



CHEESE REPORTER

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FDA Outlines Bird Flu Research To Ensure Safety Of Milk Supply

Research Agenda Includes Retail Dairy Product Sampling, Studying Pasteurization Effectiveness

Washington—The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Tuesday made available an agenda that outlines various research efforts the agency is undertaking to help ensure the safety of the commercial milk supply during the ongoing outbreak of Highly Pathogenic H5N1 Avian Influenza (HPAI virus, also known as bird flu) in dairy cattle.

FDA said H5N1 research activities continue to follow stepwise, scientific study methods that are designed to help understand the characteristics of inactivation methods for H5N1 in dairy products, ensure the safety of retail dairy products, and mitigate the impact of this virus using a One Health strategy.

While FDA's initial assessment of the milk safety system continues to be affirmed by sampling and testing of retail dairy products, there remain a number of collective activities being undertaken to ensure the continued effectiveness of the federal-state

milk safety system, FDA noted. The agency said it will continue to follow a sound scientific process to inform the agency's public health decisions related to food safety.

FDA's newly released research agenda highlights ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of retail dairy products. Earlier this week, the agency launched a second sampling survey of dairy products available at retail locations nationwide to expand its knowledge of HPAI H5N1.

This retail sampling effort is intended to address remaining geographic and product gaps from the initial sampling of the commercial milk supply that the FDA conducted between April and May of this year; results were announced in the agency's May 10 update indicating that no viable virus was detected in 297 retail samples of milk and milk products.

FDA's second sampling survey is testing approximately 155 dairy

products for H5N1 collected at retail locations, including fluid milk and products such as aged raw milk cheese, pasteurized milk and pasteurized cheeses, cream cheese, butter and ice cream.

The samples collected include dairy products processed in states that were not included in the agency's first phase of retail research.

Additional samples are being taken from areas included in FDA's previous survey to help provide a more representative picture based on the level of dairy product production that occurs in certain regions.

FDA is also working on multiple efforts to understand the effectiveness of pasteurization and other inactivation methods. The agency has been actively engaged in conducting studies using continuous flow pasteurization equipment, reflective of those in commercial use, to help confirm pasteurization parameters that are effective at inactivating H5N1 HPAI virus during milk processing.

• See **Bird Flu Research**, p. 4

US Milk Production Fell 0.7% In May; Output Declined In 16 Out Of 24 Reporting States

Washington—US milk production in the 24 reporting states during May totaled 18.9 billion pounds, down 0.7 percent from May 2023, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reported last Friday.

April's milk production estimate for the 24 reporting states was revised down by 27 million pounds, so output was down 0.4 percent from April 2023, rather than down 0.2 percent as initially estimated.

Production per cow in the 24 reporting states averaged 2,122 pounds for May, three pounds below May 2023.

The number of milk cows on farms in the 24 reporting states in May was 8.89 million head, 52,000 head less than May 2023, but 5,000 head more than April 2024.

May milk production for the entire US totaled 19.7 billion pounds, down 0.9 percent from May 2023. Production per cow in the US averaged 2,106 pounds for May, three pounds below May 2023. The number of milk cows on farms in the US in May was 9.35 million head, 68,000 head less than May 2023, but 5,000 head more than April 2024.

California's May milk production totaled 3.59 billion pounds,

• See **Milk Output Falls**, p. 6

Top Finishers In WI State Fair Dairy Products Contest Winners Revealed; Auction Is Aug. 8

West Allis, WI—First, second and third place finishers in the Wisconsin State Fair Dairy Products Contest were announced early this week.

Judging took place here at State Fair Park on Thursday, June 20, with the evaluation of over 460 entries in 50-plus categories.

The Grand Master Cheese-maker, along with winning cheese, butter and other dairy product manufacturers, will be recognized during the Blue Ribbon Dairy Products Auction, here Aug. 8.

First, second and third place finishers include:

• See **Wisconsin State Fair**, p. 8

USDA Announces \$12 Million In Grant Funding For Four DBI Initiatives

Brodhead, WI—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Tuesday announced \$12 million in grant funding is available to support processing capacity expansion, on-farm improvements, and technical assistance services through the Dairy Business Innovation (DBI) Initiatives.

The funds will be awarded noncompetitively to the DBI Initiatives at the University of Wisconsin; California State University Fresno; the University of Tennessee; and Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

Tuesday's announcement was made at Decatur Dairy in Brodhead, WI, by USDA Under Secretary Jenny Lester Moffitt, who was joined by Randy Roman-ski, secretary of the Wisconsin

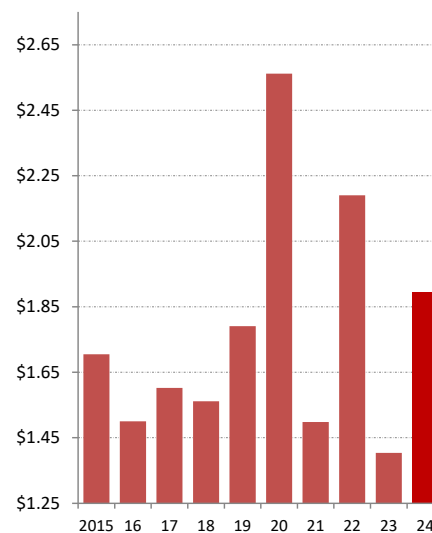
Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (WDATCP); and Rebekah Sweeney, senior director, programs and policy, at the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA).


"We're excited to be able to announce another round of funding for the Dairy Business Innovation Centers," which are "a really important part of the work that the department is doing in building more new and better markets for producers," Lester Moffitt said.

The \$12 million in funding announced Tuesday "is going to be invested in projects like we're seeing today here at Decatur farms and the Decatur Dairy, projects where they're investing

• See **DBI Initiatives**, p. 10

Average June Block Price Since 2015





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EDITORIAL COMMENT



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the dairy industry has obviously survived and in fact thrived (at least at times), thanks at least in part to various risk management programs

A Decade Without The Dairy Price Support Program

It's kind of hard to believe, but it's now been a full decade (plus a few months) since the 2014 farm bill was signed into law. Among its dairy-related provisions, that farm bill repealed the Dairy Product Price Support Program, which had been around for decades and had a sort of outsized influence on the industry for many years.

The end of the price support program was truly the end of a lengthy era in the dairy industry. The Milk Price Support Program (as it was known for a number of years) was established on Oct. 1, 1949, by the Agricultural Act of 1949 to provide dairy farmers a parity level of income, according to a "Fact Sheet" from USDA's Farm Service Agency.

The late 1970s through the late 1980s might be considered the "heyday" of the dairy price support program, for at least a couple of reasons.

First, under the 1977 farm bill, the support price was set at 80 percent of parity, and that price was to be adjusted semi-annually. Thanks to that farm bill, among other factors, the support price rose from \$8.26 per hundredweight (at the national average milkfat test) from Oct. 1, 1976, through Mar. 31, 1977, to \$13.10 per hundred starting on Oct. 1, 1980.

Second, due in large part to those semi-annual increases in the support price (and corresponding increases in the prices USDA paid to buy surplus cheese, butter and nonfat dry milk), government expenditures on the price support program soared, from about \$250 million for the 1978-79 marketing year to \$2.6 billion for the 1982-83 marketing year.

Looked at another way, USDA in 1980 purchased about 350 million pounds of surplus Cheddar cheese, 257 million pounds of surplus butter, and 634 million pounds of surplus nonfat dry

milk. By 1983, those purchases increased to 833 million pounds of Cheddar, 413 million pounds of butter and 1.06 billion pounds of nonfat dry milk.

Concerned about growing stockpiles of surplus dairy products, USDA convened a "Dairy Economics Symposium" in Kansas City, MO, in March 1982 to examine the dairy situation and possible remedies for rising government purchases.

The dairy industry, USDA, Congress and others spent the next several years trying to figure out how to reduce government dairy product purchases and stocks of surplus dairy products. Among the programs implemented were a Milk Diversion Program, under which dairy farmers were paid to reduce their milk production from a historical base; and a whole-herd buyout program, more formally known as the Dairy Termination Program, under which USDA bought out dairy herds in exchange for a commitment by dairy farmers to not produce milk for the next five years.

Those programs were, obviously, aimed at reducing milk production and thus dairy surpluses.

Meanwhile, Congress in 1983 passed legislation authorizing the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board, the mission of which is to coordinate a promotion and research program that expands domestic and foreign markets for US dairy products.

Two years later, in the 1985 farm bill, Congress created the Dairy Export Incentive Program, which was intended to help US dairy exporters enter foreign markets. That program was also terminated by the 2014 farm bill.

Also in the 1980s, USDA launched the infamous "cheese giveaway" program, under which USDA donated surplus cheese and butter to low-income

Americans. That program did reduce surplus dairy product stocks, but also displaced considerable volumes of commercial sales, according to various government reports in the 1980s.

Fast-forward to the mid-1990s, and the 1996 farm bill included language to terminate the price support program by 2000. But the program was later extended both in short-term legislation and then in both the 2002 and 2008 farm bills.

What arguably led to the price support program's demise was the 2008-09 global financial crisis. Dairy prices plunged in early 2009, but USDA's Dairy Industry Advisory Committee (DIAC), which was convened later that year, concluded that existing federal programs, including the price support program, had a limited impact on mitigating the massive impact of market events.

One of the DIAC's recommendations was to suggest that if Congress could come up with a better safety net program for dairy farmers, it would support ending the price support program and DEIP. That's what the 2014 farm bill did.

So what's been the impact of no price support program for the past decade? Well, the dairy industry has obviously survived and in fact thrived (at least at times), thanks at least in part to various risk management programs now available as a safety net to dairy farmers.

Meanwhile, government dairy product purchases and stocks, and their associated costs, no longer generate negative publicity for the dairy industry, or distract the industry from the commercial market.

Considering that there's been little to no mention of the price support program since its demise a decade ago, it seems like its elimination was a positive change for the dairy industry.

Bipartisan House Bill Aims To Combat Cargo Theft, Secure Supply Chains

Washington—US Reps. David G. Valadao (R-CA) and Brad Schneider (D-IL) on Tuesday introduced legislation that aims to improve coordination and find solutions to stopping theft within US supply chains.

The Safeguarding our Supply Chains Act establishes a Supply Chain Crime Coordination Center within the US Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and a Supply Chain and Theft Task Force led by HSI and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

The Supply Chain Crime Coordination Center will operate through HSI's Innovation Lab to collect and analyze data related to supply chain fraud and theft and to analyze regions and modes of transportation in the US that are experiencing high volumes of organized crime.

The Supply Chain and Theft Task Force will be a joint effort between HSI, the FBI, and all relevant agencies to address supply chain fraud and theft throughout the rail, motor carrier, and intermodal systems to detect, disrupt, and deter organized theft groups that are targeting all stages of the supply chain.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of dollars' worth of cargo has been stolen, causing widespread supply chain disruptions, Valadao noted. The logistics and transportation industry is facing an unprecedented increase in theft, and the issue is on track to increase even further this year. Millions of dollars' worth of cargo is being stolen before it can reach its destination.

The Safeguarding our Supply Chains Act is supported by, among others, National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), US Dairy Export Council (USDEC), American Trucking Associations (ATA), US Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), National Retail Federation, UPS, and Retail Industry Leaders Association.

"USDEC thanks Congressman Valadao for taking measures today to reign in the ongoing shipping container break-ins that dairy exporters are experiencing," said Krysta Harden, USDEC's president and CEO. "American dairy products destined for international customers are becoming collateral damage as organized crime groups indiscriminately open intermodal containers, adding extra costs to exporters and raising food safety and quality concerns. We look forward to working to advance this important legislation into law."

"US dairy producers need an export supply chain that is reliable and secure," said Gregg Doud, NMPF's president and CEO. "We thank Rep. Valadao for introducing legislation today to enhance policing of cargo break-ins that are increasingly affecting dairy exporters."

