that didn’t show up.”

Devoting 50 years to a company is rare, Davis said.

“It takes a special relationship, built on trust and commitment,” Davis said. “On both sides, owner and employee. When you have a good employee, you support them and reward their efforts. We had a lot of good ones. Roger was one of our finest.”

For Schroeder, it was touch and go for a while. He remembered starting out in the grunt jobs of cleaning and working in the wee hours of the night.

“When I started in 1973, it was really trial by fire,” Schroeder said. “If you were here two weeks you were a seasoned veteran. And we didn’t have too many seasoned veterans around here.”

Schroeder credits his parents for the reason he didn’t quit.

“My parents grew up during the Depression, and they instilled

in me that if you had a job, you damn well better keep it,” he said.

Another reason he didn’t quit was the many changes being made at the plant and Schroeder felt like he had a good opportunity to grow along with a company that was motivated.

“I was fortunate from the time I started, the plant kept growing. The Davis family had a plan here and it was exciting to be a part of it,” Schroeder recalled.

In 1969, when the Davis family purchased the operation, it didn’t make much cheese. But the plant was under continuous expansion throughout the remainder of Schroeder’s career.

“Roger was just a great employee who showed interest in what we were doing. He took responsibility,” Davis said.

In 1977, Davis hired Marlowe Starkson to run the plant and he would be the closest thing Schroeder would have to a mentor.

“He taught me how to make cheese properly,” Schroeder said. “He challenged me. He kept moving me around to all areas of the operation. Sometimes I thought it was a punishment. I didn’t know it at the time, but I guess he was grooming me.”

“Marlowe was one of the best hires of my life,” said Mark Davis. “I doubt Roger would have lasted without him. Hell, I don’t know if I would have.”

In 1981, Gary Starkson, Marlowe’s son, started working at Le Sueur Cheese. It was the start of a lifelong friendship with Schroeder.

“When I first got there my dad taught me a lot, but he kind of handed me over to Roger,” Starkson said. “Roger asked me my plans and I said I’d work through



Roger Schroeder ended his 50-year career at the cheese plant in Le Sueur, MN, earlier this year. Coming together to tell tales of thanks were (left to right) Kevin Kral, Agropur; Mark Davis, former owner of Le Sueur Cheese; Schroeder; Jon Davis, former CEO of Davisco Foods; Gary Starkson, former employee at Le Sueur Cheese; and Mark Spence of Agropur.

the summer and then I’d find something else. He laughed and said, ‘I’ll ask you again when you’ve worked here 10 years.’”

Starkson would go on to work 14 years for the Davis family, 41 years overall in the dairy industry including the last 19 for Advanced Process Technologies (APT).

“I was pretty young and just working to make some money,” Starkson said. “It became clear to me that Roger wasn’t that guy. That he wasn’t someone who simply went to work to collect a paycheck.”

Years later, working to install APT equipment into Le Sueur, Starkson saw Schroeder from a supplier’s perspective.

“He was tough and very demanding,” Starkson said. “He had taken ownership of the plant by then. It was his baby and things were going to go his way.”

Mark Davis’ son, Jon, would end up presiding over all of the cheese operations at Davisco, but at 14 he was nothing but a grunt.

“They trained me and all my brothers,” Jon Davis said. “They trained us so they could have the weekends off. They had so much involvement in this plant, particularly Roger. There was a stability to those two (Roger and Gary), they became the core and it kind of snowballed. The team and that plant really took off after that.”

Remember The Time...

Sitting in the offices across the street from where he worked for 50 years, Schroeder, Mark and Jon Davis, Gary Starkson and Mark Spence began telling ‘remember-the-time’ stories.

Spence of Agropur has been in the industry for 25 years and worked with Schroeder for 20.

“Roger is very humble. He was the leader and he kind of liked doing it from behind the curtain,” Spence said. “He didn’t need to be the guy. He knew everything about this place.”

To Schroeder’s comment of ‘nothing really stands out’ when asked about his accomplishments,

more “remember-the-time” stories are bandied about until Spence interjects, “remember the time he broke his pelvis” to uproarious laughter and you knew this was the time of all times to remember.

Editor’s Note: Due to interruptions of laughter and profanity from its story tellers, Cheese Reporter can not do justice in retelling this story here. We do, however, attempt to provide a reason for it being told. We attempt.

Approximately six weeks prior to start-up of a large expansion, Schroeder was thrown off his horse while riding with his wife.

“I just thought I hurt my back and I’d be fine. When the doctor told me that I broke my pelvis, the first thing I thought of was the start-up,” Schroeder said.

It weighed heavily on Schroeder that he couldn’t lead the renovation. In pain he felt he couldn’t just sit back and do nothing.

Spence described how Schroeder had his team jerry-rig a hoist that would lift him by fork lift to a point in the plant where he could oversee the expansion.

“You wouldn’t find that anymore. That commitment,” Jon Davis said. “We could have done it without him, we would have had to, but it wouldn’t have been carried out as seamlessly.”

“I don’t know why I had to be here. I just did,” Schroeder recalled. “Call it respect for the Davis family, I mean, yeah, they’ve been great to me. Call it respect for the team. Respect for every worker doing their bit. I don’t know. Milk was coming and once it does, it doesn’t stop.”

More stories were told in good humor with shared laughter. They could have sat together for many more hours telling tales. Someone said he was getting thirsty.

As plans were made to get together again soon, you realized this wasn’t so much a story about Roger Schroeder’s 50 years after all. It’s about a bunch of guys with mutual admiration, thanks, and friendship, built from respect and gratitude for each other’s commitment to more than just their jobs.


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Dairy Checkoff's Pizza Partnerships Expected To Boost Cheese Use

Rosemont, IL—A new dairy checkoff program with pizza partners is expected to drive an additional 12-million-pounds-plus of cheese use, according to Dairy Management Inc. (DMI), which manages the national dairy checkoff program.

The bulk of the cheese will be used internationally through an effort with a major quick-serve restaurant pizza chain and a US cheese company, DMI explained.

The pizza chain has opened its sourcing to US-produced cheese suppliers as it seeks to return its business success to pre-COVID levels. The company also is leaning on the checkoff for strategic support to increase pizza consumption frequency in this market via advertising and marketing communications.

On the domestic front, Domino's has added Pepperoni Stuffed Cheesy Bread to its lineup of Stuffed Cheesy Bread. The oven-baked breadsticks are stuffed with cheese and pepperoni, covered in a blend of cheese made with 100 percent real Mozzarella and Cheddar, and seasoned with a touch of Parmesan and garlic.

"The checkoff's relationships have always been an underpinning of our plan and our partners understand the challenges our farmers face with rising input costs that affect their bottom line," said Barbara O'Brien, DMI's president and CEO. "They are stepping up with innovative ways we can collaborate to drive more sales of US-produced cheese on their products."

DMI supported Domino's with consumer research, which helped make the Pepperoni Stuffed Cheesy Bread launch a success. This option received high consumer test scores and joins the chain's Stuffed Cheesy Bread lineup, which debuted in 2011.

The checkoff also plans to work with Domino's on an enhanced loyalty program that continues to have growing appeal with customers and will drive pizza and cheese sales.

"Domino's values its partnership with DMI, as there would be no pizza without the hard work of dairy farmers around the US," said Kate Trumbull, Domino's senior vice president – chief brand officer. "Thanks to them, we're able to offer a variety of delicious, cheesy, craveable products to customers around the country."

In addition to DMI, the efforts with Domino's were supported by state and regional checkoff organizations American Dairy Association Mideast, Midwest Dairy and the United Dairy Industry of Michigan. While these teams

contributed directly to this effort, O'Brien said funding from the entire dairy checkoff network helps make these and other partnerships possible.

The other pizza company the checkoff is working with on the international front has exclusively sourced its cheese from outside the US. The company is seeking to kick-start growth efforts and found a willing partner in the checkoff thanks to its longtime proven success in helping to grow US pizza and cheese sales, according to DMI.

