

William (Bill) Lyons, Jr.
Secretary

The Mechanics of Milk Pooling

by Dr. Eric Erba, CDFA Senior Agricultural Economist

This article is a continuation of an informational series of articles on milk pricing in California.

In the most general terms, “pooling” means sharing. Applied to the milk pooling program that was put in place in 1969, “pooling” means sharing revenues generated from sales of milk. The concept of milk pooling is simple — all dairy producers should share milk sales revenues regardless of where each producer shipped his or her milk. However, the actual mechanics of pooling are not as apparent.

Before jumping into pooling in detail, an important distinction between pool prices and class prices needs to be made. Class prices, as discussed in the January 2003 issue of the CDR, determine how money is paid into the pool by processors. Pool prices, namely quota and overbase, determine the level of payment to dairy producers out of the pool.

The diagram on page 3 shows how class prices, in conjunction with how fat and SNF were used by each class of milk, contribute the bulk of revenue that makes up the pool every month. One other contributing factor to pool revenues is regional quota adjusters (RQAs). The RQAs deduct money from quota holders based on the county in which the ranch is located. RQAs are highest in the South Valley (-\$0.27 per cwt.) and lowest in Southern California (no adjustment). RQAs contribute about \$1,000,000 per month to pool revenues.

Four activities draw money from the pool prior to price calculations. Transportation allowances and credits help to subsidize movements of milk to higher uses throughout the state. Transportation allowances provide incentives to move milk from dairy farms to plants that process Class 1, 2 or 3 products. Transportation credits provide a similar function but apply to milk moving among processing plants. Together, transportation allowances and credits draw about \$1.3 million per month from the pool. The fortification allowance, which also reduces pool revenues, subsidizes the cost incurred by Class 1 handlers for making fortified packaged milk products, namely lowfat and reduced fat milks. The fortification allowance draws about \$500,000 to \$600,000 per month from the pool. Finally, the cost of paying a quota price to quota holders is deducted from the pool prior to any pricing calculations. This represents the \$1.70 per cwt. differential that separates the overbase price from the quota price across all quota that is held by producers. About \$13 to \$15 million is needed from the pool every month to make up the \$1.70 per cwt. differential. With exception of a very small amount of the transportation credit being carried by the fat side

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DECEMBER MILK PRODUCTION

Milk production in California for December 2002 totaled 2.9 billion pounds, up 4.4 percent from December 2001. USDA's estimate for U.S. milk production for December 2002 in the 20 major dairy states is 12.2 billion pounds, up 1.8 percent from December 2001. Production per cow in the 20 major states averaged 1,567 pounds for December, which is 18 pounds above December 2001. ☀

MINIMUM CLASS PRICES

Statewide average hundredweight prices

| Class | January | February |
|-------|---------|----------|
| 1 | \$12.79 | \$12.14 |
| 2 | \$11.00 | \$10.70 |
| 3 | \$10.83 | \$10.53 |
| 4a | \$ 9.60 | ----- |
| 4b | \$ 9.58 | ----- |

FEDERAL ORDER AND CALIFORNIA MINIMUM CLASS 1 PRICES

Average Hundredweight Prices

| Regions | January | February |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Phoenix, Arizona | \$12.91 | \$12.58 |
| Southern California | \$12.93 | \$12.27 |
| Portland, Oregon | \$12.46 | \$12.13 |
| Northern California | \$12.65 | \$12.00 |
| Boston (Northeast) | \$13.81 | \$13.48 |

QUOTA TRANSFER SUMMARY

For December 2002, 6 dairy producers transferred 7,415 pounds of SNF quota. December quota sales averaged \$538 per pound of SNF (without cows), an average ratio of 2.39. For January 2003, 6 dairy producers transferred 4,835 pounds of SNF quota. January quota sales averaged \$525 per pound of SNF (without cows), an average ratio of 2.41. ☀

ALFALFA UPDATE: JANUARY

Northern California: Premium and Supreme alfalfa was not well-tested with light to moderate demand and limited supplies. Fair and Good alfalfa was steady in light test with good demand for clean dry cow hay, but hay with faults was harder to move. Retail and Stable hay was steady with light to moderate demand and supplies. Exporters showed renewed interest, mainly for hay that could supply grass orders.