"The trucking industry takes great pride in delivering America's freight safely and on time; however, the billions of tons of goods transported by trucks from coast to coast have increasingly become a prime target for organized crime rings, putting truck drivers at risk and raising costs for consumers," said Henry Hanscom, ATA senior vice president of legislative affairs.

"ATA commends Congressman Valadao for introducing legislation to address this alarm-

ing trend and safeguard our supply chain," Hanscom continued. "The Supply Chain Fraud and Theft Task Force created by this bill would strengthen the partnership between motor carriers, law enforcement, the government, and other supply chain partners to strike an effective blow against organized crime."

"Leading retailers rely on our nation's supply chains to deliver for consumers every single day. Any disruption to the safety or efficiency of that system is cause for concern, both for the businesses that rely on it and for the larger economy," said Sarah Gilmore, director of supply chain policy, Retail Industry Leaders Association.

"Organized retail crime rings continue to harm community retailers and their employees and are now exploiting supply chains to expand their operations and bolster their illegal activities at the

expense of communities, workers and businesses," Gilmore continued. "We thank Representative Valadao for recognizing the urgency of current challenges and the need for federal coordination among all stakeholders in working toward a solution."

"This bill will provide the necessary resources to combat organized crime and protect the movement of American goods throughout our country, while upholding the economic integrity of our national supply chain from rail to road, to retail," said Mike Kiely, UPS president of global government affairs.

"The alarming increase in cargo theft is having a devastating impact across industries, and we need to do more to ensure these goods are making it to their destination. The Safeguarding our Supply Chains Act will improve coordination to identify solutions and prevent theft," Valadao said.

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Bird Flu Research

(Continued from p. 1)

These ongoing studies will provide the information to validate evidence of the effectiveness of pasteurization in ensuring that no viable HPAI H5N1 virus is present in the commercial milk supply, FDA explained.

The agency is committing to sharing results from these ongoing studies in the near future.

Emergency Producer Assistance

Meanwhile, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Thursday announced that it will begin accepting applications starting on Monday, July 1, through its updated Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP) to provide financial assistance to eligible dairy producers who incur milk losses due to HPAI.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) expanded ELAP through the rulemaking process to assist with a portion of financial losses resulting from reduced milk production when cattle are removed from commercial milking in dairy herds having a confirmed positive H5N1 test. Positive test results must be confirmed through the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL).

To be eligible for ELAP, adult dairy cattle must be:

- Part of a herd that has a confirmed positive H5N1 test from NVSL;
- Initially removed from commercial milk production at some point during the 14-day time period before the sample collection date for the positive H5N1 test date through 120 days after the sample collection date for the positive H5N1 test;
- Milk-producing, currently lactating; and
- Maintained for commercial milk production, in which the

producer has a financial risk, on the beginning date of the eligible loss condition.

To apply for ELAP assistance, dairy producers need to submit the following to FSA: proof of herd infection through a confirmed positive H5N1 test on individual animal or bulk tank samples confirmed by NVSL; a notice of loss indicating the date when the loss is apparent, which is the sample collection date for the positive H5N1 test; and an application for payment certifying the number of eligible adult dairy cows, the month the cows were removed from production, and the producer's share in the milk production.

The final date to file a notice of loss and application for payment for eligible losses is 30 days after the end of the prior calendar year, which is January 30.

The per cow milk loss payment due to H5N1 will be determined based on an expected 21-day period of no milk production when a cow is removed from the milking herd, followed by seven days when the cow has returned to milking but produces 50 percent of the normal amount of production.

ELAP payments are determined using a per head payment rate of 90 percent calculated based on the monthly all-milk price and national milk production published by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and a standard number of days with reduced or no production.

As of Wednesday, H5N1 has been detected in a total of 133 dairy herds in 12 states, according to USDA.

Currently, one herd in each of the states of Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio and Texas are enrolled in USDA's HPAI Dairy Herd Status Program, which offers dairy producers more options to monitor the health of their herds and move cows interstate while

further reducing H5N1 virus spread, increasing surveillance and expanding knowledge of the disease, and supporting an overall national program to reduce the risk of H5N1 in dairy herds.

"USDA remains committed to working with producers, state veterinarians, animal health professionals, and our federal partners as we continue to detect the presence of H5N1 in dairy herds and take additional measures to contain the spread of the disease," said US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

H5N1 On Milking Equipment

The H5N1 virus in unpasteurized milk is stable on metal and rubber components of commercial milking equipment for at least one hour, increasing its potential to infect people and other animals, report researchers from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and Emory University in the journal *Emerging Infectious Diseases*.

The study underscores the heightened risk of bird flu exposure for dairy farm workers and signals the need for wider adoption of personal protective equipment, including face shields, masks and eye protection, researchers said.

"Dairy cows have to be milked even if they are sick, and it has not been clear for how long the virus contained in residual milk from the milking process remains stable on the equipment," said lead author Valerie Le Sage, Ph.D., research assistant professor of microbiology and molecular genetics at the Center for Vaccine Research at Pitt. "It is concerning that the virus in unpasteurized milk can remain stable for hours and potentially infect farm workers or spread from animal to animal."

Clinical symptoms of bird flu can range from mild fever and cough to shortness of breath and pneumonia and can be lethal.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

50 YEARS AGO

June 28, 1974: Guelph, Ontario—The aging of Cheddar to develop its body, flavor and texture might be accelerated by at least one or two months if cheese is made from lactose-free milk, according to a USDA scientist. As milk is poured into the cheese vat, powdered lactase is added, which breaks down lactose into glucose and galactose – a new form of carbohydrate that appears to accelerate aging.

Washington—Foreign dairy imports probably won't continue at record-high levels this year, but Rep. Vernon Thomson (R-WI) is still pushing a bill to keep imports down because he says Wisconsin dairy farmers need more protection than "mere assurances that imports will be reduced."

25 YEARS AGO

June 18, 1999: Watertown, WI—Specialty Cheese Company has added a fourth facility here because of growing demand for the company's baked cheese chips. "We aren't promoting or advertising it, but word has spread and we're having problems keeping up," owner and president Paul Scharfman said.

Wellington, New Zealand—The dairy industry here has applied to the New Zealand Commerce Commission to merge most of the country's manufacturing co-ops with the New Zealand Dairy Board, creating New Zealand's largest commercial entity.

10 YEARS AGO

June 27, 2014: Chicago—Date labeling variations on food packages contribute to confusion and misunderstanding by consumers regarding how the dates relate to food quality and safety. Collaboration to develop a simple solution to challenges faced by food and dairy manufacturers would have "significant benefit."

Hilbert, WI—Simon Coveny, Ireland's ag minister, recently opened a new \$12 million facility at Thiel Cheese & Ingredients here. The facility includes a Customer Innovation Center created to develop products and functional dairy solutions for Thiel's customers.

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House Bill Would Restore Maximum Monthly Allowance For Milk In WIC

Washington—Bipartisan legislation introduced in the US House this week would return the maximum monthly allowance of milk available for families, utilizing the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to previous levels.

In April, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) finalized updates to the foods prescribed to WIC program participants. That final rule, among other things, reduces milk amounts from: 16 quarts to 12 quarts for children ages 12 to 23 months in the child food package; 16 quarts to 14 quarts for children ages two through four years in the child food package; 22 quarts to 16 quarts in the pregnant and partially breastfeeding food packages; and 24 quarts to 16 quarts in the fully breastfeeding package.

The Protecting Mothers and Infants' Access to Milk Act would restore the previous maximum monthly allowances for milk. The legislation was introduced by US Reps. Elise Stefanik (R-NY), Josh Harder (D-CA) and Derrick Van Orden (R-WI).

"The WIC program helps mothers and young children have access to key nutrients they otherwise may lack. Milk, cheese, and yogurt are three of the five top redeemed items through WIC. They also provide three of the four nutrients of public health concern identified in the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans," said Gregg Doud, president and CEO of the National Milk Producers Federation. "This bill supports the program's goal of ensuring all Americans have consistent and equitable access to healthy, safe, and affordable foods."

The Northeast Dairy Producers Association (NEDPA) "fully supports consumer choice and efforts to ensure all New Yorkers have equitable access to nutritious dairy products," said Keith Kimball, NEDPA chair.

"We must ensure women, infants, and children are fed and healthy, which is why I am proud to join Rep. Stefanik in introducing this legislation to restore the WIC maximum monthly allowances for milk, which should have never been cut in the first place," Van Orden said.

"Families are already struggling with skyrocketing prices at the grocery store, and this new rule would limit their access to healthy milk our dairy farmers in Upstate New York and the North Country work hard to provide for our communities," Stefanik said.

Safe Food Coalition Opposes House Effort To Pause Food Traceability Rule

Washington—The Safe Food Coalition (SFC), a partnership of consumer, public health and other organizations, is asking congressional leaders to oppose legislation that would delay implementation of the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Traceability Rule.

The final Food Traceability Rule, which was released in November 2022, is currently scheduled to go into effect Jan. 20, 2026, the SFC noted in a June 25 letter to House and Senate leaders.

This compliance date "gives industry ample time to prepare and represents an already long overdue enactment of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)," the letter stated.

At the core of this rule is a requirement that persons subject to the rule who manufacture, process, pack, or hold foods on the Food Traceability List (FTL), maintain records containing Key Data Elements (KDEs) associated with specific Critical Tracking Events (CTEs); and provide information to FDA within 24 hours or within some reasonable time to which FDA has agreed.

The Food Traceability Rule aligns with the best practices followed by members of industry, according to the letter. Already, as the compliance date approaches, companies have made "significant progress" in tracking and recording data for food traceability purposes, improving on the current system that limits traceability capabilities to "one step forward and one step back," with little specificity.

Larger food retailers have indicated that they expect suppliers to comply with the rule well ahead of FDA's compliance date, the letter continued. For example, Kroger has announced that it will require all its food suppliers — not just those supplying the "high risk" foods on FDA's Food Traceability List, which includes numerous cheese products — to adopt new traceability protocols by June 30, 2025, six months prior to FDA's compliance deadline.

However, FMI-The Food Industry Association has pushed for House legislation, titled the Food Traceability Enhancement Act, which "would effectively gut FDA's rule by allowing retailers to discard critical lot code information that has been carefully developed and maintained by suppliers subject to the rule," the letter stated.

Lot codes "lie at the core of FDA's ability to trace and solve outbreaks, and exempting retailers — the final link in the supply chain — from maintaining such information will effectively lay waste to efforts by FDA, produce growers, and other producers and manufacturers of foods covered by the rule," the letter stated.

Another effort to undermine FDA's Food Traceability Rule has appeared as a "poison pill rider" in the House Appropriations Committee's appropriations package, the letter noted. A provision in the fiscal year 2025 bill for FDA and other agencies would put FDA's 2026 implementation date on hold by demanding that the agency conduct additional traceability pilots, including a pilot that

will require FDA to "successfully" solve outbreaks without using lot codes.

"Such delays are unnecessary," the letter stated. FDA has already conducted traceability pilots in partnership with industry and the Institute of Food Technologists shortly after FSMA was passed.

"Congress ordered FDA to create a system of commonsense traceability requirements for food retailers and their suppliers almost 14 years ago. Legislators should not now throw a wrench in the works now that FDA is finally ready to implement that system," said Thomas Gremillion, director of food policy at Consumer Federation of America. "FDA should stick to its timeline and Congress should let the agency do its job."

"Responsible members of the food industry are already working with FDA to comply with traceability requirements," said Sarah Sorscher, director of regulatory affairs at the Center for Science in the Public Interest. "Congress should not make that effort go to waste by turning the clock back on this very sensible and necessary policy."

"Recent efforts to undermine and delay the implementation of the traceability rule would be very harmful and fail to protect consumers when unsafe food enters the marketplace," said Brian Ronholm, director of food policy for Consumer Reports.

"While we support efforts to improve traceability, we need to ensure that FDA can use the information required by the complex 596-page Food Traceability Rule to improve food safety before billions of dollars and millions of hours are invested that will drive up costs," said Jennifer Hatcher, FMI's chief public policy officer.