A marketing campaign begins in October and runs through March of 2024. Pizza remains a

largely untapped opportunity in many global markets where it is often consumed about once a year. With consumer tastes rapidly shifting, it is a timely opportunity to support pizza growth internationally, DMI noted.

O'Brien emphasized the effectiveness of the checkoff's strategy of working with leading quick-serve restaurant chains, who invest hundreds of millions of dollars on marketing efforts and advertising to promote their dairy-centric menu items. While these pizza-focused efforts are additions to the annual strategic plan, O'Brien said other restaurant partners continue to deliver sales-building successes, too.

Taco Bell announced its new permanent menu item, the Grilled Cheese Burrito, whose creation

was led by the checkoff's onsite food science team, after a successful run as a limited-time option. The burrito uses 11 times the amount of cheese that the chain's regular taco does, and its success led to new flavors of the Grilled Cheese Burrito and expansion of this platform across the menu, including the Grilled Cheese Dipping Taco.

McDonald's continues to enhance its McFlurry lineup with new flavors, including the Peanut Butter Crunch McFlurry, which is currently in market. The chain also had a successful launch this summer of the Grimace Shake, which generated large amounts of media coverage and social media interaction. These efforts are made possible with checkoff food science and marketing support.

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August Dairy Trade

(Continued from p. 1)

Nonfat dry milk exports during August totaled 150.6 million pounds, up 4 percent from August 2022. During the first eight months of this year, NDM exports totaled 1.23 billion pounds, down slightly from the first eight months of last year.

Dry whey exports during August totaled 31.2 million pounds, down 38 percent from August 2022. Dry whey exports during the January-August period totaled 264.9 million, down 16 percent from the same period last year.

August exports of whey protein concentrate totaled 30.1 million pounds, down 16 percent from August 2022. WPC exports during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 212.6 million pounds, down 19 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Lactose exports during August totaled 85.5 million pounds, down 3 percent from August 2022. Lactose exports during the January-August period totaled 692.0 million pounds, up 5 percent from the same period last year.

Butter exports in August totaled 5.2 million pounds, down 63 percent from August 2022. During the January-August period, butter exports totaled 50.1 million pounds, down 45 percent from a year earlier.

Ice cream exports during August 2023 totaled 12.4 million pounds, down 10 percent from August 2022.

Ice cream exports during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 104.1 million pounds, down 8 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Yogurt exports during August totaled 3.3 million pounds, down 7 percent from August 2022.

During the first eight months of this year, yogurt exports totaled 29.7 million pounds, up 5 percent from the first eight months of last year.

Cheese Import Volume, Value Up

During August, US cheese imports totaled 41.3 million pounds, up 5 percent from August 2022.

The value of those cheese imports, \$168.0 million, was up 13 percent.

Cheese imports during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 264.9 million pounds, up slightly from the first eight months of 2022.

The value of those cheese imports, \$1.1 billion, was up 11 percent.

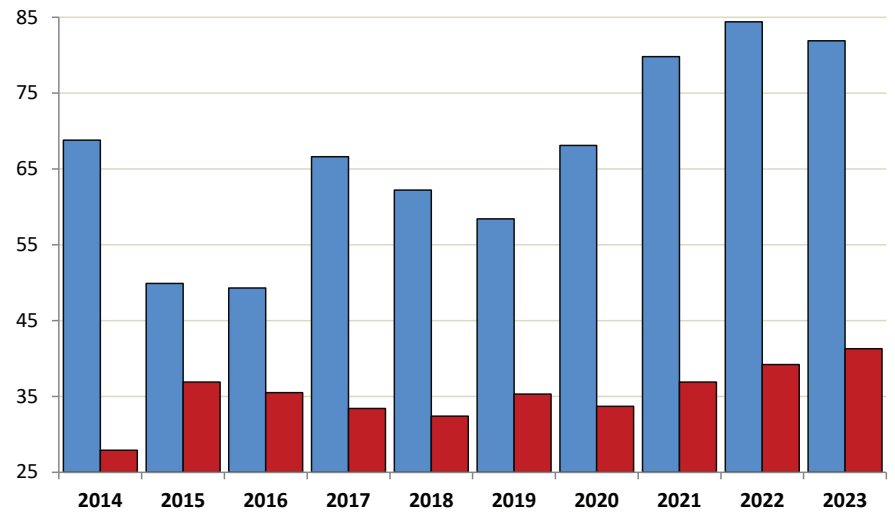
Leading sources of US cheese imports during the January-August period, on a volume basis, with comparisons to the same period last year, were:

Italy: 51.6 million pounds, down 10 percent.

France: 27.7 million pounds, down 11 percent.

US Cheese Exports vs Imports

August of 2014- 2023; Million of pounds



Netherlands: 24.3 million pounds, up 10 percent.

Spain: 22.9 million pounds, up 70 percent.

Nicaragua: 13.1 million pounds, up 37 percent.

Ireland: 11.8 million pounds, down 12 percent.

Switzerland: 11.7 million pounds, up 1 percent.

United Kingdom: 11.4 million pounds, up 5 percent.

Casein imports during August totaled 4.4 million pounds, down 51 percent from August 2022. Casein imports during the January-August period totaled 45.9 million pounds, down 38 percent from a year earlier.

August imports of caseinates totaled 7.3 million pounds, up 45 percent from August 2022. Imports of caseinates during the first eight months of this year totaled 48.1 million pounds, up 44 percent from the first eight months of last year.

Imports of Chapter 4 milk protein concentrates during August totaled 11.3 million pounds, up 132 percent from August 2022. During the January-August period, imports of Chapter 4 MPCs totaled 58.1 million pounds, up 1 percent from the same period last year.

August imports of Chapter 35 MPCs totaled 3.3 million pounds, up 178 percent from August 2022.

Imports of Chapter 35 milk protein concentrates during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 37.5 million pounds, up 72 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Butter Imports Decline

During August, US imports of butter and other milkfat-containing products (primarily anhydrous milkfat) totaled 11.7 million pounds, down 3 percent from August 2022.

Butter imports during August totaled 8.8 million pounds, down 2 percent from August 2022.

Imports of butter and other milkfat-containing products during the first eight months of 2023 totaled 106.5 million pounds, up 12 percent from the first eight months of 2022.

Butter imports during this same period totaled 75.8 million pounds, up 13 percent from a year earlier.

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Patents Awarded By USPTO For Numerous Cheese, Dairy Inventions

Washington—The US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has in recent weeks awarded patents to several companies for numerous dairy and related inventions.

A patent was awarded recently for a method of producing naturally wood smoked cheese. The inventor is Jeremy McLeod; the patent was assigned to **HILMAR CHEESE COMPANY**.

An embodiment of the invention is a method of producing a block of smoked cheese comprising producing cheese curd; adding wood smoke to cheese curd; incubating the wood smoke with the cheese curd at a temperature range of 4 to 55 degrees C; and pressing the cheese curd to form a block of smoked cheese.

The smoked block of cheese is evenly smoked and obtained in a shorter period of time than is required to evenly smoke an entire block of cheese, according to the patent abstract.

The USPTO awarded a patent for an invention relating to a composition suitable for preparing a dairy product comprising of at least one starter culture and a *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* strain capable of imparting onto the dairy product an enhanced creamy flavor without affecting the rheology negatively, the fermentation time or the post-acidification of the dairy product.

This invention further relates to processes for preparing a dairy product, such as a lowfat cheese or yogurt, which has a high content of diacetyl. A *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* strain useful for preparing such dairy product is also part of this invention.

Inventors are Stina Dissing Aunbjerg Nielsen, Helle Skov Guldager, and Cecille Lykke Marvig Nielsen. The patent was awarded to **CHR. HANSEN A/S**.

Another patent awarded to Chr. Hansen is for a method of producing a fermented milk product using *Lactobacillus casei*. Inventors are Mirjana Curic-Bawden, Luciana Luciana Jimenez, Mette Ohrstroem Runge, Karen Guilotte, and Pia Frost Jensen.