Southern California: Early January had Supreme alfalfa not well tested. Premium alfalfa was fully steady with moderate demand and supplies. Good demand from northern buyers. Fair and Good alfalfa had light demand and moderate supplies. Retail and Stable hay was steady with most supplies coming out of barns. Most Severe winds caused damage to the Chino and San Diego area hay barns. ☀

SUPREME HAY PRICES

Statewide average prices per ton

| Area | 1/3 | 1/10 | 1/17 | 1/24 |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Petaluma | \$155 | \$155 | \$150-152 | \$155 |
| North Valley ¹ | \$145-152 | \$150-155 | \$145 | \$157 |
| South Valley ² | \$146-155 | \$152-165 | \$145-149 | \$148-152 |
| Chino Valley | ----- | ----- | \$135 | ----- |

¹North Valley is Escalon, Modesto and Turlock areas.

²South Valley is Tulare, Visalia and Hanford areas.

ALFALFA HAY SALES/DELIVERY

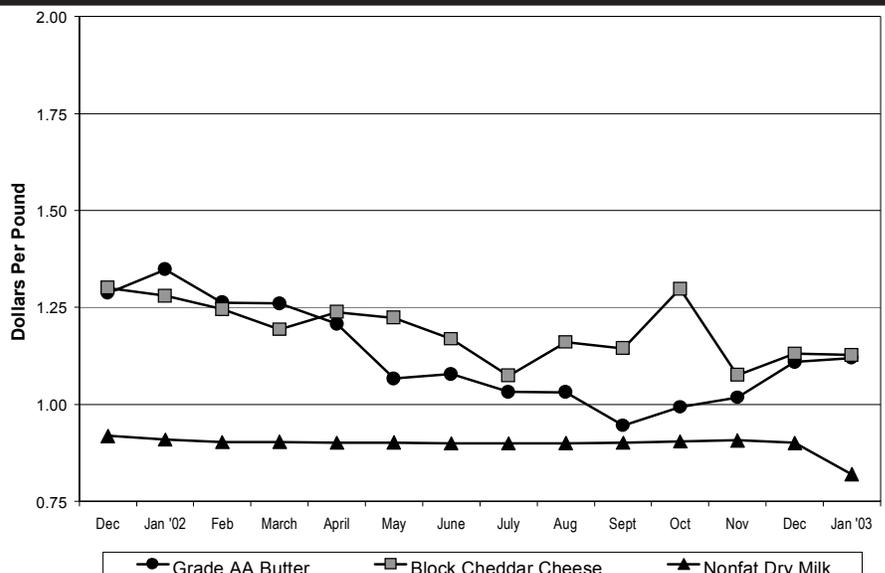
| | December | January |
|-----------------------------|----------|---------|
| Tons Sold ¹ | 66,415 | 83,725 |
| Tons Delivered ² | 29,170 | 33,125 |

¹For current or future delivery.

²Contracted or current sales.

Alfalfa hay sales, deliveries and Supreme quality prices per ton, delivered to dairies, as reported by the USDA Market News Service, Moses Lake, WA, (509) 765-3611, <http://www.ams.usda.gov/marketnews.htm>