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Milk Output Falls

(Continued from p. 1)

down 1.5 percent from May 2023, due to 6,000 fewer milk cows and 25 less pounds of milk per cow. California's April milk output was revised down by 8 million pounds, so production was down slightly from April 2023, rather than up 0.2 percent as originally estimated.

Wisconsin's May milk production totaled 2.81 billion pounds, up 1.1 percent from May 2023, due to 2,000 more milk cows and 20 more pounds of milk per cow. Wisconsin's April milk production was revised down by 13 million pounds, so output was up 2.0 percent from April 2023, rather than up 2.5 percent as initially estimated.

May milk production in Idaho totaled 1.48 billion pounds, down 0.6 percent from May 2023, due to 1,000 fewer milk cows and 10 less pounds of milk per cow.

Idaho's April milk production was revised up by 6 million pounds, so production was up 0.3 percent from April 2023, rather than down 0.1 percent as originally estimated.

Milk production in Texas during May totaled 1.44 billion pounds, down 0.3 percent from May 2023, due to 2,000 fewer milk cows but unchanged milk per cow. Texas's April milk production had been down 3.3 percent from April 2023.

New York's May milk production totaled 1.4 billion pounds, down 0.2 percent from May 2023, due to unchanged milk cow numbers but five less pounds of milk per cow.

New York's April milk output was revised up by 6 million pounds, so production was up 0.4

percent from April 2023, rather than unchanged as initially estimated.

Michigan's May milk production totaled 1.05 billion pounds, up 0.1 percent from May 2023, due to 2,000 more milk cows but 10 less pounds of milk per cow. Michigan's April milk production was revised down by 2 million pounds, so output was up 0.3 percent from April 2023, rather than up 0.5 percent as originally estimated.

Minnesota's May milk production totaled 901 million pounds, down 0.6 percent from May 2023, due to 8,000 fewer milk cows but 25 more pounds of milk per cow. Minnesota's April milk output was revised down by 5 million pounds, so production was down 0.8 percent from April 2023, rather than down 0.2 percent as initially estimated.

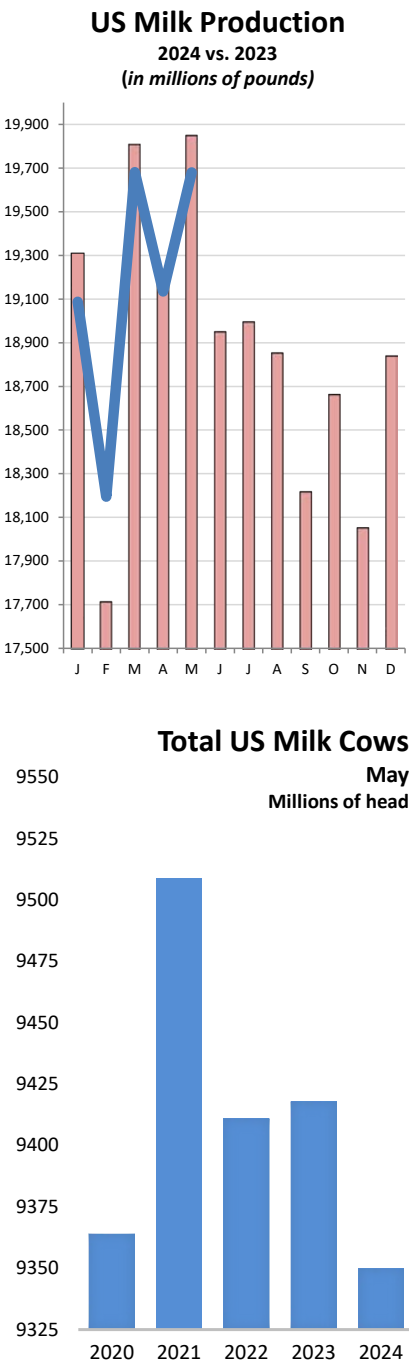
May milk production in Pennsylvania totaled 856 million pounds, down 0.9 percent from May 2023, due to 1,000 fewer milk cows and 15 less pounds of milk per cow.

Pennsylvania's April milk production was revised down by 7 million pounds, so output was down 1.3 percent from April 2023, rather than down 0.5 percent as originally estimated.

Washington's May milk production totaled 546 million pounds, up 0.9 percent from May 2023, due to 2,000 more milk cows and five more pounds of milk per cow, NASS reported.

Washington's April milk output was revised up by 3 million pounds, so production was up 0.2 percent from April 2023, rather than down 0.4 percent as originally estimated.

Iowa's May milk production totaled 522 million pounds, up 2.0



Milk Production by State				
STATE	May 2023 millions of lbs	May 2024 millions of lbs	% output change	Change Cows
California	3644	3589	-1.5	-6000
Wisconsin	2775	2805	1.1	2000
Idaho	1484	1475	-0.6	-1000
Texas	1445	1440	-0.3	-2000
New York	1402	1399	-0.2	NC
Michigan	1046	1047	0.1	2000
Minnesota	906	901	-0.6	-8000
Pennsylvania	864	856	-0.9	-1000
Washington	541	546	0.9	2000
Iowa	512	522	2.0	3000
New Mexico	605	516	-14.7	-42000
Ohio	490	493	0.6	3000
Colorado	460	454	-1.3	-3000
Arizona	434	423	-2.5	-5000
South Dakota	381	420	10.2	19000
Indiana	391	388	-0.8	NC
Kansas	368	358	-2.7	-6000
Oregon	223	216	-3.1	-4000
Vermont	223	215	-3.6	-3000
Florida	171	189	10.5	8000
Utah	185	183	-1.1	-1000
Georgia	181	166	-8.3	-8000
Illinois	151	151	-	-1000
Virginia	124	123	-0.8	NC

percent from May 2022, due to 3,000 more milk cows and 15 more pounds of milk per cow.

Iowa's April milk production was revised down by 3 million pounds, so output was up 3.0 percent from April 2023, rather than up 3.6 percent as originally estimated.

All told for the 24 reporting states NASS collected and

reported in May, compared to May 2023, milk production was higher in seven reporting states, with those increases ranging from 0.1 percent in Michigan to 10.5 percent in Florida. Milk production was lower in 16 states, with those declines ranging from 0.2 percent in New York to 14.7 percent in New Mexico; and unchanged in Illinois.

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New Zealand-Based TAHA To Launch Dairy Protein Products In US

Chicago—TAHA, a functional dairy-based protein and nutrition brand, this week announced its entrance into the US market.

TAHA's flagship products include Whey Protein Concentrate, Whey Protein Isolate, Body & Mind Protein Blend, and Colostrum.

The Whey Protein Concentrate and Whey Protein Isolate are available in chocolate, vanilla, berry, mocha and natural flavors, while the Body & Mind Protein Blend comes in German chocolate, Madagascan vanilla, and natural. TAHA's high IgG, colostrum comes undiluted in its natural form.

TAHA is now available on tahanutrition.com and Amazon.

USDA Announces More Resources For Firms Interested In Selling Their Products To USDA

Washington—The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Monday announced resource enhancements designed to simplify and streamline access to contracting information for businesses interested in selling their products and services to USDA.

These updates include the addition of new and targeted contracting information on USDA.gov, along with improved functionality that makes it easier for businesses and individuals to quickly find and access procurement opportunities, and a portal for businesses to share the scope of their capabilities with USDA more easily, the department explained.

Spearheaded by USDA's Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) in collaboration with the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU), these improvements include:

- The creation of a new "Contracting with USDA" site that offers information, resources, and links for businesses that want to contract with USDA, in a Q&A format.

- An updated Vendor Capability Submission Portal that allows suppliers and merchants to submit their business capabilities to USDA via a web form. Portal submissions are shared with contracting officers across the department.

- Updates to the previously deployed USDA Procurement Forecast, a tool that assists businesses and individuals with identifying procurement opportunities with USDA. Launched in June 2023, the Procurement Forecast now has a user-friendly way to search and filter procurement opportunities. Currently, the tool includes nearly 6,000 planned contract opportunities for fiscal year (FY) 2024.

In FY 2023, USDA obligated more than \$11 billion in 67,000 contract activities spanning a wide variety of industries and contract types. In FY 2024, USDA estimates a comparable obligation amount and contract awards to our industry partners.

Last fiscal year, USDA awarded contracts to nearly 12,000 businesses from a wide range of industries for \$4.9 billion in food (including \$519.2 million for 299 million pounds of dairy products), \$4.2 billion in services, \$1.7 billion in information technology contracts, half a billion in goods, and nearly a half billion in construction contracts.

Food Manufacturers, Retailers Back QR Codes As Successor To Barcodes

Brussels, Belgium—On the 50th anniversary of the barcode being scanned for the first time, 22 food and other businesses are calling for the global adoption of QR Codes with GS1 standards.

Powered by GS1, the neutral, not-for-profit standards organization behind the barcode, these QR Codes can give access to a wealth of product information easily accessible via smartphones, which GS1 said is expected to revolutionize the consumer experience.

Fifty years after the first scan, global industry leaders are again uniting in the transition to QR Codes with GS1 standards, a 2D barcode also known as QR Code powered by GS1, the organization stated.

Companies that have signed the industry global joint statement include, among others: Nestle, Savencia Fromage & Dairy, The J.M. Smucker Co., Barilla Group, Carrefour, Mengniu Group, Metro, Mondelēz International, The Procter & Gamble Company, Tsingtao Beer Group, and Yili Group.

Today, more than ever, consumers and regulatory bodies are demanding more product information, such as usage instructions, safety, ingredients, nutrition, certifications, recycling, etc., and there is an ongoing need for enhanced product traceability through the supply chain to mitigate risks and improve customer service, according to the joint industry statement signed by the 22 companies.

However, the traditional barcode doesn't have the capacity to support these future needs.

To meet these new demands, the consumer goods industry will be best served by transitioning to QR Codes with GS1 standards, as they can store extensive amounts of product information and are easily accessible via smartphones, the statement continued. This would open a range of new possibilities, providing all the information consumers need and desire, improving traceability and driving efficiencies through the supply chain, while still enabling scanning at checkout.

The goal of this collaboration is that by the end of 2027 QR Codes with GS1 standards should be widely adopted.

To achieve this, a coordinated effort is necessary between manufacturers and retailers: manufacturers should start implementing QR Codes with GS1 standards on product packages, while retailers should ensure their point of sale (POS) scanners are equipped to read the new barcodes, the organization said.

Unlike traditional barcodes, QR Codes powered by GS1 can connect consumers to extensive amounts of product information to elevate their experience, including usage and recycling instructions, safety, nutritional information, and industry certifications, GS1 stated.

With information easily accessible via smartphones, this opens a range of new possibilities for consumers, manufacturers, and retailers alike — giving access to all the information consumers need and desire, improving traceability, and driving efficiencies

through the supply chain, while still enabling scanning at checkout, the organization explained.

Companies will need to evaluate their internal technology and processes to make the most of QR Codes with GS1 standards, the organization pointed out. Adding more detailed product information into QR Codes can be done gradually, allowing businesses to plan changes at their own pace.

"The first barcode scan forever changed how we buy and sell products," said Renaud de Barbuat, president and CEO of GS1. "Fifty years on, industry champions have come together calling for the transition to QR Codes powered by GS1."

"This collaborative effort is set to transform in new ways how we shop, eat, and live," de Barbuat continued. "We believe this marks the start of a second barcode revolution — making products more traceable and transforming the consumer experience, thereby unlocking the future of retail."

"We expect that the transition to QR Codes with GS1 standards will happen gradually around the world, but one thing is certain: those that accelerate through this transformation the fastest will be best positioned to unlock valuable new capabilities and provide more benefits to their customers, shoppers, and consumers," said Mark Batenic, chairman of the Independent Grocers Alliance (IGA) and chairman of the GS1 Management Board.

The shift has already begun, with the new technology being tested in 48 countries around the world, according to GS1.

For more information, visit www.gs1.org/2D-barcodes.