In general, this invention provides methods of producing a fermented milk product comprising adding lactic acid bacteria to milk, wherein the bacteria comprise *Lactobacillus casei* and at least one further strain of lactic acid bacteria of a species other than *Lactobacillus casei*, wherein the further strain has a deficiency in lactose metabolism but is capable of metabolizing one or several carbohydrates other than lactose present in the milk.

A third patent assigned to Chr. Hansen is directed to a method of producing *Streptococcus ther-*

mophilus mutant strains. Inventors are Jeorgos Trihaas, Thomas Janzen and Patrick Derkx.

The USPTO awarded a patent for methods for preparing dairy compositions using an ultrafiltration step, a nanofiltration step, and a forward osmosis step.

Inventors are Shakeel Ur Rehman, Timothy P. Doelman, Michael J. McCloskey, and Keely O'Brien. The patent was awarded to **fairlife, LLC**.

The invention relates generally to separating a milk product into protein, fat, carbohydrate, and mineral components using combinations of ultrafiltration, nanofiltration, and forward osmosis techniques. Dairy compositions produced by mixing the milk components in various combinations and proportions.

A patent was recently awarded for an invention that describes a method for producing a set-type yogurt snack, said method comprising allowing said yogurt snack to set in a mold or block and wherein said yogurt snack comprises at least 12 percent (w/w) protein and at least 35 percent (w/w) total solids.

Inventors are Regina Marie Draper, Kayla Marie Polzin and David Jay Williams. The patent was assigned to **DSM IP ASSETS B.V.**

The USPTO awarded a patent for methods for extracting protein from expired or spoiled milk. The inventor is Yi Luo. The patent was assigned to **MI TERRO INC.**

In at least one embodiment of this invention, the method includes the steps of acid hydroly-

sis, first filtration, fine filtration, activation, salting out, degreasing, drying and packaging. Through the combined process of “protein activation” and “self-assembly salting out,” these methods enable the reuse and upcycling of expired and spoiled milk, according to the patent abstract.

A patent was recently awarded for apparatuses and methods for vacuumizing and sealing a package. The described apparatuses and methods may be used to vacuumize and seal bagged products, including food products such as cheese.

Inventors are Gregory E. McDonald, Gregory H. Grossman, Joe A. Price, Rod Hodgson, John L. King, Jr., Shuichi Nakamoto, Yoshitaka Nii, Silvio Rohrer, Joel Caillier, and Peter

Schmalz. The patent was awarded to **CRYOVAC, LLC**, and **FURUKAWA MFG. CO., LTD.**

The USPTO recently awarded a patent related to methods of producing full to reduced-fat cheese, such as a cream cheese or a cream cheese spread, having a simplified ingredient listing and to products thereof.

Inventors are Jonathan Wiese and Judith Moca.

The patent was assigned to **KRAFT FOODS GROUP BRANDS LLC**.

In one aspect, this patent describes novel cheese products and methods of producing such cheese products that include a biogenerated exopolysaccharide (EPS) formed in-situ and separate from the main cream cheese fermentation.

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Berkshire Area Bimi's Cheese Shop Opens New Farm-To-Table Restaurant

Chatham, NY—Bimi's Cheese Shop, a favored cheese retailer among Hudson Valley turophiles, has recently opened a farm-to-table restaurant where customers can enjoy dishes featuring some of the best local cheeses.

Owners Ellen Waggett and husband Chris Landry opened Bimi's Cheese in 2014. The possibility of starting a restaurant came several years later.

"We were offered the two adjoining storefronts seven years after launching Bimi's Cheese Shop," said owner/operator Ellen Waggett.

"We wanted to build on the popularity of the store, and were definitely at a point where we needed more seating and space," Waggett said. "We saw a path to building a restaurant, bar, and gelato shop – arms off the existing business that could all organically support and strengthen each other."

The build-out of the new spaces corresponded with the pandemic, and took two and a half years—roughly 18 months longer than anticipated.

Bimi's Canteen has been wel-

coming visitors for just over two months.

"I don't know if we are considered 'established' yet, but have been booked to capacity since we opened the doors," Waggett said.

One of the greatest challenges involved in the project was the extended construction phase, which took its toll on both finances and spirits, Waggett continued.

"Chris and I have opened and run several businesses together over the last 30 years; getting this restaurant and bar rumbling to life has hands-down been the most challenging process we have been through," she said.

"We are so incredibly proud of the results, but are both still shell-shocked by the difficulties of getting it this far," Waggett continued. "Now we are focusing on making the restaurant a little bit better every single day."

The biggest challenge now is hiring; we simply cannot find enough responsible people to fill all the roles, she said.

"This is a national problem with which every business owner is contending, and it touches on so



Owners Ellen Waggett and her husband, Chris Landry, opened Bimi's Cheese Shop in downtown Chatham, NY, in 2014. Bimi's Canteen, a farm-to-table restaurant annexed to the shop, opened a few months ago and has already welcomed much acclaim.

many fundamental issues: affordable housing, insurance, finding skilled tradespeople," Waggett said. "These questions are what currently keep me up at night."

However, Bimi's Canteen is not lacking enthusiastic customers. Waggett said people are "absolutely thrilled" with the new eatery.

"They're surprised we built this magical place in the small village of Chatham, and are delighted that we have poured so much love and attention to every single detail," she said. "They love the wonderful, locally-sourced food and cocktails we are offering."

"Many guests book reservations for their next visits before they leave, which we consider the ultimate compliment," Waggett continued.

When asked if she would recommend launching a cafe to other cheese retailers, Waggett mentioned, "ask me in a year. The restaurant/bar is a whole different experience."

"It's definitely a great addition to our store and this village, but I don't think every cheese store owner should run out and try to follow our example," she said.

"I would recommend any cheese retailer who is interested in the idea come hang out with me for a few days first to see what a typical day is like," Waggett continued.

"Currently, I personally have almost no time to devote to the store right now, and I love working in the store! That's a change I didn't foresee," she continued.

Fan Favorite: Challerhocker

Ethan Koelbel serves as executive chef for Bimi's Canteen, and Russian-born Andrey Matseyev is beverage director.

The Canteen offers cheese slates curated by the shop each day for the restaurant, with the Local Slate – three cheeses, seasonal jam and crostini – all sourced within 150 miles – is especially popular.

Current menu selections include starters such as Grilled Baby Carrots with orange-jicama slaw and coriander-lime Ricotta, and Heirloom Tomato & Burrata Salad.

Other small-plate offerings include Toasted Local Sourdough Bread with Cultured HighLawn Butter and Maldon Salt, and Freshly Baked Gougeres with Gruyere Cheese.

The Canteen's Mac & Cheese features five different cheeses with bread-crumbs, and "The Burger" is made using locally-raised beef, crispy pork belly tomato jam, and Shelburne 2 Year Cheddar with Garlic-Parmesan fries.

"It's (restaurant) definitely a great addition to our store and this village, but I don't think every cheese store owner should run out and try to follow our example."

—Ellen Waggett,
Bimi's Cheese Shop

The menu also features a burger layered with Challerhocker – a PDO, cow's milk cheese from the Swiss Alps that is cellar-aged for at least 10 months.

"This cheese is the hands-down favorite best-seller in the store, and we definitely wanted to include it in a dish at the restaurant," Waggett said.

For dessert, diners can choose from Lemon Tart, Chocolate Puff, Fruit Galette and Macaron French sandwich cookies filled with pistachio cream and jam.

Looking forward, Bimi's Canteen will be offering fondue and Raclette from October to March.

Bimi's Cheese Shop is open daily, and the Canteen & Bar is open Thursday through Monday, 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.

For more information, visit www.bimicheese.com.

USDA News

A New Product that is officially accepted* for use in Dairy Plants inspected by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Dairy Plant Survey Program.
*USDA Project Number 13377

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- 18-03 Multiple Use Rubber and Rubber-Like Materials.
- 20-17, currently 20-27, Multiple-Use Plastic Materials.