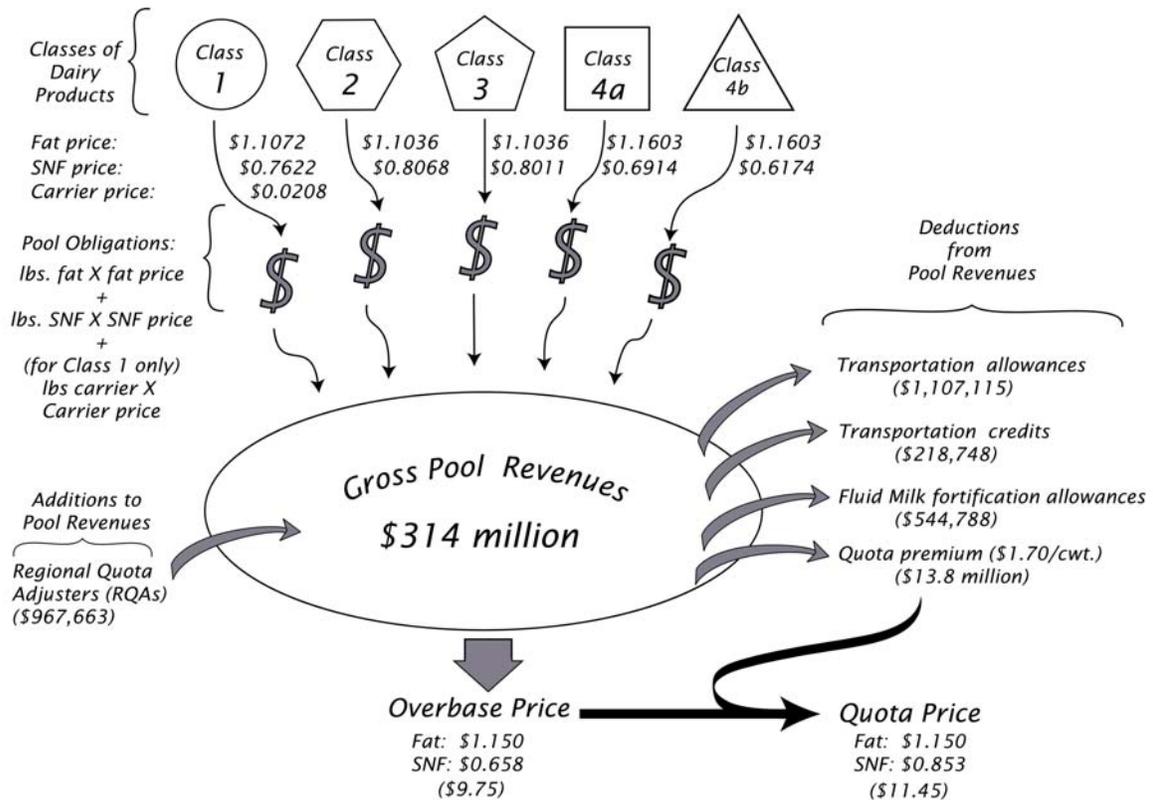
Grade AA Butter, Block Cheddar Cheese, and Nonfat Dry Milk Prices Used in the Calculation of California Class 1 Milk Prices



Mechanics of Milk Pooling - Continued

The Mechanics of Pooling

(Prices from December 2002)



of the pool, all of the additions and deductions operate on the solids-not-fat side of the pool.

The final steps address actual pool price calculations. The overbase component prices are calculated after the pool has been added to and deducted from as described above. The overbase fat price (per pound) is the total revenue generated by fat sales across each of the five classes, less the adjustment for transportation credits, divided by total fat pounds in the pool. Likewise, the solids-not-fat price (per pound) is the total revenue generated by solids-not-fat sales across each of the five classes, plus RQAs, less transportation allowances, less the residual

transportation credits, less fortification allowances, less the quota premium, divided by total solids-not-fat pounds in the pool. The hundredweight overbase price is achieved by multiplying the overbase fat price by 3.5, multiplying the overbase solids-not-fat price by 8.7 and then adding the two products. The quota price is achieved by using the same fat price as was used for the overbase price (see diagram). To obtain the quota solids-not-fat price, simply add \$0.195 to the overbase solids-not-fat price. The hundredweight quota price is achieved by multiplying the quota fat price by 3.5, multiplying the quota solids-not-fat price by 8.7 and then adding the two products. ☀

**January 28 & 30
Hearing on Class
2, 3, 4a, and 4b
Pricing Formulas**



Cattle Producer Update



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Bovine Tuberculosis in California

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the cattle industry are working together to control and eradicate bovine tuberculosis (TB) from California.

Bovine TB was confirmed in a Tulare county dairy herd in May 2002. The herd was quarantined by the CDFA, tested for TB three times, and all test positive cattle were destroyed. All cattle sold from or associated with the herd over the last five years have been traced and tested. In November, the herd was sent to slaughter and the premises thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. The premise was released from quarantine after approval of the state TB epidemiologist.