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Wisconsin State Fair

(Continued from p. 1)

Mild Cheddar

First place: Team Sartori, Plymouth, Farmhouse Cheddar, 99.00
Second place: Sartori, Old World Cheddar, 98.975
Third place: Associated Milk Producers, Inc., Blair, 98.850

Aged Cheddar

First place: Foremost Farms USA, Marshfield, 99.360
Second place: Widmer's Cheese Cellars, Inc., Theresa, 99.315
Third place: Kerry Henning, Artisan Cheese Exchange, Ltd., Sheboygan, Deer Creek The Imperial Buck, 99.265

Colby, Monterey Jack

First place: Kerry Henning, Artisan Cheese Exchange, Deer Creek The Robin, 99.80
Second place: Mark Lins, Cedar Grove Cheese, Plain, Marble Colby, 98.950
Third place: Ryan Meixelsperger, Cedar Grove, Colby, 98.850

Swiss Style

First place: Sam Morhardt, Prairie Farms, Shullsburg, Baby Swiss Wheel, 99.320
Second place: Chalet Cheese Co-op, Monroe, Swiss, 98.820
Third place: Team Prairie Farms-White Hill, CROPP Cooperative/Organic Valley, La Farge, Organic Baby Swiss Cheese, 97.950

Brick, Muenster

First place: Decatur Dairy, Brodhead, Brick cheese, 99.60
Second place: Steve Stettler, Decatur Dairy, Brodhead, WI, Brick, 99.35
Third place: Ty Saglam, Klondike Cheese, Monroe, Buholzer Brothers Brick, 99.150

Mozzarella

First place: Jeremy Robinson, Agropur, Luxemburg, LMPS Mozzarella, 99.75
Second place: Pat Doell, Agropur, Luxemburg, LMPS Mozzarella, 99.450
Third place: Pat Doell, Agropur, Luxemburg, Whole Milk Mozzarella, 99.350

String Cheese

First place: Tom Blauert, Agropur-Little Chute, Appleton, 99.475
Second place: Dan Reed, V&V Supremo Foods, Browntown, 98.650
Third place: Ken Carothers, Agropur-Little Chute, 98.625

Blue Veined Cheese

First place: Prairie Farms Dairy, Mindoro, Heat Treated Gorgonzola, 99.425
Second place: Roelli Cheese, Shullsburg, 99.225
Third place: Kingston Creamery, Cambria, Gorgonzola, 99.000

Feta

First place: Team Simonson, Agropur, Weyauwega, 99.30
Second place: Steve Buholzer, Klondike Cheese, 99.100
Third place: Steve Webster, Klondike Cheese, 98.900

Flavored Pepper Cheese

First place: Marieke Gouda, Thorp, Hatch Pepper Gouda, 99.665
Second place: Kerry Henning, Artisan Cheese Exchange, The Rattlesnake, 99.525
Third place: Zach Hagen, V&V Supremo Foods, Chihuahua with Jalapeno Peppers, 99.500

Flavored Soft Cheese

First place: Lake Country Dairy, Turtle Lake, Maple Flavored Mascarpone, 99.67



Wisconsin State Fair Judges Elle Fearing of Carr Valley Cheese, and long-time veteran cheese judge, Terry Lensmire, evaluate a pepper cheese entry.

Second place: Steve Webster, Klondike Cheese, Odyssey Peppercorn Feta, 99.430
Third place: Luke Buholzer, Klondike Cheese, Odyssey Peppercorn Feta, 99.390

Flavored Semi Soft

First place: Lake Country Dairy, Smoky Pepper Rubbed Fontal, 99.90
Second place: Lake Country Dairy, Black Pepper Roasted Garlic Fontal, 99.895
Third place: Lake Country Dairy, Tuscan Hand Rubbed Fontal, 99.70

Smoked Cheese

First place: Pat Doell, Agropur, Smoked Provolone, 99.00
Second place: Marieke Gouda, Smoked Gouda, 98.65
Third place: Kingston Cheese, Smoked Blue Cheese, 98.350

Flavored Hard Cheese

First place: Lake Country Dairy, Black Pepper Roasted Garlic Asiago, 99.900
Second place: Kerry Henning, Artisan Cheese Exchange, Deer Creek The Night Walker, 99.650
Third place winner: Sartori Company, Tomato Basil BellaVitano, 99.600

Smear Ripened Cheese

First place: Orphee Paillotin/Paula Heimerl /Ron's Wisconsin Cheese, Alpinage Cheese, Oak Creek, Raw Milk Raclette with Fenugreek seeds, 99.275
Second place: Emmi Roth-Monroe, Stoughton, Roth Grand Cru Reserve Wheel, 99.050
Third place: Emmi Roth-Monroe, Stoughton, Roth Grand Cru Original Wheel, 98.825

Cold Pack Cheese, Cheese Food

First place: Pine River Pre-Pack, Newton, Spicy Beer Cold Pack Cheese Spread, 99.900
Second place: Pine River Pre-Pack, Jalapeno Gourmet Snack Spread, 99.700
Third place: Steve Stettler, Decatur Dairy, Brodhead, WI, Colby Swiss Spread, 99.45

Pasteurized Process Cheese, Cheese Food, Cheese Spread

First place: Gilman Cheese Corporation, Gilman, White American Pasteurized Process Cheese, 99.255
Second place: Gilman Cheese, Shelf Stable Cheddar, 98.665
Third place: AMPI, Portage, Dinner Bell Creamery American Swiss Slice on Slice Processed Cheese, 97.765

Reduced Fat, Lite Cheese

First place: Steve Webster, Klondike Cheese, Odyssey Reduced Fat Feta, 99.53
Second place: Ron Buholzer, Klondike Cheese, Odyssey Reduced Fat Mediterranean Herb Feta, 99.125
Third place: Matt Erdley, Klondike Cheese, Reduced Fat Tomato & Basil Feta, 99.08

Open: Soft & Spreadable

First place: Crave Brothers Farmstead Cheese, Waterloo, Mascarpone, 98.825
Second place: Robert Wills, Cedar Grove Cheese, Quark, 98.690
Third place: Lake Country Dairy/Schuman Cheese, Traditional Mascarpone, 97.46

Havarti

First place: Steve Stettler, Decatur Dairy, 99.75
Second place: Matt Henze, Decatur Dairy, 99.70
Third place: Ty Saglam, Klondike Cheese, 99.685

Flavored Havarti

First place: Steve Stettler, Decatur Dairy, Dill Havarti, 99.825
Second place: Decatur Cheesemakers, Decatur Dairy, Dill Havarti, 99.575
Third place: Tom Schultz, Klondike Cheese, Dill Havarti, 99.50

Open: Semi Soft Cheese

First place: Lake Country Dairy, Cello Fontal, 99.40
Second place: Bryan Allen, Foremost Farms, Clayton, Provolone Non-Smoked, 98.90
Third place: Marieke Gouda, Golden, 98.875

• See **WI State Fair**, p. 9



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Wisconsin State Fair

(Continued from p. 1)

Open: Hard Cheese
First place: Lake Country Dairy, Artisan Parmesan, 99.05
Second place: Lake Country Dairy, Cello Asiago, 98.915
Third place: Roelli Cheese, Natural Rinded Cheddar Wheel with Sparse Blue Veins, 98.905

Flavored Goat Milk Cheese
First place: Franklin Team, Saputo Cheese USA, Blueberry Vanilla Goat Cheese, 99.35
Second place: LaClare Creamery, LLC, Malone, Fig & Honey Goat Cheese, 99.15
Third place: Franklin Team, Saputo Cheese, Cranberry Cinnamon Goat Cheese, 99.05

Natural Goat Milk Cheese
First place: LaClare Creamery, Malone, Original Goat Cheese, 98.95
Second place: Kingston Cheese Cooperative, Goat Blue Cheese, 98.75
Third place: Black Creek Team, Saputo, Wauwatosa, Montchevre Goat Milk Cheddar, 98.575

Latin American Cheese
First place: Crave Brothers, Oaxaca, 99.735
Second place: Ben Workman, V&V Supremo Foods, Oaxaca Ball, 99.225
Third place: Tom Dahmen, V&V Supremo Foods, Oaxaca Ball, 99.175

Sheep & Mixed Milk Cheese
First place: Terry Martin, Artisan Cheese Exchange, The Indigo Bunting, 99.60
Second place: Robert Wills, Cedar Grove Cheese, Donatello, 99.300
Third place: Team Kingston, Creamery, Breezy Blue, 98.85

Gouda, Edam
First place: Marieke Gouda, Belegen Gouda 4-6 months, 99.44
Second place: Emmi Roth, 3 Chile Pepper Gouda Wheel, 99.17
Third place: Arla Foods, Kaukauna, Edam, 98.69

Unflavored Cheese Curds
First place: Crave Brothers Team, Waterloo, WI, Yellow Cheddar Curds, 99.615
Second place: Matt Henze, Decatur Dairy, White Cheese Curds, 99.495
Third place: Nasonville Dairy, Marshfield, 99.475

Flavored Cheese Curds
First place winner: Ron's Wisconsin Cheese, LLC, Kewaunee, WI, Garlic & Dill Cheddar Curds, 99.705
Second place: Steve Stettler, Decatur Dairy, Tomato Bacon Basil White Curds, 99.645
Third place winner: Matt Henze, Decatur Dairy, Garlic Dill Havarti, 99.51

Shredded Cheese
First: Masters Gallery, Fancy Pepper Cheese Blend, 98.925
Second: Masters Gallery Foods, Fancy Cheddar Blend, 98.75
Third: Team Falke, Agropur, Weyauwega, Shredded LMPS Mozzarella and PS blend, 98.65

Crumbled Cheese
First place: Team Falke, Agropur, Weyauwega, Crumbled Traditional Feta, 99.425
Second place: Matt Erdley, Klondike Cheese, Crumbled Feta, 99.30
Third place: Team LaClare, Crumbled Original Goat Cheese, 99.275

Salted Butter
First place: Nordic Creamery, Westby, 99.35
Second place: Royal Guernsey Creamery, Columbus, 98.90
Third place: Graf Creamery, Bonduel, 98.30

Unsalted Butter
First: Nordic Creamery, 99.35
Second place: Cropp Cooperative/Organic Valley, 99.10
Third place: Foremost Farms, Middleton, 98.90

Flavored High Protein Yogurt
First place: Klondike Cheese, Peach Greek Yogurt, 99.90
Second place: Klondike Cheese, Vanilla Greek Yogurt, 99.70

Unflavored High Protein Yogurt
First place: Klondike Cheese, Labne, 99.60
Second place: Klondike Cheese, Greek Yogurt, 99.40

Open: Flavored Yogurt
First place: Klondike Cheese, Whole Vanilla Yogurt, 99.65
Second: Yodelay Yogurt, Madison, Rhubarb Swiss Yogurt, 99.05
Third place: Klondike Cheese, Whole Peach Yogurt, 98.35

Open: Unflavored Yogurt
First place: Klondike Cheese, Whole Fat Yogurt, 99.025

Drinkable Cultured Products
First place: Weber's Farm Store, Marshfield, Lowfat Raspberry Kefir, 99.75
Second: Weber's Farm Store, Lowfat Plain Kefir, 99.25
Third place: Weber's Farm Store, Lowfat Strawberry Kefir, 99.00

Open: Flavored Sour Cream
First place: Mexican Cheese Producers, Darlington, 16-oz Chipotle Acidified Sour Cream, 99.05
Second place winner: Westby Creamery, Organic French Onion Dip, 98.55
Third place: Westby Creamery, French Onion Dip, 98.25

Open: Unflavored Sour Cream
First place: Mexican Cheese Producers, 98.75
Second: Klondike Cheese, 98.65
Third: Westby Creamery, 98.05

Low Fat Sour Cream
First place: Klondike Cheese, Reduced Fat Greek Mediterranean Feta Dip, 99.25
Second: Klondike Cheese, Reduced Greek Tzatziki Dip, 98.35
Third: Klondike Cheese, Reduced Fat Greek Sour Cream, 97.75