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- USP Class VI Tests, 2004: USP 27, NF 22, 2004, <88> Biological Reactivity, In Vivo.
- USP MEM Elution Cytotoxicity, 2004: USP 27, NF 22, 2004, <87> Biological Reactivity, In Vitro.
- EU 1935/2004(3)EC, Food Contact Regulations.
- EU 2011/65/EC, ReCast of EU 2002/95/EC RoHS Directive



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USDEC Renews Latin American Partnership

San Jose, Costa Rica—The US Dairy Export Council (USDEC) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) recently renewed a partnership to advance cooperation between the organizations in promoting and harmonizing science-based standards related to food and agriculture.

Building upon four years of collaboration between USDEC and IICA, the memorandum of understanding organizes a set of objectives focused on jointly supporting the development and implementation of science-based regulations via national level capacity building and participation in international standard setting forums.

The agreement also commits the organizations to working to enhance collaboration between government and private sector stakeholders to support the critical role of livestock in the global food system and sharing sustainable productivity growth best practices.

“Working as a united front to advance regulations grounded in science is critical as we seek to limit barriers to global dairy and agriculture trade flows,” said Krysta Harden, USDEC’s president and CEO. “Latin America serves as an important trading partner and natural ally in advancing issues of common concern.”

“We are delighted to welcome the US dairy delegation to our headquarters,” said Manuel Otero, IICA’s director general. “US dairy is one of IICA’s most valued partners representing the voice of hardworking farmers, as well as manufacturers.

“The US dairy industry is committed to not just providing food security for the United States, but for the world,” Otero added. “We are grateful for the visionary leadership of USDEC and Dairy Management Inc. in areas of innovation for productivity, sustainability and technology.”

IICA has a membership of 34 countries in the Americas, including the US. The organization’s mission is to foster agricultural development and rural well-being through international technical cooperation.

The MOU between USDEC and IICA complements similar agreements signed last year with Sociedad Rural Argentina and the Chilean Federacion Nacional de Productores de Leche (Fedeleche).

Canada Launches Dairy Innovation, Investment Fund To Boost Industry

Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec—Canadian Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay last Friday announced the launch of the new Dairy Innovation and Investment Fund.

With an investment of up to \$333 million over the next 10 years, the Fund aims to help the Canadian dairy sector increase its competitiveness and adapt to new market realities.

The Fund is part of the Canadian government’s commitment to support supply-managed sectors, including dairy, due to the impacts of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA, known in the US as the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA).

Like some other dairy-producing countries, Canada is facing a growing surplus of solids-non-fat (SNF). Limited processing capacity for SNF results in lost opportunities for dairy processors and farmers, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada noted.

Through the Dairy Innovation and Investment Fund, Canadian dairy processors will have access to support for medium to large-scale projects that will help the sector better manage the surplus of SNF in Canada. The Fund will support activities that help modernize, replace and/or increase processing capacity for SNF and minimize skim milk that is not marketed.

The Canadian government is also exploring how the Supply Management Processing Investment Fund can support small-scale projects to address SNF issues within the objective of the program, by focusing on competitiveness and productivity.

The new Dairy Innovation and Investment Fund will provide Canadian dairy processors with non-repayable contributions to help the dairy sector better manage the structural surplus of solids non-fat in Canada.

The Canadian Dairy Commission will deliver the Dairy Innovation and Investment Fund on behalf of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The two-stage application process launches last Friday, Sept. 29, 2023.

Project summary forms will be accepted until Nov. 3, 2023. Additional application dates may be announced in the future.

Funding for projects under the Dairy Innovation and Investment Fund is distributed among the regions and/or provinces as follows:

- West (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba): \$74 million.
- Ontario: \$127 million.
- Quebec: \$109 million.
- Atlantic (New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador): \$18 million.

The maximum funding available is calculated based on the increase in skim milk processing capacity generated by the project as well as other factors. In all cases, the maximum funding per project is \$75 million or the total funds available in the region of the project, whichever is lower.

“This new program will support the much-needed investments in milk processing capacity in Canada,” commented Phil J. Vanderpol, chair, Dairy Processors Association of Canada. “As it is a matching fund program, dairy

processors must commit to investing in plant capacity expansion to access government contributions.

“These investments will not only benefit the dairy industry, but ultimately the entire Canadian economy,” Vanderpol continued.

“Dairy Farmers of Canada welcomes the announcement of the Dairy Innovation and Investment Fund and is pleased to see the federal government honoring its commitment,” said David Wiens, president, Dairy Farmers of Canada. “This initiative will help the industry identify and implement solutions to better manage solid non-fats and contribute to the future of a vibrant Canadian dairy sector.”

“We will always stand up for the supply management system and we have delivered on our commitment to compensate our hardworking producers and processors who have been impacted by recent trade agreements,” MacAulay said.

With last Friday’s announcement, all compensation programming to producers and processors for lost market share under recent international trade agreements has been launched. Those trade deals include the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the CUSMA.

This programming includes the Supply Management Processing Investment Fund, which helps processors of supply-managed commodities increase their competitiveness and resilience in the face of evolving markets. Under this program, priority consideration is given to small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

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COMING EVENTS

www.cheesereporter.com/events.htm

WCMA Export Workgroup Oct. 26 Will Feature Sartori Cheese, MCT Dairies

Madison—Representatives from Sartori Cheese, Food Export Midwest and MCT Dairies are among the speakers slated for a hybrid Export Workshop here Thursday, Oct. 26, at the offices of the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA).

All dairy processors and industry suppliers, regardless of WCMA membership status, are invited to join in-person at WCMA's offices in Madison or online.

The meeting will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. CST. Attendees will learn ways to maximize trade show returns on investments.

Stephen Cain with the US Dairy Export Council (USDEC) kicks things off with a look at trends and forecasts.

Dan Durand of Hidalgo Global will share information on how dairy processors can determine target markets and the best foreign trade shows to attend, organizers reported.

Representatives Paul Sorenson of Food Export Midwest and Katie Ujdak of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation offer participants specific resources to support cheese and dairy companies' trade show impact.

Representatives from Sartori Cheese and MCT Dairies will offer tips for an effective trade show experience, before joining in a panel discussion with representatives from Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin (DFW) and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection's (DATCP) International Agribusiness Center.

Presenters will field audience questions during the Workshop, and in-person attendees will be served a networking lunch.

The Workgroup is open to everyone interested.

Cost to attend the Workshop in person is \$45 per WCMA member and \$55 for non-members. Interested can also attend virtually. Cost to attend virtually is \$35 for both members and non-members, organizers said.

For questions, contact WCMA grants and business programs director Danica Nilsestuen via email: dnilsestuen@wischeesemakers.org.

To register online, more information and upcoming Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association events, visit www.wischeesemakersassn.org/events.

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CACG 'Meet The Maker' Web Series Will Feature Point Reyes Cheese Co.

Durham, CA—The California Artisan Cheese Guild (CACG) will continue its "Meet the Maker" web series with a presentation from Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company.

Kuba Hemmerling, vice president of operations for Point Reyes Farmstead Creamery, Point Reyes Station, CA, will lead a virtual discussion and optional tasting session on Thursday, Oct. 19.

Hemmerling joined Point Reyes Farmstead in 2009 as head cheese maker and plant manager. In his latest role, he's responsible for production of the company's flagship cheese, Original Blue.

Under his direction, PRFC expanded its product line with Toma, Flavored Toma, Aged Gouda, Fresh Mozzarella, Bay Blue, and Quinta.

For details and membership details, visit www.cacheeseguild.org.

PLANNING GUIDE

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

IDF World Dairy Summit: Oct. 16-19, Chicago, IL. Visit www.idf-wds2023.com to register online.

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. More information available online at www.nmpf.org.

Winter Fancy Food Show: Jan. 21-23, 2024, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, NV. Check www.specialtyfood.com for updates.

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

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

Cheese Expo: April 16-18, Baird Center, Milwaukee, WI. Registration, details, and housing information are now available online at www.cheeseexpo.org.

ADPI/ABI Joint Annual Conference: April 28-30, Sheraton Grand Chicago Riverwalk, Chicago, IL. Visit adpi.org/events for updates and information.