A TB-positive cow was found at a California slaughterhouse during September 2002. The investigation into the source of this cow is ongoing, but indicates a dispersed beef herd from Tulare County.

A complete herd test of a dairy herd in Tulare County identified a single reactor animal in October 2002. While preliminary laboratory results are positive for TB, final culture results from a USDA laboratory are pending. As a precaution, the dairy was quarantined - the second herd quarantined for TB in California. *The USDA classified this second quarantined dairy herd as an infected herd in December 2002.*

To date, 152,875 cattle in 101 herds have been tested for bovine TB since this investigation began, and nearly 8,000 cattle have been slaughtered during this investigation.

| Cumulative Since May 13, 2002 | |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| Herds tested | 101 |
| Number animals tested | 152,875 |
| Number of herds quarantined | 2 |
| Number cattle destroyed | 7,857 |
| Average number field personnel | 15 |

Since June 2002, all dairy breeding animals more than six months of age leaving California need a negative TB test within 30 days of movement. This requirement does not apply to beef cattle at this time.

Impact on California's TB-Free Status

The USDA assigns various status levels to a state under the bovine TB eradication program: Accredited Free,

Modified Accredited Advanced, Modified Accredited, Accreditation Preparatory or Non-Accredited.

The USDA announced in December that it will downgrade California's status from TB-Free to Modified Accredited Advanced because a second herd was identified within 48 months of the first herd. *The State status will not change until this regulation is published in the Federal Register.*

This new status will require all California breeding cattle to have official identification and a negative TB test within 60 days of interstate movement OR originate from a TB Accredited-Free herd (mandatory annual TB testing) OR move directly to slaughter.

The USDA is currently reviewing its regulations used to determine a state's TB status, and will publish a new regulation this year.

Plans

California is reviewing its TB control and surveillance options with the cattle industry. Current plans being discussed include:

- Test all dairy herds in Tulare, Kings, and Fresno counties.
- Require a TB test before importing dairy cattle into California.
- Restrict Mexican cattle to approved pastures.
- Develop agreements with neighboring states to ease annual testing requirements on "commuter cattle".

| CDFA Animal Health Branch Offices | |
|--|--------------|
| Sacramento (HQ) | 916-654-1447 |
| Modesto | 209-491-9350 |
| Ontario | 909-947-4462 |
| Redding | 530-225-2140 |
| Tulare | 559-685-3500 |
| www.cdfa.ca.gov | |

| CDFA Milk and Dairy Foods Control Branch Offices | |
|--|--------------|
| Stockton | 209-466-7186 |
| Oakland | 510-622-4810 |
| Fresno | 559-445-5506 |
| Ontario | 909-923-9929 |

| United States Department of Agriculture | |
|---|--|
| 916-857-6170 or 877-741-3690 | |

California Hay Stocks Higher on December 1, 2002 . . .

What are the implications for the 2003 hay market?

by Seth Hoyt, California Agricultural Statistics Service

All hay stocks on hand December 1, 2002 in California totaled 2,235,000 tons, up 14 percent from December 1, 2001. The ten-year average of December 1 hay stocks is 2,295,000 tons and the five year average is 2,335,000 tons. While an additional 274,000 tons of hay on hand this year over last year would appear to be bearish to the early 2003 hay market, it all comes down to utilization. How much hay will be utilized from December 1, 2002 to May 1, 2003? Year-to-year hay utilization in California has grown by 4 percent each of the past two years. Hay utilization the past five years is outpacing the ten-year average by about five percent. This increased usage is being driven by a growing number of dairy cows and heifers. Sources indicate that more of the hay inventory on December 1, 2002 was in the hands of dairy producers and less in the hands of dealers and growers, compared to last year.

With low milk prices in 2002 and dairy cow slaughter up 11 percent from 2001, it appeared that the growth in dairy cow numbers in California would begin to stall in 2002. This has not happened. California dairy cow numbers in 2002 continued to grow about 5,000 cows per month. While the number of milk replacement heifers shipped into California in 2002 from out-of-state declined slightly from the previous year (the first year-to-year decline since 1996), milk replacement heifer numbers in the State continued to grow. These additional cattle could boost hay utilization again in 2003.