Whole Fluid Milk - White
First place: Two Guernsey Girls Creamery, Freedom, A2 Fluid Whole White Milk, 99.90
Second place: Lamers Dairy, Appleton, Glass Bottled Whole Milk, 99.850
Third place: Two Guernsey Girls Creamery, Freedom, A2 Fluid Whole White Milk, 99.80

2% Fluid Milk - White
First: Lamers Dairy, Glass Bottled 2% Reduced Fat Milk, 99.90
Second: Weber's Farm Store, 99.80

Whole Fluid Milk - Chocolate
First place: Two Guernsey Girls Creamery, Freedom, A2 Fluid Whole Chocolate Milk, 99.90
Second: Lamers Dairy, Glass Bottled Chocolate Milk, 99.825
Third place: Two Guernsey Girls Creamery, A2 Fluid Whole Chocolate Milk, 99.775

2% Fluid Milk - Chocolate
First: Weber's Farm Store, 99.85

1% Fluid Milk - Chocolate
First: Lamers Dairy, Glass Bottled Lowfat Chocolate Milk, 99.85
Second place: Weber's Farm Store, 99.75

Unflavored Custard
First place: Barron County Organics, Barronet, Van Dutch, 99.45
Second: Dairyland Old Fashioned Hamburgers, Milwaukee, Sweet Cream Frozen Custard, 99.40
Third place: Creamy Pig, Grafton, Eggcellent Custard, 98.70

Vanilla Custard
First place: Barron County Organics, 99.55
Second place: Creamy Pig, Double Gold Vanilla Custard, 98.95
Third place: Dairyland Old Fashioned Hamburgers, Vanilla Bean Frozen Custard, 98.75

Chocolate Custard
First place: Creamy Pig, Mr. Beast Chocolate, 98.95
Second place: Dairyland Old Fashioned Hamburgers, 98.55
Third place: Barron County Organics, Dark Chocolate, 98.45


Flavored Custard
First: Dairyland Old Fashioned Hamburgers, Bananarama, 99.90
Second place: Barron County Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough, 99.80
Third place: Creamy Pig, Lemon Blueberry Kuchen, 99.65.



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DBI Initiatives

(Continued from p. 1)

in innovation,” Lester Moffitt continued. “Where the producers have ideas and they get technical support, whether that is food safety, packaging, all of the labeling, all of the above to be able to take a project from idea all the way to fruition and get it to markets and have that market development support.

“It’s about also investing in the infrastructure, some of the things in the machinery we saw are not cheap, and so the Dairy Business Innovation Initiative can help fund that as well,” she said. “And it’s investing in the people capacity, because that is what is beautiful about American agriculture, it is the farmers, the producers and the processors that really work in partnership with farmers and producers to make product that is not just delicious and nutritious, but also a really important lifeblood for all of our economies.”

The DBI Initiatives “utilize a unique approach of providing both technical assistance and subawards to small and mid-sized dairy businesses,” Lester Moffitt said. “Through this, the businesses are able to diversify markets and income, develop higher value uses for their milk products, and achieve higher returns.”

Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives provide technical assis-

tance and subgrants to dairy farmers and businesses across their regions, supporting them with business plan development, marketing, and branding, as well as, increasing access to innovative production and processing techniques to support the development of value-added products.

Since its inception in 2019, the DBI Initiatives have invested over \$64 million and awarded over 600 subrecipients in 40 states to provide support to dairy businesses in the development, production, marketing, and distribution of dairy products.

USDA’s announcement was made in front of a handful of dairy companies who have utilized DBI Initiatives funding to improve company operations.

Steve Stettler of Decatur Dairy welcomed and thanked Lester Moffitt.

“It’s a tremendous program,” Stettler said.

Decatur Dairy received a grant of \$50,000 through the program. The small Green County, WI, dairy cooperative recently went through a substantial expansion where it added 27,000 square feet to improve storage and packaging work areas; adding robotics, a cheese cutter, and a slab handler.

Stettler said the Decatur Swiss Cheese Co-op is made up of a core of young farmers that believe in what Decatur Dairy is doing and want to continue to be a part of it.



Supporters of USDA’s Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives program gathered Tuesday at Decatur Dairy in Brodhead, WI, to celebrate the announcement of \$12 million in fiscal year 2024 grant funding for the program. In the photo above are, left to right: (back row) Travis Forgues, Hidden Springs Creamery; Paul Scharfman, Specialty Cheese Company; Tom Guerin, Center for Dairy Research; Steve Stettler, Decatur Dairy; Randy Romanski, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; (front row) Terry Woods, Highfield Farm and Creamery; Rebekah Sweeney, Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA); Shaya Stettler, Decatur Dairy; Jenny Lester Moffitt, US Department of Agriculture; John Umhoefer, WCMA; and Adam Warthesen, Organic Valley.

He said his farmers will benefit from the grant he received.

“The technology, and all that included, was expensive and the \$50,000 was a very good shot in the arm to help us out,” Stettler said. “The program itself is very innovative. I can’t thank all involved enough for the stepping stone in what we are trying to do here, with our storage addition and the advancements we’ve made,” to this operation.

“To the members of Congress, the people of USDA, we thank all of them,” Stettler added.

The WCMA and the Center for Dairy Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison jointly administer the Dairy Business Innovation Alliance (DBIA), one of the four regional DBI Initiatives.

“Our center covers an 11-state region and has delivered research, training, consulting services and \$16 million in direct-to-business grants since it was first launched after the 2018 farm bill,” Sweeney said.

“I’m thrilled to report that five years into this program, Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives are not only creating new and expanding dairy businesses, but they’re also creating stronger rural communities and stronger supply chains across the country for our food,” Sweeney continued. “That’s an incredible success, particularly when you consider pressure on our industry from an exacerbating national labor shortage, shifting consumer preferences and sometimes regulation and a dynamic international marketplace.

“New threats seem to emerge every day and the ability to respond quickly to them with small targeted investments from the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives has offered, and I’m

delighted to note, will continue to offer much-needed relief for many of the people behind me. Dairy farmers and dairy processors battling through new challenges to grow their businesses,” Sweeney added.

Through a Request for Applications (RFA), the four regional DBI Initiatives will have an opportunity to submit proposals for fiscal 2024’s funding.

Of the \$12 million being made available by USDA in fiscal 2024, \$3.45 million each is being made available to the University of Wisconsin, University of Tennessee and Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets initiatives; and \$690,000 is being made available to the California State University Fresno Foundation initiative.

Initiatives must provide direct technical assistance and make subgrants to dairy businesses, the RFA explained.

This includes continuing their capacity to provide consultation and expertise necessary to advance the purpose and activities of the program and to distribute and track subawards to dairy businesses.

Initiatives should also build on previous efforts to engage existing dairy industry resources, including dairy farm density and suitability, as well as activities conducted by dairy promotion and research programs, research organizations, dairy businesses, or academic or industry stakeholders.

Dairy farmers and businesses interested in the DBI Initiatives program must contact the appropriate initiative to be considered for direct technical assistance or a subaward.

For more information, visit the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives webpage, at www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/dbi.

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Saputo Completes Sale Of Two Milk Plants In Australia

Montreal, Quebec—Saputo Inc. on Monday announced that it has completed the previously announced sale of two fresh milk processing facilities located in Laverton North, Victoria and Erskine Park, New South Wales, to Coles Group Limited, an Australia-based supermarket, retail, and consumer services chain.

The completion of this transaction is part of Saputo's overall network optimization strategy, one of the pillars of its Global Strategic Plan.

"This sale reinforces our roadmap for long-term success in Australia and demonstrates our agility in further adapting our manufacturing footprint to focus on higher-value growth opportunities," said Lino A. Saputo, chair of the board, president, and CEO.

As part of the sale, Saputo is maintaining its farmer relationships in Australia and will continue to have fresh milk products processed at the two manufacturing facilities. The employment of approximately 48 people across the two sites was transferred to Coles Group Limited.

Saputo Inc. in April 2023 announced it had entered into a definitive agreement to sell the two fresh milk processing facilities to Coles Group Limited.

In July 2023, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) identified preliminary competition concerns about Coles' proposed acquisition of the two Saputo milk processing plants. But last December, the ACCC announced that it would not oppose Coles' proposed acquisition of the two plants from Saputo.

Saputo's Global Strategic Plan is designed to accelerate organic growth. As part of this growth plan, the company expects to continue reaping benefits from its ongoing efforts to optimize its existing footprint, add new capacity, adjust its product mix by facility, and align its portfolio more closely with customer and consumer needs.

Several capital projects focused on supporting Saputo's US growth are either fully operational or ramping up and will be fully operational in the coming months, the company noted earlier this month. Near-term company priorities in the USA sector include completing its cheese network transformation, executing on the planned closures of the Lancaster, WI; Big Stone, SD; Green Bay, WI; and South Gate, CA, facilities, and continuing to ramp up its new automated cut-and-wrap facility in Franklin, WI.

Bipartisan House Bill Aims To Support Farmer Efforts To Cut Methane

Washington—Bipartisan legislation recently introduced in the US House aims to mitigate the negative environmental impacts of methane by incentivizing dairy farmers to adopt clean energy practices.

The Enteric Methane Innovation Tools for Lower Emissions and Sustainable Stock (EMIT LESS) Act was introduced by US Reps. Marc Molinaro (R-NY) and Jasmine Crockett (D-TX). Both lawmakers are members of the House Agriculture Committee, and are advancing the legislation in hopes of promoting its adoption into the farm bill.

The EMIT LESS Act:

- Creates methane product and practice testing capacity through the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS).
- Establishes and expands training programs that familiarize farmers and ranchers with practices that reduce methane emissions.
- Adds practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including methane, under USDA's Conservation Innovation Grant's On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials.
- Directs USDA to review conservation practice standards that can assist in reducing methane, revise those as needed, and establish any appropriate new standards.
- Amends USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Conservation Stewardship Program to provide financial incentives for farmers and ranchers to voluntarily use products and implement practices that reduce methane.

The EMIT LESS Act is supported by, among others, National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), National Council of Farmer Coop-

eratives (NCFC), Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), Danone North America, Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance, Bipartisan Policy Action Center, Breakthrough Institute, Environmental Working Group, and National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

"Innovative feed ingredients will help US dairy farmers bolster their already robust voluntary environmental stewardship efforts. But they will need resources and support as they start using approved enteric methane-reducing feed additives," said Gregg Doud, NMPF's president and CEO. The EMIT LESS Act would "better tailor USDA voluntary conservation programs to sustainable on-farm feed management."

"The EMIT LESS Act will support the adoption of science-based enteric methane reduction products and practices within the dairy supply chain that help US dairy processors meet their ambi-

tious emissions reduction commitments," said Michael Dykes, IDFA's president and CEO. "IDFA is grateful to Reps. Molinaro and Crockett for leading this effort to provide farmers and ranchers with safe and effective technologies that will help ensure the voluntary, incentive-based US approach to reducing emissions in the food and beverage industry is successful."

"This bill is needed and will allow our nation's livestock producers to be better positioned to compete in the global climate economy. This bill empowers USDA to direct resources to voluntary livestock practices that have incredible potential to reduce GHG emissions and increase profitability for our nation's livestock producers," said Chuck Conner, NCFC's president and CEO.

"Reducing livestock methane emissions is vital for mitigating climate change, alongside efforts in decreasing carbon dioxide emissions," said Pat Maloney, director of government and industry affairs at Danone North America.

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Vermont Cheese Summit Caps Off Vermont Cheese Week Sept. 14-15

Burlington, VT—Registration is now open for the Vermont Cheese Summit – a two-day, industry-only event that includes organized farm and creamery visits, educational programs, and one-on-one sampling sessions with Vermont’s cheese producers.

Sponsored by the Vermont Cheese Council, the Summit helps distributors, retailers, specialty food shops, grocery buyers, restaurants, and other professionals get to know Vermont’s cheeses and cheese makers.

The event is Sept. 14-15, capping off Vermont Cheese Week – a celebration Sept. 8-14 that includes educational panels, sampling opportunities, on-site farm and creamery experiences, and the opportunity for the public to interact with local cheese makers.