International Dairy Deli Bakery Association (IDDBA) 2024: June 9-11, George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston. Visit iddba.org for information

Idaho Milk Processors Association Annual Meeting: Aug. 8-9, Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, ID. Visit www.impa.us for details closer to event date.





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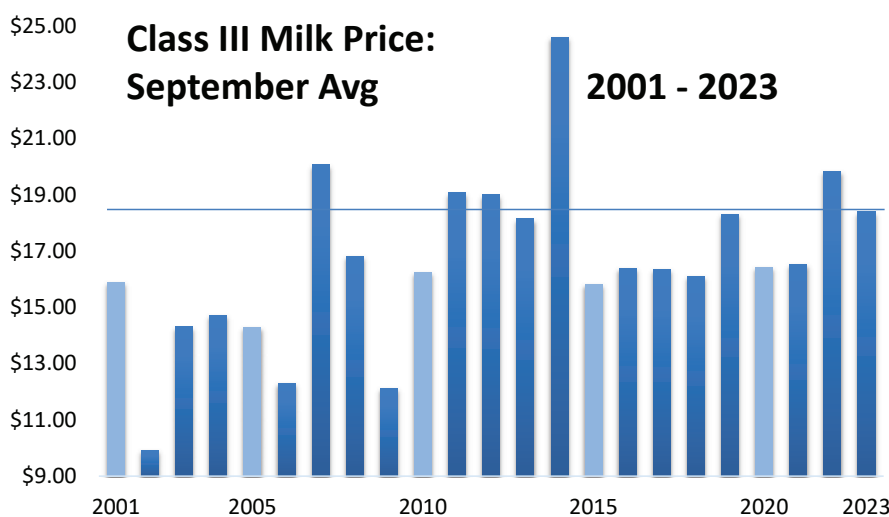
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Class Milk & Component Prices

September 2023 compared to September 2022

Class III - Cheese Milk Price	2022	2023
PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$19.82	\$18.39
SKIM PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$7.61	\$7.72
Class II - Soft Dairy Products		
PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$26.51	\$19.98
BUTTERFAT PRICE (per pound)	\$3.5723	\$3.1334
SKIM MILK PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$14.52	\$9.34
Class IV - Butter, MP		
PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$24.63	\$19.09
SKIM MILK PRICE (per hundredweight)	\$12.59	\$8.44
BUTTERFAT PRICE (per pound)	\$3.5653	\$3.1264
NONFAT SOLIDS PRICE (per pound)	\$1.3984	\$0.9382
PROTEIN PRICE (per pound)	\$1.8847	\$2.3027
OTHER SOLIDS PRICE (per pound)	\$0.2998	\$0.0992
SOMATIC CELL Adjust. rate (per 1,000 scc)	\$0.00098	\$0.00097
AMS Survey Product Price Averages		
Cheese	\$1.9503	\$1.9366
Cheese, US 40-pound blocks	\$1.8835	\$1.9895
Cheese, US 500-pound barrels	\$1.9830	\$1.8616
Butter, CME	\$3.1156	\$2.7532
Nonfat Dry Milk	\$1.5803	\$1.1155
Dry Whey	\$0.4902	\$0.2954

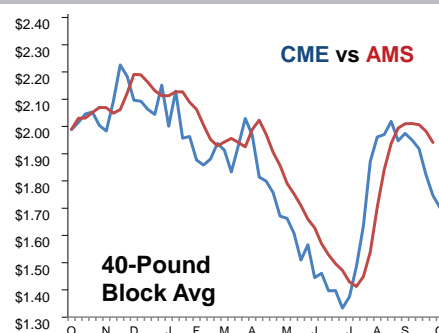


DAIRY FUTURES PRICES

SETTLING PRICE							*Cash Settled	
Date	Month	Class III	Class IV	Dry Whey	NDM	Block Cheese	Cheese*	Butter*
9-29	Sept 23	18.38	18.84	29.150	111.950	1.978	1.9380	271.650
10-2	Sept 23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10-3	Sept 23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10-4	Sept 23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10-5	Sept 23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
9-29	Oct 23	16.88	20.80	30.350	114.625	1.779	1.7550	310.000
10-2	Oct 23	17.01	21.00	30.750	114.600	1.779	1.7670	315.500
10-3	Oct 23	16.93	21.22	31.000	114.700	1.779	1.7540	321.500
10-4	Oct 23	16.76	21.41	30.775	114.875	1.779	1.7380	323.050
10-5	Oct 23	16.85	21.56	31.550	114.475	1.784	1.7410	327.925
9-29	Nov 23	17.17	20.30	32.250	114.624	1.781	1.7770	294.975
10-2	Nov 23	17.28	20.08	33.600	116.525	1.786	1.7880	298.500
10-3	Nov 23	17.33	20.67	33.225	116.600	1.794	1.7890	303.000
10-4	Nov 23	17.07	20.75	32.750	118.500	1.794	1.7650	302.750
10-5	Nov 23	17.25	21.00	33.675	118.275	1.794	1.7850	306.500
9-29	Dec 23	17.50	19.69	34.700	117.000	1.825	1.8050	271.525
10-2	Dec 23	17.48	19.48	36.000	118.850	1.839	1.8110	274.500
10-3	Dec 23	17.56	19.70	35.450	119.750	1.839	1.8120	274.000
10-4	Dec 23	17.40	19.70	35.400	120.525	1.836	1.8000	274.000
10-5	Dec 23	17.49	19.70	35.625	120.900	1.834	1.8060	273.975
9-29	Jan 24	17.99	19.25	37.675	119.000	1.878	1.8550	259.500
10-2	Jan 24	17.91	19.25	37.675	121.725	1.878	1.8550	259.500
10-3	Jan 24	17.95	19.25	37.675	122.350	1.878	1.8500	259.500
10-4	Jan 24	17.88	19.30	38.000	123.000	1.873	1.8380	259.500
10-5	Jan 24	17.99	19.25	38.250	125.175	1.870	1.8460	257.000
9-29	Feb 24	18.09	19.25	39.000	122.000	1.890	1.8700	257.000
10-2	Feb 24	18.05	19.25	39.000	124.325	1.890	1.8700	257.000
10-3	Feb 24	17.99	19.25	39.000	124.250	1.890	1.8700	257.000
10-4	Feb 24	18.05	19.29	39.250	125.000	1.889	1.8580	257.250
10-5	Feb 24	18.10	19.31	39.250	127.400	1.889	1.8520	257.250
9-29	Mar 24	18.19	19.25	39.000	124.950	1.904	1.8800	255.750
10-2	Mar 24	18.18	19.25	39.000	126.250	1.904	1.8850	258.000
10-3	Mar 24	18.13	19.30	39.000	126.500	1.907	1.8830	255.500
10-4	Mar 24	18.27	19.31	40.000	127.100	1.897	1.8700	255.500
10-5	Mar 24	18.05	19.42	40.000	130.000	1.897	1.8700	255.500
9-29	April 24	18.26	19.30	39.500	126.500	1.914	1.8920	255.000
10-2	April 24	18.26	19.30	39.500	128.500	1.914	1.8900	255.750
10-3	April 24	18.32	19.35	39.500	127.450	1.914	1.8900	255.500
10-4	April 24	18.33	19.40	40.000	129.000	1.912	1.8850	255.000
10-5	April 24	18.30	19.42	39.500	131.000	1.912	1.8870	252.000
9-29	May 24	18.31	19.40	40.000	128.000	1.922	1.9000	252.500
10-2	May 24	18.29	19.36	40.000	130.500	1.919	1.9030	252.750
10-3	May 24	18.22	19.45	40.000	130.500	1.919	1.8930	252.475
10-4	May 24	18.40	19.53	40.000	130.275	1.919	1.8900	252.500
10-5	May 24	18.33	19.56	40.000	133.200	1.919	1.8900	251.500
9-29	June 24	18.37	19.50	40.000	130.500	1.925	1.9060	254.000
10-2	June 24	18.38	19.55	40.000	132.500	1.925	1.9030	254.000
10-3	June 24	18.30	19.65	42.750	132.025	1.925	1.8960	254.000
10-4	June 24	18.33	19.60	42.750	133.000	1.925	1.9100	254.000
10-5	June 24	18.45	19.68	42.750	134.425	1.925	1.8970	252.500
9-29	July 24	18.51	19.55	40.000	132.500	1.955	1.9100	254.000
10-2	July 24	18.51	19.60	40.000	133.675	1.955	1.9150	254.000
10-3	July 24	18.40	19.60	41.025	133.675	1.955	1.9000	254.000
10-4	July 24	18.40	19.78	41.025	134.400	1.955	1.9150	254.000
10-5	July 24	18.40	19.78	41.025	134.400	1.955	1.9090	254.000
Oct. 5		19,551	7,237	2,107	8,253	2,650	16,114	8,336