While the May 1, 2002 hay stocks of 232,000 tons were up 29 percent from the low stocks of 180,000 tons on May 1, 2001, they were still below the five-year average of 314,000 tons and the ten-year average of 334,000 tons. With the significant growth in dairy cattle numbers in California in recent years, a higher "stocks on hand" number (unless it is a substantial increase) may not be as bearish to the alfalfa hay market as it was 15 to 20 years ago. Having said that, we are in a period of extended low milk prices and the possibility exists that this could be the longest depressed market on milk in history. Some industry and government experts are forecasting low milk prices for at least the first half of 2003. Will this alter the dairy producer's feed purchasing and usage patterns as they try to reduce feed costs?

Even during periods of low milk prices, higher testing alfalfa hay will normally be in higher demand than lower quality alfalfa. With so many by-product feeds and other types of hay and forages in California, dairy producers can substitute feed for dry cows easier than they can for milk cows. One way that dairy producers can partially offset the lower milk prices is to produce more milk. Higher quality alfalfa hay is a key ingredient to higher milk production.

When looking at the spring 2003 alfalfa hay market in California the two key elements are how much milk cow quality alfalfa hay do dairy producers have on hand and how high will the TDN tests be on early cuttings? With the growth of dairy cow numbers in central California, there has been good demand for several years for early cuttings of milk cow hay in the southern desert selling to San Joaquin Valley dairies. Contracting of new crop alfalfa hay in the southern desert had begun by mid-December in most years. In mid-December 2001, contracting of first through third cutting 2002 season new crop alfalfa hay ranged from \$115 to \$128 per ton, fob, to move and to store. This year, according to Market News, there were only a few contracts in the southern desert written in early January for first and second cutting 2003 alfalfa hay that brought \$105 to \$115 per ton, to move and store. A few contracts in mid-January on new crop hay to store brought \$118 to \$123 per ton. As of mid-January 2003, the number of contracts and volume of alfalfa hay purchased this year in the southern desert was below past years. Dairy hay buyers are proceeding very cautiously.

People ask me how many acres of alfalfa hay will we have in California in 2003. Because I'm the one that estimates the official USDA hay acreage for California, it is a conflict for me to give my personal opinion. But sources in the industry think that alfalfa hay acreage will be down in 2003. The reasons they give are 1.) More acres planted to cotton in the central valley in 2003 because of the Cotton Loan Program in the U.S. Farm Bill and 2.) Alternative crops to plant that have profit potential. The second reason was reflected in the mid-January report on acres in the Imperial Valley from the Imperial Valley Irrigation District (IID). According to IID, there were 163,376 acres of alfalfa hay in the Imperial Valley on

(Continued on next page)

Hay Stocks - Continued

January 13, 2003, 10 percent less or 18,290 fewer acres than the same time last year. Wheat acreage in the Imperial Valley was 42,956 acres, up 53 percent or 14,829 more acres than last year. I believe much of this increase in wheat was due to strong contract prices this past October.

When I was in the Imperial Valley in October, an alfalfa hay grower said he was reducing alfalfa hay acres in 2003 and planting other crops, including vegetables. He indicated that alfalfa was an expensive crop to grow compared to other crops. He said for the first time in a few years there were other crops with profit potential. I'm not sure if the water uncertainties in the Imperial Valley had anything to do with the fewer alfalfa hay acres in mid January, 2003.

Our first indication of hay and other crop acres in California will be in the Planting Intentions report issued by USDA in late March. At that time I should have some feedback from seed company representatives and their take on hay acres in California. As I said in a talk a couple of years ago, current year hay acres and production may have more of an impact on the hay market than carryover from the previous year. There are years, such as in 1999 when carryover does heavily impact the market. The tremendous amount of El Nino rain damaged hay from 1998 caused a very bearish dry cow hay market in 1999. 