The Summit kicks with a number of industry-only tours. Stops include Good Hands Creamery, Cabot Creamery Cooperative, Crowley Cheese, Parish Hill Creamery, Shelburne Farms, Vermont Creamery, Vermont Shep-

herd, and von Trapp Farmstead, Stony Pond Farm, Plymouth Cheese, Grafton Village Cheese, Jasper Hill Farm, and Cabot Creamery Cooperative.

Sunday will be dedicated to education sessions, networking, and one-on-one sampling with local cheese producers at Basin Harbor Resort in Vergennes, VT. Sunday’s speaker lineup kicks off with a panel presentation on sustainable packaging.

Producers who have received recent grant projects to explore sustainable packaging options will talk about challenges, successes, and unexpected findings.

Panelists include Eliza Leeper, Vermont Creamery; Jessica Riley, Cabot Creamery Cooperative; Zoe Brickley, Jasper Hill; Lucas Farrell, Big Picture; and Jed Davis, Cabot Creamery Cooperative.

A second session, moderated by VCC executive director Marty Mundy and VCC education coordinator Claire Natola, will look at how collaboration can help the cheese industry as a whole.



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Workshops On Food Labeling Basics To Be Held Across New York State

Ithaca, NY—Cornell University will host four workshops in August and October throughout New York State on the fundamentals of dairy product labeling.

Each one-day workshop will explore real-life examples of how to understand the nuances of labeling regulations outlined in the CFR, the PMO, and New York State (NYS) law.

Both New York State residents and non-residents are welcome to attend, and no prerequisites are required. Workshops will be held:

- Aug. 13, Albany County CCE Office, Voorheesville, NY
- Aug. 15, Orange County CCE Office, Middletown, NY
- Oct. 22, New York State Fair Grounds, Syracuse, NY
- Oct. 23, Wyoming County Ag Center, Warsaw, NY

Participants will also learn about the critical issue of allergen labeling. This topic is especially important, with allergens being

the primary cause of food recalls.

Other discussion topics include considerations for ingredient and allergen declarations, nutrition regulations, product claims, compliance, and enforcement.

Instructors will also cover specific issues like jurisdiction and references; nomenclature and net contents; approved supplier programs; special labeling phrases, warnings, and flavorings; nutrient, optional, and other claims; and general design, principal display, and information panels.

The workshop is geared for professionals in regulatory, research and development, quality assurance, procurement, marketing, and operational roles.

Discussion content is also relevant for dairy processors and food industry entrepreneurs.

Cost to attend a workshop is \$500 per person. For details and to sign up online, visit www.cals.cornell.edu/fundamentals-labeling.

Empowerment Of Women In Dairy Webinar Is July 17

Washington—The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) and Women in Dairy will host a one-hour webinar on Wednesday, July 17, on practical strategies for women to pursue advancement opportunities in the dairy industry.

Participants will learn how to identify and understand common psychological barriers that can deter women from seeking career advancement, and hear how other women have successfully navigated their career paths by embracing opportunities before feeling fully prepared.

Other topics include how to create and leverage a support network; basic assertiveness training techniques to express needs in the workplace; and strategies to build professional confidence.

Visit www.idfa.org/events to register and for more information.

PLANNING GUIDE

•

WDPA Dairy Symposium: July 8-9, Landmark Resort, Egg Harbor, WI. Check www.wdpa.net for updates and registration.

•

American Cheese Society Annual Conference: July 10-13, Buffalo, NY. Visit www.cheesesociety.com for registration.

•

IFT Meeting & Expo: July 14-17, Chicago. www.iftevent.org.

•

IAFP Annual Meeting: July 14-17, Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, CA. To register, visit www.foodprotection.org.

•

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

•

Eastern WI Cheese Makers & Butter Makers Association Outing: Aug. 16, Timber Rattlers Stadium, Grand Chute, WI. Email: kbhenning@tm@net for info.

•

International Whey Conference: Sept. 15-18, Dublin, Ireland. Visit www.internationalwheyconference.com for more information.

•

NCCIA Conference: Oct. 8-10, Hilton/Airport, Bloomington, MN. Visit www.northcentralcheese.org for updates.

•

IDF World Dairy Summit: Oct. 15-18, Paris-La Défense, France. Visit www.idfws2024.com for updates and registration.

•

NMPF, NDB, UDIA Joint Annual Meeting: Oct. 20-23, Sheraton Phoenix Downtown, Phoenix, AZ. To sign up, visit www.packexpointernational.com.

•

Pack Expo International: Nov. 3-6, McCormick Place, Chicago. To sign up, visit www.packexpointernational.com.

•

PLMA Private Label Trade Show: Nov. 17-19, Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Chicago. For details, visit www.plma.com/events.



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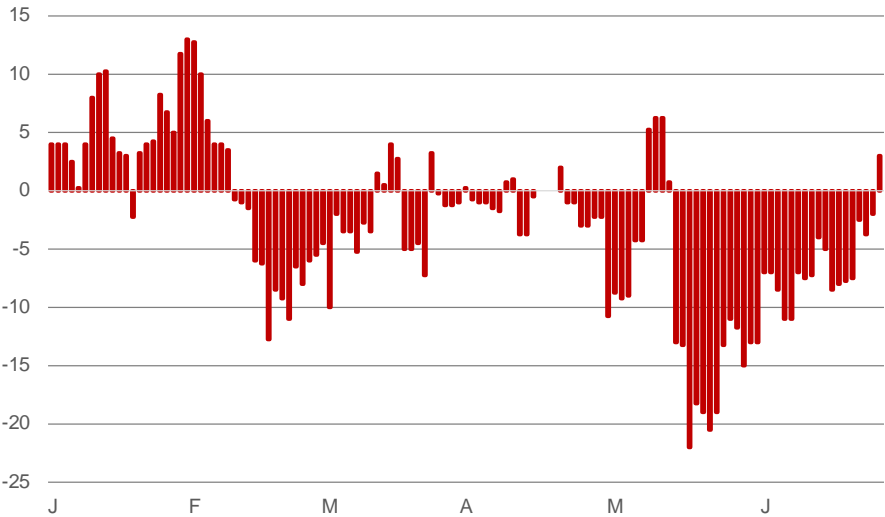
Dairy Product Stocks in Cold Storage

TOTAL STOCKS AS REPORTED BY USDA (in 1000s of pounds unless indicated)

	Stocks in All Warehouses			May 31, 2024 as a % of		Public Warehouse Stocks
	May 31 2023	April 30 2023	May 31 2024	May 31 2023	April 30 2023	May 31 2024
Butter	367,868	362,089	380,229	103	105	354,933
Cheese						
American	857,083	825,532	821,038	96	99	
Swiss	24,329	21,996	21,736	89	99	
Other	616,408	595,877	599,911	97	101	
Total	1,497,820	1,443,405	1,442,685	96	100	1,118,563

Block over Barrel Spread

January 1, 2024 – June 27, 2024 (cents difference)



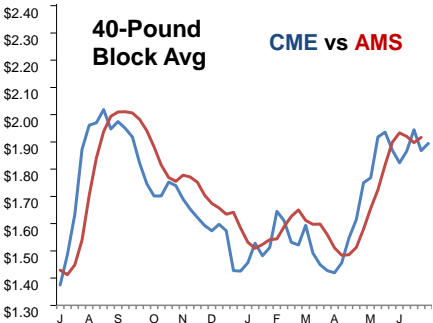
HISTORICAL MILK PRICES - CLASS IV

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'17	16.19	15.59	14.32	14.01	14.49	15.89	16.60	16.61	15.86	14.85	13.99	13.51
'18	13.13	12.87	13.04	13.48	14.57	14.91	14.14	14.63	14.81	15.01	15.06	15.09
'19	15.48	15.86	15.71	15.72	16.29	16.83	16.90	16.74	16.35	16.39	16.60	16.70
'20	16.65	16.20	14.87	13.87	10.67	12.90	13.76	12.53	12.75	13.47	13.30	13.36
'21	13.75	13.19	14.18	15.42	16.16	16.35	16.00	15.92	16.36	17.04	18.79	19.88
'22	23.09	24.00	24.82	25.31	24.99	25.83	25.79	24.81	24.63	24.96	23.30	22.12
'23	20.01	18.86	18.38	17.95	18.10	18.26	18.26	18.91	19.09	21.49	20.87	19.23
'24	19.39	19.85	20.09	20.11	20.50							

DAIRY PRODUCT SALES

June 29, 2024—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 NFDM.

•Revised



Week Ending	June 22	June 15	June 8	June 1
40-Pound Block Cheddar Cheese Prices and Sales				
Weighted Price US	Pounds 1.9163	Dollars/Pound 1.8973	1.9198•	1.9333
Sales Volume US	9,559,979	10,702,955	11,221,931•	9,962,705
500-Pound Barrel Cheddar Cheese Prices, Sales & Moisture Contest				
Weighted Price US	2.1398	Dollars/Pound 2.1291	2.1649	2.1448
Adjusted to 38% Moisture US	2.0339	2.0263	2.0569	2.0419
Sales Volume US	12,776,149	Pounds 12,834,620	12,211,221	11,531,672
Weighted Moisture Content US	34.77	Percent 34.85	34.75	34.88
AA Butter				
Weighted Price US	3.1001	Dollars/Pound 3.1197	3.0713	3.0829
Sales Volume US	2,676,070	Pounds 1,733,372	3,909,634	2,438,894
Extra Grade Dry Whey Prices				
Weighted Price US	0.4357	Dollars/Pound 0.4187•	0.4109•	0.4172•
Sales Volume US	6,665,660	7,239,200	6,502,543•	4,899,931•
Extra Grade or USPHS Grade A Nonfat Dry Milk				
Average Price US	1.1899	Dollars/Pound 1.1750	1.1667•	1.1312
Sales Volume US	14,803,203	Pounds 18,454,739•	21,047,485•	22,929,184