DAIRY PRODUCT SALES

Oct. 4, 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	Sept. 30	Sept. 23	Sept. 16	Sept. 9
40-Pound Block Cheddar Cheese Prices and Sales				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.9407	1.9823	2.0065	2.0108
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	11,098,522	10,570,127	11,295,057	10,857,567
500-Pound Barrel Cheddar Cheese Prices, Sales & Moisture Content				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.8810	1.9763	1.9886	1.9763
Adjusted to 38% Moisture				
US	1.7938	1.8830	1.8959	1.8815
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	12,644,110	13,210,504	12,518,654	12,422,366
Weighted Moisture Content	Percent			
US	34.99	34.93	34.97	34.88
AA Butter				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	2.9367	2.7736	2.7069	2.6704
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	4,576,872	4,475,051	4,922,432	5,065,739
Extra Grade Dry Whey Prices				
Weighted Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	0.3099	0.3014	0.2986	0.2852
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	5,514,895	5,157,070	5,263,968	4,234,749
Extra Grade or USPHS Grade A Nonfat Dry Milk				
Average Price	Dollars/Pound			
US	1.0999	1.1260	1.1217	1.1351
Sales Volume	Pounds			
US	25,927,963	17,427,300	18,421,735	13,044,698

CHEESE REPORTER SUBSCRIBER SERVICE CARD

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TYPE OF BUSINESS:

- Cheese Manufacturer
- Cheese Processor
- Cheese Packager
- Cheese Marketer (broker, distributor, retailer)
- Other processor (butter, cultured products)
- Whey processor
- Food processing/Foodservice
- Supplier to dairy processor

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- Laboratory (QC, R&D, Tech)
- Packaging
- Purchasing
- Warehouse/Distribution
- Sales/Marketing

DAIRY PRODUCT MARKETS

AS REPORTED BY THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Due to evolving market conditions and a limitation on directly reported cheese prices, Dairy Market News eliminated the wholesale cheese prices as of September 25, 2023.

WHOLESALE CHEESE MARKETS

NATIONAL - SEPT. 26: Unseasonably warm weather has negatively impacted milk production in some Northeast states, while milk volumes in the region are being drawn upon by school bottling purchasers. In the Midwest, some cheese makers say tight milk volumes are causing them to run reduced production schedules. Regional milk volumes are tight, and contacts report regional spot loads at prices \$1 over Class and higher. Spot milk volumes are somewhat limited in the West, amid strong Class III demand. Some cheese makers in the region say this is contributing to lighter cheese production. In the West, retail demand for cheese is strong to steady and foodservice sales are steady. Contacts in the Northeast say cheese demand is lighter compared to the summer months. Cheese demand is steady from retail and food service purchasers in the Midwest. A few contacts in the Midwest say recent bearishness on the CME daily cash call has some customers stepping back, but cheese makers in the region are still relaying mostly similar notes to previous weeks regarding demand. Cheese barrel makers say inventories are not currently a concern, despite increased bearishness for cheese barrels compared to blocks.

NORTHEAST - OCT. 4: Milk volumes remain tight in the Northeast, and contacts share that some spot loads of milk are being sold at above Class price. Strong Class I demand from school bottling orders as well as flat farm level milk outputs evidence why milk volumes remain slim. Cheese production is unchanged. Cheese plant managers note that cheese inventories are comfortable despite slower production schedules. Demand for Cheddar is higher than other American-type cheeses. Demand remains steady from both the retail and foodservice sectors.

MIDWEST AREA - OCT. 4: Midwestern cheese makers are still reporting generally limited milk offers week per week. There were some spot milk loads changing hands at lower prices than in previous weeks, but all reported prices at report time are at least slightly higher than Class III. Cheese orders are mixed. Some cheese makers say they are incorporating some downtime over the next two weeks, while others say orders have kept their production schedules fully active. Market tones are unclear. Cheese makers say that once markets settle, they expect some stronger customer participation as buyers get ahead of what contacts say is an inevitable bullish correction.

WEST - OCT. 4: In the West, retail and foodservice demand for varietal cheeses is steady. Industry sources indicate September was lighter for restaurant traffic compared to the prior months of 2023, making the restaurant destination for varietal cheeses lighter during September 2023. Export demand is moderate to light. Less consistent demand from Asian purchasers and more consistent demand from Latin American purchasers so far for 2023 is noted by stakeholders. Production managers report steady cheesemaking schedules. Class III milk demand is strong, but some manufacturers relay limited extra spot load availability, making some production schedules lighter than desired. As of October 4, 2023, daily cash trading prices on the CME have showed some bullish movement for barrels and some bearish movement for blocks since last Wednesday.

FOREIGN -TYPE CHEESE - OCT. 4: Milk production is reaching seasonal lows in some parts of Europe, although sources indicate output is near prior year levels. Cheese makers say they are operating busy production schedules, but tightening milk volumes are having a negative impact on European cheese production. Retail demand for cheese is strong, as some European shoppers have been purchasing additional cheese for early October holidays. Foodservice cheese sales are steady. Contacts report European cheese inventories are slim as production is declining and demand is strong to steady, and some cheese makers are unable to meet demands from spot purchasers searching for additional loads. Stakeholders say this is contributing to higher cheese prices in European markets.

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

Variety	Date: 10/4	9/27	Variety	Date: 10/4	9/27
Cheddar Curd	\$1.77	\$1.76	Mild Cheddar	\$1.78	\$1.79
Young Gouda	\$1.74	\$1.71	Mozzarella	\$1.64	\$1.66

DRY DAIRY PRODUCTS - OCTOBER 5

LACTOSE CENTRAL/WEST: Prices for lactose moved lower at the bottom of the range, while the top of the range and both ends of the mostly price series pushed higher. Contacts say domestic demand for lactose picked back up somewhat this week as spot purchasers seemed somewhat reinvigorated with the start of Q4. Lactose makers say they have continued to secure contract orders for Q4 this week. Export demand for lactose remains lackluster. Some stakeholders say they are offering loads of lactose at prices near the bottom of the range to international purchasers to drum up sales. Lactose loads are available for spot purchasing, but contacts report inventories of lactose which meet more stringent end user specifications are somewhat tight. Production of lactose is steady.

WPC CENTRAL/WEST: The bottom of the whey protein concentrate 34% price range was unchanged this week, but the top of the range and both ends of the mostly price series moved higher. Spot purchasers have been more willing to secure additional loads of WPC 34% in recent weeks as prices remain below other alternative protein sources. Stakeholders say some animal feed purchasers are securing additional loads of WPC 34% as they are content with current prices. Loads of WPC 34% are avail-

able for spot purchasing, though inventories of some preferred brands are getting somewhat tight. Production of WPC 34% is steady to light. Contacts report bullish market tones for higher whey protein concentrates have caused some drying operations to shift their production schedules towards these commodities, limiting time in their schedules for WPC 34% production.

NORTHEAST DRY WHEY: Cheese contacts continue to report that milk volumes are tight and that some spot loads are being sold at above Class prices. Cheese production is unchanged as manufacturers have adjusted to limited milk volumes in recent weeks. Liquid whey volumes are trending lower and several contacts report dryer difficulties that have tightened dry whey inventories. Contacts say that while supplies are tightening, domestic demand has remained relatively unchanged.