National Dairy Situation and Outlook – USDA Estimates

Milk Production and Cow Numbers

Monthly: Compared to 2001, USDA estimates that overall milk production across the U.S. was up 1.7% in December, led by Arizona's 18.6% growth in milk production (on 10,000 more cows and 185 more pounds per cow). California's estimated production was up 4.2% (on 58,000 more cows and 10 more pounds per cow). Among other western states, New Mexico was up 7.8%, Idaho up 2.9%, and Washington up 2.4%. Three of the top 10 states reported decreases: Minnesota -3.7%, Pennsylvania -2.0%, and Wisconsin -0.4%.

Quarterly: For the fourth quarter of 2002 compared to the fourth quarter of 2001, U.S. milk cow numbers were up 0.5% at 9.155 million, production per cow was up 1.6%; the net effect was a 2.2% increase in milk production to 41.7 billion pounds. USDA projects that for the first quarter of 2003 compared to the fourth

quarter of 2002, U.S. milk cow numbers will decrease 45,000 cows to 9.110 million cows, production per cow will be up 3.5%; the net effect would be a 3.1% increase in milk production to 43.0 billion pounds.

Milk Prices

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2002 to the third quarter of 2002, U.S. average milk prices were up \$0.50/cwt. to \$11.93/cwt. USDA projects that for the first quarter of 2003, U.S. average milk prices will be down \$0.25-0.50/cwt. compared to the fourth quarter; including a \$0.10-0.40/cwt. Class 4b price decrease and a \$0.25-0.50/cwt. Class 4a price decrease.

Utility Cow Prices

Comparing the fourth quarter of 2002 to the third quarter of 2002, average U.S. utility cow prices were down \$2.00/cwt. to a national average of \$36/cwt. USDA projects that utility cow prices will rise to \$39-41 levels in the first quarter of 2003.

Information from the USDA-NASS publication "*Milk Production*" and the USDA-ERS publication: "*Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Outlook*." 

Staffing Appointments in the Milk Pooling Branch

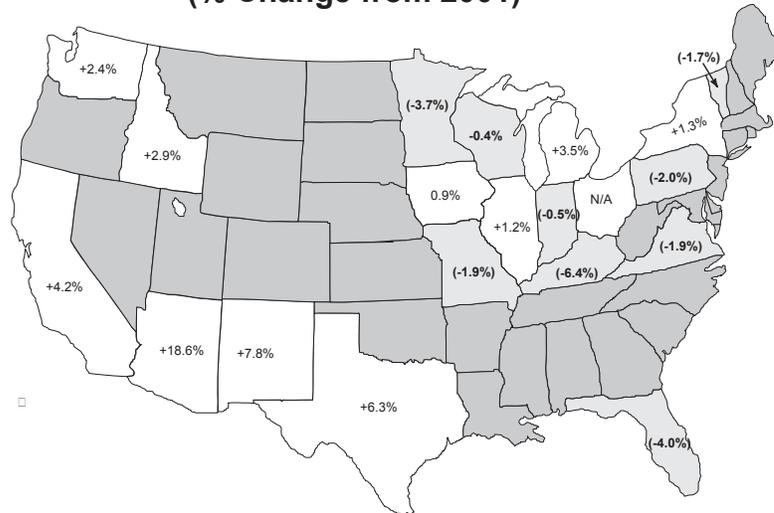
The Division of Marketing Services has announced the appointment of John Lee as Milk Pooling Branch Chief. Mr. Lee has been with CDFA since 1974 when he joined the Milk Pooling Branch as an auditor in the Los Angeles Office. Since then he has served as a Senior Auditor, Supervising Auditor and, most recently, as Manager of the Audit Section of the Milk Pooling Branch.

Marketing Services also announced that Robert Maxie, currently serving as a Research Manager in the Dairy Marketing Branch, has accepted a new position in Milk Pooling Branch where he will be the Project Manager coordinating the Department's programming of the Dairy Accounting System (DAS). The DAS is the statewide milk receipts and utilization system that is used in establishing the Monthly Producer Pool Prices and Pool Equalization Fund.

The Department's Producer Payment Unit will be integrated more closely with the work of the Milk Pooling Branch and will remain under Mr. Maxie's supervision in Milk Pooling. Jackie Juarez will remain in the Producer Payment Unit as it functions in the Milk Pooling Branch.