DAIRY FUTURES PRICES

SETTLING PRICE							*Cash Settled	
Date	Month	Class III	Class IV	Dry Whey	NDM	Block Cheese	Cheese*	Butter*
6-21	June 24	19.91	21.15	42.350	118.450	1.915	1.9960	309.425
6-24	June 24	19.92	21.15	42.350	118.450	1.915	2.0000	309.425
6-25	June 24	19.87	21.15	41.975	118.300	1.915	1.9980	309.450
6-26	June 24	19.88	21.15	41.900	117.775	1.915	1.9980	309.750
6-27	June 24	19.90	21.15	42.400	118.025	1.917	1.9980	309.800
6-21	July 24	19.75	21.33	45.750	121.300	1.945	1.9640	308.500
6-24	July 24	19.87	21.21	45.750	121.300	1.945	1.9830	305.500
6-25	July 24	19.47	21.06	45.750	120.400	1.930	1.9360	302.850
6-26	July 24	19.52	21.18	45.500	120.750	1.930	1.9420	308.025
6-27	July 24	19.56	21.21	45.500	120.475	1.930	1.9450	308.750
6-21	Aug 24	20.57	21.54	47.750	123.800	2.033	2.0440	309.000
6-24	Aug 24	20.84	21.45	47.225	123.000	2.050	2.0720	306.500
6-25	Aug 24	20.09	21.06	47.500	120.750	1.997	1.9970	303.225
6-26	Aug 24	20.50	21.43	47.500	121.250	2.022	2.0030	310.725
6-27	Aug 24	20.24	21.43	48.500	120.175	2.022	1.9930	312.950
6-21	Sept 24	20.49	21.64	49.300	124.825	2.015	2.0270	308.500
6-24	Sept 24	20.66	21.60	49.300	124.525	2.015	2.0450	306.250
6-25	Sept 24	20.04	21.16	49.300	122.000	1.995	1.9890	303.250
6-26	Sept 24	20.60	21.42	49.000	122.500	2.012	2.0280	310.525
6-27	Sept 24	20.35	21.45	49.000	120.650	2.012	2.0080	313.500
6-21	Oct 24	20.10	21.78	49.000	125.625	1.970	1.9820	310.250
6-24	Oct 24	20.19	21.65	49.000	125.175	1.995	2.0000	306.500
6-25	Oct 24	19.73	21.30	49.000	123.200	1.990	1.9560	304.000
6-26	Oct 24	20.33	21.47	49.000	124.325	1.990	1.9980	311.500
6-27	Oct 24	20.30	21.49	49.000	121.325	1.990	2.0050	314.000
6-21	Nov 24	19.74	21.53	49.000	127.100	1.940	1.9460	302.000
6-24	Nov 24	19.76	21.50	48.500	126.300	1.960	1.9600	300.000
6-25	Nov 24	19.36	21.19	48.500	124.325	1.945	1.9300	297.275
6-26	Nov 24	19.85	21.40	48.500	125.750	1.945	1.9650	304.025
6-27	Nov 24	19.90	21.40	49.000	123.000	1.970	1.9660	306.00
6-21	Dec 24	19.41	21.06	49.000	128.225	1.905	1.9200	287.850
6-24	Dec 24	19.40	21.06	48.750	128.225	1.930	1.9230	287.000
6-25	Dec 24	19.13	20.85	48.750	126.000	1.915	1.8900	285.525
6-26	Dec 24	19.44	20.85	48.750	127.025	1.915	1.9100	291.000
6-27	Dec 24	19.39	20.85	49.000	124.200	1.935	1.9120	293.000
6-21	Jan 25	18.90	20.88	47.000	130.000	1.900	1.8850	281.500
6-24	Jan 25	18.99	20.88	47.000	130.000	1.910	1.8870	281.250
6-25	Jan 25	18.82	20.72	47.000	128.775	1.900	1.8790	281.250
6-26	Jan 25	18.93	20.72	47.000	128.350	1.900	1.8890	286.000
6-27	Jan 25	18.80	20.72	47.000	125.525	1.900	1.8800	286.000
6-21	Feb 25	18.80	20.81	47.000	131.000	1.900	1.8760	281.500
6-24	Feb 25	18.83	20.81	47.000	131.000	1.910	1.8760	281.500
6-25	Feb 25	18.60	20.81	47.000	129.000	1.900	1.8630	280.025
6-26	Feb 25	18.83	20.81	47.000	128.350	1.900	1.8890	286.000
6-27	Feb 25	18.83	20.81	47.000	127.500	1.900	1.8890	286.000
6-21	Mar 25	18.80	21.06	47.000	132.050	1.910	1.8850	281.500
6-24	Mar 25	18.80	21.06	47.000	132.050	1.910	1.8850	281.000
6-25	Mar 25	18.76	21.06	47.000	131.325	1.900	1.8830	281.000
6-26	Mar 25	18.76	21.03	47.000	131.325	1.900	1.8930	286.000
6-27	Mar 25	18.76	21.03	47.000	128.500	1.900	1.8860	286.000
6-21	Apr 25	18.75	21.04	48.000	133.200	1.910	1.8890	284.975
6-24	Apr 25	18.75	21.04	48.025	133.200	1.910	1.8990	282.975
6-25	Apr 25	18.75	21.04	48.025	132.475	1.910	1.8900	280.000
6-26	Apr 25	18.75	21.04	48.025	132.475	1.910	1.8900	283.525
6-27	Apr 25	18.74	21.04	48.025	131.500	1.910	1.8900	283.525
June 27	23,368	9,755	2,279	9,240	2,300	16,837	10,139	

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DAIRY PRODUCT MARKETS

AS REPORTED BY THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WHOLESALE CHEESE MARKETS

NATIONAL - JUNE 21: Cheese production schedules are variable throughout the US. In the Northeast, steady farm level milk production and lower Class I demand has allowed some cheese manufacturers to run at full capacity. In the Central region, contacts share cheese production is in line with recent weeks. Spot milk prices ranged from \$2- to \$1-under Class III. For week 25 of 2023, though, the spot milk price range was \$11- to \$3.50-under Class III. Some cheese processors have shared that they are waiting to purchase spot milk loads until the Independence Day holiday. In the West, cheese production is steady to lighter. Milk volumes have become tighter throughout the region, and some plants reported unexpected downtime. Export cheese demand is steady.

EAST - JUNE 25: Rising temperatures have started to move into most of the East, and milk production for Class III has started to slide down along with much of the country. Even with the slight dip in milk production, cheese makers have kept steady production schedules. Both retail and foodservice customers have kept up a steady demand. Cheese makers note demand, in general, is meeting expectations. Cheese supplies placed into cold storage have remained steady as well.

CENTRAL - JUNE 25: Cheese makers are sharing mixed takes on demand in recent weeks. Some say they are turning away new orders, as they are booked solid. Others say summer demand is meeting expectations but has slowed down from a busy late spring season. Some curd makers say seasonal orders are stronger than they were last year. Production remains steady in the region, but both cheese makers and milk handlers are in preparation for next week’s holiday. Milk handlers are concerned that the Thursday holiday will keep some cheese lines down for a potential four-day weekend. On the other hand, some cheese makers say they are holding off on purchasing extra spot milk loads, which are currently in a similar price range to previous weeks, until next week when neighboring processing plants will likely be on lighter schedules. Cheese markets are not bullish or bear-ish, but indecisive.

WEST - JUNE 25: Retail demand for cheese has picked up ahead of next week's holiday, and contacts say they anticipate increased foodservice sales during the summer months. Export demand for cheese is steady, though some contacts say current prices are not competitive with internationally produced loads and are contributing to lighter interest compared to previous months. Cheese is available for spot purchasing, but contacts say inventories are not excessive. Milk output is declining in the West, and some cheese makers say this has contributed to lighter production. The NASS Cold Storage report released earlier this week revealed total natural cheese stocks on May 31 were down slightly from April but were up 4 percent from a year ago.

FOREIGN -TYPE CHEESE - JUNE 26: In Europe, retail demand for cheese is strong but contacts note mixed interest from foodservice purchasers. Some stakeholders say foodservice sales have picked up in recent weeks, while others say sales are not meeting expectations. Demand for cheese in southern Europe is strengthening. Milk production is declining in Europe, though contacts in Germany report milk output is up compared to this time last year. Cheese production is declining in Europe, due to lighter milk availability. Cheese makers in the region say inventories are tightening, but cheese is available to meet current market demands. Contacts report cheese prices for July are stronger than in previous months.

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

Variety	Date:	6/26	6/19	Variety	Date:	6/26	6/19
Cheddar Curd		\$2.03	\$2.03	Mild Cheddar		\$2.06	\$2.07
Young Gouda		\$1.95	\$1.96	Mozzarella		\$1.96	\$1.97

WHOLESALE BUTTER MARKETS - JUNE 25

NATIONAL: Domestic butter demands for both the retail and foodservice sectors are steady. For the Central and East regions, no changes in domestic butter demands from the prior week are conveyed for either the retail or foodservice sectors. Although cream availability continues to tighten at various paces across the US, butter manufacturers indicate cream volumes remain ample for processing needs. Butter production schedules are mostly steady. That said, a few manufacturers indicate churns will go down for lengthy maintenance projects prior to months end. Some stakeholders say unsalted bulk butter is tight.

WEST: The start of summer and high temperatures have had a negative impact on milk production and cream volumes in the West. Despite this, butter makers in the region continue to pull heavily on cream supplies to run busy production schedules. Some butter makers say their churns are shutting down this or next week for extended maintenance projects. Retail demand for butter is steady to lighter, but contacts report food service sales have notably softened compared to previous weeks. Spot loads of salted butter are available, while unsalted butter inventories remain tight.

EAST: As the summer months roll in, rising temperatures are having a greater impact on milk production. Farm level milk production in the East has begun to decrease, just not at the levels of the rest of the country. Cream levels have started to tighten as temperatures rise and transportation becomes more challenging. As more of the tightening

cream supply has moved to Class II and III, butter production has begun to slow. Some butter makers have limited their production in preparation for maintenance and churn rebuilds. Butter makers were prepared for the slowdown.

CENTRAL: Butter makers say demand is slightly better now than during this time in previous years. Customers are conveying a similar tone to butter manufacturers. Bulk butter is available, but as cream supplies continue to decrease, a growing number of contacts expect butter tightness in the near- to mid-term. Regarding cream, spot loads are still in the fiscal reach of butter makers, but they have become noticeably more limited than in previous weeks. Despite a slide on the CME to just above the \$3/lb mark early this week from over \$3.10 last week, most contacts contend markets are firm, with steady to bullish expectations.

WESTERN EUROPE: While European butteroil prices moved higher, European butter prices are mixed. Industrial cream prices are stable at high levels, helping maintain a level of support for milk fat values. However, sources suggest that near-term butter needs are getting filled, and bulk butter buyers are becoming more cautious with Q3 and Q4 purchases. Market observers report that although inventories are still snug, there is a large divide between bid and offer prices. Butter production is steady, although some say the wet spring and early summer in parts of Europe, such as Ireland, have made it difficult for manufacturers to churn as much butter as expected.

NATIONAL - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY PRODUCTS

Total conventional dairy ads increased 13 percent, while organic dairy ads increased by 11 percent. Conventional cheese was the most advertised dairy commodity. Conventional ice cream in 48- to 64-ounce containers was the most advertised single item. Organic milk in half-gallon containers was the most advertised single organic dairy item this week. As a commodity, conventional butter ads increased 61 percent from the previous week.

Conventional shredded cheese in 6- to 8-ounce packages was the most advertised cheese item, with ad totals increasing 21 percent. The average price was \$2.45, down 10 cents from last week. Conventional Greek yogurt in 4- to 6-ounce containers was the most advertised yogurt item, appearing in 16 percent more ads with an average price of \$1.15, up 5 cents. Half-gallon containers of conventional milk have an average price of \$2.42, while half-gallon containers of organic milk have an average price of \$4.93 - an organic premium of \$2.51.

RETAIL PRICES - CONVENTIONAL DAIRY - JUNE 28

Commodity	US	NE	SE	MID	SC	SW	NW
Butter 8 oz	2.68	2.68					
Butter 1#	4.12	4.06	4.44	4.30	3.90	4.12	3.08
Cheese 6-8 oz block	2.41	2.49	2.07	3.06	2.43	2.13	1.90
Cheese 6-8 oz shred	2.45	2.46	1.98	3.07	2.51	2.35	2.02
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced	2.51	2.49	2.42	2.92	2.58	2.40	2.13
Cheese 1# block	3.97		2.98	4.13		5.21	
Cheese 1# shred	3.90	7.99	3.65	4.13	3.74	3.49	
Cheese 1# sliced	3.62	3.99		3.40			
Cheese 2# block	6.30	7.99				5.44	6.89
Cheese 2# shred	7.05	8.71	7.27	7.99	7.27	5.44	6.49
Cottage Cheese 16 oz	2.66	3.08	2.72	2.44	2.34	2.54	2.00
Cottage Cheese 24 oz	3.03	3.99	3.09	2.69	2.97		3.49
Cream Cheese 8 oz	2.83	2.87	2.87	2.58	2.67	2.84	3.06
Flavored Milk ½ gallon	3.33			3.29	3.29		
Flavored Milk gallon	3.11	3.99	2.74	4.29	3.00	3.25	
Ice Cream 14-16 oz	3.53	3.25	3.54	3.58	4.01	3.39	3.54
Ice Cream 48-64 oz	3.72	3.32	3.82	3.41	4.21	3.74	3.09
Milk ½ gallon	2.42				2.31	2.84	1.73
Milk gallon	3.20	3.80	2.74		3.00	3.43	3.49
Sour Cream 16 oz	2.24	2.23	2.35	2.28	2.10	2.20	1.88
Sour Cream 24 oz	3.17			3.02	2.99	3.41	3.23
Yogurt (Greek) 4-6 oz	1.15	1.10	1.08	1.22	1.42	1.11	1.25
Yogurt 4-6 oz	0.61	0.60	0.64	0.63	0.71	0.54	0.61
Yogurt (Greek) 32 oz	4.62	5.62	4.00	6.13	4.14	5.99	
Yogurt 32 oz	2.56	3.63	2.48		2.56	2.65	

ORGANIC DAIRY - RETAIL OVERVIEW

National Weighted Retail Avg Price:			
Butter 8 oz:	\$3.99	Sour Cream 16 oz:	\$3.03
Butter 1 lb:		Ice Cream 14-16 oz	\$5.99
Cheese 6-8 oz shred:	\$5.29	Ice Cream 48-64 oz	\$7.99
Cheese 6-8 oz block:	\$5.49	Milk ½ gallon:	\$4.93
Cheese 6-8 oz sliced:	\$5.34	Milk gallon:	\$7.31
Cream Cheese 8 oz:		Yogurt 4-6 oz:	
Cottage Cheese 16 oz:	\$4.54	Yogurt 32 oz:	\$4.26
Flavored Milk ½ gallon:		Greek Yogurt 4-6 oz:	
		Greek Yogurt 32 oz	\$6.41

DRY DAIRY PRODUCTS - JUNE 27

NDM CENTRAL/EAST: The price range expanded, while the mostly price series held steady. The price range variance is geographically significant. In the south/southwest portion of the Central region, current NDM availability is somewhat ample despite summer temperatures keeping milk output in check. The lower range prices were reported from that area. In the Northeast, where milk has been somewhat more available despite recent heat waves, NDM processing/supplies are more limited on the spot market, hence the move up on the top of the range.