NATIONAL CASEIN: Industry sources say strengthening milk production in Oceania is contributing to increased acid casein production. Contacts report acid casein inventories are available for spot purchasing. Demand for rennet casein is softening in Europe. Contacts in the region say light demand is contributing to increased spot inventories of rennet casein inventories.

NATIONAL - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY PRODUCTS

Total conventional cheese ad numbers decreased by 24 percent. Shredded cheese in 6- to 8-ounce packages was the most advertised conventional cheese item this week, with an average advertised price of \$2.25, down 17 cents from last week. Shredded cheese in 6- to 8-ounce packages was the most advertised organic cheese product, with an average advertised price of \$4.57, up 35 cents from last week.

Half-gallons of conventional milk had an average advertised price of \$1.53, down from \$2.64 the week before. Half-gallons of organic milk appeared in 24 percent fewer ads over last week, with an average advertised price of \$4.43, up 5 cents from last week. This marks an organic premium of \$2.90 this week. Conventional flavored milk ads rose 470 percent. Sour cream in 16-ounce containers was the most advertised organic dairy product, appearing in 1,081 percent more ads over last week, with a weighted average advertised price of \$2.57.

RETAIL PRICES - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY - OCTOBER 6

Commodity	US	NE	SE	MID	SC	SW	NW
Butter 8 oz	1.99	1.99					
Butter 1#	3.87	3.91	3.99	3.95	2.99	3.72	4.03
Cheese 6-8 oz block	2.32	2.45	2.39	2.03	1.99	2.13	
Cheese 6-8 oz shred	2.25	2.24	2.24	2.27	1.99	2.36	1.99
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced	2.63	2.71	2.40	2.74		2.99	1.99
Cheese 1# block	4.50	3.90	4.99	5.99	4.49	4.05	4.99
Cheese 1# shred	4.43	4.12	4.26	4.78		4.96	4.99
Cheese 1# sliced	2.63		3.80				
Cheese 2# block	6.14	5.15				5.97	7.36
Cheese 2# shred	6.15	6.83	4.98		6.23	6.12	5.97
Cottage Cheese 16 oz	2.49	2.58	2.35				2.22
Cottage Cheese 24 oz	2.61	3.99	2.73	2.49	2.27	2.49	
Cream Cheese 8 oz	2.93	2.73	3.19	2.99	2.49	3.15	2.80
Ice Cream 14-16 oz	3.26	3.57	3.47	2.22	4.05	3.31	3.28
Ice Cream 48-64 oz	3.65	3.62	4.00	2.96	4.21	3.25	4.07
Milk 1/2 gallon	1.53	1.67	1.29	1.48	1.45	2.05	1.45
Milk gallon	3.22	3.77		2.75	3.71	3.48	2.41
Flavored Milk 1/2 gal	1.72	3.34	1.29	1.48	1.62	1.27	1.29
Flavored Milk gallon	2.68			2.67	2.79		
Sour Cream 16 oz	2.11	2.08	1.77	2.34	1.79	2.15	1.77
Sour Cream 24 oz	2.76	3.00	2.49	3.49	2.49	2.70	
Yogurt (Greek) 4-6 oz	1.06	1.13	1.03	1.07	1.00	1.08	0.89
Yogurt (Greek) 32 oz	5.18	5.99				4.49	
Yogurt 4-6 oz	0.62	0.59	0.74	0.66	0.60	0.48	0.69
Yogurt 32 oz	2.83	2.63	1.99	5.64	4.67	2.19	1.99

ORGANIC DAIRY - RETAIL OVERVIEW

National Weighted Retail Avg Price:

Sour Cream 16 oz:	\$2.57	Yogurt 4-6 oz:	
Butter 1 lb:		Yogurt 32 oz:	\$3.99
Cottage Cheese 16 oz:	\$5.12	Yogurt Greek 32 oz:	\$6.59
Cheese 2 lb shred:		Cream Cheese 8 oz:	\$3.29
Cheese shreds 6-8 oz:	\$4.57	Milk 1/2 gallon:	\$4.43
Cheese shreds 1 lb:		Milk gallon:	
Cheese 6-8 oz block:		Flavored Milk 1/2 gallon:	
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced:		Ice Cream 48-64 oz:	

WHOLESALE BUTTER MARKETS - OCTOBER 4

CENTRAL: Butter makers say demand remains intact despite market prices moving into rare territory. Bulk salted availability is not tight, but not abundant, either. Churning rates are not moving higher. Spot cream multiples have yet to move into the low/mid 1.20s. Reported multiples, for all Classes, are starting in the high 1.20s and low 1.30s in the Midwest this week. Butter makers say spot availability has firmed, and when spot market activity will begin to pick up for churning is uncertain. Butter market bulls are clearly overwhelming any bears. A number of contacts expect some downward correction near-term, but markets have yet to get that memo.

NORTHEAST: Butter prices reached \$3.3000 on industry cash exchanges last Wednesday and climbed to \$3.4200 as of Wednesday. Butter plant managers say that contracted loads of cream are keeping churns operational, as some relay the price of spot cream is cost-prohibitive. Cream supplies remain tight and demand outpaces supply. Eastern butter produc-

ers note that they are seeing slower retail sales. Some contacts have stated that retail prices at certain supermarkets are being kept low, lower than the price per pound on industry cash exchanges, in order to get customers in the door.

WEST: Although cream for spot load purchasing is slightly looser in northern parts of the region, overall, cream is tight in the West. Most of the cream is committed to contract obligations. Stakeholders anticipate near-term tightness remaining. Some butter makers are limiting additional cream purchases to necessity due to comfortable processing volumes given current prices. Butter production is mixed. Some manufacturers anticipate resuming butter production schedules by the later part this month. Manufacturers with currently active churns note strong to steady production. Some manufacturers report bulk butter production is under planned volumes, making availability of spot loads tighter. Unsalted bulk butter demand is strong, and a few butter makers are not accepting further orders.

WEEKLY COLD STORAGE HOLDINGS

SELECTED STORAGE CENTERS IN 1,000 POUNDS - INCLUDING GOVERNMENT

DATE	BUTTER	CHEESE
10/02/23	29,454	81,449
10/01/23	29,454	81,450
Change	0	-1
Percent Change	0	0

CME CASH PRICES - SEPTEMBER 25- 29, 2023

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for daily prices

	500-LB CHEDDAR	40-LB CHEDDAR	AA BUTTER	GRADE A NFDN	DRY WHEY
MONDAY October 2	\$1.5425 (+6¼)	\$1.7200 (NC)	\$3.3400 (+4)	\$1.1850 (NC)	\$0.2825 (-¾)
TUESDAY October 3	\$1.5425 (NC)	\$1.7200 (NC)	\$3.4200 (+8)	\$1.1825 (-¼)	\$0.2850 (+¼)
WEDNESDAY October 4	\$1.5425 (NC)	\$1.6800 (-4)	\$3.4300 (+1)	\$1.1775 (-½)	\$0.2900 (+1)
THURSDAY October 5	\$1.5600 (+1¼)	\$1.6850 (+½)	\$3.4850 (+5½)	\$1.1725 (-½)	\$0.2950 (+½)
FRIDAY October 6	\$1.5775 (+1¼)	\$1.7025 (+1¼)	\$3.5025 (+1¼)	\$1.1800 (+¾)	\$0.2975 (+¼)
Week's AVG \$ Change	\$1.5530 (+0.0345)	\$1.7015 (-0.0450)	\$3.4355 (+0.2045)	\$1.1795 (+0.0040)	\$0.2900 (-0.0070)
Last Week's AVG	\$1.5185	\$1.7465	\$3.2310	\$1.1755	\$0.2970
2022 AVG Same Week	\$2.2270	\$2.0150	\$3.2225	\$1.5395	\$0.4260

MARKET OPINION - CHEESE REPORTER

Cheese Comment: A total of 12 cars of blocks were sold Monday, the last at \$1.7200, which left the price unchanged. No blocks were sold Tuesday, and the price was unchanged. On Wednesday, 1 car of blocks was sold at \$1.6800, which set the price. One car of blocks was sold Thursday at \$1.6800; an unfilled bid for 1 car at \$1.6850 then set the price. A total of 10 cars of blocks were sold Friday, the last at \$1.7025, which set the price. The barrel price jumped Monday on a sale at \$1.5425, increased Thursday on a sale at \$15600, and rose Friday on a sale at \$1.5775.