We extend our congratulations to Mr. Lee and Mr. Maxie who can be reached at (916) 654-0795. 

December Milk Production in the Top 20 States (% Change from 2001)



For the U.S. overall, comparing December 2002 to December 2001:

- Milk production during December was up 1.7%
- The number of cows on farms was 9.148 million head, up 26,000 head
- Production per cow averaged 1,546 pounds, 22 pounds more than December 2001

Dairy Marketing Branch Move Day Announced

The Dairy Marketing Branch will be moving to the Downtown Plaza, 560 J Street, Sacramento, on Friday, February 28, 2003. Due to phone and computer logistics, the branch phone numbers will be disconnected and unavailable on this day. If you have an urgent need to contact someone in the branch on Friday, February 28th, please call (916) 715-7122. We are sorry for this inconvenience. Watch for information on new contact phone and fax numbers in upcoming issues.

Class 1 Review Announcement

The Department completed its analysis of 2002 Class 1 farm prices in California, as required by Food and Agricultural Code Section 62062.1. While the average California price was below average prices in Central Arizona, it was above average prices in Southern Nevada and Western Oregon. The Department determined that prices in California are in reasonable relationship to those in contiguous states, therefore, a public hearing to consider amendments to Class 1 pricing formulas is not necessary.

Milk Production Cost Index for California

| Month | Del Norte / Humboldt | | North Bay | | North Valley | | South Valley | | Southern California | | Statewide Weighted Average | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|-------|-----------|-------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|---------------------|-------|----------------------------|---------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2001 | 2002 | 2001 | 2002 | 2001 | 2002 | 2001 | 2002 | 2001 | 2002 |
| <i>Dollars per Hundredweight</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| January | 14.68 | 15.39 | 13.66 | 14.17 | 12.60 | 12.97 | 12.09 | 12.90 | 13.04 | 13.10 | 12.5165 | 13.0110 |
| February | 14.68 | 15.39 | 13.66 | 14.17 | 12.60 | 12.97 | 12.09 | 12.90 | 13.04 | 13.10 | 12.5165 | 13.0110 |
| March | 12.66 | 13.18 | 13.10 | 14.11 | 12.39 | 12.50 | 12.00 | 12.49 | 13.20 | 12.98 | 12.3930 | 12.6245 |
| April | 12.66 | 13.18 | 13.10 | 14.11 | 12.39 | 12.50 | 12.00 | 12.49 | 13.20 | 12.98 | 12.3930 | 12.6245 |
| May | 11.43 | 11.59 | 13.15 | 13.36 | 12.66 | 12.50 | 12.39 | 12.94 | 13.57 | 13.05 | 12.7255 | 12.8019 |
| June | 11.43 | 11.59 | 13.15 | 13.36 | 12.66 | 12.50 | 12.39 | 12.94 | 13.57 | 13.05 | 12.7255 | 12.8019 |
| July | 11.75 | 11.36 | 13.50 | 13.82 | 12.75 | 12.59 | 12.95 | 13.57 | 13.91 | 13.42 | 13.0678 | 13.1835 |
| August | 11.75 | 11.36 | 13.50 | 13.82 | 12.75 | 12.59 | 12.95 | 13.57 | 13.91 | 13.42 | 13.0678 | 13.1835 |
| September | 12.89 | 12.22 | 13.57 | 14.37 | 13.04 | 12.89 | 12.99 | 13.39 | 14.19 | 13.70 | 13.2516 | 13.2803 |
| October | 12.89 | 12.22 | 13.57 | 14.37 | 13.04 | 12.89 | 12.99 | 13.39 | 14.19 | 13.70 | 13.2516 | 13.2803 |
| November | 14.23 | | 14.09 | | 12.86 | | 12.69 | | 13.45 | | 12.9463 | |
| December | 14.23 | | 14.09 | | 12.86 | | 12.69 | | 13.45 | | 12.9463 | |

HUNDREDWEIGHT POOL PRICES

Milk Mailbox Prices in Dollars per Hundredweight

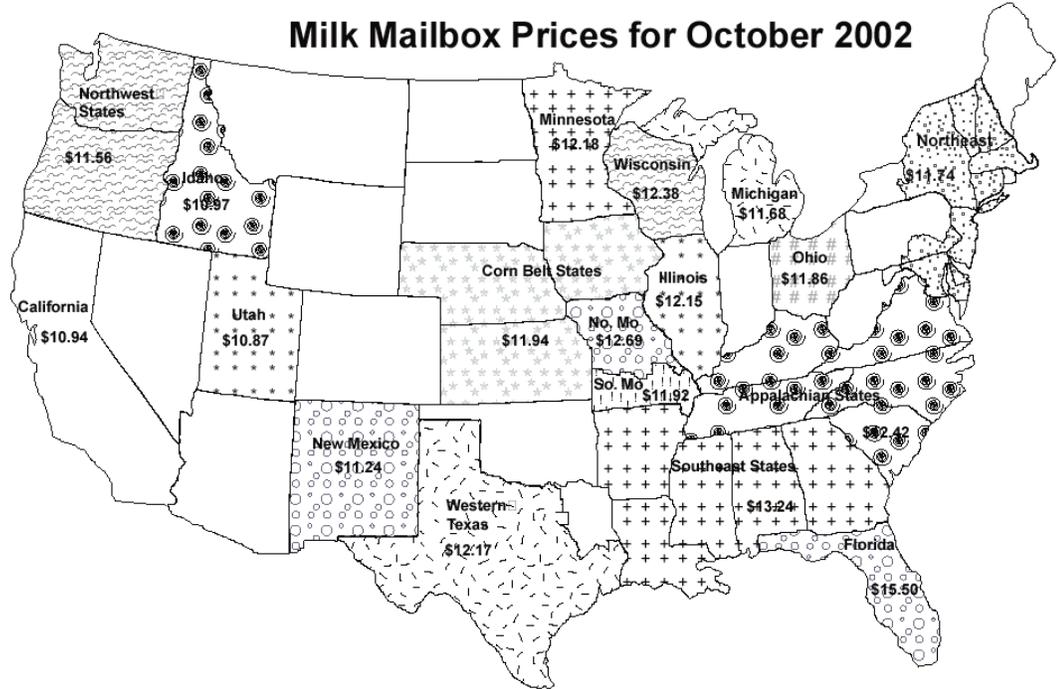
| | April | May | June | July | August | September | October |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|
| California ¹ | \$11.37 | \$10.98 | \$10.44 | \$10.11 | \$10.35 | \$10.58 | \$10.94 |
| USDA ² | \$12.16 | \$11.83 | \$11.33 | \$10.95 | \$11.18 | \$11.40 | \$12.00 |

¹ California mailbox price calculated by CDFA.

² All federal milk market order weighted average, as calculated by USDA.

| Month | Quota | Overbase |
|-------------|---------|----------|
| August '01 | \$16.70 | \$15.00 |
| September | \$16.95 | \$15.25 |
| October | \$14.71 | \$13.01 |
| November | \$13.67 | \$11.97 |
| December | \$12.93 | \$11.23 |
| January '02 | \$13.18 | \$11.48 |
| February | \$12.53 | \$10.83 |
| March | \$12.37 | \$10.67 |
| April | \$12.41 | \$10.71 |
| May | \$12.06 | \$10.36 |
| June | \$11.60 | \$ 9.90 |
| July | \$11.28 | \$ 9.58 |
| August | \$11.48 | \$ 9.78 |
| September | \$11.58 | \$ 9.88 |
| October | \$11.84 | \$10.14 |
| November | \$11.44 | \$ 9.74 |
| December | \$11.48 | \$ 9.78 |

Milk Mailbox Prices for October 2002



In October 2002, mailbox milk prices for selected reporting areas in Federal milk orders averaged \$12.00 per cwt., \$0.60 more than the figure for the previous month. Most of this month-to-month increase results from generally higher Federal milk order minimum producer milk component prices and higher producer milk tests for butterfat and protein. On an individual reporting area basis, mailbox prices increased in all reporting areas, and ranged from \$15.50 in Florida to \$10.87 in Utah. In October 2001, the Federal milk order all-area average mailbox price was \$15.51, \$3.51 higher.