NDM/WEST: Reported trading activity was slow, but some pickups in demand, particularly export demand, have some contacts expecting a move from sideways markets to slight bullishness. Condensed skim availability perked up, according to suppliers, after a few weeks of thinly stretched supplies. Production schedules are somewhat normal for drying condensed skim, but next week’s holiday is expected to keep some plants down for as many as

four days. High heat NDM processors are focused more on drying for contractual obligations. All said, market tones for NDM are steadily quiet to slightly bullish.

LACTOSE CENTRAL/WEST: Production schedules are steady, but some processors report their inventories are tightening. High mesh spot load availability is tight. Contacts share current demand is strong, with some indicating they saw more spot inquiries than in recent weeks. Some contacts are sold out for the balance of Q2 and turning away customers interested in Q3 contracts. Demand from international buyers is steady for loads closer to the bottom of the price range and mostly.

WPC CENTRAL/WEST: Liquid whey volumes are level with recent weeks, but contacts continue to share drying activity is light. WPC 80% and whey protein isolate manufacturing continues to take precedent over WPC 34%. Inventories remain light. Domestic demand and trading activity are quiet. Export demand remains limited.

WEEKLY COLD STORAGE HOLDINGS

SELECTED STORAGE CENTERS IN 1,000 POUNDS - INCLUDING GOVERNMENT

DATE		BUTTER	CHEESE
06/24/24		81,703	72,702
06/01/24		81,187	74,415
Change		516	-1,713
Percent Change		1	-2

CME CASH PRICES - JUNE 24 - JUNE 28, 2024

Visit www.cheesereporter.com for daily prices

	500-LB CHEDDAR	40-LB CHEDDAR	AA BUTTER	GRADE A NFD	DRY WHEY
MONDAY June 24	\$1.9150 (-¼)	\$1.8900 (+4½)	\$3.0650 (-2½)	\$1.1925 (-1¼)	\$0.4700 (NC)
TUESDAY June 25	\$1.9100 (-½)	\$1.8725 (-1¼)	\$3.0325 (-3¼)	\$1.1875 (-½)	\$0.4850 (+1½)
WEDNESDAY June 26	\$1.9000 (-1)	\$1.8800 (+¾)	\$3.0900 (+5¼)	\$1.1850 (-¼)	\$0.4850 (NC)
THURSDAY June 27	\$1.8800 (-2)	\$1.9100 (+3)	\$3.1075 (+1¼)	\$1.1800 (-½)	\$0.4850 (NC)
FRIDAY June 28	\$1.8800 (NC)	\$1.9100 (NC)	\$3.1250 (+1¼)	\$1.1825 (+¼)	\$0.4900 (+½)
Week's AVG \$ Change	\$1.8970 (-0.0505)	\$1.8925 (+0.0244)	\$3.0840 (-0.0123)	\$1.1855 (-0.0133)	\$0.4830 (+0.0055)
Last Week's AVG	\$1.9475	\$1.8681	\$3.0963	\$1.1988	\$0.4775
2023 AVG Same Week	\$1.3835	\$1.3335	\$2.4160	\$1.1195	\$0.2465

MARKET OPINION - CHEESE REPORTER

Cheese Comment: Two cars of blocks were sold Monday, the last at \$1.8900, which set the price. No blocks were sold Tuesday; the price declined on an uncovered offer of 1 car at \$1.8725. Three cars of blocks were sold Wednesday, the last at \$1.8800, which set the price. Two cars of blocks were sold Thursday, the last at \$1.9100, which set the price. There was no block market activity at all on Friday. The barrel price fell Monday on a sale at \$1.9150, declined Tuesday on an uncovered offer at \$1.9100, dropped Wednesday on a sale at \$1.9000, and fell Thursday on a sale at \$1.8800.

Butter Comment: The price declined Monday on an unfilled bid at \$3.0650 (following a sale at \$3.0575), fell Tuesday on a sale at \$3.0325, increased Wednesday on a sale at \$3.0900, rose Thursday on a sale at \$3.1075, and climbed Friday on a sale at \$3.1250.

Nonfat Dry Milk Comment: The price fell Monday on a sale at \$1.1925, declined Tuesday on a sale at \$1.1875, dropped Wednesday on a sale at \$1.1850, fell Thursday on a sale at \$1.1800, then increased Friday on a sale at \$1.1825.

Dry Whey Comment: The price increased Tuesday on a sale at 48.50 cents, and rose Friday on a sale at 49.0 cents.

WHEY MARKETS - JUNE 17 - JUNE 21, 2024

RELEASE DATE - JUNE 27, 2024

Animal Feed Dry Whey—Central:		.2400 (NC) – .3200 (NC)
Buttermilk Powder:		
Central & East:	1.0800 (NC) – 1.1800 (NC)	West: 1.1100 (+1) – 1.2200 (+1)
Mostly:	1.1500 (+2) – 1.1900 (NC)	
Casein: Rennet:	3.4000 (+10) – 3.8000 (+20)	Acid: 3.7000 (+10) – 4.0000 (+10)
Dry Whey—Central (Edible):		
Nonhygroscopic:	.3800 (NC) – .5000 (NC)	Mostly: .4100 (+1) – .4750 (NC)
Dry Whey—West (Edible):		
Nonhygroscopic:	.4400 (+2) – .5100 (NC)	Mostly: .4500 (+1) – .4800 (NC)
Dry Whey—NE:	.4125 (+1¼) – .4850 (+1¼)	
Lactose—Central and West:		
Edible:	.2600 (+3) – .4100 (NC)	Mostly: .2800 (-½) – .3550 (NC)
Nonfat Dry Milk —Central & East:		
Low/Medium Heat:	1.1500 (-2) – 1.2300 (+1)	Mostly: 1.1800 (NC) – 1.2000 (NC)
High Heat:	1.2600 (NC) – 1.3000 (NC)	
Nonfat Dry Milk —Western:		
Low/Med Heat:	1.1400 (+½) – 1.2400 (NC)	Mostly: 1.1600 (NC) – 1.2200 (NC)
High Heat:	1.2775 (+¼) – 1.3875 (+½)	
Whey Protein Concentrate—34% Protein:		
Central & West:	.8700 (NC) – 1.1400 (NC)	Mostly: .9200 (NC) – 1.0175 (NC)
Whole Milk:	2.1700 (+1) – 2.3700 (+1)	

HISTORICAL MONTHLY AVG BARREL PRICES

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
'08	1.8774	1.9560	1.7980	1.8010	2.0708	2.0562	1.8890	1.6983	1.8517	1.8025	1.6975	1.5295
'09	1.0832	1.1993	1.2738	1.1506	1.0763	1.0884	1.1349	1.3271	1.3035	1.4499	1.4825	1.4520
'10	1.4684	1.4182	1.2782	1.3854	1.4195	1.3647	1.5161	1.6006	1.7114	1.7120	1.4520	1.3751
'11	1.4876	1.8680	1.8049	1.5756	1.6902	2.0483	2.1124	1.9571	1.7010	1.7192	1.8963	1.5839
'12	1.5358	1.4823	1.5152	1.4524	1.4701	1.5871	1.6826	1.7889	1.8780	2.0240	1.8388	1.6634
'13	1.6388	1.5880	1.5920	1.7124	1.7251	1.7184	1.6919	1.7425	1.7688	1.7714	1.7833	1.8651
'14	2.1727	2.1757	2.2790	2.1842	1.9985	1.9856	1.9970	2.1961	2.3663	2.0782	1.9326	1.5305
'15	1.4995	1.4849	1.5290	1.6135	1.6250	1.6690	1.6313	1.6689	1.5840	1.6072	1.5305	1.4628
'16	1.4842	1.4573	1.4530	1.4231	1.3529	1.5301	1.7363	1.8110	1.5415	1.5295	1.7424	1.6132
'17	1.5573	1.6230	1.4072	1.4307	1.4806	1.3972	1.4396	1.5993	1.5691	1.6970	1.6656	1.5426
'18	1.3345	1.4096	1.5071	1.4721	1.5870	1.4145	1.3707	1.5835	1.4503	1.3152	1.3100	1.2829
'19	1.2379	1.3867	1.4910	1.5925	1.6278	1.6258	1.7343	1.7081	1.7463	2.0224	2.2554	1.8410
'20	1.5721	1.5470	1.4399	1.0690	1.5980	2.3376	2.4080	1.4937	1.6401	2.2213	1.8437	1.4609
'21	1.5141	1.4442	1.4811	1.7119	1.6923	1.5639	1.4774	1.4158	1.5319	1.8008	1.5375	1.6548
'22	1.8204	1.9038	2.0774	2.3489	2.3567	2.2077	2.0581	1.8741	2.0690	2.1285	1.9454	1.8395
'23	1.6803	1.5761	1.8175	1.5921	1.5073	1.5037	1.5404	1.8190	1.7065	1.6400	1.5816	1.4815
'24	1.4629	1.6004	1.4925	1.6214	1.9744	1.9516						

Restaurant Performance Index Rose 0.3% In May; Outlook For Sales Mixed

Washington—The National Restaurant Association’s Restaurant Performance Index (RPI), a monthly composite index that tracks the health of the US restaurant industry, stood at 99.1 in May, up 0.3 percent from April, the association reported today.

The RPI is constructed so that the health of the restaurant industry is measured in relation to a neutral level of 100. Index values above 100 indicate that key industry indicators are in a period of expansion, while index values below 100 represent a period of contraction.

The RPI consists of two components: the Current Situation Index and the Expectations Index. The Current Situation Index, which measures current trends in four industry indicators (same-store sales, traffic, labor and capital expenditures), stood at 98.7 in May, up 0.6 percent from April.

Restaurant operators reported a net decline in same-store sales in May, though readings were somewhat more positive than recent months. Some 43 percent of operators said their same-store sales rose between May 2023 and May 2024, up from 38 percent of operators who reported higher sales in April. And 45 percent of opera-

tors said their sales were lower in May, down from 53 percent who reported a sales decline in April.

Restaurant operators continued to report negative customer traffic in May. Some 18 percent of operators said their customer traffic rose between May 2023 and May 2024, while 57 percent reported a traffic decline.

The Expectations Index, which measures restaurant operators’ six-month outlook for four industry indicators (same-store sales, employees, capital expenditures and business conditions), stood at 99.6 in May, up slightly from April.

Restaurant operators’ outlook for sales in the coming months remains mixed. Some 30 percent of operators expect their sales volume in six months to be higher than it was during the same period in the previous year, down from 38 percent who reported similarly in April, while 25 percent of operators think their sales volume in six months will be lower than it was during the same period in the previous year.

Restaurant operators’ outlook for the overall economy remains pessimistic. Only 13 percent of operators think economic conditions will improve in six months.

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