Butter Comment: The price rose to a record \$3.3400 Monday on an unfilled bid for 1 car at that price, jumped to a record \$3.4200 Tuesday on the sale of 1 car at that price, increased to a record \$3.4300 Wednesday on an unfilled bid for 1 car at that price, rose to a record \$3.4850 Thursday on an unfilled bid for 1 car at that price, and increased to a record \$3.5025 Friday on an unfilled bid for 1 car at that price.

Nonfat Dry Milk Comment: The price declined Tuesday on a sale at \$1.1825, fell Wednesday on an uncovered offer at \$1.1775, dropped Thursday on a sale at \$1.1725, then rose Friday on a sale at \$1.1800.

Dry Whey Comment: The price fell Monday on a sale at 28.25 cents, increased Tuesday on a sale at \$28.50 cents, rose Wednesday on an unfilled bid at 29.0 cents, increased Thursday on a sale at 29.50 cents, and rose Friday on a sale at 29.75 cents.

WHEY MARKETS - OCTOBER 2 - 6, 2023

RELEASE DATE - OCTOBER 5, 2023

Animal Feed Whey—Central: Milk Replacer:	.2300 (+1) – .2500 (NC)
Buttermilk Powder:	
Central & East:	.8500 (NC) – 1.0000 (NC) West: .8800 (+3) – 1.0500 (+5)
Mostly:	.9000 (+3) – 1.0000 (+4)
Casein: Rennet:	3.6000 (-10) – 4.1000 (-10) Acid: 3.6500 (NC) – 3.9500 (NC)
Dry Whey—Central (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.2800 (+½) – .3400 (NC) Mostly: .3000 (+1) – .3300 (+1)
Dry Whey—West (Edible):	
Nonhygroscopic:	.3000 (+1) – .3700 (NC) Mostly: .3200 (+1) – .3600 (NC)
Dry Whey—NE:	.2800 (+1½) – .3525 (+1½)
Lactose—Central and West:	
Edible:	.1000 (-3) – .3950 (+1) Mostly: .1800 (+1) – .2850 (+½)
Nonfat Dry Milk—Central & East:	
Low/Medium Heat:	1.1000 (+2) – 1.2200 (+8) Mostly: 1.1400 (+4) – 1.1900 (+6)
High Heat:	1.2500 (+5½) – 1.3300 (-2)
Nonfat Dry Milk—Western:	
Low/Med Heat:	1.1000 (+2) – 1.2100 (+1) Mostly: 1.1300 (+3) – 1.1900 (+2)
High Heat:	1.2600 (+4) – 1.3950 (+½)
Whey Protein Concentrate—34% Protein:	
Central & West:	.7200 (NC) – .9800 (+1) Mostly: .8000 (+2) – .9100 (+½)
Whole Milk:	1.8500 (NC) – 2.0500 (NC)

HISTORICAL MONTHLY AVG BUTTER PRICES

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'09	1.1096	1.1097	1.1770	1.2050	1.2526	1.2235	1.2349	1.2000	1.2199	1.2830	1.5008	1.3968
'10	1.3950	1.3560	1.4641	1.5460	1.5896	1.6380	1.7787	1.9900	2.2262	2.1895	1.9295	1.6327
'11	2.0345	2.0622	2.0863	1.9970	2.0724	2.1077	2.0443	2.0882	1.8724	1.8295	1.7356	1.6119
'12	1.5077	1.4273	1.4895	1.4136	1.3531	1.4774	1.5831	1.7687	1.8803	1.9086	1.7910	1.4848
'13	1.4933	1.5713	1.6241	1.7197	1.5997	1.5105	1.4751	1.4013	1.5233	1.5267	1.6126	1.5963
'14	1.7756	1.8047	1.9145	1.9357	2.1713	2.2630	2.4624	2.5913	2.9740	2.3184	1.9968	1.7633
'15	1.5714	1.7293	1.7166	1.7937	1.9309	1.9065	1.9056	2.1542	2.6690	2.4757	2.8779	2.3318
'16	2.1214	2.0840	1.9605	2.0563	2.0554	2.2640	2.2731	2.1776	1.9950	1.8239	1.9899	2.1763
'17	2.2393	2.1534	2.1392	2.0992	2.2684	2.5688	2.6195	2.6473	2.4370	2.3293	2.2244	2.2078
'18	2.1587	2.1211	2.2011	2.3145	2.3751	2.3270	2.2361	2.3009	2.2545	2.2600	2.2480	2.2071
'19	2.2481	2.2659	2.2773	2.2635	2.3366	2.3884	2.3897	2.2942	2.1690	2.1071	2.0495	1.9736
'20	1.8813	1.7913	1.7235	1.1999	1.4710	1.8291	1.6925	1.5038	1.5163	1.4550	1.3941	1.4806
'21	1.3496	1.3859	1.7153	1.8267	1.8124	1.7758	1.6912	1.6815	1.7756	1.8002	1.9714	2.1536
'22	2.7203	2.6196	2.7346	2.7169	2.7514	2.9546	2.9506	3.0073	3.1483	3.1792	2.8634	2.6695
'23	2.3553	2.4017	2.3692	2.3655	2.4293	2.3902	2.5598	2.6760	2.8833			

FAO Posts Ninth Straight Monthly Decline; All Dairy Product Prices Fall

Rome, Italy—The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Dairy Price Index averaged 108.6 points in September, down 2.6 points (2.3 percent) from August, marking the ninth consecutive monthly decline, and as much as 34.1 points (23.9 percent) below its value in September 2022.

The FAO Dairy Price Index had averaged a record 142.4 points last year, but has been under 140 points every month this year.

International prices across all dairy products declined in September, principally underpinned by lackluster import demand for spot- and near-term deliveries amidst ample stocks in leading producing regions, despite an upsurge in demand towards the end of the month for some dairy products in Southeast Asian countries, the FAO noted.

In addition, rising export availabilities in New Zealand in its new production season, limited internal demand in the European Union (EU), and the impact of a weaker euro against the US dollar weighed on international dairy prices, the FAO added.

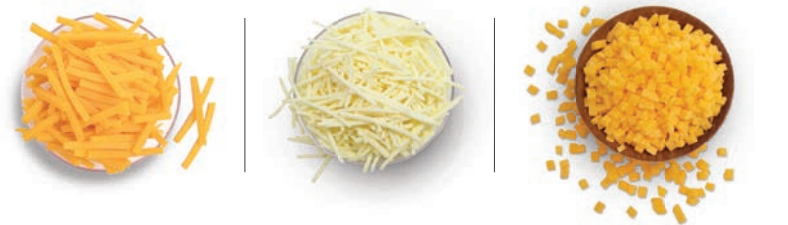
The FAO Dairy Price Index is computed using eight price quo-

tations for four dairy products (cheese, butter, skim milk powder and whole milk powder) from two representative markets. Within each dairy product, prices are weighted by the trade shares of their respective markets, while the dairy products are weighted by their average export shares for 2014-2016.

The FAO Food Price Index averaged 121.5 points in September, almost unchanged from its value in August, as declines in the price indices of vegetable oils, dairy and meat had offset increases in the sugar and cereal price indices. At this level, the index stood 14.6 points (10.7 percent) below its corresponding level a year ago and down 38.3 points (24.0 percent) from the all-time high reached in March 2022.

The Food and Agriculture Organization Food Price Index is a measure of the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities.

The FAO Food Price Index consists of the average of five commodity group price indices weighted by the average export shares of each of the groups over 2014-2016.